



## GENERAL ASSEMBLY



# ANNUAL REPORTS

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Notes:**
- (i) **Business commences at 10 a.m. on Tuesday and at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday and Thursday.**
  - (ii) **An “Introduction to Assembly Business” will be given in the Assembly Hall on Tuesday at 9.15 a.m.**
  - (iii) **Communion will be held on Tuesday at 12 noon and Worship on Wednesday and Thursday at 12.15 p.m. The break for lunch will be at 1 p.m. each day.**
  - (iv) **Figures in brackets refer to page numbers in the Annual Reports.**

#### **Tuesday**

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Business

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Communications

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Presbyterian Women

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Christian Training

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2010 Special Assembly

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Mission in Ireland

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Union Commission

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#### **Wednesday**

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Mission Overseas

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General

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United Appeal

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Finance and Personnel

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#### **Thursday**

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Judicial Commission

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Trusts

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Trustees

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Social Witness

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Education

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Youth and Children's

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## NOTES

## MONDAY, JUNE 7

### Within Church House

7.00 p.m.—

Service of Worship  
Constitution of Assembly  
Memorial Roll  
Election of Moderator

## TUESDAY, JUNE 8

10.00 a.m.—

1. BUSINESS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (1-6).  
Arrangements Committee.
2. Reports of Presbyteries (7-13).
3. Reception of Corresponding Members and Delegates.  
**Church of Scotland:** Rt Rev Dr John Christie, Rev Alastair Cherry, Charles McIntyre.  
**United Reformed Church:** Rev John Marsh.  
**Presbyterian Church of Wales:** Rev Gwenda Richards.  
**Church of Ireland:** Rt Rev MGStA Jackson, Mr LV Johnston.  
**The Methodist Church in Ireland:** Rev AW Ferguson, Ms Patricia Donald.  
**Irish Council of Churches:** Most Rev Richard Clarke.  
**Presbyterian Church USA:** Rev Doug Baker.  
**Church of North India:** Rt Rev Vinod Malaviya.  
**Gereja Masehi Injili di Halmahera (GMIT), Indonesia:** Rev Anton Piga, Rev Jerda Djawa, Rev Dermianus Ice.

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

## NOTES

4. COMMUNICATIONS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (258-263) Communications Administration; Communications Development; Church Architecture.
- (11.40) Intermission.
- 12.00 noon Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**
- 2.00 p.m.—**
5. PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN: Report and Resolution (164-169).
- (2.30) 6. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING: Report and Resolutions (242-257).  
Ministerial Studies and Development; Training and Resources; Union Theological Management.
7. 2010 Assembly Committee: Report and Resolutions (317).
- (3.45) Intermission.
- (4.00) 8. BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND: Report and Resolutions (176-196).  
Communications; Strategy for Mission; Research and Resources.
9. Overture on the books anent Par 40(4).
10. Overtures anent Pars 208(1), 300(4), 302(3)(a) of the Code (195-196).
- (5.00) 11. UNION COMMISSION.
12. Overtures anent Pars 57, 106(g), 128(3), 128(5)(a), 128(5)(d), 128(6)(b), 190(2)(c), 238(1), 245(1), 245(2)(a), 274(6)(a), 274(6)(c), 274(6)(d), 274(6)(e), 274(8), 274(10), 233(4), 260(f), 274(5)(c)(ii) and (iii), 274(6)(a), 274(7), 274(13), 274(5), 274(6), 274(12) of the Code (153-157).

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

## NOTES

(5.30) Close of Business.

7.45 PRESBYTERIANS TALK: POLICING AND JUSTICE.

### **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9**

**9.30 a.m.—**

13. BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS: Report and Resolutions (158-175).

Leadership Development; Mission Involvement; Outreach Ministries; World Development.

(10.45) Intermission.

(11.00) 14. GENERAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (14-113).

Priorities; Moderator's Advisory; Doctrine; Global Concerns; Church Relations; Recognised Ministries; Church and Society.

**12.15 p.m.—**

Worship.

**2.00 p.m.—**

15. GENERAL BOARD (cont'd): Report and Resolutions (14-113).

Financial Crisis; Church Courts; Judicial Appeals; Pensions and Assessments; Pastoral Care; Ministries.

16. Overtures on the Books anent Pars 62; 98 of the Code (112).

17. Overtures anent Pars 33, 81, 272(4) of the Code (113).

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

## NOTES



- (3.45) Intermission.
- (4.00) 18. UNITED APPEAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (304-310).
- (4.30) 19. BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL: Report and Resolutions (272-303).  
Finance, Legal and IT; Personnel; Property Management; Pensions and Assessments.
20. Overtures on the Books anent Pars 124(1); 125(1); 125(A) of the Code.
- (5.30) Close of Business.
- 7.45 p.m.— Evening Rally.**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 10**

**9.30 a.m.—**

**In Private**

21. JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (114-131).

**In Public**

22. COMMISSION ON TRUSTS: Report and Resolutions (311).
23. TRUSTEES: Report and Resolutions (312-316).

- (10.45) Intermission.
- (11.00) 24. BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS: Report and Resolutions (202-227).  
Specialist Ministries; Older People Services; Family Services; Adult Services.

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

## NOTES

**12.15 p.m.—**

Worship.

**2.00 p.m.—**

25. BOARD OF EDUCATION: Report and Resolutions (264-271).  
State Education.

(3.00) 26. BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: Report and Resolutions (228-241).  
Training; Research and Education; Resources; Ministry Opportunities; Ministry Events.

(3.45) Intermission.

(4.00) Lapsed Business.

BUSINESS BOARD: Final Report.

CLOSE OF ASSEMBLY.

*If it seems possible to finish business by 6.30 p.m., the afternoon session will continue to the close*

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

## NOTES

## BUSINESS BOARD

### A Guide to Assembly Procedure

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

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

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

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

**5. Committees:** Work for which the Assembly is responsible is generally entrusted to various permanent or temporary ("ad hoc") Committees. These must each present a report to the Assembly. Working Committees concerned

with related matters are grouped under a supervising Board. A Commission of Assembly is a Committee entrusted with the executive powers of the Assembly, within the terms of its appointment. Members of Committees, etc., are appointed by the Assembly on the nomination of various bodies and have a Convener in charge.

**6. Reports.** While the Assembly is obliged to “receive” the report of each Committee, etc., it does not “adopt” or accept responsibility for the contents of any report. Reports carry only the authority of the Committee concerned and not of the Assembly. If found too unsatisfactory the report or a section of it, may be received and referred back. This is done by an amendment to resolution 1. Any matter to which the Assembly is to be committed must be stated in a specific resolution. Resolutions should be kept to conclusions, rather than include arguments in support such as are appropriate to speeches. Similarly, speeches in the Assembly carry the authority only of the speaker.

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

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

9. After Questions, the presenter of the report formally proposes the appended resolutions in block and another person seconds, with a speech taking up any other aspects requiring treatment. Where it is considered helpful the seconder may speak before questions to clarify issues which may arise during questions.

**10. The Resolutions** are then taken in succession. The first of these is always “that the report be received”. This is the point where members may discuss (not ask questions

about) any matters in the report or for which the Board, etc., should bear responsibility, but which do not arise under any subsequent resolution.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

14. An amendment, if seconded, must be dealt with before further debate on the original resolution or

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

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

16. In the “**Alternative**” format each Board is given 35 minutes for a “Presentation”, including not only the proposing and seconding of the Report but the introduction of guests, the showing of videos, etc as may be desired. Outside speakers require the permission of the Business Board. Assembly questions for clarification then follow, and finally the resolutions. The speeches of the proposer and seconder, and any comments from Committee Conveners, should all be included in the allotted period of time, and these officebearers not speak again (except on a point of clarification or to close the debate on a resolution) otherwise the report is liable to overrun and cause business to lapse. No speech should be longer than ten minutes, unless by specific permission of the Business Board.

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



**18. An “Overture”** is a proposal for a change in the “Code”, or law of the Church’s Constitution and Government. Changes in rules, of which notice has been given in the printed Reports, may be adopted forthwith if approved by a two-thirds majority, or without such notice if approved nem.con. If approved by a lesser majority it is “placed on the books”, to be decided at the following Assembly. This applies also to rules governing the Central Ministry Fund and other Ministry Funds. In the Basic Code, where immediate operation is desirable, the change may be adopted temporarily during the intervening year as an “interim act”. If an overture contemplates a constitutional change it must also be sent down to Presbyteries to be voted on during the intervening year.

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

## NOTES

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# BUSINESS BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. In reviewing last year's Assembly the Business Board recognised that the pattern of Monday-Thursday meetings is working quite well, although concern was expressed that few younger people are attending the Monday evening opening. While the SPUD youth delegates are bringing a new dimension to the debates the Board is concerned at a general lack of participation. The Arrangements Committee was asked to consider these issues and report.

2. While some feel that one evening should be kept free, it was agreed to hold another "Presbyterian Talk" event on Tuesday evening. This is seen as a useful way for the Assembly to interact with one of the current community issues – this year on Policing and Justice.

3. Delegates were appointed to attend other Church meetings as follows:

**Presbyterian Church of Wales 2010:** Rt Rev Dr T Norman Hamilton

**United Reformed Church 2010:** Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson

**Church of Ireland General Synod 2010:** Very Rev Dr Donald Patton; Mr Denis Poynton

**Methodist Conference 2010:** Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson; Mr Campbell Young

4. The Business Board is appointed in accordance with the provisions of Par 275 of the Code to take office on the 15 March preceding the Assembly. The Board for the year 2010-2011, together with the associated Arrangements Committee is as follows:-

The Clerk, Convener

- (a) The Moderator, Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Assembly, Moderator-Designate, former Clerks, preceding three Moderators, Conveners and Secretaries of Commissions and Boards.
- (b) Rev WT Cordner; Mrs J Mann – Rev CUR Bradley; WK Belshaw – Rev D Knowles; J Suitters – Rev GF McKeown; Miss M Torrens – Rev JR Burnett; V Garland – Rev PP Campbell; DC Cowan – Rev AE Tolland; N Carmichael – Rev JA McCaughan; .....- Rev Dr J Fell; T Allen – Rev SA Woodburn; W Reid – Rev DB Knox; A Maxwell – Rev CG Gamble; W McIlreavy – Rev MG McClelland; David Knight – Rev GJ Mackarel; R Gillanders – Rev DB Murpy; Wm Grills – Rev R Herron; ..... – Rev RW Gaston; Dr E Henderson – Rev WJ Murdock; J McClurg – Rev Dr AR Rodgers; EM Carroll.

## A. ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE (6)

Rev GE Best, Convener

- (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, Moderator-Designate, Deputy Clerk, Communications Secretary, Hospitality Secretary, Buildings Manager; Committee Convener.

- (x) Rev Alan S Thompson; DA Crowe, M Fisher, Mrs J Anderson.
- (y) Revs WT Cordner, AE Tolland, R Herron, WJ Murdock, JA McCaughan, MG McClelland; Miss M Torrens, DC Cowan.

### **The Welsh Assembly 2009**

*The Right Rev Dr J Stafford Carson reports:*

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Wales met at the University of Wales at Lampeter from 7-9 September 2009. We have a strong link with this denomination through Stephen Williams, our esteemed Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological College, whose father and grandfather were both ministers in the Presbyterian Church of Wales. It is also the Church in which Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones was ordained, and where he served until he was called to Westminster Chapel in London.

Interestingly, in the Welsh language, Welsh Presbyterians are called "Methodists" because of their origin as Calvinistic Methodists, as distinct from Wesleyan Methodists. That heritage is still represented in various aspects of their form of church government where the Association rather than the Presbytery is an important decision-making assembly.

These are difficult times for PCW. The Church continues to decline, and having lost 20% of its membership in the last five years, it now stands at just over 30,000 members. Significantly, they have no students in training for the ministry, and they are reduced to less than 70 ministers in active service. There was some controversy at this year's assembly that, because of employment legislation, a number of ministers who had reached their 67th birthday were being forced to retire even though there was no one to replace them. In spite of their appeals, the Church had to apply the law rigidly.

The theme for the Assembly was "Rediscovering the Way" and it seemed clear that a number of people believe that as a denomination they have lost their way. One younger minister who led the morning devotions based his remarks on John 3 and asked if the Church was clear that all her ministers, and those who led services and organisations within the Church, were genuinely "born again". The fact that he asked the question indicated his deep concern.

The Right Rev Bill Hewitt, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, was also in attendance, and he and I had opportunity over a few meals to discuss the pattern of decline in mainline denominations, especially as it applies in Scotland and Ireland. The report of the Youth Board of PCW identified "passion" as being one of the primary characteristics of adolescents. It seems to me that if we are going to retain and nurture a significant group of committed young people we must be clear as well as passionate about what our calling is as a Church. In a word, we must have a passion for Christ.

That theme came through at the Assembly. One of the highlights of the Welsh Assembly was a lecture by the Rev Bryn Williams on "The Unique Christ in a Postmodern World". He exegeted, with precision and good illustrations, the nature of postmodernism and showed how the approach of Paul on Mars Hill still provided the pattern for Christians to present the good news of Jesus Christ to all people. It was most thoughtful and encouraging.

We recognise too, that if there are no young people in the Churches, then there is no one to respond to the call to be shepherds and leaders of the people. And if a Church has no pastors, then the sheep are not fed and they are not gathered as a flock. Healthy Churches require good pastors. Some believe that it is the marginalisation of young people in our Churches that causes them to walk away to other Churches or to write us off as irrelevant, and which ultimately leads to a loss of vitality and passion within our congregations.

We value our links with our brothers and sisters in Christ within PCW. Their new Moderator is the Rev Gwenda Richards, the first woman to be ordained as a minister within PCW, but, interestingly, not the first female Moderator of their Assembly. That distinction belonged to Miss Mary Roberts, an administrator in the denomination, who held the post in 1984.

### **The Methodist Conference 2009**

*The Very Rev Dr W Donald Patton reports:*

I attended the Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland held in the Smurfit Business School, Blackrock, 4-7 June. I had the company of Denis Poynton an elder in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Blackrock, at the Conference as a delegate from our Church and stayed with Denis and his wife Cherry. The new President, the Rev Donald P Ker was installed at a Service held on Thursday evening the 4th. The President of the Methodist Church in England, the Rev Stephen J Poxon, presided over the Conference proceedings as successor to the Rev John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, thus emphasising the historical link between the two bodies, though there is ongoing discussion to give this responsibility to the Irish President. The overall atmosphere was of an intimate and relaxed fellowship. From time to time the President would burst into song leading the Conference in extemporary praise. Can we look forward to a singing Moderator?

I was given the opportunity to bring fraternal greetings to the Conference and was warmly received. There are many personal and working links between our Ministers and people, and I enjoyed renewing friendship with a number of friends I hadn't seen for some time.

As with all such gatherings a lot of routine business is necessarily conducted but several thorny issues, common to all Churches, came to the fore. One of these revolved around a report from the Council on Social Responsibility on the subject of Human Sexuality. The report was hotly debated being criticised by some as trying to be all things to all men. Following a lengthy debate Conference voted to send it back to the Committee for further consideration.

The Rev Dr Richard Clutterbuck, Principal of Edgehill College, made mention of the changes in the working relationship between Edgehill and Union Theological College, due to differences of emphases on the direction of ministerial training. The Conference emphasised its wish that ways should be actively pursued to maintain a good working relationship with Union in the future.

The Faith and Order Committee was encouraged to continue its study on the Work of Christ and Justification by Faith, a debate which was enlivened with

the publication of 'The Atonement Debate', edited by Steve Chalke. It was proposed to engage the wider Church in the debate through the Methodist Newsletter, a Lent blog, and the publication of Bible study/discussion material.

The Youth and Children's Department reported on a lively and creative work to engage, train and include the youth within the Church and without the Church in service to Jesus as Lord and Saviour, through a variety of programmes with titles such as Building Blocks and Follow the Star.

There were several opportunities for reflection. At a breakfast held on the Friday morning the Very Rev Dr Trevor Morrow, Minister of Lucan Presbyterian Church, gave a thoughtful and challenging address on ministry woven around an autobiographical theme. Saturday lunchtime, Glen Jordan led a Bible study on the upheavals within society, asking the question, "What has the Church to say when the world ends?" He based his thinking on the theme of lament (Jeremiah chapter 4 and Lamentations chapter 5) emphasising the value of lament as a means of refocusing on God, and enabling us to grow in faith, thereby avoiding bitterness and hopelessness. On Saturday morning the Vice President of the British Conference, Mr David Walton, spoke about Christian ethics in the workplace, using the story of Jesus encounter with Zacchaeus to illustrate the difference that Christian faith and profession must necessarily make to how we conduct ourselves in the workplace.

Finally I share three points the British President made in an address in which he extolled the value of learning from the Church across the world to develop (a) Worship that celebrates; (b) Fellowship that enriches, and (c) Commitment that motivates. These are values every Christian should foster personally and in the Church. Interchange with each other allows us to deepen our understanding and to hone our practice as a living witness to Jesus as Lord and Saviour in a world which is increasingly indifferent and hostile to the gospel.

## ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

### General

1. The decline in numbers attending Opening Night has given cause for concern for several years, and the view has been expressed that this service needs a change of emphasis.

2. The Committee was tasked by the Business Board to research three remits:

- (i) To assess the purpose and effectiveness of Opening Night
- (ii) To assess the format and timing of Business during Assembly Week
- (iii) To consider ways of encouraging more members of Assembly to participate in debates.

3. In the course of discussion, the Committee agreed in general that:

- Opening Night should be largely a celebration of the Outgoing Moderator's year in office. The Outgoing Moderator would take chief responsibility for the format and content of the service. It was envisaged that this would be an inspirational service



reflective of where the Church is at today in terms of its worship and mission. The Incoming Moderator would be installed at a suitable point towards the close of the service. Former Moderators would not possess but would remain in reserve seating throughout the service.

- The Memorial Roll should be read at the Tuesday Communion Service. The Incoming Moderator would preach at this service.
- The Incoming Moderator should have opportunity to introduce his/her theme at the Assembly Rally which would change to the Thursday evening, and which would close the Assembly. The Incoming Moderator would have the responsibility for the format and content of this rally. Again, it is envisaged that this would be an inspirational service of worship, and should end the Assembly on a 'positive note'
- To aid efficiency in Assembly Business, Wednesday should be set aside as a full day of Business to include the Private Session and any Lapsed Business.
- There are limited ways to stimulate and encourage greater participation in debate during Assembly Business.

4. Resolutions are appended below which cover the specific details of how these general objectives may be achieved

#### **Guidelines to New Members**

5. It has been agreed again to provide an opportunity for elders and ministers who are attending the General Assembly for the first time to be given an introduction to Assembly procedures. This will take place between 9.15 am and 9.45 am on Tuesday, immediately prior to the first Business Session of the Assembly.

#### **Communion and Worship Services**

6. The Communion Service this year will as usual commence at 12 noon on Tuesday. There will be a coffee break immediately prior to this service, but members of Assembly are asked to be in their seats not later than 11.55am. There will also be worship on Wednesday and Thursday 12.15pm, open to the public.

#### **Exhibition**

7. Various exhibition stands will be displayed this year in the Concourse and the Carrickfergus Window area. These will feature the work of Boards and other agencies within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

#### **Tea/Coffee Breaks**

8. Tea and coffee will be served this year in the Minor Hall and in the Concourse. We are positively encouraging as many people as possible to make their way to the relatively spacious surroundings of the Minor Hall to minimise the usual congestion in the Concourse.

**Queuing to Speak**

9. The row of seats directly in front of the rostrum is reserved for those queuing to speak in debates. In the interests of efficiency and courtesy, members are asked to respect this.

**Voting Cards**

10. These should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk located in the Concourse where they are available on Monday evening/Tuesday morning, after which Members should contact the Financial Secretary's Office. Ministers please note once again this year that when obtaining voting cards, they will be asked to produce the Registration Card which is enclosed with these reports.

**Admission**

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

**Expenses**

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

GORDON BEST, Convener

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommended Order of Business be adopted.
3. That the General Assembly accept in the outline of Opening Night in the Arrangements Committee Report (Par 3) and ask the Business Board to trial at these arrangements in 2011.
4. That the General Assembly agree to the Memorial Roll being read at the Tuesday Communion Service from 2011.
5. That the Assembly Rally should be held on the Thursday Evening from 2011 and include the closing of the Assembly.
6. That the professional amplification controller and the visual display operator be admitted to the private session.
7. That a grant of £16,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.
8. That the Business Board, with its associated working Committee, be appointed in accordance with Par 275 of the Code for the ensuing year beginning 15 March, 2010.

## REPORTS OF PRESBYTERIES

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev James Campbell is their Moderator; that the Rev WJ Parkes, minister of St Andrew's, Bangor died on 8 March 2009; that the Rev DJ Steele resigned from Missionary service on 7 January 2010 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that the Rev Simon Henning presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast and was installed to the charge of Ballyblack on 29 May 2009; that MWJ McKeown and Lesley-Ann Wilson presented credentials from the Presbyteries of East Belfast and South Belfast respectively and were received as Licentiates; that the Rev Dr AF Nel, transferring, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that William Harkness, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that under their care are, as Ministers without Charge the Revs Dr SI Dennis, David McKee (retired), CD Mawhinney, DM Spratt; as Licentiates Mark Catney, Molly Deatherage, Graeme Fowles, DW Leach, Dr Michael McClenaghan, MWJ McKeown, KM Mbayo, BJ Walker, Lesley-Ann Wilson; as Students Andrew Conway, Aaron Ditty, Peter Douglas, Fiona Forbes, Andrew Galbraith, Graeme McConville, Paul Orr, Owen Patterson; that they held a Consultation at Trinity, Bangor; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev EP Gamble is their Moderator; that the Rev DJ Hutchinson presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was installed to the charge of Moy and Benburb on 12 June 2009; that the Rev AJ Dunlop presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was inducted as Assistant Minister in First Portadown on 1 April 2009; that MB Wilson was licensed on 6 June 2009 and continues under the care of Presbytery; that Andrew Faulkner and Colin McKibbin presented credentials from the Presbyteries of Iveagh and Dromore respectively and were received as Licentiates; that they have under their care as Licentiates, Andrew Faulker, Colin McKibbin, MB Wilson; as Students Seamus Burke, Ashley Graham, Simon Hamilton, David McCullagh and Mark Proctor; that they held Consultations at First Lurgan and Craigavon; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev KWJ Hanna is their Moderator; that the Rev AJ Dunlop resigned his appointment as Assistant Minister of Harryville on 31 March 2009 having received and accepted a call from the Kirk session of First Portadown and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that the Rev SWW Neilly resigned his charge as minister of Third Portglenone on 31 December 2009; that the Rev JE McDowell resigned his appointment as Associate Minister of Wellington on 25 February

2010 having received and accepted a call from the Congregation of Ballylinney and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr RM Moody was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 21 June 2009 and remains under the care of Presbytery; that they have under their care as Minister without Charge the Rev JD McGaughey; as Licentiates: WE Chestnutt and RM Moody; and as Students for the Ministry: MJO Currie, PA Kerr, SW Moore and NI Smyth; that they held Consultations at First Ballymena, High Kirk and Clough; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev WA Abernethy is their Moderator; that JA McKay, Licentiate, died on 22 September 2009; that the Rev RN Agnew retired as Minister of West Kirk on 31 July 2009; that the Rev WMcB Campbell retired as Minister of Shankill Road Mission Congregation on 7 September 2009; that the Rev JWD Rodgers resigned as Associate Minister in Whiteabbey on 23 June 2009 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that DF Leal presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was ordained and inducted as Church Planter (Cliftonville Road) on 22 May 2009; that MF Russell, Licentiate under the care of the Presbytery, was ordained and inducted as Associate Minister in Carnmoney on 20 September 2009; that SWK Glendinning presented credential from the Presbytery of Tyrone and was received as a Licentiate; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs LH Eagleson, CI McKnight, WA Shaw, WM Smyth (retired), and FW Vincent; as Licentiates Thomas Bruce, SWK Glendinning, David McCarthy; as Students for the Ministry, Ivan Ferris, Richard Houston, Jane Nelson, Jackie Spence, Gareth Simpson, Lachlan Webster; that a Consultation was held with the Congregation of Woodvale; and that the congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

The **SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Robert Love is their Moderator; that the Rev WDF Marshall, Minister Emeritus of Windsor, died on 9 August 2009; that the Rev JA Braithwaite, Minister of Dunmurry, retired on 10 January 2010, that the Rev WI Hull, Minister of Ulsterville, retired on 24 January 2010; that the Rev KA Drury resigned as Minister of May Street on 31 July 2009, that the Rev Dr MCA Gray resigned as Minister of Cooke Centenary on 10 September 2009 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh; that the Rev RS Stockman resigned as QUB Chaplain and Dean of Residence and was installed as Minister of Fitzroy on 13 November 2009; that CH Deering, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was ordained and installed as Minister of Ballycairn on 6 November 2009; that Ivan Steen and Lesley-Ann Wilson were licensed on 31 May 2009 and provided with credentials to the Presbyteries of Dromore and Ards respectively; that Kathryn Viner

presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was received as a Licentiate; that the Rev Simon Henning, Minister under the care of Presbytery, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ards on 5 May 2009; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Kathryn Viner; as Students for the Ministry Jonathan Abernethy, Corinna McQuigg, Colin Millar; that Consultations were held with the Congregation of Kilmakee; and that the congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JNI McNeely is their Moderator; that the Rev WC McReynolds, Minister Emeritus of Granshaw, died on 17 January 2010; that the Rev William McKeown, Minister of Ravenhill, retired on 30 June 2009; that the Very Rev Dr IA McKay, Minister of Dundonald, retired on 31 July 2009; that the Rev Dr Graham Connor, resigned from Missionary service on 5 March 2009 and was given credentials to the Down Presbytery; that the Rev CWP Kennedy, resigned as Associate Minister in Knock on 3 September 2009 and was given credentials to Dublin and Munster Presbytery; that RSJ McIlhatton presented credentials from the Derry and Donegal Presbytery and was ordained and installed to the Congregation of Christ Church on 11 September 2009; that BJ Walker presented credentials from the Ards Presbytery and was ordained and inducted as Associate Minister in Knock on 24 January 2010; that MWJ McKeown was licensed on 7 June 2009 and given credentials to the Ards Presbytery; that NRA Cooper presented credentials from the Carrickfergus Presbytery and was received as a Licentiate; that William Harkness presented credentials from the Ards Presbytery and was received as a Licentiate; that DF Leal, Licentiate, was given credentials to the North Belfast Presbytery; that the Rev WS Smart, transferring, was given credentials to the Route Presbytery; that they have under the care of Presbytery as Ministers without charge, Revs DR Baker, RA Crooks (Retired), WJ Harshaw, Dr Elizabeth Jamison and LR Pedlow (retired); as Licentiates, Grant Connor, NRA Cooper, William Harkness, JL Rutherford; as Students, Andrew Boreland, Peter Bovill, Jonathan Boyd, Stephen Cowan, David Gray, Edward McKenzie, Gareth Maclean; Consultations at Bloomfield and Orangefield are being held this year; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev RI Carton is their Moderator; that the Very Rev Dr RG Craig, Minister Emeritus of First Carrickfergus, died on 1 June 2009; that the Rev WJ Johnstone, Minister of Craig Hill, retired on 31 August 2009; that the Rev JWD Rogers, presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was installed to the charge of Ballynure on 24 June 2009; that the Rev GWM Glasgow, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was installed to the charge of Gardenmore on 11 September 2009; that the Rev JE McDowell, presented credentials from

the Presbytery of Ballymena and was installed to the charge of Ballylinney on 26 February 2010; that TN Bingham, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick and was ordained and installed to the charge of Magheramorne and Raloo on 18 September 2009; that on 7 June 2009 NRA Cooper was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry and given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that on Andrew Carroll, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that under their care are, as Minister without Charge, Rev DJ Paul; as Licentiates, David Clawson, LM Keys; that no Consultations were held; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **COLERAINE AND LIMAVADY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev CWA Martin is their Moderator; that the Rev Noel Ward retired from the duties of the active ministry on 10 January 2010 and demitted the charge of Banagher; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Alan Buick, Jonathan Doey, Jonathan Frazer, Keith Hibbert, Stephen Hibbert, John Stanbridge and Neil Stewart; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are printed separately.

The **DERRY AND DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the inaugural meeting of the Presbytery was held on 10 March 2009 when the Rev SJ Gray acted as Moderator; that the Rev Dr Joseph Fell is their Moderator; that the Rev William Chestnutt, Minister Emeritus of Donaghedy Congregation died on 8 June 2009; that the Rev James Lamont retired from the duties of the active Ministry in the Congregations of Dunfanaghy and Carrigart on 1 June 2009; that the Rev Dr Joseph Fell retired from the duties of the active Ministry in the Congregation of Ebrington on 31 October 2009; the Rev DJ Hutchinson resigned as Minister of Leckpatrick Congregation on 11 June 2009, having received a call from Moy and Benburb Congregations and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that the Rev TD Hagan resigned as Minister of Carndonagh and Malin Congregations on 21 January 2010, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; that on 17 October 2009, JM Browne, Licentiate, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh was ordained and installed to the pastoral oversight of the Congregations of Milford, Fannet and Rathmullan; that RSJ McIlhatton, Licentiate, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that RN Orr, Licentiate, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that the Presbytery have under its care as Ministers without Charge the Revs KG Patterson, JC Teeney, as a Licentiate without Charge William Montgomery; as Students for the Ministry, Jonathan Cowan and Brian Smyth; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** reports that the Rev BA Small is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr Graham Connor presented credentials

from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was installed to the charge of Second Saintfield on 6 March 2009; that the Rev Dr AF Nel presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was installed to the charge of Killinchy on 20 March 2009; that Kathryn Viner was licensed on 21 June 2009 and given credentials to the Presbytery of South Belfast; that under their care are: as Ministers without Charge, the Revs Samuel Armstrong, JM Casement, RN Stewart (retired), GR Stockdale; as Licentiates MC Cowan, Lesley-Ann Wilson; that during the year they held no Consultations; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** reports that the Rev John Brackenridge is their Moderator; that the Rev DC Porter, Minister of Second Dromara, retired on 31 January 2010; that the Rev GWM Glasgow resigned as Minister of Drumlough and Anahilt on 10 September 2009 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that the Rev RD Cameron presented credentials from the Presbytery of Omagh and was inducted as Chaplain to HMP Maghaberry on 29 May 2009; that Colin McKibbin was licensed on 21 June 2009 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; RS Agnew, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; CH Deering, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Belfast South; RG McElnea, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; Raymond McKibbin, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh; that under their care is: as a Minister without Charge the Rev JD Mark; that they held Consultations at First Dromara, First Dromore and Banbridge Road, Dromore; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JD Woodside is their Moderator; that the Rev MD Wasson, Minister Emeritus of Ballina, Killala and Ballymote, died on 19 July 2009; that the Rev CWP Kennedy presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was installed to the charge of Dun Laoghaire on 4 September 2009; that Andrew Carroll presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and inducted to the work of Church Planter, Donabate, on 7 February 2010; that under the care are: as Students, Damien Burke, Helen Freeburn and Kevin Hargaden; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev MN Davison is their Moderator; that the Rev WH Sanderson, Minister of Ballydown and Katesbridge, retired on 10 May 2009; that the Rev WJM Parker, Minister of Castlewella and Leitrim, resigned his charge on 9 April 2009 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that the Rev Dr MCA Gray presented credentials from the Presbytery of

Belfast South and was installed to the charge of Bannside on 11 September 2009; that Raymond McKibbin, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was ordained and installed to the charges of Glascar and Donaghmore on 4 September 2009; that Andrew Faulkner was licensed on 5 June 2009 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that JM Browne, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal; that under their care as Minister without Charge Rev EG McAuley (retired); that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev GA Mitchell is their Moderator; that RS Agnew, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was ordained and installed to the charge of First Monaghan and Smithborough on 18 September 2009; that the Rev TD Hagan presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was installed to the charge of Clontibret and Middletown on 22 January 2010; that they held Consultations at Drumkeeran, Killeshandra, Cavan, Bellasis; and that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev BAH Wilson is their Moderator; that the Rev DJ Irvine presented credentials from the Presbytery of Tyrone and was installed to the charge of First and Second Markethill on 8 January 2010; that during the year they completed no Consultations; and that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev RB Thompson is their Moderator; that the Very Rev Dr JW Lockington, Minister of Clogherney, retired on 15 May 2009; that the Rev Ian McClean, Minister of Ballygawley and Ballyreagh, retired on 30 September 2009; that the Rev RD Cameron resigned the charge of Seskinore and Edenderry and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that the Rev AJ Gordon presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ross, Church of Scotland, and was installed to the charge of Fintona and Ballynahatty and Creevan on 20 March 2009; that the Rev RG McElnea, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was ordained and installed to the charge of Newtownstewart and Gortin on 4 September 2009; that RN Orr, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was ordained and installed to the charge of First Castlederg and Killeter on 7 January 2010; and that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being published separately.

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev RJ Gilkinson is their Moderator; that the Rev WS Smart presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was installed to the charge of First Ballymoney on 30 June 2009; that they have under their care as



Ministers without Charge: the Revs Dr Victor Dobbin CB, MBE, William Brown (retired); as Students for the Ministry: JB Mullan, John McConaghie and SD McNie; that they visited the Congregations of First Kilraughts and Drumreagh; that the financial reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev CM Glover is their Moderator; that the Rev WJM Parker presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh and was installed to the charge of First Antrim on 9 April 2009; that the Rev DJ Steele presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was installed to the charge of Dundrod on 8 January 2010; that TN Bingham, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that under their care is a Student, SA Morrow; and that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev WG Hamilton is their Moderator; that the Rev DJ Irvine resigned the charge of First Stewartstown, Brigh and Albany on 7 January 2010 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Newry; that JM Gracey, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and installed in the Congregations of Coagh, Ballygoney and Saltersland on 5 March 2009; that SWK Glendinning was licensed on 21 June 2009 and furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that under their care, as Students for the Ministry, are Trevor Boyd, Noel Mulholland, Graeme Orr and Ben Preston; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

# GENERAL BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. This year has been another extremely busy year for the General Board with several important Panels undertaking specific work, as well as the on-going work of the permanent Committees. This could not be achieved without the dedicated commitment of Conveners and Committee members who give generously of their time and experience. The Church must be grateful for the enormous number of volunteer hours devoted to discerning direction and giving leadership to all the Boards of this General Assembly.

2. A new initiative this year was for the Board to hold a **Conference in January**. There were two main themes. In the morning the Conference looked at the support and encouragement given to ministers and others working in the Church setting by a) Kirk Session b) Presbytery c) General Assembly. This was to build on the important work of the Panels on **Pastoral Care of Manse Families and Conciliation**. It is recognised that many ministers and other leaders at times feel under stress and isolated. The question is whether the "Courts" of the Church are organised in such a way as to offer support, or indeed whether at times they may add to the pressure. It is intended to include a fuller report of the Conference with the Supplementary Reports and to recommend that the General Board continues to consider ways in which the Church Courts, including Boards and Committees of the General Assembly, may evolve to be more effective in the support they offer. While this is not their only responsibility it is important to their work.

3. In the afternoon the Conference looked at issues around resourcing the Church for ministry and mission. This theme is being actively considered by a number of groups, including the Union Commission, Pensions and Assessments Panel and United Appeal Board. Further comment will be made in the report of the Conference.

4. In the light of the **Financial Crisis**, the General Board appointed a Panel in 2009 which has been guiding the response of the Church in these very difficult circumstances especially in relation to the Presbyterian Mutual Society. A substantive report was given to a Special Assembly on 13 April, 2010 and a follow-up report will be brought in the Supplementary Reports. A further Panel investigating the spiritual and ethical issues which emerge for our Church has begun its work, but does not intend to report until 2011.

5. One of the major pieces of work undertaken by the General Board this year, which has wide implications for our Church, is the review of **Pensions and Assessments**. The Panel has thoroughly undertaken this work and given many hours to the detailed analysis of the options. It brings its report to this Assembly (p 67). The **Panel on Ministries** also brings a major report (p 93).

6. As reported last year the General Board has appointed a Panel to consider the **Future of Peacemaking** in our denomination, now that the 3 year Peacemaking Programme has come to an end. It is recognised that society is changing rapidly in Ireland, both North and South, and clear thought needs to be

given as to how the Church may give leadership in working for a stable and cohesive society. A report and recommendations are brought to this Assembly for discussion (p 101).

7. At the last Assembly two Panels were formed to respond to the **Memorials of the Tyrone Presbytery** on (a) the relationships of Church Courts, especially when there are differing authoritative interpretations of Scripture and the Subordinate Standards held on a matter within the wider Church (Minutes 2009, pp 91-92); (b) provision for inquiry into or review of Judicial Commission practices and procedures (Minutes 2009, p 92). The Panels bring their reports and recommendations to this Assembly (pp 63, 66).

8. This year's **SPUD Youth Assembly** looked at a range of issues, under the themes of 'Young People and the Church'; 'Engaging local congregations in Social Witness', and 'Missional Church'. Something of which the delegates became aware was that there is significant overlap in certain areas of the different Boards' work, particularly in the area of mission and community engagement. While they were extremely encouraged to see that the work of the various Boards compliment one another, they were also concerned that perhaps they were working in similar areas without great communication. The young people felt strongly that greater co-operation between the Mission Boards would be beneficial, and were keen to maintain a voice in the ongoing conversations surrounding holistic mission and community engagement. It is realised that this is not an original thought, that the Boards have the desire to work together and that the Mission Co-ordination Panel does exist. However with all of this in mind, SPUD proposes a resolution to encourage greater co-operation between the Mission Boards, in which young people may play a meaningful part.

9. The Board has been following up remits given to it by the General Assembly. A Panel has been looking at the Memorial **from Saintfield Road Kirk Session** and brings its recommendations (p 103). The Clerk is discussing with the General Assembly's Solicitor proposed changes to The Code and possibly the Union Theological College of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Act 1978, to give permanent effect to the agreed changes in the **Management Structures for Union Theological College** (Minutes 2009, p 85). The relevant Overtures will be published in the Supplementary Reports. A Panel was set up by the Board to report on the **wider role of Faculty** at Union Theological College and is continuing its work. Recently, a question was asked of the Clerk concerning the **eligibility of a paid employee of a Congregation to become an elder** in that Congregation. The General Assembly's Solicitor has advised that: "Trustees can only be employees if authorised by the constitution of the charity. Although The Code permits payments to be made to a Minister there is no express provision to allow payment to Elders. I am advised that Elders and indeed Committee members would be treated as though they were trustees.". In consultation with the General Assembly's Solicitor appropriate Overtures will be published in the Supplementary Reports.

10. The major Committees of the Board continue their work. One of the Tyrone Memorials referred to the **Doctrine Committee** significant doctrinal and pastoral issues on marriage. It brings a substantive report this year (p 23). The **Moderator's Advisory Committee** continues to consider ways to encourage conciliation throughout the Church (p 22) and the **Priorities Committee** reports

on its modus operandi (p 16). As always, the **Church and Society Committee** has been giving a lead on issues which affect the well-being of society (p 45). There are significant developments reported in the **Church Relations Committee** report, both globally in the merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council and locally in new staffing developments at the Irish Council of Churches.

11. The work of the General Board depends on the enthusiasm and hard work of its Committee Conveners, all of whom have an extensive remit. This year three of the Conveners are retiring. *The Rev Charles McMullen* has led the work of **Global Concerns** during an important period of transition. This is a difficult Committee to convene as it depends largely on the input of three Panels – Environment, Peace and Peacemaking, and Race Relations – but the breadth of Charles’ interests have helped him to hold the many facets of this work together. The Lifestyle report of 2008 is a testament to the thorough approach he brought to this work. *The Rev Dr Allen Sleith* is also resigning from the convenership of the **Church Relations Committee** due to understandable family and congregational commitments. During his convenership Allen showed clear insight in dealing with the difficult issues which are inevitably on the agenda of this Committee.

12. Changes in the intention of the Board of Christian Training to appoint a Principal of Union Theological College are reported in that Board’s report (p 242). *The Rev Prof Laurence Kirkpatrick* resigned as Principal on 31 March 2010 and by convention also as Convener of the Doctrine Committee. In the short time of his appointment Laurence brought to the position clarity of thought and a desire to work constructively for the good of all connected with the College. His resignation was accepted with regret and at the time of writing an interview is arranged in order to bring a nomination as Principal to the Assembly.

13. One important task requiring careful research and sensitivity is keeping the Memorial Roll and Record. This has been undertaken with great diligence by the Rev Dr Jack Richardson and the Board records its grateful thanks.

## PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

### Priorities in Funding and Resource Allocation

1. It is now generally accepted that the Priorities Committee must have the key role in ensuring that resources are allocated according to identified and agreed priorities. For this to be effective the following procedure was agreed:

- (a) The first step will be for the Priorities Committee to report each year, through the General Board to the General Assembly, its proposed areas of priority for the next 3 years e.g. the Assembly of 2010 will agree priority areas for 2011-13.
- (b) In preparing their on-going and future programmes of work, the Boards will then be aware of the general priority areas which have been identified and agreed by the General Assembly. In the light of

this, the Boards will be asked to report to the Priorities Committee in January each year on:

- (i) Work in which they are presently engaged and which they believe should be continued
  - (ii) Work which they no longer intend to continue or which is to be scaled down.
  - (iii) New work which the Board would hope to begin.
- (c) On the basis of the Board submissions and on-going discussions, the Priorities Committee will report to the General Board in March and then to the General Assembly in June on the agreed priorities for both on-going and proposed new work of the Boards. It will no longer be possible for Boards to initiate new work, or greatly expand existing work, by separate resolution at the General Assembly. Instead the report of the Priorities Committee will comment on and prioritise the work proposed by the Boards and a composite resolution will be brought to the Assembly which can, of course, be amended.
- (d) Following the March meeting of the General Board, and informed by the agreed priority areas of work, the United Appeal Board will consider the Board Budgets for the subsequent year and report to the General Assembly for confirmation. In some cases a budget item may be held as a contingency for the General Assembly to decide whether or not it should be included.
- (e) While the Finance and Personnel and General Boards do not directly receive United Appeal funding, their work priorities will similarly be examined and reported on by the Priorities Committee. This will inform the budgeting of the Incidental Fund.

### **Aspirations for our Church**

2. A previous report identified the following aspirations for our Church to be:

(a) *A prophetic voice, confidently proclaiming where it stands and who it stands beside, in a society which is increasingly secular and often opposed to Christian values and lifestyle.*

The prophetic voice offers a critique of life today and comments on where life appears to be going. It is a reflective voice which invites a response, an alternative voice which is critical of the status quo and a stimulating voice which challenges complacency. It is also an authentic voice where word is reflected in lifestyle.

In the history of the Church there are many examples of prophetic voices where individuals or the Church as a body have brought 'a word in season'. Sometimes the voice has been accompanied by action and other times the action has embodied the word.

Having a voice is essentially about communication. There is a need for a co-ordinated strategy in which the Church is prepared to set the agenda rather than respond to it. Church leadership must also be prepared to listen to and be challenged by a prophetic critique of what is being offered to the world.

However important it is to speak with a prophetic voice at a denominational level, it is equally important that the prophetic voice be heard at the local level.

This has important implications for the training of students for the ministry and for the ongoing equipping of ministers and others who declare God's Word.

(b) *A **caring fellowship**, welcoming the stranger and learning from one another, valuing the gifts of each individual, while offering prayer and pastoral support to all in need.*

It is recognised that congregations of the PCI are not always as welcoming and caring as they should be. This is especially relevant at a time when visitors and strangers both from within Irish culture and beyond are coming to live and worship here. There is a need to re-examine the ways in which congregations include outsiders and become enriched by them.

In the congregational family, while the role of the minister is pivotal, pastoral care should not be seen to be the responsibility of one person alone. The leadership should be jointly responsible not least for their own fellowship and support. Pastoral care teams need to be developed, recognising the varied gifting of Church members who need to be trained and recognised.

(c) *A **platform for service and outreach**, with each Congregation seeking to identify the needs of the community where it is placed and encouraging its members to act as Christ's representatives in the place where they live and work.*

In previous generations, in many localities, the Church was embedded in the community and acted as a Community Centre. Ministers had a high profile in the community. Attending Church was a norm that required no justification. Today the local Church is largely marginalised and is widely considered to be, at best, an irrelevance and, at worst, a negative influence, keeping alive old enmities, highlighting division and contributing to community strife. This intensifies the temptation for the local Church to become primarily a place of shelter for the faithful, an oasis of comforting certainties and fellowship. Yielding to this temptation will inevitably lead to the local Church's demise and death, since its membership will grow older, dwindle and depart.

(d) *A **place of transformation**, where people do not leave as they have entered but are challenged and changed, having encountered the living God present in the worship and the lives of his people.*

If congregations are going to be places of transformation they must provide training, support and encouragement for members to make a difference in society. The challenge is not only to bring people to faith but to disciple them for work and service in today's world. Too many congregations adopt a "convert and retain" policy rather than a "train and release" policy.

For this attitude to change, new thinking needs to take place on the role and leadership function of Kirk Session. This may involve issues such as the length of service of elders and their pastoral/district responsibilities. The role and training of those involved in Sunday Schools and Christian Education also needs to be re-examined.

(e) *A **community of global concern**, learning from and sharing with our brothers and sisters in the world Church, while recognising with them those issues of concern for our stewardship of the world's resources where together we must challenge injustice, poverty and oppression in Jesus' name.*

Much has been said in recent years about globalisation and living in a Global Village. There is now much greater ease in communication. Not only can

those in the West travel the world, but there is also much greater migration from less developed countries. There is a global community and it is no longer necessary to leave the shores of Ireland to engage with a broad range of people from different cultural backgrounds.

Living in an increasingly multicultural community, means that as far as mission is concerned, 'geography is history'. The emphasis on a home and overseas distinction is diminishing, and instead of talking of mission as being local or global a new word has crept into mission vocabulary, glocal. The implications of this for future inter-board discussions and for structural adjustment needs to be recognised.

Concern for global issues must result in engagement, not only in terms of stewardship but of mission in the broadest sense. The economic, social, and political must be balanced with the spiritual and environmental, taking a holistic approach. There must be emphasis on the need for the gospel to be lived out relationally and incarnationally in the world today, both at home and overseas. The Church must become a community which is globally engaged.

### **Priority Areas (2011-2013)**

3. From these more general aspirations five priority areas had been identified to encourage new work and thinking throughout the Church. These were assessed as follows:

#### **(i) Developing centres of pastoral care and fellowship –**

*Congregations need to be aware of their existence as open and welcoming communities of faith where genuine care is offered and fellowship enjoyed. Pastoral care must be seen as a responsibility of all, led by the Kirk Session. Particular attention needs to be given to the care of manse families both by the Kirk Session and Presbytery.*

The good work of the Pastoral Care Panel, convened by the Rev Gabrielle Farquhar, was recognised and the introduction of "Care-Call". The Committee agreed that it is important also to look at the role of the Kirk Session, Presbytery and General Assembly in supporting ministers and their families. Sometimes the very bodies which should be giving care and encouragement can be themselves the source of additional stress. This became one of the main topics of the General Board Conference in January (see separate report). The Board of Christian Training is developing a new framework for pastoral care in congregations and a training resource.

#### **(ii) Discipling and Training for all-member ministry –**

*The development of the gifts of all believers must be a vital element of congregational life. This may mean centrally the recognition of new types of ministry, both full-time and part-time. It will also mean continuing ministerial development and the development of leadership in all aspects of congregational life. A co-ordinated approach to training and ministry is essential.*

The development of new types of ministry, both full-time and part-time, has been spearheaded by the Ministries Panel and taken up by the Board of Christian Training. Continuing ministerial development is being co-ordinated by

the Director of Ministerial Studies and in the early years is now compulsory. While the Board of Christian Training has indicated that its Christian Training programme will concentrate on “generic” training which is of wide relevance to the Church in developing its leadership, the question remains as to how the Boards may provide “specialist” training in their own fields and to what extent this needs to be co-ordinated.

**(iii) Encouraging prophetic community involvement –**

*Congregations must be encouraged to engage realistically and prophetically with the communities in which they are set. The gospel must be lived incarnationally, outside the confines of the Congregation. The Church should not only act prophetically but also speak to challenge society in ways which will be heard and understood.*

This is an objective on which there have been less obvious signs of progress. The Communications strategy of the Church has been reviewed, but it is still proving difficult for the Church to have its agenda heard. It may be because a clear agenda for speaking prophetically in the world has yet to be developed. The changing nature of our community since the peace process, and with a vulnerable cohort of migrant workers, needs to be recognised.

On the other hand, at the local level some useful work is being done in congregations to relate to the community in which they are set, including migrants. Some ministers working in loyalist areas have been meeting to share experience and the Board of Mission in Ireland has been considering the particular challenge of urban mission. The Future of Peacemaking, on which a Panel has been meeting and the Church and Society Committee’s work on sectarianism is relevant and being developed.

**(iv) Recognising global engagement –**

*In mission the distinction between “home” and “overseas” is becoming increasingly irrelevant. The Church must act and think both locally and globally, learning from our partnerships with those of different cultures and traditions while offering expertise when it is requested. Issues of the global economy must be allowed to challenge our lifestyles.*

A Mission Co-ordination Panel is in place but needs to progress its work. Perhaps the Church needs to make more use of our global partner contacts, both individually and through e.g. WARC. It has to be questioned if the big global issues for the Church are really on our agenda.

**(v) Renewing the servant-courts of the Church –**

*Thought needs to be given as to how the courts of the Church may more adequately service the needs of congregations in mission. The leadership role of the courts should be recognised, while acknowledging also the important fellowship and support roles which they should fulfil.*

This topic was recently opened up from a pastoral point of view at the General Board Conference. A report of the Conference should include some practical suggestions for carrying this work forward.



4. It was agreed that these five should remain as priority areas to stimulate new work, but it was also recognised that for any new initiatives to take place there needs to be a renewed emphasis on resourcing ministry and mission. This was therefore added as a sixth priority for new initiatives in the Church during 2011-2013.

**(vi) Resourcing ministry and mission –**

*If the ministry and mission of our Church is to be effective it will need to be adequately resourced, both in terms of commitment and finance. In the present financial climate and with smaller groups of committed people in congregations, this may become increasingly difficult but it is surely not enough to manage decline.*

**Remit and Membership**

5. When the Priorities Committee was introduced as a Committee of the General Board in 2004 it was reported –

*“The Priorities Committee’s main function would be to prioritise the mission and ministry needs of the whole Church. It will therefore need to develop a close relationship with the other Boards and provide co-ordination between Boards. It may also give guidance at times to the Business Committee (of the General Board) on the Board’s own priorities.”*

**Remit**

While the above statement was adopted in principle by the 2004 General Assembly it has never been formally incorporated into the Code, although the co-ordinating function of the General Board is already in the Code. As the Priorities Committee is now fairly well established and carrying out its prioritising function it may be useful to add an additional sub paragraph to the Code Par 272(4). An appropriate Overture is appended.

