

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND ACCOUNTS 1995 — PREFACE

A preface to the Accounts is submitted herewith.

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

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

1994 Column is period to 31 December 1994.

1995 Column is year to 31 December 1995.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME

	Grand Total		Contributions from Congregation		Congregational Assessments		United Appeal	
	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994
	General Board	18	37	8	15	—	—	9
Business Board	8	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
Publication Board	245	262	—	—	—	—	79	107
Inter-Church Relations	385	362	368	348	—	—	—	—
Overseas Board	1,307	1,236	17	23	—	—	730	653
Home Board	405	602	39	29	4	—	243	219
Social Witness Board	3,855	3,801	13	15	—	—	161	188
Evangelism & Christian Training	460	621	12	14	—	—	210	308
Youth Board	554	435	2	1	—	—	203	167
Education Board	142	201	2	15	—	—	130	171
Studies of the Ministry	740	608	10	13	—	—	313	238
Finance & Administration	1,017	934	—	—	872	826	—	—
United Appeal	38	34	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ministry & Pensions	3,653	3,527	—	—	3,021	2,927	—	—
Presbyterian Women's Association	708	713	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sundry Other	62	61	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grand Total	13,597	13,444	471	473	3,897	3,753	2,078	2,072

EXPENDITURE

	TOTAL		Employee and Ministry Costs		Printing Stationery, etc		Administration	
	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994
	General Board	24	44	17	14	—	1	1
Business Board	6	8	—	—	4	5	—	—
Publication Board	309	227	108	80	163	100	33	32
Inter-Church Relations	334	336	—	—	19	5	1	1
Overseas Board	1,226	1,208	74	71	37	38	60	57
Home Board	540	693	48	35	3	3	59	57
Social Witness Board	3,694	4,185	2,203	2,141	339	328	179	161
Evangelism & Christian Training	486	493	309	294	81	112	27	27
Youth Board	491	413	116	119	96	82	30	25
Education Board	186	449	91	92	13	10	26	24
Studies of the Ministry	706	620	282	244	106	89	5	4
Finance & Administration	954	969	334	342	155	138	111	104
United Appeal	12	13	—	—	12	13	—	—
Ministry & Pensions	3,414	3,718	3,181	3,486	12	11	134	132
Presbyterian Women's Association	703	735	440	435	51	59	37	35
Sundry Other	37	48	—	—	1	—	1	1
Grand Total	13,122	14,159	7,203	7,353	1,092	994	704	661

MEMORANDUM CENTRAL INCOME

Per Board £000's

Trust, Investment Income and Bank Interest		Rental Income (net)		Donations and bequests		Loan Repayments		Sales: Periodicals & Property		Grants and Fees	
1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994
1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	3	3	—	—	—	—	5	7
2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	163	153	1	1
9	9	—	—	8	5	—	—	—	—	—	—
127	123	—	—	433	437	—	—	—	—	—	—
67	77	—	—	33	35	19	38	—	204	—	—
62	65	2,655	2,552	285	328	38	50	74	80	567	523
26	17	—	—	119	162	—	—	93	120	—	—
12	22	30	28	140	99	—	—	28	26	139	92
10	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
202	160	6	5	84	76	—	—	—	—	125	116
(194)	(191)	312	270	11	15	—	—	16	13	—	—
37	28	—	—	1	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
577	551	—	—	55	49	—	—	—	—	—	—
101	94	—	—	558	573	5	8	44	38	—	—
12	11	—	—	—	—	50	50	—	—	—	—
<u>1,051</u>	<u>984</u>	<u>3,003</u>	<u>2,855</u>	<u>1,730</u>	<u>1,788</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>146</u>	<u>418</u>	<u>634</u>	<u>837</u>	<u>739</u>

Travel Expenses etc		Building Costs		Upkeep of Property		Loans Issued		Home and Over- seas Projects and Grants		Missionaries Field Costs	
1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994
—	1	—	—	—	3	—	—	6	24	—	—
—	—	—	—	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	10	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	1	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	314	330	—	—
18	15	—	—	8	15	—	—	495	490	534	522
5	4	197	433	6	8	16	32	206	121	—	—
22	30	409	973	454	454	81	73	7	25	—	—
32	30	—	—	3	3	—	—	7	6	27	21
20	20	21	40	52	61	—	—	156	66	—	—
6	7	17	258	22	12	—	—	11	46	—	—
7	8	—	—	48	31	—	—	258	244	—	—
62	56	—	—	216	238	—	—	76	91	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
83	85	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	4
11	8	—	—	2	1	13	20	136	168	13	9
—	—	—	—	—	—	35	47	—	—	—	—
<u>270</u>	<u>274</u>	<u>644</u>	<u>1,704</u>	<u>813</u>	<u>829</u>	<u>145</u>	<u>176</u>	<u>1,673</u>	<u>1,612</u>	<u>578</u>	<u>556</u>

REPORTS: JUNE, 1996

BELFAST

GENERAL BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. In the course of the year the General Board held three stated meetings to deal with business arising.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

2. The Panel on the Review of Boards and Committees received returns from a number of Boards about the frequency of their meetings, and a few reductions were reported. Not all Boards and Committees feel it necessary to meet twice in the February/Easter period. Reasonable rationalisation has now been achieved in this area and the matter should not be pressed further.

3. Structural changes are also envisaged. The Board of Ministry and Pensions is consolidating its RMF, WMF and MPS Committees into one "Retirements and Pensions" Committee and the Strategy for Mission Committee is exploring the possibility of a new Mission Agency to consolidate the work of Home Mission, Irish Mission, etc. As decided by last year's Assembly (Reports p13, Mins p48) Overtures have been prepared to effect a slight reduction in the membership of certain Boards. The Youth Board is presenting a separate Overture of its own.

4. Other issues were raised but for the meantime the Panel has concentrated on two.

- (i) There could be better co-ordination and executive direction of the Church's work. There is no single body to do this during the year, and even the General Assembly usually considers different missions, agencies, etc., one at a time as their various reports are presented. It has little opportunity to take an over-view of the Church's work as a whole or to determine priorities.

The General Board could exercise a central co-ordinating role, as all Boards and Presbyteries are represented in its membership. It could also prepare reports and resolutions to give the Assembly an opportunity to have a general debate on the Church's work and to determine its priorities. The problem of financing assistantships raised in the report from the Panel on Funding illustrates the kind of multi-faceted issue that the General Board could debate and transmit to the Assembly with considered recommendations.

- (ii) The use of ad hoc Committees of Assembly can produce problems. While they fulfil a useful function, such Committees run parallel to

well-established Boards and Committees resulting in an overlap of function and duplication of activities. Some have expressed the opinion that it would be helpful to have a Board to consult during the year. It is therefore suggested that such ad hoc Committees should either be appointed by the General Board (as with the Toronto Blessing Panel) or, if appointed by the Assembly, should report to the General Board during the year so that all Boards would have the opportunity to comment and mid-course corrections made where necessary.

5. Ad hoc Committees should have a limited life span (eg 3 years) after which they should either be discharged or made permanent.

OVERVIEW OF FUNDING

6. The Panel on the Overview of Funding examined the proposals of agencies contemplating new centrally funded posts or projects and the financial resources likely to be available for them. The Youth Board suggests the appointment of another Development Officer in Northern Ireland (in addition to the shared post in Dublin mentioned last year (Reports p15)), while the Home Mission is contemplating the creation of one or two more Experimental Ministries in the Irish Republic. At time of writing further clarification of these proposals is being sought.

7. The United Appeal would find it difficult to fund the suggested second post in the Department of Practical Theology in Union College (Reports 1995 pp15, 289), so that suggestion is being withdrawn.

8. For a variety of reasons fewer congregations are now requesting assistants, so some special financial arrangements will be necessary to effect this year's assignments. The United Appeal Board have been asked to treat the resulting extra demands on the Students' Bursary Fund as a priority, and the Home Mission and CMF will be asked to give extra assistance towards the additional assignment costs in 1997/98 for those who will then be Licentiates. Restricting the intake of students is not a simple matter. Union College needs a minimum number of students to be financially viable. Fewer students and fewer fees would leave the College more dependent on direct grants from the United Appeal. It also seems likely that there will be an increase in ministerial retirements in the next few years. Nevertheless the Panel is forced to take the view that the time may be near when it will be necessary to limit the intake of students to eg an average of 15 per annum.

9. A moratorium on additional posts and the possibility of fixed term appointments is being considered. A supplementary report may be submitted to the Assembly. (See Daily Minutes).

10. It is encouraging to note that the decline in CMF reserves has now been reversed, that support for the United Appeal remains strong and that the debt on Church House continues to reduce. The ending of this assessment in about four years time will bring a welcome relief to congregations that are under financial pressure. The resolution placed on the books last year (see Reports pp9-10; Mins p48) to transfer the Church House Re-Development assessment from stipend to specified sources is now submitted for final decision by the Assembly.

NOMINATION BOARD

11. The General Board decided that specialists should be added to the Nomination Board as follows:-

Sunday School Organiser:

Education Board 3 specialists

Board of Finance and Administration 1 specialist

Director of Ministerial Students:

Board of Studies 3 specialists

Board of Finance and Administration 1 specialist

Chair of Church History

Board of Studies 3 specialists

General Board 1 specialist (Rev R F S Poots)

12. At the February meeting of the General Board the Clerk reported that the Nomination Board met on 10 January, 1996 and interviewed four candidates for the post of Secretary for Christian Education and Sunday School Organiser. As a result they resolved to nominate Rev Ian T McKee for this appointment. However, in accordance with the remit of the Nomination Board, the name of Mr William Curry, having received one-third of the votes cast, was also forwarded for a final decision by the General Board, as empowered by the General Assembly (Mins 1995, p77).

13. A ballot was taken and the Moderator declared the result as follows:-

Rev I T McKee 88 votes

Mr W Curry 20 votes

It was then moved by the Clerk, seconded by Very Rev Dr R V A Lynas, and agreed that Rev I T McKee be appointed as Secretary for Christian Education and Sunday School Organiser.

At the following meeting of the Board Mr McKee subscribed the Westminster Confession of Faith in terms of the General Assembly's formula.

CONVENERS

14. At this General Assembly three Conveners of committees under the General Board complete their seven year term of office. The Board gratefully records its appreciation of their services.

Very Rev Dr A W G Brown

15. The convenership of the Church and Government Committee is always a busy and demanding one, but never more so than during the last seven years which saw numerous terrorist outrages, then the paramilitary ceasefires and the issuing of important Government documents about the future of Northern Ireland. Our Church was indeed fortunate to have a convener of Dr Brown's calibre in office during this critical period. He worked tirelessly in the interests of the Church, meeting Government ministers and political leaders, attending conferences and drafting statements for the Committee and the General Board, for whom he often acted as a media spokesman. His public pronouncements were always articulate and helpful. He was also involved in the Inter-Church Committee on Northern Ireland, which provides a link between

church leaders here and those in the USA. The whole Church is deeply indebted to Dr Brown for his wise and capable leadership.

Rev A V Martin

16. The Rev Alan Martin has served as Co-Convenor of the Church and Government Committee for the full term of seven years. Mr Martin is not only Minister of the Abbey Church in Dublin, but Clerk of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery. He has a unique knowledge and 'feel' for life in the Republic. His extensive contacts in so many spheres of Dublin life, his keen interest in Europe, and his well-informed mind have made him an ideal person for this key post. The legendary hospitality of the Martin home has proved an invaluable benefit for visiting Moderators and deputations. The General Board records its grateful thanks to him for the wisdom and balance he has brought to the work of this Committee, and for his care in writing its minutes.

Rev D M Scott

17. The Rev Malcolm Scott has been Convenor of the Peace and Peacemaking Committee during its formative years. He took over this task just one year after Peace and Peacemaking had been formalised as a Committee, under the General Board. It is a tribute to his insight and dedication that the Committee is now recognised as having an important role to fulfil in the thinking of our Church. The years of his Convenership have been critical for our community, and under his leadership the Committee has encouraged the Church to think deeply about our relationships at all levels. While recognising the priority of speaking to our own situation, Mr Scott has frequently challenged us to also consider issues of peace on the world scene. We are indebted to him for sharing his many genuine concerns.

GENERAL

18. In response to a report from the Moderator's Advisory Committee the Clerk of Assembly was directed to write to Clerks of Presbytery, the Reception of Ministers Committee and the Board of Studies pointing out that the consequence of the Assembly's decision in 1979 (Mins p99 resolution 21) is that practising homosexuals are not eligible for the ministry of this Church. The Clerk of Assembly has now written accordingly.

VISITATIONS OF PRESBYTERY

1. The 1995 Assembly asked the General Board to review the issues involved in the visitation of congregations by Presbytery (Reports p35; Mins p51).
2. The General Board set up a panel which met five times.
3. It feels that a major review of current procedures is required. It favours a return to a single night format. It intends to concentrate more on the spiritual and mission audit aspect of the visitation and less on the statistical review. To this end the present questionnaires are being re-written. Several other Churches have been asked to supply the material they currently are using. The

Panel seeks Assembly permission to send all the documentation, when complete, down to Presbyteries for consideration and comment, so that the 1997 Assembly will be able to finalise procedures. Seminars will be held in the Autumn for Presbytery representatives to help implement the changes.

STATEMENTS

During the year the Board issued major statements as follows:-

GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS - 26 October, 1995

1. The General Board gives thanks to Almighty God that the IRA and Loyalist ceasefires have now been maintained for over a year. The Board calls on our people to continue to pray earnestly for peace and to work unremittingly to make such peace a reality in our society. (Suggested prayers are available from the Convener of the Committee on Peace and Peacemaking).

At the same time, trust is a necessity. In order to create an atmosphere of trust we encourage all people to reach out across divisions with forgiveness, generosity, and penitence. The General Board therefore calls upon paramilitaries to play their part in creating trust with the community by ceasing forthwith all violence against the person, and by taking heed to the overwhelming demand of people about the decommissioning of arms and explosives, so that substantive talks on the political settlement for Northern Ireland may proceed without delay.

2. The General Board welcomes the news that the Department of Enterprise and Employment in Dublin as part of its proposed Working Time Bill is preparing legislation to establish rights for workers in relation to Sunday working. The Board recognises that a conscientious reluctance to work on Sunday must be protected by law.

The Board calls upon the Governments of the Republic of Ireland and of the United Kingdom to be sensitive to the conscience and convictions of many people, Church members and others, on this matter.

3. The General Board is deeply concerned at the amounts of money now being spent on the National Lottery and especially scratch cards, often by those who can least afford it. It believes that clear Christian witness on this matter is compromised by any participation in these activities or by accepting grants from this source. This has been the consistent law of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, which requires that no money shall be raised by means of balloting, raffling, or lottery tickets. The Board therefore reiterates the call of the recent General Assembly "That the General Assembly, being opposed to the United Kingdom National Lottery, discourage personal participation in this lottery and direct all agencies, congregations and projects not to accept any funding coming directly from the National Lottery, and urge that the Government continue to make money available to charities and other objects which is not raised through the National Lottery". The Board urges continuing support of worthwhile charities by the time-honoured method of direct giving.

GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS - 29 February, 1996

1. The General Board gives thanks that God is the Lord of history, and reaffirms its faith in His sovereign rule over human affairs.

2. The General Board expresses anger and indignation at the ending of the IRA cease-fire, and at the cruel and calculating deeds of violence perpetrated in London. It calls upon the IRA to listen to the heart-cry of Irish people, North and South, so unmistakably expressed in recent days, and to make public announcement of a total and permanent cessation of violence.

3. The General Board notes with appreciation the work of the Mitchell Enquiry, and in particular commends its six principles as a basis for future progress towards a lasting peace.

4. The General Board commends the British and Irish Governments for their diligent efforts in moving forward the Peace Process, and in particular the Anglo-Irish Communique following the Summit of 28th February. It believes this to contain proposals necessary for progress towards peace, and therefore urges all political parties to adopt a high degree of flexibility and urgency in preparation for elections and the eventual negotiations.

5. The General Board recognises that particularly sensitive and difficult tasks lie ahead, that will need the guidance and wisdom of Almighty God. It therefore urges all our people to pray for those who are involved in any way in these negotiations, that they may be enabled to bring about a lasting solution to our long-standing problems. We also call on all church members to redouble their efforts to reach out to those with whom they differ and to promote a climate which will support the search for reconciliation.

GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS - 28 March, 1996

1. The General Board recognise that public parades especially on main roads are part of the culture of both traditions in Northern Ireland. They call upon all those who have responsibility for public parades to show sensitivity to the feelings of those who live on parade routes, and to do nothing to provoke their anger, or cause them to feel intimidated or threatened. They also call upon residents who may oppose such parades to exercise tolerance, recognising that if we are to build a new kind of society, then it must be a genuinely multi-cultural society where the traditions of both communities are not only recognised, but affirmed and even celebrated.

2. The General Board express concern for all victims of the BSE crisis.

Believing that the health of people is of top priority, they call upon the UK Government to take appropriate action to restore public confidence in the beef industry.

They offer deepest sympathy to the farming community in Northern Ireland, as well as in the rest of the UK, and the Republic of Ireland, and to all those who work in food production and other allied industries, and whose jobs are at risk because of the curtailment of markets for beef.

They request that the UK Government and the European Union give sympathetic consideration to the question of compensation.

In a world of insecurities they encourage those who are affected to find their ongoing strength and security in reverence for the Lord of Creation and Resurrection.

STATEMENT ON THE DIVORCE REFERENDUM AND ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION IN THE IRISH REPUBLIC

The following statement was approved on 26 October:-

1. The Presbyterian Church reiterates its beliefs in relation to marriage that it is a life union which is lasting, complete and exclusive. It is a covenant and therefore any built-in licence for divorce is ruled out. It is appointed that there may be lifelong comfort and companionship between husband and wife. It is appointed for the ordering of family life, where children may enjoy the security of love and the heritage of faith. It is appointed for the well being of human society, which can be stable and happy only where the marriage bond is honoured and upheld. The institution of marriage is for the enhancement of life both for husband and wife, children and society but if it breaks down irretrievably it can cease to enhance and become a form of imprisonment. Some form of divorce legislation is necessary because long term separation with no divorce legislation which results in the impossibility of remarriage does not enhance life either and can be another form of bondage.

2. The ideal of marriage as a life long union is something which should be both practised and advocated by churches but the State having overall responsibility for all citizens should legislate for those who are suffering from the irretrievable breakdown of their marriages yet in such a way as not to endanger the institution of marriage and family life.

3. The abandonment of the marriage covenant should never be seen as something “normal” but unfortunately there is an increasing incidence of marriage breakdown in recent years.

4. The Church and Government Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland therefore welcomes the action being taken by the government to deal with the realities of irretrievably broken marriages and at the same time ensuring that the institution of marriage is upheld.

5. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has previously stated that the ban on divorce should be removed from the constitution in line with most European countries and appropriate legislation deal with the matter incorporating the following:-

- (i) Counselling to couples experiencing difficulty in marriage should be required, where possible, before divorce proceedings can be started.
- (ii) The liberation of parents from a broken marriage must be balanced against the hurt caused to any children of the marriage.
- (iii) Legislation should be aimed at avoiding prolonged wrangling over property and custody of children so as to protect children as far as possible from the psychological scars of their parents break-up.

INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE ON NORTHERN IRELAND

Very Rev Dr A W G Brown reports:

1. The annual meeting of the Committee took place in Belfast on Friday, 20 October, 1995. The meeting offered members from both sides of the Atlantic the opportunity to be informed about the present situation, and in particular about the forthcoming SACHR review, and important pieces of cross-community work in Northern Ireland.

2. The Churches 'Call for Fair Employment and Investment in Northern Ireland' continues to be promoted with vigour by our American partners. We for our part have made a submission to SACHR as it carries out its employment review.

3. The Visit of President and Mrs Clinton to Northern Ireland was a most positive contribution to the peace process. His clear call to all sides to lay aside their prejudices and work for peace was well heard by the vast majority of our people. We record with gratitude also the positive contribution made by Senator Mitchell and his distinguished colleagues as they enunciated their helpful principles for progressing the peace process.

4. The breakdown of the IRA Ceasefire has undoubtedly made the task of attracting investment and tourism more difficult. It remains to be seen what long-term effects it will have. It is our earnest prayer and hope that international pressure will succeed in persuading the IRA to make a speedy and open declaration that the Ceasefire is renewed on a permanent basis.

5. We are again indebted to Rev Dr Hank Postel and Mr John Duffey of the PCUSA and Mr John Carr and Mr Gerry Powers of the US Catholic Bishops Conference for their continued wisdom and guidance, and for their willingness to listen to what we have to say. It is in no small measure due to them, and the network of contacts they have built us that we are able to have our concerns expressed at a high level in America. We have learned to value our partnerships with them increasingly in the work of this Committee.

6. There was no Summer Institute in 1995 but it is planned that there will be one this year.

7. The pioneering work of the Business Education Initiative has expanded again this year with a record number of students from Northern Ireland able to study business for a year in selected Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic colleges. We are again grateful for the co-operation of the NI Employment and Training Agency in the implementation of this programme.

PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Rev J T Magowan reports:

1. Sea Empress, Beaufort Dyke, Botanic Gardens and Belfast Parks, Stag-hunting, the list goes on, for Environmental issues feature daily on the Media. More and more we are beginning to realise that Environmental problems are the cost of increasing industrialisation, urbanisation, scientific and technological advances. Yet if we are not careful we can be progressing backwards. Increased wealth invariably produces increased waste, more

prosperity results in more pollution. God's creation and millions of God's children pay a high price for our so called "standard of living."

2. Yet many of our Church members do not feel any biblical imperative to care for God's creation and give little thought to the "not-so-goodly" heritage which we may be passing on to our children.

The Environmental Panel believes that those who are friends of God should also be friends of His creation.

The Panel has:-

- (i) Initiated and promoted the Eco-Alphabet series in the Presbyterian Herald to illustrate the broad sweep of environmental issues.
- (ii) Encouraged an Environmental Sunday and provided material for use in worship.
- (iii) Encouraged Presbyteries to appoint an Environmental Agent. Nineteen out of twenty-one Presbyteries have done so.
- (iv) Brought various churches together - Church of Ireland, Methodist and Roman Catholic. This could be very relevant in the future with a view to sharing resources.
- (v) Contacted District Councils and Government Departments on various issues from Nuclear Testing to Waste Disposal and the possibility of water privatisation.
- (vi) Established contact with other groups - Northern Ireland Environment Link and English Nature.

3. The Panel looks forward to the day when our Church will be able to have an Environmental Coordinator. We are looking for ways and means of employing someone who will help to teach, motivate and resource our Church. The Panel wants to see Church members increasingly realising the centrality of environmental issues on our contemporary agenda in the context of the ever relevant Gospel of Christ by whom "God will reconcile all things to Himself whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through His blood shed on the cross".

THE TORONTO BLESSING

1. The Committee set up by the General Board on 2 March, 1995 has continued its work and now presents the following report.

What is the Toronto Blessing?

2. The 'Toronto Blessing' is so called because of phenomena in the Airport Vineyard Church in Toronto which began in January, 1994, though this was part of something wider which had been going on before that.

3. Its distinguishing characteristics are: uncontrollable laughter, falling down and various forms of physical and emotional states associated with radical loss of control, sometimes drunkenness. We emphasise "distinguishing" characteristics. There are also phenomena commonly associated either with revivals or with charismatic experience in general, including penitent weeping, shaking and spiritual deliverance.

4. There are apparently two unprecedented elements present. One is the extent of the laughter. Laughter is not unknown as a manifestation of extreme spiritual stirring: eg, Wesley experienced but was generally disturbed by it; it was experienced in Wales in time of revival and together with most, if not all, of the phenomena that appeared in 1994 it has featured occasionally in scattered experiences in various church groups over the last few years. But as a normative and widespread phenomenon it seems to be novel. The second is people going around making noises like animals, especially barking like dogs or roaring like lions. This may deserve to be ranked with the distinguishing characteristics listed above but, although it is frequent, it seems to be less pervasive than laughter and falling.

5. One initial difficulty with assessing it is that the “Blessing” apparently takes different forms. Supporters could complain that the description just given is highly selective. The things listed above belong to the “manifestations” but not the essence of the work of the Holy Spirit. Some people have been touched, deepened and transformed without being affected in any of the ways mentioned, and even when the unusual or spectacular has occurred, it is a sign of blessing but not the heart of it.

6. The Committee has therefore considered the biblical, historical and doctrinal aspects of this phenomenon in some detail and has also prepared practical guidelines.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Old Testament

7. In the Old Testament the phrase ‘Spirit of God’ occurs 84 times and was associated with the following:

- charismatic judges and early leaders of Israel, usually for a limited time for the purpose of carrying out extraordinary tasks. (Num 11:17; 27:18; Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 14:6,19; 15:14; 1 Sam 11:6; 16:13).
- kings. Very often the symbol of this bestowal of the Spirit on kings was anointing and the laying on of hands.
- prophets and prophesying right from the time of king Saul (1 Sam 10:10) and king David (2 Sam 23:2) to the last of the writing prophets (Num 11:25-26; 24: Zech 7:12; Micah 3:8). The gift of prophecy, however, was not to be limited to a few people but ideally should also be poured out on all the people (Num 11:29; cf Joel 2:28-32).
- the presence of God with people: particularly in the Psalms (Psalm 51:11; 139:7) and Isaiah (Isaiah 63:10-14)
- the future of God’s people. In the context of the deep depression felt at the time of the exile, there was a longing for a greater outpouring of the Spirit of God associated with the coming of the Messiah and the Last Days. Ezekiel spoke of the valley of dry bones revived by the Spirit (Ez 33); he also spoke of the people receiving a new heart through the Spirit (36:26-27; 37:14) - a theme echoed in Paul in 2 Cor 3:16 - and Joel spoke of the wide outpouring of the Spirit when ‘young men shall prophesy and old men shall dream dreams’ (Joel 2:28-32), a passage which Peter took as his text in his sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2).

Intertestamental Period

8. The Old Testament longing for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the End may have been heightened during the intertestamental years by the belief (attested in the rabbinical period) that with the death of the last Writing Prophets (Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi) the Spirit of God abandoned Israel and from then on God only spoke through 'the echo of his voice', (ie indirectly). At the end time, however, this situation would be remedied and God would pour out his Spirit upon all. If this view was held at the time of Jesus then the longing for the coming of the Spirit would be even greater.

New Testament

9. Whether they knew about this later development in thinking or not, it is clear that the New Testament church found the Old Testament hope for a future outpouring of the Holy Spirit crucial in their understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. They considered that with the coming of Jesus Christ they were living in the Last Days and that those days would continue until Christ's return and the Last Judgement. The Holy Spirit, whom they understood in personal terms (1 John 2:1; Gal 5:18; Rom 8:14; 1 Cor 2:10-13; 1 Cor 3:16; Rom 8:11; 26-27; 2 Tim 1:14 and cf the Trinitarian formulae in 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Cor 12:4-6 and Eph 4:4-6), would play a dominant role in that period.

10. The Gospel, Acts and Paul in particular drew attention to the activity of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospels the event of Jesus's baptism was accompanied by the giving of the Spirit who according to John's Gospel not only descended on Christ but also 'remained on Him'. Throughout Jesus' ministry miracles and exorcisms were performed through the Holy Spirit and it was through the power of the Holy Spirit that God raised Jesus from the dead.

11. The Holy Spirit, however, was not confined to Jesus Christ himself or to the time of his earthly life, but was given to all his followers. In John 20:22 Jesus breathed on his disciples and said 'Receive the Holy Spirit' and in Acts 2 we have a description of some of the physical manifestations that accompanied an outpouring of the Holy Spirit as 'they were all gathered together in one place'. From then on in Acts the Holy Spirit is involved in every decision taken by the early church (Acts 4:31; 8:17-18; 9:17-18; 10:44-45; 15:28; 19:6; 20:28) and it is also assumed in the life of every believer for whom being a Christian meant having the Holy Spirit (cf Acts 19:1-7 etc.)

12. In Paul, the Holy Spirit is the proof and guarantee that we are in fact living 'between the Times' ie in the Last Days before the final climax of world history. He is the 'down payment' (guaranteeing that the final payment will be made) (2 Cor 1:21-22; 5:5; Eph 1:14), the 'firstfruits' (guaranteeing that the rest of the harvest will follow) (Rom 8:23) and finally the 'seal' (stamping believers as God's own till 'the day of redemption') (2 Cor 1:21-22; Eph 1:13; 4:30).

13. He is involved in every aspect of a believer's life from conversion to resurrection, of which He is the guarantor. Every believer has the Spirit (Rom 5:5; 2 Cor 1:21; Tit 3:6; Eph 1:13; 4:30; 1 Cor 2:12; 2 Cor 11:4; 2 Thess 2:13; Rom 15:16). In fact the distinction between a believer and an unbeliever is that a believer has the Holy Spirit while the unbeliever does not (1 Cor 2:6-16; 12:3;

Rom 8:9; cf too 1 John 2:27; 4:6), and every believer lives a Christian life in the Spirit.

14. The Holy Spirit is also involved in a Christian's private prayer (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15; Eph 6:18; Rom 8:26-27), including praying to God through 'inarticulate groans' (Rom 8:26-27) or, if they are different, in glossalalia (Tongues) (1 Cor 14) in which Paul claims to be more gifted than any of them (1 Cor 14:18) - though he is cautious about their use in public worship (1 Cor 14:19). He is similarly very cautious and reticent about discussing 'visions and revelations' and he disallows them as having any value in authenticating ministry. However, in his argument with the Corinthians he does claim that he himself or an acquaintance had such experiences (2 Cor 12:1-10). However, over such events he draws a veil of silence and may even describe himself as being 'very foolish' for mentioning them (2 Cor 12:11).

15. The Holy Spirit is also involved in public worship and the exercising of gifts in public. We are handicapped in our knowledge of what went on in the public worship of the early Christians. We know next to nothing of what happened in the churches addressed by John; and our information about what happened in the Pauline churches comes from the fact that Paul was correcting aspects of worship which were going wrong. We know, for example, about speaking in tongues and prophesying in public worship in Corinth because the gift of speaking in tongues was being overemphasised and causing disruption (1 Cor 14); we know about the Lord's Supper because, again in Corinth, some Christians were abusing their privileges during the Lord's Supper. What is clear, however, is that for the early church, the key to their worship was the presence of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit (Phil 3:3; 1 Cor 10:16-17, cf John 4:23). Their worship was free and spontaneous with Christians desiring and exercising various 'gifts of the Spirit' (1 Cor 14:12) but it had to be conducted in a spirit of order and discipline 'for God is not a God of disorder but of peace' (1 Cor 14:33, 40) and for the benefit of each other (1 Cor 14:19, 26). In this public worship several of the gifts (such as speaking in tongues) were more spectacular and hence, human nature being what it was, were more eagerly desired by some and so got out of hand. On the other hand, other equally extraordinary gifts such as working of miracles and healings seemed to have been exercised without problems. The criteria for using these gifts, for Paul at least, seem to have been the glorification of God and the edification of others (1 Cor 14:13-17, 26-33). Hence Christians are told not only to 'test the Spirits' to see if they are of God, and not of Satan (1 John 4:1-3; 1 Cor 12:1-3) but also, on occasions, to be disciplined and restrained in the use of Gifts of the Spirit for the sake of others.

16. Finally the Holy Spirit in the New Testament has a vital role in the preservation of the purity of doctrine of the early church and at the same time keeping it relevant to the needs of the contemporary age. It is John who wrestles particularly with this issue since there seemed to be certain people in his community who felt that since they had the Spirit they no longer had to pay any attention to the received doctrines of the church. He stresses that the Holy Spirit 'will teach you all things' but this will be done in the context of reminding them of what Jesus had said to them (John 14:26). Similarly in John 16:12ff the Holy Spirit is said to continue teaching them the things that Jesus did not have time to teach them, but the purpose of this is to guide them in Truth, where Jesus is the

truth in John 14:6 and moreover 'He will not speak on his own, he will speak only what he hears'. He will 'take from what is mine and make it known to you'. Whatever the Holy Spirit teaches is continually checked by the original revelation in Christ.

17. Two questions remain:

(i) *Does the New Testament teach that the gifts of the Spirit are time limited?* There is no evidence that Paul, for example, distinguished between gifts and manifestations of the Spirit on the grounds that they are permanent or passing, supernatural or normal. Any distinctions he does make are made on the basis of whether they edify the Church and glorify God. Moreover, while Paul clearly thinks that tongues, prophecy and knowledge will pass away (1 Cor 13:8) he thinks that that will happen only when the partial vanishes and the wholeness comes. Some, however, interpret "wholeness" as referring to the completion of the canon of Scripture, and therefore take the cessationist viewpoint discussed in Par 53 below. Others believe that this had not happened in Paul's time and will not happen till Christ returns. In the meantime the New Testament writers believed that we all, even to-day, live in the period between Christ's resurrection and the Second Coming and the presence of the Holy Spirit is the guarantor both of God's presence with us and of the future glory. Looking back we can say that different intellectual and cultural climates have resulted in different emphases being put on the 'gifts of the Spirit' in various ages and a description of that is the remit of the historical section of this paper, but until Christ comes again the guarantee of God's continuing faithfulness to his people in this age is the sign of the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament, therefore, the Gifts of the Spirit, continue in one way or another until the End of the Ages.

(ii) *What are the physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit and how can we know if an activity is inspired by the Holy Spirit?* The Bible does give us some descriptions of physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit but such descriptions are occasional and often incidental rather than comprehensive and exhaustive. Because of that we cannot use an argument from silence and say that since a particular phenomenon is not found in the New Testament it cannot be a proper activity of the Holy Spirit. But the New Testament does give us criteria for testing whether an activity comes from God or not and these criteria can still be applied in the church today ... does it glorify God? Does it honour Christ? Does it bring honour to the body of Christ, the church? Does it upbuild the Christian? Is it helpful to those around? These are the kind of criteria which Paul applied and which must constantly be kept in mind today when considering any fresh manifestations.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER BIBLE TIMES?

18. In the second half of the second century the Church was challenged by a movement in Phrygia in Asia Minor, claiming the direct and immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. A converted pagan priest, Montanus, 'spoke in strange tongues' while in a trance and 'prophesied'. He and two prophetesses, Prisca and Maximilla, announced the imminent establishment in Phrygia of the New Jerusalem and the advent of the New Age of the Spirit. Condemned by local church leaders, the movement survived and spread, chiefly as a protest against the way in which the Church seemed to be abandoning its charismatic

origins and taking fixed shape as a well-ordered institution with a defined creed, a closed canon of Scripture and a governing body of bishops. In spite of winning the support of the great North African theologian, Tertullian, Montanism discredited appeals to direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit in mainstream Christianity, as the historian, R A Markus, has judged, 'The effect of the Montanist protest was not to rehabilitate the prophet, but to strengthen the conviction of the "great Church" that the age of the prophet and of revelation had come to an end with the close of the Apostolic Age'.

19. Movements claiming the authority and immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit over against the authority of the Church or the Bible emerged on the fringes of the sixteenth-century Reformation and were condemned equally by Rome and the Reformers. The Quakers represent a surviving example of such movements, most of which abandoned sacraments and traditional Christian doctrines such as original sin. The Quakers earned their name because their preaching caused some hearers to quake: 'Men, women and little children at their meetings are strangely wrought upon in their bodies and brought to fall, foam at the mouth, roar and swell in their bellies.'

20. Similar experiences have been recorded in the history of revivals, beginning with the revivals in the Six Mile Water valley in Ulster and at Stewarton and Kirk o' Shotts in Scotland in the early seventeenth century. Robert Blair and John Livingstone, Scottish ministers who were prominently involved in these revivals, discouraged 'ecstasies' and morbid manifestations, believing them to be the work of the devil.

21. In the eighteenth century the preaching of men like George Whitefield Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley in Britain and America sometimes excited strange symptoms in their hearers - convulsions, weeping, shrieking, trembling and swooning. Normally these were manifestations of conviction of sin but Wesley and Whitefield trembled and wept on occasion and Jonathan Edwards' wife, Sarah, was repeatedly prostrated physically as she had deepening experiences of Christ during the Great Awakening.

22. About the same time in France, Jansenists, Roman Catholic dissidents, were exhibiting similar manifestations: 'men falling like epileptics, ... groaning, shrieking, whistling, declaiming, prophesying, caterwauling.'

23. Prostrations were a controversial aspect of the 1859 revival here in Ulster. They appeared in Ahoghill on 14 March 1859, usually regarded as the beginning of the revival as a mass movement and recurred from time to time and in different locations. Contemporary defenders of the revival claimed that the vast majority of those converted were not affected by these manifestations and the General Assembly's State of Religion Committee 'earnestly reminded' their brethren of the necessity of guarding, on the one hand, against cherishing undue suspicions of the reality and work of the Holy Spirit and on the other, of adopting any course of procedure whereby our people may be led to mistake bodily impressions or even conviction of sin for genuine conversion to God.

24. Earlier in the nineteenth century any idea that Pentecostal gifts might be restored in the Church had been discredited once more by the tragic case of Edward Irving and the Catholic Apostolic Church. Irving was a Church of Scotland minister who had an influential ministry in London, where he became involved in a group who were convinced that they were living in the last days

and that apostolic gifts of healing and speaking in tongues had been restored to the Church. Irving's friend, Thomas Carlyle, described the services in Irving's Regent Square church as 'more like Bedlam than a Christian Church ... foul uproar, some groaning, some laughing, some shrieking, not a few falling into swoons.' Irving was deposed from the ministry - though not officially for his charismatic activities - and his tragic story and the fanaticism of some of his followers discredited the claims they had made to special spiritual gifts.

25. Nevertheless, one of the most remarkable developments in twentieth century Christianity has been the rise and numerical growth of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Modern Pentecostalism had its beginnings in the early years of the century, particularly in the United States in the Topeka Bible School in Kansas and in a black mission church congregation in Azusa Street in Los Angeles. From small and unpromising beginnings it has become a worldwide movement planting more than a million congregations with more than fifty million members, described by its historian Walter Hollenweger as a Fourth form of Christianity alongside Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. There are several Pentecostal denominations, including the Elim Four Square Church, founded in County Monaghan by a Welsh evangelist, George Jeffreys.

26. After the Second World War Pentecostal phenomena began to appear, first in Protestant, later in Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, founded in 1953, contributed to the spread of Pentecostal influences, and in 1959, an American Episcopal minister, Dennis Bennett, claimed to have experienced a baptism in the Spirit, with speaking in tongues. Again, this movement spread rapidly, appearing on American Roman Catholic university campuses in the late 1960's.

27. The Charismatic Movement, as it is called, became a world wide phenomenon both in mainstream Christian denominations and spawning independent congregations and house groups. Also known as Neo-Pentecostalism, it emphasises belief in the existence and exercise of certain gifts (particularly tongues and prophecy) in today's Church.

28. It differs from classical Pentecostalism in various ways:-

- (a) It is trans-denominational in nature.
- (b) It has no set theology of two-stage blessing.
- (c) It incorporates a diversity of theological opinion.

It has also provided a wealth of contemporary worship songs expressing personal and corporate devotion.

The British Isles

29. The phenomenon commonly known as 'the Toronto Blessing' grew out of the Charismatic Movement. This movement can be traced historically in the British Isles to the influence of a number of Christian leaders such as the late Rev David Watson (a Church of England clergyman) and Rev Tom Smail (a Presbyterian Minister who ministered in both Scotland and N. Ireland) particularly during the mid-sixties to mid-seventies. The creation of the Fountain Trust helped promote the charismatic movement in the mainline denominations.

30. A catalyst in promoting the movement was the visit of the South African Pentecostal leader David Du Plessis (often referred to as "Mr

Pentecost"). His visits to Theological Colleges in the early seventies helped emphasise to students for the Christian ministry the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the exercise of spiritual gifts.

31. From the mid-seventies to the present we have witnessed the growth of the House Church Movement and the independent Church Fellowships. Their lack of traditionalism enabled them to have much more spontaneity and informality in worship. In this seedbed the Charismatic movement has been nurtured. It has been recognised as a world-wide movement cutting right across the mainline denominations and affecting both interdenominational and non-denominational groupings.

32. In the eighties the influence of John Wimber and the Vineyard Church Movement came through the publication of such books as 'Power Evangelism' and 'Power Healing' and the promotion of Charismatic Conferences either organised or endorsed by the Vineyard Movement. Regular publications have also increased awareness of the Charismatic emphasis on spiritual gifts.

33. With this Charismatic network already established it is not too difficult to see how a spiritual experience originating in a Vineyard Church in Toronto could spread rapidly throughout the Western world and beyond.

Origins of the Toronto Blessing

34. The history of the Toronto Blessing as given by its supporters is as follows. *It began with a series of Renewal Meetings held in the Toronto Airport Vineyard in January 1994 (a small church based in an industrial unit) led by Randy Clarke the overseer of the St Louis Missouri Vineyard Churches at the invitation of John and Carol Arnott the Pastors of the Toronto Church. Randy Clarke had recently been deeply touched by the Spirit and when he ministered in Toronto many people were deeply and visibly affected by the power of God. The four days of meetings stretched to ten, then Randy Clarke was joined in ministry by the local pastors and the 'Blessing' continued. The meetings five nights per week and twice on Sunday are still continuing at time of writing (January 1996).*

35. *The particular 'feature' of these meetings was that many (though by no means all) of those who were prayed with exhibited physical signs of God's presence, laughing, weeping, resting in the Spirit, involuntary movement and occasionally the headline grabbing roaring or making of animal-like noises. However the 'Blessing' has been characterised by the arrival in Toronto of Pastors and Ministers and Leaders from all corners of the world and from all denominations who have found 'refreshment' there - or a new joy in God - in both worship and ministry. The 'Blessing' has followed them to their home churches and fellowships and has also spontaneously self-combusted in many other places.*

36. *In the UK its origin is normally traced to the visit by Eleanor Mumford (wife of John, the Overseer of the SW London Vineyard Church) to Toronto for four days in late May 1994. On her return she spoke at morning and evening services in Holy Trinity Brompton Anglican Church where her husband was formerly a Curate, and in ministry afterwards many of the same phenomena were displayed as people were healed, refreshed and renewed.*

37. *The Blessing has affected and renewed upwards of 5,000 churches throughout the United Kingdom.*

38. Proponents and opponents of the 'Blessing' have centred their thoughts on the same texts 'By their fruits ye shall know them' and 'No one can pick good fruit of a corrupt tree, neither can a good tree bring forth evil fruit!'

39. Proponents point to healings, conversions, renewals of faith, new joy and love for the Lord and his Word, saying that these are the marks of the work of the Spirit not of the Deceiver.

40. Opponents point to Randy Clarke and his reception of ministry from Rodney Howard Brown, who had himself received ministry from and ministered with Kenneth Hagen and Kenneth Copeland whose theology and outlandish charismatic extravaganzas are alien to orthodox mainline Christians. They claim that these are the true roots of the 'Blessing' and that 'evil' or at least 'theologically incorrect' roots cannot bring forth blessing hence it must be of the devil or the flesh.

41. All (proponents and opponents) are aware of the mixed economy of all meetings where God may be present, where the devil may seek to counterfeit God's work to bring it into disrepute and where fleshly desires may mimic in order to crave attention or release emotion.

42. The growth of the Airport Vineyard has been so phenomenal and the continuing arrival of thousands of visitors has made the continuation of normal church activity such that tensions have arisen between the Toronto Vineyard and the Association of Vineyard Churches.

43. In December 1995 the Association withdrew its recognition of the Airport Vineyard as one of its churches because (1) it was now operating as a renewal centre rather than as a local church and (2) because of disagreement over the handling of and interpretation of the phenomena. The Association of Vineyard Churches believe that whilst phenomena may occur when God visits His people they are (a) secondary to the normal life of the church (worship, preaching and teaching the word, ministering healing, pastoring people and engaging in evangelism) and (b) are not to be sought for themselves nor given theological interpretations.

44. In the UK the majority of churches affected have been Anglican, Baptist or of the House Church Movement, though churches of all denominations have been touched by it. No one as yet claims it as a revival, preferring the term 'refreshment', but many hope it may be a prelude to 'revival'. Its advocates describe it as 'the Third Wave' of a series of outpourings of the Spirit, the First and Second waves being the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, preparing the Christian Church for Revival.

TWO DOCTRINAL QUESTIONS

(i) What Is The Baptism In/Of The Holy Spirit?

45. In the Charismatic renewal movement, now spanning some 30 years, there has been an emphasis on what has been called, "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit". This teaches that either at or some time following conversion there is a special endowment of the Holy Spirit, empowering the Christian, and usually leading to the practice of spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues. Traditional

Pentecostals and some Charismatics would insist that evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is tongue speaking. This emphasis on a second experience of the Holy Spirit goes back beyond the present century to various holiness movements which spoke of “a second blessing”.

46. It is always important to examine spiritual experience in the light of Scripture rather than interpret Scripture in the light of such experiences. To help our understanding we examined two New Testament phrases - the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” and the “Filling of the Holy Spirit”.

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

47. Seven passages in the New Testament mention this. Four of them in the Gospels and a fifth in Acts 11:16 state that Jesus is the One who baptises in or with the Holy Spirit. A sixth in Acts 1:5 indicates that the baptism occurred at Pentecost. The only passage which explains who receives the baptism in the Holy Spirit is 1 Corinthians 12:13. Here, Paul, speaking about the membership of the Church says, “For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one Body - whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” (NIV).

48. This key verse indicates that all who are members of the Body of Christ, that is all Christians, have been baptised in the Holy Spirit. The general term ‘baptism’ speaks of an inauguration or initiation into something new. It speaks of a new beginning. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the beginning of a person’s new life in Christ. This occurs at conversion which therefore makes it misleading to speak of a subsequent spiritual experience as the “Baptism in the Holy Spirit”.

49. For this very reason we must reject any position which may lead to the creation of a two-class Christianity composed of those who have the ‘blessing’ or ‘baptism’ and those who have not. Such an emphasis can cause some to think of their spiritual experience as inferior and may lead to divisiveness and superiority within the Christian community.

50. No one doubts that Christians can have special spiritual experiences after their conversion but it is false to label any of these as a ‘baptism’.

Filling of the Holy Spirit

51. In Ephesians 5:18 Paul commands Christians to “be filled with the Holy Spirit” literally “to keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit”. This is something that is not only repeatable but is to be sought again and again. It was clearly the experience of the early Apostles. At Pentecost all, including Peter, were filled with the Holy Spirit. Then in Acts 4:8 we find Peter before the Sanhedrin again being filled with the Holy Spirit and later in Acts 4:31 “they (including Peter) were all filled with the Holy Spirit”. Thus unlike a baptism, this is not a one-off event, but something that should occur again and again in the Christian.

52. The essence of being a Christian is experiencing a new life in the Spirit which involves growth and development, going on from infancy at the new birth, to maturity. Such growth for many Christians is gradual and progressive as they use the means of grace - worship, fellowship, prayer and the

Scriptures. However, some grow at a faster rate or experience a large step of growth which can be like a spiritual upheaval. Some speak of that as a baptism, or an empowering, or an anointing, or even a special blessing. However, if we are to understand the Christian life in biblical terms as a growth in grace, then the words of J I Packer are helpful when he says, "A better way to theologize what is mis-called Spirit-baptism is as follows. It is an intensifying of the Spirit's constant witness to our adoption and inheritance (Rom 8:15-17). It is a deepening of the communion with the Father and the Son of which Christ spoke (John 14:21-23). It is an increase in the knowledge of Christ's love that Paul prayed the Ephesians might enjoy (Eph 3:16-19). And it is a renewing of that unspeakable joy in Christ (1 Peter 1:8) of which the Puritan John Owen wrote, 'There is no account to be given but that the Spirit worketh it when and how He will. He secretly infuseth and distils it into the soul, filling it with gladness, exultations, and sometimes with unspeakable raptures of mind.'" What is happening is that our capacity to receive from God is growing rather like a balloon being filled with air. It expands and therefore its capacity enlarges so it keeps on being filled. Thus it ever is with the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

(ii) Have the "Charismata" Ceased?

53. In our century, the question of 'cessationism' has been widely discussed. A 'cessationist' holds that certain gifts of the Spirit, specifically tongues, prophecies and healings, were given to the Church in the apostolic age, but not meant to be exercised beyond that period. Two main reasons have been given for this position. The first is that the purpose of these gifts was to show that the apostles were truly messengers from God. Once the apostles died, the gifts could not have that function. The second is that once the New Testament Scriptures have emerged, there is no place for another source of revelation. To quote from BB Warfield, a major advocate of this position: 'New constituent elements of special revelation can no longer be added; for Christ has come, His work has been done, and His word is complete'.

54. If cessationists are correct, it follows that Pentecostalism and charismatic renewal are fundamentally spurious movements. Of course, the arguments given above have been countered. Sometimes people who are not within either the Pentecostal churches or charismatic renewal reject cessationism. On the first point, it is maintained that the main purpose of the charismata is not to accredit the apostles, but rather to build up the Church of the risen and ascended Christ. They are still available for that purpose. On the second point, it is argued that charismata do not add to the revelation of Scripture, but are the Spirit's continued expression of the risen life of Christ in the Church. As such, they are no more a 'new revelation' than is our discernment of God's particular will for our lives, or our deepened understanding of the Bible.

55. Presbyterians must bear in mind that the Westminster Confession of Faith rejects the possibility of additional sources of revelation, alongside Scripture. It cites Hebrews 1.1f. Opinions differ on whether or not this section of the Confession (Ch I Par 1) should be read as a 'cessationist' statement.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TORONTO BLESSING

56. The Toronto phenomenon is alternatively interpreted as (i) a renewing work of God in preparation for revival and national awakening, (ii) a demonic activity and (iii) a mass self-induced emotional disturbance. The following points should be kept in mind:

- (a) Those who are most positive about it admit that some of what happens is spurious; most who are negative admit that some can be genuinely blessed within it. The demonic, the contrived and the divine can all be present in some ways.
- (b) Broadly psychological explanations can be consistent with belief in divine action, as long as they are not regarded as sufficient explanations. But they can also be regarded as sufficient, so that one need not invoke divine action.
- (c) Those who believe that the classical revivals of the past have been genuine works of God admit that during their course, and especially at their beginnings, extremely unusual phenomena have occurred. According to His sovereign freedom, God has either directly caused or permitted such things. This must be borne in mind in any assessment.
- (d) The 'Toronto Blessing' is not usually interpreted as being a revival even by those in favour for, as yet, not many have become Christians as a result of it. Further, animal noises can only with extreme difficulty be fitted into any coherent theology of divine blessing and one ought to be profoundly cautious about this form of laughter as well.
- (e) Its reporting in the mass media can be misinformed or selective of the 'wildest' elements, whereas many claim a sense of God's power, presence, a desire for holiness, prayer and Bible study which, if they remain and bear fruit, we dare not dismiss.
- (f) It seems to contain at present much that we ought to query and suspect of being inauthentic, dangerous and damaging.
- (g) Many have been disturbed and perplexed. In some cases congregations have been divided and the witness of the Church discredited by acrimonious argument.

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

The Committee recognises that some claim to have been helped and blessed by the experience but there is much in this phenomenon to be discouraged. It accordingly offers the following practical guidelines.

- (i) Ministers should ensure that in the regular preaching and teaching of the congregation, sufficient attention is given to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, without whom there can be no Christian life and worship. There is a broad movement for renewal in the churches, which encourages new music and forms of worship, and emphasises the variety of gifts within a congregation. However, all aspects of public worship should flow from an informed biblical and theological basis.

- (ii) While the conduct of public worship is the responsibility of the minister, any radical innovations should only be introduced after due consultation and preparation.
- (iii) Sensational phenomena are to be strongly discouraged when they are the product of false emotionalism or any hint of audience manipulation. Recognising the sovereign freedom of the Spirit, meetings should never be arranged, nor audiences invited, in an attempt to induce such phenomena.
- (iv) The work of the Spirit in an individual or congregation is not to be judged by purely subjective claims or by extreme and unexplained behaviour, but by the fruit evidenced eg in Gal 5:22 and 23 (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness faithfulness, humility and self-control).
- (v) No experience, however vivid, can ever be a short-cut to spiritual maturity. Opportunities for corporate prayer and study, together with encouragement to private devotions, should be ongoing in the life of our congregations.
- (vi) Special care should be taken in ministry to young people or other vulnerable groups. Experienced and responsible leadership should always be present.
- (vii) Where situations of tension or difficulty are developing in a congregation, the Presbytery should be approached for pastoral advice at an early stage and before positions become entrenched.

CONCILIATION COMMITTEE

Rev R F S Poots reports:

1. This report follows those submitted to the Assembly in 1994 and 1995 and does not repeat what is in them. Members of the Assembly are referred to those reports for an explanation of the thinking behind this enterprise.

2. The Committee has been almost exclusively concerned with seeking to lay solid foundations to the conciliation enterprise which will both endure for the future and be one in which the Church can have confidence.

3. To this end almost all our efforts have been concentrated on training. We consider ourselves to have been extremely fortunate to have been able to use the expertise of Mediation Network under the leadership of Mr Joe Campbell and Mrs Naomi and Rev Dr John Lederach, all of whom have had extensive training and experience in the field of conciliation.

4. The Committee itself has undergone two training sessions, so that those who will have initial oversight of this enterprise are fully aware of what is involved in it.

5. A day of training was held for Presbytery Clerks which aimed to give them some training in conciliation techniques as well as acquainting them with how this scheme is designed to work and the crucial part they will have to play in its success.

6. The Committee selected and recruited fourteen people (five women and nine men; five ministers and nine "lay" people) drawn from a number of

different areas in the life of the Church. These people have undergone twelve three hour training sessions. It is most gratifying to report that the attendance of these fourteen people has been almost one hundred percent, even though it has meant some people travelling long distances, and, on three occasions, staying overnight in Belfast. We believe that this is an indication of a clear understanding on their part of the importance of mediation in conflict situations as well as appreciation of the relevance and quality sought from the beginning to utilise the talents available among those who are not ministers, the training was all done on Friday evenings and Saturdays.

7. The following policy statement on Confidentiality was adopted by the panel.

- (a) The aim of conciliation is to enable individuals and groups to resolve their difficulties and disputes independently of any judicial process.
- (b) Information gained during the conciliation process will be confidential to the Committee and will not be divulged without the consent of the person or persons concerned except where the evidence proves or suggests that an individual, whether a child or an adult, may be at risk physically or mentally or where information is sought by a civil court.
- (c) Conciliators should be aware that they will not be required to act as witnesses at or to divulge information to any Church Court.
- (d) The terms of the Statement on Confidentiality should be made clear to all parties at the beginning of the conciliation process.
- (e) When abuse or potential risk, is suspected, conciliators should confer with their Co-ordinator, Mr Ivan H Wallace CB, or with the Deputy Clerk of Assembly before passing information to the appropriate authority.

8. The Assembly has given the Committee responsibility of assisting in the promotion of a culture of conciliation within the Church. Having laid the initial foundations in the training of conciliators, the Committee is turning its attention to this responsibility in the months ahead.

9. The General Board has added Mr I H Wallace CB, Rev D Baker, and the Principal of the Union College to the Conciliation Committee, whose membership was reported to the 1995 Assembly (Reports p22).

10. The Committee is confident that a group of trained conciliators is now available to be used to facilitate reconciliation in the Church. Details of how their services can be called upon will be found on page 19 of the Assembly Reports 1995.

CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

1. The Church and Government Committee met as required during the year.

NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION

2. The problems of Northern Ireland continue to dominate the work of this Committee. The year began with a profound sense of relief that the

ceasefires called by both IRA and Loyalist paramilitaries appeared to be holding in spite of a good deal of dissatisfaction with the pace and progress of the Peace Process. The best information available to us seemed to confirm that mood of cautious optimism right up to the very day of the Canary Wharf bomb, and the ending of the IRA ceasefire. At the time of writing efforts are being made, both to persuade the IRA to reinstate their ceasefire and to encourage the Loyalists to keep their's in place, and resist the pressures within their community to match force with force.

3. The work of the Committee this year began with well-publicised meetings with the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach in which we conveyed to them the response of the General Assembly to the Framework Documents, together with our observations about the state of the Peace Process, and our concern about the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons.

4. In the month of December, we were invited to meet with Senator Mitchell and his team and to make a submission to this important international commission on the arms issue, and in a more general way on progress towards a lasting peace.

5. Once again this year we have co-operated closely with the Peace and Peacemaking Committee, both in a general way on the outworking of peace in our society, and more specifically in a new range of study groups dealing with prisoners, with parades, and with landmines. Comments on landmines will be found in their section of this year's Reports. The two other reports have yet to be completed.

6. A delegation from the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland, with which we maintain close relations, paid a visit first to Dublin and then to Belfast on 8-9 February. We were able to arrange a series of briefings for them to enable them to have a clearer insight into our situation, including the thinking of both governments, and of other influential observers north and south.

7. Somewhat later in the season than had been intended, we began another round of meetings with the constitutional political parties. The first of these this year was with the DUP, and it proved a friendly and informative gathering. Plans are in hand to meet the other parties as and when this becomes possible, bearing in mind the punishing schedule of meetings in which all our politicians are involved at present.

8. In the wake of the ending of the IRA ceasefire we issued a statement in the name of the Committee expressing our anger and indignation at what had been done, and our sympathy with the victims and their families. We called upon our people to remain calm, and urged the IRA to listen to the heart-cry of Irish people, North and South. We expressed appreciation of the work of the Mitchell Commission, and commended its six principles as a basis for future progress towards a lasting peace. We urged the political parties to adopt a high degree of flexibility and urgency in preparations for elections and eventual negotiations. These sentiments were subsequently endorsed by the General Board.

9. It is our view that the Anglo-Irish Communiqué following the Summit of 28th February contains the proposals necessary for progress towards peace. At the time of writing, the politicians are involved in discussions about how the proposed election should be conducted, in preparation for all-party talks

immediately after our General Assembly. It remains to be seen how this will work out, and whether any party will exclude itself from talks by its refusal to turn away from violence. What is abundantly clear is that God is giving us a crucial opportunity to deal with the long-standing problems of our divided society. If we are to do this positively and constructively, then it can only be as we seek His wisdom and guidance for ourselves and for those who negotiate in our name. Never was there a time when it was more needful to encourage our people to pray, and to assure our politicians that they are being prayed for in the difficult task that is laid upon them. With God, everything is possible.

DOMESTIC AND OVERSEAS ISSUES

10. The work of this Committee is of necessity carried out alongside a number of other committees and boards of the Church. As well as a close partnership with Peace and Peacemaking to which reference has already been made, we are much indebted to the Board of Social Witness, and the Committee on Addiction, for the opportunity to be involved with them in representing to Government our concerns about Sunday Trading legislation, and about the Draft Licensing (NI) Order, which will greatly extend the availability of alcohol. Concern has also been expressed about the operation of the National Lottery. While as a Church we remain opposed in principle to any form of gambling, we believe that steps must now be taken to deal with abuses that have arisen in the outworking of the gambling industry. We continue to be concerned at the chronic shortage of cash that has so far undermined the National Health Service.

11. From time to time we are involved with the Overseas Board in making representations about issues of justice that concern us. We have been particularly disturbed this year at the execution of Ken Saro Wiwa and eight others in Nigeria, and at the continuing tensions and violation of human rights among the Ogoni people.

12. We have shared a long-standing concern at the endemic civil war situation in the Sudan. We believe that the Government there is seriously mistaken in its attempt to prosecute a military solution, with its consequent suffering on a horrendous scale for the people of southern Sudan.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

13. The referendum on divorce brought a narrow decision in favour of changing the Constitution to allow divorce under certain carefully prescribed conditions. This decision marks a further step in the liberalising of Irish society. This together with good economic growth and the ceasefire brought an air of optimism which was shattered by the bomb at Canary Wharf. After the initial shock and despair there is now a determination to keep the peace process moving because the vast majority of people want a settlement from the Talks that will be generally acceptable North and South.

14. In June Ireland takes over the Presidency of the European Union. This is a critical time for the European Union. Twelve new applicant countries are waiting to join. If the enlargement is to be accomplished without multiplying weaknesses then the present structures will have to be strengthened.

15. In February six representatives from PCI along with representatives from the other main churches were invited by the European Parliamentary Union to visit Brussels to learn more about the issues that face the Inter Governmental Conference. Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, spoke to us pointing out that the original purpose was peace and that the longest period of peace in Europe had now been achieved. Within the Union national rivalries were now sorted out around oval tables rather than across battlefields.

16. The purpose of the visit to Brussels was to encourage debate as to the future of the European Union. Perhaps surprisingly they were asking for a Christian input into that debate. What are the values we would like to see in the Europe of the future? Is it right that any nation should take decisions exclusively in its own interests? How can competitiveness be balanced with social concern?

17. Whatever the outcome of the European Inter Governmental Conference the method of talking around a table until a solution is reached is surely worth noting in the context of Ireland.

A W G BROWN, A V MARTIN, Conveners

APPENDIX A

REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE ON PARADES

A joint sub-committee of the Church and Government Committee and of the Committee on Peace and Peace-making has met on a number of occasions to consider questions raised by the traditional parades associated with what is often called 'the marching season'. Membership of the sub-committee was widened to include some who have personal experience of the Orange tradition within our Church. We have also met with the Rev Martin Smyth, MP, with representatives of the Garvaghy Road residents from Portadown, and of the lower Ormeau residents from Belfast. We have been very much indebted to Mr Joe Campbell of Mediation Network for his advice and support.

We believe it to be a fundamental Christian duty so far as is possible to live at peace with people everywhere (Romans 12 v18). In this Christians are to be pro-active, and at pains not simply to look after their own rights and interests, expecting that others will recognise them, but to show concern also for the rights and interests of others (Phil 2 v3&4). Even when we feel others to be in some way our "enemies" Jesus commands us to treat them well, and to do to them as we would have them do to us (eg St Luke 6 v 27-36).

1. The whole subject of traditional parades is a deeply emotive one, that draws out the strongest of reactions from the people of Northern Ireland. It is therefore a highly sensitive area of our cultural and religious life.

2. The problems caused by traditional parades are in fact limited to a relatively small number of such parades, which happen to pass through areas which have been particularly sensitive.

3. We are aware however that the number of such flashpoints is growing and likely to increase further, orchestrated by militant elements who wish to stir up trouble with other communities and especially to involve the Police.

4. We need to recognise that the right to parade is a part of the culture of both traditions in Northern Ireland, and especially of a substantial section of

the 'Protestant' tradition, for whom the 'Twelfth' in particular is seen as an inalienable right, and a joyous celebration of their identity.

5. The changing demography of 'traditional' routes and destinations and the multiplication of parades needs to be taken into account. At the same time it is clearly undesirable that an enclave of residents who happen to live on a small part of an arterial highway should be able to veto parades passing through.

6. Nevertheless, it is only natural justice to take account of the feelings of a substantial majority of local residents who may not wish their locality to be the scene of marches, processions and demonstrations alien to them. This is part of their civil and religious liberties.

7. It is also a matter of justice that any objections to the route of a parade should be dealt with in a principled way on the basis of widely accepted policy, and not simply as a one-at-a-time agreement with each local residents group.

8. There is a paramount need to deal early with all such situations. This points to a real weakness in the present Public Order legislation.

9. In our view it is important to maintain the authority of the Chief Constable of the RUC, and in the end all operational decisions must remain under his control. At the same time we recognise the vulnerability of the RUC, and indeed the desire of various sections of the community actually to draw them into tense 'no-win' situations in order to discredit and undermine them. In view of this we would feel that it is worth at least exploring whether the use of some kind of advisory body to assist in difficult cases might be a helpful way forward.

10. We would respectfully urge all those who wish to take part in public parades of any kind the need for self-examination and restraint, so that they may consider the impact their emblems and conduct may have upon the community as a whole, and do nothing to provoke anger or intimidate their fellow-citizens. This is particularly important in the present tense situation in the Province, where symbolic gestures may well be needed in the interests of peace.

11. One area where particular care is needed is in the conduct and number of local 'band parades' not under the auspices of any organisation. Many of these are colourful occasions much supported in particular by rural populations. Some however have been marked by drunkenness, provocation and unseemly behaviour. Police should exercise more strictly their right to refuse unruly elements permission to parade in their local area.

12. There can be little doubt that the marching season is likely to remain a cause of conflict in certain parts of Northern Ireland for some time to come. In our view that need not be so, given the exercise of common sense, tolerance and wise accommodation by all sides. If we are to build a new kind of society in this Province, then that society must be a genuinely multi-cultural society, where the traditions of both communities are not only recognised, but affirmed and even celebrated. This will only come about in time, as both communities learn to trust one another and respect one another's susceptibilities and fears. That in turn can only take place through a respectful listening to one another. Simply to ignore those with whom we disagree will only make matters worse. It will result in the continuation of a problem which it is in everyone's interests to resolve.

APPENDIX B**STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
- 16 February, 1996**

1. The Church and Government Committee express in the strongest possible terms the anger and indignation felt by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, in conjunction with the vast majority of people in these islands at the ending of the IRA Ceasefire, and their utter revulsion at the cruel and calculating deed perpetrated at Canary Wharf on Friday evening 9 February. They wish to offer sincere sympathy to the injured and bereaved.

2. We plead with everyone to remain calm and courageous in face of the renewed threat that confronts us at this time. We commend all those who have taken initiatives for peace in reaching out to their neighbours to build trust. We exhort our people to put their faith in God who has not been taken by surprise by what has happened, but weeps over our polarised life, and offers salvation and healing.

3. We appeal to the IRA to listen to the heart-cry of Irish people North and South and to end the threat of violence immediately and unambiguously.

4. We also appeal to loyalist paramilitaries not to be drawn into violence.

5. We note with appreciation the work of the Mitchell Enquiry, and in particular commend its six principles as a basis for future progress towards a lasting peace.

6. We note the conclusion of the Mitchell Enquiry that decommissioning will not take place prior to talks. At the same time we are bound to point out that the clear lesson of the Canary Wharf bomb is the urgent need to decommission all illegal weapons as soon as ever possible.

7. What is now of paramount importance is to find ways of getting into the talks process, which is impoverished if any of the main parties exclude themselves. We recognise the value of calling elections as a way of making this feasible, while at the same time seeing merit in other proposals,

8. We urge all political parties to adopt a high degree of flexibility and urgency in getting serious dialogue under way.

DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

1. The Doctrine Committee had two matters remitted to it by the General Assembly.

2. The first was the re-writing of the section of the Code concerning The Standards of the Church in inclusive language. The Committee met and considered a proposed formula drawn up by the Judicial Commission. Some amendments were suggested and forwarded to the Judicial Commission. They were subsequently considered at a joint meeting with the Judicial Commission and the Public Worship Committee and accepted.

3. The other topic was the role of the eldership at the request of the Committee on Strategy for Mission. Consultations are continuing with the conveners of that Committee about various models they are proposing.

T S REID, Convener

FORCES COMMITTEE

1. At present our Church has only three full-time commissioned Chaplains serving with the Regular Forces. There is no great likelihood of any major change in this situation in the near future, though at the time of writing there are hopes that one young minister will be accepted for service with the Royal Army Chaplains' Dept. The Royal Air Force does not anticipate any recruitment of Presbyterian Chaplains before 1997.

2. The Royal Army Chaplains Department has long been fully integrated in its administrative system and its good example has been followed by the Royal Navy. The Royal Air Force Chaplains Branch is currently seeking to devise a similar scheme of administration, although all round agreement has yet to be reached. Assuming that this materialises it will mean that in all three services the principle of 'the best man for the job' will operate right across the board. Denominational loyalties shall be respected totally, as they are now, so far as the spiritual aspect of the work requires.

3. The Territorial Army will face many changes if and when the Reserve Forces Bill becomes law. These changes will have far-reaching implications for all chaplains who hold or who would hereafter wish to hold a Commission with the TA. Careful study will need to be given to the proposed new scheme and the Forces Committee has transmitted a brief paper to the relevant Committees of the General Assembly whose expertise and authority would seem to be involved in the giving of definitive answers to the questions raised. New regulations may be needed regarding the acceptance of Chaplains' Commissions in the TA.

Our Full-Time Chaplains

4. The Reverend Terry Maze, having concluded a successful secondment with the US Navy at San Diego, California, has returned to Great Britain. At Portsmouth he is exercising a ministry that is greatly needed and greatly regarded.

5. The Reverend Dr Victor Dobbin, QHC is now well into his second year as Chaplain-General and continues to fulfil the demanding administrative and pastoral duties of that high office.

6. The Reverend David Edgar still serves as a highly-esteemed Station Chaplain in the RAF. He has had encouragements as he ministers the Gospel to service men and women at Royal Air Force, Halton. All three need our prayers, for theirs is no easy task. They also deserve our appreciation.

TA, OCF, ACF Chaplains

7. We would also record our appreciation of the work of those of our ministers who give a substantial part of their time in service as Commissioned

Chaplains with the Territorial Army or the Army Cadet Force. Other ministers, who do not hold a commission in the technical sense, nevertheless render valuable service as Officiating Chaplains in various military establishments. They too deserve our appreciation. Apart from the Reverend Derek Weir of Killead, who has served the Royal Air Force at Aldergrove for thirty years, all the other brethren are linked with the Army in one capacity or another. Prayer is asked for their work also.

The Appeals

8. Each year the Royal British Legion, The Royal Air Force 'Wings Appeal' and the UDR Benevolent Fund, seek our support. We bring these worthy causes before the General Assembly once again in our resolutions.

9. Additionally we would ask for larger support for the Official Northern Ireland Remembrance Day Service which we are to host once again on November 10, 1996. Unless much more realistic levels of attendance are reached the future of this National Act of Remembrance can be questioned. We value all who come to the service, particularly the members of Cregagh Presbyterian Church Choir who with their organist have established a tradition of leading our praise.

W W PORTER, Convener

CHAPLAINS COMMITTEE

1. The Chaplains Committee met on three occasions since the last Assembly and continued the business of administering and overseeing the duties and responsibilities of our Part-time Hospital Chaplains and Full and Part-time Prison Chaplains.

2. Rev F A Bradley, who completed his seven-year Convener'ship last June has willingly and effectively assisted the new Convener to ensure a smooth transference of responsibility.

3. Hospital Chaplaincy work continues to be affected significantly by:-

- (i) Administrative changes arising from re-organisation, and
- (ii) Rapid turn-over of patients.

Unfortunately the latter has not been complemented by the former and as a consequence Chaplains, who at one and the same time are often busy Parish Ministers, cannot offer the service which many patients expect. More importantly perhaps the process of keeping local Ministers informed of admissions becomes at best difficult and at worst impossible. Discussion continues regarding the possibility of introducing modern technology as a way of improving the service. In the larger units being created, full-time Chaplaincy status may prove to be the only solution.

4. The relationship to and role of Deaconesses vis-à-vis the Hospital Chaplains are seen as priorities by the Committee and a resolution of this matter may go some way to easing the difficulties mentioned above.

5. We acknowledge the devoted and steadfast Ministry of Hospital Chaplains and those Deaconesses who work alongside them. Despite the

difficulties and frustrations they have continued to provide a valued service to members of our Church.

6. Our Full and Part-time Chaplains working in the Prison system continue to provide a vital service to those who find themselves removed for significant periods of time from the daily routine of normal living. There is no more destructive influence on physical and mental health than the feeling of being isolated and rejected by society. Throughout the Prison Service our Chaplains adopt a listening ear and a caring approach, thereby reflecting Christ's attitude of accepting people as they are.

7. Rev Stephen Neilly was appointed full-time Presbyterian Chaplain in Maze and Maghaberry Prisons at a special service of Induction conducted by the Presbytery of Dromore. This unique occasion was held in HMP Maghaberry and attended by a large number of prisoners, prison staff, friends and relatives.

8. The closure of HMP Belfast on 1st April 1996 and the transfer of prisoners to HMP Maghaberry has impacted significantly on the work of our Chaplains. Discussions at NIO level are on-going.

9. The Chaplains Committee records its appreciation of the dedication of all those who work in Prison and Hospital Chaplaincy, and is grateful to those staff involved at Prisons, Hospitals, DHHS, and NIO, who willingly facilitate their work. The prayers of the Church are vital as our men and women seek, through faith, to counsel patients, prisoners and families in a role which can be stimulating but also disconcerting.

JOHN SCOTT, Convener

MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Moderator's Advisory Committee met twice.

2. As requested by the 1995 Assembly (Mins p47) the Committee reviewed Par 63 of the Code. The Committee does not recommend any change in the wording of this paragraph. It considers that assessors should be appointed upon request to deal with matters ecclesiastical rather than advising on the civil law, for which the help of a solicitor should be sought.

3. In response to an enquiry from a Presbytery two members of the Committee were appointed as assessors to assist the Presbytery in dealing with matters arising in a congregation.

4. In response to an enquiry from another Presbytery a report was made to the General Board on the implications of the 1979 Assembly's decision (Mins p99 resolution 21) for the acceptance of students and the reception of ministers by this Church.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

PEACE AND PEACEMAKING COMMITTEE

1. With the Canary Wharf Bomb and the breaking of the IRA ceasefire still recent at the time of writing, the whole future of the political peace process looks very uncertain. What is not in the least bit uncertain however is the reality of Christ's call to a peace which is so much more than a ceasefire. Could it be that more is being asked of us in this area than many of us have yet given? Certainly, sorely though we regret the breakdown, with Christ as Lord we are very much in the business of the Hope that does not make ashamed. There is so much more that we may yet do to build right relationships as with prayer and action we seek to be expressions of Shalom.

CONFERENCE ON IDENTITY

2. A sense of security about our own identity helps us to be more at ease with ourselves and with others. The last 25 years, with their changes and stresses, have threatened that identity for many, if not all, of us. Prompted in part by the 1994 National and International Problems Report, "Nationhood: A Sense of Identity," the Peacemaking Committee decided that it was time to look at the whole question of our identity as Presbyterians. A conference asking "Who are we? How do we perceive ourselves as Presbyterians?" was therefore held at Hillhall in November 1995. Under the heading "What Has Shaped Us? Dr Bert Tosh spoke of influences and experiences that have gone to make up our history. "Who are we today" was spoken to by Presbyterians representative of different situations, by elders Dr Mary Carson (Dublin) and Mr Tom Reid (Clogherney), Very Rev David McGaughey (Kilkeel) and Rev George Moffett (Tullycarnet). Dr Geraldine Smyth OP gave "An Outsider's View".

"Who We Are Called To Be?" was the title of the paper by Very Rev Dr John Dunlop, following which two Youth members, Elaine Johnston and Nial Lockhart, responded.

3. Each Presbytery was invited to send two ministerial and two lay representatives and one youth delegate. Over a hundred attended and the conference was generally acknowledged to have been very helpful.

CONGREGATIONAL PEACE AGENTS

4. The role of a Congregational Peace Agent can be almost as varied as the situations members find themselves in, but the following may act as a Congregational Peace Agent's Check List, one, of course, that can be added to:-

- (i) Keeping the "Church's Peace Vocation" before the Session and congregation.
- (ii) Encouraging regular prayer for peace in the life of the congregation, including use of the prayer card "Stepping Out For Peace,"
- (iii) Encouraging Bible Study and other discussion on issues related to peacemaking as part of Mid-Weeks, PWAs, Young Women's Groups, Bible Classes, Youth Fellowships and other groups;
- (iv) Helping the congregation to find ways of implementing the specific challenges of the Church's Peace Vocation "to meet and talk together; with those in our own church with whom we have disagreements; with

- those from churches whose practices and beliefs differ from our own; with those from whom we are politically divided,” and
- (v) to be “initiators of programmes of action that will contribute to peace in our community,”
 - (vi) Reporting to the Presbytery Agent and to the Peacemaking Committee on efforts undertaken by the congregation, so that these may be shared with other congregations.

CONFERENCE FOR PEACE AGENTS

5. A well attended conference for Peace Agents was held in Hillhall on 2 March. The principal speaker was Mr David Hewitt an elder from Holywood and member of ECONI. Mr Hewitt spoke of the journey by which peacemaking in our situation came to be a matter of central concern to him. Messrs Ernie Carroll and Alastair Kilgore, Revs Jim Gray, Eddie Dorrans, Roy Patton, and Jim Campbell gave brief examples of Peacemaking in their congregational situation. Rev Dr David Irwin spoke of Presbytery peacemaking and Fr Sean McCartney spoke of what it meant to be the other half of a joint group.

BIBLICAL PATHWAYS TO PEACE

6. A two day seminar on Biblical Pathways to Peace, to be led by Dr Walter Wink, is planned for Wednesday 2 and Thursday 3 October 1996. Dr Wink is Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary, New York, and a noted author. We commend this to everyone in the church, but especially to Peace Agents.

NEWSSHEETS

7. The Committee publishes an A4 Newsheet in late Autumn and after Easter. We have been encouraged to hear of initiatives taken by congregations and Presbyteries who have been active in building cross-community relations in the past year. We would welcome news of further such initiatives.

ARMS TRADE

8. There are many facets of the trade in arms, some of which have been highlighted by the “Arms For Iraq” Scott Report, which give much cause for concern. Time has not permitted us to address these in any broad way. The trade in landmines however is a matter of particular international concern. A report on this, drawn up in conjunction with the Church and Government Committee, together with resolutions on the subject, is appended.

JOINT SUB-COMMITTEES WITH THE CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

9. Other joint sub-committees with the Church and Government Committee have looked at issues such as controversy over traditional marches and the kind of issues to be considered in the release of prisoners. A joint meeting also took place to consider the issues for peace in Ireland following the ending of the ceasefire.

D M SCOTT, Convener

APPENDIX I**THE CHURCH'S PEACE VOCATION**

WE, MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND,
called by God,
in the grace of Jesus Christ,
and the power of the Holy Spirit,
to live in faith, hope and love,
as children of our heavenly Father,
and witnesses to God's Kingdom,
publicly acknowledge our vocation to peace,
which is both the gift and mission placed on us by God.

WE BELIEVE that the same evangelical faith in Jesus Christ,
which emboldens us to pray to God as our heavenly Father,
challenges us to develop radically new attitudes and relationships
with our neighbours in Ireland.

WE AFFIRM that to be Christian peacemakers in our own situation:
We must grasp more clearly the distinctive teaching of our Lord
which challenges the general practice of our world,
and breaks the vicious cycle of matching injury with injury,
hate with hate, ignorance with ignorance.
We must therefore be prepared to meet and talk together:
with those in our own church with whom we have disagreements;
with those from churches whose practices and beliefs differ from our own;
with those from whom we are politically divided.

WE AFFIRM that to be Christian peacemakers in our own situation:
we must recognise the responsibility given by God to government,
and to those who serve the cause of law and order,
so as to encourage well-doing, correct evil-doers, and protect the innocent.
We must therefore reject violence;
seek ways to advance justice and promote the welfare of the needy;
affirm that in democratic societies all citizens are called
to share in these responsibilities;
and encourage all efforts to establish new structures of consent
and participation.

WE AFFIRM that to be Christian peacemakers in our own situation:
We must be initiators of programmes of action
which will contribute to peace in our community.
We must therefore provide resources and encouragement to
enable congregations to move forward at the local level in
the field of inter-community relations.

WE UNDERSTAND peacemaking to be an affirmation and accommodation of diversity, and that our particular history in this land of divided communities and recurring violence, of mutual suspicion, fear and injury, makes it imperative that we reassert the Church's own proper calling to seek peace, and the things that make for peace in our day.

Adopted by the General Assembly, June 8, 1994

APPENDIX II

LANDMINES

1. Every fifteen minutes, it is estimated, a mine explodes and every day some 70 people die as a result. Not 70 combatants however! To be a child playing, a woman gathering wood, or a man or woman cultivating, is to among those most at risk in "peace time".

2. For that is the great problem. Landmines observe neither ceasefire nor treaty but continue to kill long after formal hostilities have ended.

3. All warfare, of course, is intrinsically murderous, destructive of life and limb, of property and normal moral standards. Yet at the same time it has been the objective of civilised government, as of social, moral and spiritual endeavour, to control the scope, limit the scale and mitigate the consequences of armed conflict in the world. The landmine, however, kills randomly, so much so that it is estimated that in the years since the Second World War 9 out of 10 of those killed have been civilians. 100,000,000 landmines lie in wait around the world today about 85% of which are anti-personnel mines (APMs), with another 100,000,000 estimated to be stockpiled. They are "the greatest violators of international humanitarian law, practising blind terrorism". They "never miss, ... strike blindly, and go on killing long after hostilities have ended." (War on Mines: Cambodia, Landmines and the Impoverishment of a Nation, Paul Davies, Pluto Press 1994).

RULES OF WAR

4. To make this point more fully, the fundamental principle underlying the laws of war is that the rights of belligerents to adopt means of injuring the enemy is not unlimited. Three more specific principles have been deduced from this. First, that of distinction - between civilians and civilian objectives on the one hand and military on the other. The second, proportionality, imposes a positive obligation to minimise the effects on civilians of an attack against a military objective, and the third, prohibition of unnecessary suffering and superfluous injury. The very high percentage of civilian casualties resulting from APMs clearly constitutes an extreme violation of these.

INHUMANE WEAPONS

5. Many are strongly of the view that landmines and anti-personnel mines in particular should like chemical and biological weapons be totally banned. Protocol II, the "Landmines Protocol" of the 1980 UN Inhumane Weapons Convention, and a development of the principles noted above, regulates the use of landmines. It requires "all feasible precautions" to be taken to protect civilians. It requires "pre-planned" minefields to be marked, scatterable mines to have a neutralising mechanism or be accurately recorded, and advance warning to be given before use if possible. This, however, does not cover non-international or civil conflicts and is singularly inadequate in its purpose of protecting civilians, as will be seen. It has several other inadequacies. A review Conference on the Convention took place in Vienna from 25th September to 13th October 1995. Further meetings are to take place in the first half of 1996. The increased concern about mines is, of course, related to this. By the end of September 1995 some 16 countries had declared themselves in favour of a total ban on landmines, including the Scandinavian countries, Ireland, Belgium and New Zealand. France has announced a ban on their production and a gradual reduction of those stockpiled, adding to her ban on trade. Austria too has renounced their use and the USA has a 3 year moratorium on their export. The UK has a moratorium on conventionnel anti-personnel mines, but excludes those with self-destruct or self-neutralising devices (so-called "smart" mines). One of the problems with such APMs is that as many as 1 in 10 fail to neutralise or self-destruct and the only way a farmer can know if one of the former has done so is if it fails to blow his leg off. Hence the desire for the total ban. While opposing such landmines strongly, it has to be recognised that the defence policies of our more developed world depends on our stock of even more destructive, high-tech, high-cost weaponry. It is the poorer nations of the world who are the principal users as well as, far and away, the principal victims of APMs in their conflicts.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE PROLIFERATION

6. Landmines, of course, have long been used in warfare, but it is in the years since 1945 that the use of APMs has proliferated on a huge scale. Since however conflicts have been very largely waged in what are called Third World countries, Western awareness of their devastating effects has been quite small, until recently. Mozambique and Angola are the countries which have suffered particularly and the success of the peace process in Mozambique especially may depend on "developing a credible remedial strategy to deal with landmines." (War on Mines p123) Demining is an important matter however mines have been laid, as will be seen later.

