

NINTH SESSION

Friday, 8th June, 2018

9.30am

In Private

The Assembly again convened, the Moderator leading in prayer.

The Report of the **JUDICIAL COMMISSION** (Reports pp355-356) (together with the Judicial Commission Confidential Report Booklet) was submitted by the Rev Dr DJ McKelvey.

Moved by the Rev Dr DJ McKelvey, seconded by the Rev TD Gribben, and agreed:

1. That the Report of the Judicial Commission be received.

The Report of the **SPECIAL JUDICIAL COMMISSION** (Reports p355) was submitted by the Rev Dr DJ McKelvey.

Moved by the Rev Dr DJ McKelvey, seconded by the Rev TD Gribben, and agreed:

1. That the Report of the Special Judicial Commission be received.

The Report of the **COMMISSION ON APPLICATIONS** (Reports p356) was submitted by the Rev TD Gribben.

Moved by the Rev TD Gribben, seconded by the Rev TJ Stothers, and agreed:

1. That the Report of the Commission on Applications be received.

In Public

GENERAL COUNCIL SECTION 3 – debate resumed (see page )

Moved by the Very Rev Principal JS Carson, seconded by the Rev TD Gribben:

30. That Section 3 of the Report of the General Council be received.

Moved as an amendment by the Rev CA Meban, seconded by Mr John Hunter:

30. That Section 3 of the Report of the General Council be received, with the exception of Appendix 2 of the Doctrine Committee Report, pages 84-89.

On being put to the House, the amendment was declared lost.

On being put to the House, the substantive motion was declared passed.

DISSENT

Dissent to the decision on Resolution 30 was recorded by the following:

CHRISTINA U	DAVID BRIAN KNOX	ROGER PURCE
BRADLEY	PHILIP MATEER	ALASTAIR J RANKIN
MORRIS GAULT	ROSEMARY McCALL	ANNA SCOTT
MARK GRAY	KATHERINE P MEYER	KIRK SHILLIDAY
BRIAN	SUSAN MOORE	
HENDERSON	WILFRED J ORR	
JOHN HUNTER		
C MARY HUNTER		

Business lapsed on Standing Orders (see page)

Intermission

The Report of the **COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL WITNESS** (Reports pp359-374) was submitted by Mr Lindsay Conway, OBE.

Moved by Mr Lindsay Conway, OBE, seconded by the Rev PE Dickinson, and agreed:

1. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the opening of Trinity House, Garvagh and for the efficient transfer of the work and witness of Ard Cluan (Londonderry) and York House (York House).

2. That the General Assembly note the launch of the Adult Safeguarding Policy, Guidelines and Pocket Guide on 15th March 2018 and encourage congregations to use the resources and avail of appropriate training.

3. That the General Assembly, recognising the under provision of support services for those with a Learning Disability in the post-19 age group, encourage the Council for Social Witness as it explores this matter and, if appropriate, engages with the Department of Health in collaboration with the Council for Public Affairs.

4. That the report of the Council for Social Witness be received.

GENERAL COUNCIL SECTION 5 – lapsed item commenced (see page)

Section 5 of the Report of the **GENERAL COUNCIL** (Reports pp114-142) along with resolutions 33-38 (Reports pp146-148) was submitted by the Rev Dr JA Curry, together with the following Supplementary Report:

AD-HOC BUSINESS

1. During the last year discussions have taken place to seek a resolution to what might be described as a small, but significant, anomaly in the current Code. This is to do with the wording of Par 226, relating to the provision whereby a Minister who is unable to remain in his/her charge to the normal retirement date may apply to be designated Minister Emeritus of the congregation(s) they are leaving. This enables the Minister to be a full member of Presbytery and General Assembly. Reference is made to these discussions in paragraph 7 on page 69 of the 2018 Reports.

2. The current provision of Par 226 of the Code relates to Ministers who ‘voluntarily resign’ from their charge, and the Moderator’s Advisory Committee has outlined the process to be followed for such to be considered by the Assembly (see 2018 Reports pages 69 & 73). However the current wording of the Code does not make similar provision for a Minister who, near to retirement, is loosed from his/her charge and where there is no fault (e.g. under Code Par 318(3)(c)). An overture has therefore been drafted, and is included on page 154 of the 2018 Reports, to enable the Assembly to consider amending the Code so that such Ministers may come within the scope of the provision made in Par 226.

3. The Presbytery of North Belfast, having been an advocate for such a change and having been made aware that the 2018 Assembly would be considering that change, has requested that the Rev Jack Drennan would be able to avail of this new provision, if of course the change to Par 226 is

agreed by the Assembly. Mr Drennan was loosed from his charge, to facilitate a realignment of ministry, on 1st February 2016, becoming then a Minister without Charge.

4. This request has been considered by the Moderator's Advisory Committee, on the basis of the agreed guidelines, and the Committee is supportive of the request. A suitable resolution is appended, which will be competent only if the 2018 Assembly has earlier amended Par 226 through the overture referred to above.