**Membership**

It is important that the Priorities Committee has a proper balance between those most closely involved in the work of the other Boards and those who represent Presbytery on the General Board membership. It is also important that the Committee is no larger than it has to be. A slightly amended membership would be:

- (a) Moderator, Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Board Secretaries (9)
- (b) Conveners of: Union Commission, Boards of Communications, Mission Overseas, Mission in Ireland, Social Witness, Youth and Children’s Ministry, Christian Training, Finance and Personnel, United Appeal (9)
- (c) Presbytery membership on General Board (9)

DONALD WATTS, Convener

## MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Moderator's Advisory Committee met to confirm assessors in a matter of difficulty in a Presbytery. The main item of business, however, was to consider the development of conciliation in the Church.

2. *The Rev Doug Baker, Co-ordinator of the Conciliation Panel*, reports as follows:

During 2009 conciliators worked on five cases, by February 2010 four new cases had been referred.

### **Thoughts on Conciliation and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.**

- (i) While a good conciliation service needs to continue to be offered, even higher priority should be on preventative training on dealing constructively with difference and disagreement; facilitating good decision-making processes; and the imperative and responsibility to seek to live peacefully with each other in the fellowship of the Church.
  - Two separate days of training do take place with Licentiatees
  - Occasionally Kirk Sessions have opted for this training
- (ii) Recurring issues in cases which have been referred for conciliation need to be addressed, in particular:
  - (a) Some strong theological work needs to be done on the balance between seeking unity and purity in the Church.
  - (b) Work also needs to be done around introducing change and bringing the vast majority of existing members along with those who wish to introduce change more rapidly.
  - (c) Clarity needs to be given about what is meant when The Code says that the content of worship is the prerogative of the Minister and what, if any, role Kirk Session has in determining the style of worship.
  - (d) Serious thought needs to be given to introducing terms on Kirk Session for Elders, so that Elders who behave in ways which are detrimental to the peace and unity of a congregation can simply not be voted on again rather than having to be judicially removed or retained at great price to Ministers and others.
  - (e) Clarity needs to be given about what is and isn't appropriate to ask of those seeking baptism and admission to the Lord's Table, and what guidance there is on marriage to non-believers; co-habiting couples, inter-church marriages.
- (iii) Further training needs to be done with all Clerks of Presbytery so that they understand what conciliation is and is not, know when and how to refer cases, and know what they can do and what they should refrain from doing in order to help conciliation work.
  - A half-day session was held with Clerks of Presbytery.
  - A sheet should be given to all Clerks of Presbytery describing when mediation might be appropriate and when it is not.
  - Parties should be asked at the outset whether or not they wish to seek reconciliation. If that is not their intention, conciliation is usually the wrong process and time and effort should not go into it. If they do, then a judicial process should be avoided and conciliation attempted first.

(iv) At least half a dozen new conciliators need to be trained.

3. In considering the report the Committee concurred with the issues raised as important if the Church is to become a more accepting place.

Discussion concentrated on:

- (a) Acknowledging the distinction between a conciliation route and a judicial route and the importance of training to recognise when conciliation is possible. This will most often be a decision for Presbytery, so the training of Presbytery Clerks is important.
- (b) Exploring the possibility of elders serving on Kirk Session for set terms while remaining as elders within the Congregation. It was recognised that this may be good for other reasons also and so a resolution should be brought to the General Assembly to explore this further.
- (c) A difficulty which sometimes emerges early in a ministry can have its origin during a previous ministry or vacancy. It is important that Presbytery is satisfied all outstanding issues have been dealt with before an installation takes place. This should be incorporated in a revised vacancy procedures booklet. Presbyteries should also be encouraged to have an “exit interview” with a minister who is moving or retiring from a congregation to identify any potential problems. In cases where there are clear difficulties thought might be given to appointing a full-time “interim” for a number of years, but further thought needs to be given as to how this might work in practice.

DONALD WATTS, Convener

## DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

### Introduction

The terms of the 2009 General Assembly remit to the Doctrine Committee were as follows: ‘That the Westminster Confession, chapter 24, paragraph 3, states: “It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry who are able with judgement to give their consent: yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord”. Within the Church, there is a variety of interpretations held concerning what is meant by “to marry only in the Lord”. Such confusion arising from a variety of interpretations is unhelpful and is giving rise to pastoral difficulties and clarification is therefore required’.

The Doctrine Committee met seven times to discuss this remit and formulate a report (on 3 July, 21 October and 27 November 2009 and 14 January, 26 February, 5 and 12 March 2010). The Committee is unanimous in its view that clarity in the interpretation of biblical texts is desirable in the Church and that the pastoral issues at stake are also of the utmost importance. It has sought to fulfil its remit by (a) commenting on the Confessional teaching, (b) interpreting the relevant Scriptures and (c) examining some of the attendant pastoral issues. Obviously, in beginning with the Confession, the Committee is not giving it precedence over Scripture. The report is organised in accordance with the terms of the remit.

**(a) The Teaching of the Confession**

For many readers, the natural interpretation of the Confessional statement; 'it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord' (24.3) is that Christians are to marry only other Christians. Without detailed research into the theology and practice of marriage in the seventeenth century, no one can reach a secure conclusion on the exact meaning and scope of these words in the Confession but the Committee makes the following observations, aware that the Westminster Confession is a 17th century document, speaking to a 17th century context.

1. **The Confession.** 24.3 alludes to those 'such as profess the true reformed religion', that is, those within the visible Church who may marry. At this point, there is apparently no distinction between nominal and true believers in the 'Reformed' Churches. What it says applies to all who profess the true reformed religion. It is obviously expected that those who do so should possess a genuine and lively faith, but only in the sense that we today are to expect that of all Church members. However, from a Confessional standpoint, a marriage between two who professed the true reformed religion, would be a marriage in the Lord.

2. This reading is apparently supported by the specific Confessional reference to two excluded categories. One is defined according to doctrine; hence, marriage with 'infidels, Papists, or other idolaters' or anyone 'maintain[ing] damnable heresies' is proscribed. The other is defined according to conduct: even a Christian professing the reformed religion who was 'notoriously wicked in life' should not be a partner in Christian marriage. These two kinds of marriage would not be 'marriage in the Lord' as stipulated in the Confession.

3. As a matter of principle, it is important to notice the distinction between idolatry and heresy, for, even if Roman Catholicism was to be judged heretical rather than idolatrous, that would still exclude marriage to Roman Catholics in the terms of the Confession. If, however, Roman Catholics are not judged to be either idolatrous or guilty of heresies sufficient for damnation, it is not clear that marriage between someone professing the reformed religion and a Roman Catholic would violate the principle of marriage in the Lord as it is advanced in the Confession.

4. Consistent adherence to the Confession would apparently prohibit marriage between professors of the true reformed religion and credo-baptists or any who denied paedobaptism. According to 28.5, it is 'a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance', i.e. the ordinance of baptism, which is applicable to infants and not just to those who profess faith. In Confessional terms, deniers of paedobaptism could be presumed guilty of great sin and are presumably amongst those who entertain 'damnable heresy'. The Reformers themselves believed in the validity of infant baptism in the Roman Catholic Church; in that respect, Catholicism compares favourably with credo-baptist congregations. As far as the text of the Confession goes, it is unlikely that marriage to a credo-baptist who, by profession, condemned the baptism of infants, would be regarded as marriage in the Lord.

5. The Committee is aware of the different views maintained in PCI regarding Roman Catholicism, but it presumes that there are few, if any, who would categorically deny that Presbyterians ever ought to marry Baptists.

Certainly, the Committee is not of that view. Care must be exercised when using a 17th century document that assumptions are not made about how that document was read and understood in the mid-17th century. Adherence to our Confessional standards in this matter must therefore give way to considerations more satisfactorily rooted in Scripture.

6. We need to consider how ‘the duty of Christians to marry only in Lord’ ties in with the three purposes for marriage stated by the Confession. These are: (a) ‘for the mutual help of husband and wife’; (b) ‘for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed’; (c) ‘for the preventing of uncleanness’. (24.2). Thus, marriage is a creation ordinance, necessary for the preservation of both the world and the Church. Does it inevitably follow that people who ‘do not profess the true reformed religion’ are incapable of fulfilling these purposes? A non-believer of integrity or someone of uncertain belief who was supportive of the convictions of the person he or she proposed to marry could still offer ‘mutual help’, ‘legitimate issue’, and the prevention ‘of uncleanness’. Since infant baptism is to be administered to the child of one believing parent (28.4) it could be argued that such a person would also provide ‘holy seed’ in the Church.

7. At this stage in the report the Committee has been teasing out what the Confession teaches without making a judgement on the remit given to it. The fact that the Confession is an historical document adds further complications to the task of interpreting its teaching for our own time. Clearly it was compiled within a significantly different socio-religious situation from the one in which we find ourselves which also obscures what does or does not violate its principle of marriage only in the Lord. The Committee has been given the remit of clarifying what the Confession teaches but it is also our task to point out that, for the issues we are dealing with, a clear application to the third millennium is simply not available. Thus it is important to move on to a discussion of the various scriptural passages that form the foundation of what the Confession has to say.

### **(b) The Relevant Scriptures**

8. Several passages from Paul’s Corinthian correspondence are relevant to the Doctrine Committee’s remit. Before we can relate teaching from these ancient letters to our contemporary situation, we must first of all strive to grasp what Paul was telling his readers in their original context.

#### **2 Corinthians 6.14 – 7.1**

9. 2 Corinthians, in part at least, represents Paul’s spirited defence against his detractors and opponents in Corinth, where his apostleship is belittled and contested by some, and his robust response helps account for the uncompromising tone of the present passage. Some Bible interpreters, finding 2 Cor 6.14 – 7.1 to be harsher than the surrounding co-text, suggest that it originated in another part of Paul’s overall correspondence with Corinth (in his “painful letter”, only part of which we now possess), eventually being inserted here; this is a weak argument, however, since controversy is present virtually throughout 2 Cor as it now stands. Others wonder if part of this text – 2 Cor

6.14-18 – may even be from another hand than Paul’s; this is a view, however, that may be neither proven nor falsified.

10. To understand 2 Cor as a whole, we have to take account of its combination of polemics with pastoral encouragement, for Paul is much gentler with his faithful converts (whom he seeks to edify) than with his opponents (whom he confronts). Thus in the immediate exegetical context, both the verses which immediately precede (in 2 Cor 6.3-13) and those that follow (in 2 Cor 7.2-4) express Paul’s open-hearted affection for those who have come to Christ through his Gospel in pagan Corinth, and who *do* acknowledge him as their apostle. Paul’s overall ethical strategy, reflected in both of the Corinthian letters we possess, is for their up-building – an outcome summed up, in the climax to our passage, as “perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor 7.1).

11. 2 Cor 6.14 speaks of the pairing up of mismatched yokefellows: Paul’s words therefore seem to be in similar vein to Lev 22.10, which forbids double-yoking to a plough of incompatible animals, such as an ox and a donkey. Readers of 2 Cor 6.14 have commonly understood the unequal yoke and yokefellows (or “mismatching” – NIV) as referring to marriage between a believer and an unbeliever. Whilst marriage is a legitimate example of what is involved, the passage itself is unspecific because – as John Calvin acknowledged – here Paul is setting out a general principle. He warns against *any* incongruous yoking (or unholy alliance) whereby a Christian might be improperly harnessed to a pagan and drawn into sinful behaviour or, as Calvin says, “participation in works in which Christians cannot lawfully have fellowship.”

12. When Paul tells his readers *not* to keep on partnering or teaming up with pagans, what might such improper yoking involve? If, as seems clear, an unequal yoke does not bar the believer from ordinary everyday contact with pagans, the question is, what would compromising involvement with them – off limits, for Christian disciples – actually involve? While Paul does not say, it must surely include the kind of impure and idolatrous practices listed (and outlawed) by him in 1 Cor 6.9-11 or 2 Cor 12.20-21. The first passage makes clear that belonging to Christ means breaking with practices which typify the pagan world; fornication, adultery, prostitution, sodomy, idolatry, theft, greed, drunkenness, and revelry are all listed. In 2 Cor 12, meanwhile, Paul worries that believers may be unrepentantly engaged in quarrelling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit and disorder, together with impurity, sexual immorality and licentiousness. Whenever a brother or sister in Christ lapses into such idolatrous or immoral behaviour, this gives grounds for breaking all ties with them (1 Cor 5.9); the reason is that, if those who are “sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy” (1 Cor 1.2) were to exchange godliness and purity for pagan ways from their pagan past, this would be a denial of their faith and an abandonment of Christ.

13. Here in 2 Cor 6.14-16 Paul asks a series of rhetorical questions, with cumulative effect. All five questions imply the same negative answer (i.e., “none” or “nothing”):-

- What partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness?
- What fellowship is there between light and dark?

- What agreement does Christ have with Satan?
- What does a believer share with an unbeliever?
- What agreement has the temple of God with idols?

14. In all five cases partnering, sharing, or agreeing is impossible, since incompatible parties when yoked together will engage in idolatrous and immoral behaviour inconsistent with faith in Christ. Arguing against such unequal yoking, Paul therefore exhorts believers to separate (2 Cor 6.17-18) from “unbelievers” (2 Cor 6.14-15); here he is re-using language from Isaiah 52.11, and several parts of Ezek 20, concerning refraining from the worship of idols or from touching the unclean.

15. Over against the *negative* aspect of an unequal yoke or mismatch, however, Paul also seems to have in mind simultaneously something correspondingly *positive* – namely, faithful covenant. 2 Cor 6.16 quotes Lev 26.12 (*God covenants to walk with and be with his people*), while 2 Cor 6.18 refers to God acting as a Father to his people. The positive and the negative belong together, since the restoration of Israel’s covenant with YHWH yokes his people exclusively to him (positively), but also requires his people to put aside all idols (negatively); by their very nature, believers’ covenant obligations to God exclude any and every rival bond as being idolatrous.

16. What does Paul mean by “unbelievers” (2 Cor 6.14-15)? Throughout 2 Cor 4 (and especially v.1-3), Paul specifically has in mind his opponents; engaged in underhand and shameful activities (4.2), they have been accusing him of preaching a Gospel that is veiled and ineffectual (4.3). If in the present instance Paul is still thinking of these people, then for the Corinthians to persist in heeding such false teachers or their doctrine – instead of following (or returning to) their true apostle – would be to enter upon an unequal and inappropriate yoke. Taking “unbelievers” to refer to Paul’s opponents is an interpretation difficult to rule out, given the polemical context of the letter overall. Therefore 2 Cor 6.14 may well be addressing, first and foremost, the prospect that the Corinthians might abandon Paul’s Gospel (and so, forsake Christ as Lord) in favour of renewed immorality and involvement in idolatry.

17. However, in more general terms 2 Cor 4.4-6 has previously dubbed “unbelievers” those who are blinded to the light of the Gospel, in contrast to believers (who are in an enlightened state). Indeed, the rhetorical questions pick up on this fundamental contrast (e.g., light versus dark). Whatever may be said *specifically* (as above) about false teachers – whom Paul may be likening, by implication, to idolaters! – both the *general* Corinthian context and the *particular* OT texts to which Paul is appealing do suggest that, for the apostle, “unbelievers” may refer primarily to pagan idolaters blinded and enslaved by their idolatry. Some confirmation of this is provided by 2 Cor 7.1 where, in exhorting the Corinthians to cleanse themselves from “defilement”, Paul uses a word [molusmos] which applies (in its verbal form) to eating defiling meat offered to idols. For some believers, to eat such meat would contaminate them (1 Cor 8.7) because their weak conscience could not live with it. For Paul, as for anyone possessing a strong conscience (1 Cor 8.4-6; 10.25-27; cf. Romans 14.7,17), this is ordinarily a matter of indifference. However, Paul draws a line at eating such meat in a pagan cultic setting (1 Cor 10.17-21), since that would involve open involvement with idolatry: In such cases every believer must

abstain, for there can be no sharing the table of the Lord *and* sitting at table with demons!

18. The Corinthians know that, as members of a believing people wholly set apart for God, they constitute “the Temple of the living God” (2 Cor 6.16). They also know that their own body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that God, by his Spirit, dwells in them (1 Cor 6.19). Accordingly, uniting their body to that of a cult prostitute would mean establishing a “one-flesh” relation incompatible with being united to Christ (1 Cor 6.15*ff*) and, as such, offers an especially clear example of an incompatible yoke. But the same goes for any association which harnesses a believer into improper fellowship (sharing, agreement) with idolaters and leads both parties to plough a furrow of sinful behaviour. For the Christian believer such a relation is incompatible with being bound in faithful covenant to God in Christ, as expressed in discipleship, witness and worship.

19. As for 2 Cor 6.14 – 7.1, the text itself supplies no particular examples of such unholy yoking. Since Paul refrains from mentioning any, we may only speculate as to what particular situations he had in mind. Having opened with a general principle – *do not form sinful mismatches with unbelievers* (2 Cor 6.14) – the apostle is also content to end with a general exhortation to holiness and to the avoidance of contamination (2 Cor 7.1). It would seem that, as part of their “making room in their hearts” for their true apostle (2 Cor 7.2), the Corinthians are expected by Paul to work out how to implement all the teaching they have received from him. It is their privilege and responsibility to apply it to relevant context-specific applications, just as it falls to them to reject the false teaching his opponents have brought them. Presumably such principled action, which is devolved to them, is characteristic of both the ethical responsibility Paul has taught them and, consequently, the ethical maturity he expects of them.

20. What implications does this text have for contemporary readers who also wish to act responsibly, on the basis of Paul’s Gospel? In light of the above, 2 Cor 6.14 – 7.1 exhorts us to think carefully about what we do before we act. Paul creates space for ethically responsible people to think and then act, bounded on the one hand by a general principle (*do not get involved in being yoked with idolatry*) and on the other by an exhortation (*be holy*). For Paul, believers must work out whether, by getting involved in a particular relationship (or yoke), they might be shackling themselves to a worshipper of a false god or to a false teacher and thereby risk being implicated in idolatrous and immoral action. Responsible ethical judgment and wise discernment are involved in the decision-making process, based on the general principles enunciated both in this Scripture and in any other which is of relevance.

21. This particular text urges believers, as a principle, to think long and hard about *every* binding relationship or contract which they might consider getting involved in. They are to ask themselves whether such close partnering would constitute a faithful covenant or, on the contrary, establish a mismatch that compromises their Christian discipleship and embroils them in ungodliness or idolatry. Whilst Paul’s teaching does not mention the marriage bond here, it is legitimate to apply his principle (*think before you act*) to marriage – as one form of binding partnership among others – just as it is necessary to heed his exhortation (*be holy*) in that context, as in all relationships.



### 1 Corinthians 7. 12-16

22. The specific issue of marriage between a believer and an unbeliever has, in fact, already been broached by Paul in 1 Cor 7. The presenting problem, there, is what to do about a pagan marriage bond which apparently antedated the subsequent coming to faith in Christ of one of the spouses: What is the new believer to do in such circumstances? The now believing wife or husband is counselled by Paul (though not, he says, by the Lord, v 12!) *not* to divorce the unbelieving spouse, where that spouse is prepared to go on living with the believing partner (1 Cor 7.12-13); if, however, the pagan partner should initiate divorce, then the believer is to acquiesce in this (1 Cor 7.15).

23. The grounds Paul offers the believer of either gender for *not* divorcing the unbelieving spouse are no less than what he sees as the sanctifying power which the believer's influence has over both the unbelieving spouse and any children; both are made holy by the believer (1 Cor 7.14), with some prospect that "for all [they] know" their influence for good might ultimately save the unbelieving partner (1 Cor 7.16). As Calvin remarks, "the godliness of the one does more to 'sanctify' the marriage than the ungodliness of the other to make it unclean." The possibility that the non-Christian spouse, in such a situation, might ultimately be saved (1 Cor 7.16) implies his or her exposure to winsome testimony to faith in Jesus Christ by the believing spouse. This interpretation assumes that 'sanctified' here (v 14), unusually for Paul's correspondence, means something like 'under godly influence', or 'included within a proper covenantal relationship'. Alternatively, however, 'sanctified' here may simply mean 'legitimate', as it regularly did in Jewish contexts. Whether the union is being considered as 'holy' or simply 'lawful', either way the believing spouse is to persist in the marriage, with a view to winning the pagan spouse to faith in Christ.

24. An intriguing contrast arises, therefore, when we refer back to 2 Cor 6.14 – 7.1. In that text, where there is no mention of marriage as such, any unequal yoking to an unbeliever which results in idolatrous compromise is declared a non starter; in the second text, where marriage *is* explicitly at issue as an existing contract, prior to one partner hearing God's call to faith (v 17), the sanctifying influence exerted by the believer over the unbeliever is the very reason to keep going. In other words, 1 Cor 7.12-16 makes *positive* contamination of the unbeliever by the believer the basis for continuing marital association, when one spouse has come to faith in Christ as Lord; meanwhile 2 Cor 6.14 – 7.1 makes *negative* contamination of believers by unbelievers the reason for abstaining from all binding relationships liable to implicate believers in the practices of idolaters and false teachers. Here, twin thrusts of Paul's ethical teaching are in tension with one another; listening to and learning from the apostle would seem to commit us to taking both of them seriously.

### 1 Corinthians 7.39-40

25. But what of a widowed believer, who is free to marry again? 1 Cor 7.39-40 addresses this point. In the Pauline Church, where OT levirate marriage is seemingly no longer a constraint upon a widow, she is entirely free to marry again or, indeed, to abstain. How then should she choose? Paul's personal advice

to her is that she will be happier if she refrains from marrying (1 Cor 7.40); nonetheless, should she exercise her freedom to marry “whomever she wishes”, then her choice of a spouse should be made “only in the Lord” (1 Cor 7.39). If “only in the Lord” is what Paul’s Greek literally says, what does he mean?

26. Calvin’s Bible, which had “only in the Lord”, leaves the question open; Luther’s German translation (1545) had “only let this take place in the Lord”, but this remains rather unspecific. In opting for the literal rendering “only in the Lord” some English Bibles (e.g. AV and NKJV, RSV and NRSV) similarly leave it to their readers to determine its exact meaning. NASB and ESV do the same in the text, but offer a footnote that invites comparison with 2 Cor 6.14 and its unequal yoke; this footnote notwithstanding, all these versions leave open the question of what “only in the Lord” may mean.

27. Other English Bibles, by contrast, choose to interpret the phrase for their readers, referring it to the prospective spouse the widow will choose: Thus AB expands it as “only [provided that he too is] in the Lord.” NIV translates it as “but he must belong to the Lord”, CEV as “to a man who is a follower of the Lord”, and GNB as “only if he is a Christian”. Similarly Peterson paraphrases “she will, of course, want to marry a believer and have the blessing of the Master.” All these renderings gloss “only in the Lord” as meaning that the chosen spouse must be a Christian believer.

28. Calvin notes how, in his time, many took “only in the Lord” to be Paul’s warning to the Corinthians, in passing, not to “enter upon the yoke of marriage with unbelievers.” However, although the Reformer acknowledges that the words “only in the Lord” do have this meaning, he considers that they “go farther” by exhorting widows contemplating second marriage (here Calvin paraphrases Paul’s expression), to do so “reverently, wisely and in the fear of the Lord, which is how marriage ought to be contracted.” Or as Lightfoot puts it, “she must remember that she is a member of Christ’s body; and not forget her Christian duties and responsibilities.” Here, Calvin or Lightfoot decline to restrict the application of “only in the Lord” to the believer’s choice of whom to marry, however traditional this might be, on the grounds that Paul’s meaning has a wider interpretation and application – namely, to the wise and responsible *Christian* decision-making (undertaken “in the Lord”) of the believer who is contemplating marriage, including the choice of a spouse. This interpretation of Paul’s words takes proper account of the apostle’s aim to equip his converts, for all of life, to think and act in the Lord. Consequently, English Bibles which permit this wider meaning, rather than retaining the literal translation “only in the Lord”, are to be preferred at this point.

29. In conclusion, we may briefly weave together these threads of Paul’s ethical instruction to the Church at Corinth concerning marriage. The apostle’s overall argument, in both excerpts drawn from 1 Cor 7, rests on and defends the conviction that marriage – including a pagan marriage where one spouse now believes in Christ, and a widow’s possible second marriage after death of the first spouse – is something fundamentally good. What, then, is he telling believers in the passages in question?

30. Paul’s teaching, here and elsewhere, aims at empowering believers to think and act ethically and responsibly.

- In 1 Cor 7.12-16, to any believer already married to an unbeliever before coming to faith, he says not to underestimate the extent to which they now have a godly influence, with saving potential, over their unbelieving spouse and any children; this provides them with a positive and powerful rationale for staying married.
- And in 1 Cor 7.39-40 Paul's phrase "only in the Lord" is best understood as meaning that a widow should engage in responsible, god-fearing decision making when contemplating marriage once more and choosing the right spouse. By extension, in all responsible choices associated with entering upon (and persisting with) marriage, contemporary Christian readers are similarly empowered and impelled to exercise their own ethical judgment "in the Lord".
- As regards 2 Cor 6.14 – 7.1, two things may be concluded. First, that for Paul *looking before we leap*, when committing ourselves to any binding relationship with an unbeliever (of which marriage is one instance), is just the sort of responsible behaviour and wise discernment he would have expected from his converts at Corinth. And second, that when contemplating entering any and every form of close association (marriage included, by implication), we (like Paul's first readers) should think of ourselves as *holy* – or, put another way, as being bound by a prior relation which affects all others: being united to and indwelt by Christ as Lord, through faith.

**(c) The Pastoral Issues involved in marrying 'in the Lord'**

31. Celebrating a marriage is one of the best opportunities that the Church has to engage intimately with folk of all levels of faith or none. In an increasingly post-Christian society, celebrating a marriage not only has a pastoral dimension, but also offers an obvious missional opportunity. How the Church approaches this issue, both in terms of what we decide and the manner in which we implement our decisions, matters greatly. Recognising that there may be an irresolvable tension between pastoral concern and missional endeavour, we must think pastorally and missionally about how we approach and support couples (and their wider families) as we explore with them the possibility of being married in a Christian ceremony.

32. It is unwise to allow the debate over whether or not a Christian should marry a non-Christian to take place in isolation. We must see this discussion in the context of the overall teaching of young people and the pastoral care of families. Recommendations concerning last ditch situations alone would be inadequate, hence the following comments.

33. **Context:** Put very simply, we need to understand why people choose to marry. Is 'falling in love' an adequate reason? What about loneliness, insecurity, sexual desire, wanting to have children? Some might feel or be perceived by society or by the Church to be socially 'incomplete' without a partner or children. Having understood this context the Church will be better equipped to understand why young people make hasty or unwise decisions concerning partnership, cohabiting or marriage. the Committee suggests that the

Church needs a much more robust practical theology of sexuality, marriage, and singleness.

34. **Teaching:** The Church has an obligation to prepare her young people for making life decisions such as whom to marry, by proper, consistent and regular teaching, so that young people might bring biblical principles and a Christ-like mind to their decision making in this important aspect of life. From childhood, through teenage years and into adulthood, teaching on marriage and family life should never be left to the secular world, which is not shy about addressing these from its perspective, which is not always wholesome, seldom biblical, often reckless and sometimes hugely destructive. It is important that our young people should know what the Bible teaches about marrying someone who shares the Christian faith and the desire to live a life pleasing to God. The Committee suggests that the Church encourages congregations to more intentionally build appropriate teaching into their Christian Education programmes.

35. **Ethos:** The Church needs to address marriage and family matters with a joyful embracing of the subject as a wonderful mystery and a magnificent part of the heartbeat of the Church's very life, as God intended. It also ought to celebrate the call to singleness that comes to those who will not marry and to some who are widowed or divorced. Neither singleness nor marriage should be elevated above the other and sensitivity to both must be shown. The Committee suggests that the familial nature of the local congregation is more fully and inclusively celebrated.

### **The specific issue of a Christian/non-Christian couple requesting marriage in Church**

36. Any Christian/non-Christian couple requesting marriage should be able to see that the Church's leadership is genuinely concerned for them and specifically for this aspect of their lives. Preparation for marriage should be either part of the ongoing relationship between the minister and two members of his/her congregation or an opportunity to develop a relationship with people who may be strangers to the minister and, possibly, to the Gospel. There are two detectable approaches to marriage within PCI.

A. If one half of a couple presenting themselves for marriage is a professing Christian and the other is not, some interpretations of Scripture lead to the conclusion that a Christian ceremony would not be appropriate, both for the believing party's own spiritual good and for the sake of the Church's public witness. However, in the light of the discussion both of the Confession and the Scriptural material the Committee would suggest that reaching such a decision might not be as clear cut as some people might assume, especially if the non-believing man or woman was obviously prepared to support the Christian convictions of the believing potential spouse. In any case, this situation should be handled with pastoral and missional concern and with gracious sensitivity, remembering that marriage is a creation ordinance, not a sacrament, and therefore it is to be guarded with a different set of criteria than applied to either Baptism or the Lord's Supper.

B. The other approach may be to allow the couple to make the ultimate decision to marry in Church. In that situation biblical teaching on marriage and

the possible consequences of proceeding with the marriage should be carefully explained (e.g. the potential clash of values regarding things like use of finance, bringing up children or Church attendance). Pastoral counsel and teaching should not be simply generic but should be appropriate to each case. If a non-Christian presents himself/herself as hostile to the Gospel, then pastorally the professing Christian should be clearly counselled against the marriage, but if the non-Christian expresses a willingness to align himself/herself with the People of God, and support for the believing partner in his/her Christian lifestyle and practice then this willingness should be taken into account and a marriage need not be a contradiction of Scripture.

37. If a couple is going to be disappointed in their request for marriage in Church, then some pragmatic questions need to be asked. What will happen if a wedding is disallowed? Will the couple simply accept that they are not to marry and break their relationship, will they live together while unmarried, will they be married by another minister or will they be married in a civil ceremony? What will be the pastoral response of a minister and Kirk Session to each of these situations? A major pastoral concern for the Church must be to deal with the situation in such a way as to be able to continue to minister to the two people and to the wider circle of family and friends.

38. Having done all that might reasonably be expected to dissuade the couple, should this be deemed necessary, a minister might now, as an act of grace, agree to officiate at a wedding and commit him/herself to loving pastoral care of the newly formed family. Actions springing from grace have much redemptive potential.

### **Broader practical points**

39. All leaders are wise to appreciate the long term consequences of their actions, especially in closely knit communities. Questions of marriage are of great importance in themselves but their broader implications for the internal life and external witness of the Church must also be considered. First, we need to be careful lest we win Pyrrhic victories in which the 'letter of the law' is maintained but the spirit is broken. Allowing any situation to become a judicial issue, is to invite the prospect of having 'winners' and 'losers'; this is a great pity, but, with the exercise of Christian grace, any situation may be redeemed.

40. Second, questions such as that under consideration here do not have unambiguous practical outcomes. For example, decisions made to guard the internal integrity of the Church might have negative effects on the Church's mission and decisions taken for missional reasons might compromise the internal integrity of the Church. Further, decisions taken to guard internal integrity can result in disrupted fellowship, thereby harming one of the very things the Church hopes to maintain. Equally, decisions made from missional motives may present such a diluted picture of the claims of Christ that missional objectives are undermined by a perceived trivialising of the Gospel. This means that many decisions may be painful and will require sensitive courage.

41. Third, the Pauline injunction to treat the tender conscience gently (Rom 14) should be remembered. How will a decision, either way, be perceived by one whose faith is immature and whose conscience is very sensitive? But it is also a missional issue: what will a decision, either way, do to the reputation of

the Church and consequently, to the cause of Christ? Those who are mature should be strong enough to make decisions that encourage others towards maturity and sensitive enough to be willing to act in ways that welcome a tentative knock at the door.

42. From the perspective of pastoral and missional theology, both a blanket refusal policy and a policy of unfettered acceptance present more missional and pastoral difficulties than a case by case approach. It may convey a mixed message if one minister refuses to marry a couple while another welcomes them with open arms, but marriage is not a core issue of the Christian faith. Complete uniformity of action by ministers cannot be expected. However, guidelines produced by the General Assembly might well be helpful. At the same time, open and respectful communication between ministers who take different positions, within such limits as set by the General Assembly, is imperative.

### **Conclusion**

43. While the ideal is that Christians should marry Christians, life is not always so straightforward. A desire for definitive adjudication in favour of one ministerial practice based upon a single specific interpretation is doomed to disappointment as there are several interfaces which, inevitably, create uncomfortable and challenging areas for us.

44. Chapter 24 of the Westminster Confession does not enable us to identify with certainty and precision those who are 'in the Lord' or what action may be or may not be in the Lord's will. The different socio-religious contexts of the 17th and 21st centuries do not permit a selective cut and paste from the Confession that would justify a definitive judgement on the spiritual status of every individual seeking marriage. The exegesis of the relevant Corinthian material is set out in some detail in this report and merits close reading. The Committee are aware that Church weddings were unknown in New Testament times but note that Paul urges his readers to exercise their own ethical judgement 'in the Lord'. A case by case approach demands a sensitive, pastoral and missional approach to counselling couples who request marriage in PCI today.

45. The conclusion is that a variety of interpretations can be held with integrity within PCI concerning what is meant by 'to marry only in the Lord'. This demands mutual respect within Presbyteries and among ministerial colleagues.

LAURENCE KIRKPATRICK, Convener

## **GLOBAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE**

1. Is there a distinctive Christian worldview? It's an intriguing question. According to the very striking paraphrase of the Message we are told that "all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe – people and things, animals and atoms – get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the Cross." Everything finds its unity

and purpose in Jesus Christ: “So spacious is he, so roomy, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding.”

2. The Psalmist speaks of jubilant praise as the ends of the earth experience the coming of the Lord in salvation power. “Let the sea resound, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; let them sing before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity” (Psalm 98).

3. The prophet speaks of God’s justice and universal peace. It’s an idyllic picture of blissful, harmonious community: “I’ll install Peace to run your country, make Righteousness your boss. There’ll be no more stories of crime in your land, no more robberies, no more vandalism. You’ll name your main street Salvation Way, and install Praise Park at the centre of town” (Isaiah 60, The Message).

4. There is nothing parochial or narrow-minded about the Good News of Jesus Christ, which moves out from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. It is all embracing and in its course brings care for the lonely, the outcast, the immigrant and the poor, to name but a few. Christians are called also to look after God’s creation, of which they are not the masters but stewards. Writing in “The Times” the Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks refers to the Judaeo-Christian ethic as “the greatest system ever devised for building a society on personal virtue and covenantal responsibility, on righteousness and humility, forgiveness and love.” To embrace such a vision in Christ is surely awe-inspiring. To make it a little more manageable it is necessary to be reminded of the little steps that can be taken, which have a cumulative effect and ultimately will make such a difference.

5. It could be argued that those involved in Global Concerns carry the world’s problems on their shoulders! There is literally so much that could be done. For that reason it’s probably right to concentrate on one or two issues which are admittedly vast in themselves – the environment, race relations and peacemaking. Recently the Committee has also completed a major report on lifestyle issues and are beginning to study the complexity of Christian-Muslim relations, bearing in mind that many of our missionaries overseas serve in interface areas between Christianity and Islam.

6. As I step down from the Committee, I want to express my appreciation to all our members and in particular the conveners of our three main Panels – Robert Buick, Liz Hughes and Richard Kerr. They work tremendously hard and have such a passionate interest in their subjects. At this General Assembly Liz Hughes steps down as Convener of Peace and Peacemaking. It was said of Lydia in the Acts of the Apostles that “she persuaded us”. Liz has that unique ability to bring and keep others together, inspiring and motivating them with her beautiful warm heart and tireless enthusiasm. She has served the Panel, organised conferences, chased after funding and been involved in the wider discussions about the future of peacemaking.

## PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

*The Rev Dr Robert Buick reports:*

7. Members of the Panel enjoyed a number of stimulating visits during the year, including one to the Dungiven area to examine the site of a former hydro-electricity generation system and a modern “wind farm”. Members were joined by Presbytery Environmental Agents for a visit to AFBI Hillsborough to view the experimental Anaerobic Digester, which provided supplies of methane gas from farm by-products. The Methane gas was used to generate hot water for general farm use. Also demonstrated were a number of bio-mass boilers.

8. The Rev CJC McMullen, Convener of Global Concerns Committee, represented PCI at a meeting with Mr John Gormley TD, the Taoiseach having invited representatives of the four main Churches to share their concerns ahead of the “Copenhagen” Conference on Climate Change in December. Mr McMullen presented Mr Gormley with a copy of the Church’s Lifestyle Report.

9. It is hoped that the Panel will shortly have sufficient information to provide an Environmental page on the PCI web site. This will include reports of visits by the Panel, advice to assist Congregations to complete questions on Environmental issues which form part of the Congregational Consultation and information on grants available to Churches considering upgrading their heating systems to more efficient and environmentally friendly systems.

10. The Panel has consulted with the Convener of the General Assembly Committee on Church Architecture requesting that guidelines to Presbyteries and Congregations be issued in respect of meeting environmental concerns in plans at the outline stage-for all new buildings. This is at an advanced stage and will be issued to Presbyteries as soon as possible.

11. Panel members continue to represent PCI on Eco-Congregation Ireland and at meetings of the European Christian Environmental Network.

12. It is hoped that the Panel will visit a number of Environmental projects throughout Ireland in the coming months including a Waste Management Disposal Unit, an Energy Conservation Community and the Loughs Agency.

13. Congregations and individual members of our Church are encouraged to act in an environmentally responsible manner both out of respect for the world which our Creator in His grace has provided for us, and in consideration of our fellow human beings in poorer parts of the world affected disproportionately by our wastefulness.

### **PANEL ON PEACE AND PEACEMAKING**

*The Rev Liz Hughes reports:*

14. The Panel held a number of important events this year assisted by funding from the Community Relations Council.

15. A conference focusing on the importance of “Building Good Relations” was held on 7 November with our keynote speaker being the Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson MP MLA. The Church response was delivered by the Rev Dr Lesley Carroll (Co-Convener of the Church and Society Committee). Participants particularly appreciated the youth involvement this time with SPUD and Youth Link delegates taking part and taking centre stage – a vibrant drama featuring Wallie the Wall – written by Daphne Wilson and performed by the young people from Kilmakee. A Panel which included the Moderator, Jeffrey



Donaldson, Neal Wilkinson (SPUD Co-chair), Lesley Carroll, and Father Martin McAlinden hosted by Jeremy Gardner (CARE) fielded questions from the floor and many expressed their appreciation for the honesty and evident concern for building relationships demonstrated by all our speakers. Over 150 delegates from congregations all over the North of Ireland attended.

16. A follow up seminar was held in High Street Antrim looking at the practicalities of building good relations on the ground was facilitated by Doug Baker – peace agents and other interested Church members were invited to attend

17. A youth event looking at life on the interface “Up against the Wall” was held in conjunction with the Youth and Children’s Ministry Board and facilitated by John Peacock and Youth Link.

18. Given its limited funding the Panel took the decision to discontinue Peacemaking News and look to the Presbyterian Herald for a wider readership and a more in depth coverage. A series of articles has been commissioned by Stephen Lynas which have effectively highlighted Peace and Peacemaking issues and the Panel has been most encouraged by the Herald’s proactive engagement with such major issues.

19. The Panel very much appreciated the support of the Global Concerns Committee and specifically its outgoing Convener Charles McMullen. His wise advice, careful flexibility and gently directive encouragement have made this Convenership a lot less demanding than it might have been.

20. As this is my last report as well – I would like to pay tribute to a very hardworking and enjoyable Panel – special thanks to Doug Baker and John Peacock who have committed themselves so thoroughly to the detailed work of fundraising applications – now safely in the hands of the Future of Peacemaking Committee!

21. But while Conveners come and go the work continues and the next Annual Morning Conference date will be the 27 November, 2010.

## PANEL ON RACE RELATIONS

*The Rev Richard Kerr reports:*

22. In the context of an election year and during economic recession the reality that immigrants are people, with aspirations and concerns often similar to our own, is often overlooked. In the political wrangling and media hype people become commodities or statistics rather than friends, neighbours, colleagues. Therefore when times get tough immigrants frequently find themselves isolated, exposed, vulnerable. This is especially so for those already on the margins of society.

23. The Race Relations Panel attempts to keep a watching brief on issues relating to immigration in both jurisdictions in Ireland as well as our historical connection with South Africa. It has sought to challenge the notion that people who are invisible economically or politically are less valuable. Rather it wants to emphasise the value of every human as being created in the image of God and seek to enable the people to God to respond in a way that addresses the needs of the whole person; physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

24. In this regard, Race Relations work closely with other Panels, Committees and Boards of the Church, recognising that immigration is frequently an issue that cuts across these demarcations. The Panel has also built up good relationships with other Christian groups working in this sector; most significantly with the Churches Asylum Network in the ROI, Embrace in NI and the All Ireland Churches' Consultative Meeting on Racism.

25. Responding to a request, the General Board approved a grant towards the support of a development worker for Embrace. It is very positive to see Christians working together on an issue which presents similar challenges and opportunities for all the main Churches.

26. Embrace's role in the resolution of the Roma families' situation in June is an example of this. Following the Roma being forced from their homes in South Belfast due to racist attacks, Embrace were invited to co-ordinate flights for those who wished to return to Romania. PCI were able to provide support financially by way of a grant; personally through a visit by the Moderator; and prayerfully, including involvement in a service hosted by Fitzroy Presbyterian Church.

27. Economic demands in both jurisdictions has put increased financial pressure on social services and on agencies seeking to address racism and improve integration. This despite the fact that there are significant numbers of immigrants homeless in our cities, and that racism and integration are pertinent issues. This in turn puts a strain on voluntary organisations, including Churches, who are attempting to fill the gaps.

28. Financial pressures appear not to be reflected in immigration enforcement and compliance of the UK Borders Agency. Additional staff have been recruited, a state of the art immigration facility has opened at Drumkeen House in South Belfast, and a short term detention centre is to be provided in Larne towards the end of 2010. A conversation regarding the possibility of the Churches providing some basic chaplaincy services to this centre is ongoing.

29. The Panel acknowledges all those congregations, groups and individuals who seek to engage with immigrants and make a difference to their lives in the name of Jesus Christ. The task of welcoming, supporting and integrating immigrants is the work of the whole Church which must seek to better understand the complexities of situations and to encourage and resource those who are seeking to ensure that each immigrant knows that they have value and purpose in God's sight.

CJC McMULLEN, Convener

## **CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee met twice during the year to consider the various aspects of its important remit. As part of the one Church of Jesus Christ, PCI has much to receive from and give to the wider Church, and in such mutual sharing, it is our belief and prayer that all will experience an enrichment that would not be possible if a more isolationist stance and ethos were promoted as a denomination. The Committee is grateful to those who, in this spirit, have

participated in various inter-Church activities over the past year and who have kept the Committee abreast of the important issues involved.

### **Irish Council of Churches (ICC)**

2. The AGM was held on 25 March in Quaker House, Dublin. The keynote speaker was Bishop David Atkinson, Former Bishop of Thetford, whose theme was 'Renewing the Face of the Earth', in which he presented some theological responses to climate change. A response was given by the Very Rev Dermot Lane, President of Mater Dei Institute of Education. A short input was also given by Eco-Congregation Ireland. During the afternoon business, the Rev Tony Davidson formally handed over the ICC Presidency to Bishop Richard Clarke. The General Assembly may wish to note the high esteem in which Tony has been held throughout his two-year term of office, and thank him for his excellent contribution to church relations in Ireland and beyond over many years but especially the past two.

3. Some other noteworthy items of interest over the past year should be noted: the resignation of Michael Earle as General Secretary, and his Administrative Assistant, Jennifer Fernandez, after several years of dedicated service; the temporary employment of Karen Kelly to cover the latter post; the appointment of Robert Cochrane as interim treasurer; a request from the Reformed Catholic Church to become a member of the ICC was declined due to insufficient congregational representation on the island of Ireland; the decision to take the administrative centre at 48 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast off the property market and to review the situation after a further year; the hosting of two successful seminars on Christian Zionism organised by the Board of Overseas Affairs.

### **Irish Inter-Church Committee (IICC)**

4. Much discussion and painful reflection centred on the recent Murphy report on clerical child abuse within the Roman Catholic Church. The members of PCI's Church Relations Committee wish to convey, first and foremost, their sense of outrage and empathy for the suffering of the innocent victims but also feel called to express this denomination's fellow-feeling for the damage done by this tragic crisis to the life and morale of the Catholic Church, its clergy and lay members. Their prayer is that God will bring healing and justice as appropriate to all those involved, and that the perennial need for human beings to constantly repent will be especially and freshly evident within the Church. It is important to look for the reformation, not the decimation of the Church. The Theology Forum has been set up with the Rev Prof Brendan Leahy (Roman Catholic) and Ms Gillian Kingston (Methodist representing ICC) as Co-Moderators. PCI has two delegates on this forum, Tony Davidson and Allen Sleith. The Church in Society Forum has also been set up chaired by Eileen Gallagher and thus far PCI has proposed Lindsay Conway and David Knox as two of its three allowed delegates. Both Fora will soon set about the task of tackling some of the major issues confronting the life and mission of the Churches in Ireland. The recent death of Cardinal Daly, the former Primate of Ireland, should be noted along

with appreciation for his wise and courageous leadership, especially during some of the darkest days of the 'Troubles'.

### **Irish-Inter-Church Meeting (IICM)**

5. The 23rd Irish Inter-Church Meeting took place at the Emmaus Conference Centre, Swords, Co Dublin on 19 November 2009, co-chaired by Cardinal Sean Brady and the Rev Tony Davidson. The theme was 'Baptism in contemporary Ireland – sharing theological insights concerning the baptismal discipline and practice in our Churches'. One of the keynote addresses was given by the Rev Prof Drew Gibson of UTC and in all there were nine PCI participants at what was an excellent and well-attended day's discussion and reflection. One particular note of practical interest was that some of those present at the conference were made aware, for the first time, that there is a Certificate of Christian Baptism which is recognised by many different Churches within Britain and Ireland. This certificate deserves to be better known within our Churches than is perhaps the case at present.

### **13th Assembly of the Conference of European Churches (CEC)**

6. Four delegates represented PCI at this event in Lyon, France, 15-21 July 2009 for a very full and intensive programme. There was much to stimulate and enrich from the very diverse Church traditions present, not least in providing the opportunity to participate in worship led by traditions other than one's own. It was evident that much excellent work is done by the two (now three) agencies of CEC: (1) Churches in Dialogue Commission; (2) Church and Society Commission and (3) Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe – this latter body was officially incorporated to CEC at the Assembly and now works as an instrument of it. The Assembly theme was 'Called to One Hope in Christ' based on Ephesians 4 and resulted in the following major statements on public issues:

- Called to value migrants (especially Roma)
- Called to promote ethical principles in financial and economic structures
- Called to strengthen religious rights and relationships
- Called to a world free of nuclear weapons

7. One item which should have been addressed more explicitly was the question of how the Churches in Europe reassess and renew their core mission to share the gospel to an increasingly secular populace on this vast continent.

### **World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)**

8. Due to family health issues, Allen Sleith has had to withdraw from the Uniting General Council in Grand Rapids, 18-28 June 2010 at which WARC and REC will officially merge and his place has been taken by the Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie thus giving us the stipulated party of four delegates. One of our delegates, the Rev Cheryl Meban has been proposed by the British Churches as a member of what will be the newly-constituted WCRC Executive.

### Any Other Business

9. For several years the Rev Alan Martin has represented PCI as an observer at the meetings of the Church of Ireland-Methodist Church in Ireland Covenant Council. Alan has intimated that he is stepping down from this role and his place has been taken by the Rev Dennis Campbell. The Rev Dr Ron Savage continues to represent PCI at meetings of the Inter-Faith Forum, under the umbrella of Belfast City Council. The Rev Dr Donald Watts and others continue to represent PCI at meetings of the 'North-West Triangle' involving Churches from Liverpool, Belfast and Glasgow.

ALLEN SLEITH, Convener

## RECOGNISED MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

1. In 2007 the General Assembly accepted in principle a recommendation "*that the category of recognised minister is not necessary in the present context of the Church*" and asked for appropriate legislation to be prepared. Changes to the Code were made by overture in 2008. This meant that ministers would not be called to "*appointments lying outside the jurisdiction of the Assembly*" but may have the status of "*minister without charge*". Legislation was also passed to invite ministers without charge to sit and deliberate in Presbytery and the General Assembly.

2. At the time changes in the Code were not immediately made where Boards have the authority to call ministers, but the Committee feels there is little distinction between some of these positions and those whose appointments are "outside the jurisdiction of the Assembly". The same principle of accountability applies.

3. The relevant sections of the Code are:-

- 277(5) "call ministers appointed to work in religious broadcasting or religious journalism" (Communications)
- 280(b) "ministers appointed to positions in evangelistic work" (BMI)
- 281(3)(a) "ministers offered full-time chaplaincies in HM Forces, hospitals, hospices, prisons, universities or colleges" (BSW)
- 281(4)(b) "ministers appointed to positions in welfare work or social service to be ministers in recognised service" (BSW)
- 283(3)(b) "ministers appointed to positions in Youth Service work to be ministers in recognised service" (YACM)
- 284(3)(a) "organiser or secretary of organisations, approved by resolution to the General Assembly, which are involved in religious education or other religious work among children or young people" (Educ)
- 284(3)(b) "chaplains to universities, colleges or schools" (Educ)
- 284(3)(c) "teachers in day schools, and advisers on RE, at least 2/3 of school week engaged in specialist religious teaching." (Educ)

4. The recommendation of the Committee is that Pars 277(5); 280(5)(b); 281(4)(b); 284(3)(a) should be deleted; Par 281(3)(a) amended to include "universities, colleges or schools" and Par 283(3)(b) amended to read "positions in youth and children's work". This was agreed in principle by the General

Board and discussion is taking place with the leadership of the relevant Boards. Overtures will then be brought in the Supplementary Reports.

5. If the above is agreed all those in special work will report annually to the Board which has called them and there will be no need for a Committee on Recognised Ministries, other than to process the annual reports of Presbytery on Licentiates and Ministers without charge. It is recommended that this, and any other residual responsibility of the Recognised Ministers Committee, should pass to the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates' Committee and that Par 272(3)(d) of the Code be deleted ("*granting leave to call for ministers in recognised service to the Church*"). Overtures will also be brought to amend the wording of any consequential sections of the Code e.g. induction services or form of call.

6. The list of Ministers and Licentiates without charge as reported by Presbyteries was adopted as follows:

<i>Presbytery</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Ards	Rev Dr SI Dennis	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev CD Mawhinney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev David McKee	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev DM Spratt	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Miss Molly Deatherage	To be retained as Licentiate without Charge.
	Mrs Karen Mbayo	To be retained as Licentiate without Charge.
Ballymena	Rev JD McGaughey	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
North Belfast	Rev LH Eagleson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev CI McKnight	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev WA Shaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev WM Smyth	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev FW Vincent	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Belfast East	Rev DR Baker	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev RA Crooks	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev W J Harshaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Dr Eliz Jamison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).

	Rev Rex Pedlow	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Carrickfergus	Rev DJ Paul	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Derry/Donegal	Rev KG Patterson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev JC Teeney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Down	Rev Samuel Armstrong	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev JM Casement	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev RN Stewart	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev GR Stockdale	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Dromore	Rev JD Mark	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Iveagh	Rev EG McAuley	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Route	Rev William Brown	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Dr Victor Dobbin	To be retained as Minister without Charge.