CAMBODIA AND AFGHANISTAN

7. Cambodia and Afghanistan, in different ways, offer particular illustrations of some of the issues involved. In Cambodia it is thought that as many as 10,000,000 mines have been laid, one for every man, woman and child. These mines render highly dangerous some two-thirds of good agricultural land. The choice can often be to starve or to risk maiming, blindness or death. As a

result Cambodia has now the world's most disabled people. Furthermore it is estimated that for everyone who gets to some form of hospital another dies. Victims, as has been pointed out already, are likely to be children playing, women gathering wood, or farmers cultivating. Elsewhere herding or fetching water may also be very high risk activities. Amputations, blindness and other disabilities tie up a very large part of Cambodia's health care. This is, of course, true elsewhere eg in northern Iraq/Kurdistan, where the plight of the Kurds attracted media attention for a time. It has been estimated that civilian mine injuries tie up 50% of the region's health care resources.

8. Much of what is true for Cambodia is true in the very different Afghan terrain. One of the lessons that the Soviet armies drew from their assessments of US actions in SE Asia was that APMs have a special role for forces fighting popular armies on home ground. Their strategy was essentially to

- (i) make the land incapable of supporting the rural population,
- (ii) to make supply routes impassable.

To do this millions of APMs were scattered from helicopters and fixed wing aircraft, as well as sown by more conventional methods. Western Aid was, of course, given to the Mujaheddin. So far at the present rate of demining if the mines stayed active that long, it would take 4000 years for Afghanistan to be cleared. In the meantime, here as elsewhere, people die.

BEGGING

9. For those who survive with the loss of a limb, limbs, sight, etc, begging is most frequently not just their fate but that of the family dependent on them.

ENVIRONMENT

10. "The worldwide post-combat residue of landmines has been termed a major ecological disaster." Not only have the mines been instrumental in denying vital land to farmers, pastoralists and sometimes making impossible return for refugees, they have also "covered large tracts of earth with non-biodegradable and toxic garbage," some of which can be prime agricultural land. The fact that this has passed largely unnoticed by environmentalist lobbies for so long can only be because these things took place in lands far away. The break up of the former USSR and the fighting in former Yugoslavia has helped to alter this. Already post ceasefire death by mines has been experienced by IFOR in Bosnia.

MINING, DEMINING AND PROFIT

11. APMs are very cheap to manufacture, often under £3.00. They are mostly small - palm sized - some of them looking like a lady's powder compact. It is easy to account for their popularity with those who sell arms. However it generally costs up to 300 times as much to demine as to plant. Demining tends to proceed very slowly and incompletely. This is particularly so due to the large extent to which metal has been replaced by plastic making their detection much more difficult. Even though it is 10 years since the end of the Falklands War parts are still mined and the land is unusable.

12. It was an ill thought out scheme that led the UN in 1993 to prepare to award a major mines clearing contract to a UK mines manufacturer. Given the common practice of sub-contracting much or all of such work, this would have been a very dangerous precedent and one all too prone to abuse. Such contracts would seem best made directly with the implementing company.

MAJOR PRODUCERS

13. Major producers over the past 25 years include Belgium, China, France, former USSR, UK, USA and former Yugoslavia. Some, as has been seen, have drawn back from their manufacture and export. The UK prohibits APMs that are not detectable or which do not have self-destruct mechanisms. One of the weaknesses of this position however is the possibility of reclassification eg the Hunting Engineering's HB876 area denial mine is classified by NATO as a landmine. The Prime Minister has explained that the UK does not so classify it as, according to the MoD, it is not designed as one. Again some countries continue to export bomblets and cluster bombs, avoiding the term 'mine'.

MILITARY USEFULNESS

14. The military usefulness of APMs has been called into question by a US report (IDA Document D-1559, Institute for Defence Analysis) and by members of the UK and US armed forces. According to UK General Sir Hugh Beach (House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee Second Report, pub. 5/4/95) "Anti-personnel mines have little place in the waging of a legitimate war ... Their use is typically in the nuisance mode ... which even in the short term is as likely to ensnare civilians as the military. They have, it must be acknowledged, certain legitimate uses ... however ... none of these anti-personnel mines is of such military significance as to justify framing exceptions from what would otherwise be an extremely simple prohibition."

D M SCOTT, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Church and Government Committee

2. The General Assembly believing that our society may well be living under the judgement of God urge that we repent of the sins of our land and people and call upon God for mercy.

3. The General Assembly remind our people of Christ's command that we should be salt and light in our society, working in the power of the Holy Spirit for a new kind of society based on justice, integrity, stability and peace.

4. The General Assembly call upon all involved in political life to give courageous leadership, and to work for the future with excitement and hope, their faith firmly fixed in God.

5. The General Assembly again thank the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach for the way in which they have kept the situation in Northern Ireland so high on their political agenda.

6. The General Assembly pray the blessing of Almighty God upon the politicians as they enter upon talks and call upon our people to pray that a way forward for the future may be found that will offer hope of stability and permanence for the all people of this island.

7. The General Assembly declare their continuing opposition to all kinds of violence against persons and property, believing this to be a flagrant denial of justice, human and democratic rights, and a most heinous breach of the law of God.

8. The General Assembly express their grave concern at the growing secularization of Sunday in these islands. They believe the proposed legislation for Northern Ireland on Sunday is a further unwarranted assault upon a way of life that is integral to a substantial section of our people. They call upon the Government of the UK to respect the convictions of such people, and to ensure that their religious and personal liberties are safeguarded by law, and not left to the mercy of commercial interests.

9. The General Board recognise that public parades especially on main roads are part of the culture of both traditions in Northern Ireland. They call upon all those who have responsibility for public parades to show sensitivity to the feelings of those who live on parade routes, and to do nothing to provoke their anger, or cause them to feel intimidated or threatened. They also call upon residents who may oppose such parades to exercise tolerance, recognising that if we are to build a new kind of society, then it must be a genuinely multi-cultural society where the traditions of both communities are not only recognised, but affirmed and even celebrated.

10. The General Assembly deeply regret the actions of the Nigerian Government in executing Ken Saro Wiwa and eight others, and urge upon it the need to observe the highest standards of justice in protecting the human rights of the Ogoni people, and of all its citizens.

11. The General Assembly call upon the Governments of the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland to continue to press the Government of Sudan to abandon its attempts to impose a military solution upon the endemic civil war in its territory, which has led to untold suffering for the people of Southern Sudan, and to seek to resolve these long-standing difficulties by peaceful means, and by thorough-going restoration of human rights.

12. That a grant of £4,000 be paid to the Church and Government Committee from the Incidental Fund.

Chaplains Committee

13. That the General Assembly record their continuing appreciation of the faithful service being given to the Church and the community by our Prison and Hospital Chaplains and Hospital Deaconesses, and the willing co-operation received from staff associated with both services.

Forces Committee

14. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the faithful service of all our Chaplains to the Forces, both full and part-time, at home and overseas, and send them greetings.

15. That the General Assembly recommend that Battle of Britain Sunday, September 15, 1996 and Remembrance Day, November 10, 1996 be observed in congregations and that the appropriate offerings be taken up in support of the Royal Air Force 'Wings Appeal' and the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

16. That the General Assembly recommend that congregations continue to remember the needs of the Ulster Defence Regiment Benevolent Fund and that offerings in its support be taken up on the last Sunday of April 1997 or other convenient Sunday.

17. That the General Assembly encourage all our members to support the Official Northern Ireland Remembrance Service, which will be hosted by our Church on November 10, 1996.

18. That the General Assembly note that the Rev Professor Patton Taylor has been awarded the Territorial Decoration (TD) for his service as a TA Chaplain and offer him congratulations. The Assembly also note that the Rev W D Weir has now served 30 years as an Officiating Chaplain at RAF Aldergrove and offer him their thanks and congratulations.

Peace and Peacemaking Committee

19. In view of recent political developments, the General Assembly reaffirm their commitment to the Church's Peace Vocation and call on the Church to persevere in prayer for peace.

20. The General Assembly thank the many congregations who have appointed peace agents and would encourage those who have not yet done so to act without further delay.

21. The General Assembly urge the United Kingdom to join those other countries who have banned the manufacture and export of all Anti-Personnel Mines, or anything which might be defined as such.

22. The General Assembly urge the United Kingdom to prohibit the use of its ports by any vessel carrying Anti-Personnel Mines or weapons of a similar nature. They commend the Irish Government on their call for a complete ban on Landmines.

23. That a grant of £2,250 be paid to the Peace and Peacemaking Committee from the Incidental Fund.

Visitations

24. That all the literature and the suggested forms for the new scheme of visitations be sent down to Presbyteries for consideration and that comments be sent to Rev J I Davey by 31 December, 1996.

Conciliation

25. That the General Assembly thank the Mediation Network for the provision of conciliation training and commend the conciliation service to the Church.

Toronto Blessing

26. That the Practical Guidelines on the Toronto Blessing be approved.

Funding

27. That the Church House Re-Development assessment be transferred from stipend to specified sources with effect from 1 January, 1996.

Boards and Committees

28. That during the ensuing year the General Board exercise a co-ordinating role for the Church's work, and submit a report to the 1997 Assembly on the general work of the Church and possible priorities.

29. That during the ensuing year Ad Hoc Committees of Assembly report to the General Board.

General

30. That the resignations of Very Rev Dr A W G Brown and Rev A V Martin as Conveners of the Church and Government Committee be accepted, that they be thanked for their services and that the Very Rev Dr John Dunlop and Mr George McCullagh be appointed in their place.

31. That the resignation of Rev D M Scott as Convener of the Committee on Peace and Peacemaking be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev Dr D J Watts be appointed in his place.

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

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 272 (1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 272 (1) of the Code the words "Two ministers and three elders" be deleted and that the words "one minister and two elders" be substituted in their place; and that the words "thirty members directly nominated by the Business Board, of whom at least fifteen shall be women" be deleted and that the words "twenty members directly nominated by the Business Board, of whom at least ten shall be women" be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 277 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 277 (1) of the Code the words "three persons" be deleted and that the words "two persons" be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 278 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 278(1) of the Code the words “fifteen persons” be deleted and that the words “ten persons” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 282 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 282 (1) of the Code the words “fifteen persons” be deleted and that the words “ten persons” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 284 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 284 (1) of the Code the words “twenty persons” be deleted and that the words “fifteen persons” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 285 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 285 (1) of the Code the words “fifteen persons” be deleted and that the words “ten persons” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 286 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 286 (1) of the Code the words “fifteen persons” be deleted and that the words “ten persons” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

RECOGNISED MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

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

The Committee’s recommendations are as follows:-

<i>Presbytery</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Ards	Rev C D Mawhinney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev D J Templeton	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Armagh	Dr J G McConville	Not to be retained as Licentiate.
North Belfast	Rev W M Smyth	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev C R J Brown	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).

	Rev C I McKnight	To be retained as Minister without Charge for one year.
Belfast South	Rev P A J McBride	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev D J McCarthy	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Belfast East	Rev R A Crooks	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Dr Eliz Jamison	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev L P McClenaghan	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev H E Lewis	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Dr Samuel Scott	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Rex Pedlow	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Carrickfergus	Rev D R Byers	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Coleraine	Rev S G Anketell	To be retained as Minister without Charge for one year.
	Rev Wm Morrison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Derry/Strabane	Mr Ernest Smyth	To be retained as Licentiate.
	Rev D K McCrory	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Down	Rev R N Stewart	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired)
	Rev W N Duncan	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Dromore	Rev R J Mattison	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Iveagh	Rev E G McAuley	To be retained as Minister without Charge. (Retired)
Monaghan	Rev B A H Wilson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Newry	Rev David McKee	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).

Any names added to the list more recently will be due for review next year.

Scripture Union

4. The Education Board submitted a request for leave to call a minister to a Recognised Ministry as General Director of Scripture Union in the Republic of Ireland.

5. In accordance with current regulations the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that Scripture Union be approved for purposes of the Recognised Ministries Scheme (Code Par 200(5)(a)).

6. Scripture Union is one of the oldest para-church organisations. The work commenced in Britain in 1867 and has been involved in Ireland since 1893 when a CSSM started in Portrush. Today it is active in over 114 countries of the world. In the Republic of Ireland the work became autonomous in 1973. Previous to this Scripture Union in England and Wales had overseen a limited work within camps, a beach mission and a Bible reading ministry.

7. With the emergence of an independent body the work has developed over the past twenty years and now encompasses book shops, a restaurant, an outdoor pursuit centre, as well as camps, schools, and family ministries. It sees its work as vital in equipping the church to fulfil the great commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture Union has one main aim with two parts:

- (a) to make God's Good News known to children, young people and families
- (b) to encourage people of all ages to meet God daily through the Bible and prayer

so that they may come to personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, grow in Christian maturity and become both committed church members and servants of a world in need.

8. Today many Presbyterian churches avail of Scripture Union materials to help them with their teaching and outreach programmes; eg SALT for teaching in Sunday School, Daily Bible Reading Notes for all ages, Holiday Bible Club programmes and videos.

9. In its statement of faith, accepted by the International Council in Harare in 1985, Scripture Union describes the Church and its Mission as follows,

“We recognise the Church as the body of Christ, held together and growing up in him; both as a total fellowship throughout the world and as a local congregation in which believers gather.

We acknowledge the commission of Christ to proclaim the Good News to all people, making them disciples and teaching them to obey him; and We acknowledge the command of Christ to love our neighbours, resulting in service to the church and society, in seeking reconciliation for all with God and their fellows, in proclaiming liberty from every kind of oppression, and in spreading Christ's justice in an unjust world, until He comes again.”

10. Scripture Union in the Republic of Ireland is served by an Executive Council of 4 members which meets on a monthly basis and a General Council of 13 members which meets bi-monthly. The present staff is 15 of which the General Director has oversight.

11. Scripture Union Republic of Ireland along with Scripture Union Northern Ireland, whose General Director is the Rev. David Bruce, is a member of the Britain and Ireland region, one of seven regions within the world-wide Scripture Union family.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Recognised Ministries Committee on Ministers and Licentiates without Charge.
3. That the General Assembly approve Scripture Union for purposes of the Recognised Ministries Scheme.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: REV S HUTCHINSON

1. The Judicial Commission met as necessary during the year to deal with matters arising.

OVERTURE ANENT CODE PAR 19

2. At last Assembly an overture anent Par 19 of the Code was received and placed on the books.

3. The fundamental principles of church discipline are laid down in Par 131, which states, inter alia,

“(1) Discipline in the Church is of Scriptural authority, directed to the glory of God, the purity of the Church and the spiritual benefit of members.

(2) It is to be administered by those appointed to rule in the Church, in their respective courts, under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(3) The rights of individuals are to be protected against the wrongful use of Church authority by rules laid down for its administration.”

4. The basic rule about barristers and solicitors is set out in Code XIX, Section III, Par 340 (1), which states,

“A barrister or solicitor shall not be permitted to prosecute or defend an accused but, if an accused feels unable to state his case with advantage, he may seek leave from the court for a member of the Church not qualified as a lawyer to act with him and assist him in the case.”

This rule, however, extends further than cases of discipline. As Code Par 170 indicates.

“The provisions of Sections II and III of Chapter XIX shall, so far as relevant, apply for the purposes of proceedings on appeals and references in other cases as well as for the purpose of proceedings in cases of discipline.”

5. Cases arising under Par 224 come before the Judicial Commission by way of “reference” from the Presbytery. The Code states,

“(1) Where a minister may have placed himself in a position where it is impossible for him satisfactorily to discharge the duties of his charge, or where it is publicly reported that a minister’s usefulness has been seriously impaired, the Presbytery shall inquire into the matter, confer with him and take such steps as it sees fit.

(2) In such cases, the Presbytery may, if it considers it advisable:

(i) in circumstances where it is satisfied that there is a situation or case for further investigation, refer the matter to the Judicial Commission of the General Assembly.”

6. Careful study of all these paragraphs, taken together, reveals what the law of the Church on this matter is. Enacting, or rejecting, the overture anent Par 19 will not, of itself, affect these existing paragraphs. However, enacting the

overture would provide a clear statement of the law without the need for complicated cross-referencing.

7. An amendment has been submitted to delete the words “argue on behalf of” and to substitute the words “appear on behalf of”. The Judicial Commission accepts that this wording would be better.

CODE PAR 224

8. The 1995 Assembly agreed “that the Judicial Commission prepare legislation for the 1996 Assembly to deal with situations where office-bearers or members of a congregation may have contributed to the impairment of the minister’s usefulness” (Mins p70). Accordingly appropriate overtures anent Par 224 are now submitted.

9. An overture to correct a flaw in the first sentence of Par 250(4) is also submitted. This overture will ensure that the Presbytery is consistently referred to in the singular throughout the paragraph.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

10. In 1994 the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster submitted a Memorial about the Statement of the Standards of the Church. It stated that “exclusively male language is no longer appropriate, especially when women are being commissioned, ordained, installed, etc.” The Memorial consequently asked for “the language of Paragraphs 10 to 14 of the Code to be made inclusive”.

11. When an interim report was presented in 1995 the Assembly asked the Judicial Commission “in consultation with the Doctrine Committee and the Public Worship Committee to investigate further the issues involved”, and that has now been done.

12. While the Church should be sensitive in its use of language, the wording of any long established and crucially important section of the Code should not be altered without good reason and careful thought. Any modification of the Statement of the Standards of the Church needs to meet the requirements of the Church’s law, doctrine and worship, and it is not a simple matter to reconcile all three interests.

13. There is no fundamental legal objection to modifying the wording of this section of the Code. Changes have been made before. Indeed since the Rule of Faith was inserted into the Code in 1859 its history has been one of intermittent additions and amendments. In 1912, for example, the statement was added that “in the Church resides the right to interpret and explain her standards under the guidance of the Spirit of God”. There is therefore no serious problem about making purely verbal alterations, ie alterations of form rather than of substance.

14. Various options are possible, at least in theory.

- (i) The Statement of the Standards of the Church could simply be prefaced by reading Par 138 of the Code, “unless the context otherwise requires, words importing persons or male persons include both male and female persons”. That phraseology would be quite acceptable in a legal document but would sound out of place in a

- dignified service of public worship, as would such expressions as “he/she is to use his/her reason”.
- (ii) Secular documents are often re-drafted in inclusive language by re-writing them in the plural, but this particular section of the Code is actually concerned with the individual’s right of private judgement. Simply to use the plural would obscure the point being made. The words “his reason”, “their reason”, and “reason” could, depending on their context, convey rather different shades of meaning.
 - (iii) To permit Clerks of Presbytery to make their own verbal alterations according to circumstances or personal preference would not be conducive to good order and uniformity.
 - (iv) The Code and the various Orders of Service could legitimately be modified so as not to require the public reading of these paragraphs verbatim. It was only in 1912 that this requirement was introduced. That, however, would be an unnecessarily radical solution.
 - (v) The remaining option would therefore seem to be to effect the minimum change necessary to achieve the desired effect, aiming for the best possible compromise between the claims of doctrine, church law and public worship, and preserving unaltered the direct quotation from the Westminster Confession of Faith. Appropriate overtures drafted in consultation with the Public Worship Committee and the Doctrine Committee are appended. These overtures fall within the provisions of the Barrier Act. Three further overtures provide for consequential changes to Pars 205(2)(b), 205(4)(vi) and 212(3).

DIVORCED MINISTERS AND ELDERS

15. Sixteen Presbyteries submitted comments on the Guidelines on ministers and elders who are involved in divorce proceedings (Reports 1995, p44). These returns varied greatly in length and viewpoint. One Presbytery simply accepted the Guidelines as “satisfactory”, while a second stated (and a third Presbytery implied) that the 1983 Report on Divorce was “an unreliable basis for further use” and suggested a completely new examination of the Biblical material about divorce and remarriage.

16. Some found the wording of Guidelines (vi) and (vii) (“likely to be acceptable ...”, “likely to cause embarrassment ...” etc) to be insufficiently clear and precise to be of any real help. Many stressed the need for support for Manse families generally in the heavy demands made on them, and for continuing pastoral care for those who have been divorced, including wives who may have sacrificed to help their husbands through college but might ultimately be left without a home.

17. Other significant comments included the following.

“To have a blanket ruling that all ministers and elders must relinquish their charge if they initiate divorce proceedings except on grounds of adultery would be to underestimate the possible complexities of marriage breakdown. In Bible times if a partner turned out to be a murderer, a child molester or a homosexual, such would have been executed. Does the fact that such cases are not mentioned specifically in the New Testament as grounds for divorce mean that the believer is obliged to continue in the marriage bond?”

“It is our understanding that there is no requirement upon a minister or elder to notify Presbytery of separation or divorce proceedings ... Separation and divorce involving ministers and elders are sufficiently injurious to the Church as to require notification and consideration by Presbytery ... It would appear to be incongruous that it is an act of contumacy for ministers not to ask permission to enter part-time paid employment (Code Par 73 (d)), but to have no requirement to notify Presbytery of serious court proceedings which have the potential to make ineffective the remainder of their ministry”. Additional legislation was accordingly suggested.

18. Mention was also made of the recent referendum on divorce in the Republic of Ireland and on the need to make some reference to candidates for the ministry or eldership who are already divorced. There was general agreement on the need for a compassionate approach, for a measure of flexibility but at the same time having an objective standard that could be applied generally throughout the Church. There was also some recognition of

- (i) the danger of a divorce situation being exploited by persons opposed to a minister on other grounds, and
- (ii) the difficulty of actually determining the facts in any given case, eg a spouse may be uncooperative or vindictive. Things are not always what they seem.

19. A number of Presbyteries gave the impression that what they most wanted was a set of clear and simple guidelines to which they could refer for practical guidance in cases where ministers or elders “have initiated divorce proceedings on unscriptural grounds, or whose behaviour has given grounds for divorce proceedings”.

20. The task given to the Judicial Commission (in consultation with the Doctrine Committee) was a limited one - “to examine the practical implications of the 1983 Report ... and to prepare guidelines to Presbyteries on whether ministers or elders who have initiated divorce proceedings on unscriptural grounds, or whose behaviour has given grounds for divorce proceedings, should continue as ministers or elders”. Wider issues such as the Biblical basis for the 1983 Report, the modern pressures that can put Manse marriages under stress, the need for general pastoral support for Manse families, (especially when strains are beginning to show), the theology of Christian leadership, the divorce referendum in the Republic, etc are certainly part of the wider picture, and any one of them could form the subject of a separate full length report, but they do not fall directly within the remit which was laid down by the Assembly in 1994 and upon which the Commission has concentrated.

21. While the Memorial referred to both ministers and elders there are significant differences between the two, eg ministers have a higher profile in Christian leadership, and ministers leaving their congregations lose their manse and livelihood, which would not be the case with ruling elders. The revised Guidelines have therefore been framed with ministers in mind, but with the hope that they will also be of help to Presbyteries if called upon to consider cases of elders involved in divorce proceedings, or of others similarly involved who may be candidates for the ministry or other positions of leadership in the Church.

22. Taking these and other considerations into account the Judicial Commission has re-drafted the Guidelines. For ease of reference the 1995

version is printed in Appendix A and the revised form in Appendix B. An appropriate overture is also submitted.

MAGHERAGALL

23. A reference concerning the minister of Magheragall was made to the Judicial Commission by the Presbytery of Dromore under Par 224 of the Code.

24. On 17 November a Commission of the Dromore Presbytery, the Ruling Elders at Magheragall and Rev John Honeyford, accompanied by a friend appeared before the Judicial Commission.

25. Rev J I Davey explained why the Presbytery had referred this matter and answered questions. Various ruling elders addressed the Judicial Commission and answered questions.

26. Rev John Honeyford presented his view of the situation and answered questions.

27. The Judicial Commission met at Magheragall on 21 November and heard the views of various members of the congregation. Rev John Honeyford again addressed the Commission.

28. On 24 November the Judicial Commission held another meeting in Church House and heard some further statements. On 1 December a First Finding was drawn up.

Magheragall Finding I

1. *The Judicial Commission convened on 17th, 21st, 24th November and 1st December 1995 upon the reference of the Presbytery of Dromore to investigate further under Par 224 of the Code whether the usefulness of the Rev John Honeyford BA, BD as Minister of the congregation of Magheragall has been seriously impaired.*

2. *Having investigated the matter and having heard the opinions of the Elders, of the Minister and of the congregation, the Judicial Commission finds:-*

- (i) The usefulness of the Rev John Honeyford as Minister of the congregation of Magheragall has been seriously impaired within the meaning of Par 224 of the Code;*
- (ii) The impairment has been caused by a breakdown of the relationship between the Minister, and the Elders, Congregational Committee and some members and adherents of the congregation;*
- (iii) The Minister, the Elders, the Congregational Committee and some members and adherents of the congregation have been responsible for the breakdown of the relationship, which is not due solely to the conduct of any one individual;*
- (iv) The events which led to the impairment of the Minister's usefulness in the congregation occurred over a number of years, and were not confined to the reported events at evening worship on 4th June 1995 or at morning worship on 17th September 1995.*

3. *The Judicial Commission acknowledges that "with God all things are possible" and seeks to fulfil the Christian obligation to seek reconciliation, and has therefore resolved:-*

- (a) *The Minister, Elders, Congregational Committee, and congregation should earnestly and persistently strive towards reconciliation for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom in Magheragall.*
- (b) *To assist the Minister, Elders, Committee and congregation to achieve a lasting meaningful reconciliation the Judicial Commission appoints two of its members as Assessors, the Very Rev Dr Andrew Rodgers, MA, and the Rev James McAllister, MA, to counsel the Minister and Elders and Committee and with power to call meetings of Session and of Committee, and to set the Agenda for each such meeting. Either Assessor shall preside at the meetings of Session and of Committee.*
- (c) *Save for the purposes of the business to be conducted at meetings to be called by the Assessors, the Minister and Elders shall not undertake any of their respective duties or exercise any of their respective rights and powers, for the time being, and the measures already arranged by the Presbytery for the performance and exercise of such duties rights and powers shall remain in force in the interim, subject to any subsequent alteration which may be decided by the Judicial Commission;*
- (d) *The Assessors shall report to the Judicial Commission, from time to time as the Commission shall consider appropriate, on the extent of reconciliation achieved, and the Commission may make such further Findings and decisions as it deems to be appropriate in the light of such report;*
- (e) *The Minister and people are commended to the Grace of God;*
- (f) *The Clerk of the General Assembly is appointed to read this Finding in Magheragall on a convenient Sunday.*

29. On 19 December the Clerk of Assembly reported that Rev John Honeyford had tendered his resignation and that the Presbytery had accepted it. The Judicial Commission then adopted a second Finding.

Magheragall Finding II

The Judicial Commission refers to its Finding read to the congregation on 3 December, 1995. Following the resignation of Rev John Honeyford, BA, BD, as minister of the congregation of Magheragall with effect from 31 December, 1995.

1. *The elders shall be restored to their duties, rights and powers with effect from 1 January, 1996 and the Judicial Commission's Assessors shall be discharged with effect from the same date.*

2. *The elders are reminded of their pastoral duties to each and every member of the congregation. They should, upon restoration to their duties, take immediate steps to carry out those pastoral duties effectively.*

3. *The irregular actions of those members of the congregation who ignored the procedures within our Church for dealing with problems within the congregation are strongly deplored, as are the events of Sunday, 17 September, 1995.*

4. *The Presbytery of Dromore shall not take any steps with regard to filling the vacancy in the congregation (apart from the appointment of a Vacancy Commission and an Interim Moderator of Kirk Session)*

- (i) *until the congregation has fulfilled all its financial obligations under the terms of Call to Rev J H Honeyford; and*
 - (ii) *in any event without leave of the Judicial Commission.*
5. *The Clerk of Presbytery is directed to make arrangements to have this Finding read in Magheragall on Sunday morning, 31 December, 1995.*

APPEAL

30. The Appeal of Mr James Beckett and Mrs Iona Meyer against a decision of North Belfast Presbytery, which was referred to the Judicial Commission by the General Assembly (Mins 1995 p70), came before the Commission on 1 September, when Mr Beckett and representatives of the North Belfast Presbytery appeared.

31. Mr Beckett asked for copies of the notes of certain interviews. The Judicial Commission decided that this request should be granted and that the Appeal should be heard on 3 November.

32. On 3 November Mr James Beckett and Mrs Iona Meyer and representatives of the North Belfast Presbytery appeared before the Judicial Commission. After the Chairman ruled that Rev Douglas Mark, Minister of Ballyhenry, should also be present during the meeting Mr Beckett said he was abandoning his Appeal and Mrs Meyer said she was abandoning her Appeal also.

33. The Judicial Commission held both Appeals to have been abandoned under the provisions of Par 167 of the Code.

UNION COMMISSION

34. Consultations took place between the Union Commission and the Judicial Commission about special financial arrangements under Par 226(b) of the Code for two ministers who had resigned their charges. Advice was given as appropriate.

APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES ON DIVORCED MINISTERS AND ELDERS (1995)

- (i) There should not be one rigid rule that would apply automatically in all situations where a minister or an elder is involved in divorce proceedings. Each situation should be considered individually on its merits.
- (ii) Where grave matrimonial difficulties are developing, the minister or elder in question should take the initiative at an early stage and be open and honest with his/her Presbytery, and especially with any 'pastor pastorum' or ad hoc support group, who should deal with the matter pastorally rather than judicially and provide all possible advice.
- (iii) The minister or elder in question should consider whether he/she wishes to continue in office or not, and should discuss this with the Presbytery representatives, who should also confer as appropriate with eg the Kirk Session.

- (iv) The Presbytery should decide if it wishes to deal with the matter on its own, or with the help of suitably experienced assessors, or to refer the matter to a higher Court of the Church.
- (v) A minister or elder should not be removed from office solely because of involvement in divorce proceedings.
- (vi) Relevant considerations should include:
 - (a) what is known about the circumstances leading to any divorce proceedings;
 - (b) if continuance in office is likely to be acceptable to the local congregation and to the wider church;
 - (c) if continuance in office is likely to advance or hinder the cause of Christ.
- (vii) If continuance in office is likely to cause embarrassment, voluntary resignation should be considered (in the case of a minister under Par 226(b) of the Code).
- (viii) If a divorced minister is being given a testimonial in support of an application elsewhere, or is being furnished with credentials to another Presbytery, some indication of the background should be given.
- (ix) As a last resort enquiries could be initiated under Par 224 of the Code, or a formal charge could be brought (alleging eg scandal). Such proceedings should be conducted in as compassionate a way as possible and unnecessary publicity should be avoided.

APPENDIX B

GUIDELINES ON DIVORCED MINISTERS (REVISED)

- (i) Discreet pastoral care should be offered by Presbytery
 - (a) to ministers who report marital difficulties and
 - (b) to their families.
- (ii) Ministers should notify Presbytery if they become involved in proceedings for a divorce.
- (iii) There should not be one rigid procedure to be applied automatically in all situations. There should be sufficient flexibility for each situation to be considered individually on its merits.
- (iv) The minister in question should consider whether he/she wishes to continue in office or not and should discuss this with the Presbytery or its representatives who should also confer as appropriate.
- (v) The Presbytery should decide whether it wishes to deal with the matter on its own, or with the help of suitably experienced assessors, or to refer the matter to a higher Court of the Church.
- (vi) Any point of difficulty may be referred to the Moderator's Advisory Committee for advice.
- (vii) A minister should not be removed from office solely because of involvement in divorce proceedings. Relevant considerations should include:
 - (a) what is known about the circumstances leading to any divorce proceedings;

- (b) the teaching of relevant passages of Scripture (eg those cited in footnotes to Westminster Confession of Faith Ch 24, Pars 5 and 6. See also Reports 1983, pp 164-172).
- (c) whether in the opinion of the Presbytery continuance in office is likely to be acceptable to the local congregation and to the wider church;
- (d) whether in the opinion of the Presbytery continuance in office is likely to advance or hinder the cause of Christ.
- (viii) On-going support and pastoral care should be given to those who have been involved in divorce proceedings.
- (ix) Enquiries could be initiated under Par 224 of the Code, or a formal charge could be brought (alleging eg scandal). Such proceedings should avoid unnecessary publicity.
- (x) General procedures for re-marriage are set out in Par 85(4) and (6) of the Code. A divorced minister wishing to re-marry should consult with Presbytery prior to the re-marriage. In the case of a divorced minister wishing to remain in office after re-marriage the approval of Presbytery shall be obtained.
- (xi) Compassion should always be exercised at every stage.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Revised Guidelines on Divorced Ministers in Appendix B be approved.

OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS

Anent Par 19 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that an additional sub-paragraph be added to Par 19 of the Code as follows:

19(5) A barrister or solicitor shall not be permitted to represent or argue on behalf of any minister or office-bearer or member of a congregation in any enquiry or other proceedings whatsoever conducted by any court of the Church or by any commission thereof;

and that the present sub-paragraph 19(5) be re-numbered as 19(6).

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

LICENSED AMENDMENT

Anent Par 19 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that an additional sub-paragraph be added to Par 19 of the Code as follows:

19(5) A barrister or solicitor shall not be permitted to represent or appear on behalf of any minister or office-bearer or member of a congregation in

any enquiry or other proceedings whatsoever conducted by any court of the Church or by any commission thereof;
and that the present sub-paragraph 19(5) be re-numbered as 19(6).

JAMES McALLISTER

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 11 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 11 of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place.

- (11) It is the privilege, right and duty of everyone to examine the Scriptures personally, and each individual is bound to submit to their authority. Having formed a definite conviction as to what the will of God is upon any subject, it is the duty of everyone to accept and obey it. In exercising the inalienable right of private judgement, individual Christians are not to set their reason above the Word of God, or to refuse light from any quarter. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they are to use their reason to ascertain the divine will as revealed in Scripture, and are to refuse to subject conscience to any authority but that of the Word of God. In the words of the Westminster Confession "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to His Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship".

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 13 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 13 of the Code the word "men's" be deleted.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 85(6) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 85(6) of the Code after the words "such action" there be added an additional sentence "In the case of a divorced minister wishing to remain in office after re-marriage the approval of Presbytery shall be obtained".

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 205(2)(b) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 205(2)(b) of the Code the words "who giveth gifts unto men" be deleted and that the words "who gives gifts" be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 205(4)VI

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 205(4)VI of the Code the words “among men” be deleted from line 5 and line 10.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 212(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 212(3) of the Code the words “who giveth gifts unto men” be deleted and that the words “who gives gifts” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 224(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 224 of the Code there be added a new sub-section (3) as follows:-

- (3) Should the Presbytery as a result of its enquiries conclude that the usefulness of the minister has been seriously impaired by any officebearer or member, it shall find accordingly. In such a case the Presbytery may
- (a) remove such officebearer from office in the congregation,
 - (b) decide that disciplinary proceedings under Chapter XIX be initiated,
 - (c) take such other action as it deems appropriate.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 224(4) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 224 of the Code there be added a new sub-section (4) as follows:

- (4) The Judicial Commission may exercise any of the powers of Presbytery mentioned in the foregoing sub-paragraph (3).

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 250(4) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 250(4) of the Code the words “their enquiries” be deleted and that the words “its enquiries” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

APPEALS**Charles Garnham and others (Appellants) -v- Presbytery of Foyle (Respondents) (re an election to the eldership in Glendermott).**

The Synod of Derry and Omagh, having decided not to hear the above named Appeal itself, referred it to the General Assembly under Par 21(1) of the Code for determination.

IVOR F SMITH (Moderator)
JAMES B McCORMICK (Clerk)
13 March, 1996

* * * * *

William Stewart (Appellant) -v- Presbytery of Newry (Respondents) (re Visitation Finding for Dundalk).

The Synod of Armagh and Down, having decided not to hear the above named Appeal itself, referred it to the General Assembly under Par 21(1) of the Code for determination.

S A MATTHEWS (Moderator)
DAVID C PORTER (Acting Clerk)
14 March, 1996

UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev D CLARKE
Secretary: Rev J H MacCONNELL

INTRODUCTION

1. The work of the Union Commission is discharged through eight stated meetings, held on the third Tuesday of January, February, March, May, June, September, October and November, as well as meetings where appropriate with the Kirk Session and/or Committee of vacant congregations. In addition, special duties with the Commission's sphere of responsibilities are devolved to the Personnel and Planning and City Area Committees.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

2. At this Assembly, the Rev J H MacConnell completes his seven year term as Secretary of the Commission. Mr MacConnell is possessed of an energy which never flags, and gifted with a sunny disposition and a ready wit. His efficiency and diligence are widely recognised in the Commission and throughout the church. His knowledge of, and love for our church, have been apparent in every aspect of his work. The Commission thanks him most warmly for a job well done.

3. Rev R Trevor Anderson completes seven years as Convener of the City Area Committee. He brought his immense capacity for detailed work to the administration of the 'City Area Grants'. An awareness of the changing needs of urban ministry made him an early enthusiast and unwavering supporter of the concept of 'Night Ministry' in the 'Golden Mile'. During his convenership he encouraged others to greater realism at the challenge of ministry in the City and so paved the way for imaginative planning and thereby placed the Church in his debt.

LEAVE TO CALL

3. Leave to call a minister was given to the following congregations in accordance with the General Assembly's Form of Call and the following terms:

Second Broughshane - £20,500 stipend, £4,750 expenses, 35% fraction
 Churchtown - £12,000 stipend, £4,000 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Tobermore - £7,000 stipend, £3,000 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Draperstown - £2,500 stipend, £1,350 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Raloo - £13,896, £4,500 expenses, no fraction meantime
 Maghera - £18,000 stipend, £4,650 expenses, 35% fraction
 Hydepark - £12,200 stipend, £3,000 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Lylehill - £8,750 stipend, £2,300 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Newmills (Iveagh) - £14,500 stipend, £4,750 expenses, 35% fraction
 Whiteabbey - £22,500 stipend, £5,000 expenses, 27.5% fraction
 Carryduff - £22,500 stipend, £5,000 expenses, 27.5% fraction
 Boveedy - £4,500 stipend, £1,500 expenses, 37.5% fraction

Second Kilrea - £7,800 stipend, £3,500 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Conlig - £14,000 stipend, £4,500 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Clogher - £6,000 stipend, £3,000 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Glenhoy - £4,000 stipend, £1,650 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Dundonald - £22,500 stipend, £5,000 expenses, 27.5% fraction
 Immanuel - £20,000 stipend, £4,700 expenses, 27.5% fraction
 Greyabbey - £12,800 stipend, £4,400 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Tullylish - £8,750 stipend, £3,250 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Gilford - £4,500 stipend, £1,000 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Ballykelly - £16,000 stipend, £4,600 expenses, 37.5% fraction
 Duncairn/St Enoch's - under Home Mission Development Scheme - £12,500 stipend, plus £2,000 from investment income, £4,500 expenses, 30% fraction
 Raffrey - £15,750 stipend, £4,800 expenses, 37.5% fraction

ASSOCIATE MINISTRIES

First Bangor - Ministerial Minimum, minimum expenses of at least £2,000-£2,500, accommodation provided by the congregation
 Hamilton Road - Ministerial Minimum plus £3,000, £3,382 expenses, and housing allowance of £1,512
 Ballywillan - £15,500 salary and £2,000 expenses
 Rosemary - £14,500 salary and £2,000 expenses, together with the normal house allowance provision, for a two year period

With the changes brought about by the new legislation passed at last Assembly, it was agreed to use the following criteria when applications for leave to call associates are being made:-

- (a) number of families in the congregation
- (b) profile of congregation
- (c) profile of duties attached to the associate ministry
- (d) ability of the congregation to fund the ministry
- (e) other relevant circumstances

CONGREGATIONS UNITED

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

Garryduff and Dunloy

1. That the congregations of Dunloy and Garryduff be united as from 1st July, 1995.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finance.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The stated services shall be (a) Dunloy: 10.45 am, (b) Garryduff 12.00 noon, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.

6. That the stipends be (a) Dunloy £5,500 with a fraction of 37.5%, (b) Garryduff £12,000, with a fraction of 37.5% and initial ministerial expenses per annum (a) Dunloy £1,600 (b) Garryduff £3,000. Holiday supplies, telephone rental and business calls, rent, rates, taxes and maintenance of Garryduff Manse to be borne in the proportions Dunloy 33.3%, Garryduff 66.6%.

7. That the minister shall reside in Garryduff Manse.

8. That the directions of the Union Commission shall be observed in connection with Dunloy Manse.

Waterside and Fahan

1. That the congregations of Waterside and Fahan be united as from 1st July, 1995.

2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finance.

3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior courts of the Church.

4. In the choice of a minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.

5. The stated services shall be: Fahan 10.00 am, Waterside 11.30 am and 6.00 pm, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.

6. That the stipends be (a) Fahan £3,000, with a fraction of 37.5%; (b) Waterside £16,250 with a fraction of 35%, and initial ministerial expenses per annum (a) Fahan £700, (b) Waterside £5,750. Holiday supplies, telephone rental and business calls, rent, rates, taxes and maintenance of Waterside Manse to be borne in the proportions 90% Waterside, 10% Fahan.

7. That the minister shall reside in the Waterside Manse.

Armoy and Ramoan

1. That the congregations of Armoy and Ramoan be united as from 16th January, 1996.

2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finance.

3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior courts of the Church.

4. In the choice of a minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.

5. The stated services shall be: Armoy 10.30 am; Ramoan 12.00 noon, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.

6. That the stipends be (a) Armoy £7,250, with a fraction of 37.5% (b) Ramoan £7,250 with a fraction of 33.3%, and initial ministerial expenses per annum (a) Armoy £2,500, (b) Ramoan £2,500. Holiday supplies, telephone rental and business calls, rent, rates, taxes and maintenance of Armoy Manse to be borne in the proportions 50% Armoy, 50% Ramoan.

7. That the minister shall reside in Armoy Manse.

8. That the directions of the Union Commission shall be observed in connection with Ramoan Manse.

FRACTIONS

The Commission has reviewed the following congregations and adjustments have been made as follows:-

Lowe Memorial: Stipend for 1995 to be £24,780, with £5,150 expenses.

Ballyclare: The stipend for 1995 to be £22,070 with expenses of £5,175.

Drumachose: The fraction to be reduced to 37.5% from 1st January, 1995, provided the stipend be not less than £15,038 and that locomotory expenses be paid according to Union Commission recommendations, and a heat and light allowance, together with telephone rental be borne in the proportions 66.6% Drumachose, 33.3% Derramore.

Saintfield Road: The stipend for 1995 to be £16,800 and £4,500 expenses.

Ballygowan: As from 1st January, 1995 the fraction to be 30% provided that the stipend be not less than £22,350 and expenses of £5,000.

Shore Street, Donaghadee: The stipend for 1995 to be £22,000 with £4,700 expenses.

High Street, Antrim: The stipend for 1995 to be £20,500 with £4,700 expenses.

Orangefield: The stipend for 1995 to be £21,500 with £4,644 expenses.

Ballywillan: A reduction of fraction to 27.5% was agreed provided the stipend does not fall below £21,719.

First Broughshane: The stipend for 1995 to be £17,000, with a 37.5% fraction.

Seaview: A reduction of fraction to 30% provided the stipend does not fall below £17,450, and ministerial expenses increased to at least £4,200.

Second Killyleagh: The stipend for 1995 to be £14,500 with £4,200 expenses.

McQuiston Memorial: The stipend for 1995 to be £20,300.

First Ballynahinch: The stipend for 1995 to be £14,690.

FRACTIONS AND STIPENDS

1. Arising out of a question raised at the General Assembly of 1995, we print below an extract from Appendix B of the Union Commission Report to the General Assembly of 1989, outlining the procedures followed and the criteria employed in setting stipend and fraction during a vacancy.

2. *While it has considered establishing a formula, it has held back because of the difficulty of formulating one which would not inhibit the Commission from being sensitive to the widely differing situations presented to it.*

3. *Over many years, the Commission has found it impossible to be too rigid when dealing with vacant congregations simply because there are so many variable factors which have to be taken into consideration.*

4. *Amongst the variable factors are:*

(a) *Location of the congregation (an inner city congregation will not be able to offer as much as a congregation in suburbia nor will a church extension charge be able to offer as much as a settled rural congregation).*

(b) *Needs of the congregation (the larger congregation may have to consider employing an Assistant Minister and/or Deaconess and this will affect the amount they can offer for Stipend).*

(c) *Is the congregation rural, provincial, town or urban?*

- (d) Is the congregation in the North or the South?*
- (e) Has there been a long ministry or a series of short ministries?*
- (f) Has the local Congregational Committee given purposeful leadership in financial stewardship?*
- (g) Are there payments made locally to enhance the minister's income?*
- (h) What effects do current demographic trends have on the congregation? (Is there a decline in membership as members leave the district and move to other areas simply for reasons of convenience or on the other hand for safety and security).*

STATED SUPPLY

The Rev J Mattison's nomination as stated supply to Tassagh congregation has been renewed for a further period.

The Rev N J Linkens was nominated to the Ards Presbytery as stated supply to Cloughey and Portavogie for a two year period.

The Rev G Cunningham was nominated to the Route Presbytery as stated supply to Ramoan and Armoy as from 1st July, 1995. He subsequently resigned on 31st January.

The Rev R E Boggs, minister of Downpatrick was appointed as stated supply to Ardglass congregation by the Down Presbytery, while the minister of Raffrey was appointed stated supply to Strangford. The latter arrangement terminated with the Raffrey minister being called to another charge.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Special arrangements were made for three ministers who resigned in various circumstances and also for two licentiates.

DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESBYTERIES

The Commission appreciates recent close co-operation with several Presbyteries (in particular the Presbyteries of North Belfast, Monaghan and Derry and Strabane) in drafting policies which deal realistically with actual or projected demographic change, and opportunities of service and ministry. Leave to call has not been granted to one congregation pending Presbytery's evaluation of present and future manpower needs.

MANSES

1. Upon meeting the usual requirements, permission was given to the following congregations to sell and replace the present Manse: Edengrove, Ballygomartin, First Donaghadee, Conlig, Raloo, First Portglenone, Kilcooley, Saintfield Road, Finvoy.
2. A scheme was agreed with Carryduff for the use of proceeds from the sale of Manse property.
3. A schedule of work on Donacloney Manse was noted and attention drawn to the terms of call of the Minister.
4. Further discussions were held with Trinity, Ahoghill in the light of Counsel's Opinion on the use of proceeds from the sale of Manse property.

5. A proportion of the proceeds of the sale by Duncairn and St. Enoch's of the old Duncairn Church, Halls and Manse was agreed to be regarded as relating to the sale of the Manse. It was further agreed that this proportion may be treated as a Manse Fund which can be used to repair the Manse of the new congregation.

6. Assistance has been given to the Donegal Presbytery and the congregations of Carnone and Convoy relating to the Carnone Manse. A deputation travelled to Carnone and discussions are ongoing. In the meantime the minister has been given permission to live in temporary accommodation.

7. Advice has been given to Poyntzpass concerning the sale and use of proceeds from the Old Manse Garden.

8. Advice has been given to Trinity, Omagh and First Saintfield concerning the proper use of proceeds from the possible sale of Manse property.

9. Newmills (Iveagh) was given permission to let the Manse during the vacancy on the understanding that it be available for occupation by the new minister.

10. Permission was given to the Minister of Lisnabreen to live away from the Manse by reason of health, the congregation to undertake to make suitable financial arrangements. Lisnabreen was given permission to sell the Manse, investing the proceeds with the interest, towards the provision of a new Manse in the future.

11. Advice was given to First Garvagh concerning the sale of Church property and agreement reached whereby the terms of call of the minister would continue to be met.

12. An addition to the Terms of Union of Dungiven and Largy was agreed with the congregations as follows: "Maintenance of Dungiven Manse to be borne in the proportions 40% Dungiven, 60% Largy" (1995 Reports, Page 51f).

13. The request of a minister to live in his own house was not granted.

14. Cairnalbana was given permission for a temporary adjustment of the use of the income from the redundant Manse to finance major repairs on the building.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION
CHARGES — 1996**

Under Par. 234 3(a) of the Code

	<i>Fully Constituted</i>	<i>Families (†)</i>	<i>Assess 1996 £</i>	<i>Spec. Sources £</i>	<i>Income £</i>
Ballycrochan	1982	437 (358)	537	49,432	121,526
Kilcooley	1983	336 (223)	334	27,363	50,332
Elmwood	1982	468 (305)	457	60,809	98,519
Hazelbank	1981	299 (256)	384	46,455	122,597
Ballykeel	1982	178 (125)	187	25,915	89,283
Ballee	1986	228 (170)	255	37,953	61,896
Tullycarnet	1990	245 (170)	255	23,004	45,697
Downshire	1993	220 (178)	267	31,322	47,887
Lisnabreen	1993	294 (245)	367	42,222	78,665
Scrabo	1994	241 (169)	253	24,639	39,540
Burnside	1995	250 (154)	231	33,540	69,842

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES — 1996

<i>Church</i>	<i>Building £</i>	<i>Spec.</i>		<i>C.M.F. £</i>	<i>Ch. Ext £</i>	<i>H.M. £</i>	<i>Total £</i>
		<i>Srs. £</i>	<i>Stip. £</i>				
New Mossley*	3,720	16,194	4,048	1,943	1,296	810	8,097
Ballysally*	6,774	17,700	4,425	2,124	1,416	885	8,850
Strathfoyle	—	2,889	867	433	289	173	1,762
Taughmonagh	21,069	16,004	4,801	2,401	1,600	960	9,762
Movilla	1,661	4,515	1,355	677	452	271	2,755

* Special Arrangement

LICENTIATES — 1996

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £10,737 from 1st January 1996

Plus House Allowance p.a. (single £702; married £1,002) if applicable.
House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i>	<i>Congregations Contribution</i>	<i>C.M.F.</i>
Carrmoney	J. C. Teeney*	28,376	9,014	2,725
Hamilton Road, Bangor	J. G. Millar*	30,350	9,606	2,133
1st Portadown	N. J. McCullough*	26,195	8,359	3,380
Randalstown O.C.	S. Simpson*	21,868	5,968	5,771
Harmony Hill, Lambeg	C. J. Aitcheson*	20,992	6,799	4,940
1st Ballymena	A. M. Bates*	22,500	7,251	4,488
Ballyloughan	M. J. R. Neilly‡	19,355	5,190	6,249
Glengormley	P. E. Dickinson*	21,240	6,873	4,866
Regent Street, N'ards	A. W. Carson‡	22,851	7,206	4,233
Oldpark	S. Mawhinney	16,861	4,716	7,023
Abbot's Cross	G. W. M. Glasgow	20,049	6,516	5,223
Terrace Row, Coleraine	R. M. Murray*	24,723	6,682	5,057
Newtownbreda	A. T. F. Johnston	22,750	7,326	4,413
Rosemary	S. A. McCracken*	21,899	7,071	4,668
Mourne, Kilkeel	R. I. Abraham†	35,826	10,737	—
Elmwood	D. J. Hutchinson*	20,270	5,569	6,170
Greenisland	J. C. Simms*	18,383	5,097	6,642
Newcastle	W. A. McCully*	20,863	5,717	6,022
2nd Comber	W. M. Brown*	23,000	7,401	4,338

* Married House Allowance

‡ Single House Allowance

† No House Allowance — House provided by congregation

ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 1996

SECOND YEAR

<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Date of Ord.</i>	<i>% Min.</i>	<i>Salary</i> £	<i>House Allow.</i> £	<i>Total</i> £	<i>Cong.</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
W. J. P. Bailie	Greenwell Street	5.2.95	90	12,884	1,002	13,886	9,849	4,037
R. J. Beggs	Rathcoole	19.1.95	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	7,740	6,862
J. Coulter	Belmont	15.1.95	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	9,656	4,946
R. J. Gilkinson	1st Antrim	29.1.95	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	10,435	4,167
E. J. Hyndman	Knock	29.1.95	90	12,884	1,002	13,886	10,737	3,149
T. J. Lavery	West Church, Bangor	29.1.95	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	13,542	1,060
D. S. Mackay	Dungannon	20.1.95	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	10,898	3,704
W. J. Murdock	Cregagh	22.1.95	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	8,532	6,070
T. J. Wilson	Kilbride	19.1.95	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	8,917	5,685
J. A. Gordon	Kells, Eskylane	2.4.95	90*	12,884	702	13,586	9,595	3,991

* From 2.4.96

ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 1996

THIRD YEAR

<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Date of Ord.</i>	<i>% Min.</i>	<i>Salary</i> £	<i>House Allow.</i> £	<i>Total</i> £	<i>Cong.</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
G. Best	Greenwell Street	16.1.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	10,473	4,129
J. L. Blair	Ballygowan	21.1.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	9,615	4,987
J. Currie	Carryduff	4.2.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	10,857	3,745
E. P. Gamble	West Kirk	2.2.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	6,893	7,709
W. J. Henry	Whiteabbey	28.1.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	9,501	5,101
P. Jemphrey	Ballysillan	24.2.94	95	13,600	702	14,302	351*	13,951
Patricia McBride	1st Lisburn	23.1.94	100	14,316	702	15,018	8,425	6,593
N. G. McDowell	Cuningham Mem.	16.1.94	100	14,316	1,002	15,318	11,434	3,884
J. D. McGaughey	Immanuel	26.1.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	8,501	6,101
D. J. Paul	Craigy Hill, Larne	30.1.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	8,683	5,919
D. H. Thompson	Bloomfield	28.1.94	95	13,600	1,002	14,602	8,941	5,661

*Special Arrangement

ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 1996

FOURTH YEAR

<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Date of Ord.</i>	<i>% Min.</i>	<i>Salary</i> £	<i>House Allow.</i> £	<i>Total</i> £	<i>Cong.</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
R. Love	Duncaim/St. Enoch's	26.1.92	100	14,316	—	14,316	5,312	9,004
T. M. McWhirter	Dundonald	31.1.92	100	14,316	1,002	15,318	10,063	5,255
Lesley Carroll	Macrory Memorial	4.2.88	100	14,316	702	15,018	*—	
Martlene Taylor	Cooke Centenary	11.1.85	100	14,316	1,002	15,318	7,681	7,637

* Special Arrangement

PERSONNEL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Extra Parochial Work

1. Six ministers have received permission for extra parochial work, up to six hours per week.
2. All ministers are reminded that they should make application, on an annual basis, to the Committee for permission to undertake such work.

Locomotory Expenses

3. The 1996 recommendations for locomotory allowances are based on 10,000 miles of congregational use, with a car in the 1000-1400 cc range, and for a driver with average insurance rating. Such allowances should be paid monthly.

	N. Ireland (£)	R. of Ireland (Ir£)
Standing Charges:		
Insurance	385	830
Road Tax	135	175
Depreciation/Loss of interest	2,168	1,888
Running Costs:		
Petrol	747	777
Repairs/Serviceing	525	530
Total Costs	3,960	4,200

Inadequate Expenses Grant Scheme:

4. Changes to the application form as approved by the 1995 General Assembly have been implemented.

Ministers, Congregational Treasurers and Presbytery Clerks/Finance Conveners should pay particular attention to the need for all applications under this scheme to be approved at the appropriate meetings of Committee and Presbytery, and to be accompanied by a copy of the Congregational accounts.

5. Applications for grants towards inadequate expenses were approved for 30 ministers, the total amount of grant support being more than £47,364.

6. The recommended limits for 1996 claims under this scheme are as follows:

N Ireland £4,300; Republic of Ireland Ir£5,000.

Vacancy Guidelines Booklet

7. In response to suggestions and requests, the Committee has been working on a booklet which would provide a 'user-friendly' summary of the relevant legislation and guidelines relating to procedures in a vacancy situation.

This detailed work has not been completed at the time of writing, nor has a format for its presentation been finalised.

The Appointment of Additional Pastoral Personnel

8. Responses from Presbyteries to the 1995 General Assembly Report revealed a positive attitude towards the potential of such non-ministerial staffing ideas. They also recognised and supported the need for a proper framework within which these developments might take place, and there was general acceptance of the broad proposals and guidelines put forward in the Report. There was also a recognition of, and concern about, the possible implications of these developments for the traditional patterns of congregational staffing, ie Assistant Ministers and Deaconesses.

9. Although Presbytery responses indicated general acceptance of the proposals and guidelines put forward, they also drew the attention of the Committee to a number of very important detailed issues which the Committee feels deserve and require further careful consideration. It has not been possible to complete this work in the time available and it will therefore not be possible to bring a final report to the General Assembly until 1997.

10. Meantime it is proposed that the three resolutions placed on the books in 1995 be retained for a further year.

R J A BELL, Convener

CITY AREA COMMITTEE

1. The City Area continues to make Grants available to those Ministering in the City of Belfast who remain eligible to receive this grant. The numbers receiving the Grant will continue to decline as a result of Changes in Congregations and as salaries increase. The limit remains at £20,500 including expenses. This represents the 1994 Minimum plus 50%.

2. All future City Area Grants become the responsibility of the Personnel and Planning Committee and will be paid out by them.

3. The Future role of this Committee was examined and it was accepted that there was an important function for it as Sub-Committee of the Union Commission. The Committee would become responsible on behalf of the Union Commission for liaison with the 3 Belfast Presbyteries regarding future development within the City and they would seek to encourage the development of meaningful strategies within the City.

R T ANDERSON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the resignation of Rev J H MacConnell as Secretary of the Union Commission be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev T J Stothers be appointed in his place.
3. That the resignation of the Rev R Trevor Anderson as Convener of the City Area Committee be accepted that he be thanked for his services and that be appointed in his place.

4. That the CMF be authorised to pay grants towards expenses incurred by ministers in congregations, up to a limit of £4,300 in Northern Ireland and Ir£5,000 for ministers residing in the Republic of Ireland within the terms of Resolution 3, Page 70, General Assembly Minutes 1988 and the changes recommended in the 1996 Report.

5. That the following resolutions placed on the books last year be retained on the books for a further year:

- (i) That all proposed arrangements for the appointment of additional pastoral personnel shall be agreed by the Kirk Session and submitted to the Presbytery and the Union Commission for approval.
- (ii) That all additional pastoral personnel appointments shall be made by the Kirk Session with the approval of the Minister and the Presbytery.
- (iii) That the Guidelines for the appointment of additional pastoral personnel be approved.

6. That the Union General Commission with its associated working committees for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 128 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 236(2) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 236(2) of the Code after the word “difficulty”, the following additional words be inserted “or as part of a seven-year review,”.

DAVID CLARKE

REPORTS OF SYNODS AND PRESBYTERIES

SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN

The **SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN** report that Rev. Samuel Alexander Matthews, B.A., B.D. is their Moderator, and that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held at Annalong on Tuesday 11th March 1997 at 11.30 a.m.

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. W. L. Haslett, M.A., is their Moderator; that the Rev. C. Glass, B.Sc., Ph.D., resigned as Assistant Minister at First Bangor on 31st May 1995, having accepted a call to Dungiven and Largy, and was furnished with credentials to the Foyle Presbytery; the Rev. W. J. Carlisle, B.A., B.D., Dip.Ed., Minister of Conlig, resigned on 6th September 1995, having accepted a call to Downshire Road, Newry, and was furnished with credentials to the Newry Presbytery; the Rev. D. J. Templeton, B.A., B.D., M.Div., M.Th., Minister of Trinity, Greyabbey, resigned on 31st October, 1995, and was received as a Minister without Charge, under the care of the Ards Presbytery; that the Rev. D. C. Porter, Dip.Th., B.D., M.Th., was inducted to the Church Extension Charge of Movilla, on 22nd June 1995, having presented credentials from the Iveagh Presbytery; the Rev. D. M. Spratt, A.L.C.M., B.Ed., B.Th. was inducted as Associate Minister at Hamilton Road, Bangor, on 17th September 1995; the Rev. S. E. Hughes, B.A., B.D., was inducted as Associate Minister at First Bangor, on 31st January 1996, having presented credentials from the Templepatrick Presbytery; that they licensed as probationers for the Christian Ministry Mr. W. M. Brown on 28th May 1995, and Mr. C. J. Aitcheson on 25th June 1995; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge, the Revs. C. D. Mawhinney, D. J. Templeton; as Licentiates the Revs. W. M. Brown, C. J. Aitcheson; and as Students for the Ministry Messrs. M. C. A. Gray, J. Wylie, A. A. Cole, C. J. Gamble, C. A. Grant, K. S. Jeffrey, W. R. B. Martin; that they have visited the Congregations of Groomsport, Carrowdore and Ballyfrenis; that Financial Reports of congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Inducted

Licensed

Visited

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. M. George McClelland is their Moderator: that the Rev. S. M. Gray, B.Sc., B.D., resigned as Ordained Assistant Minister in First Portadown on 25th May 1995 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena upon his acceptance of a call to Carnlough/Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin; that they installed the Rev. J. W. P. McConnell, B.Ed., B.D., D.A.S.E. as Minister of Waringstown and Belville on 28th

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

April 1995 upon his presenting credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast; that they installed the Rev. S. W. van Os, B.A., B.D., as Minister of First Lurgan on 16th June 1995 upon his presenting credentials from the Presbytery of Newry; that they licensed Mr. R. I. Abraham, B.A., on 11th June 1995 as a Probationer for the ministry; that they licensed Mr. D. J. Hutchinson, B.A., on 18th June 1995 as a Probationer for the ministry; that they have under their care as Licentiates, Mr. R. I. Abraham, B.A., B.D., and Mr. D. J. Hutchinson, B.A., B.Th.; that they have under their care as a student for the ministry Mr. J. E. Jones, B.A.; that during the year they visited the congregations of Ahorey, First Portadown and Loughgall; that congregations have published Financial Reports separately.

Visited

Installed

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. Kenneth McConnell, B.D. is their Moderator. That the Rev. Robert McMaster Mackay, B.A., B.D., was installed as Minister of Second Comber Congregation on the 26th April 1995, having presented credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick. That the Rev. Trevor Steele B.S.Sc., was installed as Minister of Edengrove Congregation on the 25th May 1995, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus. That the Rev. Robert Adrian Moffett, B.Sc., B.D., was installed as Minister of Clough and Seaforde Congregations on the 1st June 1995, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast. That the Rev. William Graeme Stewart, B.A., B.D., resigned as Assistant Minister of 1st Comber on the 23rd November 1995, having received a call from the Congregation of Ballygomartin on the 3rd October 1995, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast. That the Rev. Paul Dalzell, B.D., resigned as Minister of Raffrey Congregation on the 4th January 1996, having received a call to the Congregation of Hydepark and Lylehill and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick. That they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs. W. N. Duncan, B.D., M.Th., and R. N. Stewart, B.A., B.D. That they have under their care as a student for the ministry Mr. Mervyn Gibson. That during the year they visited the congregations of 2nd Killyleagh and 1st Ballynahinch. That the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Resigned

The **DROMORE** Presbytery report that the Rev. A. W. Boyd, B.A., B.D., is their Moderator; that the Rev. H. J. Honeyford, B.A., B.D., Minister of Magheragall congregation, resigned his charge on 31st December 1995, and was received as a Minister without Charge under the care of the Presbytery; that Rev. S. W. W. Neilly, M.A., M.A.R., Th. M., P.G.C.E., was installed as Chaplain to H.M. Prisons Maze and Maghaberry on 18th May 1995; that the Rev. R. J. Mattison, B.D., is a Minister without Charge under the care of the Presbytery; that Dr. J. G. Millar and Mr. A. T. F. Johnston are licentiates under the care of the Presbytery; that during the year the congregations of Moira and

Railway Street were visited; that Financial Statements are being published separately by each congregation.

Visited

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. A. S. Thompson, M.A., B.D. is their Moderator; that the Rev. D. C. Porter, Dip.Th., B.D., M.Th., resigned as the Minister of Newmills on 22nd June 1995 having received a Call from the Home Board to the Church extension charge at Movilla, Newtownards; that the Rev. E. D. Smyth, M.S.Sc., Dip. Soc. Stud., B.D., resigned as the Minister of Tullyish and Gilford on the 1st September 1995 having accepted a Call from the congregation of Ballymacarrett; that the Rev. J. A. Beattie, B.Sc., B.D., resigned as the Minister of Garvaghy and Anaghlonge on the 12th January 1996 having received a Call to the Congregation of Second Broughshane; that the Rev. J. Holmes, B.A., presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was installed as Minister of Drumgooland and Kilkinamurry on the 24th March 1995; that they Licensed Mr. W. A. McCully, B.S.Sc., B.D. as a Probationer for the Ministerial office on the 18th June 1995; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge the Rev. E. G. McAuley, B.A., B.D., M.Sc.; and as students Mr. E. S. McDowell, B.Sc., Mr. R. D. McDowell, B.Sc., Mr. T. D. Hagan, B.A. and Mr. J. A. Peacock, B.A.; that during the year they visited the congregations of Second and Third Rathfriland, Loughbrickland and Hilltown; and that the Financial reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Visited

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. A. L. Kirk, B.Sc., B.D., is their Moderator; that the Rev. R. Topping, M.A., D.D., Senior Minister of 1st Drumbanagher, Jerrettspass and Kingsmills, died on 1st January 1996; that the Rev. A. J. S. Curry, B.A., Minister of Warrenpoint and Rostrevor, died on 20th February 1996; that the Rev. S. W. van Os, B.A., B.D., resigned as Chaplain to H.M. Forces on 15th June 1995 having accepted a Call to 1st Lurgan, and was furnished with credentials to the Armagh Presbytery; that the Rev. W. J. Todd, B.Sc., resigned as Assistant Minister at Mourne on 7th September 1995, having accepted a Call to Killymurriss, and was furnished with credentials to the Ballymena Presbytery; that the Rev. W. J. Carlisle, B.A., B.D., Dip.Ed., was installed in Downshire Road on 8th September 1995, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards; that they licensed Mr. Nigel J. McCullough, B.Sc., B.D., as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 18th June 1995; that they have under their care as students for the Christian Ministry Mr. Jonathan A. Curry, Mr. Robert J. Stevenson, Mr. William J. A. Moody and Mr. Kenneth W. J. Hanna; that during the year they visited the congregations of Tullyallen and Mountnorris, and Dundalk/Castlebellingham and Carlingford; and that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Died

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Visited

SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE

The **SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE** report that Very Rev. A. W. G. Brown, B.A., B.D., Ph.D., D.D., Litt.D. is their Moderator and that their next stated meeting is to be held in Cuningham Memorial Presbyterian Church, Cullybackey on Tuesday 11th March 1997 at 10.00 a.m.

Died

Installed

Ordained

Visited

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. J. J. Andrews, B.A., Dip.Th., is their Moderator; that Rev. John J. A. Rainey, B.A., Senior Minister of Churchtown, died on 19th April 1995; that Rev. Robert Dalglish, M.A., Senior Minister of Newtowncrommelin, died on 12th June 1995; that Rev. N. A. Brown, B.Sc., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Tyrone was installed as Minister of Wellington Street, Ballymena on 4th April 1995; that Rev. S. W. Dickinson, B.A., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast was installed as Minister of Glenarm and Cairnalbana of 6th April 1995; that Rev. R. J. Hyndman, B.Sc., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast was installed as Minister of Glenwherry on 5th May 1995; that Rev. S. M. Gray, B.Sc., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh was installed as Minister of Newtowncrommelin and Carnlough/Cushendall on 26th May 1995; that Rev. W. J. Todd, B.Sc., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry was installed as Minister of Killymurriss on 8th September 1995; that Rev. A. W. T. Brown, B.Sc., B.D., Assistant Minister in Wellington Street Congregation, was installed as Minister of Churchtown on 14th September 1995; that Rev. J. A. Beattie, B.Sc., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh was installed as Minister of Second Broughshane on 12th January 1996; that Mr. J. A. Gordon, B.Sc., B.D., was ordained and inducted as Assistant Minister in Kells and Eskylane on 2nd April 1995; that they have under their care as a student for the ministry Mr. Richard D. Gregg, B.Sc.; that the Congregations of First Ballymena, West Church and Cuningham Memorial were visited; and that Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Licensed

Visited

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that Rev. R. J. McCullough, B.Sc., B.D. is their Moderator; that Rev. Trevor Steele, B.S.Sc., resigned his charge as Assistant Minister of First Carrickfergus congregation on 24th May and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that they Licensed Mr. James C. Simms on 28th May and Mr. Stephen A. McCracken on 4th June as Probationers for the Ministerial office; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge, Rev. D. R. Byers, B.A., Dip.Th., and as Students for the Ministry, Messrs. R. A. Liddle, Stephen J. Lockington and Philip W. Patterson; that they visited the congregations of Ballylinney and

Woodlands; and that the Financial Reports of congregations are being printed separately.

The **COLERAINE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. R. Kelly, B.D. is their Moderator; that the Rev. Dr. R. N. Gordon, B.Sc., B.D., Dip.Ed., demitted the charge of the congregations of Boveedy and Second Kilrea on 30th August 1995; that on 2nd June 1995 the Rev. Peter Lyle, B.Ed., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick was installed as Minister of Ringsend and Second Dunboe: that on 30th August 1995 the Rev. Dr. R. N. Gordon, B.Sc., B.D., Dip.Ed., was installed to Missionary Service with the Overseas Board; that on 9th February 1996 the Rev. Dr. Charles Cameron, B.A., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dunfermline, was installed as Minister of Burnside, Portstewart; that the Presbytery has under its care as Students for the Ministry Geoffrey D. Allen, Jonathan P. Moxen and J. Keith A. McIntyre; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs. S. G. Anketell M.A., B.D., and W. J. Morrison B.A., and as a licentiate without charge Mr. Thomas Mulholland, B.Sc., B.Th.; and that the Financial Statements of congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Installed

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Very Rev. A. W. G. Brown, B.A., Ph.D., Litt.D., D.D., in their Moderator; that the Rev. W. J. Mawhinney, B.Sc., died on the 5th January 1996; that the Rev. W. J. Watson, B.A., retired on the 29th February 1996; that the Rev. D. R. Baker, B.A., M.Div., was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry, Mr. M. Henderson and Mr. G. Aitcheson; that during the year they visited the Congregation of First Ballymoney; that the Financial Reports of the congregation are being presented separately.

Died

Retired

Visited

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. J. L. Tosh, B.D., Dip.Past.Th., is their Moderator; that on 31st January 1996, the Rev. S. W. McClintock, B.A., B.D. retired from the active duties of the ministry having demitted the charge of Kilbride; that on 7th March 1995, the Rev. R. McM. Mackay, B.A., B.D., Minister of Hyde Park and Lylehill, having received and accepted the call of 2nd Comber, demitted his charge and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that on 15th June 1995, the Rev. J. Brackenridge, B.A., B.D., having presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast, was installed as Minister of Dundrod; that on 6th January 1996, the Rev. P. T. Dalzell, B.D. having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down was installed as Minister of Hyde Park and Lylehill; that on the 18th June 1995, Mr. S. Simpson, B.Sc., was Licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry; that on 21st June 1995, Mr. S. Mawhinney, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.C.H., M.R.C.G.P. was Licensed as a Probationer for the Christian ministry; that on 25th June 1995, Mr. A. M. Bates, B.A., was Licensed as a Probationer for the Christian

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Ministry that they have under their care as students for the Christian ministry, Messrs R. D. Cameron, B.D., C. M. Glover, B.A., Miss A. E. Tolland, B.Sc., P.G.C.E., B.D., M.Th.; that during the year they visited the congregations of 1st Donegore, Loanends and Kilbride; that the Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Visited

SYNOD OF BELFAST

The **SYNOD OF BELFAST** report that the Very Rev. Dr. John Dunlop, B.A., B.D. is their Moderator and that the next stated meeting of Synod will be held in Townsend Street Presbyterian Church on Tuesday 11th March 1997 at 10.00 a.m.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. Robert James Terence McMullan, B.A., is their Moderator; that the Rev. Cowan Gamble Thompson, R.D., B.A., B.D., died on 17th September 1995; that the Rev. Donald Gillies, M.A., died on 21st February 1996; that the Rev. Joseph Stanley Dallas, M.A., B.D., Dip.Ed., Minister of Whiteabbey, retired on 30th June 1995; that the Rev. Robert Harkness, B.D., B.A., Minister of Sinclair Seamen's, retired on 30th June 1995; that the Rev. James Walker Neilly, B.A., B.Th., Dip.Ed., Minister of Immanuel, retired on 30th September 1995; that the Rev. James William Philip McConnell, B.Ed., B.D., D.A.S.E., Ordained Assistant Minister in Carrmoney, demitted his charge on 27th April 1995 on receipt of a call from the congregations of Waringstown and Bellville and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that the Rev. Robert James Hyndman, B.Sc., B.D., Ordained Assistant Minister in the congregation of Glengormley, demitted his charge on 4th May 1995 on receipt of a Call from the congregation of Glenwherry and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that the Rev. Norman John Linkens, B.D., Minister of Dunlop Memorial, demitted his charge on 29th February 1996, having been appointed stated supply to the congregations of Cloughey and Portavogie; that the Rev. William Graeme Stewart, B.A., B.D., was installed in Ballygomartin on 24th November 1995 credentials having been received from the Presbytery of Down; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs. C. R. J. Brown, B.A. (Retired), N. J. Linkens, B.D., C. I. McKnight, B.A., W. M. Smyth, B.A., B.D., M.P.; that they have under their care as Licentiates Messrs. A. W. Carson, B.Sc., B.D., G. W. M. Glasgow, B.A., M.A.R., Dip.Th.S., W. C. A. McIlwaine, B.A., M. J. R. Neilly, B.A., B.D., J. C. Teeney, B.Sc., B.Th.; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Messrs. W. H. G. Crawley, R. Gaston, J. Lambe, A. McCullough, D. Murphy, N. Patrick; that they have visited the Congregation of Whitehouse; and the Congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

Died

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Visited

The **BELFAST SOUTH PRESBYTERY** report that Rev. D. C. Irwin, M.A., B.D., D.Min. is their Moderator; that the Rev. William E. Loney, B.A., B.D., assistant in Shankill Road Mission died on 17th June 1995 and Rev. Robert E. Alexander, B.A., B.D. senior Minister of Fitzroy died on 28th July 1995; that Rev. Adrian Moffett, B.A., B.D., resigned as Assistant Minister of Lowe Memorial Finaghy, having received and accepted the Call from Clough and Seaforde Congregations on 31st May 1995 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that Rev. T. W. Gordon, B.A., B.D., was installed in the Congregation of Kilmakee on the 18th May 1995; that Rev. J. Lamb, B.A., B.D., was installed in the Congregation of Townsend Street on 4th September 1995 upon receipt of credentials from the Presbytery of Stirling, Church of Scotland; that Mr. Richard Murray, B.A., B.D., was Licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on the 16th June 1995; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge Rev. D. McCarthy, B.Sc., B.D., Rev. P. A. J. McBride, B.Sc., B.D.; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Alan Boal, Andrew Thompson, Philip Thompson, Ian Harbinson, Cheryl Aedeen Reid, Peter McDowell, James Burnett; that they have visited the Congregations of Dunmurry and Fisherwick; that Financial Statements are being presented separately.

Died

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Visited

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. W. J. R. Robinson, B.Sc., B.D., is their Moderator; that the Rev. J. M. Maddock, B.A., Minister of Carryduff, retired from the duties of the active ministry on 30th June 1995; that Rev. R. J. Magee, M.A., B.Th., B.R.Ed., D.Min., Minister of Dundonald, retired from the duties of the active ministry on 10th September 1995; that the Rev. J. A. McN. Scott, B.A., B.D., Assistant Minister in Belmont, demitted his charge on 2nd May 1995, on receipt of a call to Ballina, Killala, and Ballymote and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that the Rev. J. Brackenridge, B.A., B.D., Associate Minister in Knock, demitted his charge on 14th June 1995 on receipt of a call to Dundrod, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that the Rev. D. T. Moore, M.A., B.D., Assistant Minister in Stormont, demitted his charge on 29th June 1995 on receipt of a call to Drum, Cootehill, and Kilmount, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; that the Rev. B. C. G. Black, B.S.Sc., B.D., Minister of Belvoir, demitted his charge on 7th September 1995 on receipt of a call from 1st Monaghan, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; that the Rev. G. R. Stockdale, B.A., M.Div., Assistant Minister in 1st Ballymacarrett, demitted his charge on 7th September 1995 on receipt of a Call to Newtown Stewart and Gortin, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane; that the Rev. E. D. Smyth, M.S.Sc., B.D., presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh and was installed as Minister of 1st Ballymacarrett on 1st September 1995; that the Rev. S. Muriguh, B.D., presented credentials from the Kikuyu Presbytery of the

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Presbyterian Church in East Africa, and was inducted to a special ministry in Orangefield Church on 3rd September 1995; that the Rev. J. H. Flaherty, B.A., B.D., resigned as a Minister without Charge on 5th September 1995 on receipt of a call to Tobermore and Draperstown, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Tyrone; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs. R. A. Crooks, M.A., E. Jamison, B.A., M.Ed., M.Th., Ph.D., H. E. Lewis, B.D., Dip.Ed., L. P. McClenaghan, B.A., L. R. Pedlow, M.A., S. Scott, B.D., Ph.D., Th.D.; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Messrs. D. Rankin and G. J. Kennedy; that they visited the congregations of Kirkpatrick Memorial, Knock and McQuiston Memorial; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Visited

SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH

The **SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH** report that the Rev. Ivor Francis Smith, M.A., is their Moderator; that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held on Wednesday 12th March 1997 at 2.30 p.m. in Orritor Presbyterian Church.

The **DERRY AND STRABANE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. Robert T. Davey, B.D., is their Moderator; that the Rev. M. Bolton, M.B.E., T.D., M.A., Minister of 2nd Derry (Strand) and Buncrana and Stated Supply of Inch, retired on the 31st December 1995; that the Rev. D. K. McCrory, B.Sc., B.D., resigned as Assistant Minister of Waterside on the 31st August 1995 and was placed under the care of Presbytery as a Minister without Charge; that the Rev. T. D. Gribben, B.Sc., Dip.Th., resigned his Charge in Leckpatrick on 21st March 1996 having received and accepted a Call from the Congregation of Whiteabbey and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that the Rev. G. R. Stockdale, B.A., M.Div., was installed as Minister of Newtownstewart and Gortin on 8th September 1995, credentials having been received from the Presbytery of East Belfast; that on 24th September 1995 the Rev. J. M. Cathcart, M.A., Minister of Waterside was installed as Minister of Fahan; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Mr. E. A. Smith, B.A.; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Mr. R. K. Graham, B.A., Mr. N. Dunn, B.Sc., Mr. D. S. Gilmore, B.Sc.; that the Congregations of 2nd Derry (Strand) and Leckpatrick were visited during the year; that the financial reports are being printed separately.

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Visited

The **FOYLE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. D. S. Irwin, B.A., B.D., is their Moderator; that the Rev. D. J. H. Browne, M.A., Minister of Ballykelly, retired from active duty on 30th September, 1995; that the Rev. Kenneth Campbell, B.D., Minister of Donagheady resigned his charge on 29th February 1996 and was retained as a

Retired

Resigned

Minister without Charge under the care of the Presbytery; that the Rev. Dr. Clive Glass, B.Sc., was installed as Minister of Dungiven and Largy Congregations on 1st June 1995; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry, Messrs. Alastair J. A. Rosborough, M.A., and Stanley Stewart, B.Sc., Dip.Th.; that there were three Appeals to the Synod against decisions of the Presbytery; that the Congregations of Dungiven and Largy were united with effect from 1st January 1995; that during the year the Congregations of Glendermott and Derramore were visited and that the Financial Statement of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Installed

Visited

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. W. D. Cupples, B.A., B.D., is their Moderator; that the Rev. G. S. Dickson, Minister of Aghnacloy and Ballymagrane, died on 19th December 1995; that the Rev. W. J. Kelly, Minister of Clogher and Glenhoy, retired on 31st August 1995; that they have under the care as Student for the Ministry Mr. David William Reid; that the congregations of Dromore and Pettigo were visited during the year; and that the Financial Statements are being printed together in booklet form.

Died

Retired

Visited

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. Thomas Robert Buick, B.Sc., D.Phil. is their Moderator; that the Rev. Robert Shaw Fisher, B.A. died on the 23rd February 1996; that the Rev. Norman A. Brown, B.Sc., B.D., resigned his Charge as Minister of the Congregation of Maghera on 3rd April 1995, having received a Call from the Congregation of Wellington Street, Ballymena and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that the Rev. John H. Flaherty, B.A., B.D. was installed as Minister of the congregation of Tobermore and Draperstown on 6th September 1995, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast; that they have under their care as a Licentiate for the Ministry Mr. Peter E. Dickinson, B.A., B.D.; that they have under their Care as Student for the Ministry, Mr. Adrian T. S. McAlister, B.Sc., M.Sc.; that during the year they visited the Congregations of Pomeroy and Sandholes; and Upper and Lower Clonaneese; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being published separately.

Died

Resigned

Installed

Visited

SYNOD OF DUBLIN

The **SYNOD OF DUBLIN** report that the Rev. Robert Cobain, B.A., is their Moderator, and that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held at Blackrock, Co. Dublin, at 7.00 p.m. on Monday 10th March 1997.

The **DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. W. A. Watson, B.A., B.D. is their Moderator; that the congregations of

Visited Donegal and Trenta were visited during the year; that the Financial Statements of the congregations are being published in a Year Book.

Installed The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev. Florence J. Taylor, B.A., B.D., is their Moderator; that the Rev. David T. Moore, M.A., B.D., was inducted as Minister of Cootehill, Drum and Kilmount congregations under the Home Mission Development Scheme on 30th June 1995; that the Rev. Brian C. G. Black, B.S.Sc., B.D., was installed as Minister of First Monaghan Congregation on 8th September 1995; that the Rev. Brian A. H. Wilson, M.A., B.D., remains a Minister without Charge under the care of Presbytery; that they have no Students for the Ministry; that during the year the congregations of Ballyhobridge, Clones, Newbliss, Stonebridge and Smithborough were visited; and that the Congregational Financial reports are being printed in booklet form.