Additional Resolution:

37(a). That, under Par 226(a) of the Code, the Rev JSB Drennan be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of the congregation of Crumlin Road, Belfast.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Moved by the Rev Dr JA Curry, seconded by the TD Gribben and agreed:

35. That the following resignations be accepted (or noted) and appointments made:

- (a) the resignation of the Rev WJ Henry as Convener of the Linkage Commission, that he be thanked for his services, and that Mr James Livingstone be appointed in his place.
- (b) the resignation of the Very Rev Dr HA Dunlop as Convener of the Union Theological College Management Committee, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Very Rev Dr IJ Patterson be appointed in his place.
- (c) the resignation of the Rev CW Megaw as Convener of the Specialist Services Committee, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev JP Stanbridge be appointed in his place.
- (d) the resignation of the Rev Dr KP Meyer as Convener of the World Development Committee, that she be thanked for her services, and that the Rev FMA Forbes be appointed in her place.
- (e) the resignation of the Very Rev Dr RL Craig as Convener of the General Council, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Very Rev Dr JNI McNeely be appointed in his place.
- (f) the resignation of Mr John Hunter, CB, as Convener of the Support Services Committee, that he be thanked for his services, and that Mr David Thomson be appointed in his place.

(g) the resignation of the Rev DJ Irvine as Convener of the United Appeal Committee on 2nd February 2018 be noted, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev MR Catney be appointed in his place.

(h) the resignation of the Rev JN Seawright as Convener of the Older People's Services Committee, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev JNE Reid be appointed in his place.

The Moderator paid tribute to those Conveners retiring at this Assembly, and received those present in the House. He then led in prayer.

36. That the nominations to the General Assembly Commissions, Councils and Committees (as tabled by the Nominations Committee) be approved.

37. That the General Assembly to approve that the term of service for Council and Committee members be four years from the Assembly of appointment, rather than for the remainder of a general four year term.

38. That in connection with Special Assemblies:

(a) That the suggestion of an interim, follow up event to the 2017 Special Assembly should not be pursued.

(b) That in early 2021, a Task Group, comprised primarily of members of the Priorities Committee and the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, be formed to prayerfully discern if there is an emerging theme for a residential Special Assembly to be held in 2024.

(c) That should such a theme obviously present itself to the Task Group, that a recommendation be brought to the 2021 General Assembly for a Special Assembly in August 2024 and suitable arrangements for delivery of such an event be set in place.

(d) That if such a theme does not obviously present itself to the Task Group, that no Special Assembly be held in 2024, but that the matter of future Special Assemblies, or alternatives, be considered by the General Council.

39. That the General Assembly agree that the new structures for the Council for Congregational Life and Witness (see pages 136-142) become operative from the 2019 General Assembly.

Moved by the Rev NSR Lockhart, seconded by Mr Trevor Long, OBE, and agreed:

40. That, under Par 226(a) of the Code, the Rev JSB Drennan be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of the congregation of Crumlin Road, Belfast.

Moved by the Rev Dr JA Curry, seconded by the Rev TD Gribben and agreed:

41. That Section 5 of the Report of the General Council be received.

The Final Report of the **GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE**, was submitted by the Rev TD Gribben as follows:

The Business Committee met on one occasion during the Assembly to license additional amendments and give advice to the Clerk on guidance to be given to the House in respect of an item of business.

Additional Resolutions

39. That the Clerk be given authority to make corrections to the Daily Minutes as and when required.

40. That the next General Assembly be held in Belfast on Monday, 3rd June, 2019.

41. That the Final Report of the General Assembly Business Committee be received.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Moved by the Rev TD Gribben seconded by the Very Rev Dr RA Patton and agreed:

42. That the Clerk be given authority to make corrections to the Daily Minutes as and when required.

43. That the next General Assembly be held in Belfast on Monday, 3rd June, 2019.

44. That the Final Report of the General Assembly Business Committee be received.

CLOSE OF ASSEMBLY

The Moderator conducted a closing act of worship and thanked: his Chaplain, the Rev Robert McMullan; Miss Susan Hamilton, Mrs Jenny McClure, Mrs Denise Weir, and Mrs Alicia Knox of the General Secretary's Department; Mr Ed Connolly (Presentations), the IT Staff and those

responsible for the sound-desk; Mr Mark Smith, the Press and Web Officer; Mr James McCormick and the staff in the Creative Production Department; all Assembly Buildings staff, thanking especially those who so willingly carried extra duties and hours this year because of our evening sessions; Mrs Daphne Patton (Accommodation coordinator) and Mrs Phyllis Spence (Catering Coordinator); the Caterers – Four Seasons Catering; Mrs Pat Crossley (flower arrangements); the organists and other musicians; the ‘under 30s’ who were present and who contributed to debate; stewards of the Belfast City Mission and others; the timekeepers; the Rev Andrew Thompson (Arrangements Panel Convener); and the Clerk of Assembly and the Deputy Clerk.

Thereafter he declared the Assembly to be dissolved and convened the next Stated General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast, on Monday 3rd June, 2019.

The Moderator pronounced the Benediction.

The sederunt came to a close at 1.23pm.

Attested by
TREVOR D GRIBBEN
Clerk of Assembly