7. The following reports were received from Ministers in Recognised Service.

### **Ministers in Recognised Service**

#### *The Rev Desi Maxwell reports:*

While still listed as senior teaching fellow at Belfast Bible College, Xplorations keeps me on the road not only covering Ireland but also a wide range of denominations. Helping people get more excited about the Bible and clarifying their vision by means of a Hebraic lens is most fulfilling and I sense more and more that there is a great hunger to learn. Twice a year I'm able to use Israel itself as a classroom and there is a growing number of congregations who benefit from arranging a study tour. More information about the ministry can be found at [www.xplorations.org](http://www.xplorations.org)

#### *The Rev Dr Ruth Patterson reports:*

Spiritual direction, prayer ministry, welcoming people and listening to their stories still form the pattern of the day to day life at Restoration House both for myself, my colleague Rose Ozo and our volunteers. This year saw the launch of another book "Looking Back to Tomorrow: A Spirituality for Between the Times." Our monthly newsletter goes out around the world and we receive very encouraging feedback. Monthly gatherings and days of reflection are also part of the service we provide. A wide variety of groups use our conference room,

either for their own programme or to be facilitated by myself. I personally feel blessed at the steady stream of invitations to speak at conferences, retreats and Churches around the island of Ireland and beyond. None of this would be possible without our steady and faithful prayer partners and our daily prayer here in Restoration House.

*The Rev Dr WJP Bailie reports:*

Mission Africa (The Qua Iboe Fellowship) is one of Ireland's oldest mission agencies. It is an unambiguously evangelical mission agency, working in partnership with like-minded missions and Churches in Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Chad. Through our daughter agency, African Christian Textbooks, we have a strong representation in Kenya, which in turn reaches Ethiopia. The mission concentrates on four areas of ministry: evangelism and Church planting; the strengthening of existing Church bodies through theological education and Christian literature distribution; medical mission, with particular emphasis upon HIV/ AIDS work; and compassionate ministry amongst disadvantaged and abused children. The mission has at the time of writing 20 full time staff in the field, 4 full time staff preparing to depart for Nigeria in the summer. We would typically have 8-10 volunteer missionaries on 6 months – 1 year placement at any one time, and we operate a thriving short term team programme, typically sending 50-60 people out on teams each year.

As Chief Executive I continue to have responsibility for strategic planning, administration of personnel, finance and partner relations.

Mission Africa was founded by Irish Presbyterians, so I am especially glad to report an excellent relationship with the Board of Mission Overseas through the Mission Agencies Partnership. We have been delighted to see the number of strong partnerships develop between the Mission and several congregations, such as First Carrick, Second Donegore, Maze, Newmills and Lowe Memorial, to name but a few. In July 2009 a team from Tyrone Presbytery visited Burkina Faso under the auspices of the mission, and carried out highly successful building work and children's evangelism. We are always at the disposal of all ministers, congregations and individual members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who wish to deepen their engagement in mission. We appreciate deeply all those who maintain an interest in our work and remember us in prayer.

I am also grateful to be able to record that my status as a minister in recognised service permits me to play an active role within my Presbytery and beyond.

## **RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee meet on two occasions during the year and a Panel of the Committee met to interview three people.
2. The Board of Mission Overseas requested the Committee to interview the Rev Laszlo Orban, Minister of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania, regarding Special Ministry under paragraph 200(4) of the Code. Mr



Orban was interviewed and the Board accepted him as eligible for Special Ministry within the Presbytery of Down in the understanding that his eligibility did not extend to any other Calls or Ministries within PCI.

3. The Rev Barry Reid, a member of Letterkenny congregation and who had been ordained in the Irish Baptist Church and the Rev Chris Bower, Presbyterian Church in America, applied to the Committee and both were interviewed. The Board accepted then both in the following terms: “that they undertake both a supervised assistantship, (it is recommended that this be two years in length), and any course of study required by the Board of Christian Training and that they would only become eligible for a call to a congregation, or other service within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, when they are deemed to have satisfactorily completed both the prescribed course of study and assistantship”.

4. The Board also accepted the following recommendation from the Committee regarding its procedures, namely:

- (i) That each minister or licentiate interviewed will be subject to a psychological report, as is the case for those applying to be received as students for the ordained ministry.
- (ii) That if a medical condition is declared by a candidate, they may be required to follow the same medical procedure as that stipulated by the Board of Christian Training for those applying to be received as students for the ordained ministry.
- (iii) That normally each minister or licentiate received will be required to undertake a supervised assistantship, along with whatever study the Board of Christian Training may require, and that they will only become eligible for a call to a congregation, or other service within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, when they have satisfactorily completed both the prescribed course of study and the supervised assistantship.

IVAN J PATTERSON, Convener

## CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMITTEE

The report has been written during a period of illness of the Co-Convener, the Rev Dr Lesley Carroll, which has inevitably affected the work of the Committee. It should be seen as a summary of the great deal of work which goes on in relating to government and society.

1. As was agreed last year the Committee now operates as 2 Sub-Committees – Northern and Southern. The full Committee will meet previous to General Boards and to the General Assembly to process business, share information and deal with shared business. Office bearers are empowered to process business between meetings should that be essential and appropriate.

2. **The Northern Sub-Committee** continues its work on human rights, shared future, dealing with the past. A submission to the Secretary of State’s Consultation on the Report of the Consultative Group on the Past (See Minutes, 2009, pp 39-43) has been submitted. A sub-group is working on a position paper on a shared future.

3. Attached (see Appendix I) is a position paper on human rights which the Committee asks the General Assembly to support and adopt as a position paper for the whole Church. This paper is to inform Presbyterians who are engaged in the debate, as well as those who have found the debate difficult to approach from a Christian perspective. A response was submitted to the Consultation Paper on “A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland : Next Steps” (see Appendix II).

4. At the September meeting of the Committee it was agreed that some thought needs to be given to issues related to Victims and Survivors, especially the definition of a victim and much-debated issue of the hierarchy of victims. The Committee is not convinced that taking a public position on either of these matters would be helpful and therefore intends to listen carefully to representatives of victims groups before coming to a decision.

5. One of the major debates of the year has been on the devolution of justice and policing powers. This was taking place at a time of increased paramilitary activity attributed to dissident republicans. While the Committee would have reservations about the way in which the devolution of policing and justice powers was achieved, it broadly welcomes the fact that justice is now a local responsibility and looks forward to discussion with the new Minister for Justice. It would hope that with this development the Executive will make renewed efforts to work towards a shared and cohesive community.

6. The Committee brought to the General Board a draft response to the Government’s consultation on Dormant Accounts which was confirmed and submitted on behalf of the Church (see Appendix III).

7. **The Southern Sub-Committee** at present exists in name only. Despite several attempts through the Presbytery Clerks to obtain names of possible Committee members, there has been no response. The Co-Convenor will make further contact with the Clerks in an attempt to move things on, but the indication so far is that apathy rules the day. However, following a request to the Dublin and Munster Presbytery that some kind of southern forum be established to encourage Presbyterians in the south to meet together annually or biannually, there may be some potential for recruitment.

8. Some time ago the Co-Convenor made a response on behalf of PCI to the National Commission on Restorative Justice. That body has now made its Final Report and the findings in summary (based on the 66 recommendations) are:

- Restorative Justice is an invaluable cost-effective option for the criminal justice system.
- Without adopting a definitive range of offences for which RJ would be applicable, serious crimes such as murder and rape would be excluded, but cases involving custodial sentences of up to three years would be targeted.
- Existing and future programmes of RJ should be given a statutory base.
- The rights and safeguards for offenders will be duly respected.
- The Probation Service should be the lead agency in implementation.

- The approach should be multi-disciplinary and include volunteers and NGO's.
- A National Restorative Justice Committee should be established to oversee.
- Three models of particular interest are: restorative conferencing, victim offender mediation and reparation Panels.
- Between 3,625 and 7,250 cases could be dealt with by RJ.

9. The Co-Convener attended the North/South Consultative Conference held in Farmleigh on 15 October, 2009. The presentations and ensuing discussions ranged widely (perhaps too widely), but the overall impression was that the business and volunteer sectors were frustrated by the political inertia. It was pointed out that progress was demanded by the current economic difficulties. The following points may be drawn from the official Minutes:

Contributions were wide ranging and diverse and included:

- A high level of awareness of the very significant impact a new and much more difficult economic environment was having on the work already being done by civil society North and South.
- Success, especially in this new environment, needing political engagement North and South.
- North/South implementation bodies being identified as key stakeholders.
- Importance of acknowledging the range of all-island work that was already ongoing including examples of the great many specific initiatives currently underway in the business, trade union, farming and community sectors.
- Recognition that in some areas there would naturally be competition between North and South but that in certain areas active co-operation would be of greater mutual benefit.
- The psychology of the border and the challenge to think on an island basis remaining one of the biggest hurdles to be overcome in the wider community.

Amongst the suggestions as to what the Conference could facilitate were:

- Helping those who wish to work together to do so including by recognising existing achievements and being realistic about what could be achieved.
- Identifying opportunities for public service provision North and South to proactively collaborate to tackle shared challenges.
- Revisiting wider EU dimension and especially the work of the EU Task Force with particular reference to the support of European funding for cross-border activities in the context of moving on from Interreg and PEACE funding and their capacity to impact on the environment, equality and social and economic development.
- Supporting the continuing effort required to ensure North/South is firmly and consciously factored into the thinking of business people and policy makers.
- Encouraging sectors that have not already done so to take the initiative to reach out to their counterparts in either the North or

the South and take practical steps to verify the potential mutual benefits of working directly with them.

- Compiling 'best practice' models where this is already occurring and especially in important arenas such as Education (eg issues around meeting face to face at a number of levels to balance negative impacts of segregation) or sport (where co-operation between sporting bodies began on a small scale and has now progressed to joint planning and coaching with input from ground level and engagement across communities).
- Using the new and rapidly developing capacity of the internet and social networking sites such as Facebook to bring together disparate groups and individuals virtually, both for its own work and to facilitate others.
- Implementing a shared vision where trust, mutual respect consensus building and adding value, are critical success factors.

Notice of a follow up meeting has just been issued for 27 April, 2010 and the Co-Convener plans to attend.

10. Questions have been raised by Congregations concerning the implications for Church finances following the review of charity legislation. The Dublin and Munster Presbytery has undertaken a watching brief on the situation and is currently reading through the relevant information before making any recommendations. Information on the legislation is available at: [www.pobail.ie/en/Charities Regulation](http://www.pobail.ie/en/Charities%20Regulation). A copy of the Act can be downloaded at this website. Furthermore an organisation called the Wheel has a helpdesk on the Act at email: [charityregulation@wheel.ie](mailto:charityregulation@wheel.ie).

11. The Irish economy remains under considerable strain as the major banks readjust. Bank of Scotland Ireland has moved away and Bank of Ireland has been required by Europe to transfer further shares to the government in lieu of an unacceptable financial arrangement. Unemployment is around 15%, although this disguises the massive exit of foreign nationals and young Irish emigrants. NAMA has continued to convince international banks and world leaders of Ireland's determination to tackle the underlying issues and this, along with massive public spending cuts, testifies to the serious intent to reduce national debt. The effect on people and whole regions is and will remain, considerable.

## APPENDIX I

### HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION PAPER – A CHURCH PERSPECTIVE

#### INTRODUCTION

The area of Human Rights has become contested in Northern Ireland. Although agreements were made in this area at the time of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement difference and division across the community remains. The Churches have found themselves involved in this debate, seeking to bring a Christian perspective to the issues that arise but have always faced the challenge of a highly politicized debate which sometimes fail to become realistic and

meaningful outside of the political accommodations that have to be reached. This position paper therefore seeks to draw together the thinking of PCI thereby enabling Presbyterians to engage in discussions about human rights with information to hand from the church.

Clearly, overzealous approaches to this subject can give it a “bad press”. Human rights can be (mis)represented in the media as little more than a charter for criminals, terrorists and anti-social behaviour. However events in some overseas countries show the dire consequences that may ensue for the vulnerable (including minority Christian communities) when human rights are disregarded, so the church cannot ignore the issue.

## A CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS

A concern for human rights is not exclusive to Christians, for they share it with people of other faiths or of no faith. Christians differ from secular people on the question of where our concern for human rights is grounded. Many secularists would simply assert, along with the American Declaration of Independence, that “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” (An interesting use of the term “created”!) To Christians, attempts to find a purely secular basis for the worth which human beings have, and which accounts for their rights, are not convincing.

Christians share the belief that human rights are grounded in the inherent worth and dignity of every human being but locate the basis of that worth in the fact that each human being bears the image of God and is redemptively loved by God. John Stott (writing in 1984) said:

*The origin of human rights is creation. Man has never “acquired” them. Nor has any government or other authority conferred them. Man has had them from the beginning. He received them with his life from the hand of his Maker. They are inherent in his creation.*

(John Stott *Issues Facing Christians Today*, pp143-144).

The simple yet profound declaration of Genesis:

*So God created humans to be like himself; he made men and women.*

(Genesis 1:27 CEV)

- (i) means that all human beings enjoy, among other things,
- (ii) the right to life and the resources to sustain it, for life is a gift from God;
- (iii) a right to human dignity, i.e. the right to receive respect irrespective of age, gender, race or rank or any other way in which we define individual human beings;
- (iv) a responsibility to secure/protect/establish the rights of others, for God is love. Rights only exist in relationship with others, albeit coming into play most significantly when relationships break down. Christians found their belief in relationship within the Trinity believing that God has made us in the Trinitarian image, for mutual relationship. It is out of this relationship of mutuality that Christians are challenged to love God and our neighbour as ourselves;
- (v) the right to justice, for all have been created equal before God’s law.

Historically Christianity has been a major influence in developing the concept of human rights; it was within the Christian theological tradition that the

category of human rights originated. The atheist Friedrich Nietzsche, intending a criticism, said, "...the poison of the doctrine of 'equal rights for all' - it was Christianity that spread it most fundamentally."

## **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS INFORMING A CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

### **The Fall**

The Fall, human disobedience before God, had lasting effects. The Creator's good gifts can be spoiled by human sin and the area of human rights is no exception. The rights that God gave to all human beings equally can easily be corrupted and spoiled by the very things which a concern for human rights seeks to address, the protection of the weak, marginalised or excluded. When fed by an inflated sense of one's own weakness, or the weakness of one's group, talk of equality in rights can degenerate into arguing for "my rights" regardless of the rights of others. The rights of an individual or group are seldom absolute and must be balanced against the rights of other individuals or groups.

The language of "rights" is usually invoked when there is a breakdown in relationships. Conflict can arise between the rights of one individual or group and those of another, eg in the Northern Irish context, between organizations wanting to parade in a certain area and residents who object. There can also be a conflict between the rights of an individual and those of a corporate body, eg between the rights of an individual worker and the rights of the company that employs him or her. In such situations of competition there can be a tendency for one group to dominate another, so minorities need to be protected from the tyranny of the majority. All such conflicts over rights are a consequence of our fallenness.

### **Scripture**

The Bible does not use the modern vocabulary of "human rights", as it usually emphasizes the responsibilities of the powerful more than the rights of the weak, but concern for human rights is implicit in Scripture. Given the difference between the Old Testament era (when "church" and "state" were co-terminous and made laws for the whole community) and the New Testament era, when Christians were a small and powerless minority, it is understandable that, generally speaking, specific provisions for particular matters are found in the Old Testament and fundamental principles in the New.

#### *Old Testament*

The Pentateuch protected the weak and the vulnerable, eg "You shall not keep back a hired man's wages till next morning. You shall not treat the deaf with contempt nor put an obstruction in the way of the blind." (Leviticus 19: 13-14). It laid down laws about the right to life (eg the homicide laws in Numbers 35: 9ff), about property, (eg the land laws in Leviticus 25:25-34), and about "the stranger within your gates". "You shall not oppress a stranger for you were strangers in Egypt" (Exodus 22:21). Concern for the poor is evident in eg Deuteronomy 15.11, "I command you to be open-handed towards your brothers

and towards the poor and needy in your land” and in the arrangement for poor gleaners at harvest time. (Leviticus 19: 9-10). The right to a fair trial was recognised. “Hear the law cases and judge righteously between every man and his brother and the stranger; you shall not respect persons in judgment but you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man” (Deuteronomy 1:17). The Hebrew prophets too wanted a fair legal system, eg “Let justice run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream” (Amos 5:24).

### *New Testament*

In the New Testament Jesus taught his disciples that being citizens of the Kingdom of God required unworldly thought and action. “The kings of the pagans have power over their people ...but this is not the way it is with you” (Luke 22: 25, 26). Secular standards were reversed; instead of a self-righteous demanding of rights there was to be the giving of rights by the acceptance of responsibility for others and loving service to them. “Look out for one another’s interests, not just for your own” (Philippians 2.4). Old Testament provisions are sometimes repeated in the New, eg the command in Deuteronomy 15, 11 to be open-handed is echoed in I Timothy 6.17f “Command those who are rich in this present world... to be rich in good deeds and to be generous and willing to share.”

### **Duty to God**

The primary motive for Christian concern for human rights is our duty to God. C S Lewis, commenting on such phrases as “What right have they...?” “You’ve no right to be here” “I know my rights” “By rights...” etc, observes that behind such phrases “...there is a tacit acknowledgement of some external standard or norm which can be a source of authority, protection or arbitration. Such a standard or norm has to be independent of the parties in the dispute for it to be worth appealing to. It has to ‘transcend’ them both.” (*Mere Christianity* Ch 1). Sometimes that authority may lie in civil law (eg on fair employment) but not always; many people using the language of “rights” might find it difficult to say precisely where they find that higher authority. Christians, however, should be in no doubt. “This transcendent norm is God Himself – his righteousness and justice” (John Stott).

The Bible indicates that our responsibility for human rights derives primarily from our responsibility to God. Though he might dispute it, Cain was answerable to God for his brother. Relevant Old Testament injunctions are often reinforced by such statements as “I [the Lord] command you...” (e. g. Deuteronomy 8:11; 10:13; 13:18; 24:18, 22; etc.) The Book of Proverbs observes “He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker” (Ch 14:31). Micah, in a much-quoted verse, indicates that it is the Lord who requires us “to do justly” etc (Ch 6:8). Nehemiah 5 takes up the cause of impoverished farmers who were being forced to mortgage their land and eventually to sell their dependents as pledges to pay off excessive interest to the rich. His appeal to their creditors goes directly to their obligation to God. He asks “Should you not walk in the fear of our God?” (Ch 5:9).

In modern society many groups are quick to fight for their own needs (though not all “needs” are necessarily “rights”) but the primary Christian motive is not self-interest. Of course there are times when the church should speak up for freedom of thought, conscience and belief; individuals, parents and religious institutions have a right to be distinct, and to promote and protect values consistent with their religious convictions. They should not be obliged by State legislation to promote views contrary to their deeply held religious beliefs (eg the traditional Christian view of marriage). The church is also justified in defending its own interests in areas like the employment of staff, claiming the right to employ only those whom it considers morally and spiritually suitable for church work, whatever the secular authorities might say. However, the church’s main motive for debating human rights is not self-interest but duty to God.

### **Civil Law**

Given that human relationships do break down, human beings need to be protected from one another, whether as individuals or as corporate groups, and if fundamental human rights are to be enforced, those rights need to be justifiable. However Civil Law, though necessary, has its limitations, for laws may not make people good. Human Rights conventions, charters and legislation cannot achieve everything and risk spawning endless fractious litigation. “Judicial decrees may not change the heart but they can restrain the heartless” (Dr Martin Luther King). Attitudes need to change and that is a message that the Christian gospel preaches as it calls its hearers to a change of heart.

### **Responsibility**

In line with Bible teaching modern Christians stress responsibilities as well as rights.

“We are very suspicious of reasoning which ...detaches rights from responsibilities or elevates rights above responsibilities...In Christian thinking it is sometimes better not to insist on the exercise of a perceived right in the interests of the overall wellbeing of a society...To voluntarily set aside one’s rights is not the same as having them denied.”

(PCI Church and Government submission to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, 2001).

Paul showed judgment in exercising the different rights he had. He claimed his legal rights as a Roman citizen in relation to corporal punishment (Acts 22:25) and in his appeal to Caesar (Acts 25:11), yet chose a “tent-making ministry” rather than living off the Christian community as he was entitled to do (Acts 20: 33-34).

## **APPLICATION OF CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES**

The foregoing has practical applications in at least three areas.

### *In the Church*

Christian communities should strive to exhibit within their own ranks that alternative society which bears the marks of the Kingdom of God. The church



will thus be a sign to the world of true human existence under the authority of Christ.

“We have to take more seriously Christ’s intention that the Christian community should set an example to other communities. ... The life of the local church ... is meant to be a sign of God’s rule. The church should be the one community in the world in which human dignity and equality are invariably recognised and human responsibility for each other accepted; the rights of others are sought and never violated, while our own are often renounced; there is no partiality, favouritism or discrimination; the poor and the weak are defended, and human beings are free to be human as God made us and meant us to be.”

(John Stott)

#### *In wider society*

Christians have responsibilities towards the wider community, sharing with secularists a genuine concern for the welfare of society. The church has the right and the duty to care about that and speak about it. The Christian gospel, with its message of compassion, requires sensitivity to victims and excluded groups, especially if others are not paying much attention to them. The weak and the vulnerable need protection and the church should say so, even if it is an unpopular cause. The struggle for human rights has given the church some of its modern martyrs, eg Janani Luwum (Anglican archbishop in Idi Amin’s Uganda), Oscar Romero (Roman Catholic Archbishop of El Salvador at a time of ruthless government repression) or Dr Martin Luther King (Baptist minister in the U S A at a time when the Afro-American community was being treated unfairly). Such Christian leaders highlighted exclusion, injustice and intolerance of difference as being among the primary causes of breaches of human rights and of conflicts between individuals and communities, and they took their stand accordingly.

#### *For dealing with governments*

Churches have a responsibility under God to address the powers that be. Churches have supported Bills of Rights in such countries as the USA, Canada, the Irish Republic, South Africa and the United Kingdom. No human government is perfect, and the Reformed tradition in particular makes provision for the right, even the duty, to resist when human governments violate the purposes for which they were appointed. If necessary the church must be willing to become an offence to the powers that be in its support of the deprived and vulnerable.

### **SUMMARY**

John Stott provides a useful summary of the Christian position.

Here then is a Christian perspective on human rights. First, we affirm human dignity. Because human beings are created in God’s image to know him, serve one another and be stewards of the earth, therefore they must be respected. Secondly, we affirm human equality. Because human beings have all been made in the same image by the same Creator, therefore we must...behave without

partiality to all. Thirdly we affirm human responsibility because we have to accept that other people's rights are our responsibility. We are our brother's keeper because God has put us in the same human family and so made us related to, and responsible for, one another. The law and the prophets, Jesus and his apostles, all lay on us a particular duty to serve the poor and defend the powerless. As God has laid it upon us to love and serve our neighbour, we must fight for his rights, while being ready to renounce our own in order to do so.

*(Issues Facing Christians Today, pp. 150-151).*

## APPENDIX II

### A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND : NEXT STEPS

#### Equality, representation and participation in public life

**(A) Do you believe a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland should contain a statement that everyone in Northern Ireland is equal before the law and has equal rights? What might be the practical and legal implications of such a statement?**

Yes. The simple statement that "everyone in Northern Ireland is equal before the law and has equal rights" is brief and general, which should be the style of a Bill of Rights.

**(B) The grounds on which discrimination in Northern Ireland is currently unlawful include religious belief, political opinion, race, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability. Do you believe that any other "protected categories" particular to Northern Ireland should be added to this list? Some examples might be:**

- nationality;
- national origin;
- family or carer status;
- irrelevant criminal record.

No. We do not suggest any additional categories that would be

- (i) significant;
- (ii) "particular to Northern Ireland", and
- (iii) in need of mention in a Bill of Rights.

Any attempt to compile a comprehensive list would run the risk of some important categories being overlooked, while pressure groups might lobby for the inclusion of all kinds of categories - eg the hearing impaired, asylum seekers, those who are HIV positive, etc; the list could be endless.

However we would not oppose further anti-discrimination measures being enacted for specific categories in ordinary legislation as and when deemed advisable.

**(C) Public authorities also have a duty to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.**

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and

- **between persons with dependants and persons without;**

**Do you believe that they should be given this duty in respect of any other groups?**

No. We do not propose that other named groups that should be included here. Public authorities already have a wide-ranging duty to have due regard to promote equality of opportunity in the various groups listed. The additional resources required to discharge extra duties could be disproportionate to any further protection or benefit that might be derived. We would have further reservations if the term “public authorities” were widely interpreted to include NGOs, charities, etc who happen to undertake certain limited public functions, such as care homes for the elderly (*cf Health and Social Care Act 2008, section 145*).

### **Identity, culture and language**

**(D) Do you agree that a right freely to vote in and be elected at genuine periodic elections held by secret ballot should be included in a Bill of Rights, subject to reasonable restrictions?**

Yes, if necessary. Such a provision would reflect *Protocol No 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)* which already requires “free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot....” (*Article 3*), but it would do no harm to repeat it in a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

**(E) Do you believe that the Bill of Rights should include the principle that any electoral system used in Northern Ireland should provide for both main communities to be fairly represented?**

Yes. The electoral system should ensure fair representation, but we would not wish any one method (eg Proportional Representation by a single transferable vote) to be entrenched in a Bill of Rights.

**(F) Do you believe that the Bill of Rights should also require that the structures of the Assembly and local government should enable proportionate and fair participation by elected representatives?**

Yes. However, our comments re a wide definition of “public authorities” in (C) above are equally applicable here.

**(G) Do you believe that there should be a requirement for the membership of public bodies to, as far as practicable, be representative of the community in Northern Ireland?**

Yes in principle. Those appointed should be the best people for the job, though there is a danger that a rigid quota, requiring fixed proportions of male, female, Unionist, Nationalist, aged under 30, over 30, etc, could result in some very talented people being excluded simply by the mathematics of the system.

**(H) Do you believe that any other provisions (whether or not discussed above) should be included in a Bill of Rights to help secure fundamental democratic rights in Northern Ireland?**

No. The existing provisions are adequate.

**(I) Do you agree that the right of the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves as British or Irish or both should be included in a Bill of Rights?**

Yes. A declaration on “The right of the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves as British or Irish or both” should definitely be included. This is a clear example of an issue that really is “particular to Northern Ireland.”

**(J) Do you agree that the right of the people of Northern Ireland to hold British and Irish citizenship should be included in a Bill of Rights?**

Yes. This is consequential to (I) above.

**(K) Is there a need for the existing obligations on public authorities in the equality field to be consolidated into a Bill of Rights?**

Perhaps. We are not convinced that there is a “need” for consolidation, but we would not oppose the principle. However such a provision might be better located in a Single Equality Bill (as in Great Britain) rather than being entrenched in a Bill of Rights.

**(L) Do you believe there are areas in which the identity and ethos of the two communities is not sufficiently protected by the existing equality legislation? If so, should an additional obligation be placed on public authorities in this respect?**

No. The existing equality legislation is adequate.

**(M) Do you believe that there is a need to extend the existing obligations on public authorities, by requiring them also to have regard to the desirability of promoting a spirit of tolerance, dialogue and mutual respect between people? What might the practical effect of such additional obligations be?**

No. As in (C) above, we would not want public authorities to be too broadly defined or to be over-burdened with further obligations.

**(N) Do you believe that the ECHR offers insufficient protection from the requirement to swear an oath that is contrary to an individual’s religion or belief? If so, what additional protection might be needed in a Bill of Rights? How might it be framed?**

Yes. Neither Article 9 of the ECHR nor any Protocol mentions the taking of oaths, nor is it clearly implied.

We support the wording proposed in the *NIHRC Advice to the Secretary of State*. “No one may be compelled in Northern Ireland to take an oath, or to take an oath in a manner, that is contrary to their religion or belief, or that requires them to express a belief that they do not hold.” (p 102, Recommendation 6).

**(O) Do you believe that there are additional protections in relation to Irish or Ulster Scots that should be included in a Bill of Rights? What form might such protections take?**

No. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement recognised “...the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity, including in Northern Ireland, the Irish language, Ulster Scots...” (*The Agreement p 19, par 3*) and listed various measures for the British Government to take (*Agreement par 4*). If by “additional protections” the question means

“additional to those specified in par 4” we do not think that further additional protections are needed. We would not want public authorities spending scarce resources unnecessarily on being bilingual (or trilingual!) We have no objection to enthusiasts pursuing Irish or Ulster Scots as a cultural interest, and receiving reasonable grants from the public purse, but there are few (if any) indigenous people in Northern Ireland who cannot understand English.

### **Tackling segregation and sectarianism**

**(P) Do you agree that any Bill of Rights should include a measure aimed at combating sectarian violence or harassment? Should such a measure take the form of a duty placed on public authorities? If so, which public authorities should be included?**

Yes. A measure “aimed at combating sectarian harassment or violence” is highly commendable but should be aspirational. It would be unduly onerous for “public authorities” (especially if widely defined) to be burdened with yet another legally enforceable obligation, to take “... effective measures to promote mutual respect, understanding and co-operation among all persons living in Northern Ireland, irrespective of those persons’ race, ethnicity, language, religion or political opinion.”

**(Q) Do you believe that there is a need for a Bill of Rights to contain additional protections to prevent individuals from being forced out of their home by intimidation or harassment, in addition to any general measures aimed at combating sectarian violence or harassment? If so, what role might public authorities play?**

Yes. We certainly agree with the principle of this suggestion re intimidation and harassment but would limit such duty to those “public authorities” who are clearly in a position to take effective measures.

### **Victims and the legacy of the conflict**

**(R) Should a provision about the ongoing process of re-examination of deaths related to the conflict be included in a Bill of Rights? If so, how should this be expressed?**

No. The time is coming to draw a line under the past rather than initiating ever more numerous, lengthy and expensive enquiries.

**(S) Should provision be made in a Bill of Rights relating to victims of the conflict? How should such a provision relate to the work that is currently under way around the definition and the needs of victims?**

Yes – but with reservations and within limits. The term “victim” is so charged emotionally that it is unlikely that there will ever be an agreed definition; even the OFMDFM definition is disputed, so that may always be a contentious matter. It would be better to refer eg to “the injured”, “the traumatised” or “the bereaved”; reasonable people would not want medical or psychiatric help to be withheld from casualties.

### **Criminal Justice**

**(T) The Government recognises that there have, in the past, been substantial concerns about aspects of the criminal justice system including the treatment of suspects, stemming from the history of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Many legislative safeguards have already been put in place to meet these concerns, but the Government would welcome views on whether there is any further specific provision that might be made in a Bill of Rights on this issue.**

No. The “many legislative safeguards” already in place to deal with aspects of the criminal justice system are reasonable. We would not oppose some further specific provisions being enacted (eg those listed in the *NIHCR Advice to the Secretary of State* pp 62-79) but a Bill of Rights is not the best place for numerous detailed provisions.

**(U) Recognizing the current flexible and risk-based approach to providing support and protection to witnesses, jurors, judges and lawyers, do you believe that further measures are needed in this area which should be expressed in a Bill of Rights? If so, what additional steps do you think are necessary?**

No. Further measures may well be needed, as support and protection for witnesses etc is obviously vital, but, again, we would query whether specifically detailed “further measures” are matter for a Bill of Rights. We would favour a broad statement of principle.

### **Implementation**

**(V) Do you believe that any other individuals and organisations, in addition to victims and the Human Rights Commission, should be able to start human rights cases against public authorities?**

No. Giving NGOs, voluntary bodies, etc the right to start human rights cases could lead to an unwelcome increase in legal proceedings in a society which is already very litigious.

### **Equality considerations**

**(AA) Do you believe that any of the proposals outlined at Appendix 1 will have a positive impact on people within any of the section 75 categories?**

Yes.

**(BB) Do you believe that any of the proposals outlined at Appendix 1 will have an adverse impact on people within any of the section 75 categories?**

No.

**(CC) If so, are there any measures that should be implemented to mitigate against adverse impact on people in the section 75 categories?**

N/A

**(DD) Will any of the proposals affect the promotion of good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial groups?**

Yes.

**(EE) Do you have any other comments on the equality impact of these proposals?**

No.

### APPENDIX III

#### DORMANT ACCOUNTS SCHEME CONSULTATION

1. This response comes from the General Board of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Board is representative of the church across the Island of Ireland and draws on the broad experience of ministers and elders, including rural and urban, and from congregations within different types of localities. This response therefore comes with input from a wide variety of views, opinions and experiences.

#### General Comment

2. While some ethical challenges may be raised to the notion of using money from dormant accounts we understand the intention behind this scheme. We would, however, want to emphasise that legislation protecting the money which belongs to account holders should be tight, carefully putting the owner of the money first. Clearly this is intended but it is important to us that this is emphasised.

#### Social & Environmental Purposes – areas to benefit

3. Within the broad remit of social and environmental purposes we believe there are some priorities which need to be set by government. Underpinning specific areas to which monies should be directed there are some basic standards which we believe need to be met by those seeking project funding:

- (a) There must be a commitment to making a contribution to stability and cohesion evidenced in a willingness to work alongside others, including those who are different, especially where there is similarity in what is being provided
- (b) Capacity concerns must be addressed if monies are to be distributed effectively into areas where they have not been distributed previously. The application process therefore needs to be supported and simplified as much as possible while not compromising on quality and excellence in provision and needs to be directed towards building community capacity
- (c) Consideration must be given to those who have not previously had freedom to access funding, specifically from the lottery
- (d) Areas in which there is a high level of social exclusion experienced should be considered a priority

4. With these broad underpinnings in mind it is the experience of Irish Presbyterians that there are specific areas of need in which a difference can be made when sustained programmes are delivered. These areas are a priority not only because churches have been making an impact already but because they present as areas of considerable challenge and need across society. These priority areas should, therefore, include:

- (a) Youth, particularly where there is little provision and/or considerable work needing to be done on a detached basis
- (b) The elderly whose loneliness is often unaddressed, whose experience is lost in much that is planned and whose potential contribution to building a cohesive society is not realised as it could be
- (c) Communities experiencing exclusion and social deprivation, both urban and rural, particularly as they face disenchantment and lack of purpose
- (d) Family support programmes which are addressing the rebuilding of family and the sustaining of the family unit as the primary place of learning and training for children
- (e) Faith-based groups which have shown by their sustained commitment to communities that they are dependable and credible and which have been delivering programmes which contribute to social cohesion over many years

#### **Specific individuals or organisations to be targeted**

5. We believe that organisations which have proven themselves to be in for the long haul in disadvantaged communities should be targeted for the effective channelling of funding. Those organisations which have a proven track record, an established reputation in a community and which have stayed with a community during many hard times, even when themselves experiencing trying times, have the ability to deliver what is needed with integrity and in a manner which includes a broader base of the community than might otherwise be addressed.

6. We believe that churches are well-placed to deliver programmes which address social and environmental needs and that priority should be given to churches on the basis that:

- (a) They have a long history of volunteering and the provision of services to the community through the work of dedicated volunteers
- (b) They bring a level of commitment to their work which is second to none
- (c) They are not necessarily driven by the desire to see some return for themselves but by a desire to take their place in society contributing to health and well-being of its members
- (d) They bring a passion for the work to which they address themselves
- (e) They have a settled history and cannot be accused of 'short-termism'
- (f) They have credibility among many different groups of people.

7. Churches providing regional or country-wide projects addressing the priority areas have a unique approach which is both a partnership approach and dedicated to achieving outcomes across a broader base of people. We therefore believe that these types of projects should be targeted.



**Disadvantaged areas**

8. The General Board believes that disadvantaged areas, as defined as the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, should be targeted but with the proviso that attention is paid to rural communities as well as to urban and suburban areas.

**Ethical challenges and funding from the National Lottery**

9. Under section 75 there should be no discrimination against the listed groups, including religious groups. While lottery money is not discriminatory in itself it has, in its effect, discriminated against those who are opposed to taking money raised from gambling and who are outraged by the moral corruption that gambling brings to a society. In its outworking, therefore, lottery money has ruled out those with a particular ethical viewpoint and there have been no steps taken by government to address or redress this imbalance. While PCI would prefer that other streams of funding were found for everyone we recognise that this is highly unlikely. We are prepared to bear the weight of our ethical position but in light of the contribution that churches make to society in terms of volunteering and training for volunteering, provision of youth facilities and training, provision of groups for mothers and toddlers, the elderly, the lonely and other vulnerable groups in society, etc. all without the support of outside funding we believe that this scheme should give priority to those who have carried on without the benefit of outside funding. We believe that such open funding can only enhance the contribution that some churches already make to society.

10. We are concerned that the funding stream is through the Big Lottery Fund. Given our ethical perspective it would be unethical for us to accept this money, not gained from gambling, while at the same time being required to show that funding came through the Big Lottery. At the same time we recognise that the Big Lottery have considerable experience and expertise in this area and we believe it would be unhelpful to waste money in setting up another administering authority. We therefore ask that consideration be given:

- To the application process so that there is no confusion and no impression given that those who take an ethical perspective have applied for lottery money
- To the process of receiving funding and there requirements of publically acknowledging where the funding came from so that there is no impression given that lottery money has been received

11. We would again emphasise that we do not question the competence of the Big Lottery and understand that this is possibly the only way in which funding can be delivered to those who cannot, for ethical reasons, accept lottery monies.

**Delivery of funds**

12. Funding offered as a result of the Dormant Accounts Scheme should be on a longer term rather than a shorter term basis. Experience shows that there are too many short term, and therefore proportionately ineffective projects which given longer term funding could have achieved considerably more.

13. The terms under which funding is given should be co-ordinated with other funders so that the industry of 'taking funding' is not further encouraged and so that unnecessary duplication and competition is avoided. The provision of funding should, ultimately, encourage the development of self-sustaining projects.

14. It has also to be recognised that self-sustaining projects are not always possible if all 'good service to the community' is to be recognised. So there needs to be some provision, in the longer term, for projects with particular targets in mind but which will not be focussed on becoming self-sustaining but rather on the purposes of the project over a particular period of time. Equally, the experience of many over the years is that funding is on a basis of changing targets. For many groups continuing delivery is itself a contribution to a better society and so the terms of funding should not seek to put good projects out of business on the basis of changes that are unhelpfully demanded.

15. Grants should be over a sufficient period of time to enable projects to fulfil targets and therefore should be longer term. This contributes to greater health rather than disillusionment and hopping from one funder to another. Grants should also be of a size which makes it possible for groups accessing the funding to draw on this one funding stream. This frees groups to deliver on their targets rather than spend countless hours seeking matching funding and worrying about where the next pot of money will come from. Such an approach encourages a culture of dependency.

16. Some short-term funding should also be made available, although this should be a smaller percentage of the total than longer term funding. This short-term funding can help to address capacity challenges and also provide quick outcomes which are an encouragement to groups to do more and to communities who need to see some visible sign of investment in their future.

17. Funding should be available both as revenue and capital to ease the burden of administration for organisations and to free them to do the job that they want to do. Equally, both capital and revenue should be directed towards the benefit of the broader community e.g. churches have a largely untapped resource in the form of buildings which could and should be made available for community use if they were developed for that purpose.

18. While disadvantaged areas and groups should always be a priority we recognise that other funders also set priorities and it is not helpful to the health of society when one funder is set against another. In targeting disadvantaged areas there should, as in all areas, be co-ordination between funders and common oversight of funding which is being delivered.

### **Promoting Partnership**

19. As with other funding arrangements partnership should be a key aspect taken into account when awarding funding. However, this notion needs to flexible taking into consideration the capacity for building partnerships over against the capacity for delivering programmes.

20. In promoting partnership funding should be directed to assist in building partnerships rather than making partnership a requirement for funding.

### Supporting these Priorities

21. The General Board believes that these priorities will enable churches, along with others, to contribute to building a strong infrastructure to society, thereby building community cohesion and stability.

22. The General Board further believes that these priorities will enable those who are already making a contribution to make an even more significant contribution to community health and well-being and to better understand the contribution they make and how it can be developed.

### Conclusion

23. The Dormant Accounts Scheme helps churches who could not avail of lottery monies to give more thought to how they can better play their part in building up society and to further their commitment to building healthy, engaged communities which take every individual and group into consideration.

LE CARROLL, AJ BOAL, Co-Conveners

## AD HOC COMMITTEE ON CHURCH COURTS

1. The ad-hoc Committee appointed by the General Assembly to consider the prayer of the Memorial of the Tyrone Presbytery relating to the Courts of the Church, met on three occasions to consider the issues set forth in the Memorial.

2. The substance of the Memorial read as follows:

*That a superior court in its review of the decision of an inferior court can cause significant pastoral difficulties for that inferior court and consideration therefore needs to be given as to how the rights and positions of an inferior court can be affirmed and respected;*

*That there is confusion within the Church as to how a Church court is to come to a decision on a matter before it whenever there are differing authoritative interpretations of Scripture and the Subordinate Standards held on that matter within the wider Church.*

3. The Committee in its deliberations considered three issues arising from the Memorial.

(A) (i) The first issue relates to any matter before the Judicial Commission involving an interpretation of the Church's doctrinal position where the General Assembly has not recently considered the subject. As it is the General Assembly who may "*deliberate upon and superintend matters which concern the whole Church in its doctrine ...*" (Code Par 104(2)(a)), the Doctrine Committee would either need to bring a report to the next Assembly for decision, or perhaps in certain circumstances be given power to issue. This, in turn, raises the issue of how the Judicial Commission is to decide which particular matters pertaining to doctrine are not within its remit and whether these may be determined through consultation with the Doctrine Committee or only by the General Assembly.

- (ii) The present practice is that Doctrine Committee members are invited to meet with the Judicial Commission and comment on the particular doctrinal issues. On occasion the Judicial Commission has invited the General Assembly to commission a substantive report from the Doctrine Committee on some issue, but only after the particular case before it has been decided. While this does not preclude the Assembly from taking a different view on the doctrinal issue from that of the Judicial Commission, it precipitates the very debate that has given rise to this Memorial and can have the effect of undermining the confidence of the Assembly in its own judicial process.
  - (iii) One alternative to the present practice could be that members of the Doctrine Committee become members of the Judicial Commission where matters of doctrine are involved on which the Assembly has not recently pronounced. This appears to be a simple procedure but again it raises the question as to who decides on the particular doctrinal issues for which the members of the Doctrine Committee should become members of the Judicial Commission. There are legal issues as to extending an Assembly Commission, but legal difficulties aside such a body would be large and unwieldy and may not be the most effective way to hear a particular case. A variant of this would be for the General Assembly to appoint a "Special Commission" to deal with such matters but the effect of this would be to create two judicial Commissions.
  - (iv) Another alternative to the present practice would require the Doctrine Committee to be consulted as a Committee rather than as individual members. This appears to have much to commend it. The Doctrine Committee would meet, discuss the doctrinal aspects of the matter and report as a Committee to the Judicial Commission. But simple though it sounds it is not without its difficulties. For one it may impede the judicial process given the time that may be required to write a report. For another, for any such report to be definitive it would require the sanction of the General Assembly. A variant of this would be for the General Assembly to give the Doctrine Committee the powers of a Commission but this would have the effect of removing from the Assembly as a whole the right to determine its position on matters of doctrine which affect the whole Church.
  - (v) The Committee consulted the Doctrine Committee and concluded that where a matter of doctrine is significant in deciding a judicial case, the doctrinal aspect should be referred to the Doctrine Committee who will meet to discuss it. Members of the Doctrine Committee will then be invited to the Judicial Commission to give guidance, the Convener of the Doctrine Committee outlining the main issues and ensuring that all opinions are adequately expressed.
- (B) (i) The second issue concerns how the various Courts of the Church relate to one another and whether a more relational model should be considered particularly in matters pertaining to the interpretation and application of doctrine.

- (ii) The Committee considered the approaches of other Presbyterian denominations and noted that in certain instances the Church body equivalent to the Judicial Commission was mandated by the General Assembly to exercise its powers in reviewing the decision of a lower court within a particular set of principles.

For example:-

A higher court, reviewing a lower court, should limit itself to the issues raised by the parties to the case in the original court. Moreover, the higher court should resolve such issues by applying the Constitution of the Church, *as previously established* through the constitutional process.

A higher court should ordinarily exhibit great deference to a lower court regarding those factual matters which the lower court is more competent to determine, because of its proximity to the events in question, and because of its personal knowledge and observations of the parties and witnesses involved. Therefore, a higher court should not reverse a factual finding of a lower court, *unless there is clear error on the part of the lower court.*

- (iii) There are, at present, within the legislative framework of the Code no equivalent guidelines or directives, governing the actions of a higher court in its review of the proceedings and decisions of a lower court. This may more properly be part of the remit of the other Ad Hoc Committee and, if such principles were to be adopted, it would require the General Assembly to initiate a review of the practices and procedures of the Judicial Commission. The General Assembly has asked the Judicial Commission to report separately on its practices and procedures.
- (C) (i) The third issue concerns the need to find other ways of resolving such matters through consultation and mediation rather than immediately entering into a judicial process involving an appeal to the Courts of the Church. It was recognised an attempt at conciliation should be an important first step before proceeding to a judicial process and should be included in any guide to procedures which is produced.

4. The Committee recognises that there are as many problems as there are solutions in trying to arrive at a position which allows the Judicial Commission to discharge its function without at the same time being injurious to the lower courts whose integrity needs to be respected particularly where doctrinal rather than procedural matters are involved.

5. We submit the following resolutions to test the mind of the Assembly as to whether there is a need to alter the present practice or to amend existing procedures to ensure that there is greater clarity as to the roles and responsibilities of the various courts of the Church, including the Judicial Commission.

TWD JOHNSTON, Convener

## AD HOC COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL APPEALS

1. The Committee reviewing the Judicial Appeals procedure in light of the Memorial of the Tyrone Presbytery has met three times. The substance of the Memorial read as follows:

*That the law of the Church grants to the Judicial Commission Assembly powers to dispose finally of any cases of appeal or reference or any other matters which may be referred to it under or by virtue of the Code;*

*That, accepting that there must be a court of final decision, and without seeking to undo such final decisions, the law of the Church does not provide any mechanism for inquiry into or review of Judicial Commission practices and procedures even when they may not be in accordance with Scripture, the Subordinate Standards, the Code, or the standard practice of the Church.*

2. The Committee recognised that there must be a Court of final decision, which at present is effectively the Judicial Commission (Code Par 165(5)). This is important in bringing closure to any matter. The one aspect of the present arrangements on which the Committee would have some concern is when the Judicial Commission is also the Court of first instance. Greater encouragement may be given to Presbyteries to hear a case itself, rather than passing it on to the Judicial Commission, although it is recognised that in an increasingly litigious society Presbyteries should only deal with matters on which they feel competent to act.

3. To assist Presbyteries it is recommended that a simple guide to judicial proceedings should be produced and agreed by the General Assembly. This should include a) encouragement to ask for assessors where necessary who may be appointed not only for their judicial but also their pastoral experience; b) reference to the importance of considering conciliation at an early stage where at all possible. It was noted that there is little education in the judicial process.

4. It is important that the finding of a superior court gives clear reasons for its decision, especially if overturning the decision of an inferior court and that efforts are made to ensure that the inferior court understands the issues involved.

5. Having looked at the procedures of other denominations, the Committee is considering a possibility that if  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the voting members of the Judicial Commission wish to present a minority report, the decision is stayed until it is reviewed by either the General Assembly or the General Board, depending on the time-frame and urgency of the case. At the Assembly or Board two reports would be received, one from the majority and one from the minority and a vote taken without discussion. If it is decided to make this a recommendation further detail will be brought in the Supplementary Reports.

6. The Committee is still discussing whether a case may only be referred to the Judicial Commission without being heard by Presbytery – thus making the Commission a Court of first instance – if both parties waive their right of appeal.

DONALD WATTS, Convener

## PANEL ON PENSIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

*The Rev Dr DJ Watts reports:*

1. The Pensions and Assessments Panel began its work last summer and has met regularly since then. In the Autumn the main emphasis was on the Consultation Paper which was sent to all Congregations in October. (Appendix I) Four meetings were held in Omagh, Dublin, Belfast and Coleraine to explain some of the details of the questionnaire. A paper summarising the main issues raised at these meetings is appended. (Appendix II)

2. While the consultation replies were asked for by 31 December 2009, all replies were considered up to 9 February 2010. A summary of the replies is appended. (Appendix III)

3. Conscious of the need to strike a balance between what the Church would like to do and what it can afford, the Panel reviewed all feasible options. It considered carefully the possibility of changing the scheme from the present defined benefit to a defined contribution basis for future service. This however would have shifted both the investment and longevity risks wholly to the members and created anomalies in benefit levels contrary to the collegiality which has always been a feature of PCI schemes. The Panel was also conscious that significant benefit cuts were introduced from January 2009.

4. Throughout the process the Panel has been greatly assisted by actuarial advice from the scheme's actuary Philip Murray (Kerr Henderson). This has been particularly important in considering the impact of any possible benefit change. Three possible changes have been considered following the consultation:

- (i) **Normal Retirement Age.** Recognising that this has recently been discussed at length by the General Assembly, the recommendation of the Panel is to keep in step with changes to the State pensionable age (N Ireland). It is considered that most people are unlikely to retire before then.
- (ii) **Accrual Rates.** Under a defined benefit scheme the Church, as employer, will always carry the risk of a pensions deficit. This can arise from falling equity prices; lower interest rates and government bond rates; increasing longevity; or regulatory changes forcing short-term solutions to a long-term problem. The Panel understand that the Pension Scheme Trustees, on the advice of the Scheme Actuary, wish to reduce the level of exposure to equity investments. However, that will increase the on-going contribution rate to the scheme. Recognising this, and in an effort to reduce the overall cost of the scheme, the Panel recommends a change to the accrual rate from  $\frac{1}{60}$  to  $\frac{1}{70}$  of pensionable income for each year of future service.
- (iii) **Salary Cap.** This idea is considered to have some merit but should only be considered when the recommendations of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel have been decided.

5. It was agreed to recommend that the members' contribution rate should remain at 7% for the present, but the Panel recommend that all the above issues should be kept under review.

6. The Panel noted carefully the relatively few comments that were made on governance issues, particularly the Board of Trustees. The distinction between the role of the Employer and the role of the Trustees is perhaps not fully understood.

### **Role of the Employer**

- (i) The employer is a party to the Trust Deed and Rules with the power to set the benefit levels insofar as he carries a substantial burden of the cost of the scheme.
- (ii) The employer retains certain powers especially where there is a cost element e.g. augmenting or reducing benefits or to amend the scheme in any way (e.g. change in retirement age, etc.)
- (iii) The employer has the ultimate power to discontinue the scheme.
- (iv) Where changes/amendments are proposed, the members and trustees require to be consulted.
- (v) The Employer has the right to nominate up to two-thirds of the Trustee Board.

### **Role of Trustees**

- (i) Pension Scheme Trustees hold the pension fund assets for the benefit of the members and their first duty is to them – not to the employer, trade union or outside body.
- (ii) The Trustees ensure compliance with the law and the scheme's own trust deed and rules.
- (iii) It is the duty of Trustees to safeguard and invest the scheme monies prudently and in accordance with the Church's ethical direction.
- (iv) The Trustees prepare and monitor a statement of investment principles after consultation with the employer.
- (v) The Trustees keep member records and ensure contributions and members' benefits are paid in good time.
- (vi) The Trustees keep proper books of account.
- (vii) The Trustees commission an actuarial valuation every 3 years with written reports covering developments in each ensuing year.
- (viii) The Trustees appoint the professional advisers – scheme actuary, lawyers, custodian of assets, investment manager, scheme administrators, the scheme auditor and any other professional from whom advice is required.
- (ix) The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for the contribution levels required, but they must take advice from the Scheme Actuary and consult the Employer.