Died The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that Rev. Mary Hunter, B.A., B.D., is their Moderator; that Rev. William Mills, Senior Minister of Limerick and Ennis died on 29th September 1995; that Rev. W. E. Kirkpatrick, Senior Minister of Drogheda and Kells died on 24th January 1996; that on 4th May 1995 Rev. John Andrew McNeill Scott, B.A., B.D., was installed as Minister of Ballina, Killala and Ballymote; that the Presbytery has under its care the following students, Mr. David Montgomery, Mr. Ken Gibson and Mr. Brian Colvin; that during the year the following congregations were visited, St. Patricks, Waterford and Ormond Quay and Scots; that the Financial Statements of all Congregations are being published in a limited edition of a Year Book.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BUSINESS BOARD

Convener: The Clerk

1. This year no requests were received for the “alternative” presentation of reports so all items will follow the traditional format.
2. To help business run smoothly and efficiently the Board would again draw attention to the following points.
 - (i) Questions, which should be written out and placed in the box provided in good time, will normally be limited to two per person and ten minutes in all, unless the Moderator judge that a particular subject merits an extension of these limits.
 - (ii) Amendments should be written out and submitted to the Clerk’s desk before they are spoken to.
 - (iii) If business lapses, Conveners will again have the choice of standing by for the first available slot, or having the item rescheduled for Thursday evening.
 - (iv) If lapsed business accumulates, the normal abbreviated timings could be implemented as follows:-
 - Proposing a group of Reports - 10 minutes reduced to 7
 - Seconding a group of Reports - 7 minutes reduced to 5
 - Other speeches - 5 minutes reduced to 3.
 - (v) If business runs late on Friday afternoon the Assembly may adjourn to the Minor Hall or May Street Church.
 - (vi) The front row of seats in the Assembly Hall will be reserved for those wishing to speak, who are requested to come forward to these reserved seats in good time.
3. The 1994 Assembly decided that a special residential Assembly to be known as “the Mission Assembly” be held in September, 1997 to encourage and celebrate a renewed mind set for mission within the PCI (Mins 1993, p79). It was said in debate that this was intended to replace the special Assembly planned for the year 2000 (Mins 1991, p54). A notice of motion to cancel plans for AD2000 was received last year (Mins p25). This resolution is now submitted for final decision by the Assembly.

Other Churches

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

Church of Ireland Synod 1996: Very Rev Dr D J McGaughey, Rev Dr T W J Morrow, Rev Ruth Gregg, Mr Andrew Ross.

Methodist Conference 1996: Very Rev Dr John Ross, Rev W L Haslett, Mr J C Houston, Miss E L Morrow

Presbyterian Church of Wales: Rev. J.B. Moore

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers): Rev F W Vincent

French Reformed Church: Rev Prof J C McCullough

Presbyterian Church USA: The Clerk of Assembly

Board Membership

The Business Board is appointed in accordance with the provisions of Par. 275 of the Code to take office on the 15th March preceding the Assembly. The Board for the year 1996-1997 together with the associated Arrangements Committee, is as follows:-

- (a) The Moderator, and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, the former Clerks, preceding three Moderators, all Assembly Conveners and Secretaries of Commissions and Boards, Financial Secretary, Youth and Information Officers.
- (b) Rev. W.T. Corder; W.J. Moorhead — Rev. Dr. J. Thompson; W.H. Scott — Rev. James Harper; Samuel Cunningham — Rev. A.W. Boyd; Ian McCullough — Rev. A.S. Thompson; A. Blakely — Rev. D.C. Scott; J.E. Wilson.
- (c) Rev. Dr. R. Dickinson; W. Matthews — Rev. J.W. McAuley; J. Wallace — Rev. T.J. McCormick; P. McGonigle — Rev. J.A. Thompson; D.H. McConaghie — Rev. F.J. Kelly; J.J. McIlroy.
- (d) Rev. S.R. Conkey; W. Marshall — Rev. Ruth Patterson; S. Nelson — Rev. Dr. W.J.H. McKee; R.R. Ross.
- (e) Rev. M. Bolton; F.L. Hood — Rev. J. McWhirter; R.W. Alcorn — Rev. B.A. Hunt; David Jamieson — Rev. T.J. Conway; S. McKinney.
- (f) Rev. W.A. Watson; O. Perry — Rev. J. Carson; John Rowland — Rev. D.T. Moore; S. Sharpe.

A. ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE (5)

Rev. R. Vallyly, Convener

- (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, Deputy Clerk, Information Officer, Hospitality Secretaries, H.W. Templeton, T.H. Cochrane; Rev. R. Vallyly.
- (x) Revs. S.S. McFarland, P. Dalzell; G.Y. Crooks, S. Nelson
- (y) Revs. S. Conkey, A.W. Boyd, T.J. McCormick, T. Conway; S. Sharpe, A.W. Marshall, Wm. Matthews, J. Wallace.

The Methodist Conference 1995

The Rev D Malcolm Scott reports:

1. The 226th Methodist Conference in Ireland took place in Knock Methodist Church, Belfast, from 13th to 17th June, 1995.

2. The Presbyterian delegates were the outgoing Moderator, Very Rev Dr David McGaughey, Revs H Alistair Dunlop and D Malcolm Scott and Mr W J Brown, an elder from Knock. The delegation was warmly received and well taken care of.

3. The outgoing President, Rev Edmund T I Mawhinney, Secretary of the Conference, handed over to the new President, Rev Christopher G Walpole, Minister of Enniskillen and Senior Assistant Secretary.

4. Rev Dr Leslie J Griffiths, President of the British Methodist Conference, continued the tradition of presiding over the Irish Conference. He did so with humour and effectiveness, pointing out that it was not inappropriate

for him to do so, as “a Welshman is simply an Irishman who has never learnt to swim”. Dr Griffiths kept a firm hand on the debates and, perhaps a little surprisingly from a Presbyterian point of view, his rulings were almost never questioned. Another interesting aspect was that nominations to committees were mostly from the floor and were usually quickly terminated when the number required was reached by the proposal that “nominations be closed”.

5. The morning Bible studies - on meals Jesus shared - were very helpfully led by Mrs Gillian Kingston. The prayers led by Rev Dr John Parkin were similarly helpful.

6. Material relating to the Peace Process featured quite largely in the reports. Rev Dr Johnston McMaster laid particular stress on the fact that the ceasefire constituted a “kairos” moment given by God. Questions asked included “What new thing might God be doing in the current historical and political process? What might the new thing mean for the transformation of Church and Society? What can the Church offer to reverse the sectarian patterns of history? How can the Church educate and empower a fellowship of reconstruction in Northern Ireland?”

7. The fact that Irish Methodism has several City Missions - in East, Central and North Belfast, as well as Dublin - helps to ensure that social issues are kept well to the fore. This would probably be true anyway, given the wide ranging interests of the Methodist Council on Social Responsibility.

8. World Development issues also received prominence with, among other things, a very helpful short report on “Understanding Why Africa is Starving”.

9. One interesting feature that the smaller Methodist numbers just make possible is the hour given to the “Conversation on the Work of God”. In this members rise to speak about the things they see God as doing in their districts both by way of encouragement and challenge.

The URC Assembly 1995

The Very Rev Dr David McGaughey reports:

1. The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church took place in Eastbourne from 3rd to 7th July, 1995. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland delegation was well received.

The Assembly began with a Communion Service during which emphasis was placed on the bi-centenary of the LMS, now the CWM, by the outgoing Moderator Dr J McKelvey.

2. The Assembly was constituted at the 6.00 pm service when the new Moderator Dr John Reardon was installed. He used the occasion to stress the ecumenical involvement of the URC within the “World Church” - a theme that was to continue throughout the week.

3. Much of Tuesday and part of Thursday was taken up by discussing “Patterns of Ministry”. There are now 1800 congregations within the URC and concern was expressed at the declining membership. In 1973 membership was 192,000 by 1994 it had declined to 106,000. In 1974 there was one minister to 161 members, this had dropped to one minister to 144 by 1994. Much discussion centred around the development of “Team Ministries” and allowing lay

members to preside at Communion. It will only be through spiritual vigilance and the grace of God that a similar decline in membership within our own church will be prevented.

4. During the Church and Society debate it was recognised that there was serious poverty in Great Britain. The Assembly exhorted its congregations to act collectively and put pressure on politicians to bring about change. It was pointed out that churches had priority of fellowship and care rather than social concern. It was further emphasised that the needs of society could not be met without ecumenical involvement. The Assembly highlighted the growing inequality in Britain and the increasing personal insecurity experienced by a wide range of people in work, education and retirement.

5. We were impressed at the preparation that had been made for the presentation of the various reports and by the high attendances of delegates at the worship sessions.

6. The debates revealed the wide disparity of opinion within the URC, but all were conducted with grace and goodwill.

7. The Youth delegates not only attended the Assembly well but also produced a daily news sheet on the previous day's business which we found informative.

8. We left Eastbourne realising that the URC faced many difficult decisions including the future development of ministry, but heartened by the commitment of many within our sister church.

The Welsh Assembly 1995

Rev Dr R W J MacDermott reports:

1. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales was held at St David's College, Lampeter, from 31st July to 3rd August, 1995. The Assembly was residential and it is planned to hold it at Lampeter for at least the next five years.

2. The Assembly met during some of the hottest days of a hot summer. The heat, and the residential nature of the Assembly, encouraged informality. Open-neck shirts soon became the norm. One younger minister appeared in shorts, though he decorously combined these with a clerical shirt and collar!

3. The business of the Assembly also was conducted more informally than our own. There were fewer resolutions and these were contained within much more concise reports. Most resolutions were not debated. There was no protest when, on one occasion, the Moderator said he was sure everyone agreed with all the resolutions so he would declare them passed as it was time for lunch. I doubt if our Moderators would get away with that!

4. The new Moderator is not installed until the second night of the Assembly. The Moderator for 1995/96 is the Rev W Huw Whomsley who had been seriously ill but, fortunately, was well enough to come to the Assembly for his installation and to chair several sessions. The Moderator is not normally relieved of his other duties, so it can be a heavy year. For this reason it was probably wise that a 'job description' of the moderator's duties was agreed by the Assembly.

5. In our own Church the tension between Gospel and Culture is often seen most clearly in our tendency to confuse religion and politics. In Wales the tension is evident in the Church's being self-consciously Welsh - in its support of the Welsh language, for example. Marks and Spencer were commended for introducing bi-lingual signs in all their stores in Wales. Concern was expressed that, within the Church, the monthly pay-slips were not bi-lingual and that the pension scheme was being administered by a company with offices in (horror of horrors!) England. This protest was later described as 'racist' - a charge which was heatedly denied!

6. The Presbyterian Church used to be known as Calvinistic Methodist. The Methodist roots are still discernible in its ethos and in some aspects of its organisation and administration. The Methodist term Connexion is commonly used to refer to the denomination as a whole.

7. Concern was expressed at the continuing and serious decline in the membership of the Church. In the past five years this has declined 12½% and the number of active members is now less than 54,000. The sobering report to the Assembly stated: "The clear message of these Statistics is that our Connexion is deteriorating rapidly. The missionary zeal that gave birth to us has vanished, and surely the Methodist Fathers would not recognise us as their spiritual heirs. We must face the stark choice before us: either we shall cease to exist ecclesiastically, or else we must turn to seek the Lord in repentance ..."

8. Part of the problem lies in the fact that there are a number of non-conformist churches competing for the same membership, including the Methodists, Baptists and Independents. One decision of the Assembly was "to accept an invitation for the Connexion to participate in discussions on forming a United Free Church in Wales, together with other churches which are members of the Free Church Council of Wales."

9. It would, however, be a mistake to get the idea of a despondent Church. Our impression from attending the Assembly was quite the opposite. One afternoon we were taken to visit Coleg Trefeca, near Brecon, a training centre for lay preachers, elders and other groups. Based on the home of Howell Harris (who was to Wales what John Wesley was to England) this peaceful place provides excellent facilities for Christian training and is much in demand. With a shortage of ministers, greater use is being made of lay people and of part-time ministers.

10. On the final morning of the Assembly, there was an interesting debate on: "Should the Presbyterian Church of Wales become a Peace Church?" The motion was narrowly defeated, by 46 votes to 41. Following the debate, Mr Bruce Kent was invited to give an address and spoke with his usual vigour and clarity.

11. The Presbyterian Church of Wales owes much to its General Secretary, Rev Dafydd Owen who kept a relaxed but firm hold on business (and expressed his personal views more frequently than our Clerks usually do!) He was ably assisted by his secretary, Mrs Shanta Rupalia, a charming Indian lady and a practising Hindu. I could not help wondering if the PCI could take such 'equal opportunity' in its stride as easily as the Welsh appear to do.

12. My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed our time in Lampeter and I thank our Church for the honour of representing it at the Welsh Assembly.

Religious Society of Friends 1995

Rev A V Martin reports:

I attended the yearly meeting representing the Presbyterian Church. The meetings were held in the High School, Rathgar, from 20-23 April, 1995.

Each meeting began with a period of silence and contributions were then made in a quiet and non-confrontational way. At the end of each session minutes were read and improved by members until a consensus was reached that the minutes were a correct record.

On the opening night we heard from Dr Doreen Dowd about the water of the Chikank at a Hospital in Zambia where she is the Medical Superintendent. She spoke of the great work of the hospital against the dark background of an AIDS epidemic and a threatening famine.

On the second evening Martie Rafferty told us of her work in the Maze prison amongst para-military prisoners and those who come to visit them. Her non-directive and non-judgmental work is obviously much appreciated and is an example of service as Christian witness.

The theme of the Yearly Meeting was the quotation from George Fox from Launceston Gaol in 1656 "Be obedient to the Lord God and go through the world and be valiant for the Truth upon earth; be patterns, be examples wherever you can, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people".

The Society of Friends continues to bear such witness.

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

1. Any large scale gathering of people needs some form of arrangements to ensure a smooth running event. We hope that the arrangements for our annual gathering will prove to be effective. The Arrangements Committee is grateful to those who have given good and helpful advice to the Convener during his first year in the role. We are especially indebted to the staff in the General Secretary's Office and to Mr Harry Orr, Building Manager, for their patient and pleasant guidance.

2. The Committee has reviewed the allocation of tickets for the Opening Night and hope to ensure that as many seats as possible are available for Assembly members and the general public. Members of Assembly (Ministers and Representative elders) will receive one ticket per person to admit them to the Assembly before 6.30 pm. This ticket is not transferable and if unable to attend a member SHOULD NOT pass it on to anyone else. We would ask those attending to co-operate with the Stewards who will seek to be as helpful as possible. We are indebted to elders from various Congregations and to the staff of the Belfast City Mission for their help in stewarding.

3. The advertisement for the Opening Night tickets appeared in the February edition of the Presbyterian Herald and by the end of that month applications were approaching the number of available seats. We are pleased that there is no diminishing of interest in or attendance at our Opening Service.

4. The catering facilities at the 1995 Assembly would appear to have proved adequate and we have once again engaged K C Caterers. We would

thank Mrs Kathleen Coiley and her staff for their co-operation. Hot lunches and salads will be available in the Minor Hall. During the tea/coffee breaks we would urge members to keep moving in and away from the queues thus assisting a more efficient service.

5. The Wednesday Evening Rally is one of the highlights of our Assembly Week and we hope that Ministers will advertise the Rally and encourage members to attend. This happy evening is an opportunity for our Presbyterian family to praise God together and to be inspired and challenged to face our contemporary society with a confident faith. Our Guest Speaker is Mr David Turner who has strong Presbyterian roots, having been nurtured in 1st Derry Congregation where his late father was Clerk of Session. Mr Turner is a barrister in London, a Reader, Churchwarden and Lay Preacher in All Souls' Church, Langham Place. Some may recall his inspiring leadership of a Prom Praise in 1994 in the Whitla Hall.

6. In 1997 the Speaker at our Assembly Rally will be the Rev Dr Clifford Hill, editor-in-chief of the Magazine "Prophecy Today", author of various books, lecturer, preacher and broadcaster. An invitation will also be extended to the Duke of Argyll whose ancestor officially opened the Assembly Buildings in 1905.

7. Voting cards should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk at the Carrickfergus window where they are available on Monday evening/Tuesday morning after which members should contact the Finance Office. Admission to the Private Session is only for those who have and show their own voting card.

8. All members may claim a daily allowance and travel expenses to cover the cost of one return journey. Claims should be made on the appropriate form obtainable from the Reception at the Wellington Street entrance.

9. Our visiting delegates and guests of the Assembly are a priority as we seek to assist them and make them feel welcome. We have appointed various members including hostesses at the Monday evening Reception to assist in this Presbyterian welcome but we hope that Assembly members throughout the week will not leave this role to those officially appointed. Our thanks go to all who so willingly provide hospitality and accommodation for our guests.

10. We hope that when we come to review the 1996 General Assembly there will not only be lessons to learn but that the problems will have been few and that the occasion will be marked by a spirit of co-operation in all the arrangements, thus contributing to a good and God-honouring General Assembly.

ROY VALLELY, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommended Order of Business be adopted.
3. That a grant of £6,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.

4. That the decision of the 1991 Assembly

“to hold another special Assembly of an inspirational, listening and relational nature in the year 2000, and that a committee to plan it be appointed in 1997” be rescinded.

5. That the Business Board, with its associated working committee, for the ensuing year beginning March 1997 be appointed in accordance with Par 275 of the Code.

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet at Belfast on Monday, 3 June, 1996.

The Memorial of the Presbytery of North Belfast Respectfully Showeth:

Firstly, that whereas the Code Par 176(2)(b) states:

- “(i) Notice of the intended preparation and availability of the list shall be announced to the congregation at public worship on a Sunday at least six days before the list is published;
- (ii) At the same time the qualifications required of a voter in the Church as given in Par 175 above and the procedure detailed below for the lodging of any objections or claims shall be read to the congregation.”

Many congregations now publish announcements in a printed form as part of their Order of Service which is made available to all worshippers present at Sunday services. In such congregations the printing rather than the reading of the above requirements of the Code might be more beneficial.

Secondly, that whereas congregational records are normally in the form of Minute Books, Ledgers, etc the increasing use of computers by congregations means that such records are increasingly to be found in an electronic format. The status of such records is unclear to the Presbytery nor are we aware of any guidelines to assist congregations in ensuring the protection of such records from loss through computer failure or theft.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Court to instruct the Judicial Commission in consultation with other relevant bodies to consider the implications of these changes in procedure and to report back to the 1997 General Assembly.

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

Adopted by the Presbytery of North Belfast at its meeting in Rosemary on Tuesday, 5 March, 1996.

J L CASEMENT, Moderator
JOHN R DICKINSON, Clerk

Licensed and transmitted by the Synod of Belfast at its meeting at Townsend Street on Tuesday, 12 March, 1996.

JOHN DUNLOP, Moderator
W D F MARSHALL, Clerk

BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

Convener: Rev IVOR SMITH

Secretary: Mr STEPHEN LYNAS

1. “Bored of Communicating”, was how a friend impishly addressed a letter to our Information Officer during the year. Stephen Lynas, the office staff, and the committees of the Board have been busy during the year, at times so busy that there was no time to be bored.

2. Mr Lynas has continued to be pro-active in relation to the media, with the result that the work of our Church has received widespread coverage. How we communicate with each other what we are doing is also being addressed.

Rev John Murdoch

3. For the past seven years Rev John Murdoch has worked diligently as convener of the Public Worship Committee. He has brought his own sensitive approach to worship, together with considerable expertise in the field of Church music, to bear on the work of the Committee. His hard work and good humour have earned the respect of his colleagues, and the members of the Board and the Church at large are in his debt for a job well done.

Minister in Recognised Service

Rev Dr Robert Tosh reports:

I continue in the post of Chief Producer of Religious Programmes for BBC Northern Ireland.

I am responsible for the output of the Religious Broadcasting Unit. This includes programmes like *This New Day*, *Sunday Sequence*, *Morning Service*, *Sounds Sacred* and *The Gospel Show* -all broadcast on BBC Radio Ulster. In September, 1995, Etta Halliday of the Church's Video Unit became the presenter of *Sunday Sequence* and her contribution to that programme is greatly appreciated. We also contribute to network television programmes to various strands on network radio and the BBC World Service.

The BBC as an institution has seen and is still undergoing many changes as it faces up to many challenges. With the renewal of the BBC Charter, the future of religious broadcasting seems relatively assured.

I am grateful for all the co-operation and support that I receive from many, many people, not least members of our own Church.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

1. Our staff - Mrs Ruth McConnell, Mrs Nola Wright, Mrs Winnie Cranston and Mr Edward Connolly - have continued amid some very busy times to work tirelessly for the smooth running of the Department.

Information

2. Mr Stephen Lynas has had an eventful and fruitful first year as Information Officer. He is seeking new ways of improving internal communications for our Congregations and developing our Church's profile with the media. He is to be commended for his energy and enthusiasm.

Publications

3. Much work has gone into Points for Prayer and information leaflets for United Appeal, featuring the modern Burning Bush logo. The Committee pays tribute to Mrs Nola Wright, Mrs Winnie Cranston and Mr Edward Connolly for their dedicated service to the Department, and to the PROP ladies for their help in the distribution of the Points for Prayer Booklet and Update leaflets.

4. The typesetting service continues to be used by the Christian Irishman magazine and many other agencies and individuals of the Church. All are encouraged to make use of the expertise in designing, setting and printing which is provided.

5. The new look Ministers' News Sheet has been well received.

6. A new photocopier has been purchased which greatly facilitates the work of our staff.

Presbyterian Herald

7. During the year the Presbyterian Herald was redesigned, and the new format has met with approval. The editor Rev Arthur Clarke is to be congratulated on producing an attractive magazine which is able to compete in the contemporary market. The price has been increased to £6, having been held at £5 for the last 4 years. We thank all our agents who promote the circulation of the Herald through their reliable service. The slight increase in sales continues.

W J CARLISLE, Convener

HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMITTEE

1. During the year the Society published the following items:

Aspects of Presbyterianism in Cookstown. Rev Dr W J H McKee.

The Bulletin. 1993.

First Supplement and Index to A History of Congregations. This is a joint publication with the Ulster Historical Foundation prepared by Rev Dr R Buick Knox.

Irish Presbyterianism and Orangeism. Rev Professor R F G Holmes.

Rev Dr Robert Allen. Rev Dr J Thompson.

Rev Dr John Paul and the Arian Controversy. Rev Professor R

McCollum.

2. We regret to record the death of Mr George Luke, Templepatrick Presbytery, who was a loyal member of the Council of the Historical Society and supporter of our aims. We record our condolences to his family circle.

3. The following lecture programme has been arranged for the year 1996-1997 :

1996

May, Thursday 16 - The Chapel, Union Theological College, Botanic Avenue, Belfast, 8.00 pm The Robert Allen Memorial Lecture.

Lecture: **Helen Waddell: Presbyterian Medievalist**, by Professor R Norman C Vance MA, DPhil, (Oxon), School of English and American Studies, University of Sussex.

June, Saturday 15 - Field Trip

A coach trip to places of Presbyterian and historical interest in the Co. Monaghan area, led by **Dr Lindsay Brown**. The coaches leave from the car park of Malone Presbyterian Church at 9.00 am (Seats should be booked with Mr Robert Bonar, Historical Society, Church House, Belfast, 322284, by Friday, May 24.)

October, Thursday 17, 8.00 pm - Killead Presbyterian Church.

Lecture: **The Ulster-Scot Tradition**, by Dr Philip Robinson, Head of Collections Division, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra.

November, Thursday 21, 8.00 pm - Second Saintfield Presbyterian Church

Three Famous Saintfield Ministers - Alexander Hutcheson (c1658-1711); Thomas Ledlie Birch (1776-1798); Walter Moffatt (1831-1838), by Rev Dr W D Bailie, FRHistS. This lecture forms part of the bi-centenary celebrations of Second Saintfield congregation.

1997

January, Tuesday 14, 8.00 pm - All Souls Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Elmwood Avenue, Belfast.

“An admirable finger directed by pure taste”. **Edward Bunting, recorder of the music of the 1792 Belfast Harpers’ Festival and organist of the Belfast Second Presbyterian congregation**, by Rev David Steers MA (Oxon), BD, and Janet Harbison MA, LTCl, TTCT, Director of the Belfast Harp Orchestra, who will speak on the music of Edward Bunting and perform selections on the harp.

March, Thursday 6 - Belmont Presbyterian Church.

7.15 pm Annual Meeting.

8.00 pm **Oatmeal, porridge and the Shorter Catechism**. A selection of readings and drama about Irish Presbyterian life including the work of Lydia Foster, Archibald McIlroy, and others, with some biographical background.

4. We would remind Presbytery agents and ministers to assist us in the task of publicising the work of the society, and encouraging congregations to support the lecture programme.

5. The society's rooms are to be found on the second floor of Church House, and are open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10.00 am to 12.30 pm and Wednesdays 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. Our Assistant Secretary, Mr Robert Bonar, will be pleased to assist callers and reseachers.

W D PATTON, Convener

PUBLIC WORSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Representations to the Committee following the decision of last year's General Assembly not to co-operate with the Church of Scotland in the production of a successor to CH3 prompted a survey (a) to gauge reaction throughout the Church and (b) to gain some indication as to any alternative preferred.

- (a) Just over half the Presbyteries replied to a letter from the Committee, few of them in favour of setting in motion any procedure to rescind the Assembly's decision, but indicating that opinion on the matter was in places fairly equally divided. On the basis of information available the Committee is of the opinion that, in the matter of a new hymnbook, nothing is to be gained by any attempts to restore the connection with Scotland.
- (b) Very few Presbyteries had anything positive to offer by way of suggestion for an alternative to a joint production with the Church of Scotland; this the Committee found frustrating and disappointing. It was felt to be a matter requiring careful study and research. No proposals are therefore being put forward at this stage, and it is the Committee's intention to investigate several possible options and to bring recommendations to a future Assembly.

2. The section of the Experimental Revision with material for Funeral Services has been reprinted by request, and is available from Familybooks.

3. The Committee has worked in co-operation with the Judicial Commission and the Doctrine Committee in preparing a revised format for the section of the Code which deals with the Standards of the Church.

4. The Committee was asked to examine the merits of obtaining a Copyright Licence on a denominational basis for the Church as a whole. Issues of cost and the complexities of administration proved the main sources of difficulty, and it is recommended that no further action be taken.

5. A copy of the Book of Public Worship and a copy of the Experimental Revision have been presented to first-year students at Union College and to those completing their training there after study elsewhere.

6. Each congregation of not more than ten families has been awarded a Praise Grant of £50.00.

JOHN MURDOCH, Convener

MEMORIAL RECORD

The Rev Robert Dalglish, MA, Senior Minister of Newtowncrommelin, died on 12 June 1995, in the 71st year of his age and the 41st of his ministry.

Born at Belfast on 29 July 1924, Mr Dalglish was educated at the Belfast College of Technology and worked for some years as an electrical engineer. He then enrolled as a student at Magee University College Derry, and proceeded to Trinity College Dublin where he graduated BA in 1951 and MA in 1965. He completed his theological studies at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 6 September 1953, he was ordained at Newtowncrommelin by the Presbytery of Ballymena on 26 January 1955. He retired on 31 August 1987.

Mr Dalglish was Chaplain to the Waveney, the Cottage and Braid Valley Hospitals in Ballymena. His administrative gifts were employed as Convener of the Retired Minister's House Fund from 1975 till 1982; and of the Widows of Ministers Fund from 1985 till 1986. He brought to his ministry in a quiet rural parish, a sense of fitness of things which expressed itself in worship that was ordered, dignified and reverent; and in pastoral care which shared the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of the people he served.

He was predeceased by his wife: and is survived by a daughter.

The Rev William Edward Loney, BA, BD, Assistant Minister at the Shankill Road Mission, and previously Assistant Minister at Tullycarnet, died on 17 June 1995, in the 32nd year of his age and the 7th of his ministry.

Born at Hamilton, Ontario, on 14 April 1964, he was educated at Queen's University Belfast where he graduated BA and BD. He studied theology at Union Theological College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of South Belfast on 22 June 1988, he was ordained as Assistant Minister at Tullycarnet by the Presbytery of East Belfast on 15 January 1989; and inducted as Assistant Minister at the Shankill Road Mission by the Presbytery of South Belfast on 5 February 1991.

Mr Loney was dogged all his life by ill health, and faced that disability with a strong, deep faith. Convinced, beyond any question, that God was calling him to the ministry of the Church, he was utterly determined that nothing would be permitted to prevent him answering and accepting that call. His courage in pursuing his calling and coping with his problems impressed all who knew and worked with him. His early death is a great loss to the Church.

Mr Loney was unmarried.

The Rev Robert Ernest Alexander, MA, Senior Minister of Fitzroy Avenue, and previously Minister of Trinity, Ahoghill, died on 28 July 1995, in the 84th year of his age and the 59th of his ministry.

Born at Raphoe, Co. Donegal, on 4 December 1911, Mr Alexander was educated at Raphoe Royal School, Magee University College Derry, and Trinity College Dublin where he graduated BA in 1934 and MA in 1943. He completed his theological studies at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Raphoe on 31 May 1936, he was ordained at Trinity, Ahoghill by

the Presbytery of Ahoghill on 21 April 1937, and installed by the Presbytery of Belfast at Fitzroy Avenue on 11 May 1943. He retired on 14 February 1975.

Mr Alexander served the wider Church as Convener of the Presbyterian Residential Trust from 1961 till 1970; and as Moderator of the Synod of Belfast in 1973.

After a brief and useful ministry in Ahoghill, Mr Alexander went on to an excellent ministry in a large city parish. A well prepared preacher and a tireless visitor, he ministered to a broad spectrum of members in Fitzroy and was affectionately regarded by them all as a faithful and caring pastor. It was typical of him that, during the war, he personally kept in touch with each of his parishioners serving in the armed forces. Sadly, ill health brought this ministry to a close in 1975. Yet over a period of time, and to the delight of his many friends, he recovered sufficiently to serve with great skill and acceptance as Convener of a number of vacant congregations.

He is survived by his widow, and two daughters.

The Rev Cowan Gamble Thompson, RD, BA, BD, Senior Minister of Glengormley and previously Minister of Sinclair Seamen's and Toberkeigh, died on 17 September 1995, in the 70th year of his age and the 42nd of his ministry.

Born at Belfast on 10 June 1926, he was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Magee University College Derry, and Trinity College Dublin where he graduated BA in 1950. He completed his theological studies at Princeton Theological Seminary where he graduated BD in 1953, and at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 27 May 1952, he was ordained at Toberkeigh by the Presbytery of Route on 10 November 1953. He was installed at Sinclair Seamen's by the Presbytery of Belfast on 22 April 1960; and at Glengormley by the Presbytery of North Belfast on 24 March 1966. He retired on 31 September 1991.

Mr Thompson never spared himself in ministry to the various congregations he served. His administrative talents were put to use as Convener of the Shankill Road Mission Commission from 1978 till 1985: and in sterling work with the Presbyterian Housing Association, Health, and Social Services and the governing bodies of various schools. A Chaplain with the Royal Naval Reserve for eighteen years, he was awarded the Reserve (Officer's) Decoration. He was Moderator of the Synod of Belfast in 1987.

In retirement he continued his work with Health and Social Services: and in addition he gave considerable time and energy to Christian Aid and the Department of Trade and Industry. He was chairman of Portballintrae Residents Association.

Mr Thompson was a devoted family man who followed the progress of his children and grandchildren with keen and sympathetic interest.

He is survived by his widow, a son and a daughter.

The Rev William Mills, MA, Senior Minister of Limerick and Ennis, died on 29 September 1995, in the 86th year of his age and the 51st of his ministry.

Born at Belfast on 12 July 1910, Mr Mills was educated at Magee University College Derry, and Trinity College Dublin, where he graduated BA

in 1942 and MA in 1950. He completed his theological studies at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 26 May 1944, he was ordained as Assistant Minister at Trinity, Cork, by the Presbytery of Munster on 3 October 1944. He served as Minister of New Brighton, Wallasey, Cheshire, in the Presbyterian Church of England from 1946 till 1954; and was installed at Limerick and Ennis by the Presbytery of Munster on 22 July 1954. He retired on 30 June 1971.

Prior to studying for the ministry, Mr Mills was employed in such diverse occupations as catering and road construction; as a mechanic, butcher, lorry driver, and a bakery worker.

Friendly, humorous, and outgoing, he held strong and independent opinions, and, on occasion, expressed them with vigour. His ministry, in pulpit and parish, was sympathetic and caring; and also gave much to the wider community. He was a chaplain to Limerick Gaol; and to hospitals in Limerick and Ennis. He served on the Board of Governors of Villiers School. Following the Hungarian uprising in 1956, he did fine work in helping to integrate those who sought refuge in the Republic of Ireland. He was Clerk of the Presbytery of Munster from 1955 till 1961.

He is survived by his widow, two sons and two daughters.

The Rev George Shegog Dickson, Minister of Aughnacloy and Ballymagrane, died on 19 December 1995, in the 76th year of his age and the 30th of his ministry.

Born at Moybeg, Tobermore on 21 August 1920, he was educated at Tobermore Primary School and Magherafelt Technical College. After some years in business, he resumed academic study at the Faith Mission College Edinburgh 1941-44, Queen's University Belfast 1956-58, and Westminster College Cambridge 1963-65. During this period he worked with various Missionary in Societies in Ireland and England. Licensed by the Presbytery of Bristol in 1965, he was ordained on 8 January 1966 by the Presbytery of Carlisle, and appointed to serve as Assistant Minister at Harrington in Cumberland in the Presbyterian Church of England. He was installed by the Presbytery of Derry in Burt and Buncrana on 17 June 1971; by the Presbytery of Omagh in Aughnacloy and Ballymagrane on 29 March 1973; by the Presbytery of Templepatrick in Second Randalstown on 16 September 1976; and by the Presbytery of Omagh in Aughnacloy and Ballymagrane on 28 September 1977.

Mr Dickson possessed a warm and friendly personality; was a caring Minister in the congregations he served; and was widely known as an evangelist in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Canada.

He is survived by his widow and two daughters.

The Rev Robert Topping, MA, DD, Senior Minister of First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass, died on 1 January 1996 in the 86th year of his age and the 55th of his ministry.

Born at Belfast on 17 March 1910, he was educated at Queens's University Belfast, where he graduated BA in 1935, and MA in 1937. He studied theology at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 25 May 1939, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Newry in First Drumbanagher

and Jerrettspass on 22 July 1941. He was appointed stated supply to Kingsmills in 1965; and retired on 30 September 1977.

Dr Topping was a scholar of the highest calibre, specialising in philosophy and theology, and serving as an examiner in Systematic Theology. He was a joint Convener of the Social Service Committee from 1956 till 1968. He was Moderator of the Synod of Armagh and Down in 1964; and was awarded the degree of DD by the Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland in 1976.

Dr Topping brought to his pulpit ministry a first class mind, and to his pastoral work a kindly and caring nature. A genial and friendly man who enjoyed good company, he will long be remembered by those he served so faithfully, as Minister, and by all who were his friends in the Church and in the community.

He is survived by his widow and a son.

The Rev William John Mawhinney, BSc, Senior Minister of First Ballymoney, and previously Minister of Bellaghy and Knockloughrim, died on 5 January 1996, in the 80th year of his age and the 53rd of his ministry.

Born at Ballynure on 26 March 1916, he was educated at Queen's University Belfast, where he graduated B.Sc. He studied theology at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Carrickfergus on 7 May 1942, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Tyrone at Bellaghy and Knockloughrim on 2 December 1943. Installed by the Presbytery of Route at First Ballymoney on 23 June 1964, he retired on 31 March 1983.

Mr Mawhinney was first a Parish Minister. Meticulous preparation for Public Worship and careful planning for pastoral visitation were the hall marks of his ministry. Yet his service extended far beyond the boundaries of his parish. He was Convener of the Committee on the Reception of Ministers from 1979 till 1986. He was Moderator of the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine in 1981. He served on the governing bodies of various schools.

Broad and generous in outlook he was quick to cross the denominational divides; and for many years was a member of an inter-church group of clerics called The Friends of the Way.

Predeceased by his first wife Irene, he is survived by three daughters and a son of his first marriage; and by his second wife Kathleen.

The Rev William Edgar Kirkpatrick, BA, Senior Minister of Drogheda and former Missionary to India, died on 24 January 1996, in the 84th year of his age and the 57th of his ministry.

Born at Jordanstown on 8 June 1912, he was educated at Belfast Royal Academy and Queen's University Belfast where he graduated BA in 1935. He studied theology at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 18 May 1938, he was ordained by the same Presbytery on the 5 September 1939 as a missionary to India where he served in several schools and congregations over many years. Installed at Drogheda on the 7 October 1970, he retired on 31 October 1978.

Mr Kirkpatrick was a leading member of the former Boy's Auxiliary and was commander of the camp at Guysmere for some years. He carried his interest in young people to India where he was a constant source of encouragement and

help to school children, and students training for the teaching profession and the ministry of the Church. In this sphere he did sterling work at the Mission Preparatory School at Parantij. His later years in India saw work in Ahmedabad, particularly in the hostel for high school and college students. On an extended furlough for health reasons from 1962-67 he was Assistant to the late Dr J H Withers of Fisherwick. In Drogheda where he spent the last years of his active ministry, he crossed the denominational barriers and achieved much in the realm of Inter-Church relations. Following his retirement he gave valuable pastoral help in the congregation of Stormont. A caring minister, a wise counsellor, a genial friend, he will be missed by parishioners and colleagues alike.

Predeceased by his first wife Agnes, he is survived by a son and a daughter of his first marriage; and by his second wife Sarah.

The Rev Arthur John Samuel Curry, BA, Minister of Warrenpoint and Rostrevor, and previously Minister of Ballygawley with Ballyreagh, Millisle, Cavanaleck and Aughtentaine, died on 20 February 1996 in the 63rd year of his age, and the 37th of his ministry.

Born at Clontibret, Co Monaghan, on 30 January 1934, he was educated at Magee University College Derry and Trinity College Dublin, where he graduated BA. He studied theology at Princeton Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Monaghan on 27 May 1958, he was ordained at Ballygawley by the Presbytery of Clogher on 28 October 1959, and appointed stated supply for Ballyreagh in 1965. He was installed at Millisle by the Presbytery of Ards on 5 July 1973; at Cavanaleck and Aughtentaine by the Presbytery of Omagh on 8 September 1976; and at Warrenpoint and Rostrevor by the Presbytery of Newry on 7 November 1984.

Mr Curry enjoyed the respect and confidence of his fellow Presbyters, and was appointed Moderator of the Synod of Derry and Omagh in 1982. A faithful minister of Word and Sacrament, he won the undying gratitude and affection of the people in the congregations he served by his gentle and devoted care of them through all the chances and changes of their lives.

He is survived by his widow, two daughters and two sons.

The Rev Donald Gillies, MA, Senior Minister of Clifton Street United, died on 21 February 1996, in the 87th year of his age and the 53rd of his ministry.

Born at Ardrishaig, Argyllshire, on 9 November 1909, he was educated at Glasgow University where he graduated MA in 1932. He studied theology at Trinity College Glasgow and Glasgow University Divinity Hall. Licensed by the Presbytery of Inveraray in 1936, he served as an Assistant in Cambusnathan Old Parish for almost seven years. Ordained at Barrow-in-Furness by the Presbytery of Liverpool in 1943, he was installed by the Presbytery of Belfast at Agnes Street on 5 December 1946, and at Clifton Street United by the Presbytery of North Belfast on 21 October 1971. He retired on 31 July 1982.

Mr Gillies was a courteous and charming man. As a Minister he was competent and compassionate; and any request for help from colleagues or parishioners was met with instant attention and warm sympathy. As a preacher, he possessed an oratorical skill, almost unheard in this generation, which he put

to fine use in his pulpit ministry. He also employed it to excellent effect in the General Assembly where his speeches on political and ecumenical issues were followed with keen interest by the House and the Press.

Mr Gillies was Moderator of the Synod of Belfast in 1972. He is survived by his widow and a son.

The Rev Robert Shaw Fisher, BA, Senior Minister of Brigh and Albany, died on 24 February 1996, in the 83rd year of his age and the 53rd of his ministry.

Born at Belfast on 17 November 1913, he was educated at Ballymena Academy, Magee University College Derry and Trinity College Dublin, where he graduated BA in 1939. He completed his theological studies at the Presbyterian College Belfast. Licensed by the Presbytery of Ballymena on 7 May 1942. He was ordained at Muckamore by the Presbytery of Templepatrick on 2 June 1943, and installed at Brigh and Albany by the Presbytery of Tyrone on 2 February 1949. He retired on 31 December 1979.

Mr Fisher's administrative ability was employed as a member of the Belfast Corporation Welfare Authority in the Second World War years, and as Clerk to the Presbytery of Tyrone from 1951 till 1961. Endowed with great friendliness and good humour, he enjoyed the high esteem of his fellow Presbyters, who found him a man of the utmost integrity and an unfailing source of wise counsel. A kindly, caring, and trusted minister, he did fine work in the congregations he loved and served. Always a countryman, he was completely at home in the rural setting and the farming community. His latter years brought much suffering from arthritic pain. It was a cross he bore with great patience and courage.

He was predeceased by a son: and is survived by his widow and two daughters.

TV, BROADCASTING AND AVA COMMITTEE

1. The Committee thanks all who have taken part in religious broadcasting on TV and radio during the year, and thanks its religious advisers - Rev Dr R S Tosh, BBC; Very Rev Dr John Dunlop, UTV; Rev Dr W O'Neill, RTE; and Rev Dr R A Russell, Downtown Radio for their conscientious and positive approach to effectively presenting the Gospel through the media.

2. The Committee continues to be grateful for the many skills and professional expertise of Miss Etta Halliday, who, in addition to her imaginative presentation of 'Sunday Sequence' on BBC Northern Ireland, continues to work tirelessly as Producer/Director of the Video Unit. Videos for the Overseas Board on Malawi and for Alcohol and Drug Education are in preparation. A resource catalogue, not only of video, but of printed materials will soon be available.

3. The Committee is considering the most appropriate way in which to help parents keep an eye on their children's viewing, following complaints to the Information Officer about distasteful features on show in cinemas, TV, and the media in general.

W L HASLETT, Convener

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

1. Since our last Report to the General Assembly in June, 1995, the Committee has met on seven occasions.

2. Seventy-five submissions were received and considered during these meetings. Most were granted direct approval, but several were returned to Congregational Committees for further consideration. Some requests involved on-site visits, and we express our appreciation of the hospitality and welcome accorded to Committee members on such occasions.

3. Last year, the Assembly appointed representatives to the 'Ulster Historic Churches Trust'. The Convener along with a lay expert, has represented the Church in the setting up of the Trust. Its aim will be to encourage and assist in the preservation and maintenance of historic church buildings, and to bring to the attention of a wider public the tremendous heritage which belongs to the whole community in these buildings.

4. The inaugural Conference of the Trust was held on 20 November, 1995, in Church House, when several speakers outlined the need for preservation of church buildings as part of the architectural heritage of the community. The Committee, with the permission of the Communications Board, gave a grant of £200 to the Trust. The application for grant from the Incidental Fund includes this amount.

5. The Committee would wish to alert the Assembly to the possibly of changes being made to the planning laws with regard to buildings listed for architectural and historic interest and value. These changes may make it very much more difficult for Congregations to alter their buildings to make them more amenable to modern worship needs and to accommodating modern facilities.

J T WILLIAMSON, Convener

FAMILYBOOKS LTD

1. After protracted negotiations we finally arrived at an agreement on the terms of the occupancy of additional premises in the Spires. There followed a period of consolidation during which time we determined the best way forward as a service branch of the Church.

2. We are very grateful for the support we have received from the various congregations and hope this will continue. The efficient and friendly staff together with the enlarged stock of books on display have been our greatest assets in helping to expand our business.

CLIFFORD BOYD, Chairman

REPORT BY THE CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES

TO

The General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church of Wales and the United Free Church of Scotland in respect of the year ending 31 December 1995.

CHURCH HYMNARY THIRD EDITION

1. Following the very marked decline in the sales of the Third Edition of the Church Hymnary in 1994, there appears to have been some revival in sales and 20,497 copies were sold in the current year, as opposed to 10,048 in the calendar year 1993. The total royalty received was £6,569.58 compared to the 1993 total of £3,905.80.

REVISED CHURCH HYMNARY

2. Again, more copies of the Revised Church Hymnary were sold in the calendar year 1995 with 5,482 copies being sold, compared with 3,446 in the previous year. The total royalty received amounted to £1,800.66 compared with £927.99 in the preceding year.

SCOTTISH PSALTER 1929

3. In total, 2,391 copies of the Scottish Psalter bound in the various editions of the Hymn Book were sold during the year 1995 compared with 3,132 the previous year.

IRISH PSALTER

4. 7,386 copies of the Irish Psalter bound in the various editions of the Church Hymnary in 1995. This again shows a revival in numbers compared with a total of 3,825 copies in the previous year.

REVISED CHURCH HYMNARY

5. The Trustees noted that it was uneconomic to produce a new Music Edition of the Revised Church Hymnary. In view of this and the low stocks of the Words Edition, it was decided that publication of the Revised Church Hymnary would cease when current stocks were exhausted. Large overseas orders justifying reprints in special editions would be considered as and when they arise.

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

6. Following the decision of The United Reformed Church not to participate in the production in a Fourth Edition of The Church Hymnary, it was agreed that a proportion of the Trust Fund would be paid out to The United Reformed Church. Confirmation of their decision to withdraw from The Church Hymnary Trust was only received at the end of December and the payment to

the Church is expected to be made shortly. It is calculated that the sum due to them is £31,675.63.

STATE OF FUNDS

7. Notwithstanding the capital sum paid to The United Reformed Church, the funds continue in a healthy state and the Trustees consider that they have sufficient to meet the costs of the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Hymnary. The current expenses of the Revision Committee are being met from Trust Funds. It is proposed that no distribution be made of the royalties in the current year.

W R GRIEVE, Chairman
JOHN M HODGE, Secretary and Treasurer

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly note with appreciation the work of all the staff in the Information and Publications Departments, and commend to the Church's prayers and support, the work of the Information Officer, the Video Producer and the Editor of the Presbyterian Herald.
3. That the resignation of Rev J F Murdoch, as Convener of the Public Worship Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his contribution to the work of the Committee, and that Rev W T J Richardson be appointed in his place.

Publications

4. That the General Assembly commend those Boards and Agencies of the Church who involve the Publications Department in the design and production of materials, and remind the Church that such expertise is available within the Department.
5. That the General Assembly welcome the new format of the Presbyterian Herald and commend the magazine to the Church.
6. That the General Assembly congratulate the Board of Directors and Staff of Familybooks Ltd on their exceptional service which has been recognised by the recent award of Christian Bookshop of the Year 1996 in the UK and Ireland, and commend the Bookshop to the Church.

Public Worship

7. That the Praise Grant of £50 be made to every congregation of not more than ten families.
8. That a copy of the Book of Public Worship and the Experimental Revision be presented to first year students at Union College.
9. That a grant of £800 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Public Worship Committee.

Historical Society

10. That ministers support the work of the Historical Society by making it known within their congregations and Presbyteries, announcing its meetings, encouraging donations of materials of an historical nature, using its facilities, and including it in their programmes.

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

Church Architecture

12. That a grant of £1,000 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church Architecture Committee.

General

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

NOMINATION BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The Board met during the year as required.

TESTIMONIALS

2. The 1995 Assembly asked the Nomination Board to consider the suggestion “that applicants be required to submit a testimonial from the Kirk Session of their home congregation, or in the case of ministers from their Presbytery”. (Mins p29). It is obvious that applicants should be able to demonstrate that they have the standing required for a particular post, e.g. as a communicant member of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland or as a minister within the WARC. In the case of theological professors and [full-time] lecturers the Code already requires the presentation of credentials of ministerial standing (Par 309(3)).

3. However, in addition to the question of official standing there is a further question of the depth of a candidate’s personal Christian commitment or active involvement in the life and work of a congregation. Candidates may well have their name officially “on the books”, and yet have little involvement beyond that. In rare instances there may be other factors that could give grounds for doubting suitability for an Assembly appointment. In other instances the range of suitable applicants may be surprisingly limited. The ideal may not always be available.

4. A number of questions therefore arise.
 - (i) Should the suggested procedure be approved simply as it stands?
 - (ii) Is the public testimonial an effective safeguard against an unsuitable candidate? Experience suggests that it is not necessarily so.
 - (iii) As people are increasingly reluctant to mention any reservations they may have in a published testimonial, would it be better to use confidential references?
 - (iv) From whom should ruling elders obtain their testimonials, Kirk Session or Presbytery? Would the same rule apply to candidates who are elders in other churches, who may not be accountable to Presbytery?
 - (v) Is it legitimate for candidates to say that applications should be treated in confidence and that they do not wish to discuss them with the local Kirk Session? Should a Kirk Session feel aggrieved if a member of the congregation does not mention his/her application to them?
 - (vi) In view of the wide range of posts and applicants involved, would a flexible formula be adequate e.g. “that all applicants be normally required to demonstrate their active involvement in church life? That could be by testimonial or by naming a confidential referee. The Kirk Session or the Presbytery, the minister or the Clerk of Presbytery could be involved as appropriate.” The Nomination Board would also be free to send out a confidential questionnaire instead of, or in

addition to, any of the foregoing, or otherwise satisfy itself of the suitability of an applicant for a particular post.

5. Such flexibility could also make some allowance for such considerations as whether the applicant is a well known member of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland or a total stranger, Does a Deputy Clerk applying to be Clerk of Assembly, or a Professor being nominated as Principal, require full formal documentation? Such candidates might fall outside the scope of what is "normally" required.

6. It is the considered opinion of the Nomination Board that the flexible approach is preferable. An appropriate resolution is accordingly appended.

PROCEDURES

7. As part of last year's review of procedures the Board suggested that "a leaflet on procedures could be issued along with the job description for any particular post" (Reports 1995, p95). During the year the Board prepared such a leaflet and issued it to enquirers.

8. While the new procedures approved in 1995 seem to be working satisfactorily some further suggestions for possible improvements have been made. The Board therefore proposes that it should continue to review its procedures during the coming year.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANISER

9. As directed by the 1995 Assembly (Mins p77) the Board proceeded to the nomination of a Secretary for Christian Education and Sunday School Organiser. Under the new procedures approved last year (Mins p29) Mr O McAuley was appointed as the authorised Contact Person and Rev Dr R N Brown as the expert Assessor.

10. The position was duly advertised and six applications were received. These were considered by the Shortlisting Sub-Committee and four candidates were invited for interview on 10 January.

11. The Board proceeded to interview these five candidates. After a discussion the Board resolved to nominate Rev I T McKee for this appointment, but in accordance with Par 276(3) of the Code the name of Mr William Curry, having received one-third of the votes cast, was also forwarded for final decision by the General Board. (See further Appendix I and the Report of the General Board).

DIRECTOR OF MINISTERIAL STUDENTS

12. As directed by the 1995 Assembly (Mins pp73-74) the Board proceeded to the nomination of a Director of Ministerial Students. Rev R B Savage was appointed as the authorised Contact Person, but it was not considered necessary to appoint an expert Assessor for this post.

13. The position was duly advertised and three applications were received. The Shortlisting Sub-Committee decided that all three candidates should be interviewed.

14. Interviews took place on 4 March and after a discussion the Board resolved to nominate Rev J H Robinson for this appointment. (See further Appendix II).

PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY

15. As directed by the 1995 Assembly (Mins p66) the Board proceeded to the nomination of a Professor of Church History. Rev Principal T S Reid was appointed as authorised Contact Person and Mr D F Wright (New College, Edinburgh) as the expert Assessor.

16. The position was duly advertised and seven applications were received. These were considered by the Shortlisting Sub-Committee, which decided that four applicants should be invited for interview.

17. Interviews took place on 13 March and after a discussion the Board resolved to nominate Rev Dr L S Kirkpatrick for this appointment. However, in accordance with the Code Par 276(3) the name of Rev Dr W D Patton, who received one-third of the votes cast, is also forwarded for final decision by the Assembly. (See further Appendix III).

APPENDIX I

APPLICATION FOR SECRETARY FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANISER

FROM: Rev Ian T McKee, 8 Blinkbonny Crescent, Edinburgh, EH4 3NB.

Dear Sir,

I wish to apply for the post of Secretary for Christian Education and Sunday School Organiser with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Having known for some months that this post would be formally advertised before the end of the year, Annette and I have had ample time to prayerfully consider whether or not it would be right to formally apply for it. We are now fully persuaded that I ought to declare my strong interest in this appointment.

Working with children and young people has always featured prominently in my adult life. I enjoy children's work - talking to them about the Christian faith, working with them in group and class situations, and helping others to engage in this vital work - all of which I find to be fulfilling, rewarding, challenging and often very frustrating!

In my present congregation I endeavour to give the teaching of children and young people a very high profile, maintaining the closest of personal involvement in every aspect of our Sunday School and Bible Class work. Conferences for our teachers are now regularly held, and I play a full part in these.

I believe that my experience in teaching, preaching and in leadership generally, would equip me well with God's help, to carry out the responsibilities outlined in the job description. The breadth of the responsibilities that go with this post appeals to me as much as it frightens me, underlining the very real challenge and scope which this work would present to the appointee.

As a parish minister with some 14 years experience to draw on, most recently in Scotland, I believe I would be able to relate well to and communicate effectively with other colleagues, students, Kirk Sessions and Sunday School teachers. I have always taken a keen interest in Educational matters in both Church and school, most recently in relation to Religious Observance in Lothian Region Schools.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is dear to my own heart and I would count it a great honour to be able to serve in this capacity. I enclose my CV as requested, in which I have sought to highlight those aspects of my work and experience which have direct relevance to this application.

The following ministers have been kind enough to undertake to forward Testimonials on my behalf:

Rev David C Searle, <i>Warden,</i> <i>Rutherford House,</i> 17 Claremont Park, Edinburgh, EH6 7PJ.	Very Rev Dr D Burke, <i>Senior Minister,</i> <i>Hamilton Road Presbyterian</i> 149 Groomsport Road, Bangor, BT20 5NZ.	Rev J H Robinson, <i>1st Holywood Presbyterian,</i> 79a Victoria Road, Holywood, BT18 9BG.
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The following have kindly agreed to act as referees on my behalf:

Rev Dr. Donald J Watts, <i>Ballyholme Presbyterian,</i> 3 Second Avenue, Baylands, Bangor, BT20 5JZ.	Mr. J D Uprichard, <i>Headmaster,</i> <i>Clandeboyne Primary School,</i> 7 Cairnshill Gardens, Belfast, BT8 4RW.	Mr Graeme Williamson, <i>Session Clerk,</i> <i>St Stephen's Comely Bank,</i> 47 Barnton Park Gardens, Edinburgh, EH4 6HL.
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I hereby respectfully submit my application for the consideration of the Nomination Board.

Yours sincerely,
Ian T McKee (Rev)

CURRICULUM VITAE

The Rev Ian Thomas McKee, BEd, BD,
8 Blinkbonny Crescent,
Edinburgh,
EH4 3NB.
Tel: 0131 332 3364
Date of Birth: 17:3:53

Oct 1990

Minister of St Stephen's Comely Bank Church of Scotland, Edinburgh:

- Secretary to Rutherford House Publications Committee;
- Member of Scottish SU Regional Strategy Committee;
- Chairman of Comely Bank Council of Churches;
- Chaplain to Broughton High School & member of School Board;
- Chaplain to Flora Stevenson Primary School & member of School Board;

- Member of Presbytery Christian Education Committee;
- Member of Presbytery World Mission Committee.

I have overseen the restructuring of the Sunday School in this congregation and I am closely involved in its operation, meeting regularly with the leaders with whom I organise regular conferences.

My involvement with the local Primary School is extensive, spending every Thursday morning taking classes from Primary 4 - Primary 7 in rotation, preparing them to participate with me on the fourth Thursday in a School Assembly. This is very demanding work which has to be carried out with great care and sensitivity, as "Christian" Assemblies in Lothian Region schools are increasingly under the spotlight. This involves the preparation and production of teaching materials for the class and close liaison with the class teacher. On Friday mornings I take an Infant Assembly which often includes the Nursery School. I also prepare materials for Assemblies taken by class teachers in Broughton High School. I cover areas such as Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Worship, and differences between Churches for a local Independent Primary School, preparing appropriate work sheets in the process, and I regularly take Assemblies in another Independent Primary School.

I am often invited to speak to the students at Stirling University Christian Union. I provide secretarial assistance to Rutherford House's Publication Committee and participate fully in the selection of suitable scripts for publication by the House. In my own congregation I oversee the publication of a monthly Newsletter to which I contribute a minister's letter of some 350 words. In February 1995 a purpose built office was opened and I have overall responsibility for its smooth running with the assistance of a part-time paid secretary.

Mar 1983-Sept 1990

Minister of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Bangor:

- Chaplain, Belfast Battalion of the Boys' Brigade
- Convener of Ards Presbytery Missionary Committee
- Member of Ards Presbytery Students' Committee
- Member of Overseas Board of PCI
- Member of General Board of PCI
- Chaplain to Clandeboye Primary School & member of School Board
- Member of Bangor Boys' High School Board

I sought to give Sunday School work a high priority and worked very closely with Bible Class and youth leaders. I started and was co-leader of an annual Holiday Bible Club based at St. Andrew's which is still continuing. Invitations were often received to do Children's Day services in other churches - something which I enjoyed greatly. I organised and led regular Kirk Session Conferences within the congregation.

A monthly newsletter was produced for the congregation to which I contributed a regular minister's letter. I helped to promote interest in Mission, organising conferences for the Ards Presbytery, and Bible Studies on an inter-church basis in Bangor.

My involvement with Clandeboye Primary School was considerable - taking Assemblies, working with the children and meeting with the staff. School

Board work was always taken seriously by me as the future influence of the Church in the day to day running of schools was being thoroughly re-evaluated.

June 1979 - Feb 1983

Assistant Minister, West Kirk Presbyterian Church, Belfast:

I was co-leader of a CSSM on Shankill for 2 years and part of a small team who refurbished an old mission hall and established a youth work on the Shankill which is still continuing.

Oct 1977 - June 1980

Queen's University Belfast/ Union Theological College:

BD awarded (QUB) in July 1980.

Sept 1975 - Sept 1977

Teacher at Andrew's Memorial Primary School, Comber:

I taught Primary 5 and had a Scale 2 Post. I was Leader in charge of the SU Adventure Camp for three years. I was also a Sunday School Teacher, BB Officer, Junior Section leader, Youth Club Leader - all at Christ Church Presbyterian, Dundonald.

Sept 1971 - June 1975

Student at Edge Hill College of Higher Education, Ormskirk, Lancashire:

BEd awarded from Lancaster University in July 1975.

For two years I was President of the Christian Union. During my student years I was also a leader at four SU Camps. I was a member of the CSSM team at Portstewart for two years.

TESTIMONIALS

From: Rev D C Searle, Rutherford House, 17 Claremont Park, Edinburgh, EH6 7PJ.

Ian McKee who was my close neighbour in Bangor and who is involved in the work of Rutherford House in a voluntary capacity as secretary of our Publications Committee has shared with me in confidence that he is applying for the post of Secretary for Christian Education and Sunday School Organiser with PCI. Ian has asked me to write a testimonial on his behalf. With some reservations I am happy to do this.

I should state at first my reservations regarding Ian. I would be most disappointed to see him leaving Scotland. He has done a remarkable work in a very good congregation here in the middle class area on the North side of the city. It was a congregation with no evangelical background whatsoever. Ian has worked with great tact and perseverance in spite of enormous discouragements and is seeing the congregation slowly being transformed. He has earned the respect of his ministerial colleagues in the Presbytery of Edinburgh on both sides of the theological divide and I myself have enjoyed attending his services on many occasions. The church is remarkably well attended and there are sixty or

seventy children present. Ian's gift of working with children is quite outstanding and there is no question about it that he would be an enormous loss to Edinburgh and the Evangelical cause here.

Apart from these reservations and my deep personal regret at the prospect of him leaving should he be appointed to this post I have to say with reluctance that I consider him to be eminently qualified for this post. You yourself will know him far better than I do and will have watched his progress from his days as assistant in the West Kirk through to his ministry in St. Andrew's, Bangor. You will know that he is a man of integrity and that he is particularly gifted for work with children and young people. You will also know that although he is an uncompromising evangelical he is not someone who finds it difficult to work with those who do not share his particular theological opinion. He extends the hand of friendship to all his colleagues and is willing to accept them even though they may have radically different views to himself. It is this friendliness and maturity that has enabled him to carve out a real place for himself here in Edinburgh as indeed he did in the Presbytery of Ards.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me if you want any more information about Ian's ministry here in Edinburgh. I shall be happy to speak with you further on the telephone.

DAVID C SEARLE

From Rev J H Robinson, 79a Victoria Road, Holywood, BT18 9BG.

When I first met Ian McKee twenty years ago he was a Primary School teacher in Comber, wrestling with a sense of call to the Ministry of our Church.

His decision to leave that profession was not taken easily or lightly since he was clearly a gifted teacher and was finding fulfilment in that role. However, his sense of call persisted and strengthened and having candidated successfully he began theological studies in the Autumn of 1977.

In the Summer of 1978, Ian was appointed as Summer Assistant in Knock Presbyterian Church where I was serving as Assistant Minister. I have very vivid and happy memories of those months - among the highlights being the creative and memorable Children's Addresses which Ian devised and delivered. These Addresses encouraged the participation of the children, for instance, in dramatised narrative, and were spoken of long afterwards. A further indication of the recognition of his gifting in this area is that Ian was invited back to Knock a number of times at the request of Sunday School teachers and Leaders of uniformed organisations to conduct Children's Day and Thinking and Founders' Day Services.

From that time Ian has served as an Assistant Minister and Minister of our Church and more recently, for family reasons, has ministered in The Church of Scotland. In these roles of leadership he has, alongside the regular demands of pastoring and preaching, continued his interest in reaching and teaching children both within and beyond the bounds of his congregation. Within congregational life he has stressed the importance of the place of children, ensuring that they were being taught by effective, trained Sunday School teachers (frequently conducting that training himself) and devising all-age services so that the children saw themselves as an integral part of the church family. Beyond the congregation his involvement in local schools speaks for itself. Ian is keenly

interested in the welfare and development of children, not least their education and the Christian ethos of that education.

Although keen that children would come to faith and grow in faith Ian is unfailingly sensitive to the impressionableness of children, never coaxing or coercing a response. And although maintaining a relaxed and easy style while addressing children, he is meticulous in preparation, working out clearly what he wants to say and frequently devising striking and effective visual aids.

Ian McKee is a close friend whom I would love to see back in our church, but I believe I speak accurately and objectively when I say that I know of no one better equipped and qualified to undertake the vital task of Secretary for Christian Education and Sunday School Organiser and to develop the post into the new millennium.

J H ROBINSON

From Very Rev. Dr. David Burke, 149 Groomsport Road, Bangor, Co. Down.

It is with very sincere pleasure that I write to commend the Rev. Ian T. McKee, BD, for the post of "Secretary for Christian Education and Sunday School Organiser". I have known him all his life time, for the family were members of Great James (Londonderry) when I went there in 1947, and both of his parents were deeply involved in the life of the congregation. Then when I came to Hamilton Road (Bangor) in 1955 it was to find the McKees already taking a very active part in all the work and witness. They held responsible offices in many of the committees and organisations, and made a positive contribution in all that they did. It was in that atmosphere that Ian grew up, and through Life Boys and Boys' Brigade, Sunday School, and Bible Classes he developed into an excellent and enthusiastic member of the youth organisations.

He had an excellent education, and became a teacher at Andrew's Memorial Primary School (Comber) for five years, and ever since in his various congregations has maintained that link with education. He was also involved in youth work in many ways - as leader in Boys' Brigade, in Sunday School and Clubs and also in various Christian organisations in the wider Church.

When he was ordained to the Ministry of the Church he came to St. Andrew's (Bangor) and there was involved in a very steady work, and his gifts of teaching and training - especially of young people - were clearly seen and recognised. Also, his relations with the local school was highly commended and appreciated. Likewise, in the Presbytery he held posts that involved him with Sunday Schools and various other Church bodies.

Ian McKee is deeply devoted to his ministry, and in a quiet but competent manner seeks to fulfil all his commitments and opportunities with ability and integrity. In the light of my knowledge of him personally, and of all his service within the Church I have every confidence in recommending him for this post for which he has made application.

DAVID BURKE

APPENDIX II**APPLICATION FOR DIRECTOR OF MINISTERIAL STUDENTS**

FROM: Rev J H Robinson, 79a Victoria Road, Holywood, BT18 9BG.

Dear Mr Hutchinson,

I should be grateful if the Nomination Board would consider my name for the post of Director of Ministerial Students, as advertised in the December issue of The Presbyterian Herald.

I apply out of a long-standing interest and involvement in the work of the Board of Studies, and an enthusiasm for the potential of the post as described.

It has been my privilege for a number of years to undertake a substantial portion of the Board's administration, together with overseeing the courses required of all students, including those studying overseas.

I have been further privileged, on behalf of the Board, to explain the academic requirements of our Church, and its process of assessment, to those contemplating candidating for the ministry. My role as Convener of the Committee on Studies has also given me opportunity to be involved in the recent restructure of the Licentiate period and the current review of our theological education and training.

I therefore respectfully beg the Nomination Board's consideration and, if the Board should so recommend, that of the General Assembly, and enclose a curriculum vitae, as required, accompanied by testimonials from:

- (i) **Very Rev A W G Brown**, BA, BD, PhD, DD, LittD,
Minister of Ballycastle & Co-ordinator and Assessor of Training
- (ii) **Rev H A Dunlop**, BA, BD,
Minister of Knock and former member of the Board of Studies
- (iii) **Very Rev A R Rodgers**, MA, DD,
Minister of Dungannon and member of the Board of Studies,
Committee on Studies and Residential Interview Panel.

The following have kindly agreed to act as referees:

- (i) Rev J S Carson, BSc, MA, MAR, MTh
Minister of Carnmoney and Convener of the Ad Hoc Committee on Review of Theological Education.
- (ii) Rev S A Matthews, BA, BD,
Minister of Bannside, Banbridge and Convener of the Board of Studies
- (iii) Mr James Stevenson, MSc
Clerk of Session, 1st Holywood Presbyterian Church.

Yours sincerely,
J H ROBINSON

CURRICULUM VITAE

- Date of Birth: 1st June, 1953
- Upbringing: On a small farm at Cardy, Greyabbey, and in connection with Trinity Presbyterian Church, Greyabbey, where my late father was an Elder and Sunday School Teacher, and where my mother is Clerk of Session.
I came to Christ at the age of 9, under the ministry of the late Rev J P McAteer.
In 1965 our family moved to Bangor but retained connection with Trinity, Greyabbey, where I became a Sunday School Teacher and the Leader of the Youth Fellowship.
- Education: Ballyboley Primary School; Newtownards Technical College; Bangor Technical College; Queen's University Belfast;
10 'O' levels; award for best 'O' level results in North Down Colleges; 5 'A' levels; BSc(Hons) Civil Eng.
It was my ambition and intention from an early age to be a Civil Engineer, thus the choice of the 'technical' stream. However, a growing and haunting sense of call to the Ministry during my QUB years led to a radical change of direction and a curtailment of my employment with Ferguson and McIlveen (Consulting Engineers).
- Family: Married Miss Jennifer Bryan, August, 1978. Four children: John (15), Fiona (13), Stephen (12) and Rachel (3).
- Training/Ministry: Union College 1974-1977, President of Students' Council, BD (Hons); Licensed in Greyabbey, June 1977; Ordained and Installed as Assistant in Knock, January 1978, where I remained an extra 2 years at the request of the Kirk Session and Minister, the late Rev W J A Bell. Installed in 2nd and 3rd Rathfriland, April 1982. Installed in 1st Holywood, May 1991.
- Experience Directly Related to Post: Member of Board of Studies since 1983; Committee on Studies since 1989, Convener since 1990; Convener of the Board's Qualifications' Committee since 1990; member of Interviewing Panel 1987 and 1988, Secretary to Interviewing Panel since 1989; Assignment Committee; Consultative Panel on Assistantships; Ad Hoc Committee on Theological Education; Students' Bursary Fund Committee and Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee.
- Other Relevant Experience/Skills: Clerk of Iveagh Presbytery 85-91; member of Iveagh Presbytery Students' Committee and Iveagh Presbytery In-Service Training Agent.

Member of Youth Board and Youth Night, Youth International and Youth Service and Leadership Training Committees; Ad-Hoc Committee on Special Fellowships; General Board; Board of Ministry and Pensions and CMF Committee; Publications Board and TV and AVA Committee - all previously.

I have supervised a student on 1st Year Placement and two Summer Assistants, all in 1st Holywood.

I am computer-literate and have computerised the congregational records of 1st Holywood and the records of students under the supervision and care of the Board of Studies.

TESTIMONIALS

From Very Rev Dr A W G Brown, Minister of Ballycastle Presbyterian Church.

I have great pleasure in providing this reference for my good friend, the Rev. Harry Robinson, who has, after much heart-searching, decided to become an applicant for the position of Director of Ministerial Students.

I have known Mr Robinson throughout his ministry, but have got to know him well through the Board of Studies. I have been impressed by the warmth and efficiency with which he has conducted the business of the Studies Committee, and grateful for the generous personal help he has always given me in my own work with the students' practical assignments.

Harry Robinson has a real insight into the situation each student faces. He deals with them individually with warmth and friendliness, with patience and good humour, yet he retains respect, and can be firm and decisive where this is called for.

He brings a wealth of experience to his application, together with the background of his own effective pastoral ministries. He is a man whom the whole Church respects and who will, if appointed, have already in place the range of knowledge and network of relationships needed to make this pioneering appointment work. He has the added advantage of having played a key role on the Ad Hoc Committee on Theological Education at whose request this new appointment is being made. He is thus at home with the various strands in the thinking and expectations that this post will hopefully embody.

I believe Harry Robinson has exactly the right qualities and experience to serve the Board, the College, the wider Church in this key area of preparing the ministers of the future. As such, I am honoured to support his application.

A W G BROWN

From Rev H A Dunlop, Minister of Knock Presbyterian Church

I am very pleased to support the application of the Rev J H Robinson for the post of Director of Ministerial Students. He possesses all the experience, ability and skills required for this particular post.

First, he has a pastoral heart. He has plenty of experience in pastoral work through his years of ministry in Knock, 2nd and 3rd Rathfriland, and 1st Holywood, but he has more than experience. He has a genuine heart for people and a real pastoral gifting. I arrived in Knock some 18 months after he completed his assistantship and over the years I have discovered many people - and I mean many - who have been greatly helped and blessed through his ministry. Due to the unfortunate illness of the late Rev Albert Bell, he was more than an assistant in those days, more what today we would call an associate. Certainly he carried the substantial burden of pastoral responsibility in a large suburban congregation, and carried it well. The quality of his work remains even today. My knowledge of his ministry in 1st Holywood confirms that conscientious and insightful care for the individual continues to be one of his core qualities. Perhaps even more pertinent is the evidence of a pastoral heart in dealing with students. Until last June I was a member of the Board of Studies and observed time and again the careful, sensitive and thorough way in which he reported to the Board on behalf of the Studies Committee and the Residential Interviewing Panel. Always, without exception, I was impressed with the pastoral tone and genuine concern for each individual, and the desire to help each one discern and pursue the will of God.

Second, he has proven administrative ability. The facts speak for themselves. His 6 years as a Presbytery Clerk developed and honed the sound administrative skills he already possessed. They also equipped him to appreciate the interests and concerns of Presbyteries in their dealings with the Board and with students under their care. His experience as Secretary to the Residential Interviewing Panel for 7 years is of particular significance. He has gained excellent insight into what is required in supervision of the selection procedure. Already he has been carrying much of the administrative responsibility for this, and doing so most effectively, despite his congregational workload. His convenerships of the Studies Committee and of the Board's Qualifications Committee for over 5 years have been marked by thoroughness in preparation, clarity in presentation, and efficiency in all aspects of administration. The experience gained through these Convenerships is invaluable in equipping him to understand, administer and deliver all facets of the job description. For example, he is familiar not only with the academic requirements and systems of our own Church, but also with the variety of courses offered by different theological institutions and the procedures of other Churches. He is familiar also with the researching of academic accreditation and the content of courses. Through correspondence and personal contact he has established good personal relationships with relevant Church officers and theological educators within the UK and abroad, as evidenced by his recent visits to Gordon Conwell, Princeton and Westminster Theological Seminaries in the USA.

Third, he has vision for the task. He is not interested in a sinecure. He is deeply concerned to see in ministerial students the development of spirituality, gifts for ministry, cultural awareness, and relevance to the challenges of post-modernity. In particular, he understands the need to introduce the individually-tailored Learning Covenants which the postholder will be required to administer. He has a vision for the spiritual formation of ministerial students, not just because it is a good thing, but because he knows the fundamental importance of

such formation in his own life and ministry. His experience as a member of the Assignment Committee and of the Consultative Panel on Assistantships, and his experience in supervising placements, has sharpened his vision (both as a provider and a user) for the possibilities and purposes of placements and the new extended licentiate assistantship. At an entirely different level, his experience as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Review of Theological Education has kept him up-to-date with current thinking and developments in theological education, at home and abroad, and focused his vision for the continuing development of relevant ministerial training.

Fourth, he is a person of personal integrity. He practices what he preaches. He seeks to live in daily personal relationship with Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord and he desires personal spiritual growth. He is firm and clear in his evangelical beliefs, warm in their application, loyal in his churchmanship, broad in his friendships. He enjoys the genuine respect of colleagues of varying theological outlook. He is unfailingly courteous, friendly and straightforward. He is a man of his word. He respects confidentiality and can be trusted. His dealings with students, ministers, Clerks, Board, College, Department of In-Service Training, and peers are without partiality. He is his own man. His understanding nature is allied to firmness and fairness. Not least, he possesses plenty of sound common sense.

I warmly commend him for the post of Director of Ministerial Students.

H ALASTAIR DUNLOP

From Very Rev Dr A R Rodgers, Minister of Dungannon Presbyterian Church

It is with pleasure and confidence that I write on behalf of the Rev Harry Robinson to support his application for consideration for the post of Director of Ministerial Students.

As I carefully read through the very extensive and detailed “job description” of this new post, it struck me forcibly just how much of this onerous, demanding, and specialised task has been unobtrusively and efficiently carried out by the Rev Harry Robinson for several years. Few, if any, could match his proven experience in this work over a considerable period, and especially over the past six years. A careful reading of his CV, especially in that portion regarding experience directly related to the post, must surely convince those entrusted with the interviewing of the candidates, that in Mr Robinson they have a very strong contender for the Directorship and one who is in a virtually unique position regarding relevant experience pertaining to both the College and the Students.

If one pursues his contributions in the areas of Presbytery and Assembly, once again Mr Robinson’s experience is noteworthy. As Clerk of the Iveagh Presbytery for six years, (an appointment, incidentally, which was made within three years of his entering his first charge, and which terminated only because of his call to First Holywood) he obviously enjoyed the complete confidence of the Presbytery.

His involvement with Students, Youth and Training, both at Presbytery and Assembly level, virtually throughout his whole Ministry, contributes even more

relevant weight to his application. Thus, I contend, that regarding his knowledge and experience of the demands of this new post, Mr Robinson, as a candidate, is outstanding.

However, vitally important though knowledge and experience are, other considerations must be noted.

This appointment surely requires wisdom and warmth; sensitivity and tact; ability and discretion; firmness and fairness; good humour; total integrity; and perhaps above all, spirituality.

In my many years on the Board of Studies; Committee on Studies; and Interviewing Panel, I have observed all these essential qualities demonstrated time and again in Harry Robinson. He knows, and loves His Church and his Saviour, and seeks to serve both, in his work amongst our students.

It is my prayerful and considered opinion that our Church would be making a very wise and safe decision in appointing a man of such proven experience, capability, diligence and integrity to this new and vitally important post.

ANDREW R RODGERS

APPENDIX III

APPLICATIONS FOR THE CHAIR OF CHURCH HISTORY

FROM: Rev Dr Laurence S Kirkpatrick, 76 Dunadry Road, Antrim, BT41 4QJ.

Dear Mr Hutchinson,

I am writing to you today in order to submit my name in formal application for the recently advertised Chair of Church History in Union Theological College.

In recent years I have been lecturing and tutoring in Church History and devoting an increasing amount of my time to the pursuit of historical research. I have studied the literature available with this advertisement and am fully aware of, and attracted by, the multifaceted nature of the post. I believe that I have the necessary attributes to fulfil each aspect of the job description and therefore submit my application.

In accordance with the notes made available for candidates I enclose, in addition to my curriculum vitae, three written testimonials from the following individuals (in alphabetical order);

- (i) Rev Dr James S Alexander, MA, BD, BA, PhD.
(Dr Alexander is the Senior Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History at St Mary's College in the University of St Andrews and was the external examiner for my doctoral thesis.)
- (ii) Rev Dr W Ian P Hazlett, BA, BD, DrTheol.
(Dr Hazlett is the Senior Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History in Glasgow University and was my Research Supervisor in the Department of Theology and Church History in that University.)
- (iii) Dr Ken D Scott, MLitt, PhD.

(Dr Scott is Director of Studies and lecturer in Church History and Missiology in Belfast Bible College. He has first hand knowledge of my Church History lectures and tutoring in that College.)

The following individuals, in alphabetical order, have agreed to act as referees in support of my application;

- (i) Rev Norman A Brown, BSc, BD, 21 Old Galgorm Road, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, BT42 1AL.
(Rev Brown was my 'home minister' in Woodlands congregation, Carrickfergus).
- (ii) Rev S John Dixon, BA, 11 Greystone Road, Antrim, Co. Antrim, BT41 1HD.
(Rev Dixon is a colleague in Templepatrick Presbytery).
- (iii) Rev Brian S McDowell, BA, BD, The Chaplain, Abbotsholme School, Rocester, Uttoxeter, Staffs. ST14 5BS.
(I served the latter part of my assistantship in Alexandra congregation under Mr McDowell).

May I thank you in anticipation for any consideration this application merits.

Yours sincerely,
Laurence S Kirkpatrick (Rev)

CURRICULUM VITAE

Surname: Kirkpatrick
 Christian Names: Laurence Samuel
 Date of Birth: 10 September, 1956
 Address: 76 Dunadry Road, Shaneoguestown, Antrim, BT41 4QJ.
 Home Telephone: (01849) 462157
 Marital Status: Married September 1978
 Pamela Kirkpatrick, SRN, ONC (Hon).
 Family: Stephen (1984)
 Jonathan (1988)
 Emily (1992)
 Hobbies: Hockey, Squash, Golf, Home Decorating, Gardening.

I am enthusiastically applying for this appointment to the Chair of Church History for the following main reasons;

I have been an ordained Minister of our Church for fourteen years

I have experience of lecturing and tutoring in Church History

I have a PhD in mainstream Church History

I have published in this field and am currently working on further publications.

Present Church Service

Minister of Muckamore Presbyterian Church	1984 - present
Chaplain of Muchamore Abbey Hospital	1985 - present
Member of Board of Studies	1994 - present

Current Lecturing Experience

Part-time lecturer in Church History at Belfast Bible College, Sept. 1994 - present.

Part-time tutor at MTh level in Church History at Belfast Bible College.

I am a recognised teacher, up to PhD level, within QUB Faculty of Theology.

Future Academic/Lecturing Experience

Public lecture at Muckamore. May 1996 - 'Confronting History: Why infant Baptism?'

Invitation to attend The Third Irish Patristic Conference of The Patristic Symposium at Maynooth College, June 1996.

Invitation to present paper at Patristic Conference on 'Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church' at University of Melbourne, Australia, July 1996.

I anticipate participating at the Rutherford House Dogmatics Conference on the Westminster Documents (September 1997).

Former Teaching/Lecturing Experience

Public lecture at Muckamore. January 1996:- 'Confronting History: Charles Darwin and the Theory of Evolution'.

Public lecture at Muckamore. April 1994:- 'Confronting History: Can a Roman Catholic be a Christian?'

Presented paper to Glasgow University Faculty Research Seminar. December 1993. Title of Paper:- 'When is a baptism not a baptism? A North African Dilemma'.

Presented paper at Scottish Universities History Conference at Perth. March 1993. Title of Paper:- 'Quid imperatori cum ecclesia?'

Part-time RE teaching in Belfast Royal Academy September 1986-June 1989.

Part-time PE teaching in Methodist College, Belfast, September 1975-June 1978.

Previous Church Service

Alexandra Presbyterian Church	Student Assistant (June 1980-January 1982) Assistant Minister (January 1982-May 1984)
Thompson House	Secretary of Management Committee (1982-1986)
General Board	1985-1993
Education Board	1986-1994
Chaplains Committee	1989-1993

Relevant Organisations of which I am a full member

The International Patristic Association.

Carrickfergus and District Historical Society.

The Economic and Social History Society of Ireland.
 The North American Patristic Society.
 The Presbyterian Historical Society.

Education

- | | | |
|---------|---|---|
| 1986-95 | Glasgow University
(Faculty of Divinity)
Department of Theology
and Church History.
Thesis Title: | Doctor of Philosophy,
(in Early Church History)

‘The Christian North African debate on
aspects of the Church, Ministry, and
Sacrament with special reference to the
use of Scripture’. |
| 1982-83 | American Bible College
Pinelands, Florida
USA.
Thesis Title: | Master of Theology
(Biblical Studies & Systematic
Theology)
‘The Biblical Doctrine of Infant
Baptism’
(Its history in the Church and current
problems in the administration of this
Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church in
Ireland). |
| 1978-81 | Queens University,
Belfast
(Union Theological
College) | Bachelor of Divinity
(McVicker Temperance Prize,
Carson Temperance Prize). |
| 1975-78 | Queens University
Belfast | Bachelor of Arts
(Ancient History and Ancient Near
Eastern Studies) |
| 1967-75 | Methodist College
Belfast | (Prefect, Sixth Form Committee, House
Captain, Captain of First XI Hockey)
‘O’ Levels:- English Literature, English
Language,
Maths, Additional Maths, History,
Geography, Logic, Geology.
‘A’ Levels:-Geography, Economics and
Political Science. |
| 1960-67 | Model Primary School
Carrickfergus. | Grammar School Scholarship. |

Relevant Publications to Date

- Book review:- ‘Scriptural Interpretation in the Fathers’. (Papers of The Patristic Symposium at the Second Irish Patristic Conference, 1993). Eds. Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey. (Four Courts Press, Dublin). Irish Biblical Studies. Volume 18. January 1996.

- Book review:- 'Ambrose of Milan and the End of the Arian-Nicene Conflicts' by Daniel H Williams (Clarendon Press, Oxford) *Scottish Journal of Theology*. Volume 49. January 1996.
- Book review:- 'Tertullian the Puritan and his Influence' by Cahal B Daly (Four Courts Press, Dublin) *Irish Biblical Studies*. Volume 18. January 1996.
- Booklet:- 'The "Numerical List" of James Seaton Reid'. Presbyterian Historical Society. December 1995.
- Review:- 'Wish You Were Here?' edited review of the 1995 Summer School of Theology organised by The Christian Training Centre. *The Presbyterian Herald*. September 1995.
- Book review:- 'The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon'. by Geoffrey M. Hahneman. (Clarendon Press, Oxford). *Irish Biblical Studies*. Volume 17. June 1995.
- Article:- 'Baptism, Scripture, and the problem of the Christian Sinner in Tertullian's *De Paenitentia* and *De Pudicitia*'. *Irish Biblical Studies*. Volume 17. April 1995.
- Book review:- 'Traditions of Theology in Glasgow (1450-1990)'. ed. Ian Hazlet. (Scottish Academic Press). *Irish Biblical Studies*. Volume 16. October 1994.
- Book:- 'A Sesquicentenary History of Muckamore Congregation'. March 1992.

Forthcoming Publications

- Book review:- 'The Word in the Desert. (Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism).' by Douglas Burton-Christie. (Oxford University Press). *Theology*(SPCK).
- Article:- 'Why should a Minister read Church History?' *The Presbyterian Herald*.
- Book review:- 'Arnobius of Sicca. (Religious Conflict and Competition in the Age of Diocletian.)' by Michael B Simmons. (Clarendon Press, Oxford). *Irish Biblical Studies*.
- Series of Articles:- 'Persecution in the Early Church'. *The Presbyterian Herald*.
- Article:- "Augustine's use of Scripture in *De baptismo contra donatistas*". *Irish Biblical Studies*.
- Book:- 'The Life of James Seaton Reid'. Presbyterian Historical Society.
- Book:- 'From Christ to Chalcedon. (A History of the Early Church.)' (A Textbook for students of the Early Church).

TESTIMONIALS

From: Dr James S Alexander, Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History, St Mary's College, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9JU.

I have much pleasure in supporting the application of the Rev Dr Laurence Kirkpatrick for the post of Professor of Church History advertised for your College.

I have come to know Dr Kirkpatrick over the past few years through the annual Scottish Universities Ecclesiastical History Reading Party at Perth, in which he participated regularly. His communications at this conference were always clearly structured, carefully documented, and cogently argued. I well remember him as very much to the point in discussion of questions arising out of his own paper or those of other participants, including myself. Limited as yet in his experience of teaching at university level, he could, I think, make the transition from preacher to lecturer without too much difficulty. Likable as a person, he has already learned to move easily in academic circles.

As External Examiner I thought highly of his doctoral dissertation for the University of Glasgow, submitted earlier this year on: 'The Christian North African Debate on Aspects of the Church, Ministry and Sacrament, with special reference to the use of Scripture'. I have been in correspondence with him since then and know he is continuing his studies in this area. In my report I stated that here the candidate delineates issues, so important for the future, which came to a head in the North African Church in the time of Augustine, but which, to be understood properly, must be traced back through Cyprian to Tertullian. His thesis is therefore divided into four main sections, on Tertullian, Cyprian, the Donatists, and Augustine, with appropriate introduction and conclusion. Since Scripture was commonly appealed to in argument between various groups of Christians as an authoritative source, Mr Kirkpatrick carefully examines the main Biblical texts employed to justify differing views of the Church, its ministry, and sacraments, particularly the sacrament of baptism, which he rightly sees as a central point in the North African Christian debate. He succeeds in showing how the doctrine of baptism developed over the period studied as a result of the Church's changing circumstances in the world and, in response to this, of often bitter internal bickering among Christians as to the 'who?' and 'what?' of the Church. The originality of the thesis consists in the way its author identifies a number of key Biblical texts and shows how these were variously expounded. Here he is sufficiently aware of the differences between Patristic exegesis and modern to be able to enter sympathetically into the minds of those engaged on either side of the argument, so as to relate exegetical niceties to painful decisions the Church had to take on selectivity versus comprehension, unity versus plurality, centralism versus regionalism, toleration versus coercion.

Mr Kirkpatrick writes well. The thesis is clearly presented, with full documentation and bibliography. Tables illustrating Scriptural use are sensibly relegated to Appendices. Primary sources are accurately quoted, where necessary in the original. Secondary sources are well integrated, with very few omissions, which do not substantially detract from the candidate's obvious mastery of his material.

In sum, Dr Kirkpatrick would, in my opinion, give a good account both as teacher and scholar, if appointed to your College.

JAMES S ALEXANDER

From: Rev Dr W Ian P Hazlett, Senior Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, G12 8QQ.

I am more than pleased to present a testimonial on Dr Laurence Kirkpatrick for the Church History Chair at Union Theological College. This is for two chief reasons: Firstly, he is a proven and good scholar, and secondly, I think he would be a good teacher and student counsellor.

Dr. Kirkpatrick successfully did his doctoral work at Glasgow University in the Faculty of Divinity. He was one of our most conscientious, serious-minded, and gifted research students during his association with us. Nor did he prosecute his aims in isolation, since he actively participated as far as was reasonably possible for him in the wider research community in the Glasgow Faculty and indeed in Scotland. His contribution to the Faculty Research Seminar was highly competent and impressed staff and researchers in other disciplines. He also contributed several times to the annual Church History Reading Party for Scottish University Church History departments at Perth. Here he expanded his direct contacts with other staff and researchers in the field, and so enhanced what is important for scholars, namely being a known part of a wider network. Arising out of this, he was for example invited to join the International Association of Patristic Studies, which gives him access to a world wide community of Early Church historians. In his future research, this will be very important for him and any institution with which he would be associated. In Glasgow, we have noted with satisfaction that Dr Kirkpatrick has already a number of promising publications to his name, and we are keen to encourage him further in this respect.

Were a candidate like Dr Kirkpatrick successful with his application, presumably he would, as in other institutions, undergo Staff Development training in the various arts required for teaching and supervising undergraduate and postgraduates. Yet from exchanges with me as his research supervisor, and from his performances at seminars etc, one realizes that Dr Kirkpatrick's obvious oral skills would stand him in good stead as a teacher. This communicative talent can never be taken for granted in any academic, so that I think that this must strengthen his candidature - especially at a time such as now when teaching institutions are being asked to pay more attention to developing neglected oral skills in students. Also, in observing Dr Kirkpatrick both in Glasgow and Perth, I was struck by the ease with which he could mix not only with academics, but also with undergraduate students from a wide variety of backgrounds, without being banal or superficial. Also I am convinced his manner is much more than just social, and that there is an underlying pastoral concern which also be never taken for granted in many potential teachers.

Lastly, from my knowledge of the history of the Union Theological College and the Assembly's College, I think it would be appropriate to appoint an historian with an Early Church research interest, since no one in that field of obvious major and central importance has ever been appointed before. I have little doubt that appointing Dr Kirkpatrick would provide a very welcome

enrichening asset to Union and the Queen's University Faculty of Theology, as well as the Irish Presbyterian Church. I can also foresee that he would have a lot to offer outside these institutions, to the general Church and academic field in Ulster, Ireland, and indeed beyond, so that his ambassadorial and properly ecumenical potential ought to be taken into account. Therefore I commend him very strongly to you.

W IAN P HAZLETT

From: Dr Kenneth D Scott, Director of Studies, Belfast Bible College.

It is with the greatest of pleasure that I support the application of the Rev Dr Laurence Kirkpatrick for the post of Professor of Church History in Union Theological College.

I have known Dr Kirkpatrick for the past two years and have come to appreciate him as a friend, as a lecturer and as an academic. We have valued his input in the Belfast Bible College as a lecturer on Early Church History (AD 0-325) towards one half of a GCE 'A' level in Religious Studies, offered both to full-time and to part-time students. He is now in his second year teaching that course. I sat in his classes and can vouch for the high level of teaching and content. He made Church History interesting and enjoyable. That is quite a feat. We have achieved a very high pass rate in that course, and at the end of the first year of study, 40% of the students achieved an 'A' grade and 80% a 'C' grade or better. I estimate that he was teaching his subject to degree level.

Dr Kirkpatrick was recently granted full recognition by the Queen's University of Belfast as a 'Recognized Teacher' of Church History, allowing him to teach at the Belfast Bible College towards the degree programme, and to supervise up to MPhil and PhD level. Since we were informed of that acceptance, he has given some able tutorial assistance in Church History towards higher degree examinations. We plan to use him even more. If successful in his application to your College, we will be sad to lose such a valuable part-time member of our staff. His contribution to our College has been of the highest standard.

In conclusion, I would have no hesitation in believing that Dr Kirkpatrick would be a good teacher of Church History, if appointed to your College. His pastoral, teaching and lecturing experience all auger well in that direction and have sharpened up a scholarly, practical and enthusiastic approach to what can sometimes be a difficult subject to communicate.

KENNETH D SCOTT

* * * * *

FROM: Rev Dr W Donald Patton, 23 Upper Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 6TY.

Dear Sir,

I wish to apply for the Chair of Church History in the Union Theological College, Belfast. I submit a CV with details relevant to the position in support of my application.

I have for many years taken an interest in church history. When my family and I moved to Belfast in 1988 my personal circumstances opened up the opportunity for further structured study. I was accepted as a post-graduate student in the Faculty of Theology of the Queen's University, Belfast, in 1990,

and completed my doctoral thesis in 1993, and was awarded the degree of PhD. Since then I have continued to study a variety of themes in which I have become interested. I would look forward to the challenge and stimulus of lecturing in the subject to students studying at different academic levels.

I believe 21 years experience in the pastoral ministry serving as minister in three differing congregations is relevant to the task of playing a part in the spiritual maturing of students for the ministry and of equipping them for the work of the ordained ministry, together with the other members of the College Faculty.

I have enjoyed the personnel contacts which I have had with students over the years as indicated in my CV and I would look forward to co-operating with the continuing development of the thinking of the Ad Hoc Committee on Theological Education.

I enclose testimonials from the following:

- (i) Very Rev Professor R F G Holmes
The Union Theological College
108 Botanic Avenue
Belfast, BT7 1JT.
- (ii) Very Rev Dr David Burke
149 Groomspoint Road
Bangor, BT20 5NZ.
- (iii) Very Rev Dr Andrew Rodgers
Prospect Manse
Dungannon, BT71 7BR.

The following have agreed to act as referees.

- (i) Rev Professor J S McIvor
7 Cloverhill Avenue
Lisburn, BT27 5HW.
- (ii) Rev W T J Richardson
The Manse
163 Hillhall Road
Lisburn, BT27 5JA.
- (iii) Dr W R Rowney
61 Osborne Park
Belfast, BT19 6JP.

Yours sincerely,
W DONALD PATTON

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full Name:	William Donald Patton
Address:	23 Upper Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 6TY.
Date of Birth	30th May, 1950
Status:	Married to Florence - Four children - Julie (21), Philip (18), Andrew (15), Caroline (13)

EDUCATION - EARLY

Model Primary School, Londonderry (1955-1958).
 Harte Memorial Primary School, Portadown (1958-1961).
 Portadown College (1961-1968).

EDUCATION - HIGHER

1968-1971: The Queen's University, Belfast, studying Political Science and Economics leading to the degree of Bachelor of Social Science, Hons 2:2 (BSSc).

1971-1974: Assembly's College and Queen's University, studying theology leading to the degree of Bachelor of Divinity (BD).

1993: December, I was awarded the Degree of Ph.D by the Queen's University, Belfast, for a doctoral thesis entitled:

James McCosh: The Making of a Reputation. A study of the life and work of the Rev Dr James McCosh in Ireland, from his appointment as Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in Queen's College, Belfast, 1851, to his appointment as President of Princeton College, New Jersey, and Professor of Philosophy, in 1868.

PASTORAL SERVICE

Student placement in Bessbrook congregation, summer 1972.

Student Assistant in Cregagh, Belfast, 1973-1974.

Assistant Minister in Trinity, Bangor, 1974-1977. Ordained there by a Commission of the Presbytery of Ards, January 1975.

Minister of the congregations of -

First Dromore, Co Down - 1977-1983

Greystone Road, Antrim - 1983-1988

Lowe Memorial, Finaghy, Belfast - 1988-

I have attended several courses of study over the years in relation to my pastoral work, (eg the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, Relate, etc).

Wider Service in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Boards: I have been a member of the Home board, the Communications Board, the General Board, for varying periods of time.

I served as Acting Secretary to the Communications Board, 1994-1995

Committees: I have been the Convener of the General Assembly's Committee of the Presbyterian Historical Society since 1990, and I am Joint Secretary to the Council of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Ireland.

A member of the Personnel Committee for Deaconesses for 9 years.

A member of the Assignment Committee for Assistantships, and of the Interviewing sub-committee.

I was a member of the Consultative Panel on Assistantships.

I served until last year on the Residential Interviewing Panel for candidates for the ministry.

With my co-sponsor the Rev Denis Bannerman, I was instrumental in setting up of the Assembly's Committee on Ethical Issues.

PRESBYTERY

I have served in various capacities in four Presbyteries over the years, most recently as a member of the Presbytery of Belfast South, acting as Christian Training Agent, and Convener for Visitations among other roles, and I served as Moderator of this Presbytery for a year.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Lectures and Broadcasting: I have given two lectures to the Presbyterian Historical Society - one on the Sixmilewater Revival, and another on James McCosh in Ireland. I have given a variety of other lectures to different audiences over the years (eg a seminar of the Coleraine Assembly) including historical themes.

For three or four years since living in Belfast I have given expository lectures on books of the Bible (Nehemiah, Exodus, Leviticus, I & II Chronicles) to full-time students in the Belfast Bible College, once a week for one term. This involved setting essay questions and examination papers, and the marking of them. I discontinued this when I started my doctoral thesis.

I have conducted worship services broadcast on Ulster Television, BBC Radio Four, and BBC Radio Ulster. I have contributed several times to "Thought for the day" on BBC Radio Ulster.

PUBLICATIONS

The Church on the Hill. A short history of First Dromore Presbyterian Church.

Living where the River Flows. Memorial of and a tribute to John Talbot Carson. (Editor and contributor).

My Paul prize essay for Union College, on 'The Rev Dr William Campbell of Armagh, Presbyterian and Patriot' is being considered for publication by the Presbyterian Historical Society.

Book review of: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1840-1990: a celebration of Irish Presbyterian Witness during a century and a half in The Bulletin of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, vol.20, March 1991.

TESTIMONIALS

From: Very Rev Prof R F G Holmes, Union Theological College, Belfast.

I have known the Rev Dr Donald Patton since he was one of my students in College a quarter of a century ago. He was an excellent student and showed particular interest and ability in church history. More recently he has been one of my post-graduate students, graduating PhD in Queen's University, Belfast, 1993. He had embarked originally on studies for a Master's degree but it was soon recognised that the range and depths of his researches and the importance of his subject, the life and work of the Rev James McCosh, an early professor of philosophy in the Belfast Queen's College and later President of Princeton College, New Jersey, made it more appropriate that he should be enrolled as a PhD student. That he should have completed his doctoral studies while minister

of a very large Belfast congregation is clear evidence of his industry and discipline in the use of time. His study of James McCosh's life and work involved research into many areas of nineteenth century church history, including such questions as the tensions between religion and science and the 1859 revival.

Dr Patton has also demonstrated his interest in Irish Presbyterian History as joint secretary of the Council of the Presbyterian Historical Society under whose auspices he has given two important lectures, one on the Sixmilewater Revival and the other on the life and work of James McCosh in Ireland. He has been awarded the Paul Memorial Prize in church history for an essay on the Rev William Campbell of Armagh, a significant eighteenth century Irish Presbyterian radical and patriot. He has therefore done original research work in seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century Irish Presbyterianism.

He has gained teaching and examining experience in the Belfast Bible College, and his own ministerial experience in Bangor, Dromore, Antrim and Belfast equip him for the training of men and women for the ministry.

I cannot conclude without further reference to Dr Patton's attractive personality. It was a pleasure to supervise his doctoral research and whether in congregational ministry or in the College he will always be a powerful influence for good in Church and community.

R F G HOLMES

From: Very Rev Dr David Burke, 149 Groomsport Road, Bangor, BT20 5NZ.

It is with much pleasure that I write to commend the application of the Rev Dr Donald Patton for the chair of Church History in Union Theological College. I have known him for most of his ministry and can speak of one who is most devoted to his "calling". He is a most gracious and understanding person, with real encouragement to others in all his relationships, but allied to this he has a clear and concise manner in expressing judgement in all his statements on relevant matters.

In my knowledge of him personally and of the congregations where he ministered I found one who was most meticulous in all his preparation for the pulpit and the various groups and meetings where he taught. Also with that there was a loving pastoral concern for his people. His wisdom and all the help that followed was deeply appreciated.

Dr Patton also applied himself most meticulously to further study. His various degrees and other 'papers' speak of this. He has also that ability to communicate his knowledge in a clear and concise fashion to all his audience at meetings and various classes - paying attention to their age and background.

It is with true confidence that I support his application for this post.

DAVID BURKE

From: Very Rev Dr A R Rodgers, Prospect Manse, Dungannon, BT71 7BR.

It is with genuine pleasure that I write in support of the Rev Dr Donald Patton's application for consideration for the Chair of Church History in Union College.

I have known Donald Patton for many years, and have followed his career with prayerful interest, as his wife's sister, the late Mrs Margaret Martin and her husband, Hubert, have been close and valued friends for the past 25 years.

I also enjoyed the friendship of the late Very Rev Dr J T Carson and remember very clearly the glowing accounts he gave me of his excellent assistant, Donald Patton who shared with him a great love of Church History.

So this application is no impulsive reaction to the vacancy created by the retirement of Rev Prof Finlay Holmes, but rather a carefully and prayerfully considered response by an enthusiastic scholar of Church History to a deep conviction that God might very well be calling him to a teaching ministry.

Regarding his academic qualifications, as I am not qualified to comment on this matter, I leave it confidently in the eminently capable hands of Professor Holmes and Professor McIvor.

By serving on the Interviewing Panel for prospective students for the ministry over the past 5 years, I have seen at first hand, the ease with which Dr Patton has mixed with students, and identified with them; and on the other hand, the discernment and diligence which he exercised in seeking to assess them as to their suitability for the ministry.

With the emphasis, more and more on seeking to prepare our students for the ministry not only academically, but also practically, Dr Patton comes particularly well-equipped to fulfil that aim, having ministered with great acceptance as Assistant in Trinity, Bangor, followed by 6 years in the rural setting of a country town as Minister of First Dromore. He then experienced the challenge of ministry in a comparatively new congregation in an urban Church Extension setting as he served for 5 years in Greystone Road, Antrim. He is now in his eighth year as Minister of Lowe Memorial, Finaghy where he has proved himself to be a worthy successor of the late Dr Alan Flavelle, who exercised such an outstanding ministry both in Finaghy and in Mourne, Kilkeel.

Such a varied and valuable ministry means that Dr Donald Patton, at 46 years of age, would bring this wealth of mature practical experience to the Lecture Room to the inevitable benefit of the students.

Dr Patton would also bring another essential skill to the college in his undoubted and proven ability as an excellent communicator. Not every competent and well qualified scholar is capable of communicating knowledge to others effectively. I have heard Dr Patton preach on several occasions, and have listened to him often on "Thought for the Day", and his content, format, and delivery leave nothing to be desired, and I am convinced that those talents, focused on Church History, would provide compelling interest for our students.

Essentially a family man, Dr Patton would bring mature advice to our students in the difficult balance to be maintained between congregational and family loyalties. His wife, Florence, is very capable and supportive.

In conclusion, I have found Donald Patton to combine the many virtues of Integrity, Dignity, Sincerity, Authority, Humility, Humanity, Maturity and Spirituality.

I commend him wholeheartedly, for the post of Professor of Church History believing that he would grace that chair, and under God, be a blessing to the students, and a useful and worthy member of the College Faculty.

ANDREW R RODGERS

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That all applicants to the Nomination Board be normally required to demonstrate their active involvement in church life. This may be by testimonial or by naming a confidential referee. The Kirk Session or the Presbytery, the minister or the Clerk of Presbytery may be invited to act in this capacity as appropriate.
3. That the Nomination Board continue to review its procedures and report to the 1997 Assembly.
4. That Rev J H Robinson be appointed as Director of Ministerial Students.
5. That _____ be appointed as Professor of Church History.
6. That the Nomination Board be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 276 of the Code as follows:

INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS BOARD

Convener: Rev R HERRON

1. The Board met on two occasions during the last year. Two items are highlighted in this section of the report.

Future Structure of the Board

2. The 1995 General Assembly instructed the Inter-Church Relations Board to “continue consultations with other relevant Boards about future structure and strategy and report to the 1996 General Assembly.” After consultation with the Secretaries of the Overseas Board and Board of Social Witness, and the Clerk in connection with the General Board, the Co-ordinating Committee considered various options for a possible restructuring of the Board. The options considered ranged from a complete dismantling of the Board, with World Development, Race Relations and Inter-Church Relations becoming committees of other boards or items on the agenda of other committees, to expanding the workload of the Board to include other issues. A willingness to make changes was apparent. However, it became clear that any changes in the Inter-Church Relations Board would effect the work of other Boards that already have a full agenda. Therefore it was concluded that the Board should remain in its present form.

3. It was agreed that the World Church Relations and Irish Church Relations Committees should have a further look at the way in which inter-church business is handled. One of the weaknesses in our present method is that only a few people are involved in the day-to-day work, that is, those who serve on inter-church bodies. This means that for some there is a considerable time commitment while other Board and Committee members have opportunity to listen to what other people are doing. If we are to continue the process of building upon the bilateral relationships we have been trying to establish with churches outside the main ecumenical structures, it will be necessary to have a wider sharing of responsibility.

4. For inter-church relations to be effective at a denominational level our structures must also have built within them a way of encouraging an inter-church dimension to the work of other Boards and Committees. This is already happening, indeed, it could be argued that there is more inter-church relations in the Overseas Board, the Youth Board, the Board of Education and the General Board than in the Inter-Church Relations Board. Co-ordination would seem to be a key word but it is difficult to see how this can be achieved without an inter-church office and staff. There are representatives of some other Boards on the ICRB and this could be expanded but again we would be giving extra work to people who possibly feel they have enough work to do in their own field of service. The Church of Scotland has restructured its inter-church department in order to encourage inter-church affairs throughout other departments but this has

been at the expense of not having Presbytery Representatives on its Ecumenical Affairs Committee.

5. An inter-church dimension to the life of local congregations must be a priority. This may be little more than providing an opportunity for members to hear the views of members of other churches and vice versa. When people enter into a serious exchange of views there is the possibility that there may be scope for co-operation on particular issues. Already many of our congregations are working together with churches from different traditions but this could be developed further. Any proposals for change in the Irish inter-church structures must address the issue of local ecumenism.

6. Concerning inter-church relations, there is a more fundamental issue that is always before us. What are we aiming at? If structural church unity is not our goal, and this subject is not on the agenda of any ecumenical body of which PCI is in membership, then what are we trying to do? Simply 'relating' to other churches is so vague that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate success or otherwise. At the same time, many of our members believe that we should co-operate with other churches in so far as this is possible. This would appear to be the best way forward and it can produce a result if we keep our feet on the ground and our sights on the goal-posts. It is just possible that with the right build-up and commitment we might score. Given the diversity of opinion that exists within PCI on the issue of ecumenism, inter-church relations may best be played at a slow pace. Those who are impatient will have to learn to be more patient. Those who like to go on solo runs will have to realise that that is exactly what they are doing. Those who would rather stand in the crowd and jeer should recognise that they are also players on the pitch. Those who would want to take the whistle and give it a final blast will have to think again because there will be no winners unless the match continues to the end. Those who think it is all a game are misguided!

Call to Rev D J McCarthy

7. During the year a call was issued to Rev David McCarthy, as a minister in recognised service, in his work as General Secretary of Evangelical Alliance (NI). Reports are appended from the six ministers in "Recognised Ministry" under the care of the Board.

Ministers in Recognised Service

Rev David Campbell reports:

1. The highlight of my work with the Bible Society in Northern Ireland in the past year was having the privilege and opportunity to visit the Amity Printing Company at Nanjing in China, to share in the celebrations to mark the publication of the 10 millionth Bible. It was a great occasion attended by representatives of the United Bible Societies, the China Christian Council, the Amity Foundation and staff of the Amity Printing Company. Speeches recounted the history of the printing company and told how it has helped to meet the Bible need in the vast country of China where the church is growing at a rapid rate.

Rev. Andrew Gibson reports:

1. My work at Belfast Bible College continues to be stimulating and satisfying. Teaching in an atmosphere of open enquiry and harmonious fellowship is very enriching.

2. This year we have expanded our ministry to the local Church by developing an evening class programme in conjunction with the Causeway Institute of Further and Higher Education, based in Coleraine. This has been very well attended with around half of the students and teachers being Presbyterian and with ten other denominations participating. Over the next few years we look forward to seeing these students filtering what they have learned back into the life of their local congregations thus enriching their corporate witness and fellowship.

Rev. Desmond Maxwell reports:

1. Life at Belfast Bible College continues to be as fulfilling as it is exciting. Alongside the teaching on campus our College on the Doorstep programme takes me into a wide range of churches but I often find myself working within the familiar context of our own denomination as congregations in a particular area come together for a teaching series. My annual visits to Eastern Europe continue and during last summer I had the opportunity to teach in a series of centres in both Ukraine and Croatia. At home Elmwood Congregation provides a constant source of support.

Rev. Dr. John Morrow reports:

My main duties with the Irish School of Ecumenics continue to be:

1. Ongoing responsibility for the University of Ulster Certificate in Ecumenics Course in Belfast and Londonderry.

2. Development of new shorter courses in various locations (currently in Belfast, Newry and Armagh).

3. Shared responsibility for a course on Conflict and Peace in Ireland based in Dublin (including field work in N Ireland).

4. Shared responsibility with Corrymeela for Annual Consultation on Ministry (This years' theme is 'The Churches and Community Involvement' March 12 and 13).

In addition to the above I give a lot of time to Presbytery and General Assembly's Peace and Peacemaking Committees and to an 'Inter Church Group on Faith and Politics'.

The importance of cross-community dialogue at this time can hardly be overemphasised so I would urge Ministers to encourage their members to participate in these programmes.

Rev. Ian McDowell reports:

I continue my work as National Secretary for Ireland for Christian Aid. I am responsible for the team of staff working in Ireland to promote concern and action on issues of world poverty and world justice. This involves working closely with the PCI World Development Committee and equivalent groups in other sponsoring churches, supporting their educational and fund-raising

activities. I work with Christian Aid local organisers in Belfast who run Christian Aid Week and visit many local church services and groups. I encourage people to get involved in campaigning actions, seeking to influence our governments and international bodies so that the world can become a more just place. In all this I am seeking to promote Christian thinking and action, and I see it as very much part of Christian ministry.

Rev. Ruth Patterson reports:

1. The work of Restoration Ministries continues to develop in the vital areas of healing and reconciliation. In August 1995 we were delighted to have Sister Consilia Dennehy join us on a part-time basis, funded by her Order (Bon Secours). Her coming has opened many doors for us. The opportunities for speaking, listening, praying and bridge-building are numerous.

2. I am grateful for the continuing encouragement of the Inter-Church Relations Board, and the growing interest throughout the Church. Please pray for the work - along with all the Friends of Restoration Ministries, who do so every day at twelve noon.

IRISH CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. In the past year the business of the Irish Church Relations Committee has focused on the work of the Irish Council of Churches, the Irish Inter-Church Committee and relating to other churches outside of the formal councils of churches.

Irish Council of Churches

2. The Autumn Gathering took place in McCracken Presbyterian Church on 4 October 1995. Mr David Porter spoke on the work of Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland. At the Board of Inter-Church Affairs the Rev Prof Cecil McCullough reported on the Leuenberg talks between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.

3. The Developing Missionary Congregations Project continues. Surveys have been conducted in South West Belfast, the Dundrum area of Dublin and Carlow/Kilkenny. A meeting between representatives of the evangelism committees of the Church of Ireland, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches was convened and information exchanged.

4. Changes have been taking place in ICC. There are now only two boards - the Board of Inter-Church Affairs and Overseas Board. Members of the Executive Committee are now nominated by member churches rather than the Council. Discussions continue to take place regarding the future of ICC and its relationship to the Inter-Church Meeting. A scheme for rationalisation of the inter-church bodies in Ireland is being considered.

5. The AGM is planned for 22-23 March 1996 in Dromantine House, Newry. The subject of the evening session will be "Issues in Evangelism" led by members of the Four Nations Forum on Evangelisation. At the AGM the

Council will consider an application for membership from the Greek Orthodox Church.

Irish Inter-Church Meeting

6. The Irish Inter-Church Meeting convened on 3-4 November 1995. The theme on the Friday evening was "The churches particular contribution to peace at this time". The speakers were David Porter, Development Officer of the Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland, Rt Rev James Mehaffey, Church of Ireland, Bishop of Derry and Raphoe and Most Rev Michael Dallat, Roman Catholic, Auxiliary Bishop of Down and Connor. On Saturday the theme was "The Challenges Facing us in Ireland today". This session was led by the Meeting's Department of Theological Questions with input from Rev Prof John Thompson and Father Gerry O'Hanlon SJ. The Meeting also received reports on the follow-up to the report "Sectarianism - A Discussion Document", the work of the Department of Social Issues, and on promoting and supporting local inter-church activity. In both sessions there was opportunity for small group discussion.

7. The issue of Sunday trading has been taken up by the Inter-Church Meeting and the Four Church Leaders have issued a statement.

8. A meeting has been arranged to find out what the churches are planning for the millennium and to explore what might be possible to do together.

Relating to other churches

9. On 1 February 1996 the Conveners of the Board and Committee met Pastor William Colville, Secretary, and Pastor Sam Carson, President, of the Baptist Union. The meeting was very congenial. It was pointed out that the Baptist Union is not a denomination but a union of churches. The Union looks to areas of common interest between the Baptist churches, such as, mission, youth, and social issues. The discussion covered trends in our churches and issues in society. It was agreed that there could be co-operation between PCI and the Union on areas of common concern, for example, ethical, social and youth issues. It was agreed to exchange Annual Reports.

10. Consultations have now taken place with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Baptist Union. The Committee plans to meet representatives of the Congregational Union next. Plans will have to be made to ensure that the contacts made will continue and lead to practical co-operation.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity & Evangelical Alliance World Prayer Week

11. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity literature will be made available from the Irish Inter-Church Meeting rather than through Church House. Evangelical Alliance World Prayer Week leaflet can be received directly from EA.

TONY DAVIDSON, Convener

APPENDIX

INTER-CHURCH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met in January, 1996. The members of the Committee are:

Church of Ireland	Methodist	Presbyterian
The Bishop of Limerick (Chairman)	Rev P Kingston	Rev A D Davidson
Rev I J E Knox	Rev T M Kingston	Rev R Herron
Ven G A McCamley	Rev E T I Mawhinney	Mrs E Cobain
Very Rev J T F Paterson	Miss D Blake	Rev R F S Poots

2. The Committee welcomed the information that a number of exchanges had taken place between Church of Ireland and Presbyterian students for the ministry and sporting fixtures enjoyed. Further small group exchanges of up to one week have been planned.

3. Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford will become vacant on 30 June, 1996. The Presbyterian Home Board will be responsible for seeking to fill the vacancy.

4. Reports were received from two Church of Ireland/Methodist schemes.

5. Canon W R D McCreery and Rev C J Meharry reported on the scheme at The Primacy, Bangor.

6. The Church building, situated in a 95% Protestant area which has drawn families from Belfast, was consecrated in 1984 to serve both Church of Ireland and Methodist Church members which now number 225 and 175 families respectively. The Church of Ireland membership is still under the care of Bangor Parish but it is hoped that it will become a parish in its own right within a year.

7. There is a joint evening service, a joint monthly Communion Service and shared activities, such as uniformed organisations and Bowling Club, but the Select Vestry and the Leaders' Meeting operate independently.

8. Difficulties of space and, occasionally, of ethos were noted and the two communions are expected to move increasingly from a 'them and us' to an 'us together' mentality. The privilege of working together with "brothers and sisters" of a different communion was expressed and the advantages of the joint scheme outweigh any disadvantages.

9. Captain S J McDonald and Rev C Taylor reported on the scheme at Glencairn, Belfast.

10. The ministry is in an area off the Shankill which was once the dumping ground of the Shankill Butchers. Unemployment, drug abuse, paramilitary activities, joy riding, social unrest and murders are characteristic of the locality.

11. Economic problems abound with scarcely one church member on a full-time income. Population shift has reduced a population of 5,000 to 3,000, housing has been demolished and local shops closed with the result that the estates have failed to develop an identity. Public transport carries shoppers to the Shankill Road and buses take people out to the 'large crowd' Churches on

Sundays where they feel comfortable in the anonymity of a crowd. An attempt is being made to attract house buyers by the provision of good quality, affordable housing through Habitat for Humanity, a Christian housing organisation.

12. Church Services are shared and preachers alternate. There is an elderly persons' luncheon club and a playgroup of 20 children. Around 45 adults and 30 children attend Church though there has been encouraging interest in an Alpha Course. ACE workers and a community visitor are active.

13. The Church aims to provide an ethos within which people can discover a faith for themselves and while there have been some developments there is still a long way to go in bringing the message of the Gospel to this locality.

RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. Race relations issues in Ireland and the need for greater awareness and action on the part of both government and our own church members have been particular concerns of the committee during this past year.

2. Three one-day training workshops on Race Relations Awareness and Anti-Racism, led by Fee Ching Leong from the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre, were arranged for members of congregations in the three Belfast presbyteries. We are indebted to the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre for the leadership of these and for regularly providing our committee with information about the existence and concerns of various racial ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland. The Convener was asked to participate in an evaluation of the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre in February along with representatives of other groups who depend upon its services, including the RUC and the social work training departments. The growing appreciation of the necessity for and benefits of such a centre in Northern Ireland were matched by a concern about the limited facilities and staff available to carry out its work. The Committee bring a resolution through the Board to expand our financial support for this centre.

3. In our report to the 1995 Assembly we expressed concern that no race relations legislation existed for Northern Ireland. Such legislation, which exists for the rest of the United Kingdom, has been promised to be introduced in Northern Ireland. However, we are disappointed to report that at the time of writing the legislation is still only in the drafting stage. We understand that draft legislation should appear over the summer and we intend to continue to monitor developments. During the consultation period we hope to convene a meeting with representatives of other churches, with representatives of ethnic minority groups and with civil servants involved in the drafting to discuss the adequacy and appropriateness of the proposed legislation.

4. The Committee is aware that there is considerable debate around the proposed new UK Immigration and Asylum Bill and that a number of campaigns by church and other groups have been launched to advocate fundamental changes to it. We continue to monitor immigration and asylum legislation being proposed for both the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland because of potential race issues related to them.

5. The Committee gives thanks for the progress which continues to be made in South Africa and urges congregations to continue to pray for all of the people of South Africa as the difficult task of reshaping their society continues.

6. In 1995 the Assembly agreed to contribute £2100 to the work of the Koinonia Conference Centre / Vuleka Trust in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. KwaZulu/Natal has been a region of horrific violence that requires relatively minor triggering to unleash massive forces of destruction. In addition, 50% of KwaZulu Natal's population is under the age of 15. In this context the Vuleka Trust has played its role, during the past few years, in facilitating talks between groups in conflict with one another and in drawing together in networking activities, other individuals and organisations who are similarly involved in the mediation process. Emphasis has been on skill training with 175 participants from all races having completed by the end of 1995, 150 hours of training in Basic Human Relations, Handling Conflict Creatively, Effective Negotiating Skills, and Mediation Skills. Those who during the four module courses show the required aptitude as potential trainers are invited to join the training staff in subsequent courses. Vuleka/ Koinonia are currently engaged in the preparation of a skills programme to enable people in strife-torn areas to reconstruct their community life. This will focus on helping people to deal with their pain, anger, suffering, resentment, acceptance and costly forgiveness and reconciliation as they strive for wholeness in themselves and in their community. Two special programmes operate in conjunction with six secondary schools in the vicinity and a further programme attempt to engage the wider church at grass roots level in the above range of activities. The Koinonia Centre itself is emerging as a community of Christian people from various ethnic/racial backgrounds who are committed to peace processes and the healing of the wounds caused by division and violence as an expression of their faith. The Committee bring a resolution through the Board to continue our financial support for this centre.

DOUG BAKER, Convener

WORLD CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. During the past year the Committee has continued to relate to the international bodies to which PCI belongs. These include the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Leuenberg Assembly. We also continue to develop our relationships with the Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church.

World Alliance of Reformed Churches

2. Reports were received from the European Assembly that took place in Edinburgh from 23 August - 3 September 1995. The Council met under the theme "Hope and Renewal in Times of Change". The PCI delegation had some input into the wording of the recommendation on 'Evangelisation' which now reads "Evangelisation of the peoples of Europe should be strongly encouraged in the European Reformed Churches; on the one hand as an invitation to faith

and renewal and on the other by consideration of how the Gospel of Jesus Christ can be expressed in a fast changing modern world”.

3. An invitation was received to the 23rd General Council of WARC, to be held in Debrecen, Hungary in August 1997. PCI has been allocated four places.

4. The Rev John Kirkpatrick has been elected to the European Area Committee and Miss Daphne Gilmour continues to serve on the Executive Committee.

Conference of European Churches

5. A joint delegation from the Conference of European Churches and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences met some members of PCI at Church House in November. The delegation issued a statement after their visit which was mainly for the purposes of fact finding and to identify with the Irish Churches in their quest for peace. A further reason for the visit was to promote the Joint CEC/CCEE Ecumenical Assembly to be held in Graz, Austria, 23-29 June 1997. PCI has been invited to send three delegates. The theme of the Assembly will be “Reconciliation: Gift of God and Source of New Life”, and a study guide is available.

6. An invitation has also been received to send three delegates to the 11th Assembly of the Conference of European Churches to be held in Graz, Austria, 30 June - 4 July 1997.

United Reformed Church

7. A PCI delegation visited the United Reformed Church in the West Midlands province in October.

8. In December the Convener of the Committee visited the offices of the URC in the London. He met the Rev Tony Coates who gave an overview of the current issues facing the URC.

9. The Rev Jim Waring attended the URC Assembly at Eastbourne in July as a delegate. He also attended a meeting of the Ecumenical Committee of the URC at Yardley, Hastings at the end of January.

Church of Scotland

10. The Committee is considering how best to follow up the meetings that have taken place in recent years between representatives of PCI and the Church of Scotland.

Leuenberg Fellowship

11. Prof Cecil McCullough continues to serve as a member of the Executive Committee of the Leuenberg Fellowship. During the past year he addressed the World Church Relations Committee on the work of the Fellowship and gave an update on the issue of talks with the Methodist Church. PCI has been invited to assent to the ‘Joint Declaration of the Church Fellowship’ between the Methodist churches in Europe and the Churches linked by the Leuenberg Agreement.

General

12. In November a group from the World Council of Churches invited PCI to meet with them while they were in Northern Ireland. Seven members of PCI attended the meeting and reported to the World Churches Relations Committee.

13. The Convener had the opportunity to visit the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva in May 1995 to have discussions with staff members of WARC and CEC.

DAVID CAMPBELL, Convener

WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. Together with supporting projects in the 'Two-thirds World' through Christian Aid and TEAR Fund, the Committee seeks to educate about world development issues. September saw the launch of two videos that were filmed during a visit to South Africa in February 1995 by Naomi Hodgins, Marion Jones and Timothy Magowan, who, together with the Convener, spent three weeks seeing development projects in Soweto and Lesotho.

2. The first video 'Through African Eyes', which allows Africans to tell what development means to them in their situation, is designed for general adult audiences. The second video called 'A World of a Difference' is specifically aimed at young people. The videos were made by PCI Video and are of a very high standard and have been extremely well received. It is very important that the church makes maximum use of this new resource. Copies are available from each Presbytery's world development agent. They are also available through the PWA Office, Youth Office and Information Office in Church House. There is no cost for the hire of the videos - the important thing is the message the video contains.

3. The 1995 Appeal on the theme 'Building Communities: Learning Together' raised £324,469 (12.3.96). The generosity of the Church has to be set, in a United Kingdom context, against the background of reductions in overseas aid by the British Government of 5.4%. Our great concern is not only at the effects of this cut but that it may be the first of a succession of cuts. Before the cut the British Government was only contributing 0.31% of GNP to overseas aid. It will have an enormous impact on millions of very poor people.

4. As well as supporting projects and education about world development issues, the Committee understands the Church to have a role in advocacy - speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves. We maintain a list of church members who are prepared to write to governments or other institutions whose policy or actions threaten the poor in the 'Two-thirds World'. We are constantly looking for others who are prepared to write when an urgent need arises, hopefully a maximum of three letters a year. The Committee provides all the information and a specimen letter. Further information is available from the Convener.

D R PURCE, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

World Development

2. That the General Assembly encourage congregations to make maximum use of the World Development videos as a significant means of educating on development issues.

Race Relations

3. That the importance of Race Relations in a universal church with a gospel for all be brought before congregations on Sunday January 12, 1997 or on some other suitable occasion.

World Church Relations

4. That the following be appointed to attend the Second European Ecumenical Assembly in Graz, Austria, 23-29 June 1997: Revs. Dr. J. Dunlop, S. Hutchinson,

5. That the following be appointed to attend the 11th Assembly of the Conference of European Churches in Graz, Austria, 30 June - 4 July 1997: Revs. D. Campbell, S. Hutchinson,

6. That the following be appointed to attend the 23rd General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Debrecen, Hungary, 8-20 August 1997: Revs R Herron, J A Kirkpatrick; Miss D Gilmour, Miss P A Lockie.

Irish Church Relations

That the following appointments be made:

7. To the Irish Council of Churches - Revs W Bingham, S J. Campbell, A D Davidson, Dr J Dunlop, Dr R J G Gray; Miss D Gilmour; Revs R Herron, S Hutchinson; Mrs M Irwin, Miss. P A Lockie; Revs D Mark, T J McCormick, C J C McMullen; Miss C McRoberts; Rev D Nesbitt, Mr J A Patterson; Rev Dr W W Porter; Mrs E Shepherd; Rev J A McN Scott.

8. To the Executive Committee of the Irish Council of Churches - Revs A D Davidson, R Herron, S Hutchinson, T J McCormick.

9. To the Irish Inter-Church Committee - Revs R Herron, S Hutchinson.

General

10. That the following grants be made from the Incidental Fund:

Irish Council of Churches	£25,600
Irish Inter-Church Meeting	£3,000
Conference of European Churches	£1,577
Conference of European Churches Development Fund	£287
Conference of European Churches (Graz Assemblies 1997)	£750
Leuenberg Fellowship	£466
World Alliance of Reformed Churches	£7,389
World Alliance of Reformed Churches Partnership Fund	£739

Race Relations Grant:

(a) Koinonia Conference Centre	£2,000
Vuleka Trust, Kwazulu-Natal	
(b) Multi-Cultural Resource Centre	£1,300
Bryson House, Belfast	
General Work of the Board	£3,500

11. That the Inter-Church Relations Board, with its associated working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 278 of the Code as follows:

OVERSEAS BOARD

Convener: Rev S J CAMPBELL
 Secretaries: Rev R J T McMULLAN
 Miss E BRIAN

WHAT, IN THE WORLD, ARE WE DOING?

1. The purpose of the Overseas Mission of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is:

“To proclaim the gospel in word and action in such countries and in such ways as the General Assembly or its Overseas Board may from time to time determine, wherever possible with Churches in that country or area.” {Code Par 115 (1)}

The policy of the Board drawn up in 1993 and reported to the Assembly in that year is as follows:

“The Presbyterian Church in Ireland accepts the unchanging Commission of Christ, its Lord, to proclaim the Gospel in word and action to people throughout the world. The Overseas Board accepts its responsibility to stimulate the interest and active involvement of individuals, congregations and Presbyteries and to encourage and support missionary service.”

Through this report we will seek to show how we have fulfilled this very comprehensive remit given to the Board by the General Assembly.

2. As a church and an Overseas Mission we are primarily concerned with the proclamation of the Gospel, with the growth of the Church and with the establishing of people in their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and their membership of His body, the Church. Those who offer for missionary service are not ‘called’ to be teachers, doctors, agriculturalists, community workers, but to be missionaries - to be witnesses for Jesus Christ in the contexts in which they serve him. They see their God-given skills as a means to progress the Gospel, to win men and women and young people to Jesus Christ and to see his Kingdom established, and they do so working with Christian people in the countries where they serve.

3. Most of our missionaries serve within the context of a partner Church and these Churches are involved in the proclamation of the Gospel. They encourage their people to witness to Christ by life and lip and they go forth as servants of Jesus Christ showing his love and compassion to all, irrespective of class or creed - in other words they take the Gospel in all its fullness to all of the people and their aim is to glorify Christ and to establish His Church.

ASIA - A CULTURAL COMPLEX

4. It is difficult for us to understand what it is like to be a Christian in a society which is predominantly Hindu, Islamic or Buddhist. Early missionary activity did not distinguish between what was culture and what was religion. Only now are attempts being made to help Christians use some festivals and

traditions to confirm and strengthen their faith. In many situations this is not possible as the religious element is so strong and alien that there has to be complete separation. For first generation Christians especially, this means great sacrifice and often persecution as they are cut off from family and the benefits of being part of society. Even in countries where freedom of religion is written into the constitution Christian communities may be disadvantaged in subtle and sometimes obvious ways. The result is usually a strengthening of faith and growth in the Church as evidenced by our partners in Asia.

5. **India** with its nine hundred million people made up of Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Christians and others presents the greatest challenge to the Christian Gospel in today's world. Every religious group has its militant members and there are many problems, and not a little persecution, experienced by Christians who are most numerous among the poor and oppressed.

6. It was to India that our first missionaries were sent in 1840 and today we are in partnership with the Church of North India, a united Church made up of six distinct Christian traditions. We have been supporting the evangelism and outreach work, particularly in the Diocese of Gujarat where Rev Vinod Malaviya was installed as Bishop in October 1995. We have supported the evangelists in the Gujarat Missionary Movement and have been encouraging the training of candidates for ministry in the Church in Gujarat.

7. We were privileged to have Rev Nicholas Parmar, the Secretary of the Gujarat Auxiliary of the Bible Society of India, with us for three weeks. During that time he spoke of the vision of the Church for evangelism and outreach and the spread of the word of God particularly among tribal peoples. Our Moderator, Rt Rev Dr John Ross, on his visit to Gujarat, was impressed with the commitment of Christ's people to the spread of the Gospel and the establishing of His Church.

8. Though we are unable to send missionaries to India, except to certain institutions as teachers, we have been promoting exchange visits. In June this year we expect to welcome a team of young people from the Church of North India to share with our young people their love for Christ and to learn about our Church and its mission to the people of Ireland.

9. In one of the institutions where some of the leaders of India have received their education we are privileged to share in this ministry. Woodstock School has a strategic ministry to the young men and women, boys and girls who enter its portals and many have come to a living faith in Jesus Christ during their years at Woodstock.

10. In **Nepal** Church growth has been dramatic during the past few years and, despite an ingress of denominationalism, there have been significant united efforts in evangelism. In January 1996 over 2,000 delegates from Nepal and surrounding countries with Nepali speaking communities met in India for a Congress on Evangelism. The United Mission to Nepal is constantly looking at ways of helping the indigenous church without compromising the agreement signed with the government. Through its development work in health, education, industry, hydro electric power, agriculture and forestry the UMN witnesses to the wholeness of the Gospel and shows the love of Christ for the people. We have continued to provide support and, since the last Assembly, no fewer than six missionaries have been sent to Nepal.

11. The great need of the Church in Nepal is for trained leadership so that those brought into the Church through the various evangelistic efforts can be built up in the faith. A central theological library has been started in Kathmandu by the Association of Biblical Education in Nepal (ABEN) but it needs a six thousand volume library so that associated Bible Colleges can be accredited with the Asian Theological Association.

12. In **Thailand** our association with the 'Lamp of Thailand' Bible Correspondence Course project of the Church of Christ and our knowledge of the excellent work done by the dedicated staff at the Centre in Chang Mai has resulted in a decision to increase our financial support to £6,000 a year from 1996. This has been greatly appreciated

13. During the past year the Rev Terry McMullan visited **Pakistan** and a Union Theological College student, Mr Bobby Liddle, together with his wife and family, spent a month looking at the work of the Presbyterian Church (PCP). These visits were a great encouragement to the PCP and confirmed to them our desire to continue and, if possible, develop the partnership. The Young Women's Groups of the PCI have decided to include the PCP in their 1996/97 overseas project.

14. After a gap of three years we have a teacher of English as a foreign language going to **China** under the Amity Teachers Programme. While this has been a very successful programme, with quite a number of volunteers extending their two year contract to three or even four years, there has been a drop off in the number of applicants recently. The Amity Foundation reached its tenth anniversary in 1995. Its achievements over the ten years have been considerable and included the printing of ten million Bibles on its very modern presses, the provision of medical care especially to the old and vulnerable in society, disaster relief, rural development and education projects.

15. We were made very aware of the inadequacies in the care of orphans in China through the TV programmes 'The Dying Rooms'. The Amity Foundation, while being critical of some of the conclusions drawn by the programmes, nevertheless confirmed the tremendous lack of resources for orphanages and outlined the voluntary assistance they had been providing in a number of areas to improve the situation.

16. The Church in China is having increasing opportunities for contact with the world-wide church. Last year a group of ministers came to Britain and Ireland on a study tour and later this year or early next year a group of theological teachers will make a similar visit. Large numbers of individuals and church groups are visiting China as travel becomes easier. Through the China Forum and from other sources a large amount of information is available about the situation in China. Our Asia Committee has recognised the need for a person with time to study and distil this information for the benefit of the Committee and the wider church.

17. The release from house arrest of the leader of the opposition to the military government in **Myanmar (Burma)** last year gave a hope that a movement towards democracy would follow but this has not been the case. The church in Myanmar looks forward to the day when it can be more involved in education and social work as its mission work to the remote areas of the country has revealed great need in these areas. Our support of the Presbyterian Church

has included a grant to its literature programme, provision of experience for theological students in the country and a scholarship for a minister to undertake higher studies in Singapore.

18. Scholarship funding has also been important for the church in **Indonesia**, especially in Halmahera where support has been given in both the theological and medical fields. We are also helping with the translating and publishing of Professor James Haire's book on the history of the Church in Halmahera as it will be of use as a textbook in other areas of Indonesia. In Timor we have been supporting an American volunteer who is continuing the work of teaching English in the Theological Faculty which John and Joan Hanna were doing in their spare time. We are still looking for a lecturer in agriculture and/or development for the University at Kupang to continue our link with the Church there.

19. In July an all age party of fourteen will visit Indonesia under the leadership of Jim and Pamela Ferguson. A major part of their time will be spent on the island of Sumba, where they will be looking at the work of the Christian Church of Sumba and examining ways in which our partnership with them can be strengthened.

20. Nearer to home the work of Christopher and Nivedita Macwan among **Asians in London** is one of the parts of this year's Youth and Sunday School Project. Before the family went off on leave to India last December Christopher recorded a Christmas programme in Gujarat which was broadcast by a local radio station. By this means and through a twice a year article in the main Gujarati newspaper the Good News is presented to a large number of people but most of the work is with individuals and families. The only other occasions when a sizeable number hear the Gospel is when the PCI Youth Team conducts two Holiday Bible Weeks in the summer.

AFRICA - HOPE AND TRAGEDY

21. To read of the spread of the Christian Gospel in Africa south of the Sahara is a thrilling story. To have lived through the days when African countries and Churches sought to free themselves from control of their colonial masters and Western Churches and missions has proved an exciting experience for many. To witness the demise of dictatorial regimes and the rise of new democracies in several African nations and the desire for greater democracy within the Churches has proved a challenging experience for many of our missionaries.

22. Missionaries who are there by invitation of the host Church have to display great sensitivity within a very different cultural, social and political situation, and at the same time hold firmly to the established truths of the Gospel. They also have to learn to listen to African Christians who have God-given insights into the Gospel and how it can best be proclaimed among their people.

23. Hope in the future is ever present in the hearts of the peoples of Africa, and for those who have embraced the Christian Gospel this hope is given an added dimension. Yet this hope has so often resulted in tragedy for many of the peoples of Africa, as a desire for power and wealth has taken hold of men

and women in African societies. This has often led to tribal and religious warfare which has resulted in over 30 million displaced persons/refugees through the continent and in several million deaths in the past years. The Churches and Christian leaders in Africa are seeking to discover what the "Word of the Lord" is to their people in these days of hope and tragedy. Let us stand with them and support them in their hour of need.

KENYA AND MALAWI - AN OPEN DOOR

24. It has not proved difficult for the Overseas Mission to send missionaries to Kenya and Malawi - they are welcome for the contribution they will make to the life of the Church and the nation. Yet we are concerned to send those committed to the spread of the Gospel to be involved in strategic ministries in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) - ministries that are vital for the spread of the Gospel and the building of Christ's Church.

25. Malnutrition, disease and AIDS are the greatest killers in African society and that is why the ministry to bring health and healing to its suffering people in the name of Jesus Christ, the great healer, is so vital. All three Synods of the CCAP in Malawi are involved in this important ministry through the former mission hospitals and through community health work. We continue to send doctors, nurses and others to share in this ministry with their Kenyan and Malawian colleagues and great demands are made on these faithful witnesses and servants of Jesus Christ.

26. A lack of knowledge of the Word of God and the basic truths of the Christian faith is a real problem in African Churches, as it probably also is in our own Church. The PCEA and the CCAP are concerned to see that those who offer for ministry within the Church are properly trained and grounded in the Word of God and how the Gospel should be applied in their own societies. We support this ministry through sending those who can teach the faith and prepare men and women to minister to their people. At Zomba Theological College husbands and wives are trained for ministry in different ways, so that they will complement each other as they minister to rural communities.

27. Almost 60% of the 33 million people in Kenya and Malawi are under the age of 16 years and these young people are eager for education and are keen to prepare themselves for life in their new world. The Churches in Kenya and Malawi are involved in the education of their young people and this opens the door for the presentation of the Gospel. We share in this ministry through those who are teaching and doing chaplaincy and pastoral work in the Secondary Schools and Colleges particularly in Malawi. Also in Malawi the Student Christian Organisation and Scripture Union are working with the approval of the Churches among these young people. Both organisations, to which we give support in various ways, are seeking to meet some of the social, economic and spiritual needs of young people. In Kenya we continue to support, with the help of the Junior Boys' Brigade, the development of Boys' Brigade and Youth work in the PCEA.

28. It is the rural communities where people suffer most - the land has been over-grazed and has become barren, the soil has become impoverished

through over-fertilisation and poor land husbandry, and the very lives of people are threatened because of their inability to produce food to meet their family needs. The ministry of the Church in these rural areas, providing clean water, advising on better methods of farming, providing seeds and in some cases fertilisers to those in greatest need, changing the attitudes of pastoral communities - are all done in the name of Jesus Christ and for the uplift of the people. We are privileged to share in this ministry in both Kenya and Malawi through our missionaries who are there as the servants of Jesus Christ.

SUDAN - WAR TORN YET VICTORIOUS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

29. We could not begin to tell of the dreadful sufferings of the peoples of Southern Sudan for the past forty years, of the several millions who have lost their lives in the conflict or been displaced from their traditional homes, of the growth of Christ's Church numerically and spiritually, of the courageous acts of witness and service by so many Christians in the Sudan. It is through the Christian churches in Southern Sudan that the light of Jesus Christ is shining over a dark and desolate land bringing strength and encouragement to the thousands who have been oppressed and downtrodden for many years. Their quiet but strong faith in a loving God and a risen Saviour has enabled the Church not only to survive but to grow into the body of Christ and its members to become a witnessing and serving people.

30. The Church is divided geographically because of the civil war and the inter-tribal fighting, but those in leadership continue to be identified with their people and many who have been trained as Pastors have sacrificed much to return to the Sudan to minister to the people who would otherwise be as sheep without a shepherd.

31. We share in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS) in the training of Evangelists and Pastors in Bible School and Theological College, and in short term bush Bible Schools in different part of Upper Nile province. Children, young people and adults in our own Church are supporting educational and development work in Upper Nile through projects of the Junior Boys' Brigade and the Presbyterian Women's Association for which we and the people of Sudan give thanks to God. What the people of Sudan need most is PEACE and we can pray that peace may come in Sudan even as we work and pray for peace in our own province.

JAMAICA AND BRAZIL - WORLDS APART FROM OUR WORLD

32. To visit the United Church in **Jamaica** and the Cayman Islands, as Mrs Margaret Boyd, Central President of the PWA did in January, is to enter a different world - different people, different culture, different economy - and to have very different experiences. Yet those who belong to Christ and are members of His Church are bonded together in the Gospel.

33. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in partnership with the United Church in its witness, mission and service, and our mission personnel share in the various ministries of the United Church to children and young people, to

people in their congregations and a ministry of training for leadership in congregations and local community.

34. The United Church is constantly examining the role of its members in the life of the nation and is also seeking to provide pastoral care to people in very needy situations. Christians in Jamaica have to earn the right to be heard and listened to as they seek to bring people to Jesus Christ.

35. An exchange of youth teams will take place in July and August and this will lead to greater understanding of each Church's situation and also greater prayer for each other as we seek to proclaim Christ in our very different societies.

36. We have been privileged to share in the mission of the Independent Presbyterian Church in **Brazil** (IPI) for the past eight years. PCI mission personnel have shared in theological education and preparation of evangelists and pastors for ministry, and are involved in the mission to the Indian people in the Dourados area. It is our prayer that a young couple will go to Brazil later this year or early 1997 to work under the direction of the IPI National Mission Board and to share in the Church's mission to unreached people. Recently there have been renewed contacts with the Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB) and we await any developments that may result.

37. The IPI is conscious that it is largely a middle class Church and is seeking to engage in mission to the 'poor and marginalised' in the major cities of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and also the unreached peoples and migrants in the more remote parts of Brazil. As we are aware in our own Church this is an enormously difficult task and we want to encourage the IPI as it seeks to reach out to this needy part of their society.

EUROPE - BEYOND FAITH?

38. The proximity of Ireland to mainland Europe, the fact of the European Community and the demise of the totalitarian regimes in Central and Eastern Europe has inevitably led to much more frequent contact by individuals and groups for business, social or religious purposes throughout the continent. This has also been true of our Church and many individuals and groups have visited or worked short term in several countries in Central and Eastern Europe, or taken material and spiritual aid to these countries.

39. On the other hand the emergence of these countries from their years of isolation has not resulted in the rapid growth of the Christian Church. The task of proclaiming the Gospel in the new Europe is presenting a great challenge to the Christian Churches and time alone will tell if the methods being used by Churches and mission agencies will result in the building up of the Kingdom of God throughout our continent.

40. Through the work of the **Reformed Church of France** people are being made aware of the existence of God, of the relevance of His Word for their daily lives and of the fact that God has revealed himself in the person of His son who came to bring new life to all who will believe in Him for salvation. This is also true for Jews living in France, where 'Jews for Jesus' are proclaiming Jesus as Messiah in a variety of ways.

41. We received a delegation from the Reformed Church last October and we expect a greater bond of fellowship and co-operation in the mission of Christ to develop in the future. Two groups of members of the Reformed Church will visit congregations of our Church this summer to experience the life of the people and to have fellowship with them and a holiday at the same time.

42. Our Church has had links with the **Spanish Evangelical Church** (SEC) for well over 100 years and we have helped this sister Church in a small way to grow to independence and maturity. The SEC congregations are seeking to reach out to their neighbours with the Gospel and in some places the Church is growing as a result. We continue to share in the life and witness of the SEC through ministry to English speaking residents, and we have been asked to provide a Christian Education specialist who is fluent in Spanish to establish this ministry of the Church. Daniel Reyes will soon complete his second BD year and returns home this summer for practical work and a holiday with his family.

43. In the **Czech Republic** our partnerships with the Church of the Brethren and the Czech Brethren Church continue to grow. A youth exchange, the last for the time being, will take place this summer. Some of our congregations have been helping with the establishment of the Dejvice congregation in Prague. A young woman from Hollywood has been teaching English in a school in Ostrava and we were represented at the opening of the new Ostrava Church last October.

44. We are privileged to have increasing contacts with several of the districts of the Reformed Church in Hungary and Romania. Our mission partner working in Zalau in the district of Bishop Laszlo Tokes is becoming more involved in evangelism and teaching the faith, has started Children's Church in three or four parishes and has shared in outreach in several parts of the district.

45. An all-age team will spend three weeks this summer at camps of the Reformed Church in Romania teaching English and sharing their faith in Jesus Christ. We have recently welcomed Gabriella Lakatos, a theology graduate from the Cluj Seminary, who will be completing the certificate course in Christian Counselling at Belfast Bible College and who will return to share in a ministry to drug addicts and alcoholics.

46. The Church of Jesus Christ in Central Europe has emerged from its captivity and is seeking to bear authentic witness to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Many problems still remain, but these are being addressed in a courageous way by the people of God in each place.

THE MIDDLE EAST - THE BOILING POT

47. At the time of writing (mid March) the Middle East Peace Process is in very real danger of disintegrating due to the recent escalation of violence in Israel/Palestine. Hopes were high when the Peace Accord was signed towards the end of 1994 but there are those extremists on both sides who have not been happy with the agreement and are intent on wrecking it. The pot is sadly on the boil again.

48. We were encouraged to hear of growing commitment to unity between Jewish and Arab believers in Israel/Palestine, and to learn of how this is working out through people coming together to be honest about their

differences and their hurts, but also to share their common faith in Jesus as Messiah/Lord and Saviour.

49. A visit in January by Rev John Seawright renewed contacts with Immanuel House and the King of Kings Bible College in Tel Aviv which has recently received accreditation from the Asia Theological Association. Immanuel House still hosts a messianic congregation led by David Lazarus and would gladly receive volunteers. Christ Church and the Church of Scotland Centre in Jerusalem were also visited and the current opportunities and difficulties faced by those working in Israel were outlined.

50. A visit was made to Bethlehem Bible College which was established in 1979 to train Palestinian Christians to serve the Palestinian churches and be involved in ministries throughout Israel and Palestine. Also visited was the Caspari Centre, a Norwegian centre which is linked to the Churches and which provides theological training and TEE in Hebrew for members of the Hebrew congregations. At Stella Carmel, where Kathleen Wilson worked for a number of years, a new worship centre has been built and the messianic congregation which meets there has a particular outreach to drug addicts. The Hebrew-English Bible, produced by the Association for the Dissemination of Biblical Writings, is due to be published this October and of the 10,000 Hebrew-Russian Bibles already printed some 7,000 have been distributed. We continue to assist this very important work.

SITTING COMFORTABLY?

51. Circulation figures and ratings are the measure of success or failure for the media. In an education in mission programme it is much more difficult to assess the results, but all the signs would indicate that by some means or other the message is getting across. There is a continuous stream of enquiries about overseas service, not all resulting in a call, but no fewer than eleven new missionaries went overseas since the last General Assembly. Prayer support is obviously increasing as Prayerline, giving prayer requests from overseas, has had a record number of calls during the year and the Points for Prayer Handbook 1996 is virtually sold out. Financial support both through the United Appeal and through 'extra mile' giving has adequately covered the cost of the Board's work in mission. These are all the positive signs but as in other areas of the work of the Church, too many people are still sitting comfortably, leaving mission to the enthusiastic few.

52. The quality of material produced to promote the overseas mission of our Church continues to rise. The latest 'Nepal Series' of videos are a good example of the Church using professionalism at its best. Our 'Presbyterian World News' which was produced for every family of the Church was well received and will be repeated again this year. New posters and prayer letter covers have been produced. Better display facilities for material have been created in the Overseas Office.

53. Deputation tours to Presbyteries continue to be an important way of getting the message across. There have been some memorable meetings in the Presbyteries visited during the past year but for some the pressure of organising

a tour every other year is too much, so we plan to cover all Presbyteries in three years which should allow greater time for planning and preparation.

54. One area of education in mission which needs greater attention is that of children and young people. With Sunday Schools using a wide variety of lesson material there is not the same opportunity for input of information about the work of the Overseas Board although the Overseas Project every other year helps. The Education Committee of the Board is looking at the possibility of producing, in co-operation with others, a missionary magazine for children.

55. Any education in mission programme must attempt to reach the maximum number of people in the Church and help them reach an understanding of mission which will challenge them to activity and action, in other words to make it impossible for them to sit comfortably.

MANY TASKS ACCOMPLISHED WITH GOD'S RESOURCES

56. The Overseas Office, occupying four rooms in Church House, is central to the work of the Overseas Mission. It is the nerve centre of the mission and is serviced by a dedicated staff who, with the help of the staff of the Presbyterian Women's Association, work together as a team. We welcomed Mrs Paula Cooper to our staff last May and Mrs Muriel Manson in a part-time capacity in November. The records of our Foreign Mission since 1840, together with other archival material and library books, have been catalogued by Dr Bill Adley and we thank him for his hard work in this respect,

57. We thank God for members of the Board who take a keen interest in the work of the mission and those who are members of our seven committees - Steering, Education, Finance and Personnel and the three area committees - who give much time and also their expertise to the work of these committees. Together with all the support in interest and prayer and finance generated in the branches of the PWA and the Young Women's Groups, we also work very closely with the Youth and Sunday Schools departments especially in youth exchange visits and projects and we receive much valued advice and encouragement from the Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Assembly. The servicing of all our work carried out by the Financial Secretary and his staff is greatly appreciated. We thank God for them.

58. But all of our efforts in the offices, on the committees and the Board would be in vain if it were not for the support of the congregations of the General Assembly. The congregations:

- give us their best people, called of God to serve overseas
- support our missionaries and their colleagues in our partner churches in prayer
- enable the Board to support missionaries and their families, give scholarships and send grants to our partner churches for the training of ministers and evangelists for leadership through contributions to the United Appeal and in 'extra mile' giving.

We thank God for all who share with us in the work of the overseas mission.

59. Over the past year there has been close co-operation with the Presbyterian Women's Association who provide prayer and financial support for

a number of missionaries. Discussions will take place soon to determine how best we can work together to support the overseas work of our Church in the future. Miss Elizabeth Brian took up her post as Executive Secretary of the PWA last November and is already very involved in the work of the Board as its Associate Secretary. Miss Brian is to go to Nepal with Rev John Dixon and Mr Stewart McCullough in April to visit projects of the United Mission to Nepal, our missionaries and attend the UMN Board meetings.

60. During the year the following missionaries passed to higher service: Miss Mary McKnight (India) 1947-51; and Rev William Edgar Kirkpatrick (India) 1939-71.

61. We gladly record our appreciation for the faithful witness and service of Rev John & Mrs Joan Hanna, (Singapore and Indonesia) 1982-96); Rev Brian Hughes (Jamaica) 1986-96; Rev Liz Hughes (Jamaica) 1987-96; Rev Dr Bill & Dr Ruth Addley (Brazil) 1987-96; Peter and Asa McDowell (Nepal) 1991-96; and Naomi Martin (Malawi) 1991-96. We pray God's blessing upon each as they enter a new sphere of service for Jesus Christ. Overseas visits were made by Rev John Kirkpatrick to the Czech Republic and to Romania; by Rev John Seawright to Israel; by Rev Prof Cecil McCullough to Spain; and by Rev Terry McMullan to the Sudan Consultations, to India and Pakistan and to Malawi.

62. We thank God for those whom he has called to serve Him through our Overseas Mission in long and short term capacities. During the past year eleven have been commissioned for missionary service in Kenya (1) Malawi (4) and Nepal (6), and five Volunteers in Mission have gone to serve for one or two years in the Czech Republic (1) Jamaica (1) and Malawi (3). Last summer young people went to serve as volunteers in Jamaica, India, Kenya, Malawi and Nepal; medical, nursing and physiotherapy students went on electives to several countries. Teams were sent to Romania and France and through the Youth Board there was an exchange with the Church of the Brethren in the Czech Republic and a team went to Wembley to do children's work. We are thankful for the positive experiences of mission enjoyed by these young people and the way in which God has used them in deputation meetings and in speaking to their contemporaries.

63. Those who are called by God to serve overseas need to be well prepared as they move into new situations which are very different culturally and very often religiously diverse. We have been greatly encouraged by the training received by our missionaries in Belfast Bible College and All Nations Christian College and it is expected that the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non Western World in Edinburgh will provide a further training opportunity (See Par 68).

64. During the past year the Board was happy to issue a Call to Rev Samuel Muriguh, a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, to minister in Orangefield Presbyterian Church in Belfast for a period of two years. Mr Muriguh was inducted to the ministry in the congregation last September and he, his wife Rebeccah and their two children John and Joy, are very much part of the ministry team in Orangefield.

65. Over the past year we received visits from Rev Mazuwa Banda from the Synod of Livingstonia of the CCAP; Rev David Graciano from the Synod of Blantyre, who spent three months gaining experience of the life of our Church

and particularly within the congregation of Newcastle; Rev Principal James Haire, formerly missionary to Indonesia, on a sabbatical from Trinity Theological College, Brisbane; Rev L R & Mrs Bawla and an Elder from the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar; Rev Ed Metzler, Executive Director of the United Mission to Nepal; and Dr Leina and Mrs Agnes Mpoke, who work in the rural development project at Tuum in Kenya.

66. We give thanks to God for the work of the United Appeal Board, for all who took deputation meetings and for the people in our congregations who supported our missionaries and the partner churches and missions within which they serve. We were glad to learn that our Church had fully supported the United Appeal for 1995 of some £2,185,000 and we thank God for all who gave sacrificially to make this possible. We also thank congregations, individuals, children and young people, the Junior BB, the PWA and the YWG's who have contributed over £200,000 for special projects overseas during the past year. This 'extra mile' giving has brought hope and encouragement to many needy people within our partner Churches.

67. The 1995 General Assembly agreed that application be made to the High Court for an order allowing the application Cy Pres (the nearest thing to) of the income of the trusts of the former missions of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (Reports 1995 Par 87 and Appendix). The Cy Pres scheme in respect of the Gujarat Orphan Fund was approved last October, and at the time of writing the preparation of the High Court application is almost complete. We hope to be able to report the result of the application to the Assembly.

68. Dr Jack Thompson continues in his lecturing and research work in the University of Edinburgh at the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non Western World and the Board has agreed to second Dr Thompson for a further three years (1996-99) to the Centre. His recently published book 'Christianity in Northern Malawi - Donald Frazer's Missionary Methods and Ngoni Culture' has been well received both in Malawi and internationally. The Centre is proposing to offer training and orientation for missionary candidates and this we will value greatly.

69. We continue to receive much information through our contacts with Mission Boards and Societies which are members of the Evangelical Missionary Alliance (EMA) and the Church's Commission On Mission (CCOM) and staff and Board members have attended meetings of the EMA and the forums of the CCOM where appropriate over the past year. We are members of the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies (BIAMS) and their bi-annual conference has kept us informed of mission issues, thinking and practice. We have valued our contact with over one hundred Presbyterians who are serving in about forty countries with thirty missionary societies, and have encouraged our people to pray for them by including their names in the Handbook published annually.

70. We look forward towards the end of the millennium with hope and great expectation that the God who has guided us thus far will continue to lead us forward as we seek to fulfil His Son's commission to "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20).

71. This report has sought to tell the story of what we as an Overseas Mission have done in the past year to fulfil our remit. Yet we realise that "unless the Lord builds the house they labour in vain that build it". It is our prayer that all that has been accomplished over the past year in the name of Jesus Christ will be used for the extension of His Kingdom and the building up of His Church in all the world.

APPENDIX

In this report we have not mentioned the names of any missionary, volunteer in mission or Church leader, but their names and years and spheres of service are listed below and are to be taken together with this report

BRAZIL

Bill & Ruth Addley	1987	Final Furlough
Mabel Colson	1990	Caiua India Mission

INDIA

James & Willi Barton	1966	Woodstock School
Linda Jackson	1996	Woodstock School
Norman & Joan Duncan	1994	Associate Director of Training, OM India

INDONESIA

John & Joan Hanna	1982	Final Furlough
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JAMAICA

Claire Trueman	1962	Personal Development Co-ordinator, United Church
Brian Hughes	1986	Final Furlough
Liz Hughes	1987	Associate Minister, First Bangor 31/1/96
James & Pat Cameron	1990	Directors, Children's Homes, etc
Mark McMullen	1992	Boys' Brigade Skills Training Programme
Leonora Wasson	1994	Personal Development Co-ordinator, United Church

KENYA

Stephen & Angelina Cowan	1985/9	Outreach & Development Work, PCEA
Norman & Pauline Kennedy	1989	Outreach & Development Work, PCEA
Uel & Gill Marrs	1989	TEE and teaching at Pastoral Institute

MALAWI

Freda Algie	1969	Principal, Wives School, Zomba Theological College
John & Betsy Mann	1989	Chaplaincy, teaching and pastoral work
Richard & Brenda Kerr	1991	Livingstonia, rural development & teaching
Naomi Martin	1991	Final Furlough
Paul & Athena Carnaghan	1992	Doctors at Ekwendeni Hospital
Elma Harkness	1993	Nurse Tutor, Mulanje Hospital
Margaret Young	1995	Midwife, Ekwendeni Hospital
Diane Cusick	1995	Wives School, Zomba Theological College

NEPAL

Linda McKee	1985	Assistant to Executive Director, UMN
Max Watson/Alison Rodgers	1990	Medical Officers, Tansen Hospital
Peter & Asa McDowell	1991	Final Furlough
Joy Gowdy	1992	Tutorial teacher on Furlough
Pauline Orr	1993	Nurse/Tutor, Tansen Hospital
Amanda Christie	1995	Kathmandu International Study Centre
David & Sandra Rodgers	1995	Medical Officer, Amp Pipal
Sharon Creighton	1996	Tutorial Teacher, Amp Pipal
Helen Johnston	1996	Personnel Officer, UMN HQ
Peter Lockwood	1996	Khimti Hydel Project

Volunteers in Mission are sent into overseas locations for one or two years and their names and spheres of service are as follows:

CZECH REPUBLIC

Adrienne Savage	1995	Teaching English, Ostrava
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JAMAICA

Jo Anne Bell	1995	Youth & Children's Work, United Church
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MALAWI

Renee McCracken	1992	Urban Mission Work, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa
Andrew Clenaghan	1994	Development Work, Livingstonia Synod
Barry Armstrong	1995	Teacher, Domasi Secondary School
Dave McGregor	1995	Development Work, Livingstonia Synod
Joy Williamson	1995	Teacher, Livingstonia Secondary School

We work together with partner churches and united missions and we list below those in leadership with their respective positions:

BRAZIL

Rev Mathias Quintela de Sousa	President, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil
Rev Abival Pires	International Relations, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil

CHINA

Bishop K H Ting	President, China Christian Council
Mr Han Wenzou	General Secretary, China Christian Council

CZECH REPUBLIC

Rev Pavel Cerny	President, Church of the Brethren
Rev Karel Taschner,	General Secretary, Church of the Brethren
Rev Pavel Smetana	President, Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

FRANCE

Pasteur Marc Richalot	General Secretary, Eglise Reformee de France
Pasteur Yo Ludwig	Secretary for International Relations & Mission, Eglise Reformee de France

HUNGARY & ROMANIA

Bishop Laurent Hegedus	Presiding Bishop, Hungarian Reformed Church
Bishop Kalman Csiha	Transylvanian District of Reformed Church, Romania
Bishop Laszlo Tokes	Extra Transylvanian District of Reformed Church, Romania

INDIA

Rt Rev D K Mohanty	Moderator of the CNI Synod
Dr V S Lall	General Secretary of the CNI Synod
Rt Rev V M Malaviya	Bishop of the Gujarat Diocese of the CNI

INDONESIA

Rev Dr Beni Fobia	Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Timor
Rev J C Widje	General Secretary, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera

Rev D Umbu Dingu General Secretary, Christian Church in Sumba

JAMAICA

Rt Rev Dr Richmond Nelson Moderator, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands

Rev Maitland Evans General Secretary, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands

KENYA

Rt Rev Bernard Muindi Moderator of Presbyterian Church of East Africa

Rev Dr Samuel Mwaniki Secretary General of Presbyterian Church of East Africa

MALAWI

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP)

Rev K E Nthakomna Moderator, Synod of Livingstonia

Rev Dr O P Mazunda General Secretary, Synod of Livingstonia

Rev R G Chimowa Moderator, Synod of Blantyre

Rev M E Kansilanga General Secretary, Synod of Blantyre

Rev S P Chalera Moderator, Synod of Nkhoma

Rev G A Kachaje Senior Clerk, Synod of Nkhoma

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Rev Dr Lalengzaua Administrative Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Myanmar

NEPAL

Rev Edgar Metzler Executive Director, United Mission to Nepal

Pastor Robert Khartak Senior Pastor of the Church in Nepal

PAKISTAN

Rev Dr Piyara Lall Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan

Elder Victor Azariah Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan

SPAIN

Rev Enrique Capo President, Permanent Commission of the Spanish Evangelical Church

Rev Alfredo Abad Secretary, Permanent Commission of the Spanish Evangelical Church

SUDAN

Rev John Gatluok Chol	Moderator, Presbyterian Church Of Sudan
Rev Peter Odok	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church Of Sudan
Rev Matthew M Deang	Associate Moderator, Presbyterian Church Of Sudan

THAILAND

Mrs Supaporn Insaeng	Director, Lamp of Thailand (a ministry of the Church of Christ in Thailand)
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TOGO

Pasteur Fatsema Amiou	Moderator, Presbyterian Church in Togo
Pasteur Cephas Dovi	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Togo

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly commend to the whole church our missionary personnel and their families for prayer and support as they serve Jesus Christ together with their colleagues in our partner churches in a rapidly changing world and give thanks for their faithful and sacrificial service during the past year.
3. That the General Assembly give thanks to almighty God for the witness being borne to the Gospel of Christ among the peoples of Asia by our partner churches in China, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan often in the midst of opposition and persecution, and pray that God will richly bless their efforts to establish the Church of Jesus Christ, build up the people in their faith, and strengthen them in their witness and service among their people.
4. That the General Assembly give thanks for the courageous witness to the Gospel given by our partner churches in Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, Togo and Zambia and pray for leaders and people as they continue to serve Jesus Christ in the life of their nations and as they seek peaceful and just solutions to the economic, social and political problems in their countries.
5. That the General Assembly give thanks for the vibrant ministry of the churches in Brazil and Jamaica & the Cayman Islands and pray that the Lord of the Harvest will encourage them as they continue to be involved in urban and rural mission and in serving the poor and needy in their societies in the name of Jesus Christ.
6. That the General Assembly rejoice in the strengthening of our partnerships with reformed Churches in the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Italy, Romania and Spain and encourage the Board to continue fostering these important relationships.
7. That the General Assembly rejoice in the living faith of Jewish and Arab believers in the Middle East and elsewhere, encourage the continued proclamation of the Gospel and the move towards greater unity within the body

of Christ, and pray that the recent renewal of violence may not seriously impair the progress already made towards a just and lasting peace.

8. That the General Assembly encourage the Board to review the implementation of the Objectives for the Overseas Mission as set out in the Assembly Reports 1992 Pages 155/6 and report to the 1997 Assembly.

9. That the General Assembly urge each Presbytery to set up a committee to work with its Mission Agent to promote overseas mission and to help organise the programme of the periodic deputation tour.

10. That the General Assembly thank most sincerely all who have given their time and talents to help fulfil our missionary calling as a Church of Jesus Christ and promote the challenging task of mission among our people, and further thank the whole church for providing the necessary personnel and finance for this important work.

11. That the Overseas Board and its associated working committees be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 275 of the Code as follows:

HOME BOARD

Convener: Rev Dr R W J MacDERMOTT

Secretaries: Rev R F S POOTS

Miss E BRIAN

1. It has become almost a cliché to say that the Church should be geared for mission rather than maintenance. This is a useful reminder if it prevents the Church from becoming totally preoccupied with erecting and maintaining buildings. Its primary concern should not be with real estate. But the contrast is facile if it implies that the Church can do without buildings or can neglect their maintenance. The experience of the Board is that effective and continuing mission requires a certain amount of Church 'plant'. Mission and maintenance are complementary. Part of the on-going work of the Board is to strike a proper balance between the two.

2. The Board was pleased to make out a call to Mr John Luke who, in September, was inducted to the Night Ministry (now to be known as Nightlight) in the Shaftesbury Square area of Belfast. His work will be with the many young people who throng the area, but he too needs a base and this has been provided in premises rented from the Belfast City Mission.

3. Services began in September in Movilla, Newtownards. There the Rev David Porter is ministering to an increasing number of people meeting in the temporary premises provided by Church Extension. These will soon need to be replaced by permanent and larger buildings. People and property, mission and maintenance go hand in hand!

4. During the year we welcomed Mr Colin Ferguson as the new Secretary of the Presbyterian Mutual Society and Miss Elizabeth Brian as PWA Executive Secretary. The Board continues to be indebted to our Secretary, the Rev Derek Poots, who not only undertakes the considerable amount of administration required for mission and maintenance but also travels widely, visiting and encouraging small congregations.

5. The Strategy for Mission Committee has kept the Board abreast of its ideas about a possible new Mission Agency which would incorporate both the Home Mission and Church Extension. This could provide greater flexibility and could enable manpower and financial resources to be concentrated where most needed. There are, however, a number of practical considerations which, in the Board's view, require further thought and research.

The Secretary reports:-

6. The Board received the announcement of the resignation of the Rev Dr R W J MacDermott from the Convenership with regret. During his six years in this office, Dr MacDermott enhanced the place of respect and affection which he already holds throughout the Church. His calm, clear and courteous conduct of business resulted in the efficient management of Board affairs and his wise counsel was sought in all decisions. The Board pays warm tribute to Dr

MacDermott for his commitment and contribution to the affairs of the Home Mission.