7. One issue raised both at consultation meetings and in the responses was that of members of the scheme being involved in making decisions on behalf of the "employers" i.e. the Church. A way to avoid this potential conflict of interest, which is used in various forms in other denominations, would be for the General Assembly to appoint a "Remuneration Commission" to deal with all matters concerning stipends, salaries and pension benefits. This would be made up of experienced people who are not in any way beneficiaries. The Panel's



thinking is at an early stage, and there are legal and other questions to be considered, but it may wish to bring a fuller report in the Supplementary Reports.

8. Following the consultation, the Panel recommends that assessments move to an “unrestricted income” basis, but recognises the problem with definition. The Panel suggests that “unrestricted income” for this purpose would be specified sources, including general donations, nett property income and investment income. To make this change there will need to be transitional arrangements. There is clearly also a need for further information to be disseminated throughout the Church about assessments, the costs they meet and the rationale for them. A resolution is appended to test the mind of the Assembly in principle.

## APPENDIX I

### PENSIONS AND ASSESSMENT CONSULTATION PAPER

#### OVERVIEW

At the General Assembly in June 2008, it was agreed that “a complete review be conducted of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland’s position on pensions (including desired levels of funding, future procedures of consultation and on-going management structures) by a Panel appointed by the General Board...”. In 2009, the remit of the Panel was extended to include “an examination of all assessments”.

The Panel now wishes to consult with Presbyteries, Congregational Committees and the wider Church membership, about the provision of retirement pensions for those called to service and within the context of the overall rates of assessments, which Congregations have to pay to the various General Assembly Assessment Funds.

This paper provides a brief background to the present pension arrangements and recognising the increasing burden in terms of cost to the Church, sets out a range of alternative options if changes are considered necessary.

Details of regional events to enable those interested in making comment and seeking further explanation are included.

Comments should be made in writing to Rev Dr DJ Watts, Clerk of the General Assembly, by 31 December 2009.

The Panel plans to make a full report to the General Assembly in June 2010.

#### 1. BACKGROUND

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland until recently had 3 main pension schemes

- (a) The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Ministers’ Pension Scheme (1978) (the “MPS”)

- (b) The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension and Life Assurance Scheme (the “Staff Scheme”)
- (c) The PWA/Overseas Board/Irish Mission Retirement and Death Benefit Scheme (the “PWA Scheme”)

Following preliminary reports from The Board of Finance and Personnel in 2006 and 2007, the General Assembly in June 2008 passed a resolution approving the amalgamation of the Staff Scheme and the PWA Scheme into the MPS and a revised benefit structure. The main change for former members of the Staff and PWA Schemes was that pension benefits would in future be based on revalued career average salary rather than final salary. The Ministers’ Pension Scheme pension benefit was already based on career average earnings but the basis of annual revaluation changed from the average earnings index to the retail prices index. A proposal to increase the retirement age from 65 to 67 was rejected.

On 1 January 2009, the active membership of the Staff Scheme and PWA Scheme transferred to the MPS for the accrual of pension from that date and on 31 March 2009, members’ accrued benefits were transferred. Any benefits accrued (i.e. earned) by members up to 1 January 2009 are unaffected by the change and it is only benefits which accrue from that date which are on the new scheme basis.

The MPS has been renamed the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) (the PCI Scheme (2009)”) and all members now accrue pension benefits on the same basis. The main scheme benefits are outlined in Appendix 1.

An actuarial valuation of the combined scheme was carried out at 31 December 2008 and this indicated that there was a deficit in the scheme of £20m. The Church and the Scheme Trustees have agreed that this deficit should be recovered over a period of 14 years and as a result, the present contribution rates to the scheme are as follows:

Church – normal contribution rate	16.50%
Church – deficit funding	10.90%
	27.40%
Members contribution rate	7.0%
Total Contribution rate	34.4%

The main reasons for the deficit are poor investment performance, increased longevity expectations and fall in government bond yields which are crucial in calculating pension liabilities.

Recognising the increasing cost of pensions to the Church the General Assembly asked the General Board in 2008 to establish a Panel to undertake “...a complete review of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland’s position on pensions (including desired levels of funding, future procedures of consultation and on-going management structures) by a panel appointed by the General Board...”. In 2009, the remit of the panel was extended to cover “an examination of all assessments”.

The membership of the Panel is as follows:

Moderator, Rev Dr DJ Watts (Clerk of General Assembly), Revs Robert Allely, Leslie Casement, David Irvine; Ms Helen Johnston; Messrs Douglas Crowe, Arthur Halligan, John Hunter, Clive Knox (Financial Secretary), George McCullagh and Robert McCullagh.

Kerr Henderson (Consultants and Actuaries) Limited are the advisers to the Scheme Trustees and they have facilitated the Panel during its discussions and have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Based on the audited accounts for the 3 pension schemes referred to above, which were presented to the General Assembly in June 2009, the following table summaries the combined scheme membership and levels of contributions:

<b>Scheme Membership</b>	<b>No.</b>
Active members (412+93+56)*	561
Deferred members (116+49+78)*	243
Pensioners (306+17+17)*	340
Total Membership	1,144
<b>Annual Contribution Levels £</b>	
Contributions from the Church (£2.6m+£0.4m+£0.3m)*	£3.3m
Contributions from members (£0.7m+£0.1m+£0.1m)*	£0.9m
Total Contributions	£4.2m

*\* taken from individual scheme accounts*

The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Scheme (2009) are presently: Mr John Millar (Chairman), Revs Leslie Casement, Dr Roger Purce, RIA Allely, William Henry, Messrs David Dobbin, Douglas Crowe and Clive Knox. A copy of this report has been issued to them for their information.

## **2. CONSULTATION PROCESS**

The Panel wishes to hear from Presbyteries, Congregational Committees and the wider Church membership about the provision of pensions for those who serve the Church as Ministers, Missionaries, Deaconesses, Irish Mission Workers, in an administrative capacity in Church House or elsewhere.

The Panel recognises that the issue of pensions is extremely complex and that it would not be possible within the scope of this paper to cover all relevant aspects. However, to assist in the understanding of the issues facing the Church some relevant information is included in section 3.

The Panel plans to submit a final report to the General Assembly in June 2010 and to meet the necessary deadlines for the preparation of this would like to conclude the consultation process by 31 December 2009. The Panel has

organised 4 regional events for those interested in expressing their views or seeking further explanation of the issues highlighted. The events are as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Monday 9 November 2009	7.30pm	First Omagh
Tuesday 10 November 2009	7.30pm	Rathgar, Dublin
Monday 16 November 2009	7.30pm	Church House, Belfast
Tuesday 17 November 2009	7.30pm	First Coleraine

While a note will be taken of comments made at these events, Presbyteries are encouraged to meet and discuss the matter and are asked to put comments in writing to Rev Dr D Watts by 31 December 2009.

Representatives from Kerr Henderson (Consultants and Actuaries) Limited will attend the regional events.

### **3. RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT PENSION SCHEMES**

#### **(i) Types of Pension Scheme**

There are two main types of pension scheme

- (a) Defined Benefit Schemes and
- (b) Defined Contribution Schemes (also called Money Purchase Schemes)

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) is a Defined Benefit Scheme (as were the previous three schemes).

In a Defined Benefit Scheme, the benefits, which a member receives, are fixed in advance and an actuary determines what rates of contribution are required to provide the benefits promised. The member contribution rate is set and the employer meets the balance. Such Schemes would generally be favoured by members in preference to a defined contribution scheme because they can predict what level of pension is likely at retirement as a proportion of their pensionable pay.

In a Defined Contribution Scheme the pension contribution by the “employer” and the “member” are agreed at a fixed level. Contributions are invested in an agreed form of investment (usually in what is referred to as a pooled fund of equities, bonds, property, cash etc) and when a member comes to retirement, the value of his/her fund is used to buy a pension from an insurance company. The amount of the pension will be determined by

- (i) the value of their fund which will be determined by the level of contributions made and the return on amounts invested and by
- (ii) the annuity rates at retirement usually expressed as the amount of annuity per £100 purchase price.

What are the advantages/disadvantages of the two types of scheme?

#### **Defined Benefit Schemes**

Advantages to members

- Retirement pensions benefits are pre-determined

- They don't carry the investment and longevity risks

Disadvantages to Employer

- Volatility in costs. Open-ended liability makes budgeting difficult.
- Carries all the investment and longevity risks
- High costs of administration
- Increasing costly regulation through legislation and by the Pension Regulator
- Pension Protection Fund levies

**Defined Contribution Scheme**

Advantages to the Employer

- Stable pre-determined cost, no open-ended liability which makes for easier budgeting
- Investment and longevity risks transferred to the scheme members.
- The rate of contribution paid by the “employer” and “member” is agreed and generally do not change. Members can top up their pension by increasing their contribution rate if they wish.
- Costs of administration are less than in a defined benefit scheme
- There is less costly regulation involved
- No Pension Protection Fund levies

Disadvantages to members

- The amount of pension a member will receive cannot be determined until a member's retirement date when the value of the fund and the level of annuity rates are known. So preplanning is difficult
- The members carry all the investment and longevity risks
- Anomalies can arise in that members paying the same amount over the same number of years could end up with significantly different pension because of differing investment performance or annuity rates. This could offend the collegiality taken for granted in Church schemes
- Historically employers normally contribute less to such schemes implying lower pension levels

**SUMMARY**

	Defined <b><u>Benefit</u></b> Schemes	Defined <b><u>Contribution</u></b> Schemes
Contribution rates	Reviewed at formal valuations (every 3 years)	Pre-determined and stable
Scheme benefits (pensions)	Defined in Scheme Rules	Not defined
Pension Risk	With Employer	With Member

**(ii) Actuarial Valuations**

For defined benefit schemes, a formal “actuarial valuation” has to be carried out every three years (with interim annual valuations) to see if the scheme is adequately funded to meet its liabilities. It will assess the funding level (i.e. the relationship between the value of the assets and the actuarial liability) and this is expressed in a percentage form.

Before completing his actuarial report, the scheme actuary discusses and agrees with the scheme trustees the level of prudence he intends to use when forecasting investment returns, inflation, gilt yields, salary levels, interest rates, longevity etc. Having obtained agreement on the proposed assumptions the actuary establishes the balance between assets and liabilities and strikes a contribution rate to support these assumptions. At the last valuation, as at 31 December 2008, the results were

Value of Investment assets	£59.8m
Value of Liabilities	£79.6m
Scheme deficit	£19.8m

Where a scheme deficit arises the period over which the deficit is to be recovered has to be agreed. The Pension Regulator’s view is that this would not normally exceed 10 years, although due to the current economic recession slightly longer periods have been agreed. In the latest valuation of the Scheme, the Regulator accepted a 14 year recovery period.

The investment strategy adopted by the Scheme Trustees clearly influences the value of the schemes investments. At present, the Scheme Trustees have invested the schemes investments approx 80% in equities (shares) and 20% in gilts (government bonds). Investing in equities allows the scheme to benefit from potential returns in excess of other investments and historically equities have outperformed most other forms of investment. Investing in e.g. gilts provides more capital security and reduces the variability of the contribution rate but, because it is a less risky investment, the returns are usually lower. The present investments strategy does mean the fund is susceptible to volatility in equity values. In an ideal situation the schemes assets should match the profile of its membership. Therefore, as the scheme matures and the liability to pay pension increases more of the scheme assets should be invested in gilts which do not fluctuate as much in value and where capital values are more secure. It should however be noted that investing in gilts solely, to avoid equity value fluctuations, would lead to a significant increase in the scheme contribution rates.

#### 4. HISTORY OF CONTRIBUTION RATES

The following tables summarise the recent contribution rates for member and the Church.

	From	Member %	Church %	Total %
Ministers Pension Scheme	01.04.99	4.40	12.20	16.60
	01.04.02	5.00	14.00	19.00
	01.04.05	6.00	15.60	21.60
	01.04.08	6.00	23.20	29.20
Staff Scheme	01.01.98	3.75	15.25	19.00
	01.01.01	3.75	15.25	19.00
	01.01.04	5.00	20.85	25.85
	01.01.07	6.00	25.10	31.10
PWA Scheme	01.04.97	4.00	13.50	17.50
	01.04.00	4.00	13.50	17.50
	01.04.03	5.00	22.50	27.50
	01.04.06	6.00	26.20	32.20
PCI Pension Scheme (2009)	01.01.09	7.00	27.40	34.40

#### 5. WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS OPEN TO THE CHURCH?

The Panel has identified the following options

- Option 1 – Continue with the present scheme in its current form.
- Option 2 – Continue with the present scheme but reduce the scheme benefits.
- Option 3 – Close the present scheme to new members who would join a new Defined Contribution Scheme.
- Option 4 – Introduce a “hybrid scheme” where part of a member’s benefit accrues on a defined benefit basis and part on a defined contribution basis.
- Option 5 – Close the present scheme and move all future accrual to a defined contribution scheme.

These are considered further below.

If changes to the scheme are subsequently agreed, these will only affect the accrual of member’s pension entitlement from the date the change becomes effective. Benefits accrued up to the date of the changes are unaffected. Changes to the scheme will require a formal consultation process to be carried out with scheme members in accordance with guidance issued by the Pension Regulator.

Please note that irrespective of which option is ultimately decided upon the Church will still be required to pay the Deficit Funding of 10.9% for 14 years, subject to change at subsequent actuarial valuations.

### Option 1 – Continue with the present scheme

The latest actuarial valuation of this option as follows:

	%	Indicative Annual Costs £
Total Contribution rate required	23.5	3.3m
Deficit Funding for past service	10.9	1.5m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>4.8m</b>
Members Contribution rate	(7.0)	(1.0m)
Church Contribution rate	27.4	3.8m

*based on pensionable payroll of approx. £14.0m*

The latest comparative figures taken from a Kerr Henderson 2007 survey show the average level of contributions for private sectors Defined Benefit Schemes as follows:

	Employer	Member	Total
Northern Ireland	18%	6%	24%
UK Mainland	19%	6%	25%

### Key Features of this option

1. No change is required to the present arrangements. No additional fees will be required to implement scheme changes and there will be no need to undertake a formal consultation exercise with members.
2. The “pension risk” i.e. the risk associated with paying the pension earned by members remains with the Church.
3. The Church is potentially committed to comparably higher rates of contributions.

### Option 2 – Consider reducing the present scheme benefits

The following benefit changes could be considered

- (i) Reduce the rate at which members accrue future service pension entitlement
- (ii) Increase the rate of members contribution
- (iii) Increase the retirement age
- (iv) Introduce a pensionable pay cap whereby remuneration over a certain level is not pensionable

These are considered briefly below:



**(i) Accrual Rate**

By way of example, if the accrual rate was changed the following tables summarise the reduction in a member's pension based on 30 years service and on average pensionable remuneration of £25,000

Accrual Rate	Pension (p.a. gross) after 30 years service based on CARE (Career Average Revalued Earnings) of £25,000	Reduction in Contribution Rate by Church
1/60	£12,500	-
1/70	£10,714	2.8%
1/80	£9,375	4.9%
1/90*	£8,333	6.5%
1/100*	£7,500	7.8%

Under the Scheme rules, members may give up or commute part of their pension for a tax free lump sum. The figures for the various options above are as follows:

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	
	Full Pension (p.a. gross)	Reduced Pension (p.a. gross)	Lump Sum
1/60	£12,500	£8,903	£59,353
1/70	£10,714	£7,631	£50,872
1/80	£9,375	£6,677	£44,514
1/90*	£8,333	£5,935	£39,567
1/100*	£7,500	£5,342	£35,612

\* See Appendix 2 re Contracting Out

**(ii) Members Contribution rate**

If a decision were made to ask members for an increase in their contribution rate this would have a corresponding reduction in the Church's contribution rate. Members currently contribute at 7.0%. Members, particularly those on e.g. administration scales or ministers on minimum stipends, may find it difficult to pay higher contributions as this would reduce their net monthly earnings.

**(iii) Retirement Age**

Increasing the retirement age to 67 was previously considered by the General Assembly in June 2008 and rejected but if the retirement age were increased to 67, the contribution rate would reduce by 2.2%. Member's pensions would increase, as they would have an additional two years service. It is relevant

to note that the date on which state benefits will be payable in Northern Ireland is due to increase from 2023 as follows.

From 65 to 66	Phased in from April 2024 to April 2026
From 66 to 67	Phased in from April 2034 to April 2036
From 67 to 68	Phased in from April 2044 to April 2046

Please note the Conservative party proposes to move to 66 from 2016. Individuals can check their state pension retirement date on [www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/state-pension/age-calculator.asp](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/state-pension/age-calculator.asp)

#### (iv) “Salary” cap

If a “salary” cap were put on pensionable earnings at the 30 year ministerial minimum stipend, which for 2009 is £27,300 (inclusive of CMF bonus), the contribution rate would reduce by 2.0%. The Panel is aware that the Board of Finance and Personnel, through its Tyrone Memorial Review Panel, is considering alternative basis for setting stipends and this may have an impact on pension costs.

#### Key features of this option

1. the Cost to the Church of providing pension reduces
2. members still receive their pension on a defined benefit basis
3. in future no retirement benefits would be earned on pensionable income in excess of the 30 year minimum stipend and this would penalise the higher earners
4. additional cost will be incurred implementing the changes, members will have to be consulted about proposed changes and the agreement of the Pension Regulator obtained

#### Option 3 – Close the present scheme to new members

Members of the current scheme would continue as eligible but new members would be offered membership of an alternative scheme.

#### Key features of this option

To some extent these will depend on the type of scheme introduced for new members

1. transfers the investment, volatility risks away from the Church for all new members
2. the agreed contribution rates for new members could be less than under the existing scheme
3. It will create a two-tier benefit level which could impact on the perceived collegiality of the Church
4. It will take some time for the “new members” to form a significant block and so any meaningful savings in costs for them will take time to build up

5. the non-admission of new younger members to the Defined Benefit Scheme will result in a steady increase in the average age of the membership with implications for the cost of the scheme

**Option 4 - Consider a “hybrid scheme” where part of a member’s benefit accrues on a defined benefit basis and part on a defined contribution basis**

This is by far the most complicated option. A Hybrid scheme would aim to provide part of a member’s pension on a defined benefit basis and part on a defined contribution basis. It would require a reduction in the accrual rate in the existing scheme from  $\frac{1}{60}$ th to probably  $\frac{1}{100}$ th and in addition separate Church and member contributions to a new defined contribution scheme. The Church’s overall contribution could be at a lower rate and members overall contributions could reflect a degree of personal discretion above the rate required for the defined benefit scheme. The introduction of a hybrid scheme would require the Church to contract back in to the state earnings related pension scheme. The current pension scheme is what is referred to as contracted out i.e. members do not accrue any state earning related benefits and just receive the basic state pension on retirement. By contracting out of the state scheme, schemes have to provide certain guaranteed benefits and in return the Church and members pay reduced rates of national insurance contributions. Contracting back in would mean the Church and members would have to pay higher rates of national insurance. The cost of providing part of a members retirement benefits through the state scheme may be less than providing these through the Church scheme.

For further information on Contracting In see Appendix 2 and Hybrid Schemes Appendix 3

**Key features of this option**

1. Reduces the risk to the Church and, if contracted in, passes part of the risk to the government.
2. Potential cost savings from contracting back in.
3. Retains an element of defined benefit.
4. Complicated, difficult to communicate to members.
5. Members future benefits accrual will be reduced.
6. Additional fees to implement changes.
7. Issues relating to contracting back in to the state scheme and change in accrual rate.

**Option 5 – Close the present scheme and move to a defined contribution scheme**

For information purposes the comparable contribution levels for average Defined Contribution Schemes in other organisations are

	Employer	Member	Total
Northern Ireland	4.5%	3.5%	8%
UK Mainland	7.0%	4.0%	11%

Contribution at these levels would have a dramatic impact of the level of pension members would receive on retirement. The Church could of course agree contribution at a higher rate.

### **Key features of this option**

1. May be seen by many as the appropriate action in the current pension climate
2. Minimises the future risk to the Church
3. Facilitates cost budgeting
4. Will lead to a reduction in fees
5. Is likely to lead to a reduction in members benefits
6. Passes the investment and longevity risks to members
7. Current Scheme deficit will still have to be funded and therefore two contributions will be required, to old scheme and new scheme

## **6. THE PANEL'S VIEW**

The Panel recognises that many organisations, for reasons largely related to cost, have opted to close their final salary schemes. The Panel believes, however, that the Church has a responsibility to ensure that scheme members

- have a reasonable pension related to their career average remuneration on retirement
- should be treated equitably
- should ideally, or at least to some extent, know in advance what their pension will be
- should not have to bear the entire risk as to what pension they receive on retirement, although there may be mileage in an element of risk sharing

The Panel preference is therefore for a defined benefit scheme or a scheme with an element of defined benefit with adjustments made to scheme benefits if cost exceeds agreed funding levels. However, the Panel wishes to avoid temporary fixes after each valuation.

The Panel therefore are of the view that options 1, 2 and 4 are worth further consideration but would not support options 3 or 5.

## **7. CONSULTATION WITH SCHEME MEMBERS**

This consultation process is intended to obtain a wider Church view on the pension provision the Church should make for those called to service in varying capacities. If any changes are subsequently recommended to and approved by the General Assembly, it will be necessary to undertake a formal consultation process with the schemes membership. The Trustees will have a role to ensure members accrued benefits are not affected by any change. The consultation will be conducted in accordance with guidance issued by the Pension Regulator.

## **8. WHAT ARE OTHER ORGANISATIONS DOING?**

Many commercial organisations are or have closed their defined benefit schemes entirely or to new members. They have moved to defined contribution Schemes.

Other denominations are having similar debates and are considering the various options highlighted in this paper. By way of example

The Church of England are considering whether to retain their existing defined benefit scheme or move to a defined contribution or hybrid scheme. They are also considering changes to the accrual rates, retirement age, contracting in and limiting the annual increases in pensionable stipend.

The Church of Scotland has four main pension schemes (for ministers, staff, missionaries, and care home personnel). The next actuarial valuation is as at 31 December 2009 and the situation will be reviewed in light of the results. A working group has been established in advance to discuss relevant issues, including the assumptions used in the valuation, with the Scheme Trustees. They are concerned not to make short term corrections to what is regarded as a long term issue.

The Methodist Church in Ireland has already reduced the scheme accrual rate from 80th to 100th but is considering further changes as part of the current valuation.

## **9. MANAGEMENT OF THE PENSION SCHEMES**

When the Church had the 3 separate Schemes, each scheme had a Board of Trustees of 9 members, 5 members were common to the 3 Schemes, 1 member was nominated by the supervising Board and 3 of the members were nominated by the scheme membership. Each scheme had different employers (i.e. supervising Assembly Boards), although to facilitate the Management of the new Scheme it was agreed that the Board of Finance and Personnel should act as the “employer” for all schemes on behalf of the General Assembly. As part of the resolution approved by the General Assembly in 2008 the Panel was asked to consider the “future procedures of consultation and on-going management structures”.

The Panel submit the following proposals

### **1. THE SCHEME EMPLOYER**

The “Scheme” Employer is to be the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland acting through the Board of Finance and Personnel.

In this capacity the Board will deal with routine matters relating to the pensions such as

- Providing information to the Pension Regulator including the completion of the Annual Scheme Return,
- Reporting breaches of law,
- Reporting notifiable events,
- Liaising with the scheme trustees as required,
- Allowing employees who are scheme trustees time to fulfil their duties,
- Consulting with scheme trustees regarding the schedule of contributions and statement of funding principles,
- Paying contributions to the scheme in line with the schedule of contributions,
- Making minor changes to the scheme if required.

Significant changes to the scheme such as, e.g. changes in the level of benefits or in the contribution rate will be reported to the General Assembly and approval sought for any proposals by way of resolution.

## **2. THE BOARD TRUSTEES**

It is recommended that there is a Board of 12 Trustees, 7 are to be nominated by the Employer and 5 by the active and pensioner scheme membership.

It is noted that irrespective of whether Trustees are Employer or Member Nominated the role is the same and in outline is to

- Act in line with the trust deed and rules
- Act in the best interests of the scheme beneficiaries (in particular re accrued benefits)
- Act impartially
- Act prudently, responsibly and honestly

### **2.1 Employer Nominated Trustees**

The Board of Finance and Personnel will recommend by way of Resolution to the General Assembly the names of those willing and suitable to act as Trustees. Employer Nominated Trustees will normally be Presbyterians.

The General Board Panel recommends, for the approval of the General Assembly, that in appointing Employer Nominated Trustees the Board of Finance and Personnel should ensure that 4 of the 7 Employer Nominated Trustees are reserved for the Clerk of the General Assembly, the Convener of the Board of Finance and Personnel, the Convener of the Pensions and Assessment Committee of the Board of Finance and Personnel and the Financial Secretary. Consideration should be given to normally having a maximum of 2 of the 7 Employer Nominated Trustees positions filled by Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

### **2.2 Member Nominated Trustees (MNT's)**

Member Nominated Trustees should be appointed in accordance with the guidance issued by The Pension Regulator as set out in the Regulatory Code of Practice No 8 on "Member-nominated trustees and directors - putting in place and implementing arrangements"

- 3 of the 5 MNT's are to be Ministers
- 1 of the 5 MNTS is to be a member of Staff
- 1 of the 5 MNTS's is to be an Irish Mission Worker, Deaconess or Missionary.

### **2.3 Chairman of the Board of Trustees**

It is recognised that the Trustees normally appoint a Chairman from their membership but best practice points to an independent Chairman who is not a member of the Board of Finance and Personnel and is not a beneficiary under the scheme.

## 2.4 Transitional Arrangements

The existing Employer Nominated Trustees will effectively be “removed” (term used in Trust Deed) and the names of 7 Employer Nominated Trustees presented to the General Board/Assembly.

The existing member Nominated Trustees will be contacted to see if they are willing to continue to act, any new names invited, and an election held if necessary.

## 10. CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Those familiar with congregational finances will be aware that assessments are collected based on the stipend paid to their minister in the previous year. The rates of assessment for 2009 and anticipated rates for 2010 are as follows:

	2010 p/£ stipend	2009 p/£ stipend
Central Ministry Fund	18.50	20.00
Retired Ministers Fund	2.75	4.25
Widows of Ministers Fund	4.50	5.00
Prolonged Disability Fund	0.25	0.50
Incidental Fund (incl. 0.25p re Peninsula)	5.00	5.00
Ministerial Development Fund	0.25	0.25
Special Assembly	0.25	0.25
Church House External Work	3.50	3.50
Sick Supply Fund	0.25	-
Students Bursary Fund	5.25	-
SUB – TOTAL	40.50	38.75
Ministers Pension Scheme (1978)	33.00	33.00
TOTAL	73.50	71.75

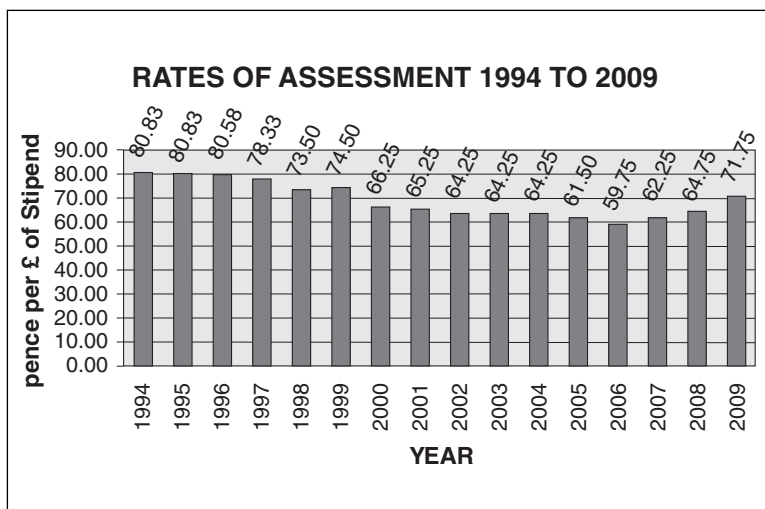
Full details on the various assessments are available in a booklet from the Financial Secretary’s Office, Church House, a copy of which has already been issued to Treasurers and Ministers. By way of general guidance 1p/£stipend collects approximately £100,000.

The amount collected by way of assessment for the Ministers Pension Scheme is 33.0p per £ of stipend and not 27.4% referred to earlier in this paper. By way of brief explanation, the 33.0p is based on a minister’s stipend but ministers generally receive additional income which is pensionable and therefore to collect the full amount due from congregations for pensions a higher assessment rate is required e.g.

Ministers Stipend	£20,000	Assessment at 33.0p	£6,600
Augmentation/CMF grants etc.	£4,000		
Pensionable Income	£24,000	Pension Contribution at 27.4%	£6,600

The Panel has reviewed the rates of assessments for the various funds and has concluded that while some adjustment can be made, it is unlikely that the rates of assessment will reduce significantly over the next 10 years. The only area where any significant changes could be made relates to the Central Ministry Fund. The Panel plans to have further discussions with Union Commission and other interested parties in particular on the level of augmentation and some of the other amounts/grants payable from the Central Ministry Fund.

The following chart summarises the historical rates of assessment since 1994



The Panel is considering recommending that the basis of Assessment on congregations be changed from stipend to levels of income as this would result in a fairer apportionment. Assessment would be based on unrestricted income. This would largely be what is commonly known as specified sources but would include

- Freewill Weekly Offering (FWO)



- Gift Aid on FWO
- Loose Offering
- Special Collections for general purposes
- Gifts, Donations and bequests which are for general purposes
- Rental income
- Any other income on which no restriction has been placed by the donor

Please note that income on which no restriction is placed by the donor which the Congregational Committee designate for a particular purpose is unrestricted income and not restricted income. Restricted income is income where the donor has indicated that the money must be used for a specific purpose e.g. property donations, donations to an appeal, a bequest with specific restriction etc.

The change from Stipend to Unrestricted Income as a rule will mean that the level of assessment will reflect a congregation's ability to contribute. The rates of assessment for the various Assessment Funds will continue to reflect the ongoing expenditure requirements of those funds. As a general guide, to collect the same amounts from congregations as at present it is estimated the rate of assessment on congregation's unrestricted income would be approximately 18%.

The introductions of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 means that congregations will have to submit annual accounts to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI). If the CCNI adopt the same approach as the Charity Commission in England and Wales accounts will have to be prepared in accordance with a "Statement of Recommended Practice" which requires Unrestricted Income to be disclosed in the accounts.

## **11. CHURCH APPEALS**

The Church Appeals include the United Appeal, World Development, Sunday School, and Special Appeals (e.g. by Moderators).

United Appeal is the main Appeal and the target of Honour for 2010 is £3,309,654. While not collected as an assessment it equates to a rate of assessment of approximately 33p per £ stipend.

From 2010, the funding of the Students Bursary Fund will move from United Appeal to become an Assessment on Congregations. This means that funding of Ministry is largely through the assessment system and Mission through United Appeal. The Panel support this move as a long term objective with servicing and administration costs allocated to the various Boards/Committee using those services.

The Panel does not recommend any major changes to Appeals at this stage.

## **12. DISTRIBUTION OF CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

This document has been issued to Congregational Treasurers, Ministers, Presbytery Clerks and the Scheme Trustees. Congregational Committees and Presbyteries are encouraged to discuss it and appoint representatives to attend one of the Consultation meetings.

Please see the Consultation Reply Form attached to this Consultation document.

## **APPENDIX 1 – Scheme Benefits, The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009)**

### **Outline of Scheme Benefit of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009)**

1. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme. Members accrue benefits on a basis of 1/60 of their annual pensionable remuneration for each year of service. Members final pension benefits are based on their average remuneration over their service not their remuneration on retirement (known as a final salary scheme). The Scheme is what is referred to as a CARE Scheme (Career Average Revalued Earnings).

A simple example

- A member has pensionable service of 30 years
- Average revalued earnings are £25,000

On retirement, at age 65, their pension would be £12,500 (calculated as 30 (years service) divided by 60 (accrual rate) multiplied by £25,000 (average earnings)).

2. On retirement, members can give up or “commute “ part of their pension entitlement for a maximum cash lump sum equal to 25% of their fund value. The amount a member has to give, the commutation factor, is determined by the Scheme Trustees on the advice of the Scheme Actuary.

Based on the above example if the commutation factor is £1 : £16.5 i.e. for every £1 of pension given up the member receives £16.50 tax free cash, the member could take a Tax Free Cash Sum of £ 59,353 and a reduced pension of £8,903

3. The widows’ pension is 50% of the member’s pension before commutation i.e. based on £12,500 not on £8.903

4. There is death in service cover of 4 times a member’s pensionable salary. There is also a refund of contributions and a 50% widow’s pension. A child pension may be payable if children are still in full time education and under 21.

## **APPENDIX 2 – Contracting Out**

### **Background to Contracting Out**

Like the vast majority of defined benefit pension schemes, The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) is contracted out of the State Second Pension (S2P). When it was introduced in 1978 as the State Earnings Related pension Scheme (or SERPS), organisations that provided their own occupational pension schemes were allowed to stay outside the State scheme, given that they were already funding their own adequate pension arrangements.

As a result, most private sector pension schemes have always been contracted out of SERPS/S2P. Contracting out means that the employer and

employee pay lower rates of National Insurance contributions than if they were contracted in. Employees receive pension benefits from their occupational scheme but do not receive the additional State Pension (SERPS and/or S2P).

Initially it represented better value for many employers and employees to pay the lower NI contributions that came with contracting out. But, over time and with a higher average age of the Scheme's membership, the financial balance of advantage has shifted. Providing the same overall level of pension benefits on a contracted out basis now costs more than doing so on a contracted in basis. The difference is around 1% to 2% of scheme salaries.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Basic State Pension (BSP) is normally paid in addition to any S2P benefit.

### **How Contracting In Would Operate**

The Church would pay additional National Insurance payments (currently around 3% of scheme salaries). In addition, the National Insurance rate paid by members would increase by 1.3%.<sup>1</sup> As a result of these higher contributions, members would become eligible for S2P in respect of future service.

The scheme benefits would be reduced to reflect the additional (reinstated) State benefits that members would then be earning. To accurately put all members in a similar position to that applying if the Scheme had not ceased to contract out would require a very complicated benefit design (e.g. with accrual rates varying by age).

A more simplified design which would ensure benefits were broadly unchanged would be to move to a 1/80th accrual rate rather than the present 1/60th. Some members would see a decrease in the total value of their pension (from S2P and the Scheme), but the vast majority (and in particular older members) would benefit from a higher level of total pension benefit.

When members retire they would receive a higher proportion of pension income from the State as they would be eligible to receive benefits from the Scheme, the Basic State Pension and S2P.

### **Controlling Risks and Other Advantages**

Becoming more reliant on State provision does, of course, carry its own risks in relation to possible future changes in Government policy. However the overall risk is reduced as the employer will no longer be responsible for providing as large a proportion of the benefits.

There are further potential advantages:

- Increases in the S2P once in payment are linked to RPI. This would mean that part of the overall pension was no longer linked to price inflation capped at 2.5% pa.
- S2P earned each year is increased in line with National Average Earnings prior to retirement. These increases are generally higher

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<sup>1</sup> This is the overall effect in terms of typical pensionable salary. NI contributions are levied at different rates on different bands of earnings.

than Retain Price Inflation which applies to revaluation of benefits within the Scheme.

### **Communication**

However the advantages have to be balanced against the complexity of communicating changes to the membership. The situation with S2P is very complicated, and in particular it is likely to be unworkable to give illustrations to members which incorporate their individual State pension figures. However we could estimate the amount by which members' S2P would increase as a result of contracting in and remind them that they can request an estimate of their State entitlements from the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions).

### **Interaction of Contracting In With the Salary Cap and Hybrid Scheme**

While remaining contracted out there is little scope for reductions to Scheme benefits below  $\frac{1}{80}$ th accrual rate. This is because this is the minimum level of benefit that must be provided by a contracted out scheme. No such minimum applies for a contracted in scheme. So contracting in is a requirement if a hybrid arrangement at a  $\frac{1}{100}$ th level is to be introduced.

The capping of salaries at the minimum stipend level would also be problematic if the scheme were contracted out as higher earners who were capped could receive less than the minimum level of benefit that must be provided in a contracted out scheme.

### **Members Over State Pension Age or Working outside the UK**

Members over State Pension Age or working outside the UK would normally **not** be accruing S2P benefits. As a result, there would be no S2P earned to compensate for the reduction in Scheme benefits.

The implications for ministers and others in service in the Republic of Ireland of contracting in will need to be fully explored before any decision is made in this regard.

## **APPENDIX 3 – Hybrid Schemes**

### **Hybrid Scheme**

Under a hybrid arrangement, part of the overall pension benefit would be provided through a defined benefit arrangement (at a relatively low accrual rate e.g.  $\frac{1}{100}$ th) and part through a defined contribution arrangement. This would mean that contributions would buy pension benefits, part of which would be guaranteed and part dependent on investment returns and annuity rates at retirement.

### **Risk Sharing**

The potential advantage of this approach is that it involves the greatest sharing of risk between the employer, the members and the State. The advantage to the Church of a hybrid scheme compared with a defined benefit scheme is that it transfers some of the future funding risk to the individual members of the

pension scheme. For the members, the advantage is that, compared with a defined contribution scheme, it does not transfer all of the risk.

It also avoids the irrevocable step of closing the defined benefit scheme.

### **Possible Hybrid Scheme**

A hybrid scheme with a future service accrual rate of  $\frac{1}{100\text{th}}$  would require a contribution rate of 7.5% of scheme salaries from the Church for the defined benefit element.<sup>2</sup> The Church would also have to pay the additional National Insurance contributions of 3% of scheme salaries in order to qualify members for S2P.

An additional defined contribution would then be paid to bring the overall contribution rate up to the level desired by the Church. There would need to be a decision whether these should be age related or on a flat rate basis. An age-related approach would be needed if the aim is to target a particular overall level of pension (e.g.  $\frac{1}{80\text{ths}}$ ).

### **Additional Administration**

Introducing a hybrid scheme would require additional administration, but similar to that required if the DB scheme were closed and a DC scheme put in place for future service.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **PENSION CONSULTATION EVENTS**

#### **1. Approximate Numbers attending**

Omagh (09/11/09)	32
Dublin (10/11/09)	10
Belfast (16/11/09)	150
Coleraine (17/11/09)	100

As a general observation, the attendees tended to be treasures or congregational members. There were not a significant number of ministers in attendance at most meetings. In general, those attending fully engaged in the question and answer sessions.

#### **2. Main Comments/Issues**

- (a) The report was well presented and explained clearly a complex topic. There appeared to be some appreciation of the work the Panel had undertaken. Some appeared to think this was a follow on of the work previously undertaken by the Board of Finance and Personnel and did not realise this was something the General Assembly had asked the General Board to do.
- (b) One of those attending queried why further changes were being considered so early after the latest changes especially in view of the significant cost incurred. More time needed to be given to see if the changes made any difference.

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2 Based on the 31.12.08 actuarial assumptions and date

- (c) At most, events a query was raised regarding the “elimination” of the defined contribution option, although it was pointed out that while this was not the Panels preferred option it had not been ruled out. There are clearly those who are of the view that this is the only option for the Church. At one of the events, the view was expressed that indicative retirement pension figures for a DC scheme should have been made available so that a comparison with pensions from a DB scheme could have been made. Some members are concerned about the long term implications of sustaining a defined benefit scheme. There was no significant discussion about the level of contribution to a DC scheme, although one person appeared to suggest that the current DB rates could be used (i.e. 16.5% and 7%).
- (d) Some views were expressed that clearer recommendations should have been made by the Panel as to the preferred way forward. Some Treasurers feel they do not have the expertise to deal with this matter and were “none the wiser” after the presentation – they required recommendations from the “experts” (i.e. Kerr Henderson).
- (e) There were mixed views on the use of Unrestricted Funds as a basis for collecting assessments. Some were concerned that e.g. unrestricted bequests would be included; others were concerned about the increase in assessments for their congregations as a result of such a change.
- (f) On occasions the Presbyterian Mutual Society issue was raised e.g. it was questioned whether any of the pension funds were invested in the PMS, others suggested that the level of income to specified sources had reduced in protest and that money was being diverted to other restricted funds.
- (g) Concern was expressed regarding the no of scheme beneficiaries on the Board of Trustees and indeed on the Panel.
- (h) One person raised a question regarding the arrears paid by members over 30 to join the PWFA (not relevant to this Panel).
- (i) There was a view that changes need to be made and that the Church with declining numbers and income could not afford to continue to pay the present level of pension assessments etc. It was pointed out that up to 2008 there had not been a decline in income.
- (j) Questions were raised, which are really issues for the Pension Scheme Trustees, regarding the level of investment performance; one person also questioned the level of administration costs in the scheme.
- (k) Some commented that they were not in a position to comments on what level the Church could afford re assessments etc.
- (l) The role of ministers in the decision making process was strongly questioned by some and there are those who suggested that ministers should not take part in General Assembly decisions on pensions.
- (m) One minister expressed concern about comments made by some members attending the event. Those members seem content to reduce minister’s pensions and he was very discouraged by the nature of the comments made.

- (n) Some uncertainty was expressed re the situation of ministers in the Republic of Ireland and missionaries re the implication of contracting in.
- (o) As a general comment, there was no overwhelming support for one of the five options. The most vocal support was for a move to a DC scheme.
- (p) Some commented that the situation was not as bad now due to recent increases in investment values – actuary had to explain the position re valuation of liabilities; estimated current deficit £16m/17m.
- (q) Some appeared to think current scheme was a “final salary scheme” and did not realise it is a CARE Scheme. Some did not appreciate that changes had been made to the schemes in recent years.
- (r) There was some discussion of the ratio of employers to members contributions (2:1).

A significant number of additional copies of the Consultation Paper were taken to be used by congregations. Copies of the presentation have been e-mailed to a number of congregations.

### APPENDIX III

#### CONSULTATION RESPONSE

122 congregations returned the Consultation Response Form.

#### KEY FINDINGS

##### **Question 1(i) – Support for a Defined Benefit Pension Scheme**

63% of congregations indicated they were in favour of the Church continuing to provide a defined benefit pension for members on retirement. 28% did not support retaining this type of scheme and 9% indicated that the existing arrangements should be retained for existing members only.

##### **Question 1(ii) – Should the Defined Benefit Structure be changed**

86% of congregations indicated that changes should be made to the existing scheme benefit structure with 14% suggesting no changes should be made.

##### **Question 2 – Comments on how benefits should be reduced**

**Accrual Rate** – 83% of congregations who responded to this question indicated that the accrual rate should be amended with 11% of the view it should be left unchanged.

**Retirement Age** – 85% of congregations who responded to this question agreed that the retirement age should be increased and there was a clear indication this should mirror the state pension arrangements.

**Salary Cap** – 72% of congregations who responded to this question supported the introduction of a salary cap although 28% specifically did not support its introduction on grounds on equity/fairness.

As a general observation, if changes are to be made to the benefit structure it would appear that the preferred order would be retirement age, accrual rate, salary cap.

### **Question 3 – Proportion of Church and Member Contributions**

The responses were varied although there appears to be a consensus that the Church should contribute in the range of two to three times the member's rate. While there was some support for retaining member's contributions at the current rate of 7%, the majority view was that the rate should be increased.

### **Questions 4 and 5 – Defined Contribution Scheme**

The response to this question mirrored the answers to question 1 with 61% not supporting a change to a defined contribution scheme, 10% supporting it for new members and 29% were in favour of such an arrangement. Those in favour of such an arrangement suggested a wide range of contribution rates, but as a general observation would support contributions at the rates to the existing scheme (ignoring the amount towards the deficit).

### **Question 6 – Hybrid Scheme**

73% indicated that they would not support the introduction of a Hybrid Scheme.

### **Question 7(i) Level of Assessments**

Not all congregations responded to this question. Some congregations indicated they did not know enough about the various fund to comment. There was an indication from some congregations that at the present time they are finding it difficult to meet their financial commitments and would therefore welcome any reduction in assessments. Analysing the various comments, there were some recurring themes and in particular:

- Reducing the level of the Central Ministry Fund assessment
- Stopping the work to Church House
- Concern about level of central costs which should be reviewed

### **Question 7 (ii) Unrestricted Income as basis of assessments**

56% of congregations responding to this question supported using Unrestricted Income as a basis of assessment. 42% did not support a change and a few congregations suggested some form of combined arrangement.

### **Question 8 – Management Arrangements**

A considerable number of congregations did not make any comment, which based on the question would suggest agreement to the proposals; 19 congregations specifically indicated support for the arrangements. There were a variety of other comments which may be summarised as concern about the role of beneficiaries, either on the Board of Trustees or through their involvement in the decision making process.



## PANEL ON MINISTRIES

*The Rev Dr WP Addley reports:*

Following the 2009 General Assembly the membership of the Panel was strengthened, by the addition of representatives from the Union Commission and the Board of Mission in Ireland, and the enhanced Panel has sought to fulfil the remit of that Assembly, namely:

*“to continue its work looking particularly at outstanding issues including ‘tent-making ministries’ and ‘part-time ministries’”.*

Accordingly the Panel has produced schemes on Part-Time Ministry in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, on Auxiliary Ministry, and on the Appointment and Training of Evangelists. In addition it gave consideration to the Salary Scales, Terms and Conditions of Additional Pastoral Personnel. Its report on this last item along with the three schemes may be found in the appendices to this Report.

## APPENDIX 1

### Towards a Scheme for Part Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament in PCI

#### Introduction

1. Over the past number of years it has become apparent that PCI needs to have more flexibility in its use of Ministerial resources. One such change that could prove helpful would be to permit the Union Commission to give leave to call for ‘part-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament’ to a charge where that was the most appropriate way to proceed.

2. While it is not envisaged that a large number of such positions would be created, such posts could be attractive to a number of Ministers and may prove a useful option for Presbyteries and the Union Commission to have available for specific situations. Such a part-time congregational ministry could also be linked to a part-time non-parish ministry.

#### The Basic Scheme

1. After consultation, with the Presbytery concerned and other relevant bodies, the Union Commission, in situations where it is clearly deemed appropriate, should be authorised to create a position which is deemed to be a ‘part-time charge’.

2. The Union Commission in granting ‘leave to call’ to such positions should both set the stipend at a suitable proportion of appropriate ministerial minimum and also specify the hours to be worked etc.

3. No current full-time position would be permitted to ‘evolve’ into a part-time position during a ministry. Such changes to the status of a charge can only be made at the time of a vacancy or realignment.

4. It should be clearly understood that any provision of posts in PCI which were deemed to be part-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament would be

open only to those who *are already ordained as Ministers of Word and Sacrament*.

5. The Union Commission should exercise due care in creating such positions, taking into account not only the local need, but the use of ministry personnel throughout PCI.

## APPENDIX 2

### Towards a Scheme for an Auxiliary Ministry in PCI

#### Introduction

1. This paper seeks to outline a scheme for part-time Ministry of the Word, for those who are not already Ministers of Word and Sacrament, either as part of a 'Ministry Team' or in a 'Pioneering Situation'.

2. This scheme will be referred to as an 'Auxiliary Ministry Scheme', where an 'Auxiliary Minister' is a part-time Minister of the Word. The creation of an Auxiliary Minister post will be authorised by the Union Commission, in consultation with Presbytery, (see sections 3.1 and 3.2 below for details relating to pioneering situations), with the Commission setting the terms including length of appointment etc.

3. An Auxiliary Minister post will fall into one of the following two categories:

- (a) An Auxiliary Minister who will work alongside, and under the supervision of, a full Minister of the Word and Sacrament in either a larger congregation or in a linkage or in appropriate circumstances under the supervision of a Convener of a Vacancy. This could be either on an 'expenses only' basis or on a 'part-time salaried' basis.
- (b) An Auxiliary Minister who will provide ministry in a pioneering situation, working under the auspices and supervision of a Presbytery and/or Board, either in a small congregation or linkage which has clear potential for growth or in a Church planting location, (see section 3 below). This could be on an 'expenses only' basis, i.e. as a 'tent-maker', or on a 'part-time salaried' basis.

#### The Basic Scheme

1. Normally an applicant for the Auxiliary Ministry Scheme would be required to be an Accredited Preacher within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, having completed the selection process, training and probationary period of that scheme.

2. Admission to the process of training for the 'Auxiliary Ministry' will be by formal application, nomination by the local Minister and Kirk Session, followed by Presbytery endorsement of that nomination. Those candidates endorsed by a Presbytery would be interviewed centrally by a Board of Christian Training Panel prior to final approval. (In the light of the relatively short training period, the selection process should seek to identify relevant existing 'giftedness' which could be enhanced through training.)

3. The normal training course for the Auxiliary Ministry should build on the Accredited Preacher Training and should include units in pastoral care and theology, normally taken over one year, delivered through a combination of regional courses and weekend residentials.

4. The one-year course would normally include congregational placements, both in the individual's home congregation and in other congregations. These would be assessed through reflective reports, by the trainee and by the 'supervising minister'.

5. Costs will be covered in two ways – central funds will cover the cost of providing trainers, with the trainee covering other costs. The local Congregation and/or Presbytery will be encouraged to support the trainee in meeting these costs. A bursary fund for particular exceptional cases, where finance is a major issue, will be made available.

6. After successful completion of the one year course, the individual would enter a six month probationary period, attached to a congregation, prior to full recognition. They would then be eligible to apply for Auxiliary Ministry positions which have been created within PCI, being commissioned to their first such position. Those who wish to apply for an Auxiliary Ministry post which will not be working directly under the supervision of a full Minister of the Word and Sacrament, i.e. one in category 1.3 (b) above, will be required to complete additional modules of study and other prescribed preparation, either before taking up such a post or within an agreed period after appointment. (See section 3 below.)

7. The oversight of the main training course for the 'Auxiliary Ministry' will be the responsibility of the Director of Ministerial Studies, with the courses approved by the relevant Board of Christian Training Committee and accredited by Union Theological College. The additional training necessary for those going into a 'pioneering' situation will be overseen jointly with the Board of Mission in Ireland. (See section 3 below.)

### **Auxiliary Ministry in pioneering situations**

1. Auxiliary Ministry posts created in 'pioneering situations' will be primarily missional in nature i.e. a position created in a small situation where there is clear potential for growth or in a Church planting location. Such posts will not be created for 'maintenance' reasons.

2. Posts will be authorised by the Union Commission following a joint request by a Presbytery and the Board of Mission in Ireland. Such a request will normally be initiated by a Presbytery, with the backing of the Board of Mission in Ireland, but could also be initiated by the Board of Mission in Ireland, with the backing of a Presbytery.

3. Those applying for such posts will normally be required to have met the full requirements of the Auxiliary Ministry scheme outlined above. They will also be required to carry out additional modules of study and other prescribed preparation, either before taking up such a post or within an agreed period after appointment. As these posts are designed to be primarily pioneering missional in nature, the additional preparation should be focussed to help equip Auxiliary Ministers exercise such missional work.

4. Appointments to such posts will be by a Panel made up of representatives of the Presbytery and of the Board of Mission in Ireland.

5. Oversight of the development of such pioneering situations, and the supervision of the work of Auxiliary Ministers in such situations, will be by a Presbytery Panel made up of representatives of the Presbytery and of the Board of Mission in Ireland. Normally this Panel will be convened by a member of Presbytery and line management arrangements agreed.