ASSIGNMENT COMMITTEE

1. Interviews for fifth year students and some others who are taking courses outside Ireland were held on 17 December, 1995.
2. Fewer requests than normal were received for assistants. The reasons for this weak demand included
 - (i) the use of “additional pastoral personnel” from non-traditional sources;
 - (ii) the fact that an increasing number of congregations no longer have either the membership or the finance to justify taking an assistant minister.
3. The Committee would, however, express its grateful thanks to those congregations who made a special effort to take assistants this year or who, having accepted students on a one-year attachment last year, subsequently agreed to retain them until they are eligible for call. The end result was that the number of re-assignments was reduced. It seems that a total of 17 places will be required for assistants in 1996.
4. Ministers requiring assistants are asked to submit their applications to the Clerk of Assembly not later than 31 January in the relevant year.
5. The Consultative Panel on Assistantships met once during the year. Its report is printed below.

CONSULTATIVE PANEL ON ASSISTANTSHIPS

1. During the year work continued on the new scheme for extended licentiate assistantships.
2. It was noted that the Code at present gives only minimal guidance on such assistantships. Some overtures are therefore submitted to make the position clearer.
3. The matter of academic study and in-service training to be undertaken by Licentiates was referred to the ad hoc Committee on the Review of Theological Education. That Committee was asked to bring a resolution to the Assembly proposing that Licentiates be invited to sit and deliberate at Church courts.
4. It was agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that the Consultative Panel on Assistantships be thanked and discharged.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE

PWA HOME DEPARTMENT

Miss E Brian reports:-

1. The PWA continues to work in association with the Home Mission Committee to “provide for the recruitment, training, organisation and support of deaconesses and woman workers in various areas of the Church’s life and interest”. There are 26 deaconesses, 2 woman workers and 2 probationary deaconesses serving the Church as well as 2 students.

PERSONNEL

2. Following recommendations made by the PWA/Home Board Personnel Committee, the following appointments were made.

Personnel Changes

3. Mrs Ruth Henry was Inducted to South Belfast Friendship House, in June 1995 and Miss Pat Shirley to Greystone Road, Antrim in February 1996. Miss Elizabeth Boyd was Commissioned and Inducted to St Columba’s, Lisburn in October 1995. The Home Board renewed the appointment of Miss Ruth Pettecrew to Townsend Street following the Installation of Rev Jack Lamb.

Probationary Deaconesses

4. Miss Eleanor Drysdale and Miss Kathleen Spence were placed in First Holywood and New Mossley, respectively.

Deaconesses in Training

5. Miss Sharon Erwin has spent the second year of her training at Glasgow Bible College and has found the course stimulating though demanding. Mrs Jacqueline O’Neill commenced training at Belfast Bible College in September 1995. PWA decided not to recruit deaconess students in 1996/97.

Resignations

6. Miss Julie Hamilton and Miss Barbara Courtney have resigned from their appointments on health grounds.

7. The North Belfast and Ards Presbyteries decided to retain Miss Elizabeth Davison and Miss Mary Henderson on the records of Presbytery for a third year because their resignations pre-dated the Guidelines for deaconess service approved by the Assembly in 1995.

Management Committees

8. Management Committees for Friendship Houses and the Multi-Media Workshop have been set up and are proving their worth.

9. We are grateful to Mrs Lana McCandless for continuing to head up the work in East Belfast Friendship House while there is no deaconess in post.

Guidelines

10. Guidelines for application for the office of deaconess and terms of deaconess service were approved by the 1995 Assembly. They will be presented to this Assembly in the form of Overtures to be made the Rules of the Church. Guidelines for Maternity leave have also been put in place.

Questionnaires and Information Sheets

11. Presbyteries are required to complete questionnaires when a candidate applies for deaconess training.

12. Information sheets containing Guidelines on the Care and Role of a deaconess are sent to ministers when enquiries are made about the possibility of obtaining the services of a deaconess. Information sheets detailing, terms and conditions of placements for deaconesses, are also available.

Employment and Retirement

13. For the purposes of SSP the working week for a deaconess has been defined as 6 days and for a woman worker 5 days.

14. Retirement age for deaconesses and woman workers has been discussed in view of the fact that Government legislation is moving towards women working on to 65.

If a deaconess/woman worker expresses a wish to continue working after age 60, she could apply to be retained year by year with the approval of the minister and Kirk Session of the congregation in which she is serving and the Home Board provided no other suitable applicant is available to fill the post.

15. Discussions are ongoing regarding pensions payable to some retired missionaries and deaconesses.

16. Concern has been raised regarding the appointment of additional pastoral personnel by Kirk Sessions and the effect this may have on the future recruitment of deaconesses.

17. Appraisals of deaconesses/woman workers after 5 years in their particular situations are taking place.

18. The ministry of Christian Drama and its related service to the Church is under review at the time of writing and consultations are continuing with the PWA Executive Committee, the PWA/Home Board Personnel Committee and the Home Board.

DEACONESS TRAINING

19. The 1990 General Assembly received a report on deaconess training, drew up a list of recognised colleges and suggested further review after 5 years.

20. Since that time the Glasgow Bible Training Institute has become Glasgow Bible College and St Colm's can no longer provide residential education.

21. Union College continues to provide classes for deaconesses who require them, especially in Irish Church History, and Belfast Bible College has proved to be very satisfactory for training. The first student to study at Glasgow Bible College has found the course demanding but, with the support of the very

helpful staff, she has experienced personal development and has benefited from living and working outside Ireland.

22. The Board recommends that:

**Belfast Bible College
Glasgow Bible College
and Union College**

should continue to be recognised for deaconess training, though all elements of training will be monitored and kept under review by the Home Board.

23. Every candidate is expected to spend some part of her course either in study or experience placement outside Northern Ireland, though no student will be compelled to attend a particular college.

24. Irish Church History will continue to be essential. Rev D Bradley has agreed to provide lessons on the Diaconate.

PRESBYTERIAN MUTUAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Rev W Herron reports:

1. The Directors are pleased to report another very satisfactory year's progress in the work of the Society, which attracted new investments in excess of £500,000 and has seen the total funds peak at £3.4 million.

2. Despite the recent trend of falling interest rates we were very pleased to be in a position to declare a dividend of 6% on shareholdings in respect of the financial year ended 31 March, 1996, which represented an increase of 14% compared to the previous year. Our sound financial position has enabled us to distribute in the region of £185,000 of our profits to over 1,100 shareholders.

3. Congregations and individual shareholders continue to enjoy very competitive borrowing facilities with over one million pounds being advanced this year by way of new loans. We have sought to further improve our service to borrowers by ensuring a timely response to requests for assistance particularly with the purchase of cars.

4. During the year 15,000 new leaflets publicising our work were distributed in two Presbyteries through nominated congregational agents and plans are in hand to extend the publicity to other Presbyteries in the coming months. The Secretary is always glad to have the opportunity to address meetings and speak to interested groups about the work of the Society.

5. We conclude with our thanks to God for all that He has enabled us to do over the past year and pray for His continued blessing in the future.

6. The Society is pleased to report the competent work being done by Mr Colin Ferguson. His professional knowledge and helpful personality contribute greatly to the continuing success of the Society.

HOME MISSION GENERAL

1. The work of Home Mission stretches the length and breadth of Ireland. In many respects it continues to be a supportive agency, enabling congregations, ministers and their families, to do the work of God's Kingdom. Increasingly though, we are looking to the possibility of developments. These will usually be in areas where the Presbyterian Church has long had a presence,

but where that presence has diminished to such an extent that the future needs to be considered.

2. Once again we use this year's report to send greetings in Christ to all those involved in the Home Mission family, whether as ministers, their families, or as leaders in congregations. May each and every one know the blessing of our God in their life and work for the Kingdom.

Personnel

3. In May 1995 the Rev John Scott was installed in the Home Mission and inducted to the Ballina, Killala and Ballymote group of congregations.

At the end of June the Rev David Moore was installed in the Home Mission and inducted to the re-established group of Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount in the Presbytery of Monaghan.

We extend a welcome to both these ministers and their families and trust that they know the blessing of God in their life and work in those parts.

4. The Rev Andrew Watters will complete his two year period as Stated Supply in the Kells, Corboy, Mullingar group this summer. We thank him for his service and wish him well as he and his family move to England and, eventually return to Australia.

The Rev Roy Cooper will complete his 8 year term in the Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford group of congregations at the beginning of July. As this group is in the Alternating Scheme, a Presbyterian Minister is due to be appointed which, we trust, will have happened by the time the General Assembly meets.

5. We note with regret the passing of the Rev William Mills in September 1995 and the Rev William Kirkpatrick in January 1996. They served in the Home Mission in Limerick and Drogheda respectively. We convey our sympathy to their families.

Home Mission Development Ministry

6. The Rev Stephen Johnston is coming towards the end of his third year of service. His work in **Carlow** proceeds steadily with an average of 40 at the now-weekly service of worship, and the Wednesday Bible study. Over the last year Stephen has been involved with Philip Kelso, of the Irish Mission, in the Regional Technical College, holding a weekly Bible study and setting up a bookstall which provides opportunities for useful conversations and contacts.

In **Fermoy** the Thursday night hotel Bible study has continued. Some 40 have attended at least once, with a present average attendance of 8. The twice-monthly service in the Presbyterian Church draws over a dozen, in the conduct of which John Corcoran from the Irish Mission has been a significant help. Particular encouragement has come with the Tuesday Children's Club, led by John and his wife Hilary, in the local community centre. The club presented a nativity play at Christmas which was held in the Church and many of the parents came along.

Stephen Johnston also spends Tuesday evenings in **Cahir**, leading the Bible Study/Prayer meeting. Preceding this is a Children's Club run by Keith Preston of the Irish Mission, at which Stephen gives much-needed help.

7. In November 1995 a consultation was held with representatives of the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster concerning future developments in that area of the Republic. Attention was focused on the future of Ballinasloe, Carlow, Cahir/Fermoy, Corboy and Mountmellick. Various recommendations were agreed and brought to the full Committee.

8. After discussion in the Committee and the Board, it was agreed to pursue the double option of moving the Rev. Stephen Johnston to Carlow to allow him to concentrate on the work there, and also of setting up a further fixed term 'experimental' ministry to concentrate on Cahir and Fermoy.

By the time this report is published discussions will have taken place on how this package could be funded and implemented. We expect further details to be available by the General Assembly. As a second option for 1997 we wish to concentrate on Ballinasloe, where we will look to the possibility of disposing of the present property, providing an alternative worship venue and appointing an additional minister to Ballinasloe and Galway, on a fixed term basis.

9. Home Mission is grateful to God for the work that is being done to consolidate the openings that exist, and to build bridges into the community to create new openings. We are mindful that the growth of this work is dependent on the prayers of God's people and would encourage prayer support throughout the Church.

Alternating Ministries Committee

10. During the year this Committee, which is composed of equal numbers of representatives of the Home Board and the Methodist Home Mission, met once. This meeting was in Waterford where the Rev. Fred Vincent is Minister. For the second half of the meeting representatives of other charges in the Scheme were invited and 4 out of the 5 attended.

Items of note were as follows:

- (a) as the working of the financial schemes of the two Churches are different and the particular scheme in use changes according to the denomination of the minister in post, it was suggested that a pamphlet to explain the two financial structures should be compiled.
- (b) in Christ Church, Sandymount, where the premises are owned by the Methodist Church, the Dublin Central Mission is undertaking a large project to re-roof the Church and to provide a substantial nursing home, incorporating a unit for those suffering from Alzheimer's Disease. The manse will need to be relocated.

Night Ministry

11. As reported elsewhere Mr John Luke has been appointed as full-time Project Director of what will be known as Nightlight.

12. Although established by the Home Mission/Board, we recognise that this is an initiative of the whole Church. To overview the work and provide support and general guidance, a General Committee has been established made up of representatives of the Presbytery of South Belfast, the Belfast City Mission, the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training, the Social Witness Board and the Youth Board, as well as Home Mission and the Home Board. The

Very Rev. Dr A J Weir was appointed Chairman, and the Rev. R F S Poots as Secretary.

This General Committee set up a smaller Executive Committee to be involved in day-to-day decisions with Mr Luke.

13. Premises have been rented from the Belfast City Mission on the Donegall Road to provide a base for the work, which at present is operating on three nights a week.

Finance

14. The year ended with the balance on the Home Mission General Account showing a slight improvement on the previous year. While overall income was down on the budget figure, overall expenditure was also below the budget figure. A number of points should be made:

- (a) some of these 'savings' have been on salary support for Summer Assistants. This figure fluctuates year by year according to the take-up for these situations.
- (b) as the 'Night Ministry' Director did not commence his work until late summer only a part of his salary support figure was used. In a full year the full figure will be used.
- (c) under the new scheme for assistantships, it is anticipated that Home Mission may be asked to provide some subsidies towards individuals and provision may need to be made out of existing funds.

15. With respect to the Home Mission Repairs Account, the figures show a very healthy balance. This is due almost entirely to the fact that congregations which have been allocated repair grants failed to begin the work. (It will be recalled that grants are only paid when the work is completed on smaller jobs, or in agreed stages for larger projects).

16. Once again the Church as a whole has given a generous response to the United Appeal, so that agencies were able to receive their full budgeted allocation. For Home Mission this meant some £220,000 at the close of 1995 and we say "thank you" to all who contributed.

17. We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of one bequest of £18,949 this year.

18. We have received a major anonymous donation towards the cost of the Night Ministry, which came to £13,333 as it was given under Gift Aid. Further donations were received from the Presbytery of Belfast South, from High Street, Holywood and Portavogie. As we are at present getting no extra funding from the United Appeal for this work, we are grateful for all donations, large and small.

19. Home Mission Repair Grants were paid in 1995 for repairs to the Churches at Moville and at Carndonagh, Co. Donegal; at Aghada, Co. Cork; at Ervey, Co. Cavan; at Newbliss, Co. Monaghan and at Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. Grants were also paid for work done to the manses at Cootehill, Cork, Bailieborough, and Boyle.

20. Approval was given by the Board for the establishing of a Fifts Fund from 1 January, 1996, to which income from bequests, the sale of redundant buildings and other donations may be credited at the discretion of the Home Mission Committee.

21. With respect to the giving of Repair Grants, we are grateful for the monitoring work done by Presbyteries. Though we continue to assume that Presbyteries take into account any credit balances of grant-seeking congregations, we plan that a specific question will be added to the application form.

22. A decision was taken to increase the retirement allowance to £750 per annum for ministers retiring from Home Mission congregations who had served at least five years in the Home Mission and being in the Home Mission at the date of retirement.

Property

23. Approval was given for the sale of the redundant manse at Pettigo, subject to congregational and Presbytery approval.

24. As a result of the Development Consultation we advised that the Manse at Mountmellick should be sold, but the Church building retained.

Office-Bearers

25. The Secretary, Rev. Derek Poots, continues to travel widely in order to see at first hand Home Mission situations and to encourage ministers, their families and leaders in congregations. We are grateful for all that he does in the midst of other responsibilities.

26. We conclude with our thanks to God for all that he has enabled us to do over the past year, and pray the blessing of God on all involved in Home Mission work.

ALISTAIR R BILL, Convener

CHURCH EXTENSION COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. Over the past years Church Extension has been mainly involved in assisting Church Extension Charges and some former Church Extension Charges, to maintain, repair and develop their property. The planting of a new Charge at Movilla Road, Newtownards marked 1995 as a special year and we thank God for this development as we pray his blessing on minister and people.

2. The following is a summary of the work of the Committee over the past twelve months.

(a) Newtownards Area

Movilla

3. In June, 1995, at a service in Regent Street Presbyterian Church, the Rev David Porter was inducted to the oversight of the new Church Extension Charge at Movilla, Newtownards.

4. A manse was purchased at 10 Movilla Road, Newtownards, and a temporary Church building erected.

5. The opening Services were held in September, 1995 and over the past months the progress has been very encouraging. At the time of writing 103

families have joined and an Interim Kirk Session and Working Committee appointed.

6. If progress continues at the present rate accommodation problems may arise sooner than anticipated. The situation will be reviewed in February, 1997.

7. The Committee recognizes and appreciates the hard work of the Rev D Porter. The progress at Movilla reflects his enthusiasm, vision and faithfulness.

(b) Belfast Area

Taughmonagh

8. The Committee has agreed that much needed renovations be carried out in the manse and these should be completed this year.

9. The congregation is in good heart and, under the enthusiastic and visionary leadership of Rev. Bill Moore, continues a relevant ministry in the community.

New Mossley

10. The work on the manse has been completed, providing one extra room. The ceiling in the Church building has been lowered and this should help solve the heating problem.

11. The Minister and Interim Kirk Session are looking to the future and at present are working on a "Development Plan" which will enable New Mossley to move forward.

(c) Coleraine Area

Ballysally

12. One hundred and fifty-eight families now claim connection with this Church and 1995 saw a marked increase in finances. The congregation are considering moving forward to full congregational status.

(d) Londonderry Area

13. Strathfoyle continues to have a Stated Supply.

14. This charge continues to decline and there are now only 40 families claiming connection with the Church.

(e) Sites

Carrickfergus and Antrim

15. The Conveners will meet with representatives of the Presbyteries concerned later in the year to discuss the future of these sites.

(f) Sunday School Support

16. Sunday School contributions to Church extension totalled £2,079 for 1995. This amount will be forwarded to the new Charge at Movilla to help provide furnishings.

17. We thank Sunday School teachers and children for the regular and valued support.

(g) Finance

18. Church Extension will be asking for the following amounts from the United Appeal:

1996 £398,000 (allocated £200,000)

1997 £480,000

19. During 1995 considerable demands were made on the resources of Church Extension due to the purchase of the temporary building, site works and manse at Movilla, manse at Burnside and grant to Belvoir. The possibility of site works at Carrickfergus and further development at Movilla will mean increased demands on the United Appeal in the future.

20. Bequests for the last financial year totalled £9,098.

(h) Conclusion

21. We thank all who gave regular support to Church Extension through the United Appeal as well as those who earmarked contributions, signed covenants and made private donations, in addition to the valued support which comes from Church organisations.

22. Appreciation is expressed to all who work in Church Extension Charges or serve on Committees and Interim Kirk Sessions.

G MOFFETT and H TAGGART, Conveners

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Assignment Committee

2. That the Consultative Panel on Assistantships be thanked and discharged.

PWA

3. That the General Assembly recognise Belfast Bible College, Glasgow Bible College and Union College for the training of deaconesses.

Presbyterian Mutual Society Limited

4. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the continuing support of the shareholders, and encourage Presbyteries to promote the work of the Society in the congregations within their bounds.

Home Mission

5. That the General Assembly commend Nightlight and its Director, Mr J R W Luke, to the prayerful and practical support of the Church and urge congregations to seek to recruit volunteers over 20 years of age for this ministry.

6. That the General Assembly support the principle of Development Ministries under the Home Mission, in particular the proposed developments in

the Fermoy area and request prayer that finances may not be a hindrance and that ministers may sense a call of God to this work.

7. That the General Assembly appoint the Home Board Convener, Home Mission Convener, Home Mission Secretary, Revs D C Caskie and Dr R W J MacDermott to the Alternating Ministry Scheme Committee.

8. That the General Assembly accept the resignation of the Rev Dr R W J MacDermott as Convener of the Home Board, that he be thanked for his services and that Rev J B Moore be appointed in his place.

General

9. That the Home Board, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 280 of the Code as follows:-

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

Anent Par. 61 (d) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par. 61 (d) of the Code the additional words “associate ministers” be inserted before the words “ordained assistant ministers”.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par. 61 (e) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par. 61 (e) of the Code the additional words “associate ministers” be inserted before the words “ordained assistant ministers”.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par. 97 (d) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par. 97 (d) of the Code the additional words “associate ministers” be inserted before the words “ordained assistant ministers”.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par. 97 (e) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par. 97 (e) of the Code the additional words “associate ministers” be inserted before the words “ordained assistant ministers”.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par. 316 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par. 316 (1) of the Code the additional words “associate minister” be inserted before the words “assistant minister”.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 73(d) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 73(d) of the Code the words “ensure that a minister in active duty shall not accept any paid public appointment” be deleted and that the words “ensure that a minister or licentiate in active duty shall not accept any paid public appointment” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 219A of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that a new Paragraph 219A be inserted in the Code as follows:-

- (i) A licentiate may be appointed to serve an assistantship in a congregation. Such an appointment shall be made by the Kirk Session with the approval of the minister and the Assignment Committee.
- (ii) A licentiate assistant shall be subject in all matters relating to any work in the congregation to the direction of the minister of the congregation.
- (iii) An appointment as a licentiate assistant may be terminated by agreement, or by two months notice given by the licentiate assistant, the minister or the Kirk Session, subject to the approval of the Assignment Committee.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 304(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 304(1) of the Code the additional words “including commendation from the Presbytery with which she is connected” be inserted following the words “and with the information specified”.

R F S POOTS

Anent Par 305(5) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 305(5) of the Code after the words “the Home Board” the additional words be added “In the event of the appointment not being renewed, the deaconess shall be retained on the records of the Presbytery and her income continued from central funds, for a period of not longer than one year or, if sooner, until she becomes eligible for retirement, receives another Call or is placed in other work by the Home Board”.

R F S POOTS

Anent Par 305(6) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 305(6) of the Code after the words “be made” the additional words be added “In such cases the standing of the deaconess within Presbytery shall not be affected”.

R F S POOTS

Anent Par 305(7) and (8) of the Code

It is hereby overruled to the General Assembly to enact that Par 305 (7) and (8) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in their place:

(7) A deaconess, on voluntarily resigning from her appointment for further studies or in the case of illness or other emergency, may apply to be retained on the records of the Presbytery for a period of not longer than two years and, if approved, she shall report to Presbytery, not less than annually, on her life and studies or other responsibilities.

(8) An appointment as a deaconess may, after twelve months' service, be terminated by mutual agreement, or by two months' notice given by the deaconess, the minister of the congregation, the Session (or in the case of a deaconess in special work by the PWA/Home Board Personnel Committee) subject to the approval of the Presbytery and of the Home Board. In such cases a deaconess may apply to be retained on the records of Presbytery for a period of not longer than one year but she shall have no entitlement to special support from central funds, though the Home Board may make a special arrangement.

(9) The normal retirement age for a deaconess shall be sixty but her appointment may be extended on an annual basis with the approval of the Home Board.

(10) Calls to deaconesses to work in Church Extension Charges shall be under the same conditions as Calls to Ministers to such charges and the appointment of deaconesses shall terminate on the charge being fully constituted as a congregation. In such cases deaconesses shall be retained on the records of the Presbytery and their income continued from central funds for a period of not longer than one year or, if sooner, until they become eligible for retirement, receive another Call or are placed in other work by the Home Board.

(11) When a deaconess, having placed herself in a position where it is imperative that she does not remain in her appointment, does not resign voluntarily, the Presbytery, having conducted an investigation in consultation with the PWA/Home Board Personnel Committee, shall have power to loose her from her appointment, without further financial obligation, and to decide whether or not she is to be retained on the records of the Presbytery for a period of not longer than one year. The Home Board may grant an allowance for a temporary period after consultation with the Judicial Commission.

(12) A former deaconess, whose name has been removed from the records of Presbytery for any reason and who wishes to be restored to the office of deaconess, shall make application to her former Presbytery which, if satisfied with all the circumstances concerning her character, health and reasons for wishing to be restored, shall refer the case to the Home Board.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Executive Secretary: Miss ELIZABETH BRIAN

Theme for the year: "Who Cares?"

(This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Home Board and the Overseas Board)

1. The three-fold purpose of the PWA is to share Christ's love with people everywhere through fellowship within branches, involvement in the Church, reaching out into the community and caring through prayer and by financial support for the mission of the Church at home and overseas. The response to the question posed in this year's theme "Who Cares?" is that the PWA cares! Branch members reflect this in their faithful prayer support, financial giving and practical care of others.

2. During the vacancy in the PWA office care was ensured for the work on the "home" front. Mrs Rosemary Thompson, clear thinking and efficient, provided support for deaconesses and woman workers. PWA is indebted to her for the many different procedures which she helped to put in place thus enabling the work to move forward.

3. During 1995 PWA again benefited from the support given by the Secretary of the Home Board, Rev Derek Poots. His advice was often sought and was always readily available.

4. PWA is also very grateful to Mrs Eileen Armstrong for her pastoral care of the deaconesses/woman workers and to Miss Nancy Donnell for all the extra duties which she undertook during her time as Central President.

5. Miss Elizabeth Brian took up her post as PWA Executive Secretary on 1 November 1995.

6. In a year of continuing change there was one constant factor - the staff of the PWA office. Sincere thanks go to Rita, Margaret and Naomi for the many extra tasks which they so willingly carried out.

PWA Executive Committee

7. The Executive Committee met 11 times during the year. As well as carrying the responsibility of steering the work of the Association the Executive Committee continues to provide representatives to several committees in the PCI and various other organisations and bodies.

8. Executive Committee 1995/96

Mrs M Russell (Ards)

Mrs M Thompson (Armagh)

Mrs A Erwin (Ballymena)

Mrs I McCune (North Belfast)

Miss N Donnell (South Belfast)

Mrs L Robinson (East Belfast)

Mrs M Patterson (Iveagh)

Mrs A Elliott (Monaghan)

Mrs C Finlay (Newry)

Miss J Patterson (Omagh)

Mrs M Binnie (Route)

Mrs V Hamilton (T'patrick)

Mrs N Johnstone (Carrickfergus)	Mrs P Sleith (T'patrick)
Mrs H Hull (Coleraine)	Mrs M Smith (Tyrone)
Mrs E McLaughlin (Derry/S'bane)	Mrs C Stevenson (YWG C'man)
Mrs E Montgomery (Donegal)	Mrs A McCaughan (Wider World)
Mrs E Craig (Down)	Mrs E Armstrong (co-option)
Mrs M Boyd (Dromore)	Mrs R Thompson (co-option)
Mrs C Poynton (Dublin/Munster)	Mrs R Robinson
Mrs G Irwin (Foyle)	Miss E Brian

9. In 1995 the following new members were welcomed:-

Mrs Annie Erwin (Ballymena)
Mrs Lois Robinson (East Belfast)
Mrs Gwen Irwin (Foyle)
Mrs Christine Finlay (Newry)

Mrs Eileen Armstrong and Mrs Rosemary Thompson were co-opted for 1995/96.

10. Office Bearers 1995/96

President:	Mrs Margaret Boyd
Home Vice-President:	Mrs Cherry Poynton
Overseas Vice-President:	Mrs Val Hamilton
Home Treasurer:	Mrs Rosemary Thompson
Overseas Treasurer	Mrs Phyllis Sleith

11. Office Bearers installed at Annual General Meeting on 9th May 1996.

Overseas Vice-President:	Mrs Phyllis Sleith
Overseas Treasurer:	Mrs Gwen Irwin

12. Members of Executive who are serving on Management Committees for the Friendship Houses and Multi-Media Workshop:

Miss Nancy Donnell	South Belfast Friendship House
Mrs Lois Robinson	East Belfast Friendship House
Mrs Marbeth Russell	Multi Media Workshop

Events

13. The 1995 PWA Conference was held in Hillhall on Saturday 24 September 1995. The Conference was very well attended - an excellent day, very informative and challenging.

14. Mrs Hilary Hull, Mrs Margaret Binnie and Miss Elizabeth Brian represented PWA and Mrs Lynn Orr represented YWG at the Peace and Peacemaking Committee's Conference held in Hillhall in November 1995. This was entitled "Who are we? How do we perceive ourselves as Presbyterians?" and proved to be a thought-provoking occasion.

15. Mrs Cherry Poynton, Home Vice-President, participated in the WARC European Area Conference held in Edinburgh. She also represented PWA at Christian Aid's 50th Birthday Party in Dublin.

16. The Annual Prayer Meeting was held on 4 May, 1995 at 2.00 pm in the Chapel, Church House.

17. The Annual Meetings were held on 11 May, 1995 when the Assembly Hall was filled to capacity. The main speaker Mrs Mary Girvan gave a challenging address on the theme "Who Cares?" and Miss Evelyn Whyte

(deaconess) Miss Phyllis Caldwell (missionary) and Mrs Freda Fleming (branch member) shared examples of care from their different situations.

18. New membership cards for 1996/97 have been designed for launch at the Annual Meetings on 9 May 1996.

PROP Ladies

19. PWA is again indebted to the PROP ladies who, under the leadership of Mrs Margaret Clarke provide voluntary assistance for many special occasions. Other Boards and Agencies of PCI including Friendship Houses benefit from their invaluable service. In February 1996 the group held its annual service in Garnerville Church when the guest speaker was Rev Samuel Hutchinson.

Home Department

20 Mrs Lynda Gibson, President of the Deaconess Association attended the Church of Scotland's 34th Diaconate Council Conference held at Carberry Towers, Musselburgh, from 6-8 June, 1995. She also attended a Conference in Liverpool entitled "Jesus in the City" in November 1995.

21 The Vine Community and Advice Centre celebrated its 25th anniversary with a service in Crumlin Road Presbyterian Church on Sunday 10 September 1995.

22 Miss Jenny Clegg represented the Deaconess Association at the Diakonia UK Liaison Group and attended a Conference in Durham, 3-5 October, 1995.

23 Miss Frances Wright undertook a Biblical Charity bike ride in Israel to raise money for the Nazareth Hospital in November 1995. "The Jordan Valley Trail" covered 240 miles over fairly rough terrain. The total raised now stands at £7,250.

24 Miss Jean Gwyn suffered a severe spiral fracture to her leg in June 1995 and although back at work she continues to experience pain and may need further surgery.

25 The Deaconess Carol Service was held in the Kinghan Mission in December. PWA office-bearers and staff joined the deaconesses and woman workers for the service and for lunch.

26 Members of the Deaconess Association have been considering the future role and development of the Diaconate and are in the process of compiling a report for future discussion with the PWA Executive Committee.

27. Consultations have been taking place between PWA, the Home Board and the Chaplains' Committee to consider a number of issues including a job description which would define the role of a hospital deaconess.

Finance

28. PWA needs more than £600,000 each year to cover its commitments at home and overseas, salaries accounting for more than half of this figure. Members contributions, amounting to almost £450,000 annually, continue to be a source of encouragement and vital for the ongoing work. The remainder of the

income required comes from various sources but, mainly, from bank interest, investments and bequests.

29. In 1995 the record sum of £19,047.66 was raised for the Birthday Thankoffering Fund and this amount was used to provide:-

- (i) a radio link for Stephen and Angelina Cowan in Kenya
- (ii) a replacement vehicle for the Umanyano (PWA equivalent in the Livingstonia Synod).

30. The 1996 fund which runs from January until December will be shared between a home and an overseas project:-

- (i) Home - The production of a video on drug abuse for the Alcohol and Drug Education programme.
- (ii) Overseas - The provision of Church schools for refugees in the Sudan.

Overseas Department

31. PWA continues to support personnel overseas and pay portions of grants to some partner Churches. Currently 15 missionaries are supported by PWA

Brazil:	Miss Mabel Colson
Jamaica:	Miss Claire Trueman Miss Leonora Wasson
Malawi:	Miss Freda Algie Miss Elma Harkness Miss Naomi Martin (final furlough) Miss Margaret Young Miss Diane Cusick
Nepal:	Miss Joy Gowdy Miss Linda McKee Miss Pauline Orr Miss Amanda Christie Miss Helen Johnston Miss Sharon Creighton
Hungary:	Miss Ilona Walsh

32. PWA acknowledges with gratitude the oversight given to its missionaries by the Secretary of the Overseas Board, Rev Terry McMullan. During the year he undertook all the administrative duties involved showing great care and concern for personnel from the preliminary enquiry to the final furlough and beyond. His support and encouragement given willingly to the PWA office staff and Executive Committee has also been appreciated.

33. Consultations between the Overseas Board and PWA Executive Committee have commenced in order to establish the best way in which the Overseas Board and PWA may work together in the future for the good of the Overseas Mission of PCI.

34. An application to the High Court is in progress for a Cy Pres Scheme to allow income from Trusts for the benefit of the former Zenana Mission to be used for the overseas missionary work of the Church.

35. Mrs Rebecca Sinha successfully completed her MSc Post-graduate Diploma Course in Nursing at Queen Margaret College, Edinburgh. After

graduating in November Rebecca paid a brief visit to Northern Ireland before returning to Nepal to tutor in the UMN Nurse Campus.

Bereavements

36. Throughout the year PWA was saddened by the following bereavements and offered sympathy and prayerful support.

Miss Mary McKnight, a former missionary to India, passed away on 9 August 1995, aged 84.

The husband of Mrs Heather McCracken, deaconess in Alexandra, died on 4 September 1995.

The mother of Miss Anne Burrows, deaconess in Belvoir Park Hospital, died on 9 October 1995.

The father of Miss Diane Cusick, missionary in Malawi, died on 24 December 1995.

Lady Louise MacDermott, first President of PWA in 1971, passed away on 26 December 1995.

Wider World

37. "Wider World" has enjoyed another steady year and has included articles about the Church's witness in Ireland and overseas, news of missionaries, deaconesses, woman workers, PWA branches, Young Women's Groups and contacts with other Churches over the past 12 months. There has also been a Children's Page in each issue compiled by Sheena McKean.

38. Sincere thanks are due to all the contributors to the magazine and to the congregational agents who work hard to promote the magazine within their local churches. Special thanks are due to the staff of the PWA office who deal with all administrative inquiries.

Young Women's Groups

39. "Created to Care" was chosen as the theme for 1995/96 to complement the PWA theme "Who Cares?". The selected text was Ephesians Chapter 2 v 10.

40. Charlotte Stevenson was elected as Chairman and Heather Hamill was elected as Newsletter Editor. Gratitude is expressed to Alison Harbison for being such an encouraging and hardworking Chairman and to Pamela Fenton who produced the Newsletter in a very capable manner.

41. Marbeth Russell replaced Margaret Boyd as the P.W.A. representative on the YWG Central Committee.

42. The venue for the Spring Rally on Thursday 27 April was the Assembly Hall, Church House. Joanne Robinson was a very enthusiastic main speaker and Diane Petherick led the worship. The Assembly Hall had been chosen to enable YWG members to see the banner when they were in Church House but the Hall was too big for the numbers attending.

43. The Annual Coffee Morning on Thursday 21st September was again open to all YWG members. Dr Anne Watts accepted a cheque for £8,500 for the work of Carlisle House. Roz Stirling received £8,500 for equipment for the

youth teams; and Rev Terry McMullan was presented with £16,000 towards the China projects.

44. Both the new YWG profiles (colour leaflets which outline the purpose and activities of Young Women's Groups with a view to promoting YWG's within Churches) and the first issue of the updated newsletter "YWG News", were available at the coffee morning. The newsletter is now glossy and its format has changed from A5 to A4. It will be produced twice a year - in February and October.

45. At the PWA conference in September Charlotte Stevenson outlined her duties as Chairman and talked about the way forward and other Central Committee office-bearers spoke about the projects and the new profile.

46. Two new projects were selected for 1995/96: the home project is Belfast City Mission, focusing on Ballyduff and Glencairn estates and overseas will support Ilona Walsh who is teaching in Romania.

47. Throughout the year the Chairman and other members of Central Committee carried out deputation and organised and attended Presbytery Rallies. YWG was represented on various Boards and Committees as well as at PCI's Peace and Peacemaking Committee's conference on Presbyterian identity, Christian Aid's 50th birthday conference in Dublin and Methodist Women's Association events.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev T C MORRISON
Secretary: Miss PAMELA A LOCKIE

1. **It could be you ...** but there is only a 1 in 14 million chance that it will be. However that has not stopped what some estimate at 96% of the population of the United Kingdom seeking contentment through a bulging bank balance via the lottery.

The Alcohol and Drug Education Committee educates and informs, lobbies and persuades.

2. **It could be you ...** that needs to find a place in a Residential Home, or increase the support necessary for ageing or ill relatives to remain in the community.

The Presbyterian Residential Trust provides Homes. PCI Enterprises is working on a community Development Programme.

3. **It could be you ...** responding to a pastoral request for help from a family who are concerned about the well being of a loved one who is addicted to one drug or another, or who is an 'offender'.

Thompson House and Carlisle House offer the opportunity of rehabilitation.

4. **It could be you ...** coming to study or work in Belfast and seeking accommodation preferably in a vibrant Christian community.

Derryvolgie Hall has much to offer, beyond mere accommodation.

5. **It could be you ...** who having served the Church in a 'full time' capacity, and now coming to retirement, is seeking help in acquiring a home in which to live during that retirement.

The Retired Ministers' House Fund is 'the fund that likes to listen' - and then help.

6. It could be you.... it certainly will be somebody.

Whoever it is the Board of Social Witness is here to help.

7. All this (and much more) is done in the name of the Church and ultimately the Lord Jesus Christ.

HIS LOVE IS THE REASON WE CARE

8. The need for an incarnational ministry alongside people, offering specific help for specific needs, has never been greater. The reports which follow focus on the work of the Board in greater detail.

9. It is a privilege to witness progress made in many projects and to hear of many lives that have been helped in the name of Christ. That is only possible because of the sterling hard work of many people.

10. Particularly we thank to Pamela Lockie whose thorough and professional approach to her task is complemented by her deep Christian concern for all those whom the Board seeks to help.

11. We thank Rosemary Thompson (Treasurer), Arlene Wilson and Ellen Wilmont and all the part-time and temporary secretarial staff who have worked

in the office; all the Government agencies who provide vital funding, and all the Conveners and Project Managers. Particularly this year thanks are offered to two who are coming to the end of their Convenerships at this Assembly.

12. Rev T I Harte, since 1989 has been Co-Convenor of the Retired Ministers' House Fund Committee. Quietly and with great care, he has ensured that many full time servants of our church have received the help they need and deserve as they sought assistance in providing homes for retirement. We thank him for his devoted service.

13. Rev Sidlow McFarland, since 1992 has been Convener of the Presbyterian Residential Trust Committee. He has steered the Trust through a period of change, some of it enforced, with great determination and dedication. He has always sought the good of the Kingdom of God, the Church, and the Trust. We thank him for his devoted service.

14. Overtures appended will "enable the Shankill Road Mission Commission to operate separately from the Board" (see Mins. 1995 p. 78).

Miss Pamela A Lockie, Adviser in Social Service writes:

1. The past year has brought continuing challenges to the work of the Board.

2. The context in which the Church seeks to show the love of Christ in action requires the Adviser in Social Service to be a manager in various projects, to be an adviser to committees and to the wider Church, to be an administrator and to assist in the development of new work not only in the Board but at times at congregational level.

3. The Board of Social Witness is conscious of the limited financial resources available for the provision of care in the community generally. In the face of that reality the importance of encouraging local congregations to show Christ's love in action is great.

4. During the past year an evaluation of our work has been undertaken by the Department of Health and Social Services who although impressed by our current work would further encourage work at local congregation level, particularly in the 'soft' care area eg friendship clubs, care groups etc. Community care policy prioritises its available resources to those in greatest need. Sadly this sometimes means those who require minimal supportive care can be left unsupported. The opportunity is presented to local congregations to provide for their members and the wider community such support as their resources permit. This area of community development is being given high priority, seeking to minister the grace of God to communities and persons in need. It is encouraging to have been approached by various congregations for guidance as part of their research and preparatory work.

5. Another area of interest and concern over the past year has been that of Child Protection. As a Church we are consciously seeking to create a trusting environment in which both children, young people and their leaders interact, without that relationship of trust being abused. The Child Protection Report brings important recommendations to the Church. In addition, however, we must not forget those adults who have been abused in the past or have abused and who still require our prayers, counsel and support.

6. It has been the Board's privilege to have had the leadership of the Rev Colin Morrison over the past four years. To this task he has brought vision, clarity of thought and commitment. We thank him for his work as Convener and pray God's continued blessing in his future ministry.

Rev John Faris, Convener of the Social Witness Southern Development Committee writes:

1. Recent news items continue to remind us vividly of long-standing and profound social needs whether it be the menace of drugs or the ill treatment of children in institutional care. Whereas some of our churches in the Dublin area are able to support social witness 'projects' which do valuable work, it may be that many of our smaller congregations throughout the Republic feel powerless to do anything. It is important to remember, however, that social witness may take place without any 'projects' at all as part of the ordinary life and witness of congregations and individuals. Projects only come into being and grow in the context of such ordinary life and witness. We were reminded of this in our second annual conference at Adelaide Road Donore Church on Saturday 30 September 1995. The keynote speaker was Maurice Kinkead of Belfast Churches Urban Development Project. We looked at church involvement in the community. The story of 'Dolebusters', the unemployment advice scheme, provided a very useful case study.

2. The first Social Witness Volunteers in the Republic began their year of service at the beginning of September 1995. Julie Archibald and Karen Morgan have proved themselves worthy pioneers, linking in with Abbey and Adelaide Road Donore congregations and their related 'Dolebusters' projects. We commend the ongoing Volunteer Scheme for prayer and the interest especially of Christian young people considering a career in social work, as this scheme could offer them valuable practical experience. The Board would be sympathetic to placing volunteers outside Dublin, subject to budgetary restraints and suitable placements.

3. We readily responded to the Irish Government's invitation to take part in the National Anti-Poverty Strategy. The summary of initial submissions and the resulting discussion papers are worth close study. Copies are available in 5 Gardiner Row (the Abbey Church Outreach Centre) and also in the Board Office, (or contact National Anti-Poverty Strategy, Interdepartmental Policy Committee Department of An Taoiseach, Dublin 2, Tel: 01 6689333 or Combat Poverty Agency, 8 Charlemont Street, Dublin 2, Tel: 01 4783355). Points of interest include the high tax/low wage poverty trap, the need for genuine consultation with the poor, the lack of involvement of financial institutions so far, the endemic grip of poverty in areas where generation after generation are permanently unemployed, the need to decentralise government, the need for adult education opportunities (especially for men who seem less eager than women to enrol) and ways in which the 'rich' may become more aware without being patronising, of the everyday realities of poverty. Our next response is likely to be to offer some 'prophetic witness' on spiritual issues without in any way downgrading the economic, social and political aspects of poverty but highlighting spiritual values such as: Hope, Perseverance, Sacrifice, Stewardship and Grace (defined for these purposes as undeserved generosity).

4. We are consulting with various people on the possibility of establishing, in conjunction with other evangelical churches, an addiction treatment centre in Munster. We would be delighted to learn from people who have experience in such matters.

Ministers in Recognised Service

(Called by the Board of Social Witness under Code Par 281(3))

Rev John Chambers, Chief Officer, Relate (NI Marriage Guidance) reports:-

CONSOLIDATION

1. After a period of change and development 1995 has been a year of consolidation. We have decided not to train any new couple counsellors in 1996, but instead to increase the output from the 68 couple counsellors we already have. The complexity of the task and the standards necessary to provide safe, high quality counselling are greater than ever. Relate is committed to high standards and is concerned that some people outside properly accredited counselling organisations believe they can provide counselling with a minimum of training and little or no regular supervision.

2. The demand for our services remains high and they are well used by members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

EVALUATION

3. It is vital to try to measure effectiveness. During the past year Relate Northern Ireland was evaluated by Price Waterhouse on behalf of our main funders the DHSS. They concluded that Relate Northern Ireland '*provides a range of professional counselling services to help people of all ages to enjoy better relationships or at least limit the damage when relationships break down*'.

4. The interim report *CLIENT EVALUATION OF RELATE COUNSELLING IN NORTHERN IRELAND* was received in June. It indicated that people were in highly distressed states when they come to Relate. 20% had been encouraged to come by a friend, 11% by their GP, 2% by their solicitors and only 1% at the suggestion of clergy. 31% had been to see their GP within two weeks of attending Relate and 14.9% of those had been for a non-routine visit. 78% of clients described their early sessions with Relate as helpful or very helpful.

5. The final report will assess outcomes of counselling over a period of time and should be available later in 1996.

6. The Autumn of 1996 will also see the findings of a major Relate research report on the *needs of teenagers from separating and divorcing families*.

STATUTORY CHANGES

7. The Children Order and the Family Law Bill will have a significant impact on families in Northern Ireland and on the work of Relate. These changes offer opportunities and challenges to tackle some of the major issues affecting family life.

PERSONAL

8. I have just completed my first year as Chairman of the Commission on Marriage and Interpersonal Relationships of the International Union of Family Organisations. My first conference was in Hungary on the subject *WHO PAYS? EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT AND ITS EFFECTS ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY*. It was particularly fascinating to be located in Eastern Europe for this important subject. This year the conference is in Switzerland at the end of June on the vital subject 'VALUES AND FAMILIES'.

9. I was thrilled to be awarded the OBE for services to Relate in the Queen's Birthday Honours list and greatly appreciate the many messages of congratulations and support I received from colleagues and friends in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Rev Doug Baker, Corrymeela, reports:-

1. Working from the Belfast offices of the Corrymeela Community, during the past year I have been primarily involved in supporting local inter-church contacts, assisting various Christian responses to community needs, and encouraging opportunities for renewal of worship, Christian education and community life at congregational level.

2. There are a growing number of local inter-church partnerships in many parts of Northern Ireland. This year I have been asked to facilitate two different series of discussion between adults from three churches in Portadown around issues of faith and politics, co-ordinate a day conference on Sectarianism for the Belmont Council of Churches, lead an all-age Advent Workshop for families from the Belmont Council of Churches, design a Good Friday event for children and teachers from the Ballynafeigh churches, help clergy groups in two provincial towns identify ways in which to begin involving lay people in the inter-church contacts which they as clergy have been having for some time, address inter-church groups in Lisburn and Belfast on particular areas of doctrine and practice, and serve as a consultant with the Seymour Hill churches for a community festival they were staging. In each of these contacts it has been very encouraging to see new leadership emerging who are committed to building bridges at local levels between the churches and who are concerned to find ways that all of the churches in a given area can work together to meet the needs of that district.

3. I continue to co-ordinate the Community Work from a Christian Perspective Network, which has grown to include over sixty members involved in community development and youth work through church, voluntary and statutory projects in many different areas. The Network meets monthly to learn more about one another's areas and projects, to share news and concerns and to support one another in holding faith and work in a creative tension. In March a two-day consultation on 'The Churches And Community Involvement' was held between this network and parish clergy of all denominations. The thrust of this was to see how partnerships can be built between local churches and various projects to their mutual benefit.

4. Another major commitment has been the co-ordination of 'Summerfest '96' which will be held June 28-July 3 at the Corrymeela Centre

Ballycastle, with the theme, 'The Things That Make For Peace.' We believe many churches will see the range of speakers, workshops and special children's and youth programmes planned for this as a potential extension of their own programme and we hope will encourage members to participate in them.

5. Finally, alongside my work with Corrymeela I continue to serve as Convener of the Race Relations Committee and as a member of the Peace and Peacemaking Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

SHANKILL ROAD MISSION COMMISSION

1. We are grateful to our Heavenly Father for all his love and mercy to us in the Mission over the past year.

2. The continued cessation of violence encouraged more people to come around the Mission, bringing increased opportunities to share the Gospel with them.

DROP-IN CENTRE

3. In October 1995 Mrs Lynn Bruce was appointed as Catering Co-ordinator to meet the stricter requirements of the Food Safety Act (1990).

4. Mrs Bruce has brought to her work not only efficiency but also a warm Christian character which has had immediate impact in a busy Centre.

5. The Drop-In Centre has been well used during the year. Mrs Caroline Kerr and Mr Tom Gouldie have been hard at work with the people in a 'listening, sharing ministry' which is bearing fruit.

HOSTEL FOR SINGLE HOMELESS - 56/58 SHANKILL PARADE

6. Mr John McFarlane and his sister-in-law Elizabeth continue to serve the Lord in this vital work of caring for the homeless.

7. Over the year 80 residents used the Home and many have been rehoused in the greater Shankill area. On a Sunday morning many former Hostel members join with current residents at worship in the Shankill Road Mission Congregation. This is a testimony to the good work carried on in Shankill Parade.

8. In co-operation with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, extensive renovations are being carried out to upgrade the property in order to meet statutory requirements for good hostel accommodation.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

9. As usual there was a magnificent response from congregations to the appeal for toys and food. We were able to meet all the requests from needy families and pensioners. A small surplus of food was distributed to Corkey House and also to a Home for Handicapped people.

10. The highlight of the Christmas season was again the visit by the Moderator. The Rt Rev Dr John Ross came on Wednesday 13th December and thoroughly enjoyed his time with us. He visited ACE workers in a Sheltered Dwelling Complex, painting and decorating a pensioner's home, a Training

session at the Mission, and working in the Drop-In Centre. A very busy morning finished with lunch in 56-58 Shankill Parade, in a relaxed and informal setting with residents and staff.

ACE SCHEME

12. Sir Patrick Mayhew's announcement before Christmas of a £12.5 million reduction in ACE funding has had a profound effect on the Shankill Road Mission ACE Scheme. There has been a reduction from 102 workers to 61 and from 4 core workers to 3.

13. It has meant, sadly, a reduction in services to the Community and anxiety about the future of the whole scheme. Mr Webb (Project Manager) and the remaining ACE staff are very much in our thoughts, during the period of uncertainty.

THANKS

14. In the busy daily life and witness of the Mission, it would be easy to forget or take for granted the commitment and loyalty of the Mission staff. We would wish to place on record once more, our grateful thanks for all the faithful and tireless work carried out by them, in so cheerful a manner.

15. Thanks too are extended to all the congregations and individual church members who support us both prayerfully and financially. Together we go forward in faith to serve our Master, Jesus Christ, in this needy part of West Belfast.

K SMYTH, J O'NEILL, Co-Conveners
W M CAMPBELL, Superintendent

ALCOHOL AND DRUG EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. Over this past year illegal drugs had an ever increasing and depressing press coverage. The committee commends the work of the RUC and Garda drug squads along with customs and excise for their seizure of large quantities of illegal drugs.

2. The Committee continues to educate on the dangers of all drugs both legal and illegal as well as on Gambling, National Lottery and AIDS.

3. The 'Youth Pack' has been designed to help ministers and youth leaders prepare and present discussions and talks in the whole area of drugs.

4. The Committee expresses its thanks to the PWA for their donation from the Birthday Fund. This will be used to produce a video for use within the Church.

5. Committee members have worked well together as a team and Laurence Kerr the Committee's Education Officer is to be thanked for his input.

6. Material was circulated to ministers for their use on ADE Sunday in November. The Committee would encourage ministers to use such materials to educate on substance abuse and related matters.

7. The Rev John Faris through the Board's Southern Co-ordinating Committee continues to keep ADE issues before congregations in the Republic of Ireland.

8. The Committee would like to thank all those who have taken part in the various rallies and seminars throughout the year. Several Presbyteries have asked that similar events be held in their areas. These have proved helpful to a wide range of people. ADE agents are to be thanked for their assistance in organising such events.

9. The Committee has responded to Government on a number of issues this year in correspondence with the Church and Government Committee. These include proposed changes to gambling and gaming laws as well as those on the alcohol licensing laws.

10. The Committee would like to express its thanks to Rev Colin Morrison for his support and encouragement to the Committee during his years as Board Convener.

R J GREER, Convener

PRESBYTERIAN WAR MEMORIAL HOSTEL COMMITTEE

1. We are happy to report that since opening in January 1995 Derryvolgie Hall has become a well known and much used establishment in the Queen's University area.

2. All rooms have been fully let since the start of the academic year in September 1995.

3. A strong community spirit has been developing over the year, thanks in no small measure to the excellent work of the Dean of Residence Rev Steve Stockman and the rest of the Derryvolgie team, including fine work from Andrew Kyle and an American volunteer Kristin Gautsch. There has been considerable opportunity for spiritual input into the lives of residents and visitors alike. Both through a relevant weekly programme of events and on a more personal one to one level of friendship and counselling, the aims of the War Memorial Trust '*That the most precious heritage of the church (our youth) . . . should as far as possible be met with a Christian environment . . . and find in the Hostel a centre of religious life and activity and a place of pleasant recreation and social intercourse . . .*' are certainly being fulfilled.

4. Phase two of the development of Derryvolgie Hall is well under way and should be ready for the September 1996 intake. This new block will provide an additional 30 bedrooms and recreation room to complement the existing 58 bedrooms already in use. Even with this additional accommodation applications for the year will be well in access of capacity.

5. There continues to be a good working relationship between the Chaplaincy team based at Derryvolgie Hall and The Bush, and between the War Memorial Hostel Committee and the University Education Committee.

6. We are thankful to Almighty God for His guiding hand upon the Derryvolgie Hall project and are pleased to report that the War Memorial Hostel

property at Howard Street and Brunswick Street remains fully let, thereby helping to provide the finance for this development.

W J CAIRNS, W J SLEITH, Co-Conveners

PRESBYTERIAN RESIDENTIAL TRUST COMMITTEE

1. The Trust gives thanks to God for His continued blessing upon its Homes, their residents and on all its staff.

It is pleasing to note that the overall occupancy level has increased in all our Homes except Adelaide House in Belfast. The Health Board Inspection Units continue to give highly favourable reports on the high quality standards achieved within the Trust's Homes.

2. This year we have had several changes in our senior staff positions. Miss Linda Shivers was transferred to the position of Secretary of the Trust and is continuing to develop the work as well as ensure Government legislation is complied with. Mrs Sandra Boyd was appointed as Head of Home for Ard Cluan in Londonderry and Mrs Norma Robinson as Head of Home for Sunnyside House, Bangor.

At the time of writing Corkey House in Belfast are seeking a new Head of Home.

The position of part-time Administrator to the Trust is still to be filled. The Trust are very appreciative of the work that Mrs Rosemary Thompson has carried out in her temporary position as Administrator.

3. The finances of the Trust continue to improve and we want to thank those members of our church who were generous to the Trust this year. Without bequests and donations the Trust would not be able to develop its work.

4. We are continuing to look for an appropriate site to replace Corkey House and we ask for God's guidance and direction on this matter.

5. The Trust proposes to develop a sheltered Housing Scheme in conjunction with Lucan Presbyterian Church. This would not entail any financial responsibility from the Trust.

6. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, planning for the proposed Dublin Nursing Home has not progressed as planned. Alternative ways of raising finance or going into partnership with others are being pursued.

S S McFARLAND, Convener

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSE FUND COMMITTEE

1. During the past year administration of the Fund has been taken over by the Financial Secretary's Department. The Committee would express appreciation for the work done by the staff of the Residential Trust over a long

period and are particularly appreciative of the insight, advice and expertise which Mr Ted Jackson has brought to the work.

2. As a result of reviewing procedures in consultation with the Church's legal advisers the proposed rule amendments are outlined below. The aim is to provide a consistent structure in dealing with applications for assistance as well as ensuring that the Fund's interests are adequately protected.

3. *Loans*

- (i) *A letter of Offer is to be prepared setting out the terms of the Fund's offer and a Mortgage Deed is also to be prepared for signature by the borrower before the monies are released. The cost of preparation, for which a standard fee will be applied, is to be borne by the Fund.*
- (ii) *Building insurance costs are to be borne by the borrower.*
- (iii) *The maximum period for the repayment of a loan is increased from ten to fifteen years.*

4. *Equity Sharing Schemes*

- (i) *A letter of Offer is to be prepared setting out the principal terms on which the monies will be advanced to the co-purchaser. A Trust Deed will also be prepared to protect the Trustees' interest. The costs of preparation will be borne by the Fund.*
- (ii) *All rates, costs of maintenance and all other outgoings relating to the premises will be borne by the co-purchaser. An allowance will be made upon the sale of the property for any improvements made by the co-purchaser.*
- (iii) *Building insurance will be included in the Fund's Block Insurance Scheme and the Fund will recoup the premiums from the co-purchaser.*

5. *Premises purchased by the Fund*

- (i) *A Letter of Offer and Lease setting out the terms of the tenancy are to be prepared when the premises are purchased. The costs of preparation will be borne by the Fund.*
- (ii) *The Fund will bear the costs of building insurance, maintenance, redecoration, etc.*
- (iii) *The tenant will be responsible for the payment of rates.*

6. The Committee continues to be able to meet an increased volume of requests and during the year approved an increase to £30,000 in respect of loans and £35,000 in respect of Equity Sharing. An increase from ten to fifteen years for the period of loan repayment was also approved. It is felt that this latter change is better adapted to the situation where loans are available to those over fifty ie fifteen years before retirement.

7. The Committee would express appreciation for the generosity of those who have made bequests to the Fund which have enabled it to meet so many requests for assistance.

SOCIAL WITNESS CENTRES COMMITTEE

1. The Committee through its Christian centres and professional staff continues to provide help for the unemployed, the alcoholic and those involved with the courts. Under the direction of the Board it is examining the viability of other projects reported on below.

2. **Thompson House.** The past year has seen considerable change in personnel. After many years of service Norman Algie has resigned his post as Deputy Director and Stephen Shaw has returned to the Probation Board for Northern Ireland at the end of three years secondment. We thank them for their faithful contribution to the work of the centre. We commend to you for prayer Mr David Farrow who has been appointed as Director.

3. **PCI-Enterprises.** It has been a year of mixed fortunes. Thanks to the efforts of staff and Management Committee our financial position has been stabilised. However we have been seriously affected by the 25% cuts imposed by Government and we regret the loss of services to the community that has resulted. The committee are presently considering a Congregational/community based scheme for the elderly.

4. **Carlisle House.** This centre of Alcohol rehabilitation continues to be held in high regard by both the clients who use it and the various professional bodies who support it.

5. **Volunteer Scheme.** This scheme was only partially used this year due to a lack of volunteers. Christian young people 21 years and over are invited to apply for next year.

6. **Learning Disabled Person Project.** Discussions with various Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts, Oaklee Housing Association and other relevant bodies have been progressing and a resolution is appended.

7. **Thanks.** Our thanks to those organisations that have worked closely with us over the past year, the North and West Community Trust, the Causeway Trust, Oaklee Housing Association, the Probation Board, the Training and Employment Agency and the various agencies of our Church who have made contributions to the work of the Social Witness Centres. Also, once again our thanks to the staff of the Social Witness Office for their much appreciated help and of course to the Centres' Staff for their commitment and service.

D W BRICE, Convener

SOCIAL SERVICE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to address a number of social issues which directly or indirectly have an impact upon our church membership.

2. The Committee has been doing some work recently on issues that are often ignored by the majority of people but are vital issues for those affected or suffering from that condition.

3. **Anorexia & Bulimia:** A 'flyer' has been printed raising awareness of this issue and indicating that our Church can help. An article has also been featured in the Presbyterian Herald.
4. **Infertility:** A sub-committee is continuing to work on a number of leaflets on the problem of childlessness. These leaflets will address the problem from three perspectives: that of the couple, the minister, and the carer.
5. **Domestic Violence:** The Government is seeking to raise awareness of this growing problem. A sub-committee is exploring this issue in relation to the Church.
6. **Counselling:** A general leaflet on Caring and Counselling in the Church has been produced offering ideas on local caring initiatives and a list of counselling referral agencies to which ministers can direct people for further help and advice.
7. **Change of Name:** The Committee feels that it is desirable to change its name to reflect more accurately the nature of the Committee's work as it has developed over the years. We suggest that the name be changed to The Social Issues and Resources Committee. A resolution is appended.

N A L CAMERON, Convener

KINGHAN MISSION COMMITTEE

1. We continue to thank God for the vision He gave for the work of the Kinghan Church. Throughout the year we have tried to be obedient to Him as He continues to renew us by His Spirit. There is so much in all our lives that needs to be brought into line with His will.
2. There are no new ventures to report this year. It has been a year of consolidation as the work continues. It takes a long time to allow change to permeate through the structures of traditional Mission to the Deaf but we continue to see changes and signs of new life in most aspects of the work.
3. Kathy McClurg joined us in January as a part-time temporary secretary. She works 16 hours per week and is gradually learning and streamlining office procedures.
4. We are still looking for an assistant to the Superintendent. Much prayer and discussion has been given to this matter and we trust God for a resolution in the near future.
5. We are greatly encouraged by the number of people who support the work by their interest their visits (formal and informal) and their financial help, either directly or through the United Appeal and by their prayers.
6. Please continue to pray for this vital work among the Deaf Community, which is part of the work of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

L P McCLENAGHAN, Convener
G A GRINDLE, Superintendent

OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND

1. The Directors of the above Funds report that, during the last financial year which ended 31 December 1995, 160 beneficiaries (62 in the Old Age Fund, 67 in the Women's Fund and 31 in the Indigent Ladies' Fund) received grants.

2. The total distribution of the Funds in Grants, Donations and Gifts was £69,890 (£30,323 from the Old Age Fund, £28,082 from the Women's Fund and £11,485 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

3. During the year 12 grants ceased because of the deaths of beneficiaries and 4 beneficiaries withdrew because of improved financial circumstances. Nine new beneficiaries were added to the Roll.

4. A 'Special Gift' of £100 was sent to every beneficiary prior to Christmas.

5. During the year the Directors responded sympathetically to various problems which had been brought to their attention. They gave one-off donations, as needed, to assist in particular cases where immediate financial aid was more appropriate than annual grants. Ministers are asked to bear in mind the possibility of help from these funds in similar cases connected with their own congregations.

6. The Directors were appreciative of the requested nominal grant to the Old Age Fund from the United Appeal and assure the Church that all monies that come to the Fund are carefully and wisely spent.

7. The Directors of the Funds deeply appreciate the kindness and thoughtfulness of those who have remembered the work of the Funds either by gift or bequest, and hope that their example may encourage others to support this vital aspect of the Church's outreach.

8. The Directors of the Funds wish to thank the Staff for the sensitive and sympathetic way in which they carried out the efficient administration of the Funds during the year.

ERIC W McDOWELL, Honorary Secretary

WORKING PARTY ON CHILD PROTECTION

1. In December 1993 the Department of Health and Social Services published 'An Abuse of Trust', the report of the case of Martin Huston. The General Board recognising the seriousness of the issue of child abuse, established a Working Party to prepare guidelines for our children's and youth work generally and, in particular, for the recruitment of volunteer workers and employees. At the General Board of October 1995 it was decided that the Working Party should report to the General Assembly through the Board of Social Witness. The Working Party is comprised of a broad range of people including ministers, youth and Sunday school representatives, social workers, doctors, and child protection specialists.

2. The protection of children is upheld by the *UN Convention on the rights of the child*. Recently Child Care (NI) in association with the DHSS produced an important document entitled *Our Duty to Care* which sets out principles of good practice for the protection of children.

3. Further the Children (NI) Order 1995 will be enforced from October 1996. This major legislation will have an impact upon a wide range of agencies and individuals who work with children and young people. While church organisations are exempted from registration under the Order and from the minutia of the Order the general thrust of the *principles* behind the legislation are meant to apply to Church organisations.

4. During the past two years the Anglican Church, the Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Boys' Brigade have all produced their own child protection guidelines, reflecting the seriousness of this subject.

5. In the light of the culture in which we live, and of these legislative and governmental recommendations, the Working Party feels that it would be unwise, indeed grossly negligent, to delay any longer in introducing more formal child protection procedures into our church organisations.

6. Appended are the Child Protection Guidelines drawn up by the Working Party. The full text of the Guidelines is included because of the importance and sensitivity of this issue. It is important that the General Assembly knows exactly what it is being asked to approve as the intention is that these Guidelines will be implemented in every congregation over the next year. This is seen as not just desirable, but as an unavoidable necessity in the light of recent government recommendations.

7. While not being definitive these Guidelines attempt within one booklet to draw together different strands of work with children and young people. The main emphasis of the Guidelines is on raising awareness of child abuse and ways of preventing it occurring within our organisations, but they also contain valuable general advice on running youth groups, Sunday Schools and uniformed organisations - i.e. having a code of conduct, matters of general safety, transport, taking youth groups away on residential trips.

8. The most important recommendations concern the issue of child abuse. It is recognized that introducing a uniform procedure into every congregation (whether large or small, in both urban and rural situations) will not be easy. The Working Party has sought to walk a tightrope. On the one side is the opinion that congregations have operated for many years without recourse to formal and unwieldy procedures, and to introduce them may have a debilitating effect upon recruitment. On the other side is the view that recognises the days we live in and that congregations are not immune from adults abusing their positions, that some already have and may do so again, and that it is essential that a thorough selection and supervision procedure be in place as soon as possible.

9. Between these two positions of blissful *laissez-faire* and legalistic vigilance the Working Party has attempted to walk. We believe these Guidelines present a practical compromise which set good standards of practice in this area based on government recommendations while at the same time not introducing unwieldy and overly burdensome procedures to a local congregation.

10. The six key propositions in the Guidelines which are developed and applied throughout the rest of the manual are as follows:-

- (a) that each organisation leader is fully conversant with the referral procedure in a suspected case of abuse;
- (b) that a designated person in the congregation (preferably not the minister) will be appointed by the Kirk Session to receive child protection training and to provide consultation and advice on contacting the child protection agencies if there is a referral from a childrens/youth organisation;
- (c) that childrens/youth organisations will follow good team procedures and have a code of discipline/conduct which lessens potential for abuse;
- (d) that there will be a recruitment policy which, in all cases relies on the completion of an application form, declaration of any current or previous criminal convictions, an interview, and a probationary period (usually six months); and in some cases the provision of two references;
- (e) that there will be a supervision programme and annual endorsement of each volunteer's achievement and progress;
- (f) that there will be a training programme which helps leaders to become aware of what constitutes abuse and how to avoid it.

11. The Working Party believes that these are the irreducible minimum of good practice if we are to stand over these Guidelines and address the issue of child protection properly.

12. The Working Party recognises that awareness training needs to be available as soon as possible for ministers, children's workers, youth leaders and the designated person concerned with child protection within each congregation. Such training does not have to be time consuming. We anticipate that it could be done in one evening on a Presbytery basis. It is important that the Guidelines are implemented throughout our church, in every situation. Resolutions are appended to this effect.

13. Once the procedure is up and running we believe that it will become more routine and less intimidating to individuals and to congregations. Indeed we believe that a uniform policy will be seen in a very positive light. The church will be seen to be making efforts to provide the highest standard of care; the children's/youth worker will appreciate even more the importance of the work upon which they have embarked; and parents will be given a further assurance that their children are in the hands of trusted adults who care about their children.

N A L CAMERON. Convener

**CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES
FOR THOSE WORKING
WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
WITHIN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

P PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

C CARING ABOUT STANDARDS

I IMPLEMENTING GOOD PRACTICE

CONTENTS

Introduction

Section One

Aim

Caring for Children

What is Child Abuse

What to do to Prevent Abuse: Six key propositions

What to do if you are concerned that Abuse is occurring

Confidentiality

When concerns are confirmed

Section Two

Aim

Good Team Procedure

Discipline/Code of Conduct

Vetting Potential Leaders

Training Leaders

General Safety

Transport

Residential Programmes

Section 3

Resources/Bibliography

Appendices

INTRODUCTION

Children and young people attend organisations for enjoyment, social contact and personal and spiritual development. They should not suffer from negligence or abuse wherever it occurs.

Adults selected and appointed to work with children and young people should enjoy providing this service, secure in the knowledge of clear guidelines, and should also have access to good support and advice.

This booklet provides guidance to all who work with children, youth leaders, and Sunday School teachers to help ensure that children and young people enjoy their activities with optimum physical safety and are free from the threat of personal abuse. It will also alert leaders to signs of distress and symptoms which may indicate that abuse has occurred.

The protection and well-being of children is not only a biblical imperative but is a national and an international requirement. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child upholds the best interests of children. It stipulates that “children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence. They must be kept safe from harm. They must be given proper care by those looking after them”. The Children (NI) Order 1995 also promotes the principles of children’s rights and that those assisting in caring for children should work in partnership with parents.

Treating children and young people with dignity and respect and upholding their “best interests” is also in the “best interests” of the organisation or club. It is therefore important for parents to have information about the organisation their child attends, its aims and methods of operation, its policies and procedures, how to share comments, concerns and if necessary make complaints.

As well as offering congregations good practice guidelines for those working with children and young people, the booklet is also designed to affirm and encourage those adults and older young people who give their time and skills in this area of Christian service.

It recommends guidelines that will reinforce good practice and help to identify and counteract bad practice and the abuses by the few, whether these occur in the home, the community, or the organisation. In the case of the latter, abuse not only causes hurt to children but undermines the integrity and the calling of the vast majority who conscientiously care about children and their well-being.

DOES THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH REALLY NEED SUCH GUIDELINES?

Our Church is not immune from the problem of trusted adults misusing their position. This requires a response which is both aimed at prevention of abuse and at caring for those who may have been abused.

By adopting and using these guidelines each congregation will be raising standards of care for those entrusted to them, no matter how brief the event or small the organisation they attend. Also leaders, teachers and helpers will be more assured of their own protection in the event of false accusations.

HOW WIDELY ARE THESE GUIDELINES TO BE APPLIED?

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland reaches out to children and young people throughout the island of Ireland and welcomes those from households where there is no Presbyterian connection or connection to the Christian church. Although the two parts of Ireland have different legal systems the objective of protecting children is held in common.

Child protection provision in the Republic is not as well developed as in Northern Ireland. However in the ongoing debate we anticipate that the Republic's legal system will follow that of Northern Ireland. There is certainly a moral obligation to protect children in the Republic. Therefore while this booklet is influenced by the guidelines, policies and procedures within Northern Ireland the text is relevant to the Republic of Ireland.

Accordingly it is recommended that every congregation in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland adopts these guidelines and seeks to implement them in all their organisations which work with children and young people.

SECTION ONE

AIM

This first section aims to make you aware of:-

- what child abuse is;
- ways of preventing abuse through careful recruitment, training and supervision;
- what to do if you suspect or are concerned that abuse is occurring;
- who has responsibility in your congregation to listen and when necessary to act on concerns;
- what happens when concerns are confirmed; and
- the need to deal sensitively and fairly with allegations.

CARING FOR CHILDREN

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

The Parents and the Leaders as Concerned Citizens

While the primary responsibility for the care of children rests with the parents or guardians, the community as a whole has a responsibility for the well-being of children and for protecting them. This means that all citizens should remain alert to circumstances in which children may be harmed and, when they have knowledge or a suspicion that a child is being abused, they should refer their concern to the appropriate agencies with statutory duties or powers to investigate or intervene; ie the Social Services, the Police/Garda, or the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC or the ISPCC).

Leaders of organisations should be clear on how to seek help if they are concerned that a child has come to their organisation having experienced some form of abuse. They should also know how to have their concerns dealt with. It is a fact that most children are abused by someone known to them either inside or outside the family home.

WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS

RESPECT - Children's ideas of what is important may be very different from yours. Try to remember this when the child wants to tell you something urgently, even if you are busy.

PHYSICAL CARE - this includes warmth, adequate clothing, enough to eat and safety from hazards.

PRAISE - this will help children to grow up to be secure, confident adults.

ATTENTION - listen to children: not just to their words but to anything they might be trying to tell you by their behaviour.

TRUST - make sure that the child knows that you trust them and that you will always take what they say seriously and help them.

LOVE - this is the most vital need of all.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

There are four main kinds of child abuse. The following list includes some of the signs and symptoms.

PHYSICAL ABUSE occurs when an adult or other young person hurts, kicks, beats or punches a child or young person. Symptoms may include:

- unexplained recurrent injuries or burns;
- improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries;
- self-destructive tendencies;
- fear of physical contact, a shrinking back if touched.

NEGLECT occurs when an adult leaves a child alone, doesn't given them enough to eat or doesn't take them to the doctor when they are ill. Symptoms may include:

- constant hunger;
- inadequate clothing;
- constant tiredness;
- poor personal hygiene.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE occurs when the adult with responsibility for caring for the child says nasty things to them, doesn't hug or cuddle them and makes them feel unloved. Symptoms may include:

- delays in physical, mental and emotional development;
- continual belittling of oneself;
- over-reaction to mistakes;
- extreme fear of any new situation;
- inappropriate response to pain;
- neurotic behaviour.

SEXUAL ABUSE occurs when an adult or other young person touches a child's private parts in a way which makes the child feel worried or unhappy. Some adults or other young people who sexually abuse children also ask the child to touch parts of their body or try to show pornographic pictures or videos. Symptoms may include:

- sexual knowledge including drawing sexually explicit pictures or use of language inappropriate for the child's age;
- over affectionate in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age;
- regression to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking;

- self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia;
- sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating.

WHY DO ADULTS ABUSE CHILDREN?

There are different reasons - Stress, problems, unhappy circumstances, the feeling of having no power in adult relationships, and perhaps having been abused as a child may play a part.

Some adults may convince themselves that there is nothing wrong with their behaviour, or that it is for the child's own good. But whatever the reason abuse is always wrong, and it is **never** the child's fault.

It isn't only adults who abuse children. Sometimes older children abuse younger ones. It is very important that this is stopped as soon as it is discovered for the sake of both the victim and the abuser for whom it could become a dangerous habit. The sooner you take action, the more likely it is that the abuse will stop and the child will recover from his or her experiences.

WHAT TO DO TO HELP PREVENT ABUSE: SIX KEY PROPOSITIONS

There is a moral obligation on anyone accepting responsibility for children and young people to provide adequate care or to pass on information concerning suspected or actual abuse of a child. Any failure to do so may leave them legally liable.

In order to support and help children and their families, the organisation and its leaders need a set of practices which both protects children and the organisation. Each congregation and its organisations should accept these child protection guidelines and ensure they have:

1. a leader in charge of each organisation who is fully conversant with the referral procedure in a suspected case of abuse;
2. a designated person identified and appointed by the Kirk Session (preferably not the Minister) who will receive child protection training and who will provide consultation and advice on contacting the Child Protection Agencies when necessary;
3. a good team procedure and a code of behaviour for both leaders and members which provides a means of preventing misuse of discipline, avoids corporal punishment, counteracts bullying or scapegoating and lessens potential for abuse by adults or young people;
4. a recruitment policy which relies on the completion of an application form, interview, an uptake of two references (for any previously unknown candidate) and a probationary period of at least six months for all those appointed;
5. a supervision programme and an annual endorsement of each leader/volunteer's achievement and progress;
6. a training programme which helps leaders to become aware of what constitutes abuse, how to avoid it, and the referral procedure in suspected cases of abuse.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT ABUSE IS OCCURRING

Responding to incidents of alleged or suspected child abuse must be based upon clearly defined procedures. Knowing what to do, whom to contact, and who needs to know will make you feel better about sharing any concerns.

DO'S AND DON'TS

If you are concerned that a child or young person has been abused or is at risk of abuse there is one thing you must not do, that is **NOTHING**.

It is important that you take what the child says seriously and follow it up with action straight away. The sooner you take action, the more likely it is that the abuse will stop and the child will recover from his or her experiences.

If you know someone who you think may be abusing a child, or a child's words or behaviour indicate to you that it is likely that he or she is being abused, report it to the leader in charge and/or to the designated person in the congregation concerned with child protection issues.

DO'S

Stay calm

Listen and hear

Give time to the child to say what they want

Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling

Record in writing what was said as soon as possible

Report to the leader of the organisation

Keep a note of your report, giving the date, time, name of the individual whom you have told and course of action agreed.

The organisation leader will report to the designated person in the congregation concerned with child protection.

Your primary responsibility is to report any suspected abuse and ensure that the concern is taken seriously.

DO NOTS

Do not panic

Do not make a child repeat the story unnecessarily

Do not promise to keep secrets

Do not enquire into details of the abuse

Under no circumstances should you attempt to deal with the problem alone

VITAL INFORMATION

Try to have available:-

- the name and address of any child you are concerned about;
- the nature of any injury;
- the need for medical attention (if any);
- your reason for suspicion of abuse;
- what you have done already;
- any practical information you may have, such as the name of the child's GP, school etc.

Abuse of children often goes undetected because people who have pieces of information are reluctant to share them. Your organisation would benefit from developing links with other agencies and with parents so that you are comfortable about taking action when you may have information which causes you concern. Sharing your information can help piece together the jigsaw.

EXAMPLE:

SUMMARY OF THE REFERRAL PROCEDURE

1. Allegation/suspicion/concern noted.
2. Report immediately to the leader in charge of the organisation.
3. The leader reports to the designated person concerned with child protection in the congregation.
Name of designated person _____
4. The designated person consults with the organisation leader and the minister and, if deemed necessary*, reports to:-
Social Services (Telephone Number _____)
OR
Police Child Protection Unit/Garda
(Telephone Number _____)
OR
NSPCC/ISPCC
(Telephone Number _____)
5. Follow the advice given by the appropriate agency above.
Social Services offices are normally open 9.00 am - 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.
There is an emergency out of hours service which can be contacted at:
(Telephone Number _____)

*** NOTE:** Following the consultation the reasons for referral/non-referral should be recorded. Where you are unable to consult with anyone, or there is any doubt or uncertainty, it is strongly recommended that you test out your concerns with Social Services staff or the NSPCC/ISPCC or the Police/Garda.

Remember the important safeguard that the task of deciding whether or not abuse has occurred rests with the professional agencies.

If after consultation there is disagreement on whether or not to refer a concern to the Child Protection Agencies an individual as a concerned citizen can still make a referral.

If you find for any reason that you cannot speak to the Minister about the concern then consultation should take place with the Clerk of Presbytery.

CONFIDENTIALITY**WHO NEEDS TO KNOW WHAT?**

Each organisation should have a clear statement about confidentiality and how this is to be respected. The legal principle that “the welfare of the child is paramount” means that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Everyone in your organisation, including children must be aware that there are some situations in

which confidentiality needs to be broken; specifically, if you are concerned that a person is in danger, either a danger to themselves or to someone else, or that suspected abuse has occurred and an offence may have been committed.

This will mean at the very least informing:-

- the organisation leader;
- the designated person for child protection in your congregation;
- a statutory child protection agency;
- the parents of the child (see below);
- the alleged perpetrator (see below).

SENSITIVITY

Informing the parents of the child about whom you are concerned will need to be handled in a sensitive way and should **only** be undertaken in consultation with the statutory agency.

Any individual under suspicion, whether or not he or she is a leader within your organisation, has a right to be notified of the cause of concern. This is another matter which will need careful consideration and should **only** be undertaken in consultation with the statutory agency who will inform you of the actions to be taken.

You will find that statutory child protection procedures are child centred. This means that in all investigations the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration. For this reason the statutory child protection agencies give an undertaking that any information you provide will remain confidential. The official policy is that those receiving such information should *“only disclose it where the welfare of the child requires it and then only to those with a legitimate need to know”*. The details you give will only be passed on to the relevant people within those agencies whose task it is to decide what action to take.

Never be put off making the contact. You may even decide not to disclose your name. In such circumstances you may still contact any of the agencies for advice about how to deal with the situation.

WHEN CONCERNS ARE CONFIRMED

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Abuse is wrong, against the law and must be stopped. When there is a referral or complaint about abuse, there should be an investigation to find out what has happened. Such an investigation still upholds the child's interests as paramount and necessarily also considers the rights and needs of the parents and any alleged perpetrator. When there is sufficient cause for concern a case conference is held, where the child and parent have the opportunity to participate. The need for a plan to protect the child is considered.

Should a volunteer or a member of your congregation be a perpetrator of abuse, they also should be shown appropriate Christian love, and support. It is important that you liaise with the Child Protection Agency so that your follow-up does not impede the work of the statutory services.

WHO ELSE CAN SUPPORT THE CHILD?

No one can pretend that such circumstances will be easy for a child who may feel scared. Although enquiries will be dealt with sensitively the child may be appropriately directed towards speaking to other trusted adults like their teacher, or doctor, or to phone a help line, eg Childline 0800 1111 or NSPCC 0800 800500 or ISPCC 003531 6794944.

REMEMBER

- abusing children or young people is always **wrong**;
- if a child or young person is abused it is **never** their fault;
- allow the child to say what they think should happen;
- never be reluctant to seek advice and always consult about what to do.

WHY BE A VOLUNTEER? WHO WANTS THE HASSLE?

Volunteering is an honourable and worthwhile thing to do. Research shows that the Church is the foremost source of help in voluntary activity.

You have the privilege of helping children and young people to enjoy themselves in safety which is rewarding in itself and is also appreciated by your congregation.

This guide should help you identify how you can help to prevent and deal with abuse of children and young people. Your responsibility is to care for the child and your organisation's responsibility is to care for and support you. Mutual respect involving leaders, children, parents and the congregation should help ensure that children are protected and as few as possible suffer.

SECTION 2

AIM

This section aims to provide more detailed advice on good practice for organisations working with children and young people.

It includes the following topics:-

- Good Team Procedure
- Drawing up a Code of Conduct
- Vetting Potential Leaders
- Training Leaders
- General Safety
- Transport
- Residential Programmes

GOOD TEAM PROCEDURE

1. It is advisable that each organisation on a yearly basis draws up clearly defined aims and objectives for its overall running.

2. Within each organisation a clearly defined line of accountability should be in place, whereby all leaders/teachers report to the appointed leader in

charge/Superintendent, who in turn reports to the church Kirk Session with whom ultimate responsibility lies. It is advisable that the Kirk Session provide supervision, pastoral oversight, and a yearly appraisal of all the work amongst children and young people.

3. At any given meeting, leaders must be informed of the specific programme, and be clear about one another's responsibilities for its delivery.

4. Acquaint the team (especially new leaders) with useful advice on getting to know children ie try to get to know the names of the children as quickly as possible; talk to the children about themselves, what they like, what they do during the rest of the week; talk to the children about yourself. They will be interested in all sorts of things.

5. Parents should be supplied with name and telephone number of the organisation leader/superintendent.

6. Each organisation leader must be fully acquainted with the Child Protection Referral procedure.

7. Each team member must be acquainted with and in full support of the discipline procedure for the organisation, and with the Child Protection policy.

8. At the conclusion of the meeting of the organisation, provision should be made for a period of review and evaluation of the programme, during which leaders can fully update the leader in charge, and one another, of issues and difficulties which may have arisen during the session.

9. It is recommended that as often as possible a fully qualified first-aider should be present. Every leader should be fully acquainted with the location of the first aid box, and how to administer basic first aid. In the event of an accident/emergency, where possible, leaders should have regularly updated contact numbers for parents/guardians

10. Recognising the legal requirements for the ratio of children/young people to leaders during youth activities, all leaders are required to abide by the stated supervision ratios.

The standard recommended ratios are:

0 to 2 years = 1 member of staff to 3 children

2 to 3 years = 1 member of staff to 4 children

3 to 7 years = 1 member of staff to 8 children

8 years and over = 2 members of staff (preferably one of each gender) for up to 20 children/young people.