### APPENDIX 3

#### Towards a Scheme for the Appointment and Training of Evangelists

##### Introduction

1. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is committed to evangelism. The effective reaching of people with the gospel message of salvation has always been an imperative for us. In the paper *“An Understanding of Mission for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland”* (GA Mins, 2009, p63) the authors seek to help the Church towards a rounded view of mission. They quote Chris Wright as follows: *“...mission that does not ultimately include declaring the word and the name of Christ, the call to repentance, and faith and obedience has not completed its task. It is defective mission, not holistic mission”*. (Chris Wright, *The Mission of God*, p 319). Evangelism therefore, is central to our identity as a people and our understanding of mission.

2. The BMI strategy of seeking to plant new Churches and revitalize existing congregations requires gifted and trained evangelists in the front line, either as Church Planters themselves, or working alongside Planters and Ministers.

##### The Office of Evangelist

1. The office of “evangelist” is not formally recognized within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland beyond the collective responsibilities of a Teaching Elder (Code, Par 16(2)), although the role, calling and work of an evangelist is provided for both through the Irish Mission which includes the work of evangelism as an explicit function for its workers, (Code, Par 302(1)(b)) and through the appointment of paid staff as evangelists within congregations under the APP scheme.

2. Historically there has been a Director of Evangelism appointed centrally by the denomination, whose task was to provide resources and training at congregational level to encourage effective evangelism to take place. For a number of years a Panel of Evangelists was recognized by the General Assembly and, for a shorter period, a Panel of Youth Evangelists. It is further noted that in 1949 the post of General Assembly Evangelist was created as a six-month temporary secondment for a Minister to fulfil, releasing him from normal parish life to lead evangelistic missions across the Church. There were four post holders before the scheme came to an end.

3. This paper will not propose any changes to the Code regarding the office of Evangelist or propose to establish any new salaried posts regarding the provision of training for evangelists.

### **The Irish Mission**

1. The Irish Mission is an evangelistic agency within the structures of the Church. (Code, Par 116(1))

2. In the past Irish Mission workers were offered training prior to their appointment, should this have been considered necessary. Sometimes this involved a full time year of theological study at Union College, but such a course was not mandatory. In all cases, a one-year period of probation prior to Commissioning was served.

3. Some workers joined the mission with many years of experience, and this was deemed to be sufficient in lieu of additional formal training.

4. Some workers were given permission to undertake specialist in service training by correspondence courses or attendance at, for example, the Irish Bible Institute in Dublin.

5. The place and purpose of the Mission within the PCI is changing, with an intentional move from central to local deployment of evangelists in growing numbers. While the BMI retains the capacity for some central deployment of personnel where local resources are inadequate or non-existent, the tactical assumption is that evangelists will work from congregations or groups of congregations to help them reach into their communities.

### **Training evangelists – Current Provision**

1. No formal dedicated training in evangelism is currently provided through Union Theological College, other than as part of the wider training for ministry, or as part of specialist courses such as Youth and Children’s ministry.

2. It is not assumed that theological training or degree-level education is a pre-requisite for effective evangelists. However, it is assumed that the identification of spiritual gifting, appropriate training and equipping both initially and ongoing is essential for an evangelist to be effective and to grow in their role and calling.

3. Exposure to new and effective models of evangelism may help to define the possibilities, and to birth genuine vision. Many of our attempts to evangelise are hampered by the perception of outsiders that it has all been heard before, or that the outmoded methodologies match an old fashioned or irrelevant message. Just as there is a universal call to re-imagine Church for the next generation, so there is a need to re-imagine evangelism for this new spiritual environment, and to devise styles of communication, which truly connect with ordinary people.

### **Proposal for Training of Evangelists**

1. It is proposed that a dedicated course on evangelism be introduced, to be run by the Board of Mission in Ireland in conjunction with the Board of Christian Training.

- (i) The course would be run annually, as a series of evening classes over a period of weeks.
- (ii) The course would be open to any person, whether in a paid capacity or volunteer, ordained or not, seeking to identify their giftedness in evangelism and improve their skills in this ministry.
- (iii) Admission to the course would normally require approval by the participant's congregation, which may be encouraged to provide some financial support.
- (iv) Completion of the course may be expected or required for some employed positions within the Church.
- (v) The course will be internally accredited by Union Theological College.
- (vi) The course would be funded through a combination of central provision of trainers' costs, and participants' fees. It may also qualify for support under the Ministerial Development scheme.
- (vii) The content of the course might include:
  - The content of the Gospel – a theological foundation.
  - Am I an evangelist? Discerning spiritual gifting.
  - Evangelism and the mission of the local Church.
  - Evangelistic preaching.
  - The way of salvation. Leading a person to Christ.
  - Conversational evangelism, and evangelistic Bible studies.
  - Use of literature, video and other media.
  - Evangelism and the creative arts.
  - Children's evangelism; Youth evangelism; Pastoral evangelism.
  - Blogging the gospel.
  - Understanding changes in Irish culture.
  - Effective story-telling.
  - Talking with strangers; making new connections.
  - Apologetics. Common questions people ask.
  - How to mobilise God's people for evangelism.

#### APPENDIX 4

##### **Additional Pastoral Personnel salary scales, terms and conditions**

###### **Issues for consideration**

###### **1. Advantages of standardising Additional Pastoral Personnel (APP) pay and conditions**

If the General Assembly was to adopt a standardised set of pay and conditions for APPs, there would be some clear benefits:

- (a) Fair reward for work of similar standard by staff of comparable ability;
- (b) Vital equity if APPs were to be paid centrally;
- (c) Would encourage APPs to commit to one situation for an extended time due to increased structure and job security, particularly if they have changing personal responsibilities;
- (d) Provides appropriate career development and incremental scales;

- (e) Standard pay and conditions can be linked to the professional development of APPs throughout the denomination, thus continuing to raise standards across the Church;
- (f) It would open up the option that Peninsula's standard job description and terms and conditions include not only the legal requirements but also guidelines from PCI on certain key terms and conditions. This would help to reduce confusion and inequitable employment practices but still allow local application as appropriate.

## **2. Potential drawbacks of standard pay and conditions for APPs**

However, there are also concerns or potential drawbacks should such a policy be pursued:

- (a) Imbalance of pay in some situations compared to minister(s) and other ministry staff;
- (b) Increased costs to some congregations, possibly seen as prohibitive to a few;
- (c) Resistance by some to what may be seen as central interference;
- (d) Would not recognise the socio-economic and other local conditions which would restrict a congregation's ability to pay.

## **Proposals on standardising conditions**

The Panel makes the following recommendations on the pay and conditions of APPs:

1. *It is recommended that* the following framework should be used for setting the salary of any APP and the APP Committee will provide guidance to congregations on how to apply this:

Steering salary pt (equivalent JNC pt)	Level of responsibility of post	Qualification attained by employee or level of experience
<b>Band A</b> 1. £16,509 (5) 2. £17,100 (6) 3. £17,697 (7) 4. £18,291 (8) 5. £19,047 (9) 6. £19,636 (10)	Mostly direct work with children, young people or adults under close regular supervision; low management responsibility for people or projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Obtained or working towards OCN level 2 and 3 qualifications, PCI Youth/Children's Ministry Course or similar qualification in the relevant field;</li> <li>- where this level of qualification is not held, demonstrated experience in this field of activity may be deemed equivalent.</li> </ul>
<b>Band B</b> 7. £20,591 (11) 8. £21,525 (12) 9. £22,489 (13) 10. £23,485 (14) 11. £24,166 (15+)	General responsibility for specific areas of programme and ministry oversight; graduating and less closely supervised responsibility for programmes, strategy volunteers or leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appropriate recognition of attainment or working towards undergraduate or postgraduate theological study or professional qualifications (including Youth and Community, teaching qualifications or other related professional qualifications such as counselling or social work).</li> <li>- where this level of qualification is not held, demonstrated experience in this field of activity may be deemed equivalent.</li> </ul>

**Note:** this salary scale is based on the latest JNC Youth and Community work scale (2009 – agreed Feb 2010) for the UK and will be updated annually. The RoI salary will be the appropriate salary point multiplied by RoI Ministerial Minimum and divided by NI Ministerial Minimum i.e. uplifted by PCI's agreed percentage for RoI cost of living differential.



2. *It is recommended that* no APP's salary should be higher than 95% of the current minister's stipend regardless of qualification or experience.
3. *It is recommended that,* in a situation where a congregation provides accommodation for the APP, a proportionate reduction in salary may be made if deemed appropriate.
4. *It is recommended that* the Additional Appointments Committee of the Union Commission (APC) should agree with Peninsula a set of terms and conditions which must be adopted by congregations employing APPs including annual and parental leave, sick pay, disciplinary and grievance procedures, training and continuing professional development policies.
5. *It is recommended that* although all APPs will continue to be employed by the Kirk Session of the congregation(s) in which they work, the payroll function will be centralised through the Presbyterian Financial Secretary's Office.
6. *It is recommended that* a PCI stakeholder pension should be available for use by congregations through the FSO.
7. *It is recommended that* a standard pro forma should be provided which congregations may use for claiming of personal expenses.
8. *It is recommended that* the APC should issue guidelines for those responsible for the line management and appraisal of APPs which will help to standardise practice in this area.
9. *It is recommended that* it should be standard practice that all who manage APPs will undergo suitable training in management and appraisal. (This would both address some common areas of tension and difficulty currently experienced by some APPs and congregations, and also support those less experienced in management.)

### PANEL ON FUTURE OF PEACEMAKING

*The Rev Dr DJ Watts reports:*

1. The Panel appointed by the Priorities Committee to consider the future of "peacemaking" within the Church has continued to meet. It has taken note of the Memorial of the Dromore Presbytery and the Resolution of the Youth and Children's Ministry Board (res 7) at the General Assembly.
2. The Panel is concerned at the lack of political leadership in forwarding the "shared future" agenda and believes that it is even more vital for the Church to give strong leadership. There is a perception that while a political accommodation has been maintained, there is little real progress towards reconciliation at a community level. Some feel that in fact relations in the community have become worse. It is therefore very important to ensure that the Church continues to move forward on "peacemaking" issues, even if the terminology needs to change.
3. The Panel identified three areas to be considered:
  - (i) **At a societal level** work needs to be done to speak clearly and prophetically into a situation of relative stalemate. It is recognised that the Church and Society Committee is already appointed to give a lead in this area.

- (ii) **At a congregational level**, leaderships need to be encouraged to look seriously and creatively at fostering good relations in their local area. As this is a gospel imperative it was felt that it would be helpful if leaderships consider this aspect of the gospel within their overall mission planning. To encourage discussion it was agreed to send out again the Peace Vocation, which is still seen as very relevant, with a series of questions to help the Panel clarify what is needed at congregational level.
- (iii) **At a denomination level**, aspects of “peacemaking” need to be built in to our overall thinking and planning. In particular training in changing attitudes needs to be part of ministerial, eldership and discipleship training. The Church also needs to ensure that its own practices nurture good relations and challenge any tendency towards sectarian attitudes.

4. The response to the questionnaire on the Peace Vocation was interesting, if a little disappointing. The questions asked were:

- (i) What do you like about the Peace Vocation and what would you want to change?
- (ii) What has been happening in this regard in the Congregation and what might happen in the future?
- (iii) How does this thinking impact your mission planning?
- (iv) Are there ways in which young people can be involved?
- (v) What help and support might be offered by:
  - a) Presbytery; b) the Church centrally?
- (vi) How would you like to see the peacemaking initiative developed in the denomination?

Only 8 replies were received from 7 Congregations and 1 Presbytery. The Panel believes there may have been some confusion between this request and the consultation on sectarianism being conducted by Church and Society. The responses received were encouraging, but it is difficult to assess the lack of response except that it may indicate uncertainty at a time of rapid change in society as to where the congregation should place emphasis in its witness to Kingdom values.

5. To enable the Church to think seriously about its role in relating within relatively post-conflict society the panel would like to bring together some people to work on how the Church may contribute to building good relationships in the emerging Irish society. This would include a review of past work and the lessons learnt from it, as well as new initiatives which could be taken. It may also enable us to reflect on some of the anniversaries which are approaching. The intention would be to look academically at some of the issues but with practical outcomes which may help focus the work of the Church. It may be that a conference or symposium will be held next Spring.

6. It was reported to the General Board that an application had been made to the Special EU Programmes Body for an inter-Church Peacebuilding Project. The five partners are the Church of Ireland, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Ireland, the Roman Catholic Church and the Irish Council of Churches. For practical reasons in submitting the application the PCI was designated lead partner. The application has been accepted at the first stage of

the process and is now subject to economic appraisal. The International Fund for Ireland has also expressed interest and an application has been submitted to them also. If this application is successful it would mean a number of people working in various denominations with an overall co-ordinator. The overall cost may be well in excess of £1m. A decision on European funding is expected in May and if the project application is successful fuller details will be published in the Supplementary Reports.

### PANEL ON PASTORAL CARE OF MANSE FAMILIES

*The Rev Gabrielle Farquhar reports:*

1. It is the Panel's continuing aim to ensure that Ministers and Manse families have the support and services they need from the Church they serve. The Panel would urge use of resources available, i.e. an appropriate person who provides a listening ear with strict confidentiality observed or an opportunity for those who just want to share a concern, spiritual or otherwise. Resources can be provided by the Church but it is up to the individuals concerned to avail of this organised help.

2. The Panel is now beginning to work on a resource for Kirk Sessions. It will contain helpful pointers to more effective pastoring of the Minister and Manse family.

### PANEL ON SAINTFIELD ROAD MEMORIAL

*The Rev Dr DJ Watts reports:*

1. The Panel to consider the Memorial of the Kirk Session of Saintfield Road met to consider appropriate legislation. The Memorial reads:

*That Ruling Elders, when elected, are ordained to the office of the ruling eldership, and installed to the oversight of a particular Congregation, or to a sphere of special service, e.g. with the Board of Mission Overseas.*

*That a Ruling Elder desiring to resign may either resign the duties in a Congregation or from the office of the eldership in the Presbyterian Church with the consent of the Presbytery [Code Par 33 (3)].*

*That when a Ruling Elder has resigned the duties in a Congregation he/she should be placed upon a roll of Elders without charge [Code Par 33 (4)].*

*That after 3 years upon the roll of Elders without charge a Ruling Elder is deemed to have resigned from the office of eldership [Code Par 33 (5)].*

*That in recent years provision has been made for Ruling Elders to step down from the duties of the eldership for a specified time, after which a return to those duties is envisaged [Code Par 25 (1)].*

*That there is no provision for Ruling Elders who, due to age, infirmity or declining health, wish to retire from the duties of the eldership, while still remaining an Elder of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*

*That a Minister/teaching Elder who retires from a charge, being still ordained continues in the office of Minister of the Church, with the title Minister Emeritus. [Code Par 225]*

*That a Ruling Elder should be permitted to retire from the duties of the eldership with a title such as Elder Emeritus, and be placed on a roll of such Elders Emeriti.*

2. The Panel was aware of the work of the Strategy for Mission Committee, esp Reports 1976, and the Assembly response to a similar Memorial from the Kirk Session of Railway Street in 1999 (see Reports 2000, pp 6-8; Minutes 2000, p 56).

3. Following discussion it was agreed that the prayer of the Memorial would be effective if a new sub-paragraph (3) was added to Par 33 of The Code to read:

*“A ruling elder who has reached the age of 65, or is in special circumstances, may retire from their duties in a congregation with the consent of the Presbytery, who may if it so wishes, in consultation with the Kirk Session, deem the elder to be an ‘elder-emeritus’ of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland”.*

### MEMORIAL RECORD

**The Very Rev Dr Ronald Gavin Craig, BA, DD**, died on 1 June, 2009 in the 93rd year of his age and the 65th of his ministry. A Belfast man, he was brought up within the fellowship of Newtownbreda Congregation where he was licensed as a probationer for the ministry. He was educated at Rosetta Primary School, the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Queens University and, what was then called the Assembly’s College, Belfast. He served his Assistantship in First Larne Congregation before being ordained and installed to his first charge of Glennan and Middletown in 1944. Four years later he was called to Woodvale Congregation – then one of the largest Congregations in the General Assembly – where he spent the next twenty one years. In 1969 he moved to First Carrickfergus Congregation where he remained until retirement in 1982. He was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1980/81 and, significantly, during his year as Moderator he was given the honour of opening the first Youthreach event which was designed to encourage young people in various leadership roles within and beyond the Church. Prior to this he held various important positions within our Church among them: Convenerships of the Youth Committee, the Arrangements Committee and the Incidental Committee. Outside the Church he made a valuable contribution to the Government Youth Committee, the Youth and Sports Council and UNESCO (NI). A man with a ready pen, he wrote several useful publications including – “Treasures in Earthen Vessels” and – “A History of Woodvale Congregation”. Ronnie Craig’s life and ministry pulsed with energy and infectious enthusiasm. A man of ideas and idealism, he brought life to everything to which he turned his hand. His love for Christ and the Church was matched with his love for people of all ages and persuasions. He had that knack of drawing alongside people, listen to their point of view, share in their joys or sorrows and bring blessing to their lives. In a real sense he epitomised all that the ideal Minister ought to be. How blest were the Congregations who had

the privilege of having him as their Minister!! During the last war he served as a reserve in the Royal Artillery and, due to his zest for life in general and contact sport in particular, one can easily imagine the impact for good which he had on the service personnel who came under his influence. Ronnie Craig's lifetime interest in sport was nurtured early in life within the Youth Organisations of Newtownbreda Congregation and Belfast Inst. A former safe pair of hands as Ireland's Rugby Fullback, he also in his day, played a straight bat for Ulster at Cricket and was, in every sense, a true sportsman. What a massive contribution this must have made to his Church work in general and his Youth work in particular and what a role model he must have been within organisations like the Boy Scouts and Boys' Brigade. The death of his beloved wife Isobel was, to Ronnie a severe blow. As a couple they worked tirelessly in the service of their Lord and Master – Jesus Christ and His Church. Their daughter Joan, son Gavin and their families can be assured of the sympathy and prayers of the General Assembly as they mourn the passing of a dear father and outstanding servant of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

**The Rev William Chestnutt, BA**, died on 8 June, 2009 in the 89th year of his age and the 61st of his ministry. He was brought up in and licensed in Mosside Congregation. His primary education was delivered first of all in the little single room Tullyban Primary School and later in Knockaholet Primary School from which he graduated to Ballycastle High School. As was then the practice for most candidates for the Presbyterian ministry, he proceeded to Magee University College, Trinity College and, what was then, Assembly's College, Belfast. As a young Licentiate he was assigned in 1944 to Ballykelly Congregation to look after this Congregation while it's Minister, the Rev Victor Quinn, was serving as a war Chaplain to the Forces. He further served an assistantship to the Rev Temple Lundie who was then minister of Dundalk, Carlingford, Castlebellingham and Greenore. He was ordained to his first charge of Kilmount in 1948 where he remained until 1951 when he received a call to Dromore Congregation in County Tyrone. For the next twenty one years he, with his wife Margaret, exercised a much appreciated ministry. For much of his time in Dromore he was Clerk of the Omagh Presbytery – a position which he undertook most assiduously. In 1975 he responded affirmatively to a call from Donaghedy Congregation where he remained until retirement in 1986. In the year 1976 he received the honour of being appointed Moderator of the Synod of Derry and Omagh. Whilst William's Pulpit ministry was thoughtful and much appreciated, it was in the Pastoral side of ministry that he excelled. A country man himself he understood country people and, in his own quiet way, he had the capacity to draw alongside people to bring comfort, challenge, healing and strength. Many remain who look back in thanksgiving that this genuine man of God passed their way and touched their lives for good and for God. William would be the first to acknowledge the massive contribution Margaret made to his ministry. As a couple nothing pleased them more than to work hand in hand in the Master's service among the people God had called them to work. Their retirement was spent in Coleraine where William loved to develop and practice his interest in painting, carpentry and clock repairs. Even in the sad circumstance of memory loss his optimism and sense of humour shone through in a typical

comment – “my forgettery is getting better.” His beloved Margaret predeceased him by three years. Their sons Norman and Alastair and their families can be assured of the sympathy and prayers of this Supreme Court of the Church which their father loved so well and served so faithfully.

**The Rev Moore Dunlop Wasson, BA**, died on 19 July, 2009 in the 91st year of his age and the 63rd of his ministry. Brought up on the Crumlin Road area of Belfast, he attended St Mary’s Primary School before proceeding to Belfast Royal Academy. For his higher education he attended Magee University College, Trinity College, Dublin, New College, Edinburgh and, what was then, Assembly’s College, Belfast. He graduated from Trinity College with honours in History and Political Science and, while at New College, he was a New Testament prize winner. Upon satisfying the Board of Studies he was licensed by the Belfast Presbytery in 1944 in his home Congregation of Greenisland and ordained and installed in his first charge of Roseyards in 1946. His assistantships in Shankill Road Mission and Rosemary Congregations were to stand him in good stead in his subsequent ministry both as a parish Minister and in Broadcasting. Speaking of the latter, he was appointed as Organiser for Religious Broadcasting for the BBC in 1955. In this position he was responsible for the planning and production of religious programmes for both radio and television. He remained in this position until 1979. In 1980 he became a teacher of Religious Education in Larne Grammar School where he remained until receiving a Call from the Congregations of Ballina, Killala and Ballymote in 1984. Here he remained until retirement in 1988. Moore Wasson’s walk with God was quiet, gracious and gentle. To be in his presence was a benediction. His thoughtful and compassionate life and ministry brought blessing and inspiration to many and he will be remembered by his friends both within and beyond the Irish Presbyterian Church as one of the most Christlike people they have ever had the privilege to meet. The dark shadow of bereavement crossed his pathway not only through the passing of his beloved wife Lorna but also his daughter Charis. His remaining daughters Christine and Eirene and son Robert and their families can be assured of the sympathy and prayers of the General Assembly at this time of sorrow and loss.

**The Rev William Douglas Ferguson Marshall, MA**, died on 9 August, 2009 in the 87th year of his age and the 59th of his ministry. He was bought up within the fellowship of Ballykelly Congregation and educated at Coleraine Academical Institution, Magee University College, Trinity College, Dublin, New College, Edinburgh and, what was then Assembly’s College, Belfast. On completion of his Theological Studies he was licensed by the Limavady Presbytery in June 1947 and ordained and installed to his first charge of First Killyleagh in June 1950. Following a short ministry of two years in First Killyleagh he was called to Townsend Street Congregation in 1952 where he remained until 1965 when he responded affirmatively to the call of Whitehouse Congregation. His final charge was to Windsor Congregation where indeed he had served a very well received assistantship. He was installed in Windsor in 1976 and remained there until retirement in 1988. Fergie, as he was affectionately known by many of his friends, possessed many gifts of heart and

mind which enhanced his ministry and endeared him to a wide circle of friends within and beyond the confines of our denomination. Possessing a fine deep bass voice which, coupled with an effective command of the English language, he was a pleasure to listen to whether in the pulpit, at the rostrum or in general conversation. His love for his God and fellow human beings; his sound grasp of the scriptures and reformed theology; his ready wit and down to earth common sense all combined towards making him the outstanding servant of our Church which he undoubtedly was. None knew this better than those among whom he worked in the various Congregations he ministered. His service to the wider Church and community were, to say the least, impressive, including his Chairmanship of the Church's Board of Trustees. His lifelong interest in Education was enhanced through his membership and subsequent chairmanship of the Belfast Education and Library Board. His experience here made him an ideal Convener of the Churches Education Board. His concern for people doubtless led to his appointment as Honorary Secretary of the Presbyterian Orphan Society, Convener of the Widows of Ministers Fund, Convener of the Ulster Institute of the Deaf and to his being a Life Member of the Workshops for the Blind. For many years he was Clerk of the Belfast Synod and in 1982 was its Moderator. It was while Assistant in Windsor that he met Olive Smith who was later to become his wife. What an outstanding example of true Christian Marriage they turned out to be! Their devotion to each other and their Lord was the springboard from which they unitedly served our Church with such distinction and devotion. Olive, their daughter Penelope and sons Mark, Glen and Douglas and their families can be assured of the sympathy and prayers of the General Assembly at this time of sorrow and loss.

**Mr Jonathan Alexander McKay, MA, DipMin**, died on 22 September 2009, having completed his first year as a Licenciate. Born in Ballymena on 31 May 1975, he was brought up within the fellowship of Brookside Congregation, Ahoghill where his father, the Very Rev Dr Ivan McKay, was minister. He was educated at Gracehill Primary School, Ballymena Academy, Cambridge University, where he gained his MA and Union Theological College where he gained his DipMin. In June 2007 he was assigned to Rathcoole Congregation as Student Assistant and, on completion of his studies for the ministry, was licensed by the Carrickfergus Presbytery in June 2008. As a very young child he trusted in Jesus as his Saviour and developed a genuine appetite for the things of God far beyond his years. In addition to the spiritual nurture he received within his home, he benefitted greatly from the encouragement of diligent leaders within the youth and children's work of Brookside Congregation. He loved to attend Portballintrae CSSM and initially as a leader and eventually as Leader in Charge he contributed enormously to the success of this ministry for many years. He was never more – "at home" – than when he was involved in some form of children's work. His capacity in this regard made him ideally suited for the years he spent in teaching in the primary school sector. As time went on he became more and more convinced that God was calling him into the Christian Ministry. Throughout the process of application for the Ministry concerns were raised regarding his health. However this did not stand in the way of following his Lord into, what he strongly believed, to be his Lord's will. Only



on the other side will we, as human beings, fully understand why a man possessing such outstanding gifts for the ministry was not allowed to continue longer in the ministry. Jonathan himself never questioned God's will in all this. Sustaining grace was provided for all his needs and he bore his terminal illness without complaint. He died in the faith that he lived and his concern throughout was that Christ would have the supremacy. His wife Susan, son Benjamin, daughter Hannah, father, mother and indeed the wider family circle can be assured of the sympathy and prayers of the General Assembly with them in their great sorrow and loss.

**The Rev William Campbell McReynolds, BA**, died on 17 January 2010 in the 90<sup>th</sup> year of his age and the 65<sup>th</sup> of his ministry. He was born near Limavady on 13 April 1919. His father William and mother Catherine were teachers in Largy Public Elementary School. They had five children of whom William was the third. The spiritual life of the family was nurtured through their involvement in Largy Presbyterian Church. As William's education in Limavady Grammar School drew to a close his mind was set on a career in banking. However, at a Belfast City Mission meeting, at the age of eighteen, he encountered Christ in a deeply personal way and that experience altered his career path. He soon felt drawn to the Christian Ministry and this led to study at Magee University College, New College, Edinburgh and, what was then, the Assembly's College, Belfast. As he gave consideration to where God might use him in the future, the lure of India became increasingly strong within him. Following an assistantship in Bloomfield Congregation, he was licensed by the Limavady Presbytery in 1944 and ordained in 1945 as a PCI missionary and sent to Cambai, Gujarat to learn the language and local culture. Although he was transferred to Surat to head up the Gujarat Mission Publishing Centre, his real passion was evangelism. With fellow Indian evangelists he often travelled out to remote villages to share the story of Christ with people who knew little or nothing of His love. He became so fluent in the language that many thought that he had been born in Gujarat. With a heart warmed by the spirit of Christ, the warmth of his friendship and simple preaching of the gospel brought many to faith in Christ. In 1950 he returned to Ireland on furlough and launched into a wide ranging tour of PCI Congregations in order to inform them of the challenge of India. On such a visit to First Dromara Congregation he met the young organist, Marion Kerr, whose parents had served in India. They invited William for lunch and romance blossomed. In May 1951 they were married in Wilson College Chapel, Bombay. They set up home in Surat and over the next eight years their three sons – John, David and Douglas were born. As a family they returned to Ireland in 1961 and William received a call to the Congregations of Carrowdore and Ballyfrenis where he remained until 1970 when he responded affirmatively to the call of Gransha Congregation. Here he remained until retirement in 1984. Following retirement he and his wife Marion joined Fitzroy Congregation where he served as elder and occasional preacher. The dark shadow of sorrow crossed William's pathway in 1997 when his wife Marion died and ten years later when his son David died. His surviving sons John and Douglas and indeed the wider family circle can be assured that their loved one is remembered by the General Assembly as one who was an effective evangelist,



a thoughtful preacher, a caring pastor, a faithful missionary and a most likeable human being whose life and ministry touched the lives of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

**The Rev Robert John Lester** died on 14 March 2010 in the 84th year of his age and the 45th year of his ministry. He was brought up within the fellowship of St Enoch's Congregation and was educated at the Boy's Model School, Cookstown Technical College, Pomona College California, San Jose State College and, what was then the Assembly's College, Belfast. Before entering the ministry he worked for British Rail and in the Travel Agents – Messrs McCalla and Co Ltd. The experience he gained in these establishments was to stand him in very good stead throughout his future life and ministry. For many years he toiled with the idea that God could be calling him into some form of full time Christian Work. When it became clear to him that this was indeed the case he allowed no challenge to stand in his way of following his Lord throughout a long period of study and subsequent ministry. On completion of his studies he was licensed by the North Belfast Presbytery in May 1965 and ordained and installed as Assistant Minister in Ballysillan Congregation in December of that same year. In November 1967 he was installed to his first Charge of First and Second Ramelton. During his time here he took on the additional responsibility of Kilmacrennan Congregation. In March 1976 he responded affirmatively to a call from Newington Congregation where he remained until 1983 when he moved to his final Charge of Ringsend. Here he remained until retirement in April 1992. In all his Congregations his pulpit ministry was deeply appreciated. However it was as a most caring pastor that he is most lovingly remembered. As a shepherd he knew his flock and as he loved them, they in turn loved him and continue to remember him with the utmost respect. Roy had many gifts and varied interests. He was throughout his life a strong supporter of the Boys Brigade. As he himself had received so much from this organisation he unstintingly gave much back and epitomised all that was best in BB. Having benefitted himself from the Ministry of Divine Healing during a serious life-threatening illness, he maintained a lively interest in this ministry thereafter and indeed was the Convener on the General Assembly's Divine Healing Committee from 1985 until 1992. In April 1967 he married Lorna Hunter and what an example of true Christian Marriage their union turned out to be! Their joy was to work hand in hand with the people God had called them to work amongst. Lorna, their three daughters Sylvia, Florence and Louise can be assured that the sympathy of the General Assembly is with them in this time of sorrow and loss.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

### **Priorities Committee**

2. That the General Assembly agree the procedure for prioritising the work of the Boards outlined in the Priorities Committee Report, par 1.

3. That the General Assembly agree the priority areas for new work (2011-2013) identified in the Priorities Committee Report, pars 3, 4.

4. That the General Assembly agree the remit and membership of the Priorities Committee, as outlined in the Priorities Committee Report, par 5.

#### **Moderator's Advisory Committee**

5. That the General Assembly encourage the provision of conciliation training at all levels in the Church and especially ask Presbytery Clerks to ensure that they have adequate understanding of the conciliation process.

6. That the Panel of Conciliators, co-ordinated by the Rev Doug Baker, be thanked for their work.

7. That the General Assembly appoint an ad-hoc Committee to consider the possibility of ruling elders serving on a Kirk Session for a set period of time.

#### **Doctrine Committee**

8. That the Report of the Doctrine Committee be sent down to Presbyteries for comment and report to the Convener by 31 December, 2010.

#### **Global Concerns Committee**

9. That the General Assembly note the work of the Global Concerns Committee and thank all those involved in the various Panels.

10. That the following grants be made from the Incidental Fund:

Embrace (NI)	£5,000
Churches Asylum Network (ROI)	£500
Valeka Trust and Diakonia Council of Churches (SA)	£1,500

#### **Church Relations Committee**

11. That the General Assembly welcome the merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council into the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

12. That the Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie replace the Rev Dr Allen Sleith as a delegate to the Uniting General Council Meeting of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

13. That the General Assembly appoint the following:

**To the Irish Council of Churches Executive:** the Revs John Brackenridge, Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, Dr Donald Watts.

**To the Irish Inter-Church Committee:** the Revs Gabrielle Farquhar, Dr Donald Watts.

14. That the following grants be made available from the Incidental Fund:

Irish Council of Churches	£19,000
Irish Inter-Church Meeting	£10,000
Conference of European Churches	£5,000
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe	£3,000
Church and Society Commission (Brussels)	£2,000
World Communion of Reformed Churches	£13,000

### **Recognised Ministries Committee**

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

16. That the Recognised Ministries Committee be thanked for its work and discharged, with any residual responsibility being passed to the Reception of Ministers and Licentiatees Committee.

### **Church and Society Committee**

17. That the General Assembly adopt “Human Rights Position Paper – A Church Perspective” (Appendix 1) as guidance for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

18. That the General Assembly note the General Board’s submission to the consultation paper: “A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland : Next Steps”.

19. That the General Assembly believe that the administration of funding from the Dormant Accounts Scheme by the Big Lottery is only helpful if a way can be found to show that the monies received are not raised by gambling.

### **Church Courts**

20. That where a case before the Judicial Commission substantially involves an interpretation of doctrine and the General Assembly has not recently issued on the subject, the Judicial Commission shall consult with the Doctrine Committee as outlined.

21. That the General Assembly encourage the Courts of the Church to ensure that in cases of difficulty conciliation is attempted, where possible, before a judicial process is begun.

### **Judicial Appeals**

22. That the General Assembly encourage a Presbytery, where it is appropriate, to hear a case rather than refer it to the Judicial Commission and in order to assist in this process the Clerk of Assembly is asked, in consultation with others, to bring a Draft Guide on the Judicial Process to the next General Assembly for approval.

### **SPUD**

23. That the General Assembly encourage greater co-operation between the Mission Boards, in which young people may play a meaningful part, as our denomination seeks to respond to the challenge of holistic mission and actively engage with both our local and global communities.

### **Pensions and Assessments**

24. That the General Assembly agree the normal pensionable retirement age be kept in line with the State Pensionable Age (N Ireland).

25. That the General Assembly accept the recommendation of the Pensions and Assessments Panel to reduce the accrual rate from  $\frac{1}{60}$  to  $\frac{1}{70}$  of pensionable income for each year of future service from January 2011.

26. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Pensions and Assessments Panel on the Board of Trustees (Appendix I, 9.2).

27. That the General Assembly agree in principle that assessments be raised on an “unrestricted income” basis and instruct the Panel to bring detailed proposals to the General Assembly 2011.

### **Panel on Ministries**

28. That the General Assembly adopt the Scheme for Part-Time Ministry.

29. That the General Board adopt the Scheme for an Auxiliary Ministry.

30. That the General Board adopt the scheme for the Appointment and Training of Evangelists.

31. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations in the Report on Salary Scales, Terms and Conditions of Additional Pastoral Personnel, effective for all new posts, and extensions of existing posts, from September 2010 onwards.

### **Resignations**

32. That the resignation of the Rev Prof Laurence Kirkpatrick as Principal of Union Theological College be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev Prof Patton Taylor be appointed in his place.

33. That the resignation of the Rev Charles McMullen as Convener of the Global Concerns Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.

34. That the resignation of the Rev Dr Allen Sleith as Convener of the Church Relations Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.

35. That the resignation of the Rev Dr Jack Richardson as Convener of the Memorial Record be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.

### **General**

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

## **OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS**

### **Anent Par 62 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 62 of the Code the words “but without a vote.” be deleted and the words “but without a vote, and shall invite ministers without charge under their care to do so.” substituted in their place.

### **Anent Par 98 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 98 of the Code the words “but without a vote.” be deleted and the words “but without a vote, and shall invite ministers without charge under the care of Presbyteries to do so.” substituted in their place

DJ WATTS

**OVERTURES TRANSMITTED****Anent Par 33 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 33 of the Code the following sub-paragraph (3) be added: "A ruling elder who has reached the age of 65, or is in special circumstances, may retire from their duties in a congregation with the consent of the Presbytery, who may if it so wishes, in consultation with the Kirk Session, deem the elder to be an 'elder-emeritus' of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland." and subsequent sub-paragraphs re-numbered.

DJ WATTS

**Anent Par 81 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 81 of the Code the following sub-paragraph (6) be added:

Par 81(6) The minister emeritus of a congregation shall not exercise any pastoral role or conduct any services in connection with the congregation without the specific prior permission of the minister of the congregation, or in a vacancy, the convener of the Vacancy Commission.

JW LOCKINGTON

**Anent Par 272(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 272(4)(d) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

"prioritising the work of the Boards of the General Assembly".

DJ WATTS

# JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: THE CLERK

1. At the time of writing the Judicial Commission had met four times and planned a further two meetings. Each meeting requires preparation and careful diligence on the part of the members and they are thanked for their time and commitment. The Chairman, Mr Mervyn Morrow QC and the General Assembly's Solicitor Mr Alastair Rankin give generously of their time and experience which is much appreciated.

## Reference

2. The Judicial Commission dealt with a reference from the Iveagh Presbytery concerning a complaint brought by a member of Newmills Congregation against the Congregational Committee. This was considered under the terms of a preliminary enquiry, as outlined in The Code, par 161. The Finding was as follows:

### **Reference from the Iveagh Presbytery in relation to Newmills Congregation**

Following a reference from the Presbytery of Iveagh the Judicial Commission has made an enquiry under Code Par 161 into the relevant facts. It read and heard evidence from members of the Presbytery of Iveagh, from Mr. Brian Martin and from members of the Congregational Committee of Newmills in relation to the complaint of Mr. Martin. This was in relation to the question he posed and the answer given at the Congregational Committee meeting of 24 October, 2006, in respect of which he was seeking an explanation. A full explanation was given by the Newmills representatives to the Judicial Commission and heard again by Mr. Martin. Mr. Martin informed the Judicial Commission that he accepted the explanation thus given. The Judicial Commission noted that when an explanation had previously been given by the Committee, Mr. Martin had written in a letter to the Clerk of Session dated 18 January, 2007, "as far as I am concerned that is the end of the matter." The Judicial Commission is satisfied that the facts do not call for further investigation by it or by the Presbytery.

The Judicial Commission asks the Presbytery to address the matter of the pastoral care of Mr. Martin and his family. It recognises the efforts that were made to find a way forward in this situation and now commends Mr. Martin, the Minister and Committee of Newmills and those who acted on behalf of Presbytery to the grace and peace of God.

## Appeal

3. The Judicial Commission met on two occasions to hear an appeal against a decision of the Armagh Presbytery relating to Ahorey Congregation.

Following the hearing of the appeal as determined in The Code, Par 169, the Finding of the Commission was as follows:

**Appeal of Mr Arthur Miskelly the Clerk of Kirk Session and five other members of the Kirk Session of Ahorey Congregation to the Judicial Commission against the decisions of Armagh Presbytery following investigation under paragraph 161 of The Code, of complaints described as charges brought by the Appellants against their Minister**

The Judicial Commission, having considered the record of the Armagh Presbytery in the case and the grounds of appeal from the decisions of Presbytery, met on 7th January 2010 to consider the written and hear the oral submissions of the Appellants and of the Presbytery concerning the investigation by Presbytery under paragraph 161 of The Code into six complaints described as charges concerning the Minister of the Congregation. The Appellants had sought to present charges against the Minister and asserted that it was no longer possible for him to satisfactorily discharge the duties of his charge within the meaning of paragraph 224 of The Code.

Having heard and considered the written and oral submissions and the record, and having heard and read statements from witnesses called by Mr Miskelly, the Clerk of Kirk Session of Ahorey Congregation, the Judicial Commission thereafter considered the matter and finds:

1. The Appeal was prepared and presented on behalf of the Appellants by Mr Miskelly. The Judicial Commission considered all the admissible cogent oral and written evidence that the Appellants presented to the Commission, and it does not accept that the Appellants had been denied the opportunity of presenting to Presbytery all the evidence available to them.

2. Decision 1: The Commission finds that the facts which are the subject of the decision occurred almost 3 years before the charge, that appropriate action had already been taken to remedy the irregularity, and the facts disclosed to the Commission do not call for further investigations. The Commission dismisses the appeal from this decision, directs pursuant to Paragraph 161(1)(d) of The Code that no further proceedings be taken and affirms the Presbytery decision that there is no case to answer.

3. Decision 2: The Appellants agreed that in effect the decision of Presbytery upheld the substance of the charge and that appropriate action has been taken to remedy the omission and to prevent the recurrence thereof as provided by Paragraph 161(1)(d) of The Code. Accordingly, the Commission affirms the decision of Presbytery and directs that no further proceedings be taken

4. Decision 3: There was no evidence presented to the Presbytery or to the Commission to substantiate the complaint concerning the Minister's knowledge of rumours concerning his marriage prior to July 2009 and the evidence of the Appellants to the Commission confirmed that none of the Appellants had informed the Minister of any such rumours prior to July 2009. The evidence established that thereafter the Minister and his wife acted appropriately in their visits to members of the congregation. The Commission

rejects the contention of the Appellants in the ground of Appeal that “Biblical Headship” had not been addressed and affirms the decision of Presbytery.

5. Decision 4: The evidence satisfied the Commission that following the information received in July 2009 the Minister and his wife acted appropriately when, in accordance with Matthew chapter 18 verse 15, they visited certain members of the congregation including some Elders. The evidence does not satisfy the Commission that the Minister and his wife acted incorrectly during the visits. The Commission dismisses the appeal from this decision and affirms the decision of Presbytery that there is no case to answer.

6. Decision 5: The evidence established that the Minister had been advised by the Kirk Session and its Acting Moderator to contact a specified member of the congregation in connection with the rumours of which the Minister had been informed in July 2009. The evidence also established that in the course of the discussion of the issues with him the Minister did not break any confidences or undermine the decision of Session that the matters which it had discussed should remain confidential. The Commission dismisses the appeal from this decision and affirms the decision of Presbytery.

7. Decision 6: No cogent evidence was presented to the Commission that the Minister had engaged in practices in his home which were dishonourable either in relation to child protection issues or issues of concern to the Directorate of Social Services or to the Board of Social Witness, or otherwise. The Commission dismisses the appeal from this decision and affirms the decision of Presbytery.

8. Mr Miskelly informed the Commission that until July 2009 he had not considered the Minister to be an offender, as described in Matthew chapter 18 verse 15, but that at 3.30am the Lord spoke to him through his reading of Jeremiah chapter 1, as a result of which he recognised the situation in Ahorey Congregation. Mr Miskelly did not agree that he had then told the Minister that he would tear down his ministry in Ahorey, but he did state that he would not sit under his ministry.

9. The Commission finds that the content and tone of the Appellants’ written, and Mr Miskelly’s oral submissions to the Commission on behalf of all the Appellants are not compatible with paragraph 131(2) of The Code. The charges they sought to present to Presbytery, which conducted the investigations under paragraph 161 of The Code, and the appeal to this Commission were not presented in the spirit of meekness, love or tenderness required by paragraph 131(2) of The Code. The Commission concludes that Mr Miskelly’s interpretation and application of Jeremiah chapter 1, that he was to remove the Minister from his charge in Ahorey, is not conducive to or consistent with holy concord and the up-building of the peace and purity of the Church. The Commission is aware that the matters under investigation have been the cause of considerable stress to the Minister and notes that he was on sick leave following the charges which the Appellants presented. The Commission advises Presbytery to consult with the Appellants and provide them with adequate theological guidance concerning their interpretation of Scripture. The Presbytery is also to consider, in the light of this finding and any relevant events subsequent to 18 November 2009, whether to apply paragraph 161(1)(b) of The Code and



direct whether proceedings shall be taken by the Presbytery Commission under paragraph 224, including 224(3), of The Code.

The Judicial Commission commends the Minister and his family, and the Appellants, Kirk Session and the Congregation, to the grace and peace of Almighty God, and urges the Presbytery to provide ongoing pastoral care to them.

### **Statement**

4. As instructed by the General Assembly 2009, the Judicial Commission has prepared a statement on its standing orders, practices and procedures which is presented to the Assembly as Appendix I.

5. At the time of writing two further items of business are being prepared: a) A further appeal by the same appellants against a further decision of the Armagh Presbytery; b) A possible appeal against a decision of the Carrickfergus Presbytery when further information is available. The decisions on these will be reported in the Supplementary Reports.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **JUDICIAL COMMISSION: STANDING ORDERS, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

1. The Judicial Commission was instructed by the last Assembly to prepare a statement on its “standing orders, practices and procedures” to present to the 2010 Assembly for its approval. In fact the Judicial Commission does not have any standing orders and its procedures are as determined by the Code. However the Commission hopes that the following comment on its practices may be helpful.

2. The Judicial Commission is appointed for five years as per The Code, Par 127. It consists of the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly and one person (minister or ruling elder) nominated by each Presbytery together with not more than 10 people nominated by the Business Board. The Clerk of Assembly acts as Convener and at its first meeting the Commission appoints a Chairman from among its members. Conscious of the need to avoid as far as possible the risk of litigation, the Judicial Commission, more than twenty years ago, decided to appoint a member with legal background to chair its proceedings. For this reason the Chairman does not act as a neutral Moderator but takes an active role, along with other members of the Commission, in questioning the parties.

3. The Judicial Commission meets as The Code required, normally to deal with an appeal, reference, including under Par 224, or a case of discipline. It should be noted that the Commission has *“Assembly powers to dispose finally of any cases of appeal or reference or any other matters which may be referred to it under or by virtue of this Code”*. (The Code, Par 127(4)). *“Offences cognisable by an inferior court shall not come before a superior court except by reference or on appeal”* (The Code, Par 330).

**APPEAL PROCEDURES****4. The procedures for hearing an appeal are as stated in The Code, Pars 163-171**

163. (1) *The Appellate courts are the Presbytery and the General Assembly. The Judicial Commission is also authorised to hear and determine appeals as provided for in Par. 165(5) and when doing so shall exercise any and all the powers of the General Assembly as the supreme judicial authority of the Church to hear and determine appeals.*
- (2) *The right of appeal belongs to –*
- (a) *any member of an inferior court who disapproves of a decision and desires to have it reviewed;*
- (b) *any party in a case before a court who feels aggrieved by a decision in the case and desires to have the decision reviewed.*
- (3) *In addition to rules contained in this section, appeals in cases of discipline are subject to any special provisions regarding procedure contained in the rules in Chapter XIX.*
164. (1) *Anyone entitled and wishing to appeal against a decision of a court shall, within ten days from the announcement of the decision, give written notice to the Clerk of the inferior court of his intention to appeal, accompanied by a statement of his reasons; otherwise the decision of the court shall stand (See App. 11(14)).*
- (2) *The Clerk shall at all times be ready to advise an intending appellant on his rights and the procedures to be followed under the law and rules of the Church.*
- (3) *The Clerk, having received the written notice and reasons of appeal, shall cause a copy of the notice and reasons to be served on the other party, or on the Clerk of the court, if this should be the other party concerned.*
165. (1) *When an appeal is regularly notified, the inferior court and all parties to the case are thereby cited to appear before the bar of the superior court; and execution of the judgment of the inferior court shall be stayed while the appeal is pending.*
- (2) *Except to the extent to which rules contained in Chapter XIX may otherwise provide with respect to appeals in disciplinary matters, notification of an appeal –*
- (a) *does not remove any temporary suspension from the ministerial office, or from Church ordinances, under which the inferior court may have placed a minister, a ruling elder or other Church member, while a charge against him is being investigated; and*
- (b) *does not arrest procedure or process when an appeal is made during the progress of a case or when the appeal, in the judgment of the court appealed from, is manifestly frivolous or vexatious.*
- (3) *Each appeal shall in the first instance be considered by the Business Committee of the superior court, or in the case of the General Assembly by the Judicial Commission, who shall report with a recommendation on whether the appeal shall be heard and decided upon directly by the court or referred to a commission.*

- (4) *Every commission appointed to adjudicate in a case shall conduct its business according to the Assembly's rules for management of business in Church courts and procedures in cases of discipline.*
  - (5) *Every appeal against a decision of a Presbytery shall go directly to the Judicial Commission which is empowered to proceed forthwith to hear and determine the appeal. However, should one of the parties, within 14 days of the date of the Notice of Appeal being lodged, request, in writing, that the appeal be referred to the General Assembly the Judicial Commission, shall, without adjudicating thereon, immediately transmit the appeal to the General Assembly with a report and recommendation in accordance with the foregoing sub-paragraph (3).*
166. (1) *In preparation for the hearing of an appeal every appellant is entitled to such extracts from the minutes of the inferior court, and to copies of such documents in its possession, as are necessary to enable him to bring his appeal before the superior court, but such extracts or copies shall be given to him only on the authority of the inferior court or of its Moderator and Clerk.*
- (2) *A court appealed from shall submit the minutes of its proceedings, and all the documents and evidence in the case in its possession, to the superior court; and shall appoint not more than five of its members to defend its proceedings and decision before the superior court.*
167. *An appeal shall be held to be abandoned and the decision appealed against shall stand, if the appellant, after giving notice of appeal to a superior court, fail to prosecute it at its next stated meeting or such special meeting as may be called to consider the appeal, unless he can satisfy the court that his failure to prosecute it was unavoidable.*
168. *When the case comes before the superior court by way of an appeal the members of the inferior court who are members of the superior court are not entitled to deliberate or vote as members of the superior court.*
169. *The order of proceedings in hearing appeals shall be as follows:*
- (1) *Read the decision appealed against.*
  - (2) *Read the reasons of appeal.*
  - (3) *Present the whole record of the proceedings of the inferior court in the case and all the documents in its possession, unless otherwise agreed by the court with the consent of the parties in the case.*
  - (4) *Hear the appellant or appellants.*
  - (5) *Hear the other party or parties in the case, if there be such.*
  - (6) *Hear any new evidence which may be tendered by either party.*
  - (7) *Hear the court appealed from, through its appointed representative or representatives.*
170. *A Church court may cite to appear before it and give evidence, such persons, and may take such evidence, as it may think proper for the conduct of any appeal or reference before it; and 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.*

171. *A superior court may at any time exercise any of the powers conferred on it by paragraphs 20 or 22(2) of the Code and, in addition, may, if it finds anything wanting in the conduct of an inferior court, advise, reprimand, or otherwise deal with the court.*

**5. The Judicial Commission has considered the interpretation of the right of appeal which belongs to “any party in a case before a court” (The Code, Par 163(2)(b). For guidance it has been agreed as follows:**

*“Party in a case” means “a person involved in the decision in question”; “involved” means “particularly and personally affected and aggrieved by the decision”; and “particularly and personally” means “to a greater extent or degree than generally by other persons”.*

**REFERENCE PROCEDURES**

**6. A reference may come to the Judicial Commission under The Code, Par 21.**

21. (1) *An inferior court may refer any matter, or any point of difficulty arising in connection with any matter, coming before it to the next superior court for directions or determination or advice. Such a reference may be without the expression of any opinion on the matter by the inferior court. The inferior court shall comply with any direction given to it.*
- (2) *In addition, an inferior court may petition or complain to a superior court with respect to the proceedings of any court exercising co-ordinate or lower authority over which the superior court has jurisdiction.*
- (3) *A petition or complaint shall not lie under sub-paragraph (2) unless, at least ten days before the superior court meets, written notice of intention to petition or complain, together with particulars of the subject-matter of the petition or complaint, shall have been given to the Clerk of the co-ordinate or lower court by the Clerk (or, if he is unavailable, by a member) of the court complaining.*
- (4) *Except to the extent provided for in sub-paragraphs (2) and (3), no inferior court has a right to review the proceedings of a superior or co-ordinate court.*
- (5) *An inferior court, or a committee thereof, shall not meet during any sitting of a superior court to which it is subordinate without leave of that court.*

**While powers of an inferior Court under The Code, Par 21(1) to “refer any matter” are used fairly regularly, it is rare for a court to “petition or complain” as in The Code, Par 21(2).**

**Each reference, petition or complaint will have its own unique features and will be dealt with individually by the Judicial Commission. However the general procedures are outlined in The Code, Pars 172-174.**

172. (1) *In addition to the powers of reference, petition or complaint available to it under paragraph 21 of the Code, an inferior court may apply for the appointment of assessors by the Assembly’s Moderator’s Advisory Committee to sit with them in the consideration of a case.*

- (2) *Where a case is referred to a superior court the inferior court shall -*
- (a) *formally notify all parties directly concerned of the action taken; and*
  - (b) *lay before the superior court an authenticated copy of its proceedings, together with the reasons of reference.*
- (3) *Every matter referred to a superior court by a Presbytery for directions or determination or advice shall go directly to the Judicial Commission, which is empowered to proceed forthwith to hear and determine the matter. However, should any party directly concerned, within 14 days of the referral, request, in writing, that the matter be referred to the General Assembly, the Judicial Commission shall, without adjudicating thereon, immediately transmit the reference to the General Assembly with a report and recommendation on whether the matter shall be heard and decided upon directly by the Assembly or referred to a commission.*
173. *When the case comes before the superior court by way of a reference (as distinct from on an appeal, as to which see Par. 168 on page 77) the members of the inferior court who are members of the superior court shall be entitled to deliberate and vote as members of the superior court.*
174. *The superior court having received the reference may without prejudice to any other power exercisable by it -*
- (a) *decline to advise, or to investigate and adjudicate; or*
  - (b) *remit the case to the court which has made the reference; or*
  - (c) *give advice; or*
  - (d) *taking the place of the court referring, it may adjudicate; or*
  - (e) *appoint an assessor or assessors to be, with the inferior court, a commission to deal with the case in the room of the inferior court; or*
  - (f) *appoint a commission of their own members to investigate and adjudicate with the powers of the superior court.*

### **Preliminary Enquiry**

**7. On occasion an inferior court may refer to the Judicial Commission a matter of difficulty which requires investigation. In that case a preliminary enquiry will be held under The Code, Pars 161-162.**

161. (1) *Where for any reason it appears to a Church court that a matter within its jurisdiction ought to be investigated by it, it may make a preliminary enquiry into the relevant facts (including, in the case of an alleged offence, an enquiry into the nature of the offence and the evidence likely to be available to establish or refute it) and subject to these rules, may, after such enquiry -*
- (a) *proceed to review and correct any proceedings of an inferior court;*
  - (b) *proceed to take any such action as may be authorised by any other provision of these rules;*
  - (c) *direct that disciplinary proceedings under Chapter XIX be initiated against any person or persons;*

- (d) *if satisfied that the facts do not call for further investigations by it, or that appropriate action has been taken to remedy any irregularity, omission or failure disclosed by the facts and to prevent the recurrence thereof, direct that no further proceedings be taken;*
- (e) *if satisfied that any offence disclosed by the facts is not flagrant, that the offender admits the offence, acknowledges his error and fully submits to the admonition of the court, direct that no further proceedings be taken; or*
- (f) *determine whether at this stage to refer the matter, in accordance with paragraph 21 of the Code, to a superior court.*
- (2) *In addition to any other power exercisable by it, a Church court may, in the course of any annual or other review or other proceeding carried out by it, direct further or other proceedings to be taken under these rules in respect of any matter.*
- (3) *A preliminary enquiry under this rule may be initiated by the court itself, by a lower court or by one or more members of the Church acting in accordance with these rules.*
- (4) *All courts should endeavour to shorten their work as much as is practicable consistently with the performance of their duties and the edification of the Church.*
162. (1) *If at any stage during the exercise of the jurisdiction of a Church court, it appears to the court that there is a reasonable possibility of an issue being resolved satisfactorily in a conciliatory way and with proper regard to the interests of the Church or of appropriate remedial action being taken in those interests, the court may adjourn its consideration of the matter for such period as it thinks fit.*
- (2) *On any such adjournment, the court may give such advice and directions as it thinks fit.*
- (3) *The court's powers under this rule are in addition to any inherent or other power of adjournment exercisable by it.*

**8. If a case is referred to the Judicial Commission under The Code, Par 224, the provisions of that paragraph apply.**

224. (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:*
- (a) *conduct a special visitation of the congregation in which such questions as they deem right shall be put;*
- (b) *loose the minister from his charge without further obligation and declare the congregation or charge vacant; or*
- (c) (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, which may loose the minister from his charge and, if appropriate, declare the congregation vacant, and/or make such other arrangements as it sees fit.*

- (ii) *In so acting, the Judicial Commission shall have power to fix a retiring allowance, if any, according to the rules for the time being, of the General Assembly, or to fix an allowance for a temporary period.*
- (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,*
- (4) *The Judicial Commission may exercise any of the powers of Presbytery mentioned in the foregoing sub-paragraph (3).*

**9. When a case of discipline is referred to the Judicial Commission the procedures followed are set out in The Code, Pars 329-350.**

329. *First steps for the exercise of disciplinary jurisdiction in any matter with respect to which such jurisdiction is vested by the Code in a Church court shall be taken by that court, save that -*
- (a) *upon neglect or failure to take such steps a superior court may direct an inferior court to take them;*
  - (b) *any case within the jurisdiction of a Kirk Session which is a case of special difficulty or importance or involves the severest censures of the Church may, and every charge of heresy coming before a Kirk Session shall, be referred by the Session to the Presbytery.*
330. *Offences cognisable by an inferior court shall not come before a superior court except by reference or on appeal; except that an offence committed in the presence of any court may be tried and determined by that court either immediately or subsequently.*
331. (1) *A preliminary enquiry as authorised by paragraph 161 shall be made if the court has reason to believe an alleged offence may have occurred or where a public rumour of an offence (“fama clamosa”) has arisen.*
- (2) *If a charge be made or a fama clamosa arise concerning the doctrinal views, moral conduct or official duties either of a minister who is a professor, or of an overseas missionary, or of a ruling elder in special work, a preliminary enquiry under this rule shall be conducted;*
    - (a) *in the case of such a minister, by the College Management Committee appointed to superintend the College of which he is a professor;*
    - (b) *in the case of such a missionary, by the Board of Mission Overseas or in the case of such a ruling elder in special work other than as an overseas missionary by the appropriate Assembly Board; provided that in any of the cases designated in this sub-paragraph, paragraph 161 (with the omission of sub-paragraph (a) thereof) shall apply to the committee or Board concerned as it applies to a Church court.*
  - (3) *On the basis of a fama clamosa a court may initiate a preliminary enquiry under this rule by conferring privately with the alleged*



*offender. Should such rumour appear groundless, the court shall take effective steps to discredit it and to counteract any harm it may have done. If, however, further proceedings are required the alleged fama shall be specifically set out.*

- (4) *Before considering any charge brought against any person in a court, the court shall in the first instance consider whether the charge may properly be entertained by it or should be prepared for a superior court.*
  - (5) *Subject to paragraph 19(4) of the Code, all courts shall, in exercising disciplinary jurisdiction, avoid unnecessary publicity.*
332. (1) *A Church court shall not entertain proceedings for an alleged offence unless some person or persons (in these rules referred to as the complainants) undertake to prosecute the charge or unless the court finds it necessary by reason of fama clamosa or for the ends of discipline to investigate the alleged offence.*
- (2) *Where the court so finds it necessary, it shall appoint such person or persons, being ministers or ruling elders of the Church, as it may think proper to prosecute a charge for the alleged offence, and it shall be the duty of the person or persons so appointed conscientiously and fairly to do so.*
  - (3) *The subsequent provisions of these rules may apply to the persons so appointed as if those persons were complainants.*
  - (4) *A member of the court shall not act as such member in relation to any charge if he is a complainant or an accused.*
  - (5) *A court may find it necessary to proceed in accordance with this and subsequent rules by reason of fama clamosa or for the ends of discipline in a case where a complainant withdraws his charge, and in that event, may summon him as witness.*
333. (1) *The charge for an offence must, in every case, be reduced to writing and a copy thereof served on the accused whether the charge be brought before the court by another party or be made by the court itself.*
- (2) *Before a copy is served on the accused in accordance with this paragraph, a charge shall be signed by each complainant in the presence of the Clerk of the court or of a deputy, being a minister or ruling elder, appointed by the Clerk to attest such signing; and a copy of the charge, signed and attested in a like manner, shall be left with the attestor who shall arrange for it to be duly served on the accused.*
  - (3) *Such service shall be effected not less than fourteen days before the sitting of the court at which the charge is to be considered.*
  - (4) *Upon service of a charge pursuant to this rule, the accused shall be informed in writing that he has the right to cite witnesses in his defence provided he sends to the Clerk of the court, within at least seven days before the sitting of the court at which the charge is to be considered, the correct names and designations and postal addresses of the witnesses known and available whom he desires to be so cited.*
  - (5) *The court may also, if it sees fit, require the complainant to furnish to it and to the accused a further statement, specifying in such detail as*



*the Court may indicate, the nature of the evidence to be offered against the accused.*

334. (1) *The charge must -*
- (a) *set forth the nature of the alleged offence;*
  - (b) *narrate the facts alleged to constitute the commission of the offence by the accused, specifying as far as possible, the time, place, and circumstances in which it is alleged to have been committed; and*
  - (c) *give the names and designations of the witnesses, known and available, who are to be cited in support of the charge together with a list of any documents to be cited in its support.*  
*This shall not prevent the production of any additional witness or documents if notice of their intended production is given at least two days beforehand.*
- (2) *Charges for more than one offence may be made in the same document but only if the offences are alleged to be founded on the same facts or form part of a series of offences of the same or a similar character.*
- (3) *Where it appears proper to the court, the court may try separately charges included in the same document. In every case, the court shall separately record the final disposal of each charge.*
- (4) *A charge of heresy must state the doctrine which the accused is alleged to have impugned, or the false doctrine which he is alleged to have taught contrary to the Word of God and the subordinate standards of the Church; and must set forth the statements from the teaching of the accused, or the quotations from his writings, which are relied upon to establish the charge.*
- (5) *In all cases of alleged personal and private wrongs the charge must be accompanied by a written averment that the course prescribed by our Lord, in Matthew xviii, 15-17, has been followed.*

## **CITATION, ETC., OF PARTIES AND WITNESSES**

**(See App. 11 for Model Forms)**

335. (1) *A court, having resolved to proceed to trial in a case of discipline, must cite the following to appear before it, namely:-*
- (a) *the complainant;*
  - (b) *the accused;*
  - (c) *the witnesses to be called upon the application of the complainant; and*
  - (d) *the witnesses to be called upon the application of the accused.*
- (2) *A citation may be oral or written; and*
- (a) *an oral citation is made by authority of the court through its Moderator or Clerk when the parties or witnesses to be cited are present in court. It specifies the time and place of the meeting of court at which the persons cited are to appear;*
  - (b) *a written citation must -*
    - (i) *be issued in the name of the court.*

- (ii) *specify the time and place of the meeting of the court at which the persons cited are to appear,*
  - (iii) *set forth the nature of the charge to be tried, and*
  - (iv) *be signed by the clerk of the court.*
  - (3) *The issue of every citation must be recorded in the minutes.*
  - (4) *The time allowed, after citation has been served, for the appearance of a party or witnesses is determined by the court, with proper regard to the circumstances of the case, and must not be less than three clear days.*
  - (5) *A written citation is duly served upon a party or witness when delivered to him personally by the hand of someone authorised by the court, or by a registered or recorded delivery letter addressed to him at his last known place of residence.*
336. (1) *Members of the Church, when duly cited by a court to appear, either as parties or as witnesses, are bound to obey the citation; and if, after a second citation, a member does not appear or furnish satisfactory reason for non-appearance, he shall be dealt with as contumacious.*
- (2) *The citation of witnesses who are not members of the Church can only take the form of a request from the court to appear and give evidence.*
337. *Members of the Church refusing without good cause to give evidence or to submit to examination as witnesses may be suspended indefinitely from membership; or, in grave cases, may be declared to be no longer a member of the Church.*
338. (1) *If a party in a case of discipline, after being orally cited, or after written citation duly served upon him to attend two separate meetings of the court with not less than six clear days between them, does not appear or furnish satisfactory reason for his non-appearance, the court at the second meeting may either -*
- (a) *treat him as having withdrawn from discipline, hold him liable to censure for contumacy, and subject to Par. 336 may declare him no longer a member of the Church or a holder of any office therein;*
  - (b) *suspend him from the communion of the Church until he submits to the jurisdiction of the court and gives evidence of repentance for not having done so before; or*
  - (c) *proceed to trial and judgment in his absence and, subject to paragraph 339, may appoint some person to conduct his defence.*
- (2) *If the person found contumacious is not under the immediate jurisdiction of the court, it shall certify his contumacy to the Kirk Session of the congregation to which he belongs or if he is a minister, licentiate or ruling elder, to the Presbytery under whose jurisdiction he is, and the Kirk Session or Presbytery may suspend him from communion until he gives evidence of repentance.*

#### **PROCEDURE IN CASES OF DISCIPLINE**

339. *If at any stage an accused admits his guilt, the court may forthwith proceed to consider the censure to be pronounced and the case shall conclude upon his submission to such censure.*

340. (1) *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 ask a member of the Church not qualified as a lawyer to act with him and assist him in the case.*
- (2) *If that member of the Church is a member of the court concerned he shall not have any vote on the case.*
- (3) *If that member of the Church is not, as such, already under the jurisdiction of the court, he becomes so for all purposes connected with the case.*
341. *A court met to consider a charge shall proceed as follows:-*
- (1) *announce the actual charge and by and against whom it is made;*
- (2) *take evidence, if the facts are not admitted, of service of the charge and citations of the parties and the witnesses cited and of requests made to witnesses to attend;*
- (3) *hear any preliminary objection from a party or a member of the court which -*
- (a) *relates to the constitution or jurisdiction of the court or the sufficiency of the charge;*
- (b) *relates to the order or regularity of the proceedings and, if sustained, would cause unfairness to any party;*
- (4) *if the court consider any such objection justified, either -*
- (a) *dismiss the charge; or*
- (b) *permit amendments to the charge which do not alter the substantial character of the facts narrated therein and may, if satisfied that no party shall be prejudiced thereby, forthwith proceed, in accordance with the succeeding provisions of these rules, to try the charge as amended or try the amended charge at a later time and place specified by the court;*
- (5) *if there is no such preliminary objection or if the court considers no such objection is justified, formally ask the accused whether he acknowledges the truth of the charge and -*
- (a) *if he does, record that fact and after hearing any statement made by or on behalf of the accused (either then or later) consider and pronounce sentence as appears to the court to be required by the circumstances of the case and the laws of the Church;*
- (b) *if he denies the charge, or does not acknowledge and confess it in a manner which the court finds satisfactory, record whichever of those facts is the case and if the accused is a minister, licentiate or elder, the court may then, if it thinks fit and if the parties agree, refer the case directly to the Judicial Commission of the General Assembly which shall have Assembly powers to issue it; but, where the court is not authorised by this sub-paragraph to make such a reference or where it decides not to do so, it shall proceed with the trial in accordance with these rules.*
342. (1) *A court, upon trial of a charge, shall proceed as follows:-*
- first: hear the complainant's opening statement;*
- second: afford the accused an opportunity, while not denying his conduct, to make a plea of justification for it;*

*third: should the court at this stage find that his plea is factually correct and not unreasonable and that his conduct was not sufficiently reprehensible in all the circumstances to require further proceeding on the charge, it may dismiss the charge either with or without giving him informal guidance as to, or requiring written assurances from him as to, his future conduct;*

*fourth: call the witnesses for the complainant and cause their evidence to be taken down, recorded and signed as required by Par. 345;*

*fifth: hear the opening statement of the accused;*

*sixth: call the witnesses for the accused and cause their evidence to be taken down, recorded and signed as required by Par. 345;*

*seventh: hear the parties in the case upon the evidence; hearing the complainant first then those against the evidence for the complainant;*

*eighth: privately consider and then in the presence of the parties announce and record its determination as to whether the charge should be dismissed or upheld and in the latter event also record its sentence;*

*ninth: when the decision of a court is announced to the parties the Court shall, at the request of any party, inform him as to his rights of appeal.*

- (2) *While a temporary suspension ceases upon the dismissal of a charge, an appeal against any ruling of the court at an earlier stage shall not stay procedure.*

343. *If a person commits an offence in the presence of a court, or comes forward as his own accuser, the court may, without trial, declare him guilty of the offences and pass sentence; but it shall not do so until it has given him an opportunity to be heard. In every such case, the record of the court must set out clearly the offence, determination and sentence; and, if the court be a subordinate one, appeal may be taken as in other cases.*

## **EVIDENCE**

344. (1) *Witnesses are examined after a solemn affirmation administered to them by the Clerk of the Court. (See App. 11 (9)).*
- (2) *Witnesses are first examined by the party calling them; then cross-examined by the opposite party; then if desired re-examined by the party calling them but shall not be further examined without leave of the court. The court may disallow a question.*
- (3) *It is open to any member of the court to put questions to a witness.*
- (4) *The court may, if at any stage it sees fit, order the exclusion of witnesses or the recall of a witness for further examination.*
- (5) *The complainant and the accused may, if either of them choose, give evidence, on condition that they submit like other witnesses to cross-examination.*
- (6) *The court may admit any evidence, including hearsay evidence, which appears to be relevant and to possess probative value.*
- (7) *The court shall bear in mind that the weight to be attached to any particular evidence calls for due consideration of the nature of that*

- evidence and of the circumstances relating to its admission by the court and its credibility.*
- (8) *The evidence of one witness shall not be sufficient to establish a charge unless it is supported by other evidence.*
  - (9) *A member of the court who gives evidence in a case is thereby disqualified from voting on it.*
  - (10) *Where the evidence is so conflicting that the court cannot form an opinion as to whether a charge should be upheld or dismissed, or referred to a superior court, it may adjourn the case sine die and record the reason for such adjournment.*
  - (11) *A case so adjourned may be reconsidered by the Court upon motion of any party or at the instance of a member of the court, but such motion shall not be made more than five years after the date on which the court first adjourned the case under the preceding sub-paragraph.*
  - (12) *Subject to this rule, the court decides all questions as to the admissibility, relevance or weight of any evidence.*
345. (1) *Note shall be taken of the evidence of each witness and a certified summary preserved among the records of the court in such form as may permit its being destroyed by a direction of the court after the expiry of ten years.*
- (2) *The evidence of witnesses unable, because of ill-health, infirmity, or other sufficient reason, to appear, may be taken by a committee of two or more persons. Such evidence is taken according to the rules followed by the court itself, and when so taken, is laid before the court as part of the evidence in the case.*
  - (3) *No member of the court may vote as a judge in the case unless he has been present throughout the hearing.*
  - (4) *The evidence in a case, properly attested by the Moderator or clerk of the court by which it has been taken, shall be received as valid evidence by every other court including a superior court to which the case may be appealed.*
  - (5) *In dealing with questions of evidence, the superior court must form its judgment from the record of the evidence transmitted by the Clerk of the inferior court with due attention to the pleading of the parties when before the superior court.*
  - (6) *If any irregularity or defect is found in the proceedings of the inferior court a superior court may correct it.*
346. (1) *If in the prosecution of an appeal new evidence is proffered which, in the judgment of the superior court, has an important bearing on the case, it may either refer the whole case to the inferior court for a new trial, or, with the consent of the parties, take this evidence and then hear and determine the case.*
- (2) *If, after a trial before any court, new evidence is discovered, which is alleged to be important to the exculpation of the accused, he may ask a new trial, and the court may grant the request, if justice seems to require it; so, however, that if the court is an inferior one, and the case has been appealed from it, such application shall be made to the superior court.*

- (3) *A new trial shall not be granted, without the authority of the General Assembly, in any case in which a minister or licentiate has been sentenced to be suspended or deposed from office.*
- (4) *A new trial shall commence in the court of first instance, or, if a superior court order it to commence in another court, in that other court.*

## CHURCH CENSURES AND CONSEQUENCES

(See App. 11 for Model Forms)

- 347. (1) *When a court has decided, after judicial trial, that a charge has been proved it shall consider what sentence should be pronounced upon the accused by way of censure authorised by paragraph 133 of the Code.*
- (2) *When a court has determined what censure is due in a case of discipline, it shall call upon the accused to appear, and on his appearance the Moderator, in the name and in the presence of the court, shall pronounce sentence, and address him in terms befitting the nature and circumstances of the case.*
- (3) *If, when duly cited, the offender does not attend to receive censure, the sentence shall be pronounced by the Moderator in his absence, and a copy of it, and of the judgment upon which it is based, shall be transmitted to him by the Clerk.*
- (4) *Sentences shall be published in the court by which they have been passed, or in the superior court if an appeal has been carried to it; and, when it shall appear to be for edification, they shall be published in the congregation to which the accused belonged, in such manner as the court passing sentence may direct.*
- (5) *Sentence respecting proceedings of an inferior court shall be pronounced only in the superior court unless the interests of the Church require greater publicity.*
- 348. (1) *A minister's suspension or deposition shall be from office and emoluments; and his right to emoluments from the congregation or any of the funds of the Church and to the possession of the manse or glebe, shall cease from the date of the sentence of suspension or deposition unless the court imposing the sentence otherwise directs.*
- (2) *When a minister, after trial and determination of a Church court is suspended or deposed without appeal, or when the sentence of suspension after appeal is confirmed by such a court, his congregation shall be declared vacant.*
- (3) *Anyone suspended from, or deprived of, Church privileges is, ipso facto, suspended or deposed from office in the Church; but an offence may be such as to necessitate suspension or deposition from office and not deprivation of Church privileges.*
- 349. (1) *Every sentence shall continue in force until it is reversed, or until the court passing the sentence has satisfactory evidence of repentance submitted to it.*

- (2) *It is the duty of Church courts and congregations to pray for persons under censure, and to use every means which Christian love and prudence may suggest to bring them to repentance.*
  - (3) *When satisfactory evidence of repentance is submitted to the sentencing court by a party suspended from, or deprived of, Church privileges, he shall, subject to these rules, be restored to such by that court.*
  - (4) *Thanksgiving shall then be offered to God for having brought the offending brother or sister to a credible profession of repentance.*
350. (1) *Restoration to the privileges of full communion does not carry with it restoration to office. Restoration to office shall not take place, however satisfactory may be the evidence of repentance, unless it is clear to the court that the cause of Christ will be advanced and not injured by restoring the offender.*
- (2) *Except in the case of suspension for contumacy by summary censure (e.g. Par 154(2)), etc. a minister or licentiate suspended, or deposed, shall not be restored to the functions or office of the ministry unless by the authority of the General Assembly; and before such restoration the Assembly must be satisfied, not only that the repentance of the applicant has been evidenced by an appropriate and sustained period of consistent Christian conduct, but that his restoration will be acceptable to the Church.*

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly approve the appointment of a Chairman of the Judicial Commission as at Appendix I, Par 2.
3. That the General Assembly approve the definition of a “party in a case” as at Appendix I, Par 5.

# UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev Dr S A MATTHEWS

Secretary: Rev Dr IAN HART

## INTRODUCTION

1. The period covered by this Report is from March 2009 – February 2010.

## MINISTRY, FINANCE AND MISSION

2. In 2009 the General Assembly asked Presbyteries to forward comments on the paper “Ministry, Finance and Mission” to the Union Commission. The Commission acknowledges the serious and considered way in which Presbyteries addressed this issue and the time and effort involved in producing the eighteen responses which form the basis of this section of the 2010 report. The 2009 paper underlined three factors which are creating a new context for the work and witness of our denomination:

- (a) the relative shortage of ministers confirmed by projections which indicate that the encouraging number of students in training will be counterbalanced by the anticipated large number of retirements and departures from the parish ministry;
- (b) the need to reduce the claims which are made on CMF to provide financial support to smaller congregations, as this in itself hinders the work and witness of the other congregations who fund this augmentation through assessments;
- (c) the need to make some ministerial resources available for new projects such as church planting which further the mission of the Church.

3. **Do we need to bring about more changes to encourage further sharing of ordained ministry?** One Presbytery recommended a cautious response, counselling against a knee-jerk reaction to the situation. However, the following comments are more representative of the responses made by the Presbyteries:

- (i) *“Presbytery accepts that a crisis is looming, indeed, some suggest it is already upon us. We affirm the diligence and urgency of the Union Commission in pursuing the formation of unions and amalgamations and we commit ourselves as a Presbytery, to support positively all decisions that have to be made. We understand that each situation is unique but we encourage the Commission to act always with the interests of the wider church in mind.”*
- (ii) *“Presbytery would encourage the Commission in its work. Since financial considerations have compelled the closure of many small rural schools, and most people are prepared to travel a number of miles for their weekly shopping, due to the diminution of the number of local small shops, surely people should be persuaded that travelling a similar number of miles to their place of worship should not be considered unthinkable.”*



- (iii) *“Presbyteries and the Union Commission need to work together in making the hard decisions in combining congregations and their assets under one minister and, where necessary, in one building”.*

3. **Team ministry and the development of more flexible forms of ministry:** Several Presbyteries suggested the development of team ministries. This response accepts that in some situations it is not a good use of ordained personnel to grant leave to call to a small congregation as a single charge. Instead, a full time minister, maybe supported by a retired or part time minister or by non-ordained personnel, would be responsible for a group or cluster of congregations. Some of the strategies mentioned are already possible under the present provisions of the Code and include the role of recently retired ministers who might serve as Stated Supply or who might help to provide pastoral care. Other suggestions will require new legislation and are already being considered through the work of bodies like the Ministries Panel. They include part time ordained ministry and tentmaking ministry which were mentioned in the responses. The Assembly will decide if these types of ministry are to become part of the life and work of our denomination.

4. **Non-ordained ministry:** Several Presbyteries urged that more use be made of elders and others to support the ordained ministry. The “all member ministry” which harnesses all the talents in a congregation, is particularly relevant in a vacancy situation. The development of the office of Accredited Preacher, or its equivalent, with a list of those trained and available to assist in supplying the pulpit would meet some of the needs expressed in the responses. Again, the Ministries Panel will report to the Assembly on this matter.

5. **Finance:** The following two comments were made about finance:

- (i) “We also felt that Presbytery Finance Committees need to be more pro-active in assisting/encouraging congregations to meet their financial obligations, especially where they have assets or income that might be used to reduce augmentation. Meeting this responsibility, we felt, ought to have a very high priority in the financial decisions of all congregations.”
- (ii) Regarding the increasing burden on the CMF, has the time not arrived for a limit to be placed on the amount of financing CMF could give to a congregation. That might enable some hardheaded thinking and necessary decisions to be made in the local situation”.

6. **Buildings:** One Presbytery reported that concerns were expressed about the closure of Church buildings, but it is worth quoting in full a comment from another Presbytery which is more representative of the responses: *“Presbytery is grateful to God for the rich inheritance of property, handed down to us to serve the ministry and mission of Christ’s church. However, concerns were expressed about the fact that buildings, far from serving the work of ministry, have been elevated in significance, by some members, to such a degree that they hinder rather than help the witness of today’s church. Presbytery deplores the attitude that equates God with a building and, in effect, becomes an idol. The wisdom of our forefathers in speaking of “the meeting house” where the church meets to worship, saved them from conferring on a mere building the dignity of a word that rightly and exclusively belongs to the people of God”.* Another Presbytery wondered: *“it may be an appropriate time to give*

*consideration to the alternative use and upkeep of church buildings when they are no longer regularly used by a congregation”.*

**Education of the general membership of the Church about the present situation:**

7. The Commission accepts the point made in several of the responses that more work needs to be done in explaining the realities and complexities of the present situation to the ordinary members of the Church. As one Presbytery put it: *“An education process needs to be commenced throughout the church in all of its structures about the need to think through the issues outlined in the report”*. The Commission hopes that the discussion prompted by “Ministry, Finance and Mission” will reverberate round the Church, and it will continue to look for other means to bring these matters to the attention of the general Church membership. The Commission is ready to provide material to be used by each Kirk Session in discussing the issues involved if so instructed by the Assembly. The Commission also sees merit in the suggestion made by several Presbyteries that explanatory material should be produced for use in vacant congregations to help in this education process. As the circumstances in vacant congregations can vary, the Commission believes that this can best be done by providing material which can be adapted for use by the Vacancy Commission in ways which relate to the local situation. This material could be quoted in a letter, in the Annual Report, or in some other material which is being distributed to the homes in a vacant congregation.

8. **The role of the Commission:** Only two Presbyteries tentatively suggested that more power should be given to Presbyteries to make decisions which at present are taken by the Commission. One asked for a “block grant” for each Presbytery which would enable the Presbyteries to decide which congregations would receive financial support. Another urged that Presbytery be empowered to make the final decision in these matters, but did not specify how Presbyteries would be accountable for the finance involved. Several Presbyteries clearly articulated the need for a central body like the Union Commission to act on behalf of the whole church in these matters; the others seemed to accept that local interests make it difficult for the hard decisions to be made by Presbyteries acting on their own. Three comments are worth quoting:

- (i) “The issues currently exercising the Union Commission are precisely why our denomination needs a body such as the Union Commission; and with the powers given to it by the Assembly, is arguably the most appropriate body to address them in an imaginative and competent way on behalf of the whole Church.”
- (ii) “Presbytery is ready to stand fully in support of the Union Commission in making tough choices that will need to be made to implement the changes required to ensure PCI rises to the challenge of 21st century”.
- (iii) It was felt that our Presbyterian people do not accept the obvious, that there are too many congregations. We should not rule out unions/amalgamations in the future, but ultimately, Union Commission needs to make final decisions. It is probably much easier for the people to accept direction from Union Commission rather than

Presbytery. One Presbytery suggested a change of name for the Union Commission.

9. **Co-operation between Presbytery and Union Commission:** There were some very helpful comments about how the Commission and Presbyteries should co-operate. The Commission has listened very carefully to the points which have been made and is already trying to address them. There was a general desire for more “transparency, consultation and communication” in the process. In response the Commission has already put in place an offer to congregations to have a preliminary informal meeting between representatives of the leadership of congregations and representatives of the Commission at an early stage of any vacancy where there are likely to be difficult issues to be addressed. This would be before the congregational deputation comes to meet the full Commission at the formal meeting where leave to call is considered. A visit by Commission representatives to some areas where a reconfiguration of ministry is required, including meetings with the local representatives of congregations continue to be an important part of the work of the Commission.

10. Some Presbyteries indicated that better use of the Consultation process and the development of Presbytery and Congregational Mission Plans would ensure that congregations are not suddenly confronted at the time of a vacancy with questions about their vision for the future.

11. **Support for the Vacancy Convener:** One Presbytery pointed out that “support of the Convener is a matter for Presbytery consideration and oversight”. The Commission accepts the authority of Presbytery in this matter, however it is clear from comments received that the Commission also has an important part to play in facilitating the work of the Vacancy Convener. One Presbytery commented that “Conveners of vacancies are effectively taking on a second full time charge”. As well as organizing the supply of the pulpit and taking responsibility for essential pastoral work in the vacancy congregation, the Convener has to lead the vacant congregation through the process of clarifying or reaffirming their strategy for the future and then in their search for a new minister. The Commission acknowledges that there is a great deal of work to be done in completing the required forms, ensuring that the manse is surveyed and that the necessary decisions about the future of the manse are made. More importantly, a congregation must be given every opportunity to think through its strategy for the future so that it may make its case before the Commission and provide adequate information to Commission members who will make the final decision about Leave to Call. Sometimes the detailed vacancy procedures which are in place may seem burdensome; unfortunately, it is the experience of the Commission that when this work is not done properly, the unresolved issues will re-emerge to have a negative impact on the new ministry. The Commission continues to develop its communication with Vacancy Conveners. (1) A new Convener’s Checklist which reminds the Convener of the important tasks to be completed before coming to the Commission is now sent to each Vacancy Convener. (2) An improved “Convener’s letter “is being used. (3) The Commission also proposes to offer an annual meeting between key Commission personnel and Clerks of Presbytery and vacancy conveners together with any other relevant Presbytery members to provide training and discuss procedural issues in vacancies. (4) The Commission Convener continues to be available to

Vacancy Conveners for consultation. The suggestion by one Presbytery that specialised ministers might be employed to act as “interim moderators” during vacancies is attractive. However, it is hard to see how it would work in practice given our relative shortage of ordained ministers. Again, the distances and the time involved would make it difficult for Commission members to serve on all vacancy commissions. However, it should be remembered that each Presbytery nominates members to the Union Commission and Presbyteries may want to reflect on the role that these representatives might have during a vacancy, or they may wish to encourage some ministers or elders to take training in vacancy procedures to be a resource in the vacancy process. Several Presbyteries saw merit in more use being made by the Convener of the other members of the Vacancy Commission. The need to set out clear boundaries concerning the level of pastoral care which can reasonably be expected in a vacancy was also mentioned. It is clear that some Presbyteries have found it a helpful development when retired ministers and others are used to lighten the load for Vacancy Conveners. Several Presbyteries supported the idea of limiting the period of a vacancy convenueership and have already begun to implement this policy.

12. **Length of vacancies:** The responses of Presbyteries naturally reflect their own context. Some Presbyteries indicated little concern about extended vacancies, and indeed one saw a vacancy as a helpful time of re-assessment for the congregation. Others, where their own recent experience has been of long vacancies, emphasized the detrimental effect this has on congregational life, the strain it imposes on Conveners, and the difficulty in attracting candidates to their area.

13. **Early appointment of a Presbytery Commission:** Most Presbyteries indicated that they would begin to use or expand their use of the provisions of the Code [par 190(1) (b)] which allow for the appointment of a vacancy convener and Commission before a minister actually retires or demits the charge. Reference was made to the need to (a) clarify areas of responsibility when the minister is still in place, (b) ensure that the departing minister does not have an influence in the choice of the new minister. However, the majority opinion clearly is that these matters can be dealt with, and that any disadvantages are outweighed by the fact that preliminary work in the vacancy can be done as soon as possible.

14. **Other relevant factors:** The Commission also received comment on other aspects of church life which some Presbyteries see as exacerbating our present difficulties. Three Presbyteries reported comments made about what was seen as an overprovision of posts in a “centralized administration”, although one response indicated that this view had been “met with informed disagreement”. The Commission would echo the calls made that the Church should approach the present situation in a spirit of prayer, that people of faith should base their giving on biblical principles and that more individuals should seriously consider giving service to Christ in the ordained ministry. One Presbytery wondered: “*Would it not also be helpful to conduct a survey of those who leave the active parish ministry within the first 5-10 years of their service to see if there are issues that need to be addressed in selection, training and support during those years?*” The Commission also reports to the Assembly the comments made in one Presbytery response about the detrimental effects of the Tyrone Memorial on

finance, the emphasis on life experience in the selection of students for the ministry which has led to the recruitment of ministers of more mature years thus reducing the amount of time they spend in ministry before retirement. Comment was also made on the factors which may be discouraging some ministers from moving to a new sphere of work, which may leave some Presbyteries with a disproportionate number of vacancies.

### **GUIDELINES ON AMALGAMATIONS**

15. Arising out of its experience of the amalgamation of congregations the Commission produced a set of guidelines on amalgamations. These are available from the Convener of the Commission. One section highlights the fact that this is a complex and demanding process: *“There will always be at least four parties involved – two Kirk Sessions/Congregations, the Presbytery and the Union Commission. Sometimes BMI is also involved together with the General Assembly’s Solicitor and the Clerk’s Office. All the parties concerned have to be consulted. Attempts should be made to reduce the number of draft terms being circulated, but there may need to be consideration of a series of drafts as changes are made. There can be tensions between those who have the vision to see that amalgamation is necessary, and those who see it as a betrayal of the all the service given to sustain the life of a congregation in the past. There can be sincerely held differing views concerning the disposal of assets. Everyone involved needs to live out of their spirituality and to look to the grace and wisdom of Christ to carry the process through.”*

### **SUGGESTED CHANGES TO PARS 274 AND 57**

16. The Commission brings to the Assembly overtures suggesting some changes to Pars 274 and 57 of the Code. The changes to Par 274 will clarify procedures in unions, amalgamations, dissolutions, and porting. They will also affirm a principle, which it has been argued is already implied in Par 274(6)(c), namely the responsibility of the Commission to act on behalf of the Assembly as the final authority in these situations. The changes to Par 57 will clarify the final authority of the Union Commission to take decisions regarding the future ownership, or dispersal, of property and assets at the point of amalgamation or dissolution.

### **CHANGES TO GUIDELINES ON PROTRACTED ILLNESS**

17. The Commission agreed the following changes to the Protracted Illness Guidelines for Ministers which were presented to the Assembly in 2002, being then a revised and updated version of the 1992 guidelines. These changes mirror requirements in similar procedures for all employees which reflect concerns about consent and confidentiality.

- (i) Change “required” to “requested” and add: “Written consent will be obtained from the Minister for any such medical consultation and he/she must be advised of the right to refuse consent”.
- (ii) Add the further following sentence: “In this process all those involved must be mindful of the rights of individuals in controlling their personal medical details. Specific written consent must be obtained

from the Minister for any medical information to be shared with others so that an informed decision can be taken. The Commission will limit the number of people involved in this process to protect the privacy of the individual.”

### **REDUCTION IN CLAIMS ON THE CMF**

18. The Commission reported to the Assembly last year that it is taking seriously the challenge to reduce the amount paid in augmentation and incremental grant from the Central Ministry Fund. The Commission recognizes that this can cause disappointment when congregations have assumed that the traditional level of funding will simply be continued; however, this reduction continues to be a priority in the work of the Commission. (1) The Commission indicates to congregations seeking leave to call that a first claim on their finances should be provision for their own ministry and that it should not be assumed that additional support from central funds will be available in every case. (2) The Review Committee of the Commission has begun the series of reviews of stipends required by the amendment of Par 236(2) passed by the Assembly last year. (3) A proposed addition to Par 57 of the Code, brought to the Assembly this year for decision, will encourage the Commission and Presbyteries to ensure that finance which should be used in the basic provision of ministry cannot be redirected to property. Through these measures the Commission is trying to make its contribution to the reduction of the CMF assessment paid by Congregations thus making more finance available for the funding of local ministry and mission.

### **THE PANEL ON STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE USE OF RESOURCES**

19. This Panel came into being on the initiative of the former Convener of the Commission the Rev Jim Stothers. Mr Stothers has continued to give many hours of his time in trying to encourage our denomination to think about how our ministerial resources can be best used in the service of Christ and in promoting the Mission of the Church. The business of the Panel has now been passed to the Commission itself and the Panel has been discontinued. The background work the Panel did is bearing fruit in some of the decisions being made. The Commission expresses its gratitude to Mr Stothers for all the service and leadership he has given in this sphere. One suggestion arising out of the deliberations of the Panel is that the term “union” should be replaced by the term “linkage” to describe what is involved in sharing a minister. It is unfortunate that often church members think that a union involves the merging of two congregations, whereas in a “union” both congregations retain their separate identities. The term “linkage” conveys more accurately what is involved. Overtures anent relevant sections of the Code are brought this year to the Assembly for decision.

### **FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ASSISTANT MINISTERS**

20. On the recommendation of the Board of Christian Training, the period of financial support from central funds for Assistant Ministers during the

time when they are normally looking for a call has been reduced from 15 months to a maximum of 12 months after date of eligibility. The normal date of eligibility for a call will now normally be 15 January, instead of 15 May. This change will not be made retrospective to those who have already begun their Licentiate Assistantships, but will apply to all those licensed from 31 March 2010 onwards.

### LEAVE TO CALL A MINISTER

21. Note: This is only a summary; there may well be conditions attached to the Leave to Call which are not recorded here (e.g. Reviewable Tenure, Restricted List, additional income for the minister). Expenses are “Initial Ministerial Expenses” and are to be kept under review and paid in accordance with the procedures agreed by the Board of Finance and Personnel.

<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Stipend</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	
1st and 2nd Markethill	£28,500	[2009]	£7,200
Edenderry	£9,430	[2009]	£3,100
and Seskinore	£14,500	[2009]	£4,100
Clontibret	€20,000	[2009]	€5,000
and Middletown	£3,000	[2009]	£1,000
Knappagh	£12,000	[2009]	£3,000
and Lislooney	£12,500	[2009]	£4,000
Dundrod	£26,000	[2009]	£7,000
Glascar	£12,480	[2009]	£3,810
and Donaghmore	£11,070	[2009]	£3,390
Ballylinney	£28,500	[2009]	£7,200
Cremore	£6,100	[2009]	£2,200
Fourtowns	£8,600	[2009]	£2,200
and Poyntzpass	£7,800	[2009]	£2,700
Ballydown	£25,800	[2009]	£7,200
Castlewellan	£18,500	[2009]	£5,100
and Leitrim	£5,250	[2009]	£2,100
1st Donaghadee	£25,100	[2009]	£7,200
Dundonald	£35,000	[2009]	£7,200
Aughnacloy	£13,750	[2009]	£4,360
and Ballymagrane	£10,000	[2009]	£2,840
Craigy Hill	£31,000	[2009]	£7,200
St Andrew’s, Bangor	£26,000	[2009]	£7,200
Donabate	Appropriate Minimum		€8,000
Leckpatrick	£25,000	[2009]	£7,200
Ballygawley	£14,292	[2009]	£4,320
and Ballyreagh	£9,768	[2009]	£2,880
Drumlough	£15,900	[2010]	£3,600
and Anahilt	£12,100	[2010]	£3,600
Ravenhill	Appropriate Minimum	[2010]	£7,200

### LEAVE TO CALL UNDER HOME MISSION DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Carlow	€20,000	[2009]	€500
and Athy	€3,500	[2009]	€500
Lisbellaw	£9,000	[2009]	£2,400
Lisnaskea	£4,200	[2009]	£1,350
Maguiresbridge	£3,300	[2009]	£1,350
and Newtownbutler	£2,400	[2009]	£900

### LEAVE TO CALL AN ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Hamilton Road	Appropriate Minimum	£3,500
Knock	£25,000	£5,000
1st Bangor	Appropriate Minimum	£5,752

### STATED SUPPLY ARRANGEMENTS

During the past year the Commission set terms and nominated a minister for appointment by the appropriate Presbytery as the Stated Supply in Carnone, Convoy and Donoughmore; Stranorlar; Bellville; Gortnessy; 2nd Newtownards; 1st Castlederg and Killeter; Katesbridge.

### CONGREGATIONS UNITED

#### Carlow and Athy

The Commission united these congregations on the following terms:

1. That the congregations of Carlow and Athy are united from 1 June 2009 or some other appropriate date.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances. It is noted that in the case of Carlow there is at present an interim Kirk Session.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
4. Leave to Call will be granted under the Home Mission Development Scheme.
5. In the choice of a Minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions (in the case of Carlow at present an interim Kirk Session) as one Kirk Session.
6. There shall be stated services each Sunday as follows: (a) Athy at 10.00 a.m. (b) Carlow at 11.30 a.m. or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions (in the case of Carlow at present an interim Kirk Session) acting together shall determine.
7. That the Stipends be (a) Carlow: €20,000 (2009) and (b) Athy €3,500 (2009) and Initial Ministerial Expenses (a) Carlow €500 (b) Athy: €500.
8. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Carlow Manse be borne wholly by Carlow.
9. That Holiday Supplies, and other shared expenses not included in 8 be borne in the proportions (a) Carlow  $\frac{2}{3}$  (b) Athy  $\frac{1}{3}$ .



10. That the Minister shall reside in Carlow Manse.

### **Clontibret and Middletown**

The Commission united these congregations on the following terms:

1. That the Congregation of Middletown be removed from the Presbytery of Armagh to the Presbytery of Monaghan on 31 July, 2009.
2. That the congregations of Clontibret and Middletown be united from 31 July 2009.
3. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
4. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
5. In the choice of a Minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
6. There shall be stated services each Sunday as follows: Clontibret 12 noon; Middletown 10.30 am or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
7. That the Stipends be Clontibret: £20,000 [2009]; Middletown: £3,000 [2009] and initial ministerial expenses: Clontibret: £5,000; Middletown £1,000.
8. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Clontibret Manse be borne in the proportions (a) Clontibret 82 % (b) Middletown 18 %.
9. That Holiday Supplies, and other shared expenses not included in 7 be borne in the proportions (a) Clontibret 82% (b) Middletown 18 %.
10. That the Minister shall reside in Clontibret Manse.

### **CONGREGATIONS AMALGAMATED**

#### **Windsor and Ulsterville**

The 2009 General Assembly amalgamated these congregations; the Commission set the following terms:

1. That the congregation of Ulsterville be amalgamated with the congregation of Windsor from 24 January 2010, or other suitable date agreed by Presbytery under the name Windsor.
2. That the two Kirk Sessions become one Kirk Session and the two Congregational Committees become one Congregational Committee until new Committee elections are held.
3. The assets to be dispersed are defined as (1) Ulsterville Church building and surrounding ground, any investments and bank accounts in the name of Ulsterville Congregation and (2) the Manse of Windsor Congregation. With respect to these assets 25% (by monetary value) become the assets of the amalgamated congregation; 15% (by monetary value) is to be transferred to the Board of Mission in Ireland as a direct contribution; 55% (by monetary value) is to be transferred to a special account in the name of the South Belfast Presbytery Mission Support Fund (or its successors) in BMI for the purpose of Missional funding determined by the Presbytery in partnership with BMI; 5% (by monetary value) is to be held by the Presbytery for continuing expenses (e.g. insurance/maintenance/legal and advertising fees). Any surplus from the 5%

following the disposal of the assets to be transferred to the amalgamated congregation.

4. That all future assets including legacies and bequests subsequent to the amalgamation become the property of the amalgamated congregation.

5. That the amalgamated congregation will remain responsible for any Ulsterville liabilities following dispersal of the assets.

6. The Ulsterville Manse becomes the property of the amalgamated congregation.

7. As the assets will not be in place for dispersal prior to the amalgamation, the Amalgamation Commission appointed by Presbytery will be responsible for the sale of the assets and the distribution as in clause (c). All the assets defined in (c) on the date of the amalgamation will be transferred to the ownership of the Presbytery.

8. That the Stipend of the new congregation be £33,300 (2010), with initial ministerial expenses of £7,200 and this be reviewed for 2011.

### **Shankill Road Mission Congregation and Townsend Street**

The 2009 General Assembly amalgamated the Shankill Road Mission Congregation with “a suitable congregation”. The Commission set the following terms:

1. That the Shankill Road Mission Congregation be amalgamated with the congregation of Townsend Street from 1st March 2010 or other suitable date agreed by the Convener of the Union Commission under the name Townsend Street.

2. The new amalgamated congregation is assigned to the Presbytery of South Belfast.

3. That the two Kirk Sessions become one Kirk Session and the two Congregational Committees become one Congregational Committee until new Committee elections are held.

4. The assets to be transferred to the amalgamated congregation are defined as any investments and bank accounts in the name of Shankill Road Mission Congregation.

5. That all future assets including legacies and bequests subsequent to the amalgamation become the property of the amalgamated congregation.

6. That the amalgamated congregation will remain responsible for any Shankill Road Mission Congregation liabilities following the transfer of any assets.

7. That the Stipend of the new congregation be: Stipend: £25,000 (2010) (with review of stipend at end of 2011); initial ministerial expenses: £6,250.

### **ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

*The Rev Peter Gamble reports:*

1. From March 2009-February 2010 approval was given for 17 posts. This is a considerable reduction on the previous year. However, a significant and

welcome new development this year has been the appointment of Community Evangelists by Congregations availing of the Irish Mission Fund.

2. The Union Commission Guidelines, approved by the General Assembly in 2008, have been very useful in assisting Congregations to make appointments of additional pastoral personnel. It is disappointing to report that these Guidelines are not being used in every case. This often leads to delays in making appointments. Congregations are reminded of the necessity to follow the Guidelines. All Ministers should have a copy, or may obtain one from the General Secretary's Office.

3. This year a Presbytery has been discussing making an additional appointment. At present the Guidelines on appointments are for Congregations only. Union Commission believes that Presbytery appointments would benefit from inclusion in the Guidelines. This requires Assembly Approval, and an appropriate Resolution is appended.

### REVIEWS COMMITTEE

*The Rev Dr Michael Barry reports:*

1. The Reviews Committee of the Union Commission has begun the series of reviews required under Par 236(2) as amended by the General Assembly in 2009:

(2) *The stipend of each congregation shall be reviewed by the Union Commission every seven years or if the application of the rule in (1) gives rise to serious difficulty. The Union Commission shall have power to vary the amount payable so that an equitable arrangement may be made.*

The following list reports reviews in this category and in other categories where for example a review is part of the terms of the Leave to Call:

<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>7 year reviews</b>	
Bovevagh	No change; review 2011
Balteagh	No change
Ballymacarett	No change
Lisnabreen	No change
2nd Dromara	Increase to £21,720
Rasharkin	Increase to £22,104
Conlig	No change
1st Kilraughts	Increase to £24,000
Ballyrashane	No change
Movilla	No change
Cairncastle	No change
Glenwherry	No change
1st Rathfriland	No change
Moira	Increase to £30,000
High St Holywood	No change
Molesworth	No change

Immanuel	No change
Buckna	No change
Cregagh	No change
McQuiston	No change
Scarva St	No change
Carnmoney	Increase to £40,020
Bessbrook	No change; review 2010
Clontarf	No change
Corboy	Increase to €2,400 plus €210 per year until next review
Mullingar	€5,400 (2009) plus €1,200 per year until next review
Naas	Increase to €8,000

**Stipulated at leave to call**

Castlereagh	No change; Review 2010
Maynooth	€18,000 plus €6,000 per year until no grants are being paid

**Request for review**

Howth and Malahide	€24,000 plus €2,400 per year
Kilmakee	Reduce to £21,216; review 2010
Glenarm	Reduce to £7,200
Castlerock	No change
Tobermore	Reduce to £12,000; review both congregations 2010

**Request not to implement Tyrone increase**

Mountpottinger	Agreed
Mourne	Agreed
Ballywillan	Agreed
Belmont	Agreed

**Reviewed under new legislation**

Caledon	Increase to £6,200
Minterburn	Increase to £12,000 (2010); £12,600 (2011)
Ballee	Increase to £22,416
Carnalbana	Increase to £18,660
Glenarm	Reduce to £7,200
Churchtown	Increase to £23,040
Mersey St	Increase to £17,004
Alexandra	Increase to £25,782
Crumlin Road	No change
Townsend St	Increase to £24,000
Downshire, Carrick	Under continuing review
2nd Islandmagee	Increase to £16,444 (2010); £17,040 (2011)
Ballywatt	Increase to £24,000
1st Kilrea	Increase to £22,416
Macosquin	Increase to £24,660
Dungiven	Increase to £12,000

Largy	Increase to £12,660
Bushvale	Increase to £24,000
Dervock	Increase to £20,280
Dunluce	Increase to £21,720 (2010); £22,416 (2011)
Clonaneese Upper	Increase to £19,080
Clonaneese Lower	Increase to £4,800
Culnady	Increase to £18,000
Swatragh	Increase to £3,200
Tobermore	No change; review 2010
Draperstown	Increase to £4,000; review 2010
Moville	Increase to €4,800 (2010); €5,400 (2011)
Greenbank	Increase to €6,600 (2010); €7,008 (2011)
Monreagh	No change
Raphoe	Increase to €32,600
Blackrock	Increase to €17,040
Bray	Increase to €3,900
Rathgar	Increase to €30,600
Cork	Increase to €4,800
Aghada	Increase to €2,760
Drogheda	Increase to €14,000 (2010); €16,000 (2011); €18,000 (2012)
Sligo	Increase to €12,000
Kilkenny	Increase to €28,240
Cavan	€2,304 (2010); €2,808 (2011)
Bellasis	Increase to €3,840
Drumkeeran	Reduce to €2,800
Killeshandra	Increase to €1,800
Dundalk	Increase to €4,800

### EXPENSES AND FEES SUB-COMMITTEE

*The Rev Robert Bell reports:*

#### Travel Expenses

1. The Commission, through its Expenses and Fees Sub-Committee, gives guidance to Congregational Committees about Travel Expenses. This is informed by information available from the motoring organisations, and based on an average of 14,400 business miles per year. For 2010, no change was made in the 2009 recommended figure which is as follows:

Northern Ireland: £5,752                      Republic of Ireland: €8,841.