There should be one additional member of staff for every ten extra children and/or young people or part thereof.

DISCIPLINE/CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In every aspect of life organisations function best where there are clear guidelines and structures. The following suggested code of conduct for children and young people recognises this basic fact. The code of conduct will require implementation that recognises the particular characteristics of individual groups.

It is recommended that at the commencement of the organisation's year a code of conduct is drawn up with the member's participation. While we

recognise that discipline may seem at times to be restrictive to young people it is best enforced with their agreement.

Such a code of conduct will help to create a safe, secure environment and an atmosphere where children will feel that they can confide in the leaders.

A Sample 'Club Code of Conduct'

As members of this club we will:-

1. Respect the authority of the club leaders.
2. Respect the views and feelings of other members of the club.
3. Respect the right of every club member to express their view/opinion.
4. Respect the right of every club member to be heard/listened to.
5. Respect both leaders' and other club members' personal privacy and property.
6. Show due care for equipment and property which will be the responsibility of every club member.
7. The following activities/behaviours are deemed **unacceptable**:-
 - (i) Consumption of alcohol and smoking within the confines of the club building or during club activities.
 - (ii) Physical abuse of other club members and/or leaders.
 - (iii) Verbal abuse including 'put-downs' of other club members and leaders.
 - (iv) Wilful destruction or damage of property or equipment.
 - (v) The misuse of any substance or stimulant.

VETTING POTENTIAL LEADERS

As we have seen in Section One, it is necessary to vet leaders to provide a safe environment. A proper selection procedure is one of the most sensible and effective ways of assessing a person's suitability to work with children and young people, and may itself act as a deterrent to potential abusers. This is often felt to be an unnecessary burden, particularly if the person is part-time, a volunteer, and already known to the minister or members of the congregation. However, the more routine the procedure becomes, the less intimidating it will be to all concerned. If we have good standards of practice in our organisations people are more likely to want to join.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that anyone who may be unsuited to working with young people is not given that opportunity. Furthermore it is important to ensure that everyone participates in a selection procedure, even though they are recognised as people of good standing.

The following steps (based on Child Care (NI)'s 'Our *Duty to Care*' page 15) are necessary to ensure good practice.

Defining the role: This involves thinking through what exactly you consider the role of a new employee or volunteer to be, and what skills will be required for them to perform effectively.

Application form: This should be supplied with a clear job description and, where appropriate, with information of what is expected of them. The form should be drafted to allow volunteers to provide all the relevant details which will be treated in confidence. (*See Appendix 1/2*)

Declaration: All volunteers will be asked to declare any past criminal convictions and cases pending against them.

Interview: Two representatives of the congregation should meet the person. This is also the opportunity to explain your child protection policy and ensure that the person has the ability and commitment required to put the policy into practice.

References: If the person is not well known to the Kirk Session two references should be obtained from people who are not family members. Where appropriate references may be sought from their previous place of worship, preferably from someone who has had first hand knowledge of their previous work with young people.

If the person has had less than two years regular contact with the church (or has had a two year period of absence from the church), again two references should be sought.

Supervision: Appointment should be conditional on the successful completion of a trial period (usually six months). There should be a facility for a yearly appraisal of volunteers and all employees.

Induction: An induction process should take place, including familiarising the new worker with your child protection policy, introduction to other workers, children, parents etc. On appointment all employees and volunteers should be given a copy of the organisation's child protection policy and procedural guidance. The volunteer should give a written acknowledgement that they have received this.

Appropriate follow-up should be provided for those who do not meet the requirements for working with children and young people.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

For those who employ youth workers, in addition, the General Assembly has resolved (June 1995) that all employees must be vetted through the Pre-employment Consultancy Service (PECS).

Access to PECS is available through the Youth Office.

TRAINING LEADERS

Volunteers who work with children and young people are a valuable resource to the church. They should have appropriate training which must include some basic Child Protection Awareness Training along with knowledge of agencies which can provide further training, resources and advice. Training, however, needs to be ongoing and not simply a one-off provision.

Within the Presbyterian Church, training can be facilitated through the following channels:

The Youth Board (Telephone Number 01232 322284)

The Board of Social Witness (Telephone Number 01232 322284)

The Board of Education (Telephone Number 01232 322284)

Christian Training Centre (Telephone Number 01232 248424)

Training may also be available through the Department of Education for N. Ireland, Health and Social Service Trusts, Nexus and Education and Library Boards.

It is recommended that a record be kept of all training that has been undertaken and who has attended.

Staff and volunteers need help in clarifying what is appropriate physical contact with children. Appropriate physical contact is a valid way of expressing your concern and care for children and young people. In training sessions or discussions it is important to indicate which physical contacts are inappropriate and to make workers aware of actions which might be misunderstood and situations which might render them vulnerable.

Relevant Programmes for Youth Groups

Pressure Points	CPAS
Youthwork Vol 2: Lifestyle	Kingsway
Sexuality and Religion	Sue Haines & Chris Wright. Lion International
Taking Charge of Your Life	Michael & Terri Quinn. Family Caring Trust
Get 'em Talking	Mike Yaconelli & Scott Koenigsaecker. Zondervan
Good Times	David C Cook
Watch Out	David C Cook
Junior Electives	David C Cook

There are other programmes available from the Volunteer Development Agency and the Away from Home and Safe Federation.

GENERAL SAFETY

Safety is of prime importance during any activity. This is not only the responsibility of the youth leader in charge but of every youth worker. They should be aware of the following guidelines.

1. There should be adequate supervision by a responsible adult of certain equipment eg table tennis tables, snooker tables etc.

2. When using special equipment for your programme eg for 'one off' activities such as trampolining, bouncy castle etc, ensure there is adequate supervision by trained adults. Be aware of the physical environment and remove/avoid items which may cause injury during the said activity. If the organisation is undertaking what is deemed to be high risk activities the leaders must seek written permission from parents/guardians in advance.

3. If at all possible it is helpful to have someone with a First Aid qualification. Where possible leaders should be aware of what medication children are currently taking and this should not be given without written consent from parents or doctors. Leaders should also seek to obtain information concerning allergies and reaction to foods eg peanuts. Medication should be clearly marked, out of reach of children, and securely locked away.

4. Be aware of the location of fire exits and ensure that they are 'unblocked'. Know where the nearest fire extinguishers are located. These must be checked regularly by a qualified person.

Occasionally fire drills should be conducted to ensure that all young people know what evacuation procedure to follow in the event of a real fire. It is helpful to have a record of these.

5. During games or 'icebreakers' be aware of the risks of physical injury and guard against this.
6. Young people must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult while in the kitchen area.
7. Areas where maintenance work is taking place should never be used and where possible should be screened off.
8. A telephone should, where possible, be installed on the premises for safety purposes.

TRANSPORT

All youth work will involve transporting young people at some stage, whether this is on a club night or to and from a residential programme. Leaders should observe the guidelines below which will help ensure protection for them and the young people.

Private Cars

1. Drivers should be aware of the limitations of third party insurance for transporting young people. Private cars can be used so long as they are not used for hire or for carrying passengers for reward.
2. Drivers must check with their insurance company regarding the adequacy of passenger liability.
3. Avoid transporting a young person on your own. Try to ensure another adult is present with you in the vehicle or other children are with you. If a situation occurs when you have to transport a child alone, ensure other leaders know this is happening, and that the child is in the rear seat.
4. Overcrowding must be avoided at all costs. This will invalidate any insurance cover provided. Seat belts should be worn.

Minibuses

5. All drivers for minibuses must have a PSV licence if driving vehicles with sixteen seats or more.
6. If driving the congregation's minibus(es) drivers must be named on the congregation's insurance policy.
7. The law states that it is the driver's responsibility to make sure that the vehicle is in a road-worthy condition before use. Failure to do so may result in the driver being legally liable in the event of any accident. Therefore, each driver must carry out a range of checks to ensure the road-worthiness of the vehicle. **IF IN DOUBT, DO NOT DRIVE THE VEHICLE.**
8. When hiring a minibus or larger bus, it is the responsibility of the user group to verify the legality and insurance cover of the operator prior to the use of the transport. If in doubt, ask to see a copy of the operator's insurance cover and operator's licence.
9. It is recognised that children (where possible) can sit:
 - 3 to a seat if under 8
 - 2 to a seat if over 8

Preferably this should be in seats with seat belts/restraints, and with the seats facing forward. Seat belts must be worn for any journey of any length, and again it is the driver/leader's responsibility to enforce this.

NOTE: From September 1996 all minibuses must be fitted with seat belts. Minibuses with side facing seats are being phased out so churches should avoid purchasing this type of vehicle.

10. Adults who accompany young people in minibuses should, where possible, sit amongst the young people. Preferably, a responsible adult should sit near the exit points of the vehicle.

11. An accident report book/breakdown log book should be carried in church minibuses and kept up-to-date.

12. Carry a First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher and familiarise yourself with them.

13. Avoid transporting a young person on your own. Try to ensure another adult is present with you in the vehicle or other children are with you. If a situation occurs that you have to transport a child alone ensure that other leaders know that this is happening.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMMES

Residential programmes often become the highlight of any congregation's youth programme offering a whole new world of relationships and events for the youth group to experience. Whilst recognising the tremendous impact residential trips can have on a young person's emotional, physical and spiritual development, residential also provide the youth leader with 'areas of concern' for the safety of his/her young people.

The Residential Centre

1. The Centre must have adequate insurance cover regarding your group and the activities your group hopes to engage in.

Insurance Cover should especially cover high risk activities eg, canoeing, rock climbing etc.

2. The Centre should inform you of its rules and regulations. Make every effort to be aware of its timetable eg whether it has a lights out time, meal times, what time it expects the group to arrive and to depart.

3. The Centre must provide access to First Aid/GP in the event of an emergency.

4. The Centre must also provide separate sleeping accommodation for males/females.

Parents

5. Parental (or guardian's) consent is a must when taking any young person away for a residential experience. A registration form must be signed by the parent/guardian and it should also give any relevant medical information eg allergies, special diets etc.

6. Before taking a group away, ensure that parents/guardians are aware of the following:

- The programme/activities their child is encouraged/expected to participate in.
- The names and numbers of adult leaders accompanying the group. (Where possible it is advisable to arrange a pre-residential briefing for the parents, giving information and allowing parents an opportunity to meet the leaders.)
- The Centre telephone number and address.
- The group's 'contract' ie what rules the young people will be asked to abide by, and possible consequences if these are broken.
- What clothes and other items the young people might be expected to need on the weekend.
- How much pocket money might be sufficient (it is advisable to set a limit on this).

The Young People

7. They must have parental/guardian consent to participate in the residential and its activities.

8. Young people should never be coerced/forced into any activity with which they are uncomfortable.

9. They should be fully informed of the nature of the residential, ie what is expected from them.

10. They should be allowed to 'negotiate' rules and a contract for behaviour and be made aware of sanctions in the event of them being broken.

Using Church Halls for Accommodation

11. If church premises are being used for accommodation certain factors need to be taken into consideration:

Only ground floor accommodation is considered suitable for sleeping accommodation.

12. There should be appropriate male/female segregation and supervision.

13. There should be at least two separate routes leading from the sleeping accommodation and out of the building.

14. Doors should be checked for ease of opening in an emergency.

Exits should be clearly marked and unblocked.

Clear instructions in the event of fire should be made clear to both young people and leaders.

15. Portable heating appliances should not impede exits and should be turned off during sleeping hours.

16. Leaders should have torches in case of power failure.

17. There should be a 'no smoking' rule applied to the premises.

18. If there is a telephone in the church the leaders should have access to it. If not, they should be aware of the nearest telephone.

19. Leaders should avoid staying on their own with a young person; always be sure that there are other leaders or young people present.

20. Sleeping accommodation for leaders and young people must be separate but easily accessible in case of distress or emergency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The content of this booklet has been based on child protection guidelines and other literature issued by NSPCC, DHSS, the Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts, Child Care (NI), the Methodist Church in Ireland, and the Corrymeela Guidelines.

SECTION 3**Resources/Select Bibliography****Publications and Tapes**

An Abuse of Trust	DHSS
Our Duty to Care	Childcare (NI)
Away from Home and Safe	Away from Home and Safe Federation
Keep them Safe- Guidelines for Youth	Methodist Department of Youth and Children's Work
Keeping Our Children Safe	Crescent Church (Belfast)
Kidscape	Michele Elliott
Help to Leaders - (Understanding Child Abuse-Child Sexual Abuse in the Family -"Caring" reprint	PCCA (PO Box 133 Swanley Kent BR8 7UQ)
Child Abuse & The Church (Tape)	PCCA
Keeping Safe - A Practical Guide to talking with Children	Michele Elliott

The NSPCC have a wide selection of relevant booklets

Secular Books

Child Abuse <i>R S Kemp & C H Kemp</i>	FONTANA/OPEN BOOKS	1978
Recognising Child Abuse <i>NIPPA</i>	T H JORDAN	1988

Christian Books

Releasing The Scream

Rebecca Newman

HODDER & STOUGHTON

1994

Child Sexual Abuse: A hope for healing

Hancock & Mains

HIGHLAND BOOKS

1988

A Silence to be Broken

E Wilson

INTER-VARSITY

1987

APPENDIX 1

Confidential

SAMPLE APPLICATION FORM FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN’S WORKERS (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Name of Organisation/Group

Name of Person

Any surname previously known by

Date of Birth

Address

Telephone Number

How long have you been at this address?

If less than 2 years, then previous address

Name of Church you attended

Name of Minister

Please give details of previous experience of working with children and/or young people:

Are you prepared to undertake appropriate training? YES/NO _____

Have you had treatment for any illness during the past 5 years which may have bearing on your ability to work with children and young people?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please state:

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence, or are you at present the subject of criminal charges?

YES ____ NO ____

If yes please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

(NB The disclosure of an offence may be no bar to your appointment)

Signed _____ Date _____

Because of the nature of the work for which you are applying, you are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order (NI) 1987 you should declare all convictions including spent convictions.

Please give the name, address, telephone number and position of two people who know you well (not members of your family)

First Referee

Second Referee

Please note that the information on this form is confidential and will be seen only by the organisation leader and the minister.

APPENDIX 2

Confidential

Sample Application Form for Youth and Children’s Workers (Republic of Ireland)

Name of Organisation/Group

Name of Person

Any surname previously known by

Date of Birth

Address

Telephone Number

How long have you been at this address

If less than 2 years, then previous address

Name of Church you attended

Name of Minister

Please give details of previous experience of working with children and/or young people:

Are you prepared to undertake appropriate training? YES/NO _____

Have you had treatment for any illness during the past 5 years which may have bearing on your ability to work with children and young people?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please state:

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence, or are you at present the subject of criminal charges?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

(NB The disclosure of an offence may be no bar to your appointment)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please give the name, address, telephone number and position of two people who know you well (not members of your family)

First Referee

Second Referee

Please note that the information on this form is confidential and will be seen only by the organisation leader and the minister.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Shankill Road Mission Commission operate separately from the Board of Social Witness.
3. The General Assembly reaffirm their continuing opposition to gambling by means of the National Lottery; considering it to be morally corrupting, particularly with obscene roll-over jackpot prizes, acting as an incentive to increasing numbers of people, who in order to enrich a few, may risk impoverishment and divert help from the most needy.
4. That the General Assembly remain opposed to changes which liberalise the Alcohol Licensing Laws for Northern Ireland believing that such changes will only serve to further add to the mounting moral and social problems which are a result of the use of alcohol.
5. That the General Assembly urge the governments of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom to grant more powers to the RUC, Gardai and local authorities to deal with problems associated with the use of illegal drugs.
6. The General Assembly appoint Sunday 17 November 1996 as ADE Sunday and that ministers make use of the materials provided to educate their congregations in this area on this Sunday or other suitable time.
7. The General Assembly commend the Youth Pack on drugs published by the Alcohol and Drug Education Committee for use among ministers, youth leaders and others throughout the Church.
8. That the name of the Social Service Committee be changed to the Social Issues and Resources Committee.
9. That the proposed amendments to the rules of the Retired Ministers' House Fund be approved (Committee Report Pars 3-5).
10. That the customary grants made by the Social Service and Alcohol and Drug Education Committees, up to a total of £3,660 be met by the Incidental Fund.
11. That Mrs Valerie Armstrong be appointed to the Committee of the Old Age Fund, Women's Fund and Indigent Ladies' Fund.
12. That the resignation of Rev T C Morrison as Convener of the Board of Social Witness be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev J M Cathcart be appointed Convener.
13. That the resignation of Rev T I Harte as Co-Convener of the Retired Ministers' House Fund be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev Henry Gray be appointed Co-Convener.
14. That the resignation of Rev S S McFarland as Convener of the Presbyterian Residential Trust be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev T J McCormick be appointed Convener.
15. That 6,000 copies of the Guidelines on Child Protection be printed as a charge upon the Incidental Fund and that all Kirk Sessions study the Guidelines and implement them by 31 March 1997.
16. That each Kirk Session appoint a designated person who is aware of Child Protection issues by 31 May 1997 and ensure that this person receives the appropriate training by that date.

17. That a register of designated persons be held by the Clerk of each Presbytery.

18. That the Working Party on Child Protection ensure that awareness training is available to enable Kirk Sessions to implement these Guidelines.

19. That the Board of Social Witness, with its associated working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 281 of the Code as follows:

20. That the Shankill Road Mission Commission be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 129 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 281(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 281(1) of the Code the words “including the Shankill Road Mission Commission” be deleted.

T C MORRISON

Anent Par 281(2)(e) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 281(2)(e) of the Code the words “the Assembly’s Shankill Road Mission (See Code Par 129 and App 10) and” be deleted.

T C MORRISON

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Convener: Rev J C BUICK
Secretary: Rev D J TEMPLE

1. We give thanks to Almighty God for His hand of blessing upon the work of the Board over the past year, in spite of our shortcomings and inadequacies.

2. When the Church of England, some time back, were facing the reality of the decline of their membership, the late Mervyn Stockwood, the respected and radical Bishop of Southwark 1959 - 81 said, 'If some of my own clergy who go around to their endless committees and yak and yak and yak away would only get on with the job of trying to convert their own parishioners, I think that we should not be in quite the state of decline that we are.'

3. Such a statement is not, relevant to the committees of our Board. Over the past year they have been active in dealing with the remit which is their responsibility. They are producing training manuals and other literature, thus enabling our people to understand more fully what church membership involves and encouraging them to a more meaningful commitment to Christ; while others are setting in motion plans to reach out and win the lost sheep of this beloved land of ours. We say thank you to all the conveners and their committees for their dedication and work for the Kingdom of God.

4. The Board Secretary, Rev David Temple, and the staff of the Irish Mission office over another year have serviced the various committees faithfully and well - to all the staff we say a sincere thank you for your co-operation and help, especially in the Board and Committee week. Trusting that they feel part of our outreach.

5. The Board offers its best wishes to one of its most faithful members, Rev Harry Allen, on his nomination as Moderator-Designate. We assure him of our support and prayers during his year of office.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS COMMITTEE

1. The brevity of this Report does not do justice to the hours of hard work which have been spent last winter compiling material on the subject of "Church and Culture". There is a growing awareness in our Church that we are failing to engage an increasingly selfish society with the claims of Jesus Christ. It must be said that we in the Church can so easily be part of the problem. It is almost six years since the Coleraine Declaration reminded us of the dangers of being more committed to Presbyterianism than to Christ. Our question is how to become more outward looking in Christ, as we bridge the gap between His claims and the world.

2. A number of pamphlets are nearing completion which will be available for use by ministers, Kirk Sessions, Bible Study and house groups. Titles include "An Introduction", "The Urban Mindset", "The Rural Mindset", "The Youth Mindset", "The Church Mindset". Each article will contain a brief introduction, a number of headings and hard-hitting questions. It is the intention that these will be the first in a series of studies which may be collected in a loose-leaf binder. Next year we are hoping to pursue questions of morality.

3. Such is the vastness of our subject that we are contemplating becoming the "Church and Culture Committee"!

4. This year we have also continued to review material already completed by this Committee in previous years with a view to making it more accessible.

C J C McMULLEN, Convener

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COMMITTEE

1. This year, 81 per cent of ministers surveyed are aware of marriage difficulties in their congregation. 91 per cent know of the PCI service Marriage Care Counselling and 26 per cent have referred couples to the service and 23 percent to Relate. These are some of the results which emerged from our survey of 118 ministers in 6 Presbyteries. The results have been analysed and a Business Plan is being implemented. This allows us to move forward with vision and accurate targeting of publicity and resources.

2. Our counsellors have their full complement of clients and we have been operating a short waiting list. Appointments can be made within 5 days from the date of contacting Marriage Care Counselling. Our counsellors, who serve the Church well, are Relate trained and monitored. We operate a strictly confidential service and encourage all congregations to refer couples whose marriages are under stress as soon as difficulties emerge.

3. It is sad that some ministers only hear of a marriage problem when things are irretrievably broken down. Others appear to involve themselves earlier and encourage such couples to come for counselling. Some 14 ministers have referred 26 couples between them - this encouraging result highlights the benefit of the service as part of the care of the Church.

4. Marriage Care Counselling is accessed by telephoning 01232 322284, asking for Marriage Care Counselling. Our lines are now open from 9.30 am - 4.30 pm Monday to Friday.

5. Rev J W McAuley acts as Secretary to the pastoral interviews of couples who plan to marry where one or both parties have been divorced. This is a demanding ministry both in the skills required and the wisdom needed to carefully assess the situations which some couples present.

J BRACKENRIDGE, Convener

APPENDIX 1**REPORT ON THE INTER-CHURCH STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIXED MARRIAGES 1995-1996**

The Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages met in Dundalk on November 17 1995. The Rt Rev Michael Mayes, Bishop of Kilmore, Co-Chairman of the Committee, acted as Chairman for the meeting.

The meeting heard apologies from Mrs Olive Marshall and Mgr Patrick Devine, both of whom were unavoidably absent. The Committee extended its condolences and sympathy to the Rev David Turtle on his recent bereavement.

1. Matters Arising from 1994 - 1995 Inter-Church Standing Committee Report

There was a brief discussion of last year's Report and it was noted that the Report had been distributed and approved by each of the Churches. The Secretary pointed out that in accordance with Item 5 of the Report, copies of the booklet entitled "Churches Together in Marriage", which is intended as a resource for those with pastoral responsibility for Inter-Church families as well as families which themselves represent one or more tradition, had been procured for each member of the Committee. This booklet was duly distributed to each of the members present.

Regarding the other publication noted in last year's Report, namely, the Doctoral Thesis on the question of Inter-Church Marriage in Ireland which had been undertaken by a Swedish post-graduate student, Ms Maria Eriksson, it was noted that the authorities at Queen's University, Belfast, are not at liberty to make copies of this study available since this might breach copyright restrictions. The Rev John Brackenridge, however, was confident of procuring a copy from another source with a view to making the most valuable research and statistical data contained in this Thesis available to the Committee in time for their next meeting.

2. Report on Marriage Preparation Courses

The Rev Brendan Murray and the Rev John Brackenridge reported on the Pre-Marriage Course, which had been organised this year in the Greater Belfast area for couples preparing for Inter-Church Marriage. They noted that the number of participants was somewhat reduced this year and this was attributed in large measure to a degree of confusion which had arisen concerning specific times, dates and location.

The Committee nevertheless welcomed the fact that, at a time when the numbers of Marriage Preparation Courses are being significantly reduced due to constraints on the number of qualified personnel, the commitment to providing specific Preparatory Courses for Inter-Church Marriage, remains constant.

It was agreed that the Committee should convey their support to all those involved in the operation of the Inter-Church Pre-Marriage Courses and that they be encouraged to promote awareness of the arrangements for such courses as widely as possible.

3. Recent Trends in Inter-Church Marriage

The Rev Turtle noted that enquiries to NIMMA (Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association) have more than doubled in recent times. The Association, for their part, have observed that whereas there is more and more evidence of increased sensitivity from clergy in their dealings with Inter-Church couples, there remain nevertheless some instances where clergy are found to be unhelpful and lacking in awareness of the specific needs of Inter-Church couples.

The Committee agreed that it was timely to repeat two principles which have long been at the core of its approach to Inter-Church Marriages, namely that: (a) Clergy of the different traditions should continue to strive toward better relations at local level and (b) Clergy from each tradition be encouraged to make a special effort to take part in Inter-Church Marriages involving a member of their congregation. In practice, NIMMA tends to refer the more problematical cases to one of the recognised Advisors or individual chaplains with specific responsibility for the concerns of Inter-Church Marriage, in order that any misunderstandings and difficulties can be speedily resolved.

The Rev Turtle also noted an increasing trend within the Protestant tradition whereby couples who have had a Registry Office wedding ceremony subsequently come to their local Minister seeking a Service of Blessing for the marriage, which had been previously solemnised by the Civil Authorities. Occasionally, married couples also seek a Service of Blessing in their local Protestant or Catholic Church some weeks after the wedding ceremony which has taken place in a Church of the other tradition.

The position of the Protestant Churches in this regard is to refuse to conduct such "Blessing Ceremonies" as this only encourages confusion regarding the status of the original wedding ceremony.

While Catholic tradition allows for a special liturgy in very particular circumstances, it emphatically rejects any ceremony which can be construed as somehow completing or replacing the initial wedding service. Occasions where this question arises then are very rare and normally this type of liturgical celebration is only undertaken where, for reasons of great distance, ill health, and such like relatives or friends of the spouses may not have been able to attend the wedding ceremony.

4. Proposal arising from Inter-Church Plenary Meeting re agreed Liturgical Texts

Bishop Anthony Farquhar informed the Committee of a proposal which had arisen from the recent Inter-Church Plenary Meeting which had been held at the Emmaus Centre, Swords, on November 3 and 4 1995. This proposal, which was duly referred to the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages, had suggested that some form of agreed liturgical texts might be compiled for use on the occasion of Inter-Church Marriages.

The Committee noted that it is already the case that whenever an Inter-Church Marriage is to be conducted according to the rights of one

Church, clergy from other Churches are invited to participate and to have some involvement in the ceremony itself, either through words of greeting or reading of prayers, blessings and such like.

It was noted that the formula for the exchange of vows differs according to the various Churches and that each of these differing formulas have been agreed upon and approved by the Civil Authorities. It was felt, therefore, that it would not be appropriate for the sub-committee to make any recommendations regarding the central part of the marriage ceremony but that it confine its deliberations instead to the question of appropriate music and suitable scripture readings for Inter-Church Marriage, drawing on the options already available within each of the four main traditions.

Accordingly, it was decided that the proposal might best be addressed by inviting a sub-group of suitably qualified persons from each of the Churches to examine the range of scriptural readings and musical options which are already available within each of the separate Church traditions with a view to compiling a resource booklet for use by those engaged in the preparation of an Inter-Church Marriage ceremony.

It was agreed that the Rev David Lapsley (Presbyterian), Canon Brian Mayne (Church of Ireland), the Rev Ken Thompson (Methodist) and the Rev Hugh Kennedy (Roman Catholic), with the Rev Dr David Lapsley as convener, should be invited to form a sub-group and to discuss this matter with a view to making a report to next year's meeting of the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages. Finally, it was agreed that next year's meeting of the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages should meet in Mount Oliver, Dundalk on Friday, November 15, 1996, at 2.30 pm.

Members of the Committee

The Rev John Brackenridge

The Most Rev Gerard Clifford

The Rev Hugh Connolly

The Rt Rev Mgr Patrick Devine

The Most Rev Anthony Farquhar

The Very Rev Hamilton Leckey

Mrs Olive Marshall

The Rt Rev Michael H G Mayes

The Very Rev Brendan Murray

The Rev David Turtle

IRISH MISSION COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. The youngest nation in Europe with the fastest growing city in Europe and the most rapidly changing society. These are all important descriptions of the Republic of Ireland where most of our Irish Mission work

takes place. Such factors underline the importance of mission on the home front. Whilst the church can sometimes be accused of looking more to the past than to the future, our missionary obligations involve us in challenging each up-and-coming generation with the claims of Christ. As we approach the challenge of modern day Ireland we do so against the backdrop of much upheaval and controversy within the Roman Catholic Church which would claim the allegiance of 98% of the population of the Republic. In this report we look to the year that is past and examine the prospects for the years to come.

Encouraging Growth

2. Co-operation with the Home Mission and its minister, Rev Stephen Johnston has seen encouraging increase in the two congregations of Carlow and Fermoy. With the prospect of Rev Stephen Johnston residing in Carlow, where our Irish Mission Worker Philip Kelso is based, William Workman, who contributed much to the early development in Carlow, is now concentrating in Athy and Naas. The Carlow congregation has grown steadily to an average weekly attendance of around 40 with the prospect of further development now that opportunities are available to reach out to students in the Regional College. Philip Kelso is also diligently developing the children's outreach work and seeking opportunities among the young people in the town. In Fermoy the fortnightly service has grown from around 6 to some 20 and this growth has arisen from the weekly outreach Bible Study in the local hotel and the Children's Bible Meeting in the Community centre.

New Openings

3. The Irish Mission responded to the invitation of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery to appoint an IM Worker to Arklow in Co Wicklow. This is one of the major holiday resorts in Ireland and has been earmarked for further development by the Government. Philip Whelton was appointed last November and has been working alongside the Rev James Carson, minister of Greystones and Arklow. Whilst the Arklow congregation is the smaller of the two there are a number of people asking for Bible Studies and Philip is able to meet this need as well as reach out to the many young people in the town.

Further Appointments

4. For many years Tom Hollywood had worked in Tullamore in Co Offaly. He retired just over a year ago and at the time we had no one suitable to take his place. On 1 March, John Chinnery was appointed as IM worker to Tullamore. He comes into the mission with a rich experience from years of service with the Salvation Army in Dublin, Belfast and Birmingham as well as being involved in evangelistic work in East Anglia. He and his wife Lilian have just moved to Tullamore and would value prayer as they get to know the people Tom Hollywood had been working with. This is a changing situation as the minister in Tullamore and Mountmellick is about to retire. As is the case with many of our small congregations in the Republic, outreach must become a priority if survival is to give way to consolidation and an impact in local communities.

Moving On

5. Miss Diane Petherick has tendered her resignation from the Irish Mission to take effect from 31st August 1996. She is leaving to take up an appointment in Regent Street Presbyterian, Newtownards. She has pioneered the work of Christian drama in Ireland and through the use of her God-given talents has reached out to many. Her work has often been lonely and entailed much travel. We value her contribution, thank her for the impact of her specialised ministry on the unchurched, its encouragement to many smaller congregations, and we pray that God will continue to bless her as she takes up this new appointment.

Steady Faithfulness

6. Much Irish Mission work is like ploughing a field - it lies before you and you get on with it. Steadiness is the nature of the task. Billy Patterson has seen this as he has sought to develop a work in one of the small villages to the South of Kilkenny. Keith Preston, William Workman and Sam Francey have seen this as they have sought to consolidate their work in the towns where they have been placed. There have been the encouragements of new contacts and the disappointments of those who have not persevered in the faith. There has been the enthusiasm of the children learning the stories of Jesus and the impact of that on some of their parents. There is the steady dogged perseverance in door to door visitation, where results often seem negligible, and where occasionally God introduces us to the neediest and most grateful of people.

7. There is the work of Tom Moorehead in the Glens of Antrim where many appreciate his visits and the constant round of meetings that Tom and Ella McCrea are involved in as they seek to counter the errors of the Sects with the truth of the Saviour.

Who will stand in the Gap?

8. One of the disappointments of the past year has been our inability to fill the gap in the Dublin Presbytery's City Mission work. This crucial work in the centre of Dublin gave us contact with some forty very needy people and we are so grateful to Ken and Betty Jackson for coming out of retirement to keep this work ticking over, but we do need, as a matter of urgency, "someone to stand in the gap." Bible Colleges in Ireland, Scotland and England have been contacted but as yet we have been unable to find anyone suitable. Through this report may we appeal to ministers and elders to prayerfully consider whether there might be someone suitable, preferably a married couple, who could rise to the challenge of this vacancy which gives ample opportunity to both proclaim and practice the love of the Saviour amongst the most needy of people!

Future Priorities

9. It is obvious that the church as a whole is considering her strategy for mission on the island of Ireland and in common with the whole church and its various agencies we await with anticipation the developments and decisions that will flow from the Strategy for Mission Report to this year's General Assembly. The Irish Mission Committee has also been looking at its strategy, aware that

Ireland is a rapidly changing society, and also aware of the scriptural injunction that one cannot put new wine into old wineskins. Whilst the message in our missionary endeavours never changes, methods must be constantly examined as to their effectiveness. We cannot afford the luxury of doing mission in the way it has always been done regardless of its effectiveness. We are in consultation with the Dublin and Munster Presbytery regarding the possibilities of church planting in one of the Dublin housing estates. It would seem that such a task may well involve several agencies of our Church putting together a team. Certainly it will require the collective expertise of the church. As a mission we have also been examining the possibility of some fresh approaches to mission for the old methods do not seem to be making the impact that they once did. We have also been examining opportunities in the West of Ireland, but as in most things the problem is not discerning the opportunity but in discovering the people who can grasp that opportunity. As a mission we are looking for suitably gifted Christian people who will have a heart for mission and who will see Ireland as one of the most important and strategic mission fields in Western Europe.

10. As always we pay tribute to our office staff in the Irish Mission. Mrs Mandy Higgins was appointed Senior Secretary in November in succession to Mrs Julie Sykes. She has settled in very well to the environment of Church House and we would thank her, Nehru, Roberta and Elaine for their valued work in serving not only the Irish Mission but also the various committees of the Board.

11. Tribute must also be paid to the Rev David Temple for the leadership given to the Mission. As Editor of the *Christian Irishman*, with a circulation of 10,000, he ensures that the work of the Mission is kept before the wider Church.

As Superintendent, his regular contact with the Workers, and his comprehensive knowledge of the situation, particularly in the Republic of Ireland, ensures that the Committee is kept aware of the needs and opportunities in Ireland today.

We ask you to pray for him, the Office Staff and Workers as they continue to serve the Church under the auspices of the Irish Mission.

R STERRITT, Convener

CHRISTIAN TRAINING COMMITTEE

1. The Christian Training Committee assists the church in her work by providing relevant training materials for use in the local congregation. In choosing subjects for publication the Committee is guided by requests and ideas submitted by ministers, elders and others engaged in training church members. Suggestions for future publications are always welcomed and considered by the Committee.

2. In the past year work has continued on the preparation of materials covering a number of different subjects. "Presbyterian Beliefs" is a booklet which sets out the distinctive doctrines and practices of our church. It is suitable for all church members, including those who may be studying or working away from home and who are in contact with other Christian denominations and

traditions. "Positive Living" is a booklet which aims to be a basic guide to Christian morals and standards. It seeks to provide clear and concise answers to moral questions which are commonly raised in everyday life. A leaflet entitled "Prayers and Readings for Elders' Visitation" is also in preparation.

3. Preparing a booklet or leaflet for publication is often a more difficult task than writing a larger work. The fact that the end result is edited and shaped by a Committee adds to the task. Our aim is to produce material which is Biblical in content, attractive in presentation and written in a style which is clear and easily read. We greatly value the prayer and support of the General Assembly for our continuing work.

4. Last June the text of the informative leaflet on Freemasonry was approved by the General Assembly. The leaflet was subsequently printed and is now in circulation free of charge. Other training materials currently available are on display in the Irish Mission Office and in Familybooks, we commend them to the whole church and pray that "the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ".

W J JOHNSTONE, Convener

DIVINE HEALING COMMITTEE

1. Recently the Committee has asked all Presbyteries to forward their Divine Healing Reports annually to the convener and those received thus far suggest that an increasing number of congregations have the Ministry of Healing as part of their ongoing work and witness. An 'in house' meeting has been organised for Thursday morning 19 September 1996, in Ballyhenry when Presbytery and Congregational representatives will have an opportunity of getting together for teaching and encouragement.

2. A little deputation has been undertaken by some of the Committee members during the year, but most of our work has been taken up with the survey on "Stress in the Ministry" which takes up the rest of our report this year.

3. Most ministers accept that part of the job entails coping with pressures, problems and people. Most just get on with what they have been called to do, and most cope adequately. In the background, however, we are aware of Presbytery Commissions, Judicial Commission, lengthy absences and resignations: obviously some are not coping adequately and there is a casualty rate. Up until now no one has taken a long, hard look at what has become a recognised feature of life in today's sophisticated, technological, competitive and disturbed society, "occupational stress".

4. It is reckoned that more than three million working days were lost to mental distress at work in Northern Ireland in 1993. An estimated 40 per cent of absenteeism is now caused by excessive stress levels and consequent mental ill health. The Committee's "ministerial stress survey" was carried out during the winter of 1994-1995 and is the first such investigation among ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The disturbing indication is that the divine ministry is not immune to such a secular phenomenon. That ought not to be a

surprise because ministers come from that sophisticated, technological, competitive and disturbed society, and are influenced by it and seek to minister to people who are part of that society. Occupational stress needs to be recognised as a reality among ministers and as something which individual ministers and the Church as a whole must come to terms with.

5. The survey plus the tabulated results amount to a total of thirty pages, so it represents a substantial investigation into the issues of ministerial stress. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the 123 ministers (almost 30 per cent of all ministers on active duty in 1994) who took the time to complete and return the two page survey. The sample, broadly representative of the Church as a whole, is one on which we can base conclusions. It is, however, a survey in which ministers “diagnose” themselves, by how they feel and how they respond to the nitty-gritty of ministerial life. In other words, the survey is not a clinically professional analysis and the results should not be interpreted as such. Allowing for this, the results do indicate that we have a problem and highlights the areas that need attention.

6. 22 per cent of the respondents indicated an excessive level of stress. 9 per cent had already been off due to stress during the previous three years. 17 per cent had given prolonged consideration to moving out of full time ministry altogether, and for 3 per cent it was a case of both time off and considering a move out. Obviously the survey failed to capture those who had actually left the ministry during that time. The figures suggest that 22 per cent of all ministers in active duty are battling with the problem, recognised elsewhere as “occupational stress”.

7. It needs to be emphasised that these are not “angry young people” trying to change the world, but are mostly ministers with more than five years of ministry behind them (90 per cent), and mostly ministers in their middle years of life, between 36 and 55 years of age (71 per cent), when they ought to be at their peak. Since all but one respondent was male, it is not possible to draw any conclusions as to whether men or women are the more susceptible to ministerial stress: since all but seven are married, it is obvious that ministerial stress becomes reflected in the home as domestic stress so that the lady of the manse becomes caught up in the triangle of stress: a minister-husband, his work, and his family, in particular his wife, the main source of care and support. Where a minister is being overloaded by occupational and domestic stress, then it follows that the attitude with which he ministers will be affected and his effectiveness as a servant of Jesus Christ will be lessened, and that will be felt among those to whom he ministers.

8. If nothing is done about it, occupational stress is going to become an increasing problem within the Church and is bound to affect the quality of ministry being offered by those who labour under a burden that is wholly unnecessary. That is not to say that ministers want a stress-free life, an easy-going laxity, because ministers, whether over-stressed or not, want to be able to do their job in a more effective and more professional way, and work mostly around 60 hours a week (74 per cent) with some (21 per cent) working in excess of 70 hours weekly.

9. What would appear to be disturbing is that the three main stress factors, common to all respondents are (i) time pressures, (ii) conflicting

expectations between minister and congregation, and (iii) situations of conflict involving the congregation. It is how the minister copes with these three that finally determines whether he is on the road to becoming a victim of occupational stress.

10. This survey indicates the importance that needs to be given to tackling this issue in terms of prevention of stress overload from occurring in the first place, the recovery of those who experience it and the provision that may be made to support those who face a lengthy period of absence from work during recovery. This will mean tackling the subject at all levels: (i) the selection and training of candidates for the ministry; it is a common complaint by ministers that they were inadequately prepared for real life “out there”; (ii) Presbyteries, currently the last place to which the troubled turn for care and support; and (iii) congregations, the minister’s work place, and the place where the pressures and various conflicts are most likely to emerge.

11. In the area of prevention, it might be possible to use the survey prognostically to identify situations where the factors involved in excessive stress already suggest a high probability of ministerial stress.

12. The resolutions of the Committee below are presented after consultation with others in more professional capacities within our Church; they have studied the survey and given helpful advice.

J ISAAC THOMPSON, Convener

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

1. Before his Ascension, Christ left his followers with an immense task - the Great Commission command to make disciples of all nations. Evangelism is the first step in obeying this command. God has done something about the evil that surrounds us and dwells within us. He has done something about restoring us to Himself in a holy, personal and intimate, safe and eternal relationship. This deliverance from evil and restoration to relationship with God is great news for all human beings. But people must spread this news, and blessed are those who do! The gospel is the power of God for salvation, no matter what the challenges or setbacks. Even though opposed, it cannot be overcome, Our task is to proclaim this message of ultimate liberation, of ultimate freedom, of eternal salvation with boldness to all people.

2. Dr Brian Kingsmore, our evangelism promoter, continues to be a most helpful encouragement at every level of our Church. A brief report of his work is given below. His enthusiasm and guidance continue to be of great benefit to the Committee. We ask you to continue to remember him in prayer, and use him in developing your strategy for evangelism and engagement in evangelism.

3. The bulk of our time this year has been involved with the early planning of the run up to our Church-wide evangelistic thrust. We plan to prepare information and training materials for use in congregations to be completed by this time next year. Those materials will be distributed to congregations in September 1997. They are for the consideration of Kirk

sessions and others. At this time congregations will be expected to begin the detailed planning for outreach events/activities. It is hoped that these events/activities will be held in every congregation in our General Assembly between September 1998 and August 1999.

4. A review and assessment of the year is to be carried out in each congregation between September 1999 and December 1999. During this same period plans should be laid in each congregation for further outreach, for regular training in Christian discipleship and for church membership classes on a regular basis. It is hoped to involve Presbytery Evangelism Agents in the work of promoting, planning and assessing evangelism in the congregations within each Presbytery. We see this as a key element to widespread involvement.

5. The work of writing material has been divided up within a sub-committee. Some of the subjects being addressed are "A Strategy for Evangelism in the Local Congregation", "Evangelistic Methods", "Training in Discipleship & Church Membership", "Continuing Assessment of Progress in Evangelism in the Congregations" and "Prayer". We are planning to make the materials minister friendly and flexible in approach.

6. Under the sponsorship of the Irish Council of Churches, representatives of the committee met with those from other member churches to discuss what was being currently done by way of Evangelism in the various denominations. Our representatives were particularly encouraged by what was being done in the Church of Ireland. It was felt that such an annual meeting would be helpful.

7. We continue to give thanks to God for all those within the life and witness of our church who take hold of the opportunities given to them to share the gospel. We remember that the first Christians changed the world. How? Through immersing themselves in the Word, through constantly bathing their plans in prayer, and through relying on the Holy Spirit to empower them to be witnesses. "They were few and weak, but in a dark room it doesn't take much light to make people squint!". (Michael Green).

G CONNOR, Convener

APPENDIX A

The following list, compiled from replies received, gives the names of those ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church who have served as visiting evangelists during the year 1995.

(Adults/All "A", Youth "Y", Children "C")

Rev Noel Agnew (Magherafelt) Y, Rev D Bannerman (Garvaghy) A, Rev R Birney (Cavanleck/Aughtentaine) A, Mr L Brown (Lucan) Y, Rev G Connor (Ballyclare) A, Rev Tom Conway (Castledawson) C, Very Rev Dr W M Craig (Magherally) A, Rev Peter Dickinson (Magherafelt) C, Rev Keith Duddy (2nd Ballybay) C, Rev Norman McAuley (Brigh) A, Rev John McCullough (1st Antrim) C, Rev Ivan McKay (Castledawson) A, Rev K Newell (Fortwilliam Pk, Belfast) A, Rev J Parkes (2nd Dromara) A & (Magherafelt) A, Mr M Perrott (Clough) A & (Randalstown) A, Rev J Thompson (Middletown) A, Rev S Thompson (2nd/3rd Rathfriland) A & (1st Dromara) C, Rev Dr H Uprichard (Tandragee) A.

APPENDIX B**EVANGELISM PROMOTER'S REPORT**

Rev Dr Brian Kingsmore reports:

In this past year I have continued to visit Sessions, Presbytery Elders' Fellowships, Presbyteries, Synods, PWA's etc, as well as attending conferences in Northern Ireland and England. I have also spent considerable time with a great number of individual Ministers discussing, encouraging and counselling about future evangelistic outreach in their churches. John Stott wrote "I think there is no chance of the church taking its evangelistic task seriously unless it first recovers its confidence in the truth, relevance and power of the gospel and begins to get excited about it again". It is with the same conviction that I have approached all my endeavours this past year.

I am happy to report that the invitations I have received from Churches have covered a wide geographical area from vastly differing socio-economic groups as well as differing theological emphases. On reflecting on all these visits, the impression one is left with is that as a church we are waiting for "something" to happen. Henretta Mears who had such a profound spiritual effect on many including Dr Billy Graham and Dr Bill Bright was fond of saying "It's hard to steer a parked car so we had better get it moving". We are it seems like a church at "parked", waiting for movement.

That momentum I believe is about to be accelerated by (a) The Evangelism Committee's new 3-year Outreach due to start in September 1997 and (b) by the new mindset proposals being presented by the Strategy for Mission Committee. I look forward with great expectation and enthusiasm to continuing my work with these two bodies as well as the Youth Board in seeking to obediently fulfil the Great Commission and the Great Commandment in and through our own denomination.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

National and International Problems Committee

2. That the General Assembly commend the pamphlets on "Church and Culture" for study and use when available and approved by the Board.

Marriage and Family Committee

3. That the General Assembly encourage Ministers to refer couples with marriage problems for counselling to Marriage Care Counselling, Church House.

Irish Mission Committee

4. That Ministers bring to the attention of their congregations the increasing missionary opportunities in Ireland today, with specific prayer that

God would raise up individuals whose desire would be to serve Christ through the Irish Mission.

Divine Healing Committee

5. That the General Assembly recognise that ministerial stress is neither inevitable nor insurmountable but is a problem affecting a significant number of ministers and ought not to be ignored.

6. That the Divine Healing Committee prepare a condensed report of its survey into ministerial stress and that this be circulated to all with an interest in this, and to ministers and Presbyteries for discussion and report back by 31 December, 1996.

7. That the Divine Healing Committee report to the General Assembly of 1997 what specific actions need to be taken to minimise ministerial stress and care for those affected by it.

Evangelism Committee

8. That the General Assembly continue to support prayerfully the work of the Evangelism Promoter, Rev Dr Brian Kingsmore.

9. That the General Assembly commend the proposed church wide evangelistic outreach, and call on each congregation to pray urgently in preparation for it, in the light of the deepening spiritual crisis in Ireland.

10. That the General Assembly support Bible Sunday on 8 December, 1996, and continue to pray for all involved in the translation of the Scriptures and production of Bible studies and aids throughout the world.

11. That thanks be expressed to those who served as visiting evangelists during 1995.

General

12. That the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training, with its associated working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 282 of the Code as follows:

YOUTH BOARD

Rev DANIEL KANE, Convener
Miss ROSALIND STIRLING, Secretary

1. The Youth Board continues to support the Church's ministry to young people. The cutting edge of all youth work is carried out each week in the local congregation. In this work the church continues to be well served by many committed and talented leaders who willingly dedicate their gifts to this end. The Board readily acknowledges the Church's indebtedness to such people. Our prayers are for everyone who endeavours to promote the cause of Christ amongst young people so that they are converted to faith in Him and become active citizens of His Church.

2. The Board continues to be in total support of our Youth Officer who works tirelessly to encourage and support effective youth ministry in our congregations. Miss Roz Stirling is the visionary behind the Mission Statement and Strategy Document which the Board has adopted and is implementing. This strategy document will sharpen the focus of the Board's work and direct us into the new millennium. Together with our youth office staff, Mrs Jean Gibson, Mrs Felicity Atwell and Miss Lois McIlrath, and our Centres Director, Mr Maurice Kennedy, who work hard and cheerfully, our Board is well serviced.

3. The review of Boards and Committees initiated by the General Assembly two years ago has pin-pointed the need for the Board to revise and update the Code regarding its constitution. This piece of legislation comes in the form of overtures anent Pars 283(1) and 283(2) of the Code. It basically does three things:

- (i) It reduces the overall size of the Board by reducing the number of members on the "a" line by five.
- (ii) It takes cognisance of the Board's newly adopted Mission Statement.
- (iii) It updates obsolete language.

We feel that a broader spectrum of relevant Youth Bodies and Organisations than is presently represented on the Board would be better served by inviting their representatives to "sit and deliberate" on the Board as deemed appropriate. The Board would draw up a list of such people annually.

4. A concern regarding the new Guide Association promises is under consultation. Constructive meetings are being held with the Executive Committee of the Ulster Guiding Association.

5. Last June the General Assembly welcomed the proposed appointments of a Youth Development Officer/University Chaplain in the Dublin area and a Youth Development Officer in the Donegal and Monaghan Presbyteries. The Board is glad to report that Miss Iris Stevenson has been appointed as the Youth Development Officer for the Donegal and Monaghan Presbyteries and took up her employment with us in February 1996. The Board commends her to the Church's prayers and looks to God for abundant blessing in the lives of the young people of these two Presbyteries. Unfortunately progress with regard to the Dublin post has not been so rapid. Along with the

Board of Education, the Youth Board continues to seek out a suitable person for this position and hopes to move towards making an appointment soon.

6. In November 1995 the Nexus Ireland Project was honoured by President Mary Robinson at a dinner in Dublin castle marking the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. We were delighted to have the South African Christian writer and founder of African Enterprise, Dr Michael Cassidy, as our main speaker. The building work for a new multi-purpose hall, with new kitchen and ancillary rooms, is well under way, the necessary finance having been secured. The aim of this project is to develop the Lucan Youth Centre, both in terms of "bricks and mortar" and as a place of an effective, Biblically based reconciliation ministry within our Church and beyond.

7. The Board welcomes Mr Glenn Jordan as the new Team Leader of Youth Link NI and wishes him God's blessing and guidance in his appointment. Presently Youth Link NI is going through a helpful process of review of its structures, and examination of its effectiveness as a service agency to the member Churches in the areas of training and cross-community development. Through the organisation a corporate strategy for Christian youth work carried out by the constituent denominations is being drawn up which will be the basis on which the Board will approach Government for headquarter funding.

8. The Churches Youth Service Council has entered a new era with a new streamlined constitution and Board of Management. This has been accomplished in close consultation with the three constituent Protestant denominations, and is widely welcomed and unanimously accepted by the Board. It will make for more efficient management of CYSC and enable it to respond to the training needs of youth leaders. It also takes into account CYSC's relationship to Youth Link NI.

9. The Board feels it is urgent that we proceed to the appointment of a Northern Field Officer in September 1997. This person's main role would be to support the ever-increasing demands from Ministers, Kirk sessions and Youth Leaders for assistance with the youth ministry carried out by their congregations. The case for such an appointment is overwhelming, given the present workload of the Youth Officer and the large number of congregations who are disappointed that she is not always freely available to them. The proposed post has been through the normal channels and will cost £25,000 (approx) per annum. Our request comes to the General Assembly with the strong plea that we be given full approval for this strategic post.

10. The Board wishes to thank those who supported the Youth and Sunday School Project Barnabas which benefited youth work in Cavan, Guysmere Youth Centre and Thompson House. The Board commends Project Namaste to the church, for work in India, Nepal and Wembley.

11. The Board is grateful for the generous support of our Church for its work, not least through the financial assistance received from the United Appeal Board, which is our major source of funding. The Board is also thankful to the Government of the Republic of Ireland for their financial support of youth development work in the Republic.

YOUTH TRAINING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. During the past year each of the working groups has been developing strategies for their agreed aims. This has been a slow process, but it has been time well spent so that the groups feel they are making the best possible use of the personnel, expertise and resources available to make the most effective impact in encouraging and equipping local congregations.

2. There is a growing awareness of the diversity of situations in our church family, North and South, rural, town and city, large and small congregation, youth club and youth fellowship and the particular needs, opportunities and problems associated with such diversity. The working groups have been doing their best to take account of this.

TRAINING WORKING GROUP

3. This group began by communicating the philosophy at the heart of the leadership course and its subject areas, at meetings of Presbytery and by informing Youth Agents. As a result of these contacts courses have now been run for Youth Leaders from the Presbyteries of Ards, Carrickfergus, Down and Newry.

4. A strategy has been developed which will offer the course in N Ireland in three regional locations at set times to which anyone can apply. In Donegal and Monaghan it will run at times to be arranged with the new Youth Development Officer (Miss Iris Stevenson). The strategy for Dublin and Munster is still being developed. A number of trainers for the leadership course have been identified from different Presbyteries and a one-day training course will be held in September 1996.

TRAINING TREVOR

5. After two years of outstanding success the third Training Trevor is due to take place at the end of this Assembly (on Saturday 8 June from 10.00 am until 5.30 pm). In response to Youth Leaders' requests this year's format is similar to previous years with one exception. There are only three seminar slots. Each seminar lasts longer (one hour fifteen minutes) and there is a longer lunch break to enable participants to view the resource stands more effectively. Andy Hickford is back as our keynote speaker, with others flying in for the day including John Allan, Dave Male and Brian Blacklock. We also have 15 speakers from our own shores.

RESOURCES WORKING GROUP

6. The aim of this group is "to produce or recommend Biblically-based, culturally relevant resources in the areas of discipleship and issues." This process began with a questionnaire to each congregation seeking to develop an understanding of resource material in current usage and the issues which need to be addressed. The group is currently preparing a resource pack for Youth Leaders on the area of "The World of the Young Person", to be available in September 1996.

7. A new Leaders Guide is now available to be used in conjunction with "Loving in the Real World", prepared by Ruth Morrison who wrote it. It should be invaluable in helping Youth Leaders and teachers to use the material more effectively. "Loving in the Real World" is being increasingly used in schools and churches.

RECONCILIATION WORKING GROUP

8. Material is being prepared by this group to encourage local churches to be involved in "the ministry of reconciliation" as described by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, in the context of Ireland (North and South). The material will include: new resources; a list of available resources; useful contacts and speakers. Part of the group's remit is to provide resources to help Youth Leaders and young people in local congregations to understand the culture of their community so that like Paul in Athens (Acts 17) our young people will be more able to communicate their faith.

D STANFIELD, Convener

YOUTH CENTRES COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Centres Committee is encouraged by the activities held at each of the Centres: Guysmere, Lucan and Rostrevor, and reports that during the past year in excess of 20,000 young people and leaders have benefited from the improved facilities.

2. The developing emphasis of the centres under the committee, is to create facilities where young people can be challenged by the claims of the gospel, taught in the Word of God, and instructed in how to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of the Church of Jesus Christ and their fellow citizens throughout the length and breadth of this land and further afield.

3. Under the enthusiastic leadership of Maurice Kennedy, the Centres' Director, assisted by his wife Helen, these goals and aspirations of the committee are implemented at the 'coal face'. Maurice's organising abilities coupled with his financial expertise has contributed much to the physical improvements at each of the centres.

4. Last year the report highlighted the 'great potential for the development of Guysmere'. Tenders have been opened and work started on the sports hall, with the promise given that the completion date in June is on target and the facilities will be available for all the activities of the Summer of this year.

5. In Lucan, work is well under way in respect of the dining hall as part of the overall continuing development of the centre. The Lucan Centre is used not only weekly but on a daily basis by many groups. The mid-week Chalet facility continues to be available to Ministers and full-time workers who need a quiet, relaxing break.

6. Rostrevor's extremity proved to be an opportunity. Burst pipes created considerable damage as well as considerable compensation that covered the costs of redecoration and carpets. This centre in the estimation of many 'has never looked better'. It was with a sense of shock that the Centres Committee

learned of the death of Rev Arthur Curry, Chairman of the Rostrevor committee, whose contribution to the centre was inspirational.

7. This year our centres are expanding their camp facilities with Rostrevor hosting an adventure camp for 11-15 year olds from the 3-9 August, and a music camp providing workshops and seminars for those with musical talents from 22 - 27 July. The Lucan Soccer camp, 4-9 August, alongside the Summer camp, 17-23 August, is undoubtedly a repeatable activity from last year. The Guysmere Girls' Camp, 29 June - 6 July, and the boys' Camp, 12-20 July, will no doubt be most popular holidays for many campers with their success this year being as great as previous years. The Committee thank all who put time and energy into the organising and staffing of these camps.

8. The Centres Committee see the camps, along with other activities, as part realisation of the goal that our centres are not only facilities merely for holiday breaks, but centres for ministry.

9. It is the Committee's desire to continue to develop high standards of accommodation within the centres. We thank God for those who over the past year have come to faith, and for young Christians who have been challenged into further avenues of service as a result of ministries within the centres.

10. Thanks are extended to individual Committee members at local level and to the staff of the Youth Office for their willingness to promote the work with graciousness and enthusiasm.

D I J McNIE, Convener

YOUTH HOME MISSION COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Home Mission Committee carried out its work through three working groups. We have tried to co-ordinate with the local church through sending an Outreach Team or the Year Team, and we are in the process of encouraging a training programme in evangelism for our young people.

PCI YEAR TEAM

2. There is a new chairman of this working group, Rev James Hyndman, and under his guidance the work of the Year Team continues to be an important part of The Presbyterian Church in Ireland. We would wish to thank Rev John Kirkpatrick for all his hard work over the formative years of this work. Indeed, it is because of his enthusiasm and encouragement that the Team has the profile it now enjoys. The committee would like to thank the other members of the working group for their continuing commitment to this part of ministry.

3. The PCI Year Team are fewer in number this year. Seven people were appointed, but even though it is a smaller group of people, a valuable work is being done. The Team, after receiving training, went as a whole to Garvagh. There the two churches came together to work among the young people of the area. We were encouraged to see the contacts made with the young folk, and also to hear of some of them coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. In the New Year the Team were divided into two smaller groups and undertook work in West Kirk Presbyterian Church, Belfast and Ballycrochan Presbyterian

Church, Bangor. The young people reported that the work was challenging and exciting. The final placement for the Team meant that once again they were divided into different smaller groups, they worked alongside two different churches and gave some special time to schools work.

4. The Committee is grateful to God for the way that He uses the young people on PCI Teams within the local church scene. We are glad to see the individual Team members mature and grow in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. The Committee would commend this work to the Church, and if any young person would be interested in giving a year to this work then an application form may be obtained from the Youth Office.

6. If Churches would desire the PCI Year Team to be part of their year's work, then an application form can be obtained from the Youth Office. Any Church wishing to make application for 1998/99 should do so by 1 May 1997.

7. The PCI Year Team working group would want to thank Miss Anna Montgomery for all her help and hard work throughout this year. Her thoroughness has made the organising of this year easier.

OUTREACH TEAMS

8. The Working Group, under the leadership of Rev Albert Baxter has been encouraged with the way that the young people of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland give of their time and talent to go to various places and do various types of work during the summer months. We have in the region of nearly three hundred applications for fourteen teams.

9. The Committee would thank all the congregations who invited Outreach Teams to come into their area to work with the local congregation. This is a very important work, and the committee is glad to be part of the ongoing work of evangelism within those churches. Churches should apply through the Youth Office to receive an Outreach Team.

10. The Committee would thank the Team Leaders for all their hard work prior to, during and after the time of outreach. Our thanks also to the congregations for hosting, support in prayer and finance of the Outreach Teams.

EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL WITNESS PROMOTION

11. Rev Leslie Addis is the chairman of this working group. There has been thought about the need of a relevant lifestyle evangelism document to be produced. This document would be helpful to our Christian young people so that they would be able to talk about and live out the Christian life. There is a need for our young people to be informed about and motivated towards personal evangelism.

12. The working group will also be considering the Social Witness aspect of the Christian faith and how that fits into the youth scene.

13. Coming under this working group presently is the Wembley Team. The Committee thanks those who continue to give this team their interest and time.

14. The Home Mission Committee would want to record its thanks to Roz Stirling and the Youth Office staff for all their work throughout the year.

M G McCLELLAND, Convener

YOUTH OVERSEAS COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Overseas Committee continues to carry out its work through three working groups. The Committee has sought to get young people interested and involved in the overseas mission of our church. The Committee thanks all the members of the working groups and also the Overseas Board for its help and support

Outgoing Teams Working Group

2. This working group seeks to provide opportunities for young people from PCI to go overseas to experience firsthand the work of our partner churches, see our missionaries in action and share in some aspect of the work.

3. In 1995 teams went to Czech Republic and England. In the Czech Republic the young people were able to experience the life and culture of the people there, meet with youth groups and help in building work. In Wembley the young people were working alongside Christopher and Nivedita Macwan and were involved in Holiday Bible Clubs.

4. This summer young people will be travelling to the Czech Republic, where they will be continuing the partnership with the Czech Church and will be involved in joint youth activities with the Church of the Brethren. Some will also be travelling to Jamaica where they will spend time studying mission and relating to Jamaican churches and youth groups. They will experience Jamaican life and culture.

5. There are also a number of young people going overseas as individuals for short term missionary service. We praise God for these young people.

Incoming Teams Working Group

6. This working group seeks to host the many young people who visit PCI each summer, allowing them to experience life here and be involved in many of the aspects of our church.

7. Last year the Youth Board received young people from Czech Republic, and they participated in many churches here and met with many youth fellowships.

8. The Youth Board hopes to receive a number of young people from Jamaica, India and the Czech Republic in the summer of 1996.

Promotion of Overseas Mission Working Group

9. This working group is seeking to provide resources and materials for youth fellowships to help youth leaders include overseas mission in their programmes. They are exploring new ways in which they can promote world mission amongst Presbyterian young people.

PHILIP McCREA, Convener

YOUTH EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Events Committee through its three working groups continues the task of bringing young people from our Presbyterian Church together to experience life in its fullness offered in Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, teaching and fun.

Youth Night Working Group

2. Last year Youth Night had an evangelistic theme and was addressed by J John. Many young people stayed after the meeting to commit their lives to Christ and it was a tremendous encouragement to see God use this event in such a powerful way to change lives.

3. This year our Youth Nights will be addressed by Andy Hickford, Pastor of Maybridge Christian Fellowship. He is a familiar figure to our young people and has a tremendous gift of communicating the Word of God in a relevant and challenging manner. Logan and Robb will provide some dramatic stimulus to the evenings.

Youth Activities Working Group

4. Sadly, guided by the Mission Statement of the Youth Board, the major event organised by the Activities Working Group, the Fun Day in Gosford Forest has been shelved for this year. It is hoped that in co-operation with other Boards, this extremely valuable event will continue as an inter-Board event in the years to come.

5. The Working Group, led by the Chairman Rev Richard Hill, is looking for innovative ways to encourage young people to meet together. A number of new proposals are under consideration and it is hoped that within the next year some of these will be introduced into the calendar of the Youth Board programme.

Youthreach Working Group

6. The Youthreach festival for 1996 will be somewhat different from former years. For the first time it will meet in the excellent premises of Coleraine Academical Institution allowing for greater freedom in the programme and arrangements.

7. Under the chairmanship of Rev Frank Sellar the format for the mornings has been developed by the Working Group. The traditional pattern of Bible Readings and Seminars has been slightly altered with a view to giving a greater opportunity to apply the Word of God through responsive worship and reflective Bible Study.

8. The event takes place from 5 to 10 August 1996 and the evening celebration speaker will be Rev Dr Trevor Morrow, minister of the congregation of Lucan.

R L BROWN, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

- 1 That the Report be received.

General

2. That the General Assembly appoint the Revs David Stanfield, Adrian Moffett, Stewart Jones and Mr Trevor Long to be representatives on the Board of Management of the Churches' Youth Service Council.
3. That the General Assembly appoint to Youth Link NI Groups:
 - (a) Co-ordinating - Rev DJ Kane
 - (b) Training and Development - Rev Adrian Moffett and Mr Trevor Long
 - (c) Cross-Community - Youth Officer and Rev David Stanfield
4. That the following grant be paid from the Incidental Fund:

Youth Link NI	£6,500
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- 5 That the General Assembly give the Youth Board permission to move towards the full-time appointment of a Northern Field Officer.

Youth Overseas Committee

6. That the General Assembly rejoice in the number of young people continuing to offer themselves for short-term service overseas and commend to the prayers of the church those who will be travelling in the coming weeks.

Youth Training and Resources Committee

7. That the General Assembly congratulate those who have completed Basic Youth Leadership Courses and encourage each congregation to recommend the course to their youth leaders.
8. That the General Assembly commend to youth leaders and school teachers the new Leaders Guide to "Loving in the Real World" to encourage the wider and more effective use of this valuable resource amongst young people.

Youth Home Mission Committee

9. That the General Assembly continue to give their support to and to pray for the work of summer Outreach Teams in fourteen centres this year and also the Wembley Team.
10. That the General Assembly encourage congregations to make use of the PCI Year Team in their ongoing work of evangelism, and commend this Team and its work to the prayers of the Church.

Youth Centres Committee

11. That the General Assembly commend the three Youth Centres, Guysmere, Lucan and Rostrevor to the support and prayers of the Church.
12. That the General Assembly commend the development of Guysmere and Lucan Youth Centres to the Church.
13. That the General Assembly commend the established camps, the boys' camp and the girls' camp at Guysmere along with the summer camp and soccer camp at Lucan to the Church.

14. That the General Assembly commend the two new camps, the adventure camp and the music camp at Rostrevor to the Church.

General

15. That the Youth Board, with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 283 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 283(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 283(1) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:

“This Board shall consist of the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the Convener of the Evangelism and Christian Training Committee, the Education Board Secretary, the Sunday School Organiser, the University Chaplains, the Assembly conveners of the Board and working committees under its supervision, with their members, the Assembly’s Youth Officer and two persons nominated by each Presbytery together with not more than twenty persons, the majority of whom shall be women, nominated by the Business Board. The Board shall also invite representatives from such youth organisations and bodies as it shall deem appropriate to sit and deliberate.”

D J KANE

Anent Par 283(2) of the Code.

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 283(2) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:

- (a) The Board shall encourage the study of, and response to, the needs of young people. It shall also facilitate local congregations in the work of evangelism, training and nurture of young people.
- (b) The Board shall act on behalf of the General Assembly, where appropriate, in relation to relevant youth organisations and bodies, including the statutory Youth Service.

D J KANE

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Dr R J RODGERS

Secretary: Rev R F S POOTS

1. The terms of reference of the Education Board require it, severally, to act on behalf of the General Assembly in all matters educational throughout the island of Ireland, to have a particular concern for the interest of the Church across the full spectrum of educational provision - from early years to university level, to seek to promote Religious Education in schools and to give special attention to the work of Sunday Schools and all areas of Christian nurture and education. Thus its responsibilities might be summarised as embracing all ages, reaching into all aspects of education and having an all-island dimension. Through the work of its three Committees over the past year it has seen its roles as representing, articulating, informing, counselling, shaping and guiding the opinion of the Church in this vital area of society's life and activities. It has been involved in maintaining and developing good relations with universities, colleges and schools, with boards of governors and teachers, with employing authorities and support services, with central government and with Sunday Schools at local, congregational and Presbytery levels.

2. The work of the Board has had to be conducted in what seems to have become a growing challenge in recent years to the involvement of the Churches at all in education. There have always been those who would favour a purely secular education service and they would question the electoral mandate of the Churches in this arena - often without, it has to be said, any attempt at substantiating the case for an alternative rationale. There are others who complain that the programmes of the Churches have too frequently been reactive to proposals for change emanating from others rather than proactive in propounding a carefully thought-out theology of education - although this charge leaves itself open to the counter-charge of refusing to live in the real world. Government regulations have not always been sympathetic to the Churches' participation in educational administration and government, and, currently, operational reform initiatives have put a premium on the accumulation of new expertise as well as a willingness to invest a greater time commitment by Church people if they are to be effectively involved.

3. There are always, moreover, even within the Churches, those who would be happier if they were to confine their operations to the realm of personal piety and who would not oppose a retreat into what have been called "our faith forts" in the hope of protecting our own. The Board would contest such a proposal and, as the reports which follow demonstrate, has sought to play its full part in the Church's role in shaping the society in which we live. The Board would endorse the view of a recent writer that education should be looked upon as "a handmaid to be welcomed in every sphere of ministry to which Christians are called, both in the Church and in the wider society".

4. The Board extends congratulations to the Rev R S McMullan on his appointment as Scripture Union Director for the Republic of Ireland and

commends him to the continuing prayer of the whole Church. A Call will be issued to him by the Board, subject to the approval by the Assembly of Scripture Union as a Recognised Ministry.

STATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

NORTHERN IRELAND

Review of Educational Administration

1. In our submission to the consultative process concerned with the review of educational administration in Northern Ireland we asked for the establishment of controlled schools' councils with executive as well as advisory powers in each of the five Education and Library Board areas. In his general statement of September 1995 the Minister for Education rejected this proposal. At the same time he publicly recognised the special role and interest of the transferor churches in controlled schools and he offered to formalise and provide a stronger structure for termly meetings between himself and his officials on the one hand and the representatives of the churches on the other hand to discuss any major issues of concern. He has been as good as his word and not only have meetings already taken place but a senior civil servant has been appointed to maintain liaison with the churches.

Ministerial Contact

2. The Convener of the Committee along with the Board Convener and Mr J A McBride have been on the churches' deputations received by the Minister. We have raised with him a number of important issues.

- (a) We indicated that we are still concerned at the absence of a holistic focus of support for the controlled schools' sector comparable with that provided, respectively, by Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education, for maintained and integrated schools.
- (b) We asked for and received confirmation of the Churches' ownership of the core syllabus in Religious Education - which means that any revision to be contemplated in the future will require to come back to a drafting group on which the churches will be represented.
- (c) We did not accept that part of the Minister's September statement which declared that the role of the transferor churches had increased in importance in the last few years. We pointed out that the proportion of four out of nine places on a controlled school board of governors is, in fact, a reduction from the guarantee that the churches would have not less than 50% of the places on such boards given when the schools were transferred a couple of generations ago.
- (d) With particular respect to transferor representation on the boards of governors of controlled secondary schools, we asked the Minister to amend the requirement that these have to be drawn from those who are already serving on the boards of feeder primary schools. We also

asked him to review the arrangement whereby all board members of these feeder primary schools had a say in the choice of the secondary school transferor representatives.

- (e) Arising from our concern at the heavy burden laid on transferor representatives serving on Education and Library Boards where their total number is severely diminished, we have asked the Minister to authorise the Boards to establish, where it is deemed necessary, a panel nominated by the Transferor Representatives' Council from which they may draw in constituting their teaching appointments Committees.
- (f) We intimated to the Minister that we would be prepared to enter into discussion on the possible use of Church premises for the provision of cross-community pre-school groups.
- (g) We asked the Minister to ensure that the allocation of funds from the National Lottery to specific projects will not be used to place Education and Library Boards under pressure to alter or postpone already identified priorities. We emphasised also our concern that schools or other bodies which entertain conscientious objections to such funding should not find themselves penalised.

Transferor Representatives' Council

3. The Transferor Representatives' Council draws its financial support from the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church as well as our own Church. It exists to formulate and express those views with which the Boards of Education in the three Churches are deemed to be in agreement, to maximise co-operation between them, and to develop a single strategy where possible.

The Council meets twice a year and is currently chaired by the Convener of our own Board of Education. Its Executive Committee, on which our Church has three representatives, meets on a monthly basis. This has enabled the Churches' Boards to co-operate effectively, to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, and to respond quickly to government requests for comment or proposals for precipitate change. One example of the latter would have been the intention, announced during the schools' Christmas vacation, to alter the arrangements for home to school transport - and withdrawn after widespread protest, including our own, within two months for re-consideration. The appointment by the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment of a subject panel for Religious Education followed an approach by the Transferors to the parent body - and the churches, including our own, are well represented on that panel. Through the Transferor Representatives' Council we have also made contact with the Chief Executives and the Religious Education Advisers of the five Education and Library Boards, and we have been consulted by them on a number of Religious Education support materials produced by the Advisers for use in schools.

Integrated Education

4. A position paper on Integrated Education is printed below. Prepared as the result of an initiative from our own Committee it was unanimously

endorsed by our own Board, attracted the support of our sister Churches' Boards of Education and has been lodged with the Minister. Already he has issued a statement indicating that he is engaged on a re-think on the implementation of government policy with respect to integrated schools. We look forward to further discussions with him on the subject.

(i) CERTAIN BASIC PRINCIPLES

Education Is Spiritual

- (a) Education is a formative influence. It shapes, and informs the values of the individual and society. The variety of schools in society demonstrates that there is a valid plurality of approach to the educational process. The Churches recognise and uphold this diversity. The Churches are and always have been involved in schools of varying approaches and support their exploration and development of the spiritual both of the pupils and the staff and throughout the curriculum, within and beyond formal religious education.

Concern For All Pupils

- (b) The Churches are concerned for the welfare of all pupils in all types of school provision, and for pupils of all churches and faiths, and for those with no apparent connection with either. The Churches wish all pupils to have equality of opportunity in developing their potential and talents and to receive equality of treatment through a just distribution of available resources.

Concern For Reconciliation and Mutual Regard

- (c) The Churches are committed to an educational approach which promotes education for mutual understanding and the recognition and exploration of the diversity of cultural traditions and heritage of this community.

Concern For Parental Interests and the Stewardship of Public Resources

- (d) The Churches recognise that there is a balance which must inevitably apply between attempting to acknowledge the rights of parents to choose the type of school which they wish their offspring to attend, and the ultimate and necessary constraint upon choice which the justifiable stewardship of public funding will inevitably impose upon the degree of choice obtainable in any society.

(ii) RESERVATIONS CONCERNING THE CURRENT APPROACHES TO INTEGRATED EDUCATION

Questioning a Basic Assumption

- (a) The assumption has been made and received immense political and financial support from the government that denominationally integrated education will make a major contribution to the resolution

of the problems of a community which is composed of two major religious traditions. The Churches are firmly of the conviction that schools alone cannot deliver this goal due to certain basic facts eg. (i) integrated education cannot be delivered in many of the major housing areas, and (ii) it is conscientiously opposed by the Roman Catholic Church which has stated and adheres to its policy on education.

Parental Motivation

- (b) The Churches recognise that most parents who support integrated education have clear motivation to do so. However, the Churches perceive that the motivation of some parents does not arise purely from a desire for integrated education. For some an integrated school is a more socially acceptable alternative than the local secondary school if it is perceived that the pupil will not succeed in obtaining a grammar school place consequent to the selection process.

In some areas where integrated schools have been funded, they present new buildings in more accessible areas than some of the more-tired, under-funded and 'badly in need of repair' buildings which exist. The funding available to such new-starts has enabled these schools to finance and produce promotional materials which lie well outside the possibilities of the existing schools. This has been highlighted in public and fair comment by several principal teachers.

The majority of the controlled schools which have so far opted for controlled integrated status have done so against a background of falling enrolments which ultimately were leading to staff reductions and/or to a change in the role of the principal teacher.

Against such a background the Churches can identify a growing resentment at the comments emanating periodically from the integrated sector which have about them a ring of total righteousness which fails to recognise the totality of reaction within the community.

Preferential Funding and Treatment

- (c) The Churches are opposed to such policies as they affect schools. The Churches reiterate their concern that the government has seen fit to establish, fund and promote a Council for Integrated Education, whilst at the same time refusing to recognise the need for any form of Controlled School body either within or beyond the Area Education and Library Boards.

Exclusion and Reduction of the Transferor Interest

- (d) The Churches remain extremely sensitive to their exclusion - by law - from the management of integrated schools and to the reduction by fifty per cent of their representation on school boards of governors consequent to any controlled school opting for controlled integrated status.

Impact on Other Schools

- (e) Good schools in areas in which integrated schools have been established are affected in two ways, (i) the reduction of enrolment with attendant contraction of resources, and (ii) the removal from their parents' groups of the very people who would support education for mutual understanding.

(iii) RECOMMENDATIONS

The Churches would encourage and support the implementation of the following policies:

Redefinition of Terminology

- (a) The redefinition by the Department of Education and others of 'integration'. Such redefinition should include the esteem of all other types of schools and should include:
- an acknowledgment of and commitment to other types of schools where a degree of integration already exists and is being nurtured in a quiet but sensitive and positive manner,
 - an acknowledgment of schools which are historically founded on an idealism which upholds equality of access and opportunity and whose practice is informed by its foundation vision.
- Such redefinition should indicate the Department's definitions of the terms 'inter-denominational' and 'integrated'.

Monitoring

- (b) The Department should state clearly how it monitors the founding enrolment of a proposed integrated school and what the composition of the enrolment should be for any school to be considered 'integrated'. Similarly the Department should inform the public how it tends to monitor on an ongoing basis the denominational composition of enrolment in integrated and other types of schools.

Research

- (c) Further research should be promoted into the efficacy of integrated education. Research elsewhere would suggest that integrated education alone will not solve those problems which some proponents of integrated education would claim for it. Basic questions need to be asked, such as - Would the pupils who attend integrated schools contribute to the hostility and division in society if they were not attending such schools? Are the benefits, such as can be defined, only obtainable through integrated schools? Are the benefits such as to require a radically different model of school from the other existing types of schools? The Churches are firmly of the opinion that further extensive research is needed prior to further distortion of the system of education pertaining at present.

Equality of Treatment of Sectors

- (d) The Department of Education must rescue itself from the discriminatory position in which it has placed itself in demanding that Area Boards divest themselves of certain support and services to all types of schools and at the same time establish CCMS and NICIE to support schools in those sectors whilst continuing to refuse to establish any similar holistic focus of support for Controlled schools. The Roman Catholic and the integrated sectors in education are obtaining preferential treatment by law imposed upon this divided society by the Department charged by law to work for reconciliation and mutual understanding. The Department's position is inconsistent and whilst it is maintained the Department and government spokesmen cannot be expected to be heard with equanimity by those against whom they are discriminating. The Department's stance on this issue does not fit well with its commitment to education for mutual understanding and reconciliation.

Equality of Treatment of Pupils

- (e) The Department's policies in every respect must uphold this principle. This is particularly relevant in policy areas such as school transportation and targeting social need. It is recommended that greater consideration be given to assessing the effects and consequences of such policies on the equality of choice and other issues affecting pupils living in the same community or area.

Teaching Appointments

- (f) The Department should clearly identify the criteria which apply in respect of funding and employment criteria when the composition of the teaching school staff in a controlled school may required to be altered to reflect its change of status to controlled integrated. The Department should clarify the situation in which applications have been sought by the Board of Governors of a controlled integrated school for a teacher qualified to give instruction in the sacraments of one denomination. Such clarification should include whether or not Boards of Governors will be permitted to advertise for teachers who are qualified and willing to give such distinct denominational instruction for other denominations?

Review of Management of Controlled Integrated Schools

- (g) The Churches recommend that the composition of the Boards of Governors of controlled schools who have opted or will opt for controlled integrated status be altered in order that there should be no reduction in the number of existing transferor representatives at the time of change in status and that the number of representatives from the Roman Catholic community be increased to equal that of the transferors. This change to be effected without any further changes in the composition of these Boards.

Preferred Model of Integrated School

- (h) The Churches' preferred model of an integrated school is that of the controlled integrated and the Churches recommend that wherever possible the Department, the Area Boards and the Churches consult as to the possibility of growing an integrated school from an existing controlled school, rather than undertake unnecessary additional public expenditure. The Churches are willing to be pro-active in this process provided that the other recommendations outlined above are seriously considered by the Department of Education.

Appointments

5. Nominations made by the Board resulted in the following appointments:

South-Eastern Education and Library Board	-	Rev H S Boyd
Stranmillis College Board of Governors	-	Mr J A McBride, OBE
Donegal Protestant Board of Education	-	Rev B Brown
	-	Rev C F D Clements
	-	Mr A O Buchanan
	-	Mr T A Morrow

Republic of Ireland - Primary Schools

Rev J S B Drennan, Director of Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:-

1. Following the publication of the White paper on Education there have been negotiations between the Department of Education and the partners about the governance of schools. Subsequent to consultations between the department's facilitator and our own Board of Education re the Presbyterian Ethos the following statement has been submitted:

"The Presbyterian School exists to provide young people with educational experiences and opportunities through a broad and balanced curriculum which aims to develop them as whole people and to prepare them for adult and working life. Within this context the ethos of the school is one which encourages caring, sharing, self-esteem and mutual respect amongst all who work and study in the school and live in the local community. The school imparts Christian values and morals through all aspects of its work and in particular through the teaching of Religious Education based on an authoritative version of Holy Scripture. Normally the Presbyterian minister will provide advice, guidance and oversight in establishing and maintaining this ethos, which is the ultimate responsibility of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland".

2. It appears that there are some irregularities in the patronage of a few of our schools. For the benefit of all our schools it is important that all are under the patronage of the Presbytery within whose bounds they reside and every effort must be made to iron out ambiguities. It can only be of benefit to present a strong united front to the Department of Education.

Republic of Ireland - Secondary Schools

Mr B Duffy, Director of Secondary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:-

Religious Education

1. In April 1993 the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment formed a Committee to examine the place of religious education in secondary schools. Rev T McCaughey has been representing the Presbyterian Church in Ireland on this Committee. A draft syllabus for Religious Education for the Junior Certificate has recently been published by the NCCA and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been invited to submit comments on it.

White Paper

2. The Minister for Education, Niamh Bhreathnach TD, published her White Paper "Charting our Education Future" in May 1995 and has announced plans to enact legislation during 1996 to implement some of her major proposals. A Committee of the Synod of Dublin met in May and drafted a response on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland which was forwarded through the Board of Education.

Secondary Education Committee Grants

3. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is represented on the SEC by Mr Brian Duffy and Rev. Mary Hunter. In addition, there are representatives from the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church and the Religious Society of Friends. During the year (1994/95), the Committee allocated £2,443.285 to 3,157 pupils. Maximum grants were increased for 1995/96 and are expected to be increased again for 1996/7.

Targeting of Funds

4. The Minister plans to have somewhat different arrangements for funding secondary schools in the future. While the block grant referred to above will be retained, there will also be additional discretionary funding available to secondary schools. Some of this will be allocated on the basis of "disadvantage". The SEC has formed a Committee with representatives of the Irish Schoolheads' Association, the Council of School Governors and the National Protestant Secondary School Parents' Association to consider how best to avail of such funding.