2. Ministers doing a higher mileage should be paid more, and those doing a lower mileage should be paid less.

#### Supply Fee

3. Through its Expenses and Fees Sub-Committee the Commission note the Supply Fee for 2010 at £60 (€100) single, and £90 (€150) full.

4. Travelling expenses should be paid in accordance with the rate set for attendance at Assembly Boards, currently 14p (22 cents) per mile.

### MANSES SUB-COMMITTEE

*Mr AJ Giffen reports:*

1. Through its Manses Sub-Committee, the Commission dealt with a wide variety of manse issues of which the following are the most significant.

2. The congregations of Ravenhill and Railway Street, Lisburn were given permission to sell their existing Manses, and either to purchase or build a suitable replacement.

3. The congregation of Windsor was given permission to sell the existing Manse, and to refurbish the previous Ulsterville Manse as the new Manse of the amalgamated congregation.

4. The congregations of Cooke Centenary, Dundonald, and 3rd Portglenone were given permission to lease their Manses during their respective vacancies.

5. In the cases of the Manses belonging to Coagh, Donagheady, Fisherwick and Moneydig, permission was given to the respective ministers to live outwith their Manse for a temporary period for renovation or other reasons.

6. The Manses Sub-Committee issued guidelines relating to the periodic inspection and testing of both Electrical and Domestic Gas installations in Manses. Guidelines were also produced to assist congregations who share a Manse to decide what items of work should be agreed as being Maintenance, and which more accurately are Alteration or Improvement, when attempting to determine an equitable division of the upkeep costs.

7. In addition the Manses Convener gave advice on a variety of other matters relating to Manses or Manse land.

8. In view of difficulties caused in the past by a lack of certainty among some vacant congregations regarding the future of their Manse, the Commission would remind all concerned that Leave to Call will be delayed until firm decisions on this matter have been agreed.

9. Congregations are further reminded that, before letting a Manse in a vacancy, the permissions of both Presbytery and the Union Commission are required, together with the drawing up of a proper legal agreement. It is also strongly recommended that the detailed professional survey of the vacant Manse be carried out before any tenants move in so that the eventual Leave to Call is not delayed.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION  
CHARGES — 2010**

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

<i>Church</i>	<i>Fully Constituted</i>	<i>Families (†)</i>	<i>Assess 2010 £</i>	<i>Spec. Sources £</i>	<i>Income £</i>
Burnside	1995	153 (140)	210	67,181	108,486
Movilla	2001	238 (179)	268	63,446	126,510
New Mossley	2005	110 (90)	135	31,576	91,470
Ballysally	2007	159 (65)	97	37,808	94,378

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

**ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES — 2010**

<i>Church</i>	<i>Building £</i>	<i>Spec. Srs. £</i>	<i>Stip. £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>	<i>Ch. Ext £</i>	<i>H.M. £</i>	<i>Total £</i>
Taughmonagh	—	13,620	4,086 (30%)	2,043 (15%)	1,362 (10%)	817 (6%)	8,308 (61%)

## LICENTIATES — 2010

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £16,812 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

## FIRST YEAR — From 1st January, 2010

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregations Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
McQuiston Memorial	* N Cooper	05.06.09	32,000 (30%)	10,101	7,713
Hill Street, Lurgan	* A Faulkner	05.06.09	35,676 (25%)	9,420	8,394
Sinclair Seamens	† S Glendinning	21.06.09	26,000 (s/a)	6,000	11,514
Hamilton Road	* M McKeown	07.06.09	41,520 (30%)	12,957	4,857
First Armagh	* C McKibbin	21.06.09	32,238 (s/a)	4,531	13,283
West Church Ballymena	* R Moody	21.06.09	39,900 (30%)	12,471	5,343
Ballygilbert	* I Steen	01.06.09	32,981 (s/a)	6,600	11,214
Fisherwick	* K Viner	21.06.09	38,999 (30%)	12,201	5,613
First Comber	† L Wilson	31.05.09	32,807 (30%)	10,193	7,321
The Mall, Armagh	* M Wilson	26.06.09	34,280 (25%)	9,071	8,743

\* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance

s/a Special Arrangement



## LICENTIATES — 2010

Licentiates are paid 80% of the ministerial minimum = £17,932.80 plus House Allowance p.a.  
(single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

## SECOND YEAR — From 1st January, 2010

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregations Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Newtownbreda	* C Anderson	01.06.08	34,270 (32%)	11,467	7,468
Glengormley	* T Bruce	08.06.08	34,475 (32%)	11,533	7,402
Newtownards - First	* M Catney	25.05.08	31,170 (32%)	10,475	8,460
Ballymena - First	* E Chestnutt	22.06.08	36,000 (32%)	12,021	6,914
Holywood - First	† G Connor	25.05.08	36,500 (32%)	12,031	6,604
Newtownards - Regent St	† G Fowles	13.06.08	36,157 (32%)	11,921	6,714
Granshaw	* W Harkness	13.06.08	33,200 (27%)	9,465	9,470
Larne - First	* L Keys	22.06.08	36,484 (32%)	12,176	6,759
Mourne	# A Mullan	25.05.08	43,510 (32%)	13,923	4,010
Kilfennan	* R Orr	06.06.08	31,526 (32%)	174	137
McQuiston Memorial	* JL Rutherford	08.06.08	32,000 (32%)	10,741	8,194

\* Married House Allowance

† Single House Allowance

# No House Allowance — House provided by congregation

s/a Special Arrangement

## LICENTIATES — 2010

Licentiates are paid 85% of the ministerial minimum = £19,053.60 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702, married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

## THIRD YEAR — From 1st January, 2010

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregations Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Greenisland	* Andy Carroll	08.06.07	30,000 (32%)	463	471
Craig Hill	* David Clawson	03.06.07	34,000 (32%)	11,381	8,675
Hamilton Road	* David Leach	24.06.07	41,520 (32%)	13,787	6,269
Abbot's Cross	† David McCarthy	01.06.07	29,452 (32%)	9,776	9,980
Greenwell Street	* Michael McClenahan	01.06.07	36,251 (32%)	12,101	7,955
Ballygilbert	* Ben Walker	27.05.07	32,981 (s/a)	158	1,106

\* Married House Allowance

† Single House Allowance

s/a Special Arrangement

**ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 2010**

**From 1st January, 2010**

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Ord.</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>% Min.</i>	<i>Salary</i> £	<i>House Allow.</i> £	<i>Total</i> £	<i>Cong. Cont.</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
First Portadown	AJ Dunlop	13.05.07	39,240	100	22,416	1,002	23,418	2,000	21,418
Muckamore	CWA Jones	01.06.08	34,697	100	22,416	1,002	23,418	9,869	13,549

## ASSOCIATE MINISTERS 2010

<i>Name</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Salary</i>		<i>House Allowance Paid</i> £	<i>Annual Assessment Recovery</i> £
		<i>Paid</i> £	<i>Recovery</i> £		
J E McDowell (to 25.2.10)	Wellington Street	3,522.37	2,459.04	341.61	718.03
G McFadden	High Kirk	24,000.00	24,000.00	3,000.00	1,278.82
B Walker (from 24.1.10)	Knock	23,464.58	23,464.58	n/a	1,755.15
MF Russell	Carrmoney	22,416.00	22,416.00	2,000	344.00

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly direct the Union Commission to keep a register of the availability of retired ministers for continued ministry in supply preaching or in other appropriate roles and that information from this register be available to the Conveners of Vacancies and Clerks of Presbytery.
3. That the General Assembly, continuing to recognise that for historical reasons there are more Church buildings, Congregations and Charges than are required in the present circumstances and that the worship and mission of the Church are hindered by this, instruct the Union Commission to continue in consultation with the Presbyteries and the Board of Mission in Ireland, actively to address this issue.
4. The General Assembly direct the General Board to allocate to the appropriate Board or Committee the task of preparing practical guidance to Presbyteries on the disposal of redundant buildings, particularly where sensitive issues such as graveyards surrounding Churches are concerned.
5. That the General Assembly direct the Union Commission to prepare printed material setting out the issues contained in “Ministry, Finance and Mission” and that the Presbyteries oversee the discussion of this material by each Kirk Session.
6. That the General Assembly encourage Presbyteries to make use of the provisions of the Code [Par 190(1)(b)] which allow for the appointment of a vacancy convener and Commission before a Minister actually retires or demits the charge.
7. That the General Assembly instruct that any Additional Appointment made by a Presbytery comes under the auspices of the Union Commission, through the Additional Appointments Committee, and that Guidelines on Additional Appointments be amended appropriately.
8. That the Congregation of First Ballymacarrett be amalgamated with the Congregation of Ravenhill on terms agreed by the Union Commission on 31 October 2010 or some other suitable date, under the name Ravenhill.
9. That the Congregation of Second Derry (Strand and Buncrana) Congregation be amalgamated with Carlisle Road Congregation from 11 October 2010, or other suitable date as agreed by the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal.
10. That CMF be authorized to pay grants towards expenses incurred by Ministers in congregations, up to a limit of NI £5,752 or RI €8,841, within the terms of resolution 3, p 70 General Assembly Minutes, 1988.
11. That the Union Commission be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with par 128 of the Code as follows:

**OVERTURES TRANSMITTED****Anent Par 57 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 57 of the Code be deleted and the following paragraph substituted in its place:

57(1) **Subject to sub-paragraph (3) below, it shall be the duty of congregational trustees** to carry out the lawful directions given to them on behalf of the congregation by the Congregational Committee and, in giving such directions and in administering the property of the congregation, the Committee shall be bound by the subsequent provisions of this paragraph.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraph (3) below, transactions creating, transferring or affecting any estate or interest in congregational property shall not be entered into without the authorisation of the congregation and the sanction of the Presbytery being first obtained; save that the Kirk Session may, subject to this Code and to rules, authorise what meetings shall be held in or on congregational property.

(3) When deciding upon the terms of any amalgamation or dissolution the Union Commission shall have power to determine the future ownership or dispersal of property and assets belonging to both or either congregation and congregational trustees shall carry out such directions given to them on behalf of the Commission.

(4) All leases, declarations of trust or other assurances relating to the acquisition, disposal or use of congregational property shall before being executed be submitted to the Presbytery and shall not be executed without the prior approval of the Presbytery. It shall be the responsibility of the minister and the representative elder to ensure that this submission is made.

(5) The site and plans of all new buildings proposed to be erected on congregational property and of all proposed demolition, structural alterations of or structural additions to existing buildings thereon (including all proposals and designs for memorials, windows, artificial lighting and for seating and furnishings requisite for public worship) shall be submitted for the approval of the Committee on Church Architecture and of the Presbytery and, without such approval, and without the approval of the congregation, no such erection or alteration shall be undertaken or made.

(6) In all situations where augmentation or incremental grant is being paid to the minister of a congregation the Presbytery shall consult with the Union Commission and obtain the Commission's consent before authorising any project under section (5) above.

(7) Notice of the convening of a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of giving an approval required under sub-paragraphs (2) or (5) or paragraph 46(f) shall be given from the pulpit on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

#### **Anent Par 106(g) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 106(g) of the Code the word "unite" be deleted and the word "link" substituted in its place, and that the word "unions" be deleted and the word "linkages" substituted in its place.

**Anent Pars 128(3), 128(5)(d) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 128(3), 128(5)(d) of the Code the word “united” be deleted and the word “linked” substituted in its place.

**Anent Par 128(5)(a) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 128(5)(a) of the Code the word “union” be deleted and the word “linkage” substituted in its place, and that the word “unions” be deleted and the word “linkages” substituted in its place.

**Anent Par 128(6)(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 128(6)(b) of the Code the word “union” be deleted and the word “linkage” substituted in its place.

**Anent Pars 190(2)(c), 238(1), 245(1), 245(2)(a), 274(4), 274(6)(a), 274(6)(c), 274(6)(d), 274(6)(e), 274(8), 274(10) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars. 190(2)(c), 238(1), 245(1), 245(2)(a), 274(4), 274(6)(a), 274(6)(c), 274(6)(d), 274(6)(e), 274(8), 274(10), of the Code the word “union” be deleted and the word “linkage” substituted in its place.

**Anent Par 233(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 233(4) of the Code the word “unions” be deleted and the word “linkages” substituted in its place.

**Anent Pars 260(f), 274(5)(c)(ii) and (iii), 274(6)(a), 274(7), 274(13) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 260(f), 274(5)(c)(ii) and (iii), 274(6)(a), 274(7), 274(13) of the Code the word “united” be deleted and the word “linked” substituted in its place.

**Anent Par 274(5) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 274(5) of the Code the word “unite” be deleted and the word “link” be substituted in its place.

**Anent Par 274(6) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 274(6) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

274(6)(a) Where in the opinion of the Commission the pastorate of two or more congregations may be linked the Commission shall consult with the Kirk Sessions and Congregations involved (either directly or through the Presbytery), with the Presbytery itself and, in the case of Home Mission Congregations, with

the Board of Mission in Ireland. The Commission shall endeavour to agree the terms with the Kirk Sessions involved. Where it proves impossible to obtain the agreement of one or more Kirk Sessions, but the Presbytery consents and in the case of Home Mission congregations the Board of Mission in Ireland consents, terms of linkage shall be fixed by the Commission, a date for its commencement set and such action reported in due course to the Assembly. These terms shall be binding on all the parties concerned. The same action may be taken to facilitate a porting. The Commission shall be the final authority as to the area of porting to be effected.

(b) No congregation shall be dissolved or amalgamated, with loss of its identity, except by authorisation from the Assembly. Where the Commission has been instructed by the General Assembly to agree terms, where one or more congregations are being amalgamated or dissolved by resolution of the Assembly, the Commission shall endeavour to agree the terms with the Kirk Sessions involved. Where it proves impossible to obtain the agreement of one or more Kirk Sessions, but the Presbytery consents, and in the case of Home Mission congregations the Board of Mission in Ireland consents, the terms shall be set by the Commission and shall be binding on all the parties concerned.

(c) When any congregation is considering a proposal for dissolution, amalgamation or linkage with another congregation, no arrangements regarding the sale of its properties and distribution of the proceeds or the income therefrom shall be made without first obtaining the agreement of the Commission.

(d) Where it is decided that within five years from the date of the leave to call the vacant congregation/s shall be linked with another congregation or congregations where there is still a minister in active duty (hereafter referred to as “the other congregation or congregations”), the Commission may issue leave to call to the vacant congregation/s on deferred union terms.

- (i) The Union Commission will have power to direct that in the choice of a Minister the vacant congregation or congregations and the other congregation or congregations shall act as one congregation and the Kirk Session as one Kirk Session.
- (ii) The rights and entitlements of the active minister/s in the other congregation or congregations shall not be adversely affected by this arrangement.
- (iii) When the minister/s in active duty retires or ceases to be minister/s of the other congregation or congregations in the deferred union the Union Commission shall agree final terms of union and the Presbytery arrange a service of installation in the other congregation or congregations.
- (iv) If the minister called to the original vacant congregation in the deferred union resigns his charge, the same procedure as above will be followed.

*(Please note that if the overtures relating to ‘link and linkage’ are not passed, then the phrase “united” should replace the phrase “linked” and the phrase “union” should replace the phrase “linkage” in the overture anent Par 274(6)).*



**Anent Par 274(12) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 274(12) of the Code the word "union" be deleted and the word "linkage" be substituted in its place, and that the word "unite" be deleted" and the word "link" substituted in its place.

SA MATTHEWS



# BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS

Convener: Rev SJ HANNA

Secretary: Rev WS MARRS

## ‘Serving a mission-hearted church’

1. The General Assembly’s Board of Mission Overseas (BMO) upholds a vision *“to serve a mission-hearted Church, in step with the God of mission, reawakened to the missionary nature of God’s Word, placing mission at the heart of all it is and all it does, from the end of the pew to the ends of the earth.”* (Overseas Board Report to the General Assembly 2005, p 142). The Board is committed to proclaiming Christ and His universal reign and to upholding values of being God-centred, people-focused, church-based and forward-thinking.

2. As BMO seeks to mobilise the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) to this end, the Board’s Mission Review 2005 identified four areas of priority namely: Mission Engagement; Outreach Initiatives; Leadership Development; and Compassionate Ministries. These continue to provide clear foci for the ongoing work of BMO’s four Assembly Committees:

Outreach Ministries Committee                      Para 4 to 10  
Main Issues: Evangelism and Church Planting

Leadership Development Committee              Para 11 to 21  
Main Issues: Evolving leadership development practice; Leaders in training

World Development Committee                      Para 22 to 30  
Main Issues: Micro-credit schemes

Mission Involvement Committee                Para 31 to 50  
Main Issues: Website; Toolkit for Short-term teams; Training Events;

Overseas Teams

3. BMO and its Assembly Committees continue to be served by the Steering Committee which operates as the Business Committee of the Board:

Steering Committee                                      Para 51 to 75  
Main Issues: Review of activities; Staffing

## OUTREACH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

4. The initial task of OMC was to examine five major areas of mission and produce guidelines that would help develop policy and strategy to guide the future work of BMO in outreach. Over the last number of years guidelines have been presented to the General Assembly on three of these five areas:

- Hospital and community based healthcare mission

- Mission through education
- Specialist Service Agencies (SSAs)

5. The primary focus of this year's OMC report is the fourth set of guidelines, relating to the Board's work in the area of **evangelism and church planting**. These guidelines have been developed to give direction to PCI for outreach initiatives in its overseas mission. PCI now serves in mission with partner churches across the world, and encourages and assists its partner churches in evangelism and church planting. In certain situations the best approach is for PCI to support personnel commissioned by its partners. At other times, it is right for PCI to provide personnel to meet a presenting opportunity, as the Lord leads and guides.

6. PCI is particularly well placed to develop work in Western Europe. United Kingdom and Irish citizens have more immediate access to learning European languages and have rights, under EU legislation, which allow them to travel and work in several European countries. They are more familiar with the culture than missionaries coming from Africa or Latin America, with more immediate access to learning of European languages. Such a focus on Western Europe may be regarded as the Church working in a widening circle, after the pattern of "*Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth*" (Acts 1:8). Furthermore, since the major cities of the continent remain places of global importance in which migrants from many nations are to be found, this focus may be regarded as responding to the "*great door for effective work*" (1 Corinthians 16:9) which is currently open. BMO will, therefore, especially seek to be involved in evangelism and church planting in Western Europe. In this, it will seek to co-operate with its European partners, and explore partnerships with other churches and mission agencies. It is BMO's intention that any church plant would come under national church leadership.

7. Church planters need to be well-trained and prepared for long-term work. PCI has a responsibility to ensure that those it supports in mission have been equipped for the task. It has a special responsibility to train those whom it will call and commission for service. On occasions, it may be desirable for the church planter to be an ordained minister. There is a need for specialised courses of study that go beyond standard theological training, and for practical "hands on" experience.

8. The driver for all outreach initiatives must be the presence and power of the living Christ in His Church. BMO prays that PCI will increasingly be marked by a missionary zeal to fulfill the great commission, until all the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of God.

9. OMC is currently exploring the many issues with regard to sustainable development and crisis intervention and in this regard it is intended that a fifth and final set of guidelines will be presented to the General Assembly in 2011.

10. OMC amended grants for 2010 and proposed grants for 2011 have been agreed totalling £50,000 in each year.

STEPHEN RICHMOND, Convener

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11. Previous reports have highlighted the importance, for leadership development work, of the Guidelines which LDC began developing in its first year of existence. As anticipated in the report to the previous General Assembly, throughout 2009/10 LDC has benefitted from use of a revised and edited version of these; they have proved invaluable as a handbook on leadership development issues pertaining to key areas of mission practice, namely vision and purpose, partnership and strategic resources. The material has had a constant impact upon LDC's ongoing work, from the moment objectives are set for the award of grants and study scholarships to the successful completion of the various training projects to which these relate.

12. An important task, in coming months and years, will be effective communication of the **evolving leadership development practice** to overseas partner Churches and institutions. For new partners, time learning about each other's commitment to and experience of mission is always time well spent, whereas in longstanding partnerships in mission the partners already know one another well. In either case, however, as overseas partners formulate and pursue their particular objectives for the mission of the Church, a growing awareness of PCI's own missional values, commitments and goals will be of special relevance.

13. One area which exemplifies this is the selection by partners of mission-minded scholarship candidates. When choosing those most likely to benefit from the training opportunities which PCI can help them access, and those whose potential is greatest to make a difference within their own contexts, partners will in future be able to make use of suggested selection criteria, including interview questions, and to apply other procedures such as a missional test to the assessment of projects for which PCI support might be sought.

14. Partnership, of course, means not just giving but receiving. It is a two-way process which commits PCI, as part of its faithful engagement in mission, to listening to its partners and learning from them. Fruit of good listening and learning has already been harvested, over the years, by past and present executive staff, as well as through the knowledge and expertise of PCI personnel who have served or still serve in partners' contexts; such experience will continue to inform and enrich the work of the committee in the future.

15. Many LDC guidelines directly address the topic of partnership in mission which has remained a key focus throughout BMO in the last year; this material will continue to help the Board's Steering Committee draw out the full implications of discussion on partnership engendered by last year's BMO report to General Assembly. During 2009/10 a great deal of work was done on a database containing detailed and up-to-date information accumulated in relation to all of BMO's existing partners; although further analysis of this data is still needed, LDC is already anticipating creative interaction with this resource.

16. LDC is also aware that partners still have much more to contribute to PCI's thinking about and practice of leadership development – in mission both overseas and in Ireland – than the denomination has so far been willing or able to hear. New and better ways are therefore needed for facilitating missional

input from our friends and for maximising the impact it will have on the worship, witness and service of PCI.

17. Since LDC was set up, the Convener has been privileged to engage regularly in the theological training of students in France, Latvia & Lithuania and North Africa. As anticipated last year, LDC as a whole now intends moving onto a new footing: In support of BMO executive staff, LDC members hope to play an increasing part in leadership development through appropriate direct engagement with partners. At the time of writing plans are being laid to enable LDC members to undertake short study visits, in autumn 2010, to two training institutions with which PCI already partners in France and Spain. Comprising mainly LDC members, these small study teams will gain first-hand knowledge of the Colleges and of the theological training they provide, engage with their staff and students, learn about the Churches they serve and discover something of the European contexts in which they operate. Europe, together with Asia, constitute two areas of the world to which LDC (in line with the BMO review) is seeking to give a higher priority.

18. LDC hopes to be of assistance to the Mission Involvement Committee (MIC) through the provision of some guidelines which will enable MIC to examine the role that congregations may have in LD work specifically. Whenever PCI sends personnel overseas – often, typically, to engage in LD work – this provides the home congregation with an opportunity to share ownership of the project, supporting the missionary for example through prayer, pastoral care and perhaps in future cost-sharing. However, there are also significant opportunities for involvement with partners' personnel. LDC is therefore committed to making core aspects of its Guidelines available soon to the wider Church – notably congregational mission committees – in the form of a handbook for supporting and getting involved with a leader in training from overseas.

19. **Leaders in training:** For one academic year from September 2009, two members of partner churches have been training and studying at Union Theological College. Ms Rózsa Drabik from the Hungarian Reformed Church in Hungary, and the Rev Zoltán Les from the Hungarian Reformed Church – Transylvanian District in Romania. On 28 March 2010 the Rev Laszlo Orban from the Hungarian Reformed Church – King's Pass District, Romania, was inducted to serve in Special Ministry for a period of two years in First Ballynahinch Congregation.

20. In 2010/11 two leaders in training from the Hungarian Reformed Church will once more be hosted in Belfast; as part of an ongoing review of scholarship provision, LDC will support one candidate from Central or Eastern Europe the following year. It is also anticipated that four leaders in training from Africa – three from Malawi, one from Kenya – will benefit from leadership development scholarships from the Lindsay Memorial Fund in 2010/11. Our partners for these projects are the Livingstonia and Blantyre Synods of CCAP (three students), together with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (one student). Two students are to undertake Masters studies (in both theology and public health), while the others will study for diplomas in theology and in child development respectively. Three of the four students will study in Belfast, where

each will make a valuable contribution to the life of a local PCI congregation. The remaining student will follow a distance learning programme.

21. LDC amended grants for 2010 and proposed 2011 have been agreed totalling £110,000 in each year.

GORDON CAMPBELL, Convener

## WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

22. **World Development Appeal:** The first year of the “**Credit Where Credit’s Due**” World Development Appeal took place during Advent and Christmas 2009. The projects highlighted were in Ethiopia (Tearfund), India (Christian Aid), Cambodia (Tearfund) and Mali (Christian Aid). Strong stories drawn from **micro-credit schemes** reinforced that, with just a little start up help lives can be transformed and communities empowered. The robust and welcomed level of support indicates that the materials produced to explain and illustrate the Appeal struck a chord. They reminded the PCI community of faith that in the midst of the global economic/banking crisis the impact in the developing world was so much greater than in the western world. PCI members responded in generous solidarity.

23. In January and February 2010, £580,000 was contributed to the World Development Appeal. The Committee has disbursed initial grants of £280,000 to Tearfund and £280,000 to Christian Aid. In the same period last year, £508,000 was contributed, indicating that after a challenging year the level of support for the Appeal is strengthening again. Throughout 2009 a total of £580,000 was disbursed to Tearfund and Christian Aid, equally divided between the agencies.

24. In the course of the year, the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Stafford Carson, visited projects of our Tearfund and Christian Aid partners in Ethiopia and the Committee wish to place on record their thanks to Dr Carson for his steadfast support of the work of the Committee in his moderatorial year. Reflecting on his trip, Dr Carson emphasized the importance of good, focused, effective and strategically directed development work. This he termed “sophisticated development” and noted that it is very different from development work grounded primarily in good intentions. He underlined the professionalism of Tearfund and Christian Aid, while stressing that passion for people was neither diminished nor diluted.

25. **Irish Aid Cuts:** Following a 20% cut to the aid and development budget of the Irish Government the Moderator, accompanied by representatives of the World Development Committee, met with the Minister of State for International Development, within the Department of Foreign Affairs. The PCI delegation expressed appreciation for all the Irish Government had done in the field of development and discussed the implications of the cuts.

26. Dr Stafford Carson reviewed his trip to Ethiopia, speaking of how impressed he had been with the work supported by the Irish Government. The Rev Katherine Meyer noted that the Irish public did not want the world’s poorest people to bear the brunt of government cuts in an unfair or disproportionate way. Dr Mark Gray expressed thanks for the consistent support of the Irish

Government for development projects of PCI's partner churches funded through Irish Aid's Civil Society Fund. He noted with concern that the 20% cut in the Irish Aid budget had come at a time when food insecurity was increasing in places like Ethiopia. He continued by observing that by following a focused strategic approach the Irish Government had gained a high reputation for its development work and that nothing should be done to erode this. He concluded by encouraging the Irish Government to reach the goal of contributing 0.7% of gross national income sooner rather than later. In reply, Minister Power said that the Irish Government considers Christian Aid as in the "premier league" of agencies it works with, stated that there would be no further cuts to the aid budget this year and explained the financial background to the matter.

27. **Board of Mission Overseas Allocation:** In 2009 the Board of Mission Overseas allocation of the World Development Appeal was £36,000. The Board has used £30,000 in support of the second year of a "Livelihood Security" project of the CCAP Blantyre Synod, and £6,000 in support of a project undertaken by the Adult Basic Education Society (ABES) focused on non-formal primary education among poor women and children in Pakistan.

28. **Moderator Supported Haiti Appeal:** Following the devastation of the earthquake in Haiti, a Moderator Supported Special Appeal was launched. As of March 2010 almost £650,000 had been contributed. Tearfund and Christian Aid are both involved in long-term work in Haiti and both have the capacity to use any contributions given to them. BMO has no partner church ties to Haiti. In light of this the Haiti Appeal has been divided equally between Christian Aid and Tearfund.

29. **Climate Change and the Copenhagen Conference:** The issue of climate change will continue to be important in the development agenda. Post-Copenhagen, Christian Aid report that: (1) The Copenhagen Accord was driven by a select group of countries acting in a largely unrepresentative and unaccountable way; (2) The level of ambition of the Accord is too low in terms of carbon emissions reduction; (3) More clarity is needed about financial support proposed for developing countries.

30. **Credit Where Credit's Due:** The projects highlighted for the second year of the "Credit Where Credit's Due" World Development Appeal, to run in Advent and Christmas 2010, will be in Burkina Faso (Christian Aid) and Tanzania (Tearfund). They will again be grounded in scriptural teaching about credit and stewardship, remembering that, as John Calvin puts it, "It is not enough to abstain from acts of injustice, if thou refuse thy assistance to the needy." There is an imperative to be active contributors to the well-being of the poor and marginalised. In supporting the World Development Appeal people are encouraged and facilitated to do just that, knowing that through Christian Aid and Tearfund they are not only working with relief and development agencies of great expertise, but also participating in the mission of God to the world.

MARK GRAY, Convener

## MISSION INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

31. MIC continues to be encouraged by the involvement of an increasing number of individuals and congregations in God's global mission. As MIC has reflected on its role as both a supporter and encourager of mission involvement across PCI, it has adopted words from Ephesians 4:12 as its biblical mandate and as a focus for its work. MIC exists, therefore, to '**equip God's people for works of service**'.

32. In order to equip God's people more effectively for works of service, four **MIC Working Groups** have been established. These are the Communications, Mission Mobiliser, Congregational Support and Mission Opportunities Groups. The remits of these groups are closely aligned with the four key components (Informing, Envisioning, Equipping, Engaging) of the 'Mission Engagement Learning Circle' that was presented to the General Assembly by BMO in 2006. Significantly, the Mission Opportunities Working Group has been established as a joint working group between BMO and the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, thus bringing the 'PCI Overseas Teams' components of each Board's work under the direction of a single group.

33 **Equipping through ... Informing:** The new **BMO web-site** ([www.pcimissionoverseas.org](http://www.pcimissionoverseas.org)) was launched in September 2009 and has already proved to be, not just a very useful site, but a very well used one. The site is aimed primarily at PCI members and provides a comprehensive source of information and news about the overseas mission work of PCI - covering the countries, places and partners with which PCI and its missionary personnel are linked. A review was carried out of the BMO policy on the use of photographs of mission personnel on the website. This resulted in the photographs of the children of missionary personnel being removed and safeguards relating to the information made available on the website being strengthened.

34. BMO's '**Missionary Poster**' was updated for the 2009/10 church year and was well received. Work is currently underway on the design and production of a new range of promotional material that will allow information on mission personnel to be displayed in a format that best fits its intended 'audience', whether that be an individual, group or congregation.

35. In response to the **SPUD** resolutions that were brought to the 2009 General Assembly, discussions are underway with SPUD delegates as to how PCI's young people can best be educated about, engaged in and mobilised for mission through more effective communication of BMO's work and the formation of links with the children and young people of BMO's overseas personnel. It is hoped that significant progress will be made on this through the inclusion and participation of young people on selected MIC working groups.

36. MIC was represented at SPUD's "Big Event" on 21 November 2009 in Church House and the 'Mash Up' that took place at the Kilbroney Centre, Rostrevor on 20 February 2010. At the former, MIC representatives worked together with the Board of Mission in Ireland, to make a joint presentation on the theme of 'the Missional Church', seeking to envision our young people regarding the importance of holistic mission both locally and globally.

37. The young people were given a chance to prayerfully reflect on accounts of different communities, both at home and abroad, fictional and non-



fictional. They considered how far these reflected their own communities, and went on to explore how we both identify and respond to needs in both local and global communities. The young people were asked what makes them care about the lives of others. Being loved by God, they said, meant that they loved others. They were convinced that we must build relationships with people, that we learn their stories, and that our greatest resource in responding to these people's needs is God. The young people were encouraged to work *with* God, not just for Him. Prayer, patience, and being prepared to answer tough questions were all things that the young people felt were important to ensure that the Biblical message of caring for others is translated from Word into action. The young people felt strongly that greater cooperation between the Mission Boards would be beneficial, and were keen to maintain a voice in the ongoing conversations surrounding holistic mission and community engagement.

38. **Equipping through ... Envisioning:** Three regional **Celebration of Global Mission** evenings have been held this 'church year' with 'Celebrations' being held in Church House and Ardstraw in October 2009 and in Banbridge Road, Dromore in March 2010. Attendances were encouraging and the feedback positive for each of these events. While venues for the autumn of 2010 have still to be confirmed, MIC is keen to ensure that the location of venues reflects the wide geographical spread of our denomination. MIC also seeks the help of ministers, Presbytery and Congregational Mission Agents in encouraging people of all ages to attend these events in order that they might be envisioned for mission as they hear first hand of what God is doing in his world today.

39. Recognising that the best advocates for global mission are so often those who are serving or who have served overseas, MIC seeks to equip mission personnel on home assignment for the task of deputation in order that the experience is a positive one for both speaker and listener alike. To this end a **Deputation Training Day** was held in October 2009 for the mission personnel on home assignment at that time. The demand for speakers still outweighs the number of mission personnel available however, and as last year's report indicated, it is MIC's desire to establish a broader pool of **Mission Mobilisers**. Unfortunately, plans to run a training event for this group in January had to be postponed. It is hoped, however, that this work will move forward significantly over the coming months.

40. **Equipping through ... Training and Support:** In response to the increasing number of congregations sending individuals and/or teams overseas – whether short or long-term – MIC wants to help PCI's congregations as they serve as both senders and those being sent.

41. MIC wishes to encourage congregational leaders to stand back and take time to think about the 'why' and 'when' of sending teams overseas rather than automatically jumping onto the 'Overseas Teams' bandwagon. In other words, instead of saying, "We've a Team – where can we go and what can we do?" congregations are encouraged to first of all address the question, "Is God calling us to go or stay?" To help congregations address this, MIC is in the process of producing a congregational '**Toolkit for Short-Term Teams**'. For those congregations who decide that the answer is 'Go', the Toolkit will also provide, amongst other things, checklists and advice on matters such as developing good partnerships, understanding expectations, maintaining your

spiritual health, travel, safety overseas and finance. MIC believes that this Toolkit will help whole congregations, not just the 'team', to be better prepared and less likely to make mistakes. Sections of the kit are currently being trialled by various congregational teams and it is hoped to be able to make the Toolkit available to all congregations early in the new 'church year'.

42. While training resources can, and do, provide worthwhile and necessary guidance on various aspects of the 'sending' process, MIC would also encourage congregations to avail themselves of the various **training events** that are available. A new training event, **Briefing for Senders**, was run by BMO in March 2010 in conjunction with the Mission Agencies Partnership (MAP). This one day, interactive workshop seeks, through discussion and expert input, to provide congregational leaders with an understanding of the issues that they should be considering as they help teams or individuals prepare for service overseas.

43. With significant numbers of PCI congregational, as well as BMO and YAC, teams going overseas each year, BMO's **Overseas Teams Training (OTT)** day has become an important and well established event in the training calendar. OTT aims to provide relevant, practical advice and training on topics not normally or easily covered by individual teams in their pre-departure preparations. Feedback year-on-year has enabled the programme to be fine-tuned to suit needs. Overall, OTT has been well-received and appreciated by those who have attended and, again, MIC commends this training opportunity to all who are taking teams overseas.

44. A mission trip should not end when those involved arrive back in the UK or Ireland. Taking time to debrief teams or individuals after they return home from overseas is very important, even if they have only been away for a week or two. The aims of debriefing are many, but include helping those returning home appreciate that 'Re-entry' can have its difficulties and advising them on how to cope with any issues that may crop up. Debriefing also provides an opportunity for individuals, teams and congregations to ask, "What next?" and to look at how the experience can be integrated into the life of the individual and/or congregation. A good debriefing can mean that an overseas visit becomes a life-changing mission experience rather than simply being a great trip! The best people to carry out debriefing are those in the congregational leadership who were involved in the sending process and those who will have an on-going responsibility for the individual's pastoral care. MIC understands that many in congregational leadership will feel ill-prepared for this task and so the **Debriefing for Senders** training event aims to equip congregational leaders and team leaders for this vital task. Now in its second year, this event has proved very worthwhile and has been well received by all who have attended.

45. **Equipping through ... Engaging:** While many members of PCI have the opportunity to serve on short-term overseas teams through their own congregation, opportunities also exist for individuals to join one of **PCI's Overseas Teams**. Indeed, the number of applications received this year for BMO's and YAC's Overseas Teams would indicate that centrally organised teams are still a necessary provision for individuals who wish to be part of a broader denominational or specialist team or for whom the option of serving on a congregational team does not currently exist.

46. When establishing short-term overseas teams, BMO focuses on doing what congregations aren't able or choosing to do, and offers team opportunities that complement what's going on at congregational or presbytery level. This summer, for the sixth year running, BMO will be sending an all-age team to **Ukraine**. This team will lead an English-language teaching camp for young people, with members having the opportunity to share their faith through music, drama and discussion groups.

47. BMO will also be sending two teams to **Malawi**. One team, rather than having a particular 'job to do', will, instead, have the opportunity to '**Go ... See**' a variety of projects in a number of locations. The purpose of this team, which is comprised (largely) of congregational leaders, is for the participants to gain a better understanding of the Malawian context and to see what opportunities exist for establishing potential partnerships with congregations or projects in Malawi. The other Malawi team, in a joint venture with YAC, is comprised of early years teachers and early childhood development specialists. This specialist **Teacher's Team** will be supporting the work of Diane Cusick and Fiona Innes in Mzuzu through the provision of training workshops for Malawian early years teachers.

48. MIC is glad to help individuals, congregations and other mission boards and organisations to identify special projects from a wide range of partner church activities. In 2008/2009 the Youth and Children's project entitled Treasure Box raised £97,000 for Sunday School Development in Malawi and the Boys' Brigade Appeal entitled 'Trees please...' in Kenya, Jamaica and Palestine raised £15,083. By March 2010 *Presbyterian Women's Birthday Project* for 2009/2010, supporting the Vine Centre in Belfast and a women's project in Nepal, had raised over £43,000.

49. On the understanding that United Appeal targets have been met, the Board continues to offer the service of channelling funds from 'extra mile' giving, ensuring that, where appropriate, a refund of tax paid by the donor is received under the Gift Aid scheme. Once again, appreciation is expressed to those who have given so faithfully in this way.

50. MIC amended grants for 2010 and proposed grants for 2011 have been agreed totalling £10,000 in each year.

MARK WELSH, Convener

## STEERING COMMITTEE

51. **Review of the activities of the Board:** At the request of the Priorities Committee of the General Board, BMO undertook a review of its activities in early 2010.

52. The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities Report to the General Assembly in 2002 indicated that at central level, 'Mission and Ministry' Boards should exist to "encourage, facilitate and resource mission and ministry at local congregational level." While this policy was primarily concerned with mission and ministry within Ireland, nevertheless, BMO is aware that the same holds true for global mission engagement. It means encouraging further developments in mission education and training; and hands on involvement by congregations that goes beyond contributing prayerfully and financially to a more direct

involvement in global mission. This is a key priority for BMO at this time, and is being taken forward by the Mission Involvement Committee.

53. When it comes, however, to the responsibility for sending personnel, this has been viewed as a specialised activity to be undertaken centrally by BMO as a way to “enable local congregations together to be involved in wider mission and ministry, where such mission and ministry would not be possible alone.” (Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities 2002). Working together with our partners around the world to highlight needs and opportunities, the sending of missionaries overseas has remained a core activity of the General Assembly since its inception in 1840. It could be said that this has been part of the DNA of our Church, and BMO plans to continue to place personnel strategically in overseas contexts depending on God’s calling.

54. When PCI commits to sending mission personnel into overseas settings and as people tell their story in mission, other resources have followed, namely funds and prayer. In 2009 there were restricted donations of £977,084 towards the work of partner churches in which BMO personnel have been engaged. Bearing in mind the level of giving in this area, it is proposed that the Board scale down the central payment of grants to partners who benefit from these restricted donations from individuals and congregations committed to extra mile giving, having met their United Appeal Board target of honour. At the same time, however, the Board will endeavour to maintain grant funding to partners where there are no mission personnel. A new and robust grant application process will also be implemented.

55. By proceeding in this way, funds would be freed up for expenditure in the strategic area of mission education and involvement. Indeed a recent review of staffing has highlighted a particular need for a training role to be taken up in this area. BMO wish to appoint a Mission Training Officer, and generally expand our work in this key role of facilitation. This would require no new money from the United Appeal.

56. In summary therefore, BMO’s budgetary plans for 2011 are to continue existing work (by equipping God’s people here in Ireland for growing involvement in global mission and by sending mission personnel), while scaling down the payment of grants to overseas partners, in a carefully managed way, wherever restricted donations provided by the wider church are already at a significant level.

57. **Partnership:** Outstanding questions on partnerships highlighted in the 2009 BMO General Assembly Report continue to be taken forward. Particular attention is being given to the concern voiced for some time that PCI has failed to have a voice on the unfolding situation in the Middle East. In February 2010, BMO convened a panel on the Middle East situation, with a view to finding a place for a Panel on the Near East within existing structures.

58. Amended block grants for 2010 and proposed block grants for 2011 were agreed totalling £30,000 in each year.

59. **Partner Church Visits and Visitors:** In the past year the following overseas visits were made to attend consultations and conferences called by partner churches and missions organisations, and to offer pastoral support and encouragement to BMO missionary personnel:-

- Portugal: Professor Bill Addley and the Rev Uel MARRS visited James, Heather, Alana & Lucy Cochrane and attended the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Portugal's 64th Synod Meeting from 8 to 12 June 2009.
- Romania: Miss Dobbie McCaughan, a BMO pastoral advisor, visited Cluj to meet with Darren and Nicola Aitcheson, from 7 to 15 July 2009.
- Ukraine: BMO's team to Ukraine went ahead as planned from 9 to 21 July 2009.
- Romania: The Rev John and Mrs Joan Hanna visited Darren and Nicola Aitcheson and Csaba, Ilona, Jázmin & Carissa Veres from 26 to 30 July 2009.
- Ethiopia: The Rt Rev Dr Stafford Carson and his wife Patricia visited with partners of Christian Aid and Tearfund from 31 July 2009 to 13 August 2009.
- Brazil: Professor Bill and Dr Ruth Addley and Miss Helen Johnston visited Naomi Keefe in Recife and attended the 150th Anniversary Celebrations of the Presbyterian Church in Brazil from 4 to 17 August 2009.
- North Africa: Professor Gordon Campbell to deliver teaching on the Gospel of John to students of the Augustine Institute from 6 to 12 September 2009.
- Kenya: The Rev Stephen Richmond attended the Presbyterian Church of East Africa's official opening of the Galana Bridge from 25 to 31 October 2009.
- Spain: The Rev Uel MARRS attended the Synod of the Spanish Evangelical Church (IEE) in Barcelona from 9 October to 12 October 2009.
- England: The Rev Uel MARRS, Miss Helen Johnston, Mrs Joan Scott, the Rev Mark Welsh, Dr Heather Williamson and Miss Deborah Ford attended the Global Connections Annual Conference entitled 'The Whole Church Taking the Whole Gospel to the Whole World' at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire from 4 to 6 November 2009.
- Malawi: Mrs Dorothy Marshall, PW President and Mrs Edna McIlwaine, PW Overseas Vice President from 7 to 25 November 2009.
- Romania: The Rev Uel MARRS visited with the leadership of the Transylvania Church District; Csaba, Ilona Jázmin & Carissa Veres; and the Board of the Caleb House from 22 to 26 November 2009.
- England: The Rev Adrian Moffett attended Global Connections Europe Consultation at Redcliffe College from 4 to 5 January 2010.
- France: Professor Gordon Campbell to teach at the Free Faculty of Reformed Theology (FLTR) from 4 to 8 January 2010.
- Nepal: The Very Rev Dr Trevor Morrow and Mr Nigel Eves to meet with UMN and partner organisations; lead a retreat for

UMN personnel and Nepali pastors; and visit Joe and Janet Campbell, Grenville, Georgie, Toby, Ollie and Lulu Hopkinson from 21 February to 5 March 2010.

- Ukraine: The Rev Uel Marrs to visit Jenni Wolfe and meet the leadership of the Transcarpathia Church District of the Hungarian Reformed Church in May 2010
- Latvia: Professor Gordon Campbell to deliver teaching on the Gospel of John to students and ministers at the Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary from 29 May to 5 June 2010

60. During the past year BMO was delighted to receive the following visitors from partner churches and mission organisations:

- The Rev Dr Nuban Timo (Moderator), the Rev Kameli-Maleng (vice Moderator), the Rev Souk (Synod Administrative Secretary) and Mrs Sayuna (Synod Council member) from the Evangelical Christian Church in Timor, Indonesia, from 25 May to 6 June 2009
- The Very Rev David Gathanju, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, from 29 May to 4 June 2009 for the General Assembly.
- Prof Kihumbu Thairu, Vice Chancellor of the Presbyterian University of East Africa, Kenya on 23 June 2009.
- A delegation of Nepali politicians and civil servants – Mr Rakam Chemjong, Mr Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Mr Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Mr Ramesh Lekhak, Mr Punya Prasad Neupane, Mr Madhab P Paudel, Mr Sadhu Ram Sapkota from 12 to 20 September 2009.
- The Rev Maqsood Kamil, Executive Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan, from 12 November to 16 November 2009.
- Mrs Josephine Soko from the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Livingstonia Synod, Malawi, from 7 February to 31 March 2010.
- The Rev Gertrude Kapuma, Head of Station, Mulanje Mission, CCAP Blantyre Synod, Malawi, from 9 to 23 March 2010.

61. **Office Staff and volunteers:** BMO is once again very grateful to its full time staff who, in handling a heavy workload, have carried out their work with great efficiency and enthusiasm. At present the executive staff team is comprised of the Overseas Secretary; Mission Involvement Development Officer, and Personnel Officer (Overseas). Over the past year they have been ably supported by an administrative staff team which has included a Senior Administrative Officer; two Senior Secretaries; and a Secretary/Receptionist (temporary). In September 2009 BMO expressed its gratitude to Mrs Muriel Manson who retired on 31 August 2009 after fourteen years of dedicated service. Following recent staff retirements existing work in the office has been reviewed and evaluated. It is hoped in the near future to fill the vacant posts of Secretary and Senior Secretary. We also extend appreciation to those who, from time to time, help out in the office on a voluntary basis.

62. Aside from the full-time staff in the Mission Overseas Office, many members of the Board willingly sacrifice of their time, energy, gifts and experience to serve on the BMO's Assembly and Board Committees. Gratitude is extended to all who, on behalf of the Board over the past year, have attended consultations with partner churches, visited missionaries in their country of service and spoken in PCI congregations about the work overseas.

63. BMO's membership of Global Connections enables it to keep up to date with new thinking and initiatives in world mission. The opportunity to work alongside other agencies and societies in the local context through the Mission Agencies Partnership (MAP) is valued. As members of the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies (BIAMS), BMO is further able to reflect upon mission. In the past year BMO has been represented at a number of forums and conferences examining a broad range of mission related issues.

64. **Personnel:** BMO thank God for His faithfulness and provision for all BMO mission personnel who share their lives, gifts and skills in different nations and continents around the world – see Appendix A. The Board continues to strive to encourage and support them as they share the good news with people from different languages and cultures.

65. In the past year Calls were issued as follows: Miss Fiona Innes to missionary service in Malawi as Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in the Early Childhood Development Department of the CCAP Livingstonia Synod; the Rev Laszlo Orban, a minister of the King's Pass District of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Transylvania, to Special Ministry for two years in First Ballynahinch Presbyterian Church; Mr Volker and Mrs JinHyeog Glissmann, members of Harmony Hill Presbyterian Church, to Missionary Service in Malawi where Volker will serve as Executive Director of TEEM (Theological Education by Extension Malawi). Together with their children Lina, Micha and Lukas, they plan to depart for Malawi during July 2010.

66. In June 2009, Miss Jenni Wolfe was commissioned by the Congregation of First Islandmagee for service under the Board's Ignite category as a Language Assistant in the Reformed school and congregation of Nagyberég, Ukraine.

67. Appreciations are recorded for Miss Margaret Young (Malawi 1995 – 2009), Miss Heather Lennox (Jamaica 2003 – 2009) and for the Rev David and Mrs Maggie Steele (Malawi 2001-2010) who resigned from the service of the Board during 2009/10.

68. During the last year memorial minutes were recorded and sympathies expressed in respect of the Rev Norman Hunter who passed away on 12 May 2009, having served in Malawi from 1965 to 1972, the Rev William (Bill) McReynolds who passed away on 17 January 2010, having served in India from 1946 to 1960, and Miss Shirley Rutherford who passed away on 8 February 2010, having served in Malawi from 1997 to 2001. Full details of memorial minutes are held in the BMO office.

69. Working in conjunction with MAP (Mission Agency Partnership), with whom BMO continue to take an active role, a weekend retreat was organised and run once again this year. This provided an opportunity for pastoral encouragement for BMO mission personnel and Presbyterians serving with



other mission agencies. An appropriate programme for the children, sometimes referred to as 'third culture kids,' was also part of this weekend.

70. BMO is grateful for the ongoing services of Miss Dobbie McCaughan and the Rev Brian Hughes who comprise the Pastoral Adviser Team. It is hoped to add to the team in the coming year.

71. **Finance:** The ongoing commitment by PCI members to support the work of mission in a wide variety of ways brings ongoing encouragement. Thanks are recorded to individuals and congregations who year after year have provided financial support through the United Appeal, and for all that the United Appeal Board does to ensure that the target of honour for the total appeal is reached each year. BMO received £1,050,000 from the United Appeal Board in 2009, and £1,000,000 has been approved by UAB for 2010.

72. The married couples' furlough allowance, which is the benchmark to the setting of all other missionary allowances, was increased for 2010 by 1% to £22,087. A detailed review of missionary allowances is currently underway. The accounts for the year ended 2009 show a cash surplus of £8,022.

73. Once again the Board of Mission Overseas is very grateful for the ongoing support of *Presbyterian Women (PW)* whose office bearers, central committee and members continue to contribute faithfully to the work of the Board. In 2009, the Annual Grant made by PW to the work of the Board was £200,000. BMO commends the PW for their enthusiasm and commitment to the work of PCI in mission beyond the shores of Ireland, and thanks its members for their prayerful and practical support of BMO mission personnel.