Religious Education in Day Schools

Rev W T J Richardson, Organiser of Religious Education in Day Schools, reports:-

1. The teaching of Religious Education in day schools continues to be of a very high standard both in the Primary and Secondary sectors. Ministers continue to be warmly received into schools and in some cases are looked on as an extension of the school's staff. They conduct Assemblies, give talks on various moral and ethical issues and, in many cases, teach classes. The "Annual

Day Inspection” in most areas has been phased out and replaced by an ongoing visitation of Ministers into the schools. This is welcomed both by Ministers and teachers and provides for an ongoing relationship with the Minister regularly on hand to give guidance and support to the teachers as well as instruction in the classroom.

2. Many Ministers refer to the commitment of teachers to RE and, whilst in some cases, particularly in the Secondary sector, it is ‘squeezed in’ because of other curricular pressure, in most cases it enjoys a high profile and is well taught. Increasingly the subject is related to other subjects on the curriculum and to issues that children and young people are facing in their day to day lives. In spite of its being a statutory requirement of the curriculum, not all schools teach RE in accordance with the Core Syllabus.

3. The question of RE Inspection has been raised in several Presbytery Reports. In 1991 the Board of Education pointed out that DENI will inspect RE in a school only if requested to do so by the Board of Governors and our Church has asked Governors to ensure that, in the event of a General Inspection, RE is treated on the same basis as other subjects. Some concern has been expressed, however, that this may result in RE being inspected by someone who has little interest or sympathy for the subject. It is important to remember that the Department has appointed a senior Inspector to be responsible for the inspection of RE and also that Ministers of Religion continue to have inspectorial rights as well as the statutory right of entry into all grant-aided schools.

4. Reports from the Presbytery Agents have for the most part been encouraging but fuller information, including enrolment statistics, from those who do not provide it would be welcomed.

5. Several RE Agents have expressed their appreciation for the co-operation shown by their Church of Ireland and Methodist colleagues and also for the support and encouragement of the various Boards’ RE Advisers. In a day when more and more children are opting out of Sunday School, or leaving Sunday School at a younger age, it is important that, as a Church, we take full advantage of our contact at the local schools.

Recognised Ministry

Rev. David Bruce, General Director of Scripture Union (Northern Ireland), reports:-

1. During 1996, Scripture Union’s work has continued in the areas of Schools, CSSM and Camps, FYT and Resources with training. Many opportunities have been taken to meet with Ministers, Sunday School Superintendents and teachers, Holiday Club Co-ordinators and Youth workers, both within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and other denominations. It is encouraging to note the growth in interest in new ways of teaching the Christian faith to children and young people. The use of multi-media, interactivity and games in learning has grown, as has the recognition that not all children (or adults) prefer to learn in the same way. Innovative work has been done to develop new programmes to recognise these different learning styles, and a group is currently working at a Regional level to examine the question of hermeneutics in this regard.

2. Rev David Bruce is currently Regional Secretary for Great Britain and Ireland in addition to his responsibilities as General Director in Northern Ireland. In this respect he has recently travelled to the former Soviet Union, and in particular Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine where Scripture Union work is commencing. Scripture Union currently works in 114 countries world-wide.

3. The Movement as a whole greets the appointment of Rev Robert McMullan as General Director of SU in the Republic with enthusiasm and wishes him well in his new position. It is hoped that the Assembly will agree to recognise Mr McMullan in his new post under the Recognised Ministry scheme.

4. Scripture Union in Northern Ireland records thanks to the Assembly for its continuing interest in the work.

R F S POOTS, Convener

CHURCH EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. Throughout the past year there has been a vacancy in the Sunday School office and it is with great delight that we welcome the appointment of the Rev Ian McKee to the post of Sunday School Organiser.

2. Mr McKee is now in post and the Committee looks forward to working closely with him to further the work in our Sunday Schools, island wide.

3. The Committee and Acting Convener are greatly indebted to the work of Mrs Jean Brown in the Sunday School office. She has had much more work added to her already busy schedule due to the vacancy.

4. Although there have been no training events organised by the Sunday School office, the Committee continues to be very grateful to members of our congregations with skills in this area who are willing to share their insights with other congregations and Sunday Schools.

5. The Church Education Committee continues to publish additional lesson material each year. The four lessons at present are Presbyterian Worship - Prayer, The Irish Mission, PCI Overseas, and Children and Young People in the Church. The four new lessons for 1995/96 will be Baptism, Children in the Church, PWA and Alcohol and Drug Education. The material is commended to the whole Church and Superintendents are encouraged to make time available in the teaching programme of Sunday Schools to make use of these lessons.

6. Project Barnabas has now officially closed. The final total raised was £54,938.16. This has been divided up between the three projects of the Cavan Minibus, Guysmere and Thompson House. The Committee wishes to record its sincere thanks to all Sunday Schools and Youth Groups who worked so hard to raise this money.

7. Project Namaste, the 1996 project is, now well under way. Because of the vacancy it was launched somewhat later than desired but the idea would be that this project will run for at least this calendar year. It has already raised £10,297.66.

The project involves two major building works -

(i) Bethany Ashram - a home with a difference in Kathmandu which will shelter the terminally ill, the old and especially those neglected by their families because they have embraced the Christian faith.

(ii) A new worship/activity centre at Thaltej in Ahmedabad, North India.

In addition, two grants will be given to the Christian Arts Association in Nepal (CAAN) to help Christian artists have their work published or performed, and to Christopher Macwan in Wembley to purchase office equipment to help him in preparing materials for his work.

8. The Committee expresses thanks to the administrators of the Local Bible Fund for enabling it to make the following awards of Bibles during the year:

19 teachers with 30 years or more service,

41 children with 5 years or more unbroken attendance,

6 children for repeating the Shorter Catechism.

9. This year, Signposts on the Way was re-launched at the reduced cost of £1.00 per copy. This attractively produced workbook is a very useful tool in teaching the Catechism to 8-12 year olds.

10. The Sunday School Teacher continues to be published twice a year and its news, reviews and information is proving very helpful to Sunday School staff.

11. The Committee is excited at the appointment of the new Sunday School Organiser, commends him to the prayers of the Church and expresses the hope that the Church will avail of his expertise and knowledge.

12. The work of the Sunday School continues to be of vital importance to the life of the Church. The Committee is deeply indebted to all those faithful members who week by week prepare and teach girls and boys. Their work is very much appreciated and the Committee will continue to seek to help prepare them for their weekly task.

ROBERT S McMULLAN, Acting Convener.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The last year has seen a continuing growth in the spiritual and community ethos of the Queen's University Chaplaincy. Both the Bush Chaplaincy Centre and Coffee Bar and Derryvolgie Hall are bustling centres of student and youth activities. Accommodation, food, pastoral care and a programme of events which are both contemporary and biblical are all contributing to the high profile of the Presbyterian Church in the Queen's/Stranmillis area. Revs Noel Williamson and Steve Stockman, together with their Administrative Assistant, Mr Andrew Kyle, and their team of employees and assistants, are advancing the Kingdom in the University and College communities.

2. The Chaplaincy at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown is very different from that at Queen's. It operates on a team basis, with Chaplains of all the different Churches serving the academic community together. The Prayer Room, provided last year with help from the Committee, is a well-used resource away from the hectic activities of campus life.

3. It was reported last year that the Committee was entering into a joint arrangement with the Youth Board to provide the Dublin and Munster Presbytery with a Youth Development Officer who would also serve as Chaplain to Dublin City University and Dublin Institute of Technology. Unfortunately this post has not been filled as yet. The two relevant Committees are looking again at the requirements of the post with a view to re-advertising in the near future. Please pray that the person chosen by God for the post will be available as soon as possible.

4. The Committee is dedicated to seeking to support the work of Chaplains in all areas of the country. Please pray for all chaplaincy work and especially for those part-time Chaplains who give of their valuable time to support the young people in our Universities and Colleges.

Queen's University

Rev Noel Williamson reports from Queen's University:

5. The total undergraduate population now stands at 17,000 (3,600 part-time) of whom 330 first-year students registered in September as Presbyterians. Our drop-in centre THE BUSH is very strategically centred in Elmwood Avenue so that there is a very happy and busy 'buzz' around the chaplaincy each day with many demands on the Chaplain and the Chaplaincy.

We enjoy a varied programme of study groups, social events and a good number of inter-chaplaincy contacts. The link with Rev Steve Stockman and Derryvolgie has again proved vital. We welcomed Miss Belanne Calderwood to our team in January and she immediately proved to be very popular with the students and is providing them with excellent food every day.

6. Looking back, Queen's enjoyed a year of successful events to celebrate 150 years and the Chaplains were involved in a number of these. Looking forward, recent cut-backs in funding for third-level education are clearly causing a great deal of concern to administrative and academic staff, already burdened by ever-increasing pressures. It is clear that significant changes in policies are required to meet the increased demands on staff.

7. This has been an enjoyable, busy and successful year and I would like to express my thanks to the University Education Committee for its support during the year and to Prof Hasley Mitchell in particular.

University of Ulster

Rev David Stanfield reports from University of Ulster at Jordanstown:

1. Out of five chaplains on Campus, three are new to this role and have brought with them an enthusiasm and breadth of experience, both lay and ordained, which greatly enriched the work. We enjoy a "Unity of the Spirit" which we recognise as a gift of God and which has been a powerful foundation for our ministry.

2. There have been more students and staff involved in the life of the chaplaincy than at any other time in the last five years and our facilities are in frequent use.

3. The Prayer Room is being used by individuals and groups on many occasions, day and night. We offer organised prayer times twice daily. Every Wednesday lunchtime we provide an opportunity to pray for our land and the peace process.

4. The Office/Social Area is in constant use throughout each day, but particularly at lunch times, where on Mondays there are up to 30 people who lunch together, contributing to projects in developing countries and, on Tuesdays, similar numbers have been taking part in issue-based discussion.

5. Mixers provides a context for socialising which is more vital than ever, given the pressure on students in relation to finance and work. The number of students using this facility is increasing week by week.

6. We have a strong desire to be evangelistic and to encourage staff and students to share their faith. One of the ways we have developed this desire is to run an ALPHA Course. It has been lovely to see every person on the course grow in their awareness of who God is and what he desires. They are much more confident in sharing their faith and are spending more time in prayer and Bible Study.

7. We have recently restarted a staff Christian Fellowship Group because we are increasingly aware of the stresses and pressures being faced by staff as well as students. We hope this will be a source of pastoral care and encouragement.

8. This has been a good year in building relationships with International Students and we would hope to develop this contact next year.

9. The University continues to be very helpful in providing support, especially resources, and we have a good relationship with the Students Union and many members of the Christian Union.

10. Thank you for your continued prayer support.

Coleraine Campus

Rev George Moore reports from the University of Ulster, Coleraine Campus:

1. I am in my 3rd year as part-time Chaplain. There are over 6,000 staff and students on Campus and approximately 50 students each year register as Presbyterians though, as the year progresses, I come into contact with other Presbyterian students who have not bothered to register.

2. I am available in the Chaplaincy each Wednesday. Students drop in for advice, for help or just for a chat. Each Wednesday lunchtime we hold a Presbyterian Fellowship for Bible study, discussion, focus on mission etc. Due to the increase in Wednesday afternoon lectures students are not as free as they used to be. All Chaplains are finding that the pressures of work and the semester system make it more difficult to get students involved.

3. I continue to work in close relationship with the other Chaplains, for instance, in organising the annual Chaplaincy lecture. I also seek to develop close relationships with the Christian Union.

4. I still find the work as Chaplain to be encouraging and stimulating.

Magee Campus

Rev. Robert Davey reports from the University of Ulster, Magee Campus:

1. The Magee Campus of the university continues to expand. This year the full-time students number 1,586 and part-time 960. The number of Presbyterian students is decreasing year by year, only 4 registered with the Chaplain as first year students. The Christian Union continues to provide a valuable spiritual home for students at the weekly fellowship.

2. As well as the formal events of registration, Christmas Carol Service and graduation, my time this year has been taken up with attendance at University Council meetings as the Chaplains' representative.

Dublin

Rev. Katherine Meyer reports from Trinity College, Dublin:

1. As part of the Chaplaincy team at Trinity College my work is engaging and deeply challenging, and I want to express my gratitude for the ongoing support which I receive.

2. There were about 30 first year students who registered as Presbyterian in October 1995 and there are between 125 and 200 undergraduate students from a Presbyterian background at Trinity, though the list of 'registered' Presbyterians would be closer to 100.

3. The Tuesday morning ecumenical prayer services continue on a weekly basis. On Tuesdays we also offer a free bread and cheese lunch, which often fills the chaplains' coffee room to breaking point! A celebration of communion in the Presbyterian tradition was held in the winter of last year.

4. Highlights of our programme last year included: a weekend in Glendalough, focusing on different Christian traditions of prayer; a panel discussion for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity entitled, Getting the Questions Right: Ecumenical Implications of the new Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church; an evening talk by Jean Vanier entitled 'Healing the Pain of Brokenness', and the Trinity Monday service in May, at which the preacher was the Very Rev. Dr. John Dunlop.

5. I continue to be one of the facilitators for a student bereavement support group, which usually runs during the third term.

6. I would like to express my appreciation for the financial support given to the Chaplaincy team at TCD by the Dawson Fund, a small endowment fund set up by a Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College, the proceeds of which are used to support projects agreed by all the chaplains.

University College Dublin

Rev Denis Campbell reports from University College, Dublin:

1. There are just 22 Presbyterian students out of a student population of around 13,000. A reception for students was held in the autumn term hosted jointly with the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplains. We were encouraged by the good attendance. Contact with students is made through visitation and through attending student societies.

2. Several students worship on Sundays in local Presbyterian Churches.
3. This year I chaired a study-group for students. We discussed the book, "Because of Her Testimony" by the Irish theologian, Anne Thurston. There was considerable enthusiasm for the issues raised for faith by this exploration of the Word of God in female experience. The author herself came to address the group at our last meeting.
4. All the Chaplains meet for prayer and planning on Wednesday afternoons.

R H MITCHELL, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

State Education Committee

2. That the General Assembly encourage the Education Board as it continues to seek to maintain the influence and effectiveness of the Church at all levels in the field of education.
3. That the General Assembly adopt and support the principle of Controlled Integrated Education where there is local demand for integrated school provision.
4. That the General Assembly urge the Government to respond to genuine concerns about the future strength and ethos of the controlled sector of education in the new competitive situation in Northern Ireland where the independence and distinctive character of other sectors of education are being strengthened.
5. That the General Assembly urge the Government to recognise the state-funded support systems available to other sectors and to establish a structure to provide an identifiable and unequivocal voice in education to represent the controlled sector, and also to provide for it a specialised and co-ordinated support system sympathetic to the culture and ethos of parents who have traditionally depended on that sector.

Church Education

6. That the General Assembly urge the Church to support Project Namaste.
7. That Rev R S McMullan and Rev I T McKee be appointed Acting Co-Conveners of the Church Education Committee.

University Education Committee

8. That the General Assembly commend the work of the chaplaincies to the prayers of the Church and urge all our young people, attending Irish Universities, to make full use of the facilities provided.

General

9. That the Board of Education, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 284 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF STUDIES

Convener: Rev S A MATTHEWS

1. During the year the Board of Studies has continued to implement the existing policies of the Assembly. Representatives of the Board have also been involved in the on-going work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Theological Education.

2. This year the Very Rev Professor Finlay Holmes retires from his post of Professor of Church History in the College. The Union College Management Committee report makes reference to the contribution made to the life of the Church by Professor Holmes. The Board thanks him for the service he has given to the students of our Church.

3. The creation of the post of Director of Ministerial Students by the Assembly in 1995 is an important development in the work of the Board. There has always been the painstaking administrative task of dealing with applications from candidates and monitoring courses taken by our students who study at a wide variety of Colleges. There has also always been a recognition of the need to relate to students in a pastoral way. While Board Officials have tried to fulfil these roles in the past, they have always been undertaken on a part-time basis by ministers already committed to the parish ministry. This post has become essential with the emphasis on preparatory studies for candidates, the increased elements of assessment and evaluation for students for the ministry and the use of learning covenants, all envisaged by the Ad Hoc Committee on Theological Education. The Director will provide an accessible full-time representative of the Board who will be able to co-ordinate the efforts of all those involved in the progress of our ministerial students, from the very initial enquiry stage to the point of Ordination. The Board has established the mechanisms which will govern the relationship between the Director and the Board, and which will ensure adequate support and supervision for him in his work. The Board has always been conscious of its responsibilities in training those who will serve Christ in His Church as Ministers of Word and Sacrament. The Board assures the Director of its prayers as he brings new energy and focus to that task and as he carries forward the process of reform of our theological education.

4. The Director of Ministerial Students will undertake the duties presently carried out by the Co-ordinator and Assessor of Training for Ministerial Trainees. Dr Godfrey Brown has brought great commitment and experience and pastoral concern to this aspect of the work and the Board would record its gratitude to Dr Brown for his service to the Church.

COMMITTEE ON STUDIES

1. The Committee met four times during the year.

2. It continued to give advice to prospective candidates and to set courses and administer examinations in accordance with the Regulations of the General Assembly and the direction of the Board of Studies.

3. In the academic year 1995/96 there were 53 students under the care of Presbyteries as listed in the appended Schedule.

4. Thirteen students were granted permission to study at Universities/Colleges other than Union: four at Aberdeen, two at Edinburgh, one at Westminster, Philadelphia, one at Columbia/Candler, Georgia, one at Mansfield, Oxford, two at Princeton, New Jersey, one at Regent, Vancouver and one at Trinity, Singapore.

5. The Committee expresses its thanks for the work of the following external examiners:

OT Language and Biblical Theology - The Rev I J Patterson, BA, MTh.

NT Language - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD.

NT Greek (Qual) - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD.

Systematic Theology - The Rev D Bradley, BA, BD.

Church History - The Rev T N Hamilton, BA, BD.

Homiletics, Public Worship and Pastoral Work - The Rev Dr D C Irwin, MA, BD.

Study in a Missionary Partnership

The Rev Dr Ian Hart reports:

6. Students for the ministry of our Church are offered the opportunity to spend one of the 3 theological years (or a “year out”) studying theology in a country where we have a missionary partnership. This can be a very enlightening and stimulating experience; for example, overseas Churches are often struggling with very different issues from those we are preoccupied with in Northern Ireland; we sometimes need to be freed from localistic practices; and we may realise that we have been following social conventions rather than the gospel. In recent years students have taken up this opportunity in Kenya (St Paul’s United Theological College, Limuru), and in Jamaica (United Theological College, Kingston). In the academic year 1995-1996 Geoffrey Jones has been in Singapore, studying at Trinity Theological College. Geoffrey and his wife and 2 children have been warmly received into Katong Presbyterian Church, and have been enjoying their exposure to a very different culture, the rapidly growing Christian Church, a faster pace of life and a more prosperous society than our own.

Training and Assessment of Ministerial Students

The Very Rev Dr A W G Brown reports:

7. In my final report as Co-ordinator of Assignments, I would reflect on what has been achieved over the seven years since the scheme came into operation. After an initial experiment with final year students, we now have in place two short assignments for first and second year students at Union (one longer assignment is normal for our students studying elsewhere). In the case of Union students this is set up and supervised by the Professor of Practical Theology. Final year Students are assessed on their assistantships/placements. This assessment is part of the Board of Studies requirement for licence. Each

year in the early autumn we have organised a training session for supervising ministers, and have been available to them as requested.

In addition to their coursework with the Christian Training Centre, licentiates are also supervised and assessed on their practical performance. Until now this has extended over a six month period, which was far from adequate. Under the new regulations it will now extend for the full period of probation, and will form an essential part of a candidate's credentials for ordination,

I believe we have gradually built up a good set of procedures, modified by experience, and I am most happy that these will now fall under the aegis of the new Director of Ministerial Students.

I would like to pay tribute to Principal Reid, the Rev A H Graham, as well as the Convener of the Board of Studies, the Rev S A Matthews, all of whom have made my task a pleasant one, and perhaps most of all to successive groups of students and their 'bosses' with whom it has been a privilege to work.

Residential Interview

8. The Residential Interview was held in Union College on 17/18 September. Eighteen candidates were in attendance, a marked increase on the previous year. Of these, 13 are among those recommended to this General Assembly, 1 will be recommended to the 1997 Assembly, 1 is not recommended at this time and 3 are not recommended.

The Interviewing Panel comprised: The Right Rev Dr John Ross; The Very Rev Drs. A R Rodgers, R Sterritt, and J Dunlop; the Revs J M Cathcart, D Knowles, F A Bradley, R S Hetherington, R Lockhart, J H McIntyre, H S Boyd, R F S Poots, F P Sellar, S J Campbell, M Stanfield and D B Knox; Dr R J Rodgers, Mr H Plester, Mrs M Robinson and Mrs E Nesbitt together with The Rev S A Matthews (Director), The Rev J H Robinson (Secretary), Dr D E Eagleson MA, DipVocG and Mrs H Mullan BSc, PGCE (Vocational Consultants acting as advisors to the Panel).

The 1996 Residential Interview is planned for Sunday/Monday 15/16 September.

J H ROBINSON, Convener

APPENDIX

SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS

ARDS	Andrew A Cole	Union
	Colin J Gamble	Edinburgh
	Cecil A Grant	Princeton
	Mark C A Gray	Columbia/Candler
	Kenneth S Jeffrey	Aberdeen
	W R Brian Martin	Regent, Vancouver
	Jonathan Wylie	Edinburgh
ARMAGH	J Geoffrey Jones	Trinity, Singapore
BALLYMENA	Richard D Gregg	Union
EAST BELFAST	Graeme J Kennedy	Union
	Daniel Rankin	Union

NORTH BELFAST	William H G Crawley	Princeton
	Roy Gaston	Union
	Johnston R Lambe	Union
	Angus A McCullough	Westminster
	David B Murphy	Union
SOUTH BELFAST	Noel Patrick	Union
	Alan J Boal	Union
	James R Burnett	Union
	W R Neil Craigan	—
	J R Ian Harbinson	QUB
CARRICKFERGUS	Andrew J Thompson	Union
	Philip D Thompson	Union
	Robert A Liddle	Union
COLERAINE	Stephen J Lockington	Aberdeen
	Philip W Patterson	Union
	Geoffrey D Allen	Union
DERRY & STRABANE	J Keith A McIntyre	Union
	Jonathan P Moxen	Union
	Mark Dunn	Union
DOWN	David S Gilmore	Union
	R Ker Graham	Union
	Mervyn Gibson	QUB
DUBLIN & MUNSTER	Brian D Colvin	Union
	Kenneth R Gibson	Union
	David J Montgomery	Union
FOYLE	Alastair J A Rosborough	Union
	Stanley Stewart	Union
IVEAGH	T David Hagan	Union
	Edwin S McDowell	Aberdeen
	Ronald D McDowell	Aberdeen
	John A Peacock	Union
NEWRY	Jonathan A Curry	Union
	Kenneth W J Hanna	UUJ
	William J A Moody	Union
	Robert J Stevenson	Union
OMAGH	David W Reid	QUB
ROUTE	Gareth Aitcheson	Union
	Mark Henderson	Union
TEMPLEPATRICK	Rodney D Cameron	Union
	Christopher M Glover	Mansfield, Oxford
	Miss Anne E Tolland	—
TYRONE	Adrian T S McAlister	Union

MAGEE FUND SCHEME COMMITTEE

Magee Director's Report

1. The Christian Training programme has continued during the past year both at the Christian Training Centre and throughout the Church. Three of the highlights during the year were the Summer School of Theology held in June, 1995, the one day visit of Professor Walter Brueggemann (USA) and also the seminars conducted by Rev John Bell (Scotland) in February. To these speakers and all others who contributed to the programme, as well as to agents and participants who helped to make the seminars helpful, we would express our thanks and indebtedness.

2. The programme for 1996-97 is now available and it is hoped that it will be well supported by ministers, elders, leaders and members.

3. Last year's Summer School of Theology was so successful that another is planned this year. It is to be held in the College Chapel from 18-20 June with registration taking place at the CTC. This year's School has as its theme "Wisdom for Today's Church" and we are privileged to have as our special guest speaker Rev Professor Bruce Waltke from Regent College, Vancouver, Canada. Our other panel of speakers are known to many of us and we are honoured that they have agreed to speak. Dr Des Alexander (Queen's), Mr Robert Alcorn and Rev Charles McMullen complete an excellent panel of speakers for what should be a very worthwhile event. Lunch and residence will be available at the College and details of the programme can be obtained at the CTC.

4. Professor Walter Wink (USA) will be conducting a two day course in October and Rev Fergus Macdonald (Scotland) will be coming in November to participate in our on-going programme with a wide variety of topics, many of which are new this year. From 10-13 March, 1997 there will be a Joint Residential Conference at St Ninian's, Crieff when the theme will be "Reforming and Transforming". Starting on 16 September 1996 the six week Monday night lay training series is being reintroduced and it is hoped that after a break of four years it will be as well supported as in the past.

5. It has been gratifying to note that the book on "Living Leadership" has now been reprinted and is still much in demand. The elders' training video, along with others are also widely used. The Bible Correspondence Course continues to have a steady stream of applicants as well as those continuing with the course.

6. The Director found attendance at courses at Berkeley and Willow Creek USA to be helpful in getting ideas and material for new programmes at CTC.

7. The Magee Committee continue to give their support for the training programme and this is much appreciated. Mrs Mary Coles continues to seek to improve her computer skills and her detailed knowledge of the programme is of invaluable help. The Rev Charles McMullen continues to show deep interest and gives help and encouragement in his work as Convener. Thanks go to both of them for all they do.

8. The prayers, interest and support of the whole church are sought for all the work being done through the Christian Training Centre.

A H GRAHAM, Director

STUDENTS BURSARY FUND

1. The Committee met four times during the year.
2. There were 50 students in training during the year as follows; Union Theological College 34, Princeton 2, Columbia 1, Mansfield 1, Regent Vancouver 1, Westminster 1, Edinburgh 2, Aberdeen 4, Trinity Singapore 1, Non graduating Arts 3 and 46 of these received benefit from the Bursary Fund.
3. The total expenditure of the fund during 1995 was £288,319 while the total income from all sources amounted to £279,732.
4. We thank all who supported the fund during the year. This could have been by direct giving or offerings at services of ordination, installation or licensing. These financial offerings are much needed and appreciated and have increased from £43,657 in 1994 to £50,893 in 1995. The Pulpit Supply Association administered by the students at Union, contributed £1,795.

GEORGE MOORE, Convener

UNION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. During the year 1995 the Committee met on three occasions. Meetings were also held of the Buildings, Residence and Staffing sub-committees.
2. 68 students were enrolled for the Academic Year 1995-96 (1994-95: 72). Of these, 34 were ministerial and 34 lay. An additional ministerial student is studying a course approved by the College in Singapore. Two lay students from Spain and Malawi undertook short study periods and one 'sat in' at lectures. 29 students were in residence.
3. This Academic Year provided the first intake for the new Joint Honours Philosophy/Theology degree of Queen's University.
4. The Committee records its warm appreciation of the work of the Very Rev Professor R F G Holmes, MA, MLitt, DD, who retires from the Chair of Church History on 30 September, 1996.

Professor Holmes was ordained in 1954 as Chaplain to the RAF. Subsequently he was Chaplain at Campbell College (1960-63), Lecturer in Church History and Theology, Magee Theological College (1963-71), Professor of Church History, Assembly's College - from 1978, Union Theological College - (1971-date) and Principal of the College (1987-92). He was appointed Moderator of the General Assembly in 1990.

The College - and the Presbyterian Church - has been enriched by the person and the scholarship of Professor Holmes, not only as Moderator, but also

as a distinguished man of letters, a gifted teacher and a man whose genuine interest in the welfare of his students has been very evident. His publications - 'Our Presbyterian Heritage' - a History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; the biography of Henry Cooke and the 'Centennial History of Magee Theological College' together with a number of monographs published in theological journals, have brought distinction not only to himself but also to the College. His scholarship has been widely recognised. We shall miss his warm and friendly presence in the College and, in recording our indebtedness to him, would wish him and Mrs Holmes a long and happy retirement.

5. Professor J C McCullough was invited to lecture at the 150th Anniversary of the Reformed Theological College in Cluj, Romania. Professor S N Williams accepted invitations to lecture in Poland and Austria.

6. Salaries of the Domestic Bursar, College Secretary and Librarian were reviewed. College Administrative Staff are on Church House salary scales and the Committee appreciates greatly the help and advice from Church House staff on comparability. It has become necessary to increase the College Secretary's hours to full-time and those of the Librarian to 27 hours per week. Arrangements are being made to extend the opening hours of the Library to bring them more into line with comparable libraries. The Committee has also approved the appointment of a part-time Secretarial Assistant (20 hours pw) and a part-time Library Assistant (15 hours pw). It is also hoped to complete the computerisation of Book Stock this summer.

7. The Committee has agreed to provide accommodation for the Director of Ministerial Students and Secretary subject to an appointment being made by the General Assembly.

8. We look forward to co-operating once again with the Christian Training Centre in the 1996 Summer School.

9. The Committee is examining the most efficient use of College buildings and the most cost-effective method of up-dating residential accommodation.

10. The Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 December, 1995, shows an overall deficit of £17,391. The cumulative General Revenue Account surplus has fallen to £8,387. This will be exhausted during 1996 and will mean increasing dependence upon grants from the United Appeal.

Negotiations with the Department of Education for an increase in tuition fees for university courses were unsuccessful. Fees payable to the College are already more than double those of Arts courses provided at universities.

11. The UTC and Edgehill Joint Co-ordinating Committee met twice during 1995. Working relations continue to be excellent and to the benefit of both Colleges. Agreement has been reached with Edgehill which will result in a pooling of net tuition fees and their apportionment between the Colleges according to services and facilities provided.

12. Once again the Management Committee records its appreciation to the College's academic and administrative staff for the helpful and committed performance of their duties. Their ready co-operation enables the College to run well and for the benefit of all the students.

MARGARET L JOHNSTON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly accept the retirement of the Very Rev Professor R F G Holmes, the date of retirement to be 30 September, 1996.
3. That the thanks of the General Assembly be given to the Very Rev Professor R F G Holmes.
4. That the General Assembly thank the Very Rev Dr Godfrey Brown for his service as Co-ordinator and Assessor of Training for Ministerial Trainees.
5. That the General Assembly discontinue the post of Co-ordinator and Assessor of Training for Ministerial Trainees.
6. That the Director of Ministerial Students act on behalf of and under the supervision of the Board of Studies in all matters relating to students for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
7. That the work of the Magee Director of Christian Training, and the Bible Correspondence Course be commended to the whole Church for support, participation and prayer.
8. That the General Assembly commend and encourage support for the Summer School of Theology to be held at UTC and CTC from 18-20 June, 1996.
9. That the following grants be paid from the Incidental Fund:

To cover cost of post of Co-ordinator and Assessor of Training for Ministerial Trainees	£2,000
To cover expenses of the Residential Interview	£1,496
To cover the expense of a meeting of students and their spouses	£500
To cover the expense of the Pre-Term Conference	£200
To cover the expense of honoraria for Extern Examiners	£287
To provide elocation for students outside Ireland	£80
TOTAL	£4,563
10. That the General Assembly note that the Bursary Fund grant for 1996-97 will be £3,000 and the married allowance £1,350. Children's allowances will continue to be paid at CMF Rates.
11. That the following candidates, their nominations having been sustained by the Board of Studies, be accepted as students for the Ministry and placed under the care of their Presbyteries:

Colin Burcombe	Ballyclare	Carrickfergus
Ronald Ian Carton	Downshire	Carrickfergus
Samuel James Castles	St Columba's, Lisburn	Dromore
Michael Norman Davidson	Saintfield Road	East Belfast
Lee Henry Eagleson	Wellington Street	Ballymena
Kenneth Henderson	Mourne	Newry
Simon Henning	Conlig	Ards
Dr Mark Jones	Ballyhenry	North Belfast
Andrew Newell Kerr	Belvoir	East Belfast
Peter George McDowell	Fitzroy	South Belfast
Cheryl Aeeden Reid	Lowe Memorial	South Belfast
Stephen Richmond	1st Portglenone	Ballymena
Louise Jane Robinson	2nd Ballyeaston	Templepatrick

David John Steele	Trinity, Ballymoney	Route
Maurice Milford Stewart	Greenwell Street	Ards
Philip Bolton Wilson	Terrace Row, Coleraine	Coleraine

12. That the Board of Studies, together with the appropriate working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 285 of the Code, as follows:-

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 285(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 285(1) of the Code the words “the Director of Ministerial Students” be inserted after the words “the Secretary of the Home Mission Committee”.

S A MATTHEWS

COMMITTEE ON RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES

1. The Committee held three stated meetings during the year.
2. The Committee is pleased to report that the arrangement of the Overseas Board for the Rev Samuel Muriguh from the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, in accordance with Par 200(4) of the Code, is proving to be most satisfactory.
3. An application from the Rev Andrew M J Smith, BA, MDiv, of the Presbyterian Church USA, for reception as a Minister without Charge in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was considered. The Committee agreed unanimously that he memorialise the General Assembly in June 1996 in accordance with the standard procedure of the Code (Par 219(5)).
4. Correspondence has been received from a Presbytery about the possible reinstatement of a minister who resigned some years ago. At time of writing this matter is under consideration.

ROBERT JOHNSTON, Convener

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet at Belfast on Monday, 3 June, 1996.

The Memorial of Andrew James Macleod Smith, BA, MDiv, Respectfully Showeth:

That he was born on 30 September, 1967 and that he is married with an infant daughter;

That he was brought up in St Patrick's Church of Ireland parish, Jordanstown, and attended Belfast Royal Academy where he achieved ten Grade A passes at GCE "O" Level;

That his family emigrated to Alaska, USA in 1984, from which time he was actively involved in the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America;

That he graduated from Middlebury College, Vermont, Bachelor of Arts in French, Magna Cum Laude, in May, 1989;

That from 1989-91 he was a full-time employee of Plaistow Bank and Trust Co, Plaistow, New Hampshire;

That he graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts, Master of Divinity, Magna Cum Laude, in May, 1995;

That from July, 1994 until the present he has served as an Assistant Minister;

That he was ordained by the Northern New England Presbytery of the PCUSA on 29 October, 1995 and that he is a recognised minister of the PCUSA;

That he is willing to subscribe the Westminster Confession of Faith in terms of the General Assembly's formula;

Believing that God has called him to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament and that his ministry should be exercised in the land of his upbringing, Memorialist wishes to be received as a minister within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Memorialist therefore prays your Venerable Assembly to receive him as a minister without charge, with the condition that his qualifications and experience be counted as the equivalent of one year of ordained assistantship, and that he completes a further twelve months as an ordained assistant minister, including whatever supplementary studies which the Board of Studies shall decide, before he is eligible for a call.

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

ANDREW J M SMITH

Licensed and transmitted by the Presbytery of North Belfast at its meeting in Rosemary on Tuesday, 5 March, 1996.

J L CASEMENT, Moderator
JOHN R DICKINSON, Clerk

Transmitted by the Synod of Belfast at its meeting in Townsend Street on Tuesday, 12 March, 1996.

JOHN DUNLOP, Moderator
W D F MARSHALL, Clerk

COMMISSION ON TRUSTS

1. Attention is drawn to the Capital Account of the General Investment Fund. The Commission advised the acceptance of the Trust Funds.

A.J. RANKIN, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Commission on Trusts for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par. 130 of the Code as follows:-

BOARD OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Convener: Mr O J G WHITE

1. The Board met three times and was represented at numerous other meetings during the year.

2. Over the past few years more attention has been focused on the financial accountability of charities. Detailed new legislation has been enacted in England and Wales and the NI Government Department of Health and Social Services has issued a lengthy consultative document setting out its proposed legislation. This is likely to have a significant impact on the Church with perhaps 20% of our congregations as well as Church House being required to produce much more detailed accounts. The Board has reviewed and responded to the consultative document and will continue to monitor developments in this area. Presbytery Finance Conveners and congregations likely to be affected by the legislation will be kept informed of developments as detailed legislation is produced.

3. The Board is conscious of the time and effort required to produce the annual statistical return of each congregation's finances. While the filling in of standard forms with lots of blanks may frustrate individual congregational treasurers the benefit to the Board in having congregations accounts prepared in a standard format is immense. Trends can only be analysed and conclusions drawn with confidence if the underlying data is consistently drawn up both across the congregational spectrum and over the years.

To help congregational treasurers the Statistics Committee is embarking on an ambitious project to produce a Congregational Treasurers Manual which will hopefully help with what is an onerous task.

4. The Finance and Staffing Committee have continued the work of harmonising the terms and conditions of employment of all the Church's staff. In particular proposed Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures for Assembly appointments are attached as a resolution to this Report. These seek to lay down procedures for dealing with Disciplinary and Grievance matters for Assembly Appointees should this be necessary. Such procedures are already in place for all other employees.

The Church provides pension schemes for each category of its employees tailored to meet the particular circumstances of each grouping. Under Government legislation any employee has the right to opt out of the Church's schemes and contribute to a personal pension. Such a decision has long term implications not only for the employee concerned but also for the spouse and any dependent children. The Board has therefore suggested to the administrators for each of the Church's Pension schemes that where an employee decides not to join the appropriate Church scheme, they should write not only to the employee concerned but also to his/her spouse to ensure that the implications of the decision taken are known by both parties.

CHURCH HOUSE AND ASSEMBLY HALL COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to exercise a careful oversight of the affairs of Church House, Assembly Hall and Spires Shopping Mall so that our overdraft might continue to be reduced and eradicated as soon as possible.

2. Lettings for the Assembly Hall and ancillary accommodation rose significantly during the past year and income increased by 48.12% from £23,777.68 in 1994 to £34,626.03 in 1995.

3. In the Spires Shopping Mall all units are now let with the exception of Unit 5 and the kiosk. The Committee would like to thank members and their friends for their support of the traders in the Shopping Mall during the past year.

4. The roof of the offices in Fisherwick Buildings gave serious cause for concern recently because it was found to be leaking badly. Repairs have now been carried out.

5. The Committee would like to express thanks to Harry Orr (Building Manager) and his staff, and Lambert, Smith, Hampton (Letting and Managing Agents) for their expert assistance during the year. The work of the Friends of Church House and those who conduct the tours of the building is also greatly appreciated.

D S GRAHAM, Convener

FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met three times during the year.

2. The Committee continued to assist Departments in staffing matters.

3. Progress was made in the harmonisation of Conditions of Employment and Pensions for administrative staff within the employment of the Church.

4. The Consultation Document on Charity Legislation in Northern Ireland which could have far reaching implications for the Church in the area of accountancy has been considered. The response to the Document has been forwarded to the Department of Health and Social Services. Meanwhile improvements on the Annual Accounts towards fulfillment of Recommended Practice continued and in the light of increased requirements of the Financial Secretary's Department it was decided to recruit a qualified Accountant.

5. Payments by BACS (Banking Automatic Clearing System) continued during the year to include payment of suppliers, expenses and dividends from the General Investment Fund.

6. Overdraft facility requests from Committees were received and those previously granted reviewed. Upon assurance that repayment plans were established overdrafts were granted or continued. These included the project at Guysmere, the replacement of Corkey House, phase II of the Derryvolgie Hall project and the funding of the Director of Ministerial Students post.

7. Banking facilities were reviewed and the set off of bank accounts of the Residential Trust within the overall arrangement was agreed with the

Northern Bank Ltd together with improved efficiency in the monitoring of the daily bank balance.

8. The Committee pays tribute to the dedication of staff to their duties and their role in providing support to congregations, ministers, and the public.

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

9. The Committee drew up the following Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures to be applied to Heads of Departments appointed by the General Assembly.

- (i) Internal grievances should be dealt with by the Committee on Finance and Staffing by whatever procedures it may deem appropriate;
- (ii) Internal discipline should be dealt with by the Board of Finance and Administration in accordance with whatever procedures it may deem necessary.
- (iii) In exceptional circumstances the General Board may place an Assembly appointee on leave of absence on full pay until the next General Assembly.
- (iv) Only the General Assembly may remove from office a person whom it has appointed, but the General Board, acting on behalf of the Assembly, may accept a voluntary resignation.
- (v) These guidelines do not affect the rights and duties of the various courts of the Church as set out in the Code.

It is, of course, hoped that problems will in practice be resolved informally and by agreement, but it would be prudent to have approved procedures in place.

C ROBINSON, Convener

GETTY BEQUEST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met on Thursday 13 February, 1996.

2. The Committee received a report from Mr George Ferguson, Secretary to Belfast City Mission, which showed that satisfactory progress had been made with the alteration and renovation to the Mission Hall at Mountcollyer Avenue, Belfast. The estimated capital cost has been given as £105,000. An anonymous donation of £53,333 and a possible Urban Development Grant of £15,460 left a shortfall of £36,207.

3. In view of the above report, it was agreed to make the following allocation out of income received in 1995:-

	1995	1994
	£	£
Overseas Board - Foreign Mission	970	1,000
Overseas Board - Jewish Mission	485	500
Home Mission	1,360	1,400
Belfast City Mission	3,985	4,100
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£6,800	£7,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>

T H COCHRANE, Convener

INCIDENTAL FUND COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met twice during the year.
2. The Fund Account (including the General Purposes Fund) showed a credit balance at the end of the year of £109,000.
3. The Committee reviewed applications for Funding and recommends the following grants be paid in 1996:-

	£
Board of Studies	4,563
Arrangements Committee	6,000
Inter-Church Relations Board	46,608
Public Worship Committee	800
Board of Social Witness	3,660
Youth Board	6,500
Church Architecture Committee	1,000
Peace & Peacemaking Committee	2,250
Historical Society	13,700
Church & Government Committee	4,000
Nomination Board	600
Strategy for Mission Committee	5,500
Conciliation Panel	NIL
Environmental Panel	145

4. The Committee confirms that a loan to Familybooks of £50,000 in 1995 is to be repaid in two instalments - £25,000 on 1.8.97 and £25,000 on 1.8.98.
5. Thanks are recorded to all members of the Committee.

J D McCLEERY, Convener

STATISTICS COMMITTEE

1. The Committee acknowledges the work carried out at Congregational and Presbytery level in relation to the completion of the 1995 Statistical Returns. However, errors were found in approximately 20% of the returns, albeit that most of the errors were of a minor nature.
2. Statistical and financial data for 1995 is summarised in Tables 1-5. Comparative figures for the preceding year also appear in these tables.
3. Graphical presentations of some data have also been provided, to help with the visibility of trends. Comparisons can be made with each of the last 5 years, as well as 10 years and 20 years ago.
4. The Committee held meetings during the year with Presbytery Finance representatives and the output from those meetings will be reviewed further in the coming year.
5. The Committee plans to produce a handbook for those involved in finance and statistics within our Congregations and Presbyteries, along the lines of the Church of Scotland Treasurer's Handbook. This task will involve other arms of the Board of Finance and Administration, as well as the Financial Secretary's Department.

D LAMB, Convener

TABLE ONE

PERSONS AND AGENCIES

	1994	1995	Increase	Decrease
Retired Ministers	185	187	2	
Ministers in Active Duty	429	430	1	
Retired Missionaries	5	5		
Missionaries in Active Duty	56	48		8
Total Ministers and Missionaries	675	670		5
Licensures	11	18	7	
Congregations	562	563	1	
Total Families	120,719	119,792		927
Persons of All Ages	307,863	304,265		3,598
Contributors to FWO or Stipend	102,853	101,829		1,024
Baptisms	2,900	2,746		154
Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time	2,198	2,085		113
Communicants	125,053	123,833		1,220
Attended at Least One Communion during year	85,178	83,309		1,869
Ruling Elders in Kirk Session	7,210	7,285	75	
Number on Rolls in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes	39,918	38,999		919

TABLE TWO
CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

	1994		1995		%Difference	
	£	IR£	£	IR£	N.I.	R. of I.
Specified Sources	16,662,101	869,832	17,727,945	915,195	6.4%+	5.2%+
Building Fund etc.	7,764,117	593,913	8,513,085	493,299	9.6%+	16.9%—
“For Others”	3,851,390	203,060	3,738,947	198,258	2.9%—	2.4%—
Raised from other sources	3,328,498	423,272	3,232,015	444,565	2.9%—	5.0%+
Requests etc.	1,739,297	154,206	2,464,487	95,577	41.7%+	38.0%—
Total Receipts	33,345,400	2,244,282	35,676,478	2,146,894	7.0%+	4.3%—
Total Receipts Less						
Bequests etc.	31,606,103	2,090,076	33,211,991	2,051,317	5.1%+	1.9%—
Bequests	583,920	18,841	702,797	21,177	20.4%+	12.4%+

TABLE THREE
CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE

	1994		1995		IR£	%Difference N.I.	R. of I.
	£	IR£	£	IR£			
Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others	9,132,438	527,407	9,674,895	561,710	5.9%+	6.5%+	
Payments under Assembly Assessments	4,306,146	255,472	4,509,103	267,782	4.7%+	4.8%+	
Building, Repairs, etc.	7,947,647	698,956	8,774,197	455,832	10.4%+	34.8%+	
United Appeal Schemes	2,151,036	91,596	2,215,810	94,516	3.0%+	3.2%+	
Supplementary Schemes							
Other Religious and Charitable Objects	2,425,569	178,159	2,290,841	181,479	5.6%—	1.9%+	
General Expenses	5,022,916	394,411	5,096,431	391,843	1.5%+	.7%—	
Total Payments	30,985,752	2,146,001	32,561,277	1,953,162	5.1%+	9.0%—	

TABLE FOUR
CONGREGATIONAL BALANCES

	Closing 1994		Opening 1995		Closing 1995		%Difference N.I.	
	£	IR£	£	IR£	£	IR£	N.I.	R. of I.
Credits	13,022,625	977,535	13,215,963	970,951	14,297,075	1,058,223	8.2%	9.0%+
Debits	2,942,651	110,517	3,094,121	107,319	3,065,664	80,792	.9%—	24.7%—
Net Credits	10,079,974	867,018	10,121,842	863,632	11,231,411	977,431	11.0%+	13.2%+

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

	1994	1995	% Difference
	£	£	
Total Ministerial Income			
(Active Duty — Note 2)	7,088,758	7,544,276	6.4%+
Retired Ministers; Income	1,545,328	1,356,738	12.2%–
Stipend Paid	5,317,692	5,727,127	7.7%+
Allowances			
Light, Heat, etc			
Ministerial Duties			
Total	1,696,339	1,769,686	4.3%+

Note 1 Figures for the Republic of Ireland have been converted into £STG using the average value of the £IR for the year.

Note 2 This refers only to 364 ministers in charge of congregations, excluding Assistants, Chaplains, Missionaries, Professors, Administrative Officers and Ministers in recognised service in special work.

APPENDIX

Salary Scales of Executive and Administrative Posts. (The undernoted figures are inclusive of a 4% increase applied as from 1 January, 1996 following the annual review).

EXECUTIVE POSTS**Scale 1 (£14,820 - £17,280)**

Building Manager

Scale 2 (£16,824 - £19,872)

Dean of Residence

Director of Nightlight

Scale 3 (£18,900 - £22,020)

Executive Secretary, PWA

Secretary for Education in Mission

Secretary - Residential Trust

Promoter of Evangelism

Sunday School Organiser/Christian Education Secretary

Director - Video Unit

Scale 4 (£20,916 - £24,960)

Youth Officer

Superintendent of Irish Mission

Adviser in Social Service

Information Officer

Scale 5 (£22,944 - £27,000)

Deputy Financial Secretary

Convener of Overseas Mission

Scale 6 (£24,960 - £29,148)

Deputy General Secretary

Scale 7 (£28,416 - £32,652)

General Secretary

Financial Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS**Scale 1 (£7,512 - £8,820)**

Junior Secretary (4)

Telephonist

Assistant Building Manager

Scale 2 (£8,820 - £10,296)

Secretary (8)
 Telephonist/Receptionist
 Information & Technology Assistant

Scale 3 (£9,972 - £11,652)

Senior Secretary (6)
 Production Assistant
 Administrative Assistant

Scale 4 (£11,388 - £13,212)

Personal Secretary (2)
 Information and Technology Officer
 Financial Assistant (2)
 Administrative Assistant (2)

Scale 5 (£12,528 - £14,568)

Personal Secretary
 Computer Controller
 Publications Manager
 Administrative Assistant
 ADE/Aids Officer
 Youth Centres Director

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That Ernst and Young be appointed as auditors for the current year.

Incidental Fund Committee

3. That the assessment for the Incidental Fund for 1996 be 5 pence in the pound of Stipend.
4. That the assessment for the Church House Redevelopment Project for the year be 10p in the pound of Stipend, 3.5p in the pound of Specified Sources.

Getty Bequest

5. That the following be appointed to a Committee of Management in accordance with the terms of the will of the late John Getty:-
 Revs S Hutchinson, Dr J Girvan, Dr T J Simpson, Dr A J Weir, R J T McMullan, R F S Poots, J N Seawright; Messrs T H Cochrane, G Ferguson, W H Henry, D Lamb, J F Rowan and O J G White.

Finance and Staffing Committee

6. That the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures for Heads of Departments appointed by the General Assembly be approved.

General

7. That the Board of Finance and Administration, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 286 of the Code as follows:

UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: Rev W COWPER LYNAS
Secretary: Rev S HUTCHINSON

1. The Board is pleased to report that it was able to pay in full all the proposed allocations for 1995.

2. The Target for 1996 is £2,250,000. (See Schedules I and II). The Board hopes that ministers will speak and invite others to speak to their congregations about the wider work of the Church and the United Appeal.

3. The Board interviewed representatives from the Home, Youth, Social Witness, Overseas, Publications and Education Boards as well as the Residential Trust, the Irish Mission, the Directorate of Ministerial Students, and Union College, concerning their accounts and budgets for 1997.

4. The requests for funding for 1997 rose by almost £800,000 which would have meant a rise of some 38%. Regrettably, cuts have had to be made on the requests of most of the agencies. The Board recommends that the increase of the Target for 1997 should be 4.9%. The Target figure will be £2,360,000 (See Schedules III and IV).

5. The Board has taken on the funding of the new position of Director of Ministerial Students, which the Assembly agreed to in 1995. As the Board of Studies is not on the list of agencies funded by the United Appeal, a notice of motion to rectify this follows in the resolutions.

6. The Board would draw attention of congregations to the Code Par 287 (4)(c) "When a congregation raises a sum in excess of its allocation, it may distribute the excess among the funds of the Church included in the Appeal in such proportion as it thinks fit".

7. The Board gratefully acknowledges the legacy of the late Miss Elsie Salters, Bangor, of a sum in excess of £800,000 to the United Appeal. The Board proposes to invest the money in the General Investment Fund, and to draw 1/5 of the Capital, together with interest, into the United Appeal Account each year for 5 years.

SCHEDULE I

Presbytery	Contributing Families 1994	United Appeal 1996 £
Ards.....	11,007	240,788
Armagh	4,177	91,376
Ballymena	8,285	181,242
Belfast North.....	8,818	192,902
Belfast South.....	4,920	107,629
Belfast East	10,688	233,809
Carrickfergus.....	6,451	141,121
Coleraine	4,775	104,457
Derry & Strabane.....	3,873	84,725
Donegal	1,337	29,248
Down.....	5,246	114,761
Dromore	5,556	121,542
Dublin & Munster.....	1,361	29,773
Foyle	3,075	67,268
Iveagh.....	3,707	81,094
Monaghan	1,021	22,335
Newry.....	2,841	62,149
Omagh.....	2,622	57,359
Route.....	3,883	84,944
Templepatrick	5,046	110,386
Tyrone	4,164	91,091
	102,853	2,250,000

SCHEDULE II

	Requested 1996 £	Proposed Grant 1996 £
Home Mission.....	264,700	220,000
Church Extension.....	398,905	200,000
Christian Training & Evangelism.....	41,650	30,000
Irish Mission.....	185,000	185,000
Education Board.....	175,000	135,000
Students Bursary Fund.....	158,597	158,597
Chaplains Committee.....	10,000	8,000
Youth Board.....	196,137	175,000
Rostrevor Centre.....	4,160	1,000
Guysmere Centre.....	29,000	29,000
Lucan Centre.....	10,400	7,000
Social Witness Board.....	44,100	34,000
Social Service Committee.....	3,000	3,000
ADE Committee.....	27,970	20,000
Thompson House.....	17,500	12,500
PCI Enterprises.....	5,550	5,500
Carlisle House.....	17,500	17,500
Old Age Fund.....	0	0
Residential Trust.....	35,000	25,000
Shankill Road Mission.....	25,000	15,000
Overseas Board.....	691,500	660,000
Publications Committee.....	25,000	15,000
Information Department.....	71,929	55,000
TV/Broadcasting Committee.....	24,000	24,000
Union Theological College.....	186,000	145,000
Kinghan Mission.....	39,250	5,000
Forces Committee.....		0
Contingencies.....		64,903
	<hr/> 2,686,848	<hr/> 2,250,000

SCHEDULE III

Presbytery	Contributing Families 1995	United Appeal 1997 £
Ards.....	10,884	252,249
Armagh.....	4,168	96,598
Ballymena.....	8,296	192,269
Belfast North.....	8,303	192,431
Belfast South.....	4,857	112,566
Belfast East.....	10,511	243,604
Carrickfergus.....	6,424	148,883
Coleraine.....	4,810	111,477
Derry & Strabane.....	3,866	89,599
Donegal.....	1,332	30,871
Down.....	5,287	122,532
Dromore.....	5,537	128,326
Dublin & Munster.....	1,375	31,867
Foyle.....	3,024	70,085
Iveagh.....	3,705	85,867
Monaghan.....	1,019	23,616
Newry.....	2,832	65,635
Omagh.....	2,616	60,629
Route.....	3,856	89,367
Templepatrick.....	4,985	115,533
Tyrone.....	4,142	95,995
	101,829	2,360,000

SCHEDULE IV

	Requested 1997 £	Proposed Grant 1997 £
Home Mission.....	290,500	220,000
Church Extension.....	498,000	225,000
Christian Training & Evangelism.....	48,300	45,000
Irish Mission.....	226,000	200,000
Education Board.....	205,000	155,000
Students Bursary Fund.....	188,200	188,000
Chaplains Committee.....	27,700	27,000
Youth Board.....	199,600	185,000
Rostrevor Centre.....	3,000	2,000
Guysmere Centre.....	5,000	5,000
Lucan Centre.....	32,500	7,000
Social Witness Board.....	60,800	55,000
Social Service Committee.....	2,600	0
ADE Committee.....	31,000	25,000
Thompson House.....	15,000	15,000
PCI Enterprises.....	5,000	2,000
Carlisle House.....	17,500	3,000
Old Age Fund.....	100	0
Residential Trust.....	16,000	5,000
Shankill Road Mission.....	35,000	0
Overseas Board.....	723,000	715,000
Publications Committee and Information Department.....	86,800	85,000
TV/Broadcasting Committee.....	28,000	25,000
Union Theological College.....	200,000	180,000
Kinghan Mission.....	7,700	5,000
Forces Committee.....	0	0
Director of Ministerial Students.....	64,500	60,000
Contingencies.....		86,000
	3,016,800	2,520,000
Less Bequests.....		160,000
		2,360,000

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the United Appeal for 1997 be as set out in Schedules III and IV.
3. That the General Assembly receive the Notice of Motion, "That the Board of Studies be added to the agencies which receive funding from the United Appeal".
4. That the United Appeal Board for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 287 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF MINISTRY AND PENSIONS

Convener: Rev W J R ROBINSON

1. The Board met four times during the year to receive reports from each of its constituent Committees. Many matters of policy were discussed and recommendations were received and approved.

2. It is pleasing to report that the rapid decline in the strength of the Central Ministry fund has been halted. In 1995 the Central Ministry Fund was no longer required to assist with the burden of the implementation of 'The Way Ahead' document approved by the General Assembly in 1993. At the end of the year the Central Ministry Fund stood at £776,768 compared with £560,233 at the end of 1994. It must be remembered however that the retained balance, which is of course a working balance, stood at £924,961 at the end of 1989.

3. The present state of the Central Ministry Fund has made it possible to increase the Basic Ministerial Minimum from £13,896 to £14,316. It has also been possible to increase the payment under Par 316(2)(e) of the Code from £300 to £420. The cumulative effect of these increases produces an increase of 3.80% for a minister on the basic Ministerial Minimum. This compares with an increase of 2.87% in the previous year.

4. Concern has continued regarding the cost of the Ordained Assistantship Scheme - £197,970 in 1995. This will of course rapidly decrease under the new scheme but the cost of licentiates will increase. The Board will also have to bear the cost of special arrangements which will be required to ensure that some licentiates are able to complete their training in agreed placements.

5. The position of the Widows of Ministers Fund worsened considerably in 1995, the retained balance reducing from £182,676 to £85,185. This had been anticipated when the assessment for 1995 for the Widows of Ministers Fund had been reduced from 6p in £ of Stipend to 5p in £ of Stipend.

6. The position of the Retired Ministers Fund had given much concern over the last few years, with its retained balance limping along at only £10,880 at the end of 1994. This report to the General Assembly last year indicated that since no further 'balance of grants' would now need to be paid to retired ministers, the fund would show an upturn in 1995. This prediction was accurate and the retained balance at 31 December, 1995 amounted to £168,267.

7. Considering the projected needs of the Widows of Ministers Fund and the Retired Ministers Fund the Board recommends that the 1996 assessment for the WMF be 6.5p in £ of Stipend, and that for the RMF 10.75p in £ of Stipend.

8. Since the total of the WMF and RMF assessment in 1995 came to 17.5p in £ of Stipend, the combined 1996 assessment for these two funds shows a reduction of 0.25p in £ of Stipend. It is hoped that this will be the first of a series of genuine reductions in congregational assessments.

9. The improved situation in the Retired Ministers Fund has enabled it to reduce its request for subvention from the Central Ministry Fund by £10,000. It is hoped that this request can now be reduced year by year.

10. The Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) Fund continues to grow and the valuation shows that its Asset Value at 31 December, 1995 was just in excess of 23 million pounds. Actuarial Valuation shows the scheme fully funded and satisfying all legal requirements.

11. The Board is pleased that the Death in Service Benefit can be increased from three times to four times the Basic Ministerial Minimum. This valuable improvement in the Scheme is achievable without any additional assessment on congregations. The assessment remains at 15p in £ of Stipend.

12. The Board would express its concern that only 171 completed Expression of Wish Forms are in place, and would urge all members of the Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) to attend to this matter without delay.

13. The sub-committee structure of the Board has been under careful scrutiny and the Board feels that the time has come for rationalisation. It is proposed that the Widows of Ministers Fund Committee, the Retired Ministers Fund Committee and the Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) Committee be merged into one committee known as the 'Committee on Retirements and Pensions', with individual accounts of the funds being maintained. The Central Ministry Fund Committee would remain as a separate Committee.

14. The Board also considered the obvious advantages of moving the declaration of the Basic Ministerial Minimum to a date before the end of the current financial year, rather than the existing system of declaration in February with backdating which involves double work and numerous recalculations. As a result a special meeting of the Central Ministry Fund Committee and of the Board was held in December, but the declaration of Minimum will be made in future years, based on the estimates at the normal October meetings. This decision has also resulted in outstanding balances being paid to Ministers a month earlier, in February rather than in March.

CENTRAL MINISTRY FUND COMMITTEE

1. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 1996.

- | | | |
|---|---------|-----------|
| (a) Ministerial Minimum for 1996 | £14,316 | (£13,896) |
| Minimum for 10 years' service | £15,033 | (£14,590) |
| Minimum for 20 years' service | £15,747 | (£15,286) |
| Minimum for 30 years' service | £16,464 | (£15,980) |
- (b) **Family Grants:** Payable to qualified Ministers serving in Northern Ireland whose total income, excluding Family Grants, does not exceed the appropriate Ministerial Minimum plus £1,250, and to all qualified Ministers serving in the Republic of Ireland in respect of their children on the following scales and regulations:

	Northern Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Birth to 10 years	£150	IR£350
11 to 15 years	£225	IR£550
16 years and over		
(i) in full-time attendance at Grammar School or other similar institutions	£275	IR£1,000
(ii) in full-time attendance at University or other similar third level institution of full-time learning	£350	IR£1,875

The grant in respect of any child who is 16 years of age and over falling into category (b) and who is in receipt of a maintenance or training grant shall be reduced by £1 for every £1 by which such maintenance or training grant exceeds £850.

- (c) **Augmented Grants:** The amount a minister may earn apart from congregational work without the Augmented Grant being affected shall be £2,000.
- (d) **Bequests:** A minister may receive up to £750 per annum from bequests received during his ministry without grants being affected.
- (e) **Differential Grant:** The Republic of Ireland Differential for 1996 - IR£1,800 (IR£1,800).

2. That the C.M.F. make a subvention payment of £170,000 to the R.M.F.

3. That the extra payment of £15 per month to retired ministers be continued.

J McVEIGH, W J ALEXANDER, Joint Conveners

RETIRED MINISTERS FUND COMMITTEE

- 1. The Committee noted the expected upturn of the fund in 1995.
- 2. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 1996:-
 - (a) Basic Retirement Allowance - £7,158
 - (b) Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic with no State Pension - £5,082 (married), £3,180 (single).
 - (c) Eire Differential - IR£1,200

R I A ALLELY, Convener

WIDOWS OF MINISTERS FUND COMMITTEE

1. The accounts showed a much reduced retained balance reflecting a need for readjustment of the assessment.

2. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 1996:-

- (a) Widows Pension - £3,579
- (b) Widows not in receipt of N.I. State Pension - £3,579 + £475
- (c) Widows not in receipt of N.I. State Pension or P.W.F.A. - £3,579 + £500
- (d) Widows whose husbands were not eligible for N.I. State Pension - £3,579 + £3,180.
- (e) Eire Differential - IR£800.

W.D.F. MARSHALL, Convener

MINISTERS' PENSION SCHEME (1978) COMMITTEE

1. The report from the Trustees and the Accounts for the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) for the year ended 31 December, 1995 are included in the published Accounts.

2. The Trustees have decided to award an increase of 3.2% for the year commencing the 6th April, 1996 to pensions in payment in the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978).

3. The following Ministers are not members of the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978):-

Revs. W.B. Boyd and J.L. Tosh.

W H HENRY, Acting Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Central Ministry Fund

2. That retired ministers be paid in the current year a special grant (Code Par 315(5)) of £15 per month from the Central Ministry Fund.

3. That a subvention payment of £170,000 be paid to the Retired Ministers Fund from the Central Ministry Fund.

4. That in reckoning augmentation for 1996 the Central Ministry Fund shall not take account of a sum not exceeding £420 being income from the Commutation, Sustentation and Central Ministry Funds.

5. That in reckoning family grants for 1996 the Central Ministry Fund shall not take into account the above-mentioned sum of £420.

Retired Ministers Fund

6. That the scale of assessment for RMF for 1995 be 10.75p in the £1 of Stipend as shown in the column 'Stipend paid to Minister' or as fixed for a vacancy by the Union Commission.

7. That permission be given to the respective Presbyteries upon request to release for retirement under the '65' rule, Rev R McC Bell (1st Kilraughts), Rev M L Johnston (Fortwilliam Park), Rev J K F Watson (Ballygrainey), Rev G C McKay (Tullamore and Mountmellick), Rev R C Graham (Carlisle Road, Londonderry with Crossroads), Rev J S Martin (Drumlough and Anahilt).

Widows of Ministers Fund

8. That the scale of assessment for WMF for 1996 be 6.5p in the £1 of Stipend as shown in the column 'Stipend paid to Minister' or as fixed for a vacancy by the Union Commission.

Ministers Pension Scheme Fund (1978)

9. That the scale of assessment for MPSF (1978) be 15p in the £1 of Stipend as shown in the column 'Stipend paid to Minister' or as fixed by the Union Commission in the case of a vacancy.

General

10. That the WMF Committee, the RMF Committee, and the MPS (1978) Committee be merged into one Committee known as 'The Committee on Retirements and Pensions', with individual accounts being maintained to administer these funds.

11. That the resignations of the present Conveners of the WMF, RMF, and MPSF(1978) Committees, Rev W D F Marshall, Rev R I A Allely and Mr W H Henry be accepted, that they be thanked for their service, and that Mr R Kerr and Rev R I A Allely be appointed as Joint Conveners of the Committee on Retirements and Pensions.

12. That the Board of Ministry and Pensions, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 288 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS**Anent Par 316(2)(d) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 316(2)(d) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:-

- (2)(d)(i) a sum not exceeding £2,500 (or as may be fixed from time to time by the supervising Board) being income earned from Clerkships, Chaplaincies, Licenserships, Convenerships or other Church appointments, or Church-nominated appointments;
- (ii) a sum not exceeding £1,500 (or as may be fixed from time to time by the supervising Board) being income earned from any other work outside his congregation.

- (iii) the total sum to be disregarded under the sub-sections (i) and (ii) shall in no case exceed £2,500 in all (or as may be fixed from time to time by the supervising Board).

J I DAVEY, W J ALEXANDER

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 222(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 222(3) of the Code, the words “the Retired Minister’s Fund Committee” be deleted and that the words “the Committee on Retirements and Pensions” be substituted in their place.

W J R ROBINSON

Anent Par 223(4) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 223(4) of the Code, the words “the Retired Minister’s Fund Committee” be deleted and that the words “the Committee on Retirements and Pensions” be substituted in their place.

W J R ROBINSON

Anent Par 321(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 321(1) of the Code, the words “the Retired Minister’s Fund Committee” be deleted and that the words “the Committee on Retirements and Pensions” be substituted in their place.

W J R ROBINSON

TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

1. The following is an extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Trustees at their Annual General Meeting, held in Church House, Belfast, on 28 March, 1996.

2. "The Report of the Executive Committee and the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 1995 and the Committee's Statement of Accounts dealing with the Fire Insurance Trust, Capital and Income for a like period, all duly audited, were laid before the Trustees and were adopted by them.

3. It was reported that the Executive Committee had reviewed the terms of trust of investors in the Non Participating Trust Funds. Advice was received that many of these trusts could be transferred to the General Investment Fund and the Committee are taking steps to effect transference.

4. Moved by Mr J I Bill, seconded by Mr W C Henderson and unanimously agreed that the Report and the Statements of Account be adopted, signed by three Trustees, inserted in the Appendix to the Minute Book and lodged with the Clerk of Assembly to be laid before the Assembly in June. The Report and the Statement of Accounts were, therefore, signed by Mr. R S Andrew, Mr A L Jamieson and Mr N H McLean and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

5. It was reported that the Executive Committee had also received and examined the audited Accounts for 1995 of the Presbyterian War Memorial Hostel, the Getty Trust, and The Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) and had accepted these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly. On the proposal of Rev S Hutchinson seconded by Mr John Suitters this report was received. The accounts of the Union Theological College were tabled and noted."

6. Retiring members of the Executive Committee were re-appointed for a further three years, these being Rev Dr T H Mullin, Mr Wilson Ervin and Mr David Bell.

7. Mr W Ervin and Mr D Bell were nominated members of the General Assembly, according to the provision of the Code, Par 97(h)(iii).

Trust Funds

8. **Mrs A M Davidson Trust.** The total income available in 1995 for distribution was £5,480.30. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:-

Union Theological College	50%
Church House Redevelopment	50%

9. **Sir Wm V McCleery Estate.** The total income available for distribution is £28,613.06. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:-

Central Ministry Fund	50%
Retired Ministers' Fund	30%
Widows of Ministers' Fund	20%

10. **Estate of Miss Irene Scott:** The total income for 1995 available for distribution amounts to £5,928.41. The Board of Trustees recommend to the General Assembly that this be allocated as follows:-

Thompson House Project	1/3rd
Church House Redevelopment	1/3rd
Guysmere Development	1/3rd

11. **Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown.** The total income for 1995 available for distribution amounts to £3,804.62. The Board of Trustees recommend to the General Assembly that this amount be paid to Church House Redevelopment Appeal.

GENERAL INVESTMENT FUND

12. Declaration of Dividend	15.4.95	15.10.95
Number of shares qualifying	3,647,305	3,664,177
	£	£
Income from investment for distribution and income tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers Fees	348,209	457,000
Dividend per share	9.00p	12.50p

In the year 1995 £20,000 was transferred to the Dividend Equalisation Reserve and the balance on the Dividend Equalisation Reserve at 31 December, 1995 is £132,500.

13. The combined annual Dividend of 21.50p per share is to be compared with 21.00 for 1994; 22.00 for 1993; 25.50 for 1992; 25.00 for 1991; 23.50 for 1990; 21.00 for 1989; 18.50 for 1988; 17.25 for 1987 and 16.50 for 1986.

14. Valuation	15.4.95	15.10.95
	£	£
Valuation of Investments	13,859,663	15,108,527
Cash on Deposit	223,073	302,027
Dividend Equalisation Reserve	133,500	132,500
Property and Ground Rents	1,773,145	1,773,145
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£15,989,381	£17,316,199
	<hr/>	<hr/>
No. of Shares Issued	3,647,305	3,664,177
Share Value	£4.3839	£4.7258

Crescent Church Loan Fund

15. The Committee considered applications from congregations seeking loans from the Crescent Church Loan Fund. Loans totalling £40,000 were made.

Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

16. The joint sub-Committee representative of the Trustees and the Board of Ministry and Pensions continue to monitor the investments, meeting regularly with the Fund Managers. In accordance with statutory requirements the Report of the Trustees and the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) together with the Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 1995 are included in the Volume of Accounts.

Mr James W Russell

17. It was with regret that the Trustees received the resignation of Mr James W Russell, LLB, who had acted as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for twenty-nine years, twenty-eight of them as a very committed member of the Executive Committee.

18. A man of many talents Mr Russell has served the Church with diligence and distinction in countless ways, but the Trustees particularly appreciated his deep interest in their work and his expert legal advice on the complex issues arising.

19. They wish him and Mrs Russell every blessing in the years to come.

20. They welcome Mr A T Ross as Mr Russell's successor on the Executive Committee.

General

21. The terms of appointment of the General Assembly's Solicitor state that "one or more firms of solicitors may be appointed by the Trustees Executive Committee to undertake particular work" (Reports 1993 p126). This is intended to provide for exceptional situations, eg where there could be a conflict of interest. Legal work for the General Assembly, its Commissions, Boards and Committees, should normally be undertaken by the Assembly's Solicitor. A resolution is appended to place the matter beyond doubt.

22. An overture to harmonise Appendix 7 B 2 of the Code with Par 57(1) is also appended.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Secretary

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendation regarding the Mrs A M Davidson Trust be adopted.
3. That the recommendation regarding the Sir Wm V McCleery Trust be adopted.
4. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Irene Scott Trust be adopted.
5. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Ida Mary McGeown Trust be adopted.

6. Legal work for the General Assembly, its Commissions, Committees and Boards, shall normally be undertaken by the General Assembly's Solicitor. However one or more firms of Solicitors may be appointed by the Trustees Executive Committee to undertake particular work.

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Appendix 7.B.2. of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Appendix 7.B.2. of the Code the words "may sell, lease, mortgage, charge or otherwise dispose of" be deleted and that the words "shall sell, lease, mortgage, charge or otherwise dispose of" be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

APPOINTMENT OF NEW TRUSTEE

Nomination of the Synod of Armagh and Down - Mr Walter Cosgrove.

RESOLUTION

That Mr Walter Cosgrove be, and is hereby nominated and appointed by the General Assembly as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in room of Mr James W Russell, resigned, and of the due appointment of Mr Walter Cosgrove as a said Trustee attestation is made by the signature of the Moderator of the General Assembly and of the Clerk of the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Act, 1871.

FORTUNE TRUST BEQUEST

1. Last year's General Assembly approved an application to have the Fortune Mission Trust vested in the Trustees of the General Assembly (Mins 1995 p54, res 10).

2. A meeting of the Fortune Mission Trustees took place on 19 January to complete the necessary formalities.

3. The General Assembly's Solicitor has now been instructed to proceed with the application to the High Court.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Secretary

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

STRATEGY FOR MISSION COMMITTEE

Conveners: Rev W A KENNEDY
Rev D J McKELVEY

1. We have no mission of our own. Our *mission* arises out of Christ's *commission*. We might do well to remind ourselves of the 1992 Mission Statement received by the General Assembly:

The PCI as a Reformed Church within the wider body of Christ is grounded in the Scriptures and exists to love and honour God through faith in His Son and by the power of the Holy Spirit, and to enable her membership to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

2. Mission includes everything Christ sends His people into the world to do. It therefore includes the work of evangelism *and* the work of social witness. We are both to preach the gospel and so let our light shine "that men may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." To this end we have adopted a definition of mission as follows "*In Mission the Church proclaims Christ to the world, which is evangelism, and serves humankind in His name, which is social action. Mission embraces both witness and service.*"

3. As we seek a strategy for our participation in the fullness of Christ's mission to Ireland the only approach which we dare take is to listen and be sensitive to the ways in which He pushes us and pulls us by the Holy Spirit, listening both to the Word and to today's world.

4. When our life, witness and worship are not making a notably successful impact on the people to whom we are called to be missionaries it is time to ask ourselves questions about whether we have been listening carefully to what God has been trying to say to us.

5. A new strategy for mission will not come out of mere fears of decline and the "loss of clout" which the PCI might experience if numerical losses continue. It will only come out of prayer and faithful submission of all we are and of all we do to either confirm action or redirection by God's Word and His Holy Spirit.

6. The Report which the Strategy for Mission Committee presented to the June 1994 Assembly was generally well received. It outlined some of the changes in society which have created a cultural revolution within our base population - a revolution which is sufficiently great to present a traditional Reformation Church with what is no less than a cross cultural missionary problem to reach its own people!

7. The 1994 Report was not, however, without hope. It drew attention to the opportunities and the positive side of the hunger and openness of today's people in this island.

8. The key concept in the 1994 Report was a call for a new mindset within every part of the PCI. Every congregation and Presbytery set in a local community must begin to see itself as placed there in the providence of God as

a missionary agency to the people of that community. Congregations and Presbyteries are made up of people who must catch the vision of mission rather than maintenance and be empowered for new ministries and new roles.

9. The tentative proposals which the Committee brought to the 1994 Assembly and which were adopted as a working basis by that Assembly have continued to be our guidelines during the intervening two years as working groups have attempted to examine the various areas addressed. We remain convinced that if God is to give the PCI a new vision and a new effectiveness, the areas in which we sought progress and change in 1994 are still crucial. They form an interwoven whole from which no thread can be pulled out without in some sense unravelling the whole.

10. The various proposals in this year's report aim to create conditions and structures which support and sustain the change to this new mindset within the people and institutions of the PCI.

11. *Ministers and elders*, as the leaders of the Church, are crucial to any new direction. However, in an age when many are feeling highly stressed already, care must be taken to equip and resource them for the challenge of leading their people into new avenues of mission. An increase of well targeted and professionally competent in-service training is necessary as are opportunities for personal spiritual renewal.

12. *Congregations* need help and encouragement in spiritual growth and in vision building and prayerful strategic planning for mission in their communities.

13. *Presbyteries* must become exciting centres of inspiration and resourcing for the congregations to whose mission they give oversight.

14. *The General Assembly's resources for training* must be co-ordinated and geared to the urgency of mission in such a way that practical skills in ministry and mission are given as great priority as traditional academic theological studies, not only with students for "the ministry" but with all our members who are engaged in *any* ministry ...

15. *Models for mission* must be put in place which are appropriate for Biblically informed outreach to today's society. These will stand alongside present structures which are still effective. We must both encourage what is working and pursue ways to reach those who are untouched by present methods. Such models may simply spell out what is possible at present and "new" approaches will often be rediscoveries of former Presbyterian practice. They will certainly involve an increasing working out of the priesthood of all believers.

16. *Agencies and Boards* of the Church need a re-grouping to provide the creative focus and stimulation for a new mind set within the Church. The task of a "New Mission Agency" and supervisory Board would be to redirect our resources to "mission rather than maintenance". Without such an agency and Board we fear that the impetus will run into the sand.

The Work of the Committee in 1995-1996

17. During the past year the Committee has continued its work in the six sub-committees reported to the Assembly last year, namely:

Innovation
 New Mission Agency
 In-Service Training and Central Training Resources
 Presbyteries
 Congregations
 Mindset

18. The first five of these have worked hard at processing the 1994 resolutions to enable each area of the work to contribute to a practicable and effective overall strategy for the more effective engagement of our Church in mission. Much time has been given to this work. The full Committee are greatly indebted to the Conveners and members of these sub-committees. What follows in this Report is largely a digest of their work.

19. The early part of 1996 has been consumed by the work of coalescing the separate sub-committee reports into a coherent whole so that we lay the groundwork for a strategy for the whole Church. The onus of this has fallen on the Joint Conveners who must bear responsibility for any faults in the final product.

20. In all our year's work we have been conscious of our need for, and sense of, God's guidance in all that we have done. All our meetings formal and informal have been grounded in prayer. If anything that follows is of God, it is His doing and we would wish to give Him the glory.

Mindset Sub-Committee

21. The main thrust of firing the Church for mission has been the responsibility of the Mindset Committee. They have been both thorough and imaginative in their work of seeking to prepare the wider membership of the Church for the new "mindset for mission" and in stimulating prayer.

22. All 21 Presbyteries have been visited, a set of Bible Studies on mission and the key doctrines of faith in Christ have been prepared and at eight countrywide 'Motivation for Mission' Rallies a specially produced Video and newly written Drama combined with Praise and preaching to inspire the large numbers who attended.

23. The co-ordination of all these was no mean managerial feat and the mindset sub-committee are to be commended for the way in which they have kept Mission before us all. As this is written they are preparing a **Day of Prayer** on April 28 as we call out to God to breathe renewal on His Church.

Mission Assembly Committee

24. Although they now have a separate existence we are pleased that the Mission Assembly Committee are progressing steadily with plans for August 1997 which we believe will be a further step forward in motivating us all for Mission.

Evangelism Committee

25. We have been pleased to meet on two occasions with the Evangelism Committee or its representatives. They are planning a Churchwide evangelism thrust in 1997-1999 and have kept us au fait with their planning so that there

may be no conflict between our programmes. We believe that their imaginative ideas can be a welcome focus for the evangelism side of the mission strategy which each local congregation is to be asked to adopt. We look forward to continued co-operation with the Mission Assembly Committee to ensure that all our plans dovetail and thus maximise their potential.

Other Churches and Parachurch Agencies in Mission in Ireland

26. The very nature of denominationalism forces each Church to act as though it were THE Church of Christ. However, we must remember the unity of Christ's body and be conscious of the dangers of triumphalism and denominational pride in all areas of our life as the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. In no area is this more important than in mission where different denominations can very easily get locked into a competitive race with huge waste of resources (of finance and of personnel) not to mention the scandal to the world and the division of the Kingdom.

27. It is essential to our strategy that there be consultation and co-operation with other Churches in any area where we have a plan to initiate a new work of mission. This applies to the work of the local congregation, the Presbytery, the mission agencies of the central Church and to the General Assembly itself.

28. We therefore believe it essential that in any strategic planning for mission there should be consultation with other Christian bodies so that there can be a sensible division of labour where new work is contemplated, respect for work already begun by others which could be weakened by a rival PCI venture and, where helpful to the cause of mission, a willingness to enter into joint projects.

Towards a Strategy for Mission

29. As we come to present the fruit of our work we are conscious of the enormity of the challenge. It means a major redirection of the life and witness of the PCI. We realise that there are many threads which need to be untangled and we have fully tackled only a few of them: much remains to be done in succeeding years; for the working out of this whole scheme will touch most things that we do as a Church of Christ in Ireland and as congregations and Presbyteries in our local communities.

30. Many threads there may be but it is one ball of string. To impose order on the exposition of the whole enterprise this report is divided into three areas:

- (i) People;
- (ii) Existing PCI structures
- (iii) New channels for mission

Much that is said under each of these headings has implications for and inter relationships with others.

31. To maintain clarity of focus much of the detail is put into Appendices. These themselves may not always be totally consistent, for they represent the work of different sub-committees, but the exposition under each theme represents the final position of the whole Strategy for Mission

Committee. In the end the key things are the resolutions which indicate how we believe the PCI should proceed to implement or further process the various interlocking areas.

PEOPLE

32. Our Lord Jesus Christ continues to pursue His mission on earth through people whom He indwells through the Spirit and empowers for service. Collectively these persons are “the Body of Christ” amongst whom are to be found all the necessary gifts of service to one another and the world.

33. The greatest and most abundant resource of the PCI is its people. Many Churches outside Ireland long for the numbers that we still have attending and worshipping in our congregations. The faithfulness and dedication of Ministers, Elders and members is the strength of our Church.

34. **The first aim of our Strategy is to equip, empower and envision the believing people of the Church at all levels.** In the Church those who have received gifts in leadership have these gifts “to prepare God’s people for works of service”. (Eph. 4:11ff.).

Ministers

35. It is a strategic necessity that we assist and encourage ordained Ministers in their task of building vision and leading congregations into the new mindset and into mission projects. Like every other Christian they too need ministry and stimulation.

36. Resolution E - I of the 1994 report dealt with outline ideas on which such a strategy could be based. We are convinced that this is one of the cornerstones of the whole strategy building project. Therefore, we have sought to outline a programme for a “Ministerial Development Programme”.

The details are given in Appendix A.

Three main components would be included for each minister:

Theological Reflection
Practical Skills Training
Spiritual Development

37. The key elements in realising this are two triennial cycles of In-Service Training and a seventh year in which a Sabbatical would be offered. For the first few years an emphasis on the theology and practice of mission would probably be necessary to consolidate the new mindset in the leadership of the Church.

38. Whilst each Minister would be encouraged to actively seek appropriate opportunities for such training, the necessary investment of resources by the Church is so large that there must be a structure of accountability. This will ensure that all three components of the programme are given equal emphasis over the complete training cycle.

39. The programme given incorporates a Panel of Advisers at Synod level with whom on behalf of the Church the programme of the individual minister would be contracted. This system provides for proper accountability in the use of resources and guards against the use of the scheme to follow personal hobby horses, but does not infringe the essentials of Presbyterian order.

40. The provisions for sabbaticals and “in service training” outlined here should apply to all those employed by the Church in ‘Ministry’. Thus we envisage these arrangements applying to Deaconesses, pastoral or lay assistants, youth workers, Irish Mission Workers, Overseas Missionaries, etc. Where an overseas posting makes yearly in-service provision impossible it could be incorporated into the next furlough as sabbatical.

41. Whilst remaining voluntary in the first instance, the requirement to undertake such development should be written into all new calls and Presbyteries should actively encourage all members to participate.

We commend to the Assembly the adoption of the Ministerial Development Programme set out in Appendix A and the outline of a Sabbatical Programme set out in Appendix B.

This programme could begin in 1997-98 and, if adopted, Synods should begin the work of establishing the necessary structures immediately in consultation with the Training Council which is recommended in the Section on Structures.

Elders and Leaders

42. The training, empowering and equipping of ministers (ie ordained ministers) and full-time staff is only a small part of the story. Crucial to the inculcation of Mission into every aspect of our Church life is the equipping, empowering and envisioning of ruling elders, leaders and indeed the whole people of God.

43. We believe that it is the responsibility of every Kirk Session (and in particular of the teaching elder) to ensure that elders and leaders are properly equipped for their roles and given opportunity to see imaginative models and experience the power of prayer that will increase their vision for their own situation.

44. Appendix C sets out our understanding of the way in which this can be achieved. The resources available are as wide as those offered for ministers and the Presbytery Strategy for Mission Committees.

Church Members

45. The PCI has for many years had, under various names, a Committee for training Church members. With our renewed vision there is obviously an increased need for such focused work. However, we suggest that this Committee or a remodelled successor be transferred to the proposed new Board of Christian Training.

46. Much of the work of training, equipping and empowering is the ongoing routine of the teaching programme of the Church but it needs to be constructed so that it provides the food and answers the questions that people ask and provides the skills that they need.

47. This section of the Report on “People” majors on in-service training. The role of people in the whole strategy is much wider and later sections of the Report will look at:

- (a) those innovative forms of “ministry” where full or part-time members can use their gifts in the mission of the Church;

- (b) methods of mobilising the entire membership of PCI and challenging them with the full implications of what it means to be a “member” of the Church.

EXISTING PCI STRUCTURES AND MISSION

48. The history of Presbyterianism in Ireland began in mission as the Church in Scotland sent ministers to disciple the rather motley crew of settlers who made their exit from Scotland and to a lesser extent from England.

49. The structures which the PCI has inherited or built up over the past 150 years were in themselves a faithful response to fulfilling her mission. Many still function with varying degrees of efficiency but others show signs of their age. We honour our forebears more fully by pursuing the vision they followed and the ends they sought than by idolising the structures they built for that purpose.

50. We need have no fear of those structures which we believe are essential to a Biblical Church - they can adapt to carry the weight of any age. More ad hoc structures must be constantly examined.

A new mindset for mission must have implications for the ordering of our private world as members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and for Ireland!

A New Structure of Boards

51. The Committee is conscious that for a major change of direction to be accomplished within the PCI not only is a new agency of mission required but a new Board structure also.

52. This proposal ties in very closely with that for a New Mission Agency and the detailed cast for much of it is made in the report of the New Mission Agency Sub-Committee (Appendix G). That report is concerned only with the present Home Board and Board of Evangelism and Christian Training. The wider concerns of the whole Strategy for Mission include the territory of the Board of Studies as well and so the end product is different from that envisaged by the NMA Sub-Committee.

53. What we would propose is to take the three Boards which at present deal with the totality of concerns addressed by the Strategy for Mission Committee, replace them with two new Boards and send some of their Committees to other Boards.

We would thus create two strong Boards dealing with (i) our Mission in Ireland, and (ii) our training of members of the PCI for ministry and mission. The Boards which would come together to create them are: the Home Board, the Evangelism and Christian Training Board and the Board of Studies. The new Boards might be called: “The Board of Mission in Ireland” and “The Board of Christian Training”. A table explains better what we suggest. Committees printed in italics are present Committees whose function is fulfilled by a new Committee.

*New and Revised Boards and Committees***Board of Mission in Ireland**

Mission Ireland Committee (with sub-committees)

[Irish Mission]

[Home Mission]

[Church Extension]

Strategy for Mission Committee (Presbyteries and think tank)

Property and Resources Committee

Assignment Committee

Evangelism Committee (resourcing congregations)

Board of Christian Training

Committee on Studies

UTC Management Committee

Central Training Unit Committee (Magee Fund Scheme)

Students' Bursary Committee

Reception of Ministers Committee

Divine Healing Committee

Committee on Christian Training (training materials)

Board of Social Witness

Marriage and the Family Committee

General/Inter-Church Relations Board

Committee on National and International Problems

54. **The detail of these proposals is still to be worked out.** The exact number and responsibilities of the sub-committees, the complex legal and administrative problems of coalescing the present work and the necessity of protecting those presently employed and negotiating new working arrangements are all still ahead. However, we believe there is so much to be gained by concentrating our work, bringing together all agencies in the same field that we can take a decision in principle now.

PRESBYTERIES

55. "We believe that the heart of our strategy is the Presbytery". (1994 Res 3A).

When Presbytery becomes a dynamic, Spirit-led, worshipping community fired for mission to its area, encouraging congregations and equipping them for service, then the Church *will* be geared to a mindset for mission.

Such a Presbytery will be proactive, planning its mission activity and finding the personnel and the finance and other resources required.

56. We believe therefore that the Presbytery must be freed from clogged agendas, given new structures for relating to and encouraging its congregations and be revitalised in the worship, fellowship and intellectual vigour of its life.

We therefore submit in Appendices D1 and D2 two sets of guidelines which, if adopted by a Presbytery keen to renew its life, may be of assistance.

57. Furthermore, following the working principles approved in June 1994 (Resolutions 3A and 3C) which asked that “each Presbytery should have a strategy for mission within its own bounds” and that “a co-ordinator of Strategy for Mission should be appointed by every Presbytery together with a small committee to promote mission within the Presbytery’s bounds and whose responsibilities would include visiting each congregation on a five year cycle to review its local plan for mission”, we submit Appendix D3 which gives a suggested remit for a Presbytery Strategy for Mission Committee.

Presbytery Visitation

58. The visitation process, which is sometimes seen as routine and not dealing with the real issues in a congregation’s mission, is, we believe, central to the task of inculcating a mission mindset amongst congregations.

59. We believe that the statistical, legal and administrative work of visitation should be separated from the spiritual assessment of a congregation’s life and mission. The former might be regarded as a congregational “audit” and should be done as a five year more in-depth survey of the things the yearly statistical return sheets touch on. It could be done by a small task force of 3-4 people on behalf of the Presbytery, presenting a statistical analysis of the congregation and identifying trends, positive and negative, within it.

60. This should precede by six months the spiritual and mission visitation conducted by the Presbytery. It would use the statistical analysis provided by the audit as a base for identifying the needs of the area, the resources of the congregation and the mission strategy required.

61. In such a visitation there would be a sense of the Presbytery sitting alongside the congregation rather than “inspecting” it. The purpose would be to envision and enable the congregation to set objectives, identify attainable goals and begin the process of achieving them. Subsequent visits would review the objectives and goals set.

We favour some such approach - but are conscious that the Assembly has set up an Ad Hoc Committee in response to the Memorial of the Dromore Presbytery on which our Committee is represented. Therefore we make no proposals here.

Accountability of Presbytery.

62. We do believe that if Presbyteries themselves are to have Mission Strategy Plans then the Presbytery itself should be accountable for the achievement of goals set - perhaps to the new Board of Mission in Ireland or some other body representing the General Assembly.

Central Training Unit

63. Implicit for the recommendations for In Service Training is the need to maximise the resources of the Church and all other providing agencies (Scripture Union, Marc Europe, Belfast Bible College, Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS), etc) so that those operating the Synodical Panels of Advisers and Presbytery Training Committees will have access to information and be able easily to make the system work.

64. Resolution 3S of the 1994 Report asked us to explore the possibility of co-ordinating central provision. *“That the General Assembly wish to explore how the central training resources of the PCI in Union Theological College, Magee House, the Evangelism Board, etc might be unified and co-ordinated to help service the kinds of patterns of mission suggested by the present resolutions”*. We have begun the process and our working paper is enclosed as Appendix E.

65. We recognise that there are several distinct units at present doing slightly different jobs (ie Magee CTC, Christian Training Committee, Union Theological College and training arms of other Boards, etc). We remain convinced that though there are obvious difficulties of personnel, legal documents and history to be overcome the end result is worth striving for. Our main recommendation is, therefore, that a Training Council be set up with a remit:

- (i) to oversee the introduction of the Training Schemes set out in the earlier part of this Report;
- (ii) to assist Presbyteries and Synods in establishing Panels of Advisers and Training Committees respectively;
- (iii) to work towards creating a Central Training Unit for the Church.

Congregations

66. The basic unit of the Church is the congregation and its people. The first and sometimes only commitment of individual members of the PCI is to the local congregation. **It is, therefore, basic to our strategy that congregations are released into a mindset for mission.**

67. The 1994 Assembly accepted as a working principle that: *“since every congregation is unique it should work out its own strategy for mission to the particular community in which it is situated in consultation with the Presbytery and should present this strategy to the Presbytery and account to the Presbytery for its fulfilment”*.

Congregational Mission Strategy

68. It seems to us that this principle is self-evidently necessary and we propose that **legislation should require congregations to form a mission strategy for their parish area**. This local strategy could involve some or all of the following or other suitable projects:

- visitation programmes for the parish area;
- drop in centres;
- pastoral care groups for young mothers, elderly people, the unemployed;
- Church planting inside the parish;
- involvement in evangelism/children’s work in local estates;
- friendship groups, luncheon clubs, after school clubs;
- involvement with neighbouring congregations in a mission priority area;
- resident teams or “Church houses”;

financing and sending young people or recently retired members for outreach elsewhere.

The bottom line of writing a mission strategy is that it should be **imaginative, relevant** to a world which does not have a Christian world view and **achievable**. Better to have modest goals that succeed than grandiose plans which fail.

Kirk Sessions

69. **Leadership structures** need to encourage imaginative mission and to inspire by example and involvement. In our 1994 Report we made suggestions about the composition of Kirk Sessions. The Doctrine Committee has not yet delivered on this remit.

We believe that we are not yet in a position to put forward definitive proposals on the role of Kirk Session.

Membership

70. Probably nothing is more crucial to this whole strategy than releasing members of the PCI into a new understanding of what it means to be committed to Jesus Christ as communicant members of the Church. Nothing stifles our Church's mission more than the low level of commitment expected by our people in taking up membership.

71. Ministers often find that teaching high standards of responsibility in membership at a communicants class is undermined because the parents or peers of the class members are communicants already and patently not giving that commitment.

72. Presbyterians practice an open Table and an open door policy. We are not, nor would we wish to become, a closed fellowship or a shuttered sect but indifferent commitment was consistently identified as the single most crippling factor in the local Church when we surveyed the state of the Church in the first year of our remit.

73. At services of admission to membership new communicants along with questions on faith, commit themselves to others expressing their intentions regarding regular attendance at worship, regular personal devotions, proportionate giving of time, talents and money to God's work in the local Church and to consistent discipleship and witness in the world.

74. We believe it is strategically necessary that our people be challenged on the standards they have committed themselves to. It is clear that those Churches, both within and without the PCI, which are experiencing a dynamic life and witness have a higher than average level of expectation from their members and are rewarded with a similarly high degree of self-sacrifice and engagement from them.

75. It will not be an easy task to change fundamental perceptions of what it means to be a "member" of the PCI or of the implications of "full membership". We believe that it would be useful if this were further researched. One of our sub-committees has looked briefly at the categories used in other Presbyterian Churches such as "adherents" and "members". No particular system commends itself - and in the event it will be a work of God which will

reawaken love for the Saviour and the world He came to save and which alone will change attitudes.

76. However, we wish to see if there is a way of stating what “membership” implies that would command wide acceptance and challenge the membership of the Church. **In partnership with all the initiatives suggested as part of our PCI strategy for mission in Ireland we believe there needs to be a Church-wide initiative or mission to our members to set higher standards of discipleship.** The planning and steering of such an initiative might be remitted to the Committee on the Training of Church Members or their successors.

Finance

77. Many who are in the greatest sympathy with this report may be persuaded to “pigeon hole” it because they believe it cannot be financed either locally or centrally. We are totally aware of the financial implications of all that we have suggested and most of which has received a tentative approval from the Assembly in 1994 as necessary.

78. From the outset of our work we were aware that there are presently no spare monies sitting waiting to be used. CMF, United Appeal, etc are fully stretched. Therefore, central to our understanding of this strategy is the need to release new money.

The new money needed can and must be raised from the givings of our members who at present have scarcely begun to live out the implications of discipleship, life style and obedience to Christ in the area of giving. The Committee believe that we ought to challenge our people to give in a biblical and sacrificial way.

79. For those who take discipleship of Christ seriously tithing must surely be seen as a minimum standard (accepting that we are not under law but under grace). Jesus said, “When you tithe, do not do as the Pharisees ...” He also said, “Your righteousness should exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees”.

Many of our leaders and members already practice tithing. But can the PCI adopt such a policy, teach such a policy and have such a vital ministry that our membership much more generally will follow it because they have ownership in the work we do? Can those who share leadership in our Church live personally with such a standard?

80. Tithing is widespread among Churches where growth is taking place. Those Churches throughout the world which teach or require tithing have both personnel and finance for a great variety of ministries and are seeing God’s blessing on their ministries.

We submit our recommendation to test the mind of the Assembly.

NEW CHANNELS FOR MISSION

New Wine in New Skins!

81. The gravity of the challenges that face Christian mission, through a sea change in society and culture, demand that, alongside those present

structures which are permanently essential to a Biblical Church, we need the Holy Spirit to lead us into a discovery of new attitudes and new channels which are effective vehicles of witness to Christ.

82. These “new wine skins” will be true both to Scripture and to the culture of today (in so far as it is neutral and not in need of essential redemption). Often these “new” things will prove to be rediscoveries of old patterns and approaches formerly used in Irish Presbyterianism’s struggle to disciple its people and reach out to others. Nor is this to say that we must abandon those other aspects of our life, witness and worship which remain effective for mission in various situations.

83. The Strategy for Mission Committee believe that if we are significantly to change the direction of the PCI we need a genuine rewiring of the connections between the various components of our mission work in Ireland. Such a rewiring will set up a new dynamic, make us rethink current approaches and create a greater wholeness in our work.

84. That there has been in recent years a growing and fruitful closeness between the Irish Mission and the outreach work of the Home Mission is indicative that God is leading us in this direction. We believe the time is ripe to unite them in a single ministry with no connotations of a division between “officers and men” and with a clear focus on Church planting and Church growth. In addition a new agency would greatly increase the opportunities for more of our Christian people to engage in mission on a full-time, part-time, short term or non stipendiary basis within a ministry recognised and supported by the structures of the Church.

New Mission Agency

85. We believe the proposal for a New Mission Agency which essentially ties together the work of the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training with the work of the Home Board is basic to carrying forward this whole far reaching scheme of a Church with a new mindset for mission.

It is not that we want to reduce the focus of our Church on Evangelism and Christian training. On the contrary, we believe that the integrating of these into a new synthesis with evangelism and mobilisation of the Body of Christ should be at the heart of our practice of home mission.

86. The Home Mission and the Irish Mission have long and proud histories of work throughout Ireland for well over a century. We are very conscious of the positive contribution they have made in a wide variety of ways - the Irish Mission through its colporteurs (now workers) in carrying the scriptures particularly into the South and West of Ireland - the Home Mission through caring for Presbyterians who felt isolated and often forgotten by a Church based largely in the North.

87. Both these Agencies have come through a period where their different styles and emphases made occasional difficulties into a period where, in a totally changed Ireland, they have entered into an era of co-operation and expansion that shows clearly ways in which sensitive mission can be done.

88. We believe that a New Mission Agency will increase and build on their work, making it more effective and integrating the whole thrust of mission in Ireland. Such a Ministry has the potential of strengthening existing

evangelical fellowships, seeking to guide people who have come to a reformed conception of faith and church into “Church plants” and to undertake sensitive evangelism.

Whatever name the “New Mission Agency” might bear it would be in continuity with the Irish Mission and would bear a name that represented that continuity.

The New Board and the Social Witness Board

89. Mission includes both what we call “evangelism” and what we call “social witness” in a complex interaction with one another. Logically and in reality the work of the present Social Witness Board is part of the seamless robe of our mission to Ireland and should, in theory, be included in the work of a new “Board for the Mission of the PCI in Ireland”.

90. The SFM Committee has been accused, not without justification, of using the word “Mission” in John Stott’s definition as “All that God sends the Church into the world to do”, and then proceeding to work with a concept of mission that leaned heavily towards the evangelism/Church planting end of the spectrum.

91. The reality is that under such a definition of Mission not only the work of the Social Witness Board but also the following could be included:-

Church and Government Committee (relating to political structures in Ireland)

Peace and Peacemaking Committee

Panel on the Environment (these relating to the culture and ethos in which Mission is done)

Inter-Church Relations Board (since every aspect of the work of Mission has inter-church implications and must be done with sensitivity to and in co-operation with the existing work of other denominations and fellowships in Ireland.)

All of these and maybe some others could be justifiably included in a New Board of Mission for Ireland. Their omission we justify on practical grounds since such a colossus would include most of the work of the Assembly. In the narrower and perhaps more closely related issue of the Social Witness Board, we believe it is not administratively feasible to incorporate their work into a united structure without building a huge and unmanageable empire. Co-operation between these Boards, however, is essential and should be included in the structures created.

92. Secondly, we believe that the main way in which a Church such as the PCI can put social witness on the ground is through the multiplication of on-the-ground workers and teams and the creation under God of worshipping fellowships which have power to influence their community. We freely acknowledge, however, that the initial work of agents of mission under the new Board/Agency may, indeed should, have a content of social witness.

But we believe that the distinctive NT pattern of mission is through people sent to minister in Christ’s name and in the power of the Holy Spirit with the hope of calling into being a new gathered Church or ecclesia.

93. Whilst maintaining an organisational separation between the new Board and Agency it is essential that the Social Witness Board is involved in every

stage of its work and that there is complete cross-fertilisation between the two in full partnership.

A Board for Mission in Ireland and a Board for Training

94. The New Mission Agency Sub-committee has argued for a union of the Home Board with the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training. The full Strategy for Mission Committee wishes to take this rationalisation further and propose that the Board of Studies also be included in this redistribution of responsibilities to take into account the development of In Service Training and create two Boards with clearly defined functions: one for mission in Ireland and the other for training for mission and ministry in Ireland (and overseas).

The full Report of the Sub-Committee on the New Mission Agency with its proposals and arguments are presented in Appendix [F].

Church Planting

95. The history of Presbyterian mission in Ireland is a history of Church planting from the 1640's until the Church Extension movement of this century. In any society or period the conservation of the fruits of mission in conversion to Christ and the channelling of that fruit into holistic further mission demand the multiplication of new worshipping and nurturing fellowships.

96. It was so in the great eighteenth century evangelical awakening on both Calvinist and Armenian wings, and it is true today. The present dynamic growth in the evangelical/charismatic section of the Church of England which is resulting in a genuine impact being made on largely unevangelised groups of people is closely linked to the idea of the "Church plant". Not everyone likes the term "Church plant(ing)" but it has stuck as the technical description for the deliberate seeding of new worshipping fellowships in areas of need.

97. It is frequently said that we in the PCI have the ground in the NE of Ireland sufficiently well covered with congregations (too many in some places) that we do not need more. This is to misunderstand: [1] the nature of how modern society functions; [2] the fragmentation of society into many groupings and [3] the cultural chasm between many of today's people and the traditional congregation.

98. These issues were addressed in the report of 1994 and do not need to be rehearsed here. In response to the 1994 Assembly's encouragement we have attempted to produce some thinking on how a movement for Church planting might function within the PCI's mission: Appendix [G]

99. We have attempted in this to maintain a balance between what is already possible to congregations within their own bounds and the need to have order through Presbytery's oversight and the need for a new mission agency to have possibilities of taking initiative.

What we presented in Appendix [G] is preliminary but indicates the general direction in which the Committee feels the Church should go. Some of it is really only making explicit what is already possible under the Code.

Mission Priority Areas

100. In June 1994 the Assembly expressed its desire in principle to make possible the declaration of "Mission Priority Areas". These would be analogous to governmental "Urban Priority Areas" where special needs are addressed by introducing special incentives and relaxing normal norms of taxation, etc.

101. Some areas, whether geographically or socially defined, present needs for evangelism/ social witness which are not easily met by established congregations and where parish bounds are not helpful. It may be useful for a group of congregations to be able to work together under such a scheme, or for a Presbytery concerned about a needy area to be able to set up an area which operates under mission conditions rather than the structures of established congregations.

In Appendix [H] we present an attempt to define the conditions under which a Mission Priority Area might operate.

Postlude

101. Our task is not finished - even to continue the work presented this year will require much time. But there are issues which flow from the matters discussed in this Report or which may flow from the decisions of the Assembly.

102. Among the issues we have not touched are:

- (i) Alternative models of ministry.
- (ii) Status of volunteers, non-stipendiary ministers, and other short or long term commitments to ministry, lay or ordained.
- (iii) Discussion with Union Commission about any changes needed to their guidelines.

103. Finally, we do not believe that we have either all the answers or necessarily the right ones. Nor, as we have already stated, do we believe that acceptance of any or all of our recommendations or alternatives will revitalise the Church. That work is God's and our first and most important resolution is a call to Prayer and, maybe, fasting by the whole Church as we ask the Father, whose delight is to hear His children, to send His Spirit to renew His Church.

To God alone be the glory!

APPENDIX A

A MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Purpose: To help individual ministers in the development of skills required to give leadership in the ongoing missionary task of the Church.

Procedures: The Ministerial Development Programme would -

- (a) apply in the first instance on a voluntary basis to all ministers in congregational service or in the employment of Boards or other agencies of the Church. The right to such development and the responsibility to undertake it should be written into all new calls.
- (b) operate on a triennial cycle
- (c) encourage individuals to reflect on and evaluate their own ministry in the context of the congregation/Board/agency, Presbytery and Synod

with which they are associated and consider measures to secure development as necessary.

- (d) be regarded as a joint vocational task, shared between the minister and a Ministerial Development Adviser.

Process: The process will include the following components -

- (a) self-evaluation as a first step, using a common format to provide information which clarifies the individual's current vocational role and which will help to focus the development interview
- (b) preparation by the Adviser on the basis of the information provided by the individual minister
- (c) the Development interview, at which the minister will have the opportunity to identify positive achievements and to explore areas of development need; the interview will focus on the present and future needs of the minister, not on personal characteristics
- (d) an agreed set of outcomes in written form including realistic objectives for the development cycle
- (e) an agreed procedure to enable the outcomes to be processed for any necessary action.

Implementation:

- (a) The Clerk of Synod or a Convener appointed by the Synod will have responsibility for ensuring that an effective Ministerial Development Programme is implemented according to the principles outlined
- (b) A Panel of Advisers should be appointed by the Synod
- (c) The individual Adviser acts as representative of the Panel and policy decisions are those of the Panel (subject of course to the policy and scrutiny of the Synod)
- (d) Recognising the importance of trust and mutual confidence between the Adviser and the individual minister, opportunity must be given either for ministers to select an Adviser from the Panel or to request that an Adviser be appointed other than the one initially designated
- (e) The Development Programme will involve a system of in-service provision which will include, subject to the availability of resources - opportunities for leave; financial assistance for approved courses or programmes; financial assistance to attend conferences etc.
- (f) The Programme should be implemented progressively with one third of the ministers in a Synod being involved in each year.
- (g) The Programme shall be funded by compulsory Synodical contributions from congregations, Board or Agencies.
- (h) Ministerial Development priorities and the administration of the funds shall be the responsibility of a Synodical Ministerial Development Commission composed of the Moderator and Clerk, the Development Advisers and Elders appointed by the Synod.
- (i) The objective will be that in the second triennial cycle all ministers will be undertaking 2 weeks In-Service Training per year.

Training for Development

The Synod accepts that training is essential to the success of the Ministerial Development Programme and accordingly will arrange appropriate training and resources for Advisers.

Monitoring

The introduction and implementation of the Ministerial Development Programme will be monitored by the General Assembly's Training Council and procedures will be periodically evaluated.

These provisions should apply equally to all full-time staff whose work is 'ministry'. For instance, the programme should apply equally to pastoral or lay assistants, deaconesses, youth workers, Irish Mission workers, missionaries etc. Those working overseas in places where relevant in service courses are not readily available should be permitted to take the time as sabbatical incorporated into their furlough arrangements.

APPENDIX B

SABBATICALS

1. Longer periods of leave or sabbaticals are we believe also an essential plank in the Ministerial Development Programme. We believe that the Assembly should make provision for sabbaticals and that, as would seem Biblically appropriate, they should come every 7th year. The programme would therefore consist of 2 triennial in-service cycles followed by a year in which a sabbatical is taken. The sabbatical should be of 2/3 months duration and a minister may opt to include it immediately before or after his/her month's holiday provided at least half of that holiday is being used as part of the sabbatical. During a sabbatical the minister may request a fellow Presbyter to take charge of the congregation and those pastoral emergencies for which the elders and members of the congregation cannot provide adequate cover. Supplies may be met within the personnel of the congregation and the Presbytery.

2. A sabbatical should be agreed as an integral part of the Ministerial Development Programme and should include elements of all 3 strands - theological reflection, skills development and spiritual growth.

3. Sabbaticals should be introduced on a voluntary basis and offered as soon as practical to those, 7, 14, 21, 28 and 35 years ordained. Whilst we recognise that this places a long wait on those 8, 15, 22 and 29 years ordained and excludes those entirely in the last 5 years of ministry, we would encourage those congregations whose ministers will have to wait longest or may miss out to make some form of sabbatical available to their minister.

4. We propose that a committee be set up immediately to forward these proposals whilst the larger issues of the co-ordination of central training resources is tackled.

APPENDIX C

**THE ROLE OF THE MINISTER, PRESBYTERY AND
CONGREGATION IN EQUIPPING AND ENABLING ELDERS AND
OTHER LEADERS**

Purpose

1. There are two closely related ends in view. The first is the development of a vision for mission in the minds of elders and leaders. Second is the provision of the means whereby this vision may be translated into concrete action. Obviously a vision for mission cannot be separated from a vision for the rest of the life of the congregation, therefore, the provisions outlined below may well form the core of a wide perspective on congregational life or they may already exist within a congregation and the need will be simply to add in a mission emphasis.

2. A vision for mission is primarily sharing in the vision of God for His world. This is clearly stated in the New Testament as the integration of all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Col 1:20). In the normal course of events God has chosen to implement this plan by working in and through His people. Such an understanding of mission leads us to suggest that it is incumbent on all Christians to find the role that God has for them in the implementation of His plan. Putting it the other way round: how does God normally work in any situation? Through those of His people who are part of that situation or whom He calls to be part of that situation.

3. Procedures. Six elements are involved in enabling elders and other leaders to catch and implement this vision:

- (a) a clear understanding of mission as part of the fabric of the Christian faith;
- (b) a clear understanding of some of the issues which God is calling His people to address;
- (c) a clear understanding of the call to all Christians to be active in mission;
- (d) a clear understanding of the wide variety of ways in which individuals and groups within the Church can be involved in mission;
- (e) a clear understanding of all that God makes available to His people in order to enable them for mission;
- (f) a taste of excitement from being involved in mission.

4. The last of these elements forms the bridge between catching and implementing the vision. The first five elements may be understood as feeding "information" into the recipient but the sixth is part of the feedback process in which experience of mission given form, life and power to raw "information".

5. The following proposals are offered on the grounds that, following the laying down of some basic principles, involvement in mission is the best method of learning about mission.

6. Process. The process will include the following elements:

Congregational provisions:

- (a) it is taken for granted that unless the minister in a congregation has an adequate understanding of and passion for mission then all else is

virtually doomed. The regular preaching and teaching of the minister should clearly express this emphasis;

- (b) regular (annual?) Kirk Session conferences to consider the mission of the congregation and its effectiveness. These conferences should include prayer and worship (as an essential element in catching the vision of God for His world); review and assessment; planning and teaching;
- (c) regular (annual?) conferences for the leaders of the various groups within the congregation, which should include prayer and worship (as an essential element in catching the vision of God for His world); review and assessment; planning and teaching;
- (d) the minister, or where appropriate a Session Training Committee, should see that all ministry within the congregation is adequately resourced. Training courses need not necessarily be formal courses but care should be taken that those who feed are fed and the resources of the central church and para-church bodies in providing such should be utilised;
- (e) the primary role of the teaching elder is to teach. This teaching involves not only the Sunday Services but the training, maturing and equipping of the people who will teach, administer, pastor, evangelise and lead the people of God and the community.

Presbytery Provisions:

- (a) The work of the Presbytery Christian Training Agent should be thoroughly reconsidered. The person in this role should become the Convener of a Presbytery Committee for Training with a brief covering such things as:
 - providing congregations with resources for mission;
 - organising seminars, conferences, workshops, etc at Presbytery level;
 - being available to provide input for congregations as they organise their mission activities;
 - being available to provide for congregations as they organise their mission awareness events.
- (b) The work of the Training Agent and the "Strategy for Mission Agent" envisaged elsewhere should be parallel and complementary. Both should be members of the Presbytery's Strategy for Mission Committee.

Central Provisions:

- (a) Some central provision should be made to project a holistic understanding of mission. This would include the work of Overseas Mission, Home Mission, World Development, Evangelism, Irish Mission, Social Witness, various chaplaincies and others. Such provision might be in the form of a Mission Awareness and Co-ordination Committee or the publication of a periodical or a regular section within other periodicals of the Church.
- (b) The new Central Training Council/Unit will naturally be the central resource which feeds information on appropriate material to the

Presbytery Training Committee and congregations and when necessary provision of such material.

APPENDIX D1

GUIDELINES ON STRUCTURING PRESBYTERY BUSINESS ETC

1. Presbytery should hold stated business meetings in the months of February, May, September and December.

2. Presbytery should form a small but representative Commission to process routine and non-controversial business between stated business meetings and to process routine business for the main business meetings. Membership of the Commission might be for two years.

3. Presbytery should meet on at least two other occasions for the purpose of reflection, praise and prayer. If thought appropriate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may also be observed. At all meetings of Presbytery the opportunities for worship should be maximised, and where possible include praise and a period of corporate prayer.

4. Presbytery should organise at least one Residential Conference per year for ministerial members in active service for the purposes of fellowship and inspiration. The theme might be suggested by the Moderator, Clerk and Strategy for Mission Convener.

5. Presbytery should provide an Elders' Fellowship within its bounds;
- (a) encouraging a programme to meet spiritual, training and social needs;
 - (b) inviting Office-bearers to Presbytery on a "sit and deliberate basis";
 - (c) receive an annual report on the work of the Fellowship at one of the "reflective" meetings.

6. Presbytery should accept the commitment of organising, and supporting, events to facilitate fellowship within the Presbytery: in the first instance for members of Presbytery and then for other identifiable groups, eg Sunday School teachers.

7. Where a Presbytery, for reasons of geographical size or number of congregations, experiences difficulties in encouraging effective and meaningful fellowship, it may consider forming "sub-Presbytery groups" for congregational support.

APPENDIX D2

GUIDELINES ON PERSONNEL IN PRESBYTERY

1. All Presbytery appointments should be on a term basis of not more than 7 years. The Presbytery Clerk may, at the request of the Presbytery, serve for a further period of up to five years.

2. Representative Elders should be subject to the same nine year rule as membership of Assembly Committees.

3. In the formation of working groups and committees Presbytery should appoint people with relevant skills or interests even though they may not be representative elders.

4. Presbytery should identify its secretarial requirements, eg photocopying, preparing post, etc and “buy in” the appropriate services thereby freeing the Clerk.

5. Presbytery should be careful not to overburden the Moderator and Clerk by expecting attendance at meetings at which others could preside and take minutes.

6. Presbytery should encourage the pooling of resources by congregations within its bounds, especially expensive technical equipment. This is good stewardship and would enable the purchase of a wide range of equipment.

APPENDIX D3

PRESBYTERY STRATEGY FOR MISSION COMMITTEES

Each Presbytery should appoint a Strategy for Mission Committee with the following remit -

- (a) To assist the Presbytery to draw up and implement a mission Strategy for the area within its bounds.
- (b) To assist the congregations within the Presbytery, both informally and through the visitation procedure, to draw up a strategy for their parish that reflects the Presbytery’s strategy and the congregation’s particular priorities.
- (c) To advise the Presbytery on the designation of Mission Priority Areas and to oversee the creation of initiatives to meet the needs of these.
- (d) To serve as the link between Presbytery and the New Mission Agency.
- (e) To liaise with the Presbytery Training Committee so that appropriate resources and training are made available to make mission strategies effective at congregational and Presbytery levels.
- (f) There should be close liaison with those representing the Overseas Board in Presbytery so that mission can be presented as a cohesive whole.

APPENDIX E

TOWARDS A CENTRAL TRAINING UNIT

“The General Assembly wish to explore how the central training resources of the PCI in Union Theological College, Magee House, the Evangelism Board, etc might be unified and co-ordinated to help service the kind of patterns of mission suggested by the present resolutions”. (Resolution 3T, 1994)

Four elements are involved in the co-ordination of training resources:

- (a) to raise the profile and stress the importance of in-service training;
- (b) to reflect the theological diversity of the PCI and allow cross fertilisation of ideas;
- (c) to provide study and research material for Presbyterian Ministers, Kirk Sessions and “Midweeks”.

- (d) to provide or access actual teaching and training to service every aspect of Church life.

Present Provisions.

There are presently at least three constituents:

- (a) **Union Theological College** for the training of students for the ordained ministry;
- (b) **The Christian Training Centre** presently operates under the provisions of the Magee Fund Scheme. Four aspects of training are included in the legislation:
- (i) The provision for approved persons of teaching and training facilities and financial assistance to enable them to avail themselves of classes and courses at Union College, or at any other institution or institutions approved by the General Assembly, or of private tuition.
- (ii) The provision of courses in training of auxiliary Church workers.
- (iii) The development of extramural courses in Biblical studies, theology and associated fields of study both in Union College and elsewhere in Ireland.
- (iv) To assist in the provision of courses of further education and training for ordained Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
- (c) **A variety of agencies** including: Peace and Peacemaking, National and International Problems, Ethics and Christian Training, Doctrine Committees; Evangelism Promoter.

Future Provisions

These are mainly based on the development of the Christian Training Centre.

- (a) The development of a research department which would list the material already available on topics of relevance, prepare papers at the request of Presbyteries and provide for the co-ordination of work already being done by different Boards and Committees so as to avoid duplication.
- (b) The research department would have the power to co-opt specialists outside the existing Board structures.
- (c) The appointment of an administrator who would promote the work of the CTC, consult with other denominations and training providers in general, attend courses, liaise with Synod Panels of advisers and Presbytery SFM Committees, advise as to the availability of courses elsewhere, prepare programmes, maintain the daily running of the CTC, secure finances and be responsible for general management.
- (d) The administrator would have an important role co-ordinating work with the Practical Theology Department of UTC.
- (e) The Administrator would act as “Director” of the CTC.

- (f) The development of present training for ministers, elders and the congregation.

For ministers, this would include the introduction of required courses for study, reflection and renewal.

For elders, there ought to be considerable training to assist in the catching of a vision. This will be achieved by the realignment of Presbytery meetings, regular Session conferences, etc, all setting elders free to be elders.

For congregations, training in evangelism, caring, healing, friendship and other ministry through "away days", etc.

Closer links with the Practical Theology Department of UTC, for example: the use of sermon workshops, audio visual aids, visitation skills, time management, planning a years preaching. Much is already happening in this area of co-operation.

Implementation

1. **A Training Council** should be established immediately including representation of the Magee Fund, Christian Training Committee, Union Theological College and the training areas of the Youth, Social Witness, Home and Overseas Boards and such others as the Assembly or the Business Board see fit, together with a number of individuals with expertise in training, management and co-ordination of resources.

2. This Training Council should seek to create a **Central Training Unit** for the PCI along the lines of the above paper - based on the Magee provision. To fulfil legal requirements any such body should have a Magee Fund Committee as a sub-committee.

3. The Training Council should:

- (a) review the staffing needs required to implement the Church training programme;
- (b) subject to the Assembly's approval and normal nomination procedures, draw up the job description and terms and conditions of employment of the Director (when the post of Magee Director becomes vacant) and such other staff as are deemed necessary and approved by the Assembly. It is envisaged that the Director's role is primarily that of Manager/Administrator/Policy Initiator rather than of Provider or Trainer;
- (c) initiate the co-ordination and dissemination of information on external courses and conferences, ensuring that Synodical Panels of Advisers are adequately briefed, resourced and trained and that Presbytery SFM Committees and parish ministers should be aware of the resources available.
- (d) research and secure the necessary finance.

4. In implementing the programme the Training Council or its successor is expected to provide and implement such courses as are necessary from its own resources or in partnership with other Churches or Church/secular training organisations. They should not seek to reduplicate courses already offered adequately by bodies such as Scripture Union, CPAS, Belfast Bible College, etc. They should seek to send trainees to appropriate courses in the UK or to arrange for providers of such courses to run them locally at their invitation.

The Strategy for Mission Committee believe that a system such as this will greatly change the mindset and skills of the whole Church in mission. All courses and training, however, are understood to follow the disciplining model - show - teach - do: no training should be simply theoretical.

APPENDIX F

New Mission Agency

Introduction

When the General Assembly in 1994 received the Strategy for Mission Committee Report and accepted resolutions R and T, it acknowledged that there was a prima facie case for uniting several facets of mission under one agency and possibly one board.

Resolution R: *that the General Assembly further wish to explore:*

(a) *the possibility of creating a unified mission agency to work throughout the whole of Ireland and which might include all or part of the present Irish Mission, Home Mission, Church Extension and Evangelism Board:*

(b) *the possible relationship of such a body with the Belfast City Mission;*

Resolution T: *that the possibility be explored of establishing a new 'Board for Mission of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland' to oversee any new agency and initiatives and to keep vision for the church as an agent of the Lord for mission before the whole PCI.*

After lengthy discussions the Committee has concluded that the thrust of these resolutions is essentially correct and so make the following recommendations.

1. **The Home Board and The Board of Evangelism and Christian Training** should be united to form a new Board responsible for mission and outreach throughout Ireland. Some aspects of the work of the present boards should be relocated in other boards.

Board of Evangelism - Most of the work of the Board of Evangelism should be incorporated into the new Board. The Marriage and Family Committee could find a more appropriate home in the Board of Social Witness and the Committee on National and International Problems in the General Board or the Inter-Church Relations Board.

Home Board - Aspects of the Home Mission's work which concentrate on supporting the weaker churches and seeking to expand our witness throughout the island of Ireland would again find a natural home in a new Board as would the work of the Church Extension Committee and the Irish Mission. Both the Church Extension Committee and the Home Mission have a considerable involvement in new buildings and maintaining older properties. These aspects could be combined under one Property Committee which would take on day to day responsibility on behalf of the new Board. The Assignments Committee might fit more easily under the Board of Studies.

2. **The Irish Mission** should continue its restructuring to create the more flexible organisation needed if the other aspects of this report are to be implemented. Without an engine to drive forward the changes envisaged, in our

Report it is hard to see how real progress could be made. An important thrust of its work should be church planting.

3. Close relationships with other boards involved in complementary mission activities should be established. Whilst mission at home is the primary function of the new Board it could not contain all that would constitute the church's mission. Links should be established with other boards to co-ordinate areas of mutual interest or overlapping responsibilities. The Youth Board should have links with the restructured Irish Mission through which youth groups could be involved in Mission Teams. Much of the work of the Social Witness Board is of a general nature, but its skills and expertise could be drawn upon for example, as part of developing a strategy for inner city outreach or to support specific initiatives.

Both Boards ought to have significant representation on the appropriate committees and to be actively involved wherever they have something to contribute. There are dangers in trying to integrate too much together too quickly, or in creating a structure which is too large and unwieldy. These proposals are a pragmatic assessment of what may be practical at the moment.

4. **Belfast City Mission** - The work of the Belfast City Mission in pioneer evangelism and outreach parallels what we believe the restructured Irish Mission ought to be involved in. In its present structure, however, it falls short of our aim which is to establish churches where those who have come to faith go on to full Christian discipleship and service. There is obviously need to maintain and extend the dialogue already entered into. While we would hope to more fully involve the Belfast City Mission, until further explorations are made it is hard to predict how realistic such an association might be.

5. **Aims** - We consider evangelism to be on the cutting edge of the church's outreach and it must always have the highest priority. Effective evangelism is evident in the Christian discipleship of those evangelised, and Church involvement is an essential prerequisite for discipleship; church involvement ought to be the springboard for Christian witness to the community. There is a danger in creating a false dichotomy between mission and evangelism. Evangelism is a vital part of the mission of the Church, but evangelism ought to create Christians actively involved in the diversity of Christ's mission to His world.

The restructured Board which would oversee its work could not be responsible for all that would constitute the Mission of Christ. Its more limited brief would be to encourage and promote;

- (a) Church planting - Pioneer evangelism as part of an agreed strategy with definable goals normally involving team work with the objective of church planting;
- (b) Church porting - Identify and facilitate congregations where relocation of the church building would make work and witness more effective. Imaginative use of a new plant to facilitate greater community involvement;
- (c) Church enrichment - Assist the regeneration of congregational life where congregations are small, struggling, ageing or discouraged;
- (d) Church growth - Help congregations develop a vision of how their Church could grow and reach out more effectively to their local

community. Local congregations should be encouraged to foster among their members a climate for Church planting;

- (e) Church service - Foster tangible expressions of Christian love and concern at a local level;
- (f) Training and resources - Provide appropriate training and resources to promote the stated aims;
- (g) Complementary activities - Whilst Church planting would be the central aim other complementary evangelistic activities which may not result directly in Church planting should be encouraged. The present Night Ministry in Belfast is one example.

6. **Presbytery** - Presbytery would play a vital role in the New Board and New Mission Agency. It should every five years, in response to a detailed questionnaire, provide an analysis of its area and identify mission opportunities. This would be followed up by discussion between Presbytery and the Board in order to draw an agreed plan of action for the next five years. The Agency Mission would provide additional manpower and expertise to assist with the implementation of the agreed plan. The Convener of the Presbytery Mission Committee should also serve on the Board.

7. **Local Congregations** - Mobilise local congregations for mission and outreach. Core groups of members from other local Churches could be set up in an area as a nucleus for establishing a Church and to work Action Teams drawn from Mission Agency resources.

8. **Action Teams** - Teams should be structured to respond to the specific needs of individual situations, and would include some of the following resources.

Group Leaders to co-ordinate an outreach plan.

Full-time Agents would be permanent members of staff with diverse skills and an emphasis on mission and evangelism.

Deaconesses on secondment to the Mission.

Short-term Appointments on limited contracts for specific tasks.

Voluntary helpers, with a limited period of time commitment, funded on a subsistence basis. These could include young people or those who had taken early retirement.

9. **Advantages of a New Board and New Mission Agency:** Our present Mission is divided between several boards and committees. A less fragmented approach ought to be more efficient and effective.

The recent examples of co-operation between the different agencies is highly commendable but suggests a need for more effective mechanisms to promote such joint schemes.

A New Mission Agency could more readily incorporate a wider range of people involved in mission; not only more full-time agents but also young people and folk who had taken early retirement or on short term contracts.

Church planting ought to be one thrust of outreach and evangelism.

Opportunities for full-time agents to share in a wider sphere of service would be provided. A career structure reflecting knowledge, skills and experience should also be incorporated into the work of the New Mission Agency. This could provide an opportunity for some to spend a period in pioneer evangelism and then to go on to train and prepare for pastoral work.

A more flexible approach able to respond and adapt to new or changing situations ought to be more effective as a mission tool.

Drawing in Presbytery at an early stage to the decision making process should result in local congregations feeling a greater sense of ownership of mission activities.

It would be easier to encourage the Church at large to release the resources needed for the work of the agency, if this could be presented in a unified way.

10. **Disadvantages of a New Board and New Mission Agency:** Such an agency would require a major administrative change.

Present agencies especially the Irish Mission have a loyal band of supporters who may not so readily identify with a restructured Irish Mission. This could have major financial implications.

Though there are economies of scale, size can render organisations slow to respond and keep them out of touch with the people who support.

There are many practical, financial, structural and legal difficulties which have to be overcome. These may prove to be insurmountable but without a will to move forward the status quo will prevail and we will miss a vital opportunity to gear ourselves for mission in a new century.

11. **Finance** - A considerable amount of resources in terms of funding and personnel is already allocated to the work of existing agencies, but new resources would be needed. However presenting a unified vision for mission in Ireland could captivate the imagination of church members and encourage a generous response to tangible initiatives.

12. **Conclusion** - We feel that there is a strong case to be made for a new Home Board and New Mission Agency remodelled as outlined in this Report. This would build on existing work while opening opportunities for imaginative mission as we enter a new century. Though the goal is desirable we recognise the many obstacles on the way to its achievement and so submit the following resolutions.

APPENDIX G

CHURCH PLANTS IN THE PCI

An attempt at definition and rules

1. A Church plant is the establishment of a new fellowship of Christians with an independent life, witness and worship. The quorum is "two or three met together" though its aim will be to grow through evangelism/social witness. It may possess neither property nor a paid ministry and it may never grow sufficiently to acquire the status of an "established congregation" within the PCI. It may begin with the deliberate transfer of a group of people from an established congregation or with the work of a missionary or missionary team.

2. To be considered a Church plant of the PCI a fellowship should be in sympathy with the standards of this Church though with considerable liberty from usual congregational norms as to form.

3. Any congregation of the PCI may within its own parish bounds freely initiate a Church plant, though it should inform Presbytery.

4. A group of congregations similarly may, by agreement registered and approved by Presbytery, initiate a Church plant within the area of their collective parish bounds.

5. Church plants may best flourish within the conditions of a Mission Priority Area but the declaration of an MPA is not necessary for the establishment of a Church plant which can be justified on the grounds that it fulfils a need within either:

- (i) a geographical area where the PCI presence and witness is inadequate or inappropriate to fulfil the mission needed to impact the people within it with the words, works and life of Christ; or
- (ii) a social space with similar need such as unevangelised young people, a student population, transient evening or weekend population, people of different culture or race, etc.

6. Any individual or group of individuals who are members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland may petition Presbytery for the establishment of a Church plant. Presbytery before granting permission shall consult with all congregations whose parish bounds may be affected but the right of granting permission to well sustained proposals belongs to Presbytery advised by its Strategy for Mission Committee. Presbytery itself shall have the right to initiate Church plants.

7. Where a Church plant covers an area of work which does not fall within the bounds of a single congregation a Presbytery Commission should be appointed to provide encouragement, oversight and a relationship with the courts of the Church.

8. In each Church plant there should be a recognised leader who might be eligible for ordination by the Presbytery as a “missionary ruling elder”. Such leaders should be encouraged as early as is practicable to establish a working committee of those who are in membership of the fellowship for the day to day running of its affairs. Full members would be on the same basis as any other congregation of the PCI and new members would be received on the permission of the Presbytery Commission.

9. The Presbytery, through its Commission, should visit each Church plant with assessors from the New Mission Agency in the first year, after three years and thereafter at five yearly intervals.

10. A Church plant approved by Presbytery could have the status of “Home Mission Congregation” and the New Mission Agency would advise, train, stimulate and assign approved workers in conjunction with the Presbytery and have power to call and induct or commission Ministers, Licentiates, Deaconesses or missionaries and place them within a Church plant at the invitation of Presbytery.

11. Church Plants which grew successfully might apply to the Presbytery to have their unordained leader received as a student for the Ministry whilst in pastoral charge of the work. Similarly a Church plant which grew very strongly might petition the General Assembly to be received as either a missionary or an established congregation.

APPENDIX H**MISSION PRIORITY AREAS****An attempt at definition and rules**

1. A Mission Priority Area would be designated by the Presbytery in consultation with the New Mission Agency and the Union Commission. The NMA could take the initiative in proposing the declaration of an MPA within the Presbytery.

2. A Mission Priority Area within the bounds of a Presbytery may be either:

- (a) a geographical area where the PCI presence and witness is inadequate or inappropriate to fulfil the mission needed to impact the people within it with the words, works and life of Christ; or
- (b) a social space with similar need such as unevangelised young people, a student population, transient evening or weekend population, people of different culture or race, etc.

3. Within an MPA parish bounds should be deemed to be waived in so far as they might adversely effect the new mission work. Whilst the effect of parish bounds would be modified within the MPA those engaged in Mission activity within this freedom would be expected to operate with sensitivity towards the existing congregations of the bounds and the congregations to support and encourage the new work of mission.

4. Responsibility for resourcing the MPA within its bounds, though not necessarily individual projects undertaken inside it, would rest with the Presbytery who have declared it - assisted where possible by the New Mission Agency.

5. The NMA would advise, train and stimulate Presbytery Strategy for Mission Committees on matters germane to MPA's. The NMA would have power to assign approved workers to projects in conjunction with Presbytery and would have authority to call and commission Ministers, Licentiates, Deaconesses or missionaries and place them within approved projects in an MPA at the invitation of Presbytery.

6. Mission activity within an MPA might result in the establishment of a Church plant, the strengthening of the life and witness of existing Congregations or the establishment of an agency for outreach and/or social witness.

7. Projects for evangelism or social witness within an MPA could be proposed to the Presbytery by a congregation, a group of congregations, a group of individual Church members (through Kirk Session), the NMA or any other relevant Board or agency of the PCI. Presbytery would have the power to allow or disallow any proposal.

8. A Minister or Licentiate of the PCI able to raise his or her own support should be able to be called and inducted into work in an MPA under suitable Union Commission rules. Similarly a self supporting missionary who is a member of the PCI and approved by his/her congregation, should be able to be commissioned for recognised work within an MPA under the NMA.

9. The Strategy for Mission Committee of the Presbytery should act as a Commission of Presbytery in the administration of any MPA declared within the bounds, reporting regularly to Presbytery.

10. The NMA, representing the General Assembly, should keep a watching brief over all MPAs and report to the General Assembly each year.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That the Committee on Strategy for Mission continue to actively promote a Mindset for Mission in co-operation with the Mission Assembly Committee and Evangelism Committee's Churchwide Outreach.

3. That the General Assembly commend the Bible Studies on Mission to those who have not yet used them and call all congregations to prayer for the mission of the Church.

People

4. That the triennial cycles of in-service training as set out in the Ministerial Development Programme (Appendix A of the Report) be adopted in principle by the Assembly and that Synods and the Training Council (if approved) or such other body as may be appropriate as determined by the General Board take steps to implement the proposals by 1998.

5. That the principle of Sabbaticals as an integral part of the Ministerial Development Programme as set out in Appendix B be agreed. That the Training Council (if approved) or such other body as the General Board may deem appropriate set up a sub-committee to agree the details of their implementation and funding and the care of congregations during ministerial absence and report to next Assembly.

6. That the provisions of Appendices A and B apply to all employees of the Church and its Boards who work in 'ministry' and that the appropriate agencies be asked to consider how to implement them.

7. That each Presbytery appoint a Training Committee to work with Kirk Sessions and the central training bodies of the Church to maximise opportunities for training in ministry and mission for local congregations.

8. That each Kirk Session recognise their responsibility to equip the leadership of congregations for ministry and mission and that such training/resourcing, formal or informal, is to be understood as the right and the responsibility of all who are in leadership.

9. That the General Assembly reaffirm their commitment to provide appropriate training for all church members.

Existing Structures and Mission - Assembly Boards

10. That the General Assembly accept the principle of restructuring present committees so that there is a single Board responsible for Mission throughout Ireland and another Board responsible for all Christian Training (including Training for the Ordained Ministry of the Word and Sacraments).

11. That the General Assembly instruct the Home Board, Board of Evangelism and Christian Training and Board of Studies together with the Strategy for Mission Committee to confer as to how they might best in co-operation set up appropriate structures to advance the unification of our present committees concerned for Mission and for Christian Training within two Boards. The Clerk of Assembly shall convene a meeting of their representatives to commence this process.

12. That the above Boards together report to the General Assembly in June 1997 on their progress and bring forward proposals for the accomplishment of the aims set out in resolutions 10 and 11 at the earliest date possible.

13. That the above three Boards be empowered to negotiate the numbers and remit of sub-committees - the roles and job description of staff employed under these Boards - and such other matters as are necessary to expedite the creation of the new Boards.

Central Training Unit

14. That a Training Council be appointed by the General Board consisting of representatives of the Magee Fund Committee, Christian Training Committee, Union Theological College and such other Assembly bodies as are appropriate together with an equal number of members with appropriate expertise to oversee the creation of a Central Training Unit as envisaged in Appendix E.

Presbyteries

15. That Presbyteries be encouraged to adopt, where possible, the guidelines for Business outlined in Appendix D1 and that in any case they be sent down for discussion and comment by them, replies to be received by the Conveners of the Strategy for Mission Committee by 28 February, 1997.

16. That Presbyteries be encouraged to adopt the recommendations of Appendix D2 regarding personnel.

17. That Presbyteries be required to create and adopt a Strategy for Mission for their bounds which takes account of the needs of the locality and the present work of the kingdom there. To this end they should form a Strategy for Mission Committee with the remit set out in Appendix D3.

18. That the suggestions on Visitation be sent to the Committee on the Memorial of the Dromore Presbytery.

19. That Presbyteries account for their Strategy for Mission to a joint committee of the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training and the Home Board or their successor on a 5 year cycle.

20. That every congregation adopt a strategy for mission within its own parish in co-ordination with the Presbytery's strategy and where possible with other local Christian bodies. That practical, relevant and achievable goals be the heart of such a strategy.

Congregations

21. That the Doctrine Committee be requested to discuss fully the implications of new ways of electing and terms of office for Kirk Sessions in consultation with the Strategy for Mission Committee.

22. That the Strategy for Mission Committee in consultation with such other committees as are appropriate look at the meaning of and commitment required by 'Members' in the PCI.

23. That the Strategy for Mission Committee in consultation with such other committees as are appropriate consider the 'Initiative to our Members' discussed in the report.

24. That the General Assembly affirm their belief that tithing is a Biblical principle applicable under grace to the New Covenant. The Assembly ask the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training to identify or prepare material on the implications of this and make it available to our congregations and members so that such sacrificial giving may become a regular emphasis in the preparation of new church members and in teaching generally on the responsibilities of Church membership.

25. That the Strategy for Mission Committee consider the implications of their Report for United Appeal, Union Commission, Ministry and Pensions and other agencies in dialogue with those engaged in this work.

26. That as part of the restructuring to be accomplished under resolutions 10, 11 and 12 the General Assembly direct the parties concerned to bring into being, if at all possible, a single mission agency to incorporate the core mission work of the present Irish Mission, Home Mission and Church Extension Committees.

27. That the General Assembly approve in principle the paper on Church Planting (Appendix G) as a basis for future action.

28. That the General Assembly approve the designation of 'Mission Priority Areas' as outlined in Appendix H and ask that the Committee in consultation with other appropriate bodies prepare legislation, rules or guidelines on the basis of the report.

29. That the General Assembly once more call on all congregations, Presbyteries and members to commit themselves to 'pray without ceasing' that God will revive His Church, heal our land and motivate His people for mission in the name of Christ.

30. That the Ad Hoc Committee on Strategy for Mission be reappointed for a further year as follows:-

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

1. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of Theological Education is attempting to describe a period of training, study and formation which will result in the church having a steady supply of gifted people who are adequately prepared for the work of the ministry. It has been stressed repeatedly in our discussions that the period of preparation must be directly related to the challenges of ministering in the contemporary world. As has been stated in reports to previous General Assemblies, it is our goal to give theological education an orientation and bias towards the work of the Christian ministry.

2. The Committee has consulted with a number of interested parties in this important task, and is grateful to all who have taken time to share their insights and concerns. This report builds on those which the Committee has made to previous General Assemblies.

PROPOSALS FOR A REVISED SCHEME OF TRAINING FOR MINISTERIAL STUDENTS

PREPARATION AND ASSESSMENT FOR MINISTERIAL STUDIES

The Concept

3. In contrast with the existing procedure where nominated candidates are assessed at an overnight Residential Interview in September, the Ad Hoc Committee proposes a period of learning, reflection and assessment, with nominating Presbyteries being kept informed of progress and of any concerns that arise.

4. Under the proposed scheme nominated candidates will attend a residential Study Block in June, at the conclusion of which they will be interviewed and, if approved, will proceed to the Applicant's Course. This Course is not an additional year of theological study, but a 9 month period, typically comprising some distance learning, two residential weekends, two short term congregational placements of a few hours per week and concluding with a further Study Block the following Easter. It is envisaged that the Applicants' Course could be undertaken by applicants in full-time employment or tertiary education.

5. It is the conviction of the Ad Hoc Committee that this protracted process of assessment will enable the candidates and the church to make a better judgment regarding suitability. It will also have the significant additional benefit of preparing applicants for full-time theological education and training.

The Practical Arrangements

6. Applications to the Board of Studies should be received by 15 December and forwarded to Presbytery for nomination. Applicants should be informed about the components of this Pre-theological phase so that they can, with approval of Presbytery, attend the Applicants' Course.

7. Study Block 1 will be held in Union Theological College during the latter part of June. It will be a five day residential period which will include participation in lectures, workshops and worship times.

8. At the conclusion of Study Block 1, applicants will be interviewed by the panel appointed by the Board of Studies, and only with its approval, will proceed to the Applicants' Course.

9. The Applicants' Course will include two placements and two weekends which will be completed during the following autumn and winter. Assignments and reading for the Applicants' Course will be monitored and completed at the weekends.

10. The following Easter, applicants will attend the Phase Two interview at which their performance at Applicants' Course will be taken into consideration. The names of successful applicants will be nominated to the General Assembly in June for acceptance as students for the ministry.

11. Study Block 2 will be held during the latter part of June and will run concurrently with Study Block 1. Study Block 2 will prepare students for full-time theological studies and must be successfully completed before entering College in September of that year. While our preferred option is for this period of preparation and assessment to lead into theological studies, in some circumstances it may be taken at an earlier stage.

12. It is envisaged that the Study Blocks will be comprised of 45 minutes lectures dealing with the following subjects:

- Introduction to Christian Ministry
- Communication Skills
- Conduct of Worship and Preaching
- Survey of the English Bible
- English Language
- Introduction to Philosophy and Christian Ethics

There will be time for library work and preparation of assignments. The evening worship times may include a series of addresses on the life and work of the Minister. Study Block 2 will build on the work completed during the Applicants' Course.

13. It is hoped that congregations who recommend applicants for the ministry will be prepared to pay the fees for Study Blocks 1 and 2.

14. We fully expect that applicants for the full time ministry of the Church will already be active members of their home congregations. The two placements which are included at this stage will not demand more than hundreds of Christians are already giving freely to the Church and so can be combined with either full-time study or employment. However, they will be taken in congregations selected by the Director of Ministerial Studies and be under the supervision of ministers who have been trained to observe and report.

15. Students overseas or in Great Britain during the year between Study Blocks may not be required to attend weekends in Belfast.

16. In some circumstances the Pre-theological placements might be full time.

17. During this phase Presbyteries will continue their role of supervising applicants and there will be consultations between the Director of Ministerial Students and nominating Presbyteries. This should mean that Presbyteries will be aware of problems about the candidacy of someone whom they have nominated. The Director of Ministerial Students will take a leading role in resolving difficulties.

18. The General Assembly remains the only body empowered to accept or reject candidates as students for the ministry. The statutory right of a nominating Presbytery to appeal against the decision of the Board of Studies will be retained. After the Phase Two interview the Interviewing Panel would, as at present, report to the Board of Studies which has the role of nominating applicants to the General Assembly.

Courses at Union Theological College

	Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer
Year 1	*Greek Grammar Old Testament 1 Church History 1 *Practical Theology	*Greek Grammar New Testament 1 Biblical Texts Systematic Theology 1	Placement 3
Year 2	New Testament 2 Systematic Theology 2 *Hebrew Grammar *Practical Theology	Old Testament 2 Church History 2 *Hebrew Grammar Practical Theology	Additional Placement
Year 3	Irish Church History Modern Church History and Theology Biblical Theology *Practical Theology	Philosophy of Religion & Ethics Practical Theology Elective course	

* denotes half module

Course Structure

19. The plan shown in the above table is not intended to be binding in all its details on the Faculty of Union Theological College. Its purpose is to illustrate how the required number of subjects and modules could be combined into a suitable curriculum. Consultation with the teaching staff of the College will continue regarding this proposed plan in order to avoid time-tabling problems and not to create an uneven distribution of the teaching load of any member of staff over the two semesters.

20. Each of the Departments of Union College should produce a Mission Statement for the teaching of its subject which would be agreed and periodically reviewed by the Church, through the Board of Studies, together with a flexible plan to deliver the contents of that statement.

21. The total number of modules is 19.5. The successful fulfilment of all these modules (apart from the three half-modules presently labelled Practical Theology) would satisfy the regulations of QUB for the BD degree. Apart from one elective module, these are allocated between the different subject areas as follows:- OT - 4 modules; NT - 4 modules; Church History 3.5 modules; Systematic Theology 3.5 modules; Practical Theology 3.5 modules. Additional modules in Practical Theology will be offered in the Pre-theological stage/year and during the licentiate period. By adopting this plan it should be possible to have a smooth transition from the present Course structure to this new one.

22. While this structure gives a greater emphasis to the area of Practical Theology, it reduces the possibility of academically gifted students being able to specialise in particular subjects. The need for such specialisation is clearly necessary. Perhaps this could be addressed by the provision of a part-time/full-time Post-graduate Course which might be taken by some of the more able students (and possible others from outside our Church). It might also be worth considering the timing of Old Testament 2. If this were located in Year 3, students could be given the choice of following either a Hebrew Bible or English Bible course (as occurs at present for Greek with NT2).

23. All students who complete their Courses successfully by the end of June will be deemed to have been licensed on 15th May.

Placements

24. Placement 3 will extend from the summer through to Christmas. It is intended that the half module in Practical Theology in Year 2, Semester 1 should be closely linked to the placement during the summer of year 1. The teaching given in this semester will reflect the practical experience which the student is gaining through the placement.

25. The Additional Placement may be required for some students when this has been shown to be necessary by the Residential Interviews and in these circumstances it will be part of the agreed Learning Covenants for those students. It may be served in the British Isles or overseas and will usually involve work other than normal congregational activities.

Additional Matters

26. As far as possible courses will be related to the practice of ministry and an attempt will be made to provide a coordinated programme of teaching.

27. Although not mentioned explicitly in the table, study of the Westminster Confession of Faith will be part of the Course at Union College and possibly, the Study Blocks.

28. The work of the Faculty at Union College would be aided by the addition of an integrated computer system. It is important that such facilities are made available for the co-ordination of the College's work, and that the Faculty

of Union College be kept in touch with research and resources in other educational institutions.

Practical Theology

29. The Practical Theology courses timetabled above would cover the following topics.

First Year

30. In the First Semester, two classes per week to include Introduction to Homiletics and Public Worship.

Second Year

31. Two classes per week in the First Semester with reflection on experience in Placement 3 which began in the summer and continues through the semester.

In the Second Semester there will be four classes per week to include Missiology (a module in BD and BTh) and Christian Education and the psychology of human development (both part of a module in BD and BTh).

Third Year

32. During the First Semester two classes per week will include preaching workshops and worship in specific settings.

In the Second Semester there would be three classes per week covering the Church in the World and the Theology and Historical Development of Pastoral Theology and Counselling (both parts of a BD module).

Staff

33. This Course will not require the appointment of an additional lecturer in Practical Theology, assuming that the contribution of Edgehill College to Practical Theology continues at its present level. We envisage the continued involvement of working ministers in the teaching of Practical Theology. However, if it is to be effective, additional secretarial help for Union College will be required.

34. In all this, it is important to realise that Practical Theology is not a separate discipline, independent from the rest of the curriculum, neither is it to be understood as a series of 'how to' lectures or techniques. All theology is practical theology, and every course should help to inform and guide the practice of Christian ministry.

Union College as a Worshipping and Caring Community

35. It is essential that students for the ministry continue to mature in their faith during their time of training. While structures alone cannot guarantee such spiritual growth, it is important that time is set aside to encourage both personal growth and the union of Faculty and Students as a worshipping community.

36. The Study Blocks include time for worship at the Pre-theological Phase.

37. At the beginning of each year there will be an over-night retreat in the first week of term. The programme might be:

Monday	Board of Studies presentation Registration Public opening
Tuesday and Wednesday	Retreat
Thursday	First day of lectures

38. The retreat would be funded by the Board of Studies and attendance would be required.

39. Daily prayers in College will be held at a time when their value will not be diminished by pressures from the time-table.

40. There should be a monthly service in the College at which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper may be observed. The preachers at this service should sometimes be members of the Faculty and at other times be from outside the College.

41. Students should be encouraged to form teams to work overseas and to conduct missions in congregations at home. These might, on occasions, be led by one of the Professors.

42. The informal small groups which are part of student life at Union College are very valuable and often give support long after college years have come to an end. In addition it is hoped that it will be possible for every student to have experience of being a member of a small group led by an experienced person.

LICENTIATE TRAINING IN FIRST LICENTIATE YEAR

Structure

43. This should have two elements, Residential and Day Release.

Residential

44. Two three-day residential periods in, for example, September and May. These should consist of lectures, seminars, study time and worship.

Day Release

45. On a fortnightly basis with 5 days between September and Christmas and 6 between January and May, meeting from 10 am to 3 pm with the morning given to teaching and seminars and the afternoon to study time.

The venue for both should be Union College because of the facilities it affords, although this should not exclude visits to other venues eg prisons, hospitals etc

The programme should be given to the licentiate soon after licensing.

Attendance should be obligatory, recognised by both the licentiate and his/her minister as a priority. It is not to be regarded as 'time off' but as an essential part of the licentiate's training which must be completed before becoming eligible for ordination.

It is intended licentiates be not overburdened but at the same time they take the training seriously.

Responsibility

46. The Professor of Practical Theology in cooperation with the Director of Ministerial Students and the supervising minister should be responsible for the training, thus providing continuity with the previous three years and a sense of responsibility to the Faculty.

As full use as possible should be made of the resources and expertise available in the wider Church including the Christian Training Centre.

Content

47. The following topics are submitted as a suggested list of subjects. Some may be brought out of the Practical Theology courses taught at Union College and dealt with at this stage. Some may be dealt with earlier in a theoretical way and may be given further development at this stage, using an inter-disciplinary approach, especially as the licentiate will have had more experience of Church life.

There is a certain amount of overlap in these areas.

48. Minister as Worship Leader

Preaching	Conduct of worship	Hymnology and music
Prayer	Children's addresses	Teamwork

49. Minister as Pastor

Visitation - regular and crisis	Counselling Evangelism	Ethics
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50. Minister as Trainer/Teacher

RE class, School Assembly	Youth culture Communion, Baptism and Marriage preparations	Training people Working with small groups
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51. Minister as Administrator

Congregational planning	Personal planning	Education - Boards of Governors
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52. Minister as Leader

Minister in Irish context Coping with change	People management	Conflict management
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53. Minister as a Person

Financial management	Manse family life
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54. Minister as a Presbyterian

Sacraments Church structures	Marriage Church House resources	Church law
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55. Minister as Resource person

Tear Fund, Christian Aid, CARE, RELATE etc	Social resources
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56. While some licentiates might be able to study for a Masters or higher degree this would only be with the permission of the Board of Studies and such permission will be granted only when the training set out above can be successfully completed and in consultation with the licentiates's supervising minister.

Supervising Ministers

57. These should attend one session of the May residential course but the Professor or Director should maintain contact on a continual basis with them.

This should provide an opportunity for an assessment of the licentiate, the supervising minister and the scheme of licentiate training.

58. A certificate will be awarded on the successful completion of this Course, but it is essential that all involved understand that a licentiate is still a probationer for the ministry and completion of the Course is a requirement for eligibility for a call and ordination.

The Director of Ministerial Students

59. It is envisaged that the person appointed to this new post will take up duties in September 1996. Representatives of the Ad Hoc Committee have been involved in discussions with Union College Management Committee as to the practical arrangements for office accommodation at Union Theological College.

60. Since this post will be funded through the United Appeal, it is best if the Directorate of Ministerial Students becomes a separate agency approved by the United Appeal Board rather than being included in the Union College Management Committee budget. This means that the College will not have to carry any shortfall in the funding of the post and also gives the Directorate independence. The Ad Hoc Committee has, therefore, requested the United Appeal Board to bring a notice of motion to the General Assembly which will establish the Directorate as a separate agency.

Glossary

Semester: Each academic year is divided into two semesters. Semester 1 normally runs from October to January and Semester 2 from February to May.

Module: A module is a unit of study within a particular discipline. It normally requires 3 class hours per week throughout a semester. Most universities require the successful completion of 18 modules for the award of a degree.

Course: Within the period of theological training, a course is a series of lectures and seminars on a single topic or theme. Some modules may include 2 or 3 courses.

The word is also commonly used to describe a period of study, this use is indicated in the report by writing 'Course'.

Placement: A placement will normally be completed in a local congregation, although in certain cases it may be completed in connection with an agency or mission of the church. It will include the active involvement of the student in ministry and will require reflection on that activity.

J S CARSON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Director of Ministerial Students be commended to the prayers of the whole Church at the beginning of this pioneer task.
3. That the proposals for the period of preparation and assessment be implemented for two years before any formal changes are made to the Code, and that these proposals be implemented from receipt of the next series of applications (ie by 15 December 1996).
4. That each department in Union Theological College prepare a Mission Statement for the teaching of its subject, and that these Mission Statements be submitted to the Board of Studies before the 1997 General Assembly.
5. That licentiates of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland be invited to sit and deliberate at Church courts.
6. That the new proposals for licentiate training in the first licentiate year be implemented from June 1997, and that, in preparation for that, the Professor of Practical Theology, the Director of Ministerial Students, in consultation with the Magee Director of Christian Training, prepare an appropriate programme.
7. That the Management Committee of Union Theological College investigate ways in which funds may be made available from the Church or charitable organisations for the provision of an integrated computer system for the Faculty of Union Theological College.
8. That the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of Theological Education be thanked and discharged.

MISSION ASSEMBLY (1997) COMMITTEE

Conveners: Revs J R DICKINSON, Dr T W J MORROW

1. The Mission Assembly Committee has met regularly throughout the year. Working Groups formed to oversee particular aspects of the arrangements have also been meeting regularly.

2. The format of the Assembly and the nature of its membership were the initial questions which occupied the Committee. It was felt that normal Assembly arrangements would not be appropriate in this case and so we are proposing that this event be organised as an Assembly Conference. This has a number of advantages.

3. In the first place, no business will be taken or reports discussed or resolutions passed. Instead, plenary sessions, seminars and times of celebration, worship and prayer will fill the day.

4. Secondly, representation is normally restricted to minister and representative elder. By taking the Conference model, however, each congregation will be encouraged to send three representatives and it will be up to the Kirk Session to determine who these should be, although it is assumed that one of these representatives will be the minister and one of them an elder.

5. Widening the representation led to consideration of the timing of the Assembly Conference. A date in September, as originally envisaged, creates problems for people in certain forms of employment or deeply involved in organisational leadership in getting away for four days and yet these may well be the people who need to be present if this event is to fulfill its role. So we are proposing that the Conference should be held in Coleraine from 11-14 August 1997.

6. The Assembly Conference would take place in the campus of the University of Ulster at Coleraine. Whilst the facilities there are excellent space for main meetings is at a premium and so we would propose to make use of the New Horizon marquee for some of the activities.

7. Each day at the Assembly Conference would fall into three parts. In the morning the programme would be geared largely to the cultivation of the spiritual lives of the participants. The activities would be fairly flexible and the main input would be in the hands of Eugene Peterson, an American Presbyterian and Professor of Spiritual Theology at Regent College, Vancouver.

8. The afternoon would be spent in seminar groups each of which would have a practical emphasis. Twelve main topics have been defined ranging from - "How to manage people and change" and "How to make church worship more relevant" to "How to reach teenagers effectively" and "How to deal with decline". Seminar leaders would be carefully selected and well-trained and each participant in the Assembly Conference would be able to attend three seminars during the four days.

9. The evenings would take the form of a celebration. The tent would be used for this and it would be open to people who are not delegates to the conference. It is hoped that Presbyterians will travel from particular areas on particular nights and that the tent could be filled every night.

10. Obviously, if this Assembly Conference is to be a success it will require the wholehearted support of the General Assembly and the congregations who will be represented at it. The merits of proceeding as outlined above are clear to the members of the Ad Hoc Committee and we hope that the General Assembly will share our enthusiasm by warmly accepting the appended resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly approve the arrangements for the Assembly Conference to take place from 11-14 August 1997 as outlined in the Report.
3. That a grant of £10,000 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Mission Assembly (1997) Committee to cover administrative expenses for the ensuing year.
4. That the Mission Assembly (1997) Committee be re-appointed for the ensuing year as follows:

MEMORIALS TRANSMITTED

North Belfast Presbytery re church records	92
Rev A J M Smith re acceptance	273

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

Par 19	57
Par 61(d)	175
Par 61(e)	175
Par 97 (d)	175
Par 97(e)	175
Par 316(1)	175
Par 316 (2)(d)	301

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Par 11	58
Par 13	58
Par 73(d)	176
Par 85(6)	58
Par 205(2)(b)	58
Par 205(4)VI	59
Par 212(3)	59
Par 219A	176
Par 222(3)	302
Par 223(4)	302
Par 224(3)	59
Par 224(4)	59
Par 236(2)	74
Par 250(4)	59
Par 272(1)	44
Par 277(1)	44
Par 278(1)	45
Par 281(1)	224
Par 281(2)(e)	224
Par 282(1)	45
Par 283(1)	248
Par 283(2)	248
Par 284(1)	45
Par 285(1)	45
Par 285(1)	273
Par 286(1)	45
Par 304(1)	176
Par 305(5)	176
Par 305(6)	176
Par 305(7) and (8)	177
Par 321(1)	302
App 7 B 2	306

APPEALS

C Garnham & Others -v- Presbytery of Foyle	60
W Stewart -v- Presbytery of Newry	60

RESOLUTIONS ON THE BOOKS

Re Church House Assesment	44
Re Special Assembly AD 2000	92

INDEX TO REPORTS

Accounts 1995 — Preface	1	Shankill Road Mission	189
Alcohol and Drug Education	190	Trusts	275
Alternating Ministry	170	Union of Congregations	61
Appeals, Church Courts	352	COMMUNICATIONS BOARD	93
Appeal, United	291	Conference of European Churches	142
Architecture, Church	103	Cconciliation Committee	25
Arrangements, Assembly	90	Consultative Panel on Assistantships	165
Assessments		Conveners, Retiring	7, 8, 61, 93, 164, 185, 186
Church Extension	67	Corrymeela Community	188
Church House Re-development	6, 290		
Incidental Fund	290		
Licentiatees	68	Deaconess Training	167
Ordained Assistants	69	Deaths	
M.P.S.F. (1978)	301	R. E. Alexander, 81; A. J. S. Curry, 77; R. Dalglish, 78; G. S. Dickson, 83; R. S. Fisher, 83; D. Gillies, 80; W. E. Kirkpatrick, 84; W. E. Loney, 81; W.J. Mawhinney, 79; W. Mills, 84; J. J. A. Rainey, 78; C. G. Thompson, 80; R. Topping, 77.	
R.M.F.	301	Delegates' Reports	87
W.M.F.	301	Director of Ministerial Students	115
Assignment	165	Divine Healing	233
Assistantships, Consultative Panel	165	Divorced Ministers	56
		Divorced Ministers and Elders	51, 55
		Doctrine Committee	31
Barristers and Solicitors	49	EDUCATION BOARD	249
Barrier Act	58	Church Education	259
Boards and Committees, Panel	5	Education in the Republic	256
Bursary Fund, Students	270	Integrated Education	251
BUSINESS BOARD	85	State Education	250
		University Education	260
Central Ministry Fund	298	Environment, Panel	12
Chaplaincy, Queen's University	261	European Churches, Conference of	142
Chaplains Committee	33	EVANGELISM BOARD	225
Chaplains to Forces	32	Evangelism Committee	235
Chaplains — Hospital	33	Expenses:	
Chaplains — Prison	34	Locomotory	72
Chaplains — University	261	Inadequate	72
Child Protection	196, 199	Familybooks	103
Christian Aid	136	Family Grants	299
Christian Training	232	FINANCE AND	
Church and Government	26	ADMINISTRATION	276
Church Architecture	103	Finance and Staffing	277
Church Extension	172	Forces	32
Church Extension Assessments	67	Fortune Trust	306
Church House and Assembly Hall	277	Funding, Overview	6
Church Hymnary Trustees	104		
City Area	73		
College Management	270		
COMMISSIONS, ASSEMBLY			
Judicial	49		

GENERAL BOARD	5	Ministerial Minimum	298
General Investment Fund	304	Ministerial Students, Director of	115
Getty Bequest	278	MINISTRY AND PENSIONS BOARD	297
Grievance, Heads of Department	278	Mission Assembly (1997)	349
Herald, Presbyterian	94	Mixed Marriages	227
Historical Society	94	Moderators Advisory	34
HOME BOARD	164	Mutual Society, Presbyterian	168
Home Mission	168	National and International Problems	225
Home Mission, P.W.A. (Home Department)	166	Nightlight, Belfast	170
Hospital Chaplains	33	NOMINATION BOARD	7, 107
House Fund, Retired Ministers	192	Nomination Board, Review of Procedures	107
Incidental Fund	279	Northern Ireland Situation	26
Inclusive Language	50	Old Age Fund	196
Indigent Ladies' Fund	196	Ordained Assistants Assessments	69
Installed		Ordination	
<small>J. A. Beattie, 78; B. C. G. Black, 84; J. Brackenridge, 79; A. W. T. Brown, 78; N. A. Brown, 78; C. Cameron, 79; W. J. Carlisle, 77; J. M. Cathcart, 82; P. T. Dalzell, 79; S. W. Dickinson, 78; J. H. Flaherty 83; C. Glass, 83; J. A. Gordon, 78; R. N. Gordon, 79; T. W. Gordon, 81; S. M. Gray, 78; J. Holmes, 77; S. E. Hughes, 75; R. J. Hyndman, 78; P. C. Lyle, 79; J. Lamb, 81; R. McM. Mackay, 76; J. W. P. McConnell, 75; R. A. Moffett, 76; D. T. Moore, 84; S. Murgih, 81; S. W. W. Neilly, 76; S. W. van Os, 76; D. C. Porter, 75; J. A. McN. Scott, 84; E. D. Smyth, 81; D. M. Spratt, 75; T. Steele, 76; W. G. Stewart, 80; G. R. Stockdale, 82; W. J. Todd, 78.</small>		J. A. Gordon, 78.	
Inter-Church Consultative Committee	139	OVERSEAS BOARD	146
Inter-Church Committee on N.I.	12	Overtures	
INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS	134	On the Books	351
Irish Church Relations	137	Transmitted	351, 352
Irish Mission	229	Parades	29
Information and Publications	93	Peace and Peacemaking	35
JUDICIAL COMMISSION	49	Pension Fund, Ministers'	300
Kinghan Mission	195	Personnel and Planning	72
Landmines	38	Praise Grants	96
Licensed		Presbyterian Residential Trust	192
<small>C. J. Aitcheson, 75; R. I. Abraham, 76; A. M. Bates, 79; W. M. Brown, 75; D. J. Hutchinson, 76; S. A. McCracken, 78; N. J. McCullough, 77; W. A. McCully, 77; S. Mawhinney, 79; R. Murray, 81; J. C. Simms, 78; S. Simpson, 79.</small>		Presbytery Reports	75
Magee Fund Scheme	269	Prison Chaplains	34
Magheragall Finding	53	Professor of Church History	120
Marriage and Family	226	Public Worship	96
Memorial Record	97	Publications Committee	93
Memorials Transmitted	351	P.W.A.	178
Ministers' Pension Scheme	300	Home Department	166
Ministers, without Charge etc	45	Young Womens' Groups	182
		Race Relations	140
		Reception of Ministers	273
		Recognised Ministries Committee	45
		Recognised Ministries, Scripture Union	47
		Relate	187
		Residential Trust, Presbyterian	192

Resigned

J. A. Beattie, 77; B. C. G. Black, 81; J. Brackenridge, 81; A. W. T. Brown, 78; N. A. Brown, 83; K. Campbell, 82; W. J. Carlisle, 75; P. Dalzell, 76; J. H. Flaherty, 82; C. Glass, 75; R. N. Gordon, 79; T. W. Gordon, 81; S. M. Gray, 75; D. T. Gribben, 82; J. Holmes, 78; H. J. Honeyford, 76; S. E. Hughes, 79; R. J. Hyndman, 80; N. J. Linkens, 80; P. C. Lyle, 79; R. McM. Mackay, 79; J. W. P. McConnell, 80; D. K. McCrory, 82; R. A. Moffett, 81; D. T. Moore, 81; S. W. van Os, 77; D. C. Porter, 77; J. A. McN. Scott, 81; E. D. Smyth, 77; D. M. Spratt, 75; T. Steele, 78; W. G. Stewart, 76; G. R. Stockdale, 81; D. J. Templeton, 75; W. J. Todd.

Resolutions on the Books 352

Retired

M. Bolton, 82; D. J. H. Browne, 82; J. S. Dallas, 80; R. Harkness, 80; W. J. Kelly, 83; S. W. McClintock, 79; J. M. Maddock, 81; R. J. Magee, 81; J. W. Neilly, 80; W. J. Watson, 79.

Retired Ministers' Fund 299

Retired Ministers' House Fund 192

Retirement, Ministers 301

Retirement, Professor 265

Shankill Road Mission 189

SOCIAL WITNESS BOARD 184

Social Service 194

Social Witness Centres 194

Southern Social Witness 186

Statistics 279

Strategy for Mission 307

Students' Bursary Fund 270

Students, Schedule of 267

STUDIES FOR THE MINISTRY 265

Studies, Committee on 265

Sunday School Department 259

Sunday School Organiser 109

Synod Reports 75

Television, etc. 102

Theological Education 340

Toronto Blessing 13

Training Centre, Christian 269

TRUSTEES OF THE CHURCH 303

Trustees: Fortune Mission

Bequest 306

Trusts, Commission on 275

UNITED APPEAL BOARD 291

Union College 270

UNION COMMISSION 61

Visitations of Presbytery 8

War Memorial Hostel 191

Widows of Ministers' Fund 300

Without Charge, Ministers 45

Women's Association, Presbyterian 178

World Alliance of Reformed Churches 141

World Church Relations 141

World Development 143

Worship, Public 96

Young Women's Groups 182

YOUTH BOARD 239

Centres 242

Youth Events 246

Youth Home Mission 243

Youth Overseas 245

Youth Training and Resources 241