74. BMO is once again indebted to the Board's Finance Officer (Overseas), Mr Mervyn Whittle, for his ongoing commitment to monitoring income and expenditure, finalising budgets and accounts, and for devoting a great deal of his time, energy and expertise to the ongoing maintenance work of the BMO properties. We also express thanks to the staff of the Finance Office for their support and guidance.

75. The Board gives all honour, praise and thanks to God for His guidance and sustaining grace over this past year, and ever seeks to bring glory to His Name.

## APPENDIX A

In the main report most of the names of BMO mission personnel have not been mentioned but their names, spheres and category of service are listed below and are to be taken together with this report.

### ***INTEGRATE CATEGORY – service of two or more years***

#### **BRAZIL**

Naomi Keefe	2004	Outreach programme, The Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB), Casa Caiada, Recife
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**GREAT BRITAIN**

Christopher & Nivedita Benjamin	1989	Ministry among Asians in Wembley, London
Edwin & Anne Kibathi	2009	Ministry among East Africans in East London

**INDIA**

Linda Jackson	1996	Teacher
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**INDONESIA**

Mervyn & Raing McCullagh	1998	Organisational Consultant
	2007	Community Development
Barry McCroskery	2004	International Partner Relations & Diaconal Work (social witness), Evangelical Christian Church in Timor (GMIT), Kupang

**KENYA**

Stephen & Angelina Cowan	1985 1989	Outreach & Development Work, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Tuum
Naomi Leremore	1991	Teacher for Centre for Early Childhood Education and development of Sunday School materials, PCEA, Nairobi
Derek & Linda Roulston	1998	Outreach & Development Work, PCEA, Timau
Gary & Mary Reid	2000	Outreach & Development Work, PCEA, Olkinyiei

**MALAWI**

Diane Cusick	1995	Pre-school teacher training, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Livingstonia Synod, Mzuzu
Robin & Helen Quinn	2004	Lay Training Centre and Livingstonia Theological College, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Ekwendeni
Una Brownlie	2007	Nursing, David Gordon Memorial Hospital, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Livingstonia
Neil & Sara Kennedy	2008	Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics & Child Health – College of Medicine of the University of Malawi & Consultant Paediatrician in the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Blantyre
Fiona Innes	2010	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in Early Childhood Development

Programme, CCAP Livingstonia Synod,  
Mzuzu

### NEPAL

Joe & Janet Campbell	2006	Lead Advisor in Conflict Transformation & Pastoral Care with United Mission to Nepal (UMN), Kathmandu
Grenville & Georgina Hopkinson	2008	Strategy and Development Policy Director, UMN

### PAKISTAN

Ron & Hilary McCartney	2007	Teaching, Forman Christian College, Lahore
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### PORTUGAL

James & Heather Cochrane	2008	Leadership training, Bible teaching and Discipleship, Portuguese Bible Institute (IBP), Faro
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### ROMANIA

Csaba & Ilona Veres	2001	Programme Co-ordinator, IKE-YMCA
	1993	Mera Children's Project, Aksza Mission & Caleb House, Cluj

### SPAIN

Derek & Jane French	2000	Student outreach with Grupos Biblicos Unidos (GBU), Bilbao
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### *IGNITE CATEGORY – service of up to one year*

### MALAWI

Maurice & Helen Kennedy	2008	Schools Renovation & Refurbishment Programme, CCAP Blantyre Synod, Blantyre
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### UKRAINE

Jenni Wolfe	2009	Language Assistant, Nagyberegi Reformatus Liceum (NBRL), Transcarpathia Church District of the Hungarian Reformed Church
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### CANDIDATES IN MISSION

Volker & Jin Hyeog	2010	Executive Director, Theological Education by Glissmann Extension in Malawi (TEEM), Zomba
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**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly give thanks for the faithful service and dedicated witness of PCI's missionary personnel and their families serving overseas, and encourage BMO to continue in its established role of sending out missionary personnel in response to the Call of God and the invitation of PCI's partners.
3. That the General Assembly give thanks for the witness of all who come from partner churches to study and serve in Ireland, and encourage all BMO Assembly Committees to foster a climate in which PCI's partners can make an increasing contribution to the denomination's thinking about, and practice of, mission today, both in Ireland and throughout the world.
4. That the General Assembly encourage congregations to equip their members for involvement in global mission and to avail themselves of the information, insight and training provided by BMO's resources and events.
5. That the General Assembly encourage congregations to seek opportunities for active involvement in leadership development projects, especially through engagement with, and support of, leaders in training from partner churches.
6. That the General Assembly acknowledge the guidelines on church planting and evangelism and affirm their continued commitment to encourage and assist partner churches in this work.
7. That the General Assembly give thanks that in difficult times support for the World Development Appeal is strengthening.
8. That the General Assembly give thanks that, confronted with suffering and devastation caused by the earthquake in Haiti, Presbyterians in Ireland responded with generosity, bringing hope in the midst of destruction.
9. That the General Assembly give thanks for the support raised by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, the Junior Boys' Brigade, and Presbyterian Women for the mission of partners in Malawi, Kenya, Jamaica, Palestine and Nepal, and for every expression of 'extra mile' giving by the wider church; and recognise especially the very generous grant received from PW in 2009.
10. That the Board of Mission Overseas, with its associated working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 279 of the Code as follows:

# BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND

Convener: Rev RA PATTON

Secretary: Rev DJ BRUCE

1. The purpose of the Board of Mission in Ireland is: “Serving the Church, enabling mission”.

2. Our vision is that increasingly, PCI Congregations will be vibrant communities of Christ, serving and transforming Ireland.

3. To fulfil this purpose and realise this vision, the Board currently pursues four key strategies:

(1) Mission Development. Building the capacity for mission in Ireland

- (a) Research
- (b) Mission Planning
- (c) Mission Development
- (d) Mission Networks

(2) Strategy for Mission. Pushing the boundaries of mission in Ireland

- (a) Home Mission
- (b) Irish Mission
- (c) Deaconesses
- (d) Evangelists

(3) Communication. Narrating the story of mission in Ireland

- (a) ReachOut
- (b) Online presence
- (c) Conferences
- (d) Publications

(4) Support. Enabling the delivery of mission in Ireland

- (a) Finance
- (b) Grants
- (c) Personnel
- (d) Property

4. The Board employs five executive staff, with two full-time and three part-time administrative staff. It has six Committees and a number of Panels, which together seek to turn these key strategies into realities in the lives of Presbyteries and Congregations across the Church.

5. The Board affirms the utter dependence of His people on God alone for mission. All our plans are dependent on Him, and our effectiveness in mission is an outworking of His gracious dealings with His human creation. As in the past, the Board calls the Church to fervent and urgent prayer for the spiritual life of this island, and to seek His will for the future witness of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in these deeply challenging days. All that follows

in this Report is offered in this spirit of absolute dependence on the God who sends us out to proclaim His good news.

## STRATEGY FOR MISSION COMMITTEE

### Mission Planning

1. During 2009/10, the Board has been working with Presbyteries and Congregations in mission planning. The “Tell it Again” materials have been used in hundreds of Congregations, and the process of mission planning has uncovered the scale of the task and the breadth of the opportunities open to us as a Church. Some copies of the “Tell it Again” materials are still available from the BMI office.

### Strategy for Mission Development

2. In light of the resolution passed at the 2009 General Assembly, (Minutes, 2009, p 71) which required the production of “a detailed strategy for supporting mission development at Presbytery and Congregational levels”, the Assembly this year will hear a presentation of this strategy, and be invited to approve it. With Assembly approval the Rev David Thompson ([dthompson@pcinet.org](mailto:dthompson@pcinet.org)) will head up the delivery of a programme of facilitated discussion with each Presbytery over the next number of years, and will help Presbyteries and Congregations navigate the shift from mission planning to mission development. The full text of the proposed strategy is attached as Appendix A to this Report, with an appended resolution, that it is sent to Presbyteries for comment by 31 December 2010.

### Home Mission

3. The Committee offers comment on mission-related matters to the Union Commission when requested to do so. The following Home Mission charges or Congregations are currently vacant, and the Committee is assessing and evaluating the opportunities for mission development in each case:

- Galway
- (Ebrington) and Inch
- Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge, Newtownbutler
- Ballina, Killala, Ballymote
- Carlow and Athy
- (Frankford, Castleblayney) and Corvalley
- Carndonagh and Malin
- Carrigart and Dunfanaghy

### Church Planting

4. The Revs Dario Leal (Cliftonville Road, Belfast) and Andy Carroll (Donabate, North Dublin) have recently begun ministry as Church Planters, having been called by the BMI to these positions. The Board affirms again the necessity for our denomination to be committed to new Church development,

and commends Dario and Andy to the prayers of the wider Church. A meeting with Steve Timmis, an experienced church planter working with the Crowded House initiative in Sheffield and as the European representative of the Acts 29 church-planting network, took place on Wednesday 14 April 2010 to discuss models of church planting.

### **Urban Mission Panel**

*The Rev David Thompson reports:*

5. A Panel to steer the Board's activities in urban settings was launched on 14 April 2010 at an event in Belvoir Presbyterian Church. The Committee has agreed the Panel's membership and its remit is threefold:

- Urban Mission Network – to create, build and sustain an urban mission network for the denomination as a vehicle for sharing stories, bringing practitioners together, highlighting resources, aiding reflection and provoking imagination;
- Urban Mission Strategy – to act as an advisory body to the BMI Strategy for Mission Committee in assessing the allocation of resources in urban mission;
- Urban Mission Research – to commission pieces of research to address some presenting issues in urban mission.

6. By resolution of the Board, Taughmonagh Presbyterian Church in South Belfast Presbytery was designated an Urban Mission Congregation, having applied to the Presbytery for this change in its designation.

### **Nightlight Panel**

*The Rev Alistair Bill reports:*

7. The ministry of Nightlight continues under the Director John Luke, with Linzie Cobain and Brian Simons as the Development Officers and Catherine Dalzell taking responsibility for administration and communication. The project is being reviewed during 2010. The Board recognises and affirms the valuable work that has been done since the inception of this work in September 1995. In seeking to proclaim and demonstrate the Kingdom of God through word and action, Nightlight has involved dozens of volunteers, and touched the lives of thousands of people in the entertainment areas of Belfast. Following an initial period of consultation, completed during the winter, a more complete process of review will be finished by the autumn of 2010, after which the Board will receive a final report.

8. The review will address:

- The vision and values of the project;
- The current spheres of work in Belfast;
- The prioritisation of ministry resources;
- The management structures;
- The place of Nightlight in PCI's developing strategy for Belfast city centre;
- The possibility of multiplication of the model;

- The possibility for continuous learning from similar ministries across the UK and elsewhere;
- The effectiveness of training for volunteers and staff;
- The possibility of additional sources of funding.

### **Evangelism**

9. In the General Board's Panel on Ministries report, a section has been written on identifying and training evangelists. The Board sees this as a priority for the Church at large, and proposes to commit some time and energy to the preparation and delivery of a part-time course for evangelists. This is not to supersede the strong biblical imperative that all believers are called to be witnesses to the transforming power of the gospel, but to recognise that for some, there is a specific gift of an evangelist. This gift once identified needs to be nurtured and used.

WILLIAM HENRY, Convener

## **RESEARCH AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee will adjust its emphasis, should the Assembly agree a shift from mission planning to mission development. Among other functions, the Committee will help the Board assess resources from third party agencies, which may be useful in Congregational life and mission. For Congregations that have been envisioned by mission planning, there will be a place to turn for "What next?" ideas.

2. The Committee receives reports from two Panels as follows:

### **Worship Panel Report 2010**

*The Rev Karen Campbell reports:*

3. The "Engaging the Heart" Conference in August 2009 was well attended and provided an important opportunity to be revived by the concept of worship as covenant renewal. John Witvliet, the Director of Calvin Institute of Worship, provided inspirational keynote addresses.

4. The Worship Panel continues to provide a mentoring service available to all musical directors. This has been used by a variety of Congregations over the past year. The musical arranging service continues to be available on request ([mhiggins@pcinet.org](mailto:mhiggins@pcinet.org)) to provide musicians with arrangements for different instruments.

5. During the year, the Worship Panel piloted a 'reluctant organist' workshop for five Presbyteries, where participants could receive organ training for a Saturday morning. The Panel are looking to develop this project in order to encourage other organists.

6. The Panel plans to provide several worship road shows in the incoming year which will provide practical and theological training for those involved in worship leading. The core theme running through each seminar and workshop will be the use of Psalms in worship.

## Revision of the Book of Public Worship Panel

*The Very Rev Dr David Clarke reports:*

7. The Panel and its working groups have met at various times over the winter months and its work has been broken down into several specific areas, as follows:

- Sacraments;
- Presbytery Services;
- Special Occasions, including weddings and funerals;
- Worship and Christian Festivals.

8. Sub-Committees have been established to address each of these areas.

9. The Panel has invited suggestions from Presbyteries on the format of services of Ordination and Installation; and are hopeful that its work will be substantially completed during 2010. When ready, the material will be submitted to Presbyteries for comment, and a resolution to this effect is appended.

10. The Panel plans to complete its work this year and bring a full report to the 2011 General Assembly.

CHRIS KENNEDY, Convener

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

1. During the year BMI has published 6 editions of ReachOut magazine, with a growing circulation – 8,000 copies of each edition are distributed. The focus in ReachOut is unashamedly the mission of the Church, and the intention is that Ministers and leaders will be able to find ideas for effective mission, and examples of missional activity that could be replicated in their locality. Circulation could increase. It is noted that 2 out of every 5 Congregations within PCI do not promote the magazine at all. Robin Fairbairn ([rfairbairn@pcinet.org](mailto:rfairbairn@pcinet.org)) can organise a promotional pack for any Congregation on request.

2. BMI hosts [www.missionireland.org](http://www.missionireland.org) with its associated prayer bulletins, blogs and downloadable resources. The site is being refreshed and restructured in time for the Assembly this year. Online booking for events and online payments for events and products are just two of the added facilities, not to mention *Flickr* and *YouTube* connectivity. Prayerfocus, in a new layout, continues to be e-mailed to subscribers as well as being available for downloading in PDF from the website.

3. The Publications Panel has been looking at the production of all of the Board's printed material. This includes the re-publication of some earlier booklets, which remain relevant to PCI members and Ministers. The Communion booklet "The Lord's Supper" has already been refreshed and reprinted in a contemporary format and is available for order from the BMI office or website.

4. Mission in Ireland evenings have again been well supported this year, with an estimated 2,600 people in attendance across 13 locations. There was greater flexibility this year both in the timing and choice of venue. These events



are part of the Board's strategy to tell the story of mission across the Church. During the year, as well as the regular day and residential conferences for Deaconesses and Irish Mission Workers, the Board ran two special conferences on urban mission and missional church. "Cross with Care" in October 2009 was jointly led by Dr Manny Ortiz, Professor of Ministry and Urban Mission, Emeritus, and Dr Susan Baker, Adjunct Professor of Practical Theology, from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. "Total Church" in April 2010 was led by Steve Timmis, co-author of the book of the same title.

5. "Awake to Jesus" – a low-cost edition of Luke's gospel was produced as a resource for Congregations to use in mission. While the devotions, which are linked to the Gospel according to Luke appearing at the end of the booklet, were primarily intended for use during the period leading up to Easter, they were not specifically linked to that period and so could be used at any time of the year. 35,000 copies were distributed.

6. A resolution is appended, proposing that the Communications Committee become a Committee of the Board.

CHERRY POYNTON, Convener

### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

*Mrs Irene Young reports:*

1. The Board currently deploys 9 Irish Mission workers, with one probationer.

2. In partnership with the PW, BMI deploys 28 Deaconesses, with a further 5 student Deaconesses at different stages of preparation.

3. There are currently 36 Ministers serving with the Board, including 2 Church Planters, 2 in urban situations and 32 in Home Mission Congregations.

4. A full directory of personnel serving with the Board is included in Appendix B.

#### **Home and Urban Mission Ministers and Church Planters:**

5. The Rev Dario Leal was ordained and inducted as Church Planter on Cliftonville Road under the supervision of North Belfast Presbytery on 22 September 2009.

6. The Rev Andy Carroll was ordained and inducted as Church Planter, Donabate, North Dublin, under the supervision of Dublin Munster Presbytery on 7 February 2010.

7. The Rev William Montgomery was ordained and inducted as Home Mission Minister in Fermoy and Cahir (stated supply) on 20 March 2010 by Dublin and Munster Presbytery.

#### **Irish Mission Workers:**

8. Mr Keith Preston was transferred from Tyrone Presbytery to serve in East and South Belfast Presbyteries, reaching migrant communities.

9. Mr Jonathan Reid resigned from the Glens of Antrim, Ballymena Presbytery.

10. Mr Eamon Doyle was transferred to Howth and Malahide to undertake a further probationary year, under the supervision of the Rev Dr Gary Millar.

11. Mr Stephen Wilson was transferred to Kells and Ervey on a temporary placement to serve alongside the Rev Dr Brian Savage.

**Deaconesses:**

12. Mrs Elizabeth Matthews received a Call to serve in Elmwood Congregation.

13. Mrs Elizabeth Warnock was Called and Commissioned to serve as a Deaconess in Abbey, Monkstown, alongside the Rev John Seawright, on 6 September 2009.

14. Miss Rosemary Spiers was Called and Commissioned to serve as a Deaconess in First Antrim, alongside the Rev Bill Parker, on 6 December 2009.

**Student Deaconesses:**

15. Mrs Lynda McFaul commenced her probationary year in First Carrickfergus on 1 June 2009, and subsequently received a Call to serve in First Carrickfergus.

16. Mrs Eileen Black, Miss Joanne McCourt, Miss Tracey Nicholl and Mrs Hazel Reid commenced two year training at Union Theological College on 28 September 2009.

17. Miss Amy Johnston commenced one year training at Union Theological College on 28 September 2009, and starts a probationary year in Muckamore on 1 June 2010.

18. Mrs Lorna Lynn resigned as a Student Deaconess on health grounds in September 2009.

**Resignations and Retirements:**

19. Ms Gillian Martin resigned from Woodvale Congregation in March 2010 to commence other employment. She remains a Deaconess on the records of North Belfast Presbytery for one year.

20. Miss Sheila Sutter retired on health grounds from Kells, Ballymena Congregation, in October 2009.

**Line management arrangements:**

21. It is assumed by the Board that where possible, line management responsibility for Deaconesses in congregational situations, Irish Mission workers deployed with a Congregation and other personnel in similar locations should be through the local Minister. To assist Ministers with additional staff, the Board of Christian Training ran a pilot training course in January 2010. The BMI will have further input into future courses, and may seek to provide additional training specific to BMI staff, and/or Home Mission Ministers. An overture relating to The Code Par 302 is appended to reflect this understanding, in relation to Irish Mission workers.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

*Mr Douglas Cowan reports:*

1. This has been a difficult year for all concerned with financial oversight, both within the Church and throughout the commercial and business world, with few indications that the outlook will improve in the short term. However, the Committee affirms that its faith and dependency is not on the world economic situation but on the Lord who has provided all that has been needed to finance the work of the Board for 2009/10.

2. BMI has assets in properties owned, part owned, rented out and rented for staff members. The Committee would like to adjust some of these arrangements but, after a full review, believes that this is not the opportune time to make any changes. This matter will be kept under review.

3. During 2009 the Shankill Road Mission ceased to operate. The Board has incurred costs in the closing of this operation. Arrangements have been made to look after the property until a decision is made about the long-term future of the building.

4. As part of the overall review of BMI accounts, the Committee has had discussions with appropriate groups about the finances of ReachOut, Nightlight and the cost of employing 28 Deaconesses. The Committee is grateful for the support of Congregations and PW to help with the latter and are satisfied that these important areas of the Board's work are being held accountable for the finance involved.

5. In 2009 the Irish Mission Fund was established and the balance carried forward into 2010 to provide grants for Congregations or Presbyteries seeking to appoint evangelists to work in their areas. Congregations or Presbyteries seeking financial help with the employment of evangelists (full or part time) may apply to Lorraine Beatty for application forms and assistance with the process. ([lbeatty@pcinet.org](mailto:lbeatty@pcinet.org))

6. The Committee reviews the Board accounts quarterly and is satisfied that these are in line with budgetary projections. Where there have been variations, these have been investigated. One major difference in the figures in 2009 arose because some capital expenditure and sale of surplus land included in the original budgets did not take place because of the property downturn both in the Republic and Northern Ireland. Variations in the currency value of the Euro have also affected the Board's financial position.

## GRANTS PANEL

*The Rev David Bruce reports:*

1. The Grants Panel with members of the BMI Finance and Property Committees has met regularly to consider and approve grant applications from Congregations and Presbyteries. The Board currently makes grants under the following main headings:

Capital	For construction of buildings and land purchase. This is open to Home and Urban Mission Congregations only.
Property repairs	For assistance towards repairs to Church property. This is open to Home and Urban Mission Congregations only.
Mission support	For missional projects, such as the employment of additional personnel, equipment purchase or the refurbishment of facilities for missional purposes. This is open to all Congregations.
Urban Mission support	For the deployment of mission support staff in urban situations. This is generally a fixed term grant over three years, in partnership with a local Congregation or Presbytery. It is open to all Congregations in urban situations.
Irish Mission Fund	For the employment of evangelists, usually based with a Congregation or group of Congregations. It is open to all Congregations and Presbyteries.

2. In addition, the Board also administers loan funds and fabric grants for Home and Urban Mission Congregations, and the Grants Panel manages these arrangements.

3. Mr Nehru Dass is the BMI Finance Manager with overall financial operational responsibility, ([ndass@pcinet.org](mailto:ndass@pcinet.org))

4. Miss Lorraine Beatty has executive responsibility for managing the Board's grant-making capacity, and its properties, and acts as secretary to the Panel, ([lbeatty@pcinet.org](mailto:lbeatty@pcinet.org))

## PROPERTY COMMITTEE

*Mr Brian Knox reports:*

In addition to the stated meetings of the Property Committee, representative sub-Groups, using the varying expertise of members, have visited numerous Church properties, meeting with many Congregational representatives and thereafter reporting to the Board as appropriate. The following is a brief summary of the work of the Committee since reporting to the 2009 General Assembly.

### **Irvinestown**

1. The new replacement Church building has been completed and the Congregation is enjoying the facilities provided.

### **Mullingar**

2. Negotiations to acquire a new site for a larger Church building are progressing and several meetings have been held with representatives from Westmeath County Council, the site owners. The Property Committee continues to progress matters, hopefully concluding the site purchase soon.

**Mountmellick**

3. Positive attempts to sell the listed Church building and adjoining manse are continuing, without any offers being made to date. In the interests of safety, some essential maintenance works have been carried out.

**Drogheda**

4. Tenders have been obtained and statutory approvals granted in respect of the new Church building on a site acquired in South Drogheda. The Committee was encouraged to learn during several meetings with Drogheda representatives, of the commitment of the local Congregation to the next phase of the project, however unfortunately there has been no progress to date regarding the sale of the existing Church. The local Congregation realise that, while BMI have committed to support this exciting scheme with a substantial grant, no work can be commenced until the project funding is secured. Positive discussions are ongoing.

**Waterford**

5. The ownership of St Patricks, Waterford, a listed building in need of essential repair and upgrading works, has been transferred to the Methodist Church. The handover service took place in October 2009 and our involvement has ceased, although the door is open for us to establish a new Presbyterian witness in the area.

**Ballyshannon**

6. Due to the downturn in the property market no sound offers have yet been received for the Church building. Meetings have been held with the Architectural Conservation Officer from Donegal County Council with a view to obtaining permission to remove pulpit, pews etc, thereby hopefully making the property more marketable. Essential maintenance works are being undertaken to minimise further deterioration to the property.

**Corvalley**

7. The sale of the old manse has progressed, a holding deposit having been paid by the purchaser. A contract of sale is presently being prepared for completion.

**Donabate**

8. Arrangements have been made to rent a house in Donabate for an initial 12 month period for the Board's Church Planter.

**Howth and Malahide**

9. Proposals to extend the Church Hall at Malahide have been agreed and building works are to be progressed at this time.

**Shankill Road Mission**

10. Essential remedial work to dangerous stonework has been completed on the SRM building, and it is realised that there will be the need for certain other works to secure the building. All members of the Property Committee have visited the building, however final decisions regarding the future of the property have yet to be taken, bearing in mind the present state of the property market.

**Lisbellaw Manse**

11. Tenders have been obtained and statutory approvals granted in respect of agreed work to extend and upgrade the manse building. A grant towards this work was approved and works are presently underway.

**Clones Manse**

12. Maintenance/upgrading works to the interior of the manse have been carried out and essential re-roofing work is presently underway.

**Kilkenny**

13. Following appropriate researches and surveys, a new house has been purchased for the Irish Mission Worker in Kilkenny.

**General**

14. The Committee continues to strive to be supportive in respect of property issues throughout the work of the Board. Over the year numerous matters have been under discussion in addition to those already referred to. These include; Arklow; former manse in Galway; Donegal manse; residence in Cork; Fermoy; Cahir; Bellasis; Sligo.

15. The Property Committee continues to work in close co-operation with other relevant Committees in order to give appropriate ongoing assistance to the Board in property matters. Work on preparation of a comprehensive database regarding all title deeds of properties owned by BMI is progressing. The location of most title deeds has now been recorded, and in due course the deeds will be examined and any difficulties noted will be resolved.

16. The Assembly will be asked by overture to amend Par 300(4) of The Code to allow proceeds from the sale of Home Mission properties to be used for missional purposes through the normal grants mechanisms of the Board.

**SPUD**

1. This year SPUD delegates had the chance to participate in a session jointly led by BMI and BMO. The young people were given a chance to prayerfully reflect on accounts of different communities, both at home and abroad, fictional and non-fictional. They considered how far these reflected their own communities, and went on to explore how we both identify and respond to needs in both local and global communities. The young people were asked what makes them care about the lives of others. Being loved by God, they said, meant that they loved others. They were convinced that we must build relationships with people, learn their stories, and that our greatest resource in responding to these people's needs is God. The young people were encouraged to work with

God, not just for Him. Prayer, patience, and being prepared to answer tough questions were all things that the young people felt were important to ensure that the Biblical message of caring for others is translated from Word into action. The young people felt strongly that greater co-operation between the Mission Boards would be beneficial, and were keen to maintain a voice in the ongoing conversations surrounding holistic mission and community engagement.

## APPENDIX A

### A DETAILED STRATEGY FOR FUTURE MISSION DEVELOPMENT

#### 1. Reflections on the present Mission Planning Process

- 1.1 May 2010 saw the completion of a process in which both Presbyteries and Congregations have drawn up Mission Plans. The exercise has enabled our denomination to take stock of the opportunities and challenges we face in mission in Ireland today and our readiness to respond.
- 1.2 The Board of Mission in Ireland pays tribute to the work of those who, in prayer and dependence on God, have given themselves to the task of mission planning at both Presbytery and Congregational levels.
- 1.3 At the completion of this process, the Board of Mission in Ireland remains eager to identify the best means by which to fulfil its role of serving the Church and enabling mission. To that end the Board offers the following key observations and conclusions which represent the valuable lessons learned through the mission planning process.

#### 2. Presbytery Mission Planning

- 2.1 The limitations of Presbytery capacity.
  - 2.1.1 The Presbytery Mission Plan process proved to be an exacting task. The Board recognises the constraint of time commitment available in the already busy schedules of those who led the process. Additionally, this was the first time Presbyteries had been asked to undertake such a task. The nineteen Presbytery Mission Plans vary widely in terms of content and length. In part this reflects the variety of situations across Presbyteries as to their geographical spread, context for mission and cohesion. In addition however, it does appear that those Presbyteries facing greater challenges in terms of sustainability of Congregations and the pressures of secularisation of society invested more in, and benefited most from, the exercise. In every case, Presbytery Mission Plans focused more on analysing the present situation than anticipating future strategic responses.

*It is evident that if Presbyteries are to exercise a significant role in planning for mission in future that their capacity to fulfil this task will need to be enhanced. This will require maximising the limited time and resources available to undertake this crucial aspect of Presbytery life and work.*

- 2.2 The need for outside facilitation.
- 2.2.1 Presbytery Mission Plan teams were reluctant to comment on specific challenges and opportunities facing Congregations in mission, much less begin to evaluate their responses. In part this may have resulted from a lack of available information and knowledge of local situations. Another factor at work, however, was a widespread feeling of discomfort at being asked to comment on the life and witness of neighbouring Congregations. This issue of proximity impedes Presbytery's readiness to exercise its role in local accountability with the necessary rigour.

*Experience suggests that only with the support of a degree of external facilitation will Presbytery be enabled to fulfil its role of oversight of Congregations in developing their local mission.*

- 2.3 Presbytery as an agent of mission support.
- 2.3.1 Many Presbyteries were creative in responding to last year's General Assembly resolution asking them to offer support to Congregations in their task of mission planning. Presbytery's ability in supporting Congregations in mission planning provides a platform to build upon in the future. The bringing together of neighbouring Congregations in geographical clusters seems to offer a particularly valuable means of exploring new possibilities in mission.

*Opportunities for Presbytery to bring together Congregations for mutual support, encouragement and training in mission must become an ongoing part of its life and work.*

### 3. Congregational Mission Planning

- 3.1 The importance of context.
- 3.1.1 Both the *Tell it Again* and *Tearfund Discovery* resources proved popular vehicles in enabling Congregations to engage their membership in planning for mission. Both resources recognised the range of different starting points for Congregations and offered a varied toolbox of materials rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

*The need to take seriously the variety of contexts for mission, both in terms of Congregations and the communities they serve, is crucial to the effectiveness of future mission development. Congregations need to continue to be encouraged to develop their ability to read their local situations and develop appropriate responses.*

- 3.2 An atmosphere of worship and dialogue.
- 3.2.1 The importance of the emphasis of engaging in this process guided by the Word and in an atmosphere of prayer, in an effort to genuinely discern God's will, positively undergirded the whole



exercise. Additionally, there was widespread testimony to the value of an approach to mission planning that facilitated discussion among members. Many long-standing impediments to mission were named for the first time and the levels of awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing situation facing local Congregations deepened.

*The value of a worshipful, relational and conversational, rather than a managerial and detached, approach to mission development needs to continue to be built upon. Mission strategy must be something we do with each other before God rather than to each other as an exercise in mere organisational re-structuring.*

### 3.3 The outworking of our Presbyterian polity.

- 3.3.1 A much-undervalued strength of our Presbyterian polity is the interlocking relationship between the local Congregation, Presbyteries and the Boards of the General Assembly. No-where is this more a strength to build upon than in the area of mission. The mission planning process modelled a positive working relationship in which mutual respect began to replace institutional distrust.

*As in all areas of Church life, unity is a fragile treasure, which God calls us to maintain and develop. We need to learn to become more comfortable with, and value, gracious creative tension. Our ability as a denomination to respond to future challenges and opportunities in mission may rise or fall on our aptitude in harnessing the latent strength of this aspect of our Presbyterian heritage.*

## 4. Future Strategy: From Mission Planning to Mission Development

- 4.1 While in no way wanting to under-play the importance of the concrete outcomes of the mission planning process, the most positive, lasting impact of the initiative may in the longer term be measured less by the specific projects generated and more by the culture of new missional thinking created. Nevertheless, it would be easy for the gains of all that has been done over the last two years to be lost by a failure to follow through on commitments.
- 4.2 In order to harness the best of the new breeze of mission blowing throughout the denomination and to support Congregations, in particular, in developing their local mission, the Board proposes a subtle, but important, shift of future emphasis from *mission planning* to *mission development*.
- 4.3 *Mission development* needs to be seen as a dynamic ongoing process to which we are always bending our minds and hearts and wills, rather than an exercise in *mission planning* to which we routinely return every five years.
- 4.4 By adopting this *mission development* approach, the Board's priorities in encouraging future strategy for mission would therefore be built around the following key principles:

- 4.4.1 **Building** the capacity of Presbytery as a missional body;
  - 4.4.2 **Facilitating** Presbytery in both supporting Congregations in mission and exercising their role of oversight;
  - 4.4.3 **Stimulating** an atmosphere of worshipful reflection on the challenges of mission in Ireland;
  - 4.4.4 **Equipping** Congregations to understand, and respond to, the challenges and opportunities of local mission;
  - 4.4.5 **Harnessing** the potential of Presbyterian polity for mission.
- 4.5 In terms of the ongoing outworking of these principles for mission development, two key questions suggest themselves.

- *How can the Board of Mission in Ireland and Presbyteries work together in the support and oversight of Congregations in the task of local mission?*

- *How can the momentum for mission gained at Congregational level through the mission planning process be built upon?*

## 5. Empowering Presbytery as a missional body

It is the exception, rather than the rule, that Presbytery is an agent of mission. More typically, Presbytery acts in *support* of Congregations as the primary agents of mission. Equally, the role of exercising *oversight* of Congregational mission also falls within Presbytery's remit. Presbytery fulfilment of either of these responsibilities is not without its present difficulties, particularly surrounding issues of capacity and proximity, as noted above.

- 5.1 PRESBYTERY MISSION AUDIT. To assist Presbytery in exercising these roles more effectively, the Board proposes the development of a rolling process of Presbytery Mission Audit. Facilitated by the Mission Development Officer in conjunction with Presbytery Mission Development Committees, the process of Mission Audit would proceed as follows:
- 5.2. SCHEDULE
- 5.2.1 Four Presbyteries audited per year, beginning September 2011. One Presbytery Audit undertaken in each of the following periods Sept/Oct; Nov/Jan; Feb/Mar; Apr/May.
- 5.3 PROCESS
- 5.3.1 Two month review process facilitated by BMI Mission Development Officer along with Presbytery Mission Development Committee.
- 5.4 COMPONENTS: With room for flexibility determined by local situations, the following basic plan is proposed:
- Gathering of Congregational information by questionnaire;
  - Joint Presbytery Worship service around missional theme (Sunday night, stated Presbytery meeting, or other);
  - Preparatory meeting of Presbytery Mission Development Committee and BMI Mission Development Officer to examine Congregational returns;

- Series of informal face-to-face interviews undertaken by Presbytery Mission Development Committee and BMI Mission Development Officer with Minister and one representative elder to review each Congregation's mission and to pray together;
- Compilation of short, focused comment on each Congregation's progress in mission with further suggestions to explore as appropriate;
- Identification of any particular common challenge or emerging opportunity for mission within the Presbytery area or within its Congregations;
- Production of Presbytery Mission Audit document;
- Audit document presented to Presbytery for discussion and approval;
- BMI/Presbytery facilitated training day on presenting issues for Congregations in mission development and/or to showcase potential models for mission;
- Twelve months later, Presbytery Mission Development Committee obtain a written review of Congregational progress and follow up with personal contact where necessary;
- Any future missional issue arising within Presbytery bounds would then be considered in the light of the latest audit and by dialogue between all the parties concerned.

#### 5.5 PRESBYTERY CONSULTATIONS.

- 5.5.1 Recognising that there may be some overlap with the existing system of Presbytery Consultation, it is proposed that in the calendar year in which a Presbytery undertakes a Presbytery Mission Audit, the process of Presbytery Consultation be suspended.

### 6. Maintaining and supporting Congregational momentum in mission

Due to the sheer scale of the task and the complex variety of issues surrounding mission in Ireland today, the capacity of Presbyteries or the Board of Mission in Ireland, to positively contribute to the mission of Congregations directly, is limited.

- 6.1 NETWORKS. Alongside its work with Presbyteries in the provision of a rolling Mission Audit, the Board of Mission in Ireland can also serve and enable mission at Congregational level through introducing a series of networks for mutual learning and encouragement. These networks might centre upon the following three broad contexts, or categories for mission.
- 6.1.1 *Urban* – addressing the challenges of mission in the urban contexts of town, city, and housing estate.
- 6.1.2 *Rural* – addressing the challenges of mission in the diverse landscape that represents rural Ireland today.
- 6.1.3 *Missional Church* – addressing the broader, and less geographically specific, issues of transition from a culture of maintenance to a mindset for mission.
- 6.2 MAINTAINING THE NETWORKS. It is envisaged that the networks would operate primarily through a web-based presence, regular e-bulletins

and personal gatherings of practitioners. The Board of Mission in Ireland's role would be to develop and maintain the networks based around the following key objectives:

- 6.2.1 Sharing stories of initiatives in mission;
- 6.2.2 Bringing practitioners together;
- 6.2.3 Highlighting available resources;
- 6.2.4 Aiding reflection on particular challenges to mission;
- 6.2.5 Provoking imagination to stimulate new models of mission.

## **7. Which way now?**

- 7.1 The Board recognises that any strategy for mission development needs to be tested as to its potential to add value to what is happening on the ground, and will benefit by being refined by the reflection of the wider Church. The Board of Mission in Ireland proposes to send this outline strategy to Presbyteries for their comments to be returned by 31 December 2010.
- 7.2 In addition, to continue to build upon the work done in Presbytery and Congregational mission planning, it is proposed that the Board's Mission Development Officer meets with Mission Development Committees from each Presbytery in the period September 2010 to May 2011, to undertake the following three tasks:
- To examine and make brief comment on each Congregation's Mission Plan;
  - To consider how the Presbytery Plan might be refined in the light of Congregational Mission Plans;
  - To present a report comprising the above to Presbytery.

In so doing, this exercise will give a flavour of what is proposed in the Presbytery Mission Audit process.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Directory of Ministers, Deaconesses and Irish Mission workers currently serving with the Board.**

#### **Home Mission Ministers**

	Congregations in (brackets) are not in the Home Mission.
Rev R Agnew	(1st Monaghan) and Smithborough
Rev M Anderson	Arklow
Rev S Anketell	First Baileborough, Corraneary, (Trinity Bailieborough)
Rev Janice Browne	(Kerrykeel, Milford) and Rathmullan
Rev D Campbell	(Blackrock) and Bray
Rev CFD Clements	Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo
Rev C Dickson	(Cavanaleck) and Aughentaine
Rev JG Faris	Cork and Aghada
Rev CJ Gamble	Naas

Rev WJ Hayes	Tullamore and Mountmellick
Rev K Henderson	(Aughnacloy) and Ballymagrane
Rev J Honeyford	(2nd Castledearg) and Alt
Rev KA Jones	(Waterside) and Fahan
Rev SJ Lockington	Corboy and Mullingar
Rev R Love	Taughmonagh
Rev Dr DK McCrory	Maynooth
Rev GJ Mackarel	Drumkeeran, Killeshandra, Cavan, Bellasis
Rev DJ Montgomery	Greystones
Rev K Meyer	Sandymount
Rev Dr JG Millar	Howth and Malahide
Rev NS Millen	(Dundalk, Castlebellingham) and Carlingford
Rev GA Mitchell	Sligo and Boyle
Rev William Montgomery	Fermoy and Cahir
Rev DT Moore	Kilkenny
Rev T Morgan	Clones, Stonebridge, Ballyhobridge, Newbliss
Rev SW Rea	Enniscorthy and Wexford
Rev DW Reid	(Ardstraw) and Douglas
Rev SJ Richmond	Donegal
Rev J Rushton	Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount
Rev Dr RB Savage	Kells and Ervey
Rev RB Thompson	(Badoney, Corrick) and Glenelly
Rev DJ Woodside	Drogheda
Rev GP Young	Moville and Greenbank
Rev Geoff Hewitt (Methodist)	Limerick
Vacant	Galway
Vacant	(Ebrington) and Inch
Vacant	Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge, Newtownbutler
Vacant	Ballina, Killala, Ballymote
Vacant	Carlow and Athy
Vacant	(Frankford, Castleblayney) and Corvalley
Vacant	Carndonagh and Malin
Vacant	Carrigart and Dunfanaghy

### **Urban Mission Ministers**

Rev M Gibson	Westbourne
Rev D Rankin	Strand, Belfast

### **Church Planters**

Rev D Leal	Cliftonville Road, North Belfast Presbytery
Rev A Carroll	Donabate, Dublin and Munster Presbytery

### **Deaconesses**

Jenny Clegg	Ballycrochan, Bangor
Amanda Cooper	New Row, Coleraine
Muriel Cromie	Belfast City Hospital chaplaincy team

Doreen Draffin	Whitehouse
Eleanor Drysdale	Wellington, Ballymena
Lynda Gibson	NI Prison Service chaplaincy team
Jean Gwyn	Royal Victoria Hospital chaplaincy team
Sharon Heron	Strand, Belfast
Roberta Irvine	First Comber
Christine Kyle	Ulster Hospital chaplaincy team
Phyllis Linton	West Church, Ballymena
Michelle McCauley	Ballygowan
Heather McCracken	Alexandra and locum Royal Victoria Hospital chaplaincy team
Sonya McCullough	Shore Street, Donaghadee
Sadie McCullough	Whiteabbey
Lynda McFaul	First Carrickfergus
Carol McRoberts	Tullycarnet
Elizabeth Matthews	Elmwood, Lisburn
Carol O'Hara	Antrim and Musgrave Park Hospital chaplaincy team
Jackie O'Neill	Joymount, Carrickfergus
Julie Peake	Portrush
Margaret Robertson	Gardenmore, Larne
Jenny Robinson	South Belfast Friendship House (Social Witness Board)
Kathleen Spence	Scarva Street, Banbridge
Evelyn White	First Lisburn
Rosemary Spiers	First Antrim
Liz Warnock	Abbey, Monkstown

### **Student Deaconesses**

Amy Johnston	2nd year Muckamore (probationary placement, 1 year)
Eileen Black	1st year
Joanne McCourt	1st year
Tracey Nicholl	1st year
Hazel Reid	1st year

### **Irish Mission Workers**

David Boyd	Adelaide Road, Dublin
Tom Dowling	Kilkenny
Eamon Doyle	Howth and Malahide (probationer)
Kevin Hargaden	Maynooth
Harry Moreland	Fermoy and Cahir
Billy Patterson	Drogheda
Keith Preston	Migrant communities, South and East Belfast
Stephen Wilson	Kells and Ervey
William Workman	Athy and Carlow
Philip Whelton	Arklow

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the report be received.
2. That the General Assembly note the Board's strategy for future mission development (Appendix A) and direct that this paper be sent down to Presbyteries for consideration and comment by 31st December 2010, and ask the Board to bring a final report to the General Assembly in 2011.
3. That the General Assembly encourage Presbyteries to welcome the proposal in Appendix A, 7.2, that the BMI Mission Development Officer meets with Mission Development Committees from each Presbytery in the period September 2010 to May 2011 for the purposes outlined.
4. That the General Assembly ask the BMI Research and Resources Committee through its Panel on the Revision of the Book on Public Worship to prepare a Report and send it down to Presbyteries for consideration and response by 31st December 2010.
5. That the General Assembly commend the work of Nightlight under its Director, Mr John Luke, and encourage volunteers to offer themselves for service.
6. That the General Assembly encourage Congregations to set aside one Sunday in the year to celebrate our rich access to Scripture and in this regard, commend the online resources of the Bible Societies in Ireland to Ministers and Kirk Sessions.
7. That the BMI Communications Committee, being a Committee of the General Assembly, becomes a Committee of the Board.
8. That the Board of Mission in Ireland with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 280 of the Code as follows:

### OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS

#### **Anent Par 40(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 40(4) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place: "The Session shall record attendance of communicants at the Lord's Supper and may do so by the use of tokens or other appropriate method approved by Presbytery."

RA PATTON

### OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

#### **Anent Par 280(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 280(1) of the Code, the words "the Irish Mission Superintendent" and "the Presbyterian Mutual Society Agent" be deleted, and that the words "Youth and Inter-Church Relations" be deleted and the words "and Youth and Children's" be substituted in their place, and that the words "Youth Board" be deleted and the words "Youth and Children's Board" be substituted in their place.

**Anent Par 300(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 300(4) of the Code, the words “a Home Mission Repairs Fund account from which” be deleted and the words “the Board of Mission in Ireland so that” be substituted in their place, and that the words “towards the acquisition or repair or improvement of Church or manse property held in connection with any congregations or charges under the Board” be deleted.

**Anent Par 302(3)(a) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 302(3)(a) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

(3)(a) An Irish Mission Worker is responsible to the Presbytery for his life and doctrine and at Presbytery Consultations enquiry should be made about his work. Immediate responsibility for the direction and supervision of the work of Irish Mission Workers shall rest with the Minister or in some instances the Presbytery/Board having charge. The Board shall exercise a general responsibility. Irish Mission Workers shall report annually on their work to the Presbytery and the Board of Mission in Ireland.

DJ BRUCE



# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

President: Mrs DOROTHY MARSHALL  
General Secretary: Mrs CAROLINE HAWTHORNE

## Theme for the year: All Things New

(This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Board of Mission in Ireland, Board of Mission Overseas and Board of Social Witness.)

1. The theme for this past year has been **All Things New**. Members were encouraged to examine their lives in the light of God's Word, to remember that His compassions are new every morning and that He can create in each of us a new heart. This theme challenged *Presbyterian Women* to consider new ways to reach out to those beyond our own church walls.

2. The *Presbyterian Women's* (PW) office continues to be staffed by Mrs Caroline Hawthorne, General Secretary; Miss Fiona Bingham, Senior Secretary and Miss Naomi Campbell, Receptionist/Secretary. Mrs Charlotte Stevenson has been working as part-time Development Officer for the past four years and has made an invaluable contribution to the work of PW. PW is very grateful for the staff team it has and records sincere thanks to them for their efforts over the past year. It records a special thanks to Mrs Pauline Kennedy who acted as General Secretary during Caroline's maternity leave.

3. The Resources Committee continues to be commended by members for the production of the resource pack. Groups are offered this pack each year to help with their programme – it is full of useful ideas relating to the theme for the year. PW records sincere thanks to Mrs Ann Blue for convening this committee and for the valuable contribution she and committee members have made.

4. The PW website is continually being updated and it contains useful information relating to the organisation. Helpful resources and images are available on the website for members to download. The website address is [www.presbyterianireland.org/pw](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/pw).

## 5. CENTRAL COMMITTEE 2009/10

### Office Bearers:

President:	Mrs Dorothy Marshall (North Belfast)
Home Vice President:	Mrs Phyllis Spence (Dromore)
Overseas Vice President:	Mrs Edna McIlwaine (Armagh)
Former YWG Chairperson:	Mrs Valerie Tweedie (East Belfast)

### Committee Members:

Mrs Margaret Stevenson (Ards)	Mrs Nan Bradford (Monaghan)
Mrs. Moyra Stirling (Armagh)	Mrs Ann Blue (Newry)
Mrs Lynn Murray (Ballymena)	Mrs Jean Donald (Omagh)

Mrs Evelyn Coleman (North Belfast)	Mrs Gwen Carson (Route)
Mrs Winnie Moffett (East Belfast)	Mrs Edith Holmes (Templepatrick)
Mrs Lynda Stothers (Carrickfergus)	Mrs Anne Thompson (Tyrone)
Mrs Hazel Clarke (Coleraine & Limavady)	Miss Anna Morison (former YWG)
Mrs Violet Miller (Coleraine & Limavady)	Mrs Deborah Hyland (former YWG)
Mrs Georgina Hunter (Derry & Donegal)	Mrs Vera McLean (former YWG)
Mrs Valerie Stewart (Derry & Donegal)	Mrs Caroline Hawthorne
Miss Zena McAllister (Down)	Mrs Charlotte Stevenson (Ex Officio)
Mrs Vera Crawford (Dromore)	Mrs Anthea Harrison (Ex Officio)
Mrs Elizabeth Moffett (Iveagh)	Mrs Patricia Carson (Ex Officio)

## 6. New Members of Central Committee 2010/11

Mrs Sandra Stokes (Down) Dr Jean Shannon (South Belfast)

## 7. New Office Bearers effective from Annual Meeting, 6 May 2010

President 2010/11:

Mrs Phyllis Spence (Dromore)

Home Vice President 2010/12:

Mrs Valerie Tweedie (East Belfast)

8. The Central Committee met eight times during the year. As well as carrying the responsibility of steering the work of the organisation, the Central Committee continues to provide representatives to several committees and Boards in PCI and various other organisations and bodies.

9. Mrs Winnie Moffett represents PW at Women's Link.

10. Mrs Valerie Stewart represents PW at the NI Women's Rural Network.

11. Mrs Maureen Weir represents PW at Women's Forum and The Olive Branch.

12. Mrs Caroline Hawthorne represents PW on the Focusfest Committee.

13. Mrs Dorothy Marshall has served as Central President 2009/10. During this year she has given generously of her time in attendance at meetings of Boards and Committees and has travelled extensively throughout Ireland to fulfil her many speaking engagements. She has also given up a lot of her time to help with administrative duties during the General Secretary's maternity leave. Central Committee deeply appreciates the contribution Dorothy has made to PW especially during her term in office.

14. PW Central Committee continues to appreciate the support and advice given by the Clerk of the General Assembly, the Rev Dr DJ Watts.

15. The Committee also records its thanks to the Rev D Bruce, Secretary to the Board of Mission in Ireland; the Rev WS Marrs, Secretary to the Board of Mission Overseas; Mr L Conway, Secretary to the Board of Social Witness; and Mr S Lynas, Secretary to the Board of Communications, for their help and expertise.

## 16. Events 2009/10

- The Annual Prayer Meeting was held on 2 April, 2009, in the Chapel, Church House. Prayers were led by Mrs Joan Hanna.
- The Annual Meetings were held on 7 May, 2009, in Church House. The guest speaker was Mrs Noor Van Haften from the

Netherlands, who explained the story as told at the beginning of Luke 5. The familiar passage tells of the miraculous catch of fish that Jesus ordered Simon to go out and catch in the Sea of Galilee. Noor challenged us to lower our nets and step out into the deep for God. She said that Jesus calls us to be His friends, His followers and fishers of men.

- Prior to Central Committee in September 2009 the Rev David Brice conducted a Communion Service.
- A conference was held on 12 September, 2009, in Church House, Belfast with the theme, "Go Deep!" It explored further the teaching at the Annual Meetings and acted as a trial for the Roadshows which were planned for 2010. The programme was presented by Central Committee members and a drama team from Ebrington. Worship was led by Mr Graham Hawthorne from Woodlands Presbyterian Church, Carrickfergus.
- PW Forum met on 28 January, 2010, in the Minor Hall, Church House. The Birthday Project and PW theme for 2010/11, "Stir us to Action" were introduced at the meeting.
- In the spring of 2010 *Presbyterian Women* hosted a series of Roadshows in five different venues throughout the Province to equip and enthuse Christian women to do what many find difficult - share their faith. The Roadshows used drama, songs, poems, readings and true life stories to convey the message that we are to go out into the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ. The programme was varied and aimed to 'wake us and shake us' so that we will open our mouths to speak of Him and for Him.

### **South Belfast Friendship House**

17. The PW Central Committee continues to value the partnership with The Board of Social Witness in relation to the management of South Belfast Friendship House.

18. The Management Committee met on four occasions during the year. On 26 March, 2010 the new extension of South Belfast Friendship House was re-opened by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Mrs Naomi Long, and the work of Friendship House was re-dedicated by the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Right Rev Dr Stafford Carson.

Friendship House continues to be a place of Christian witness for this area of South Belfast. This is evident by the number of people who call to share their news with the staff! The sick and housebound are visited regularly, as well as those who haven't been in contact for a while.

19. The Management Committee is thankful to Mrs Jenny Robinson, and Mrs Eunice Moore for their continued faithful service and commitment to the work of South Belfast Friendship House over the past year. It records special thanks to Mrs Menita Cheesman who completed her work as Project Worker in June 2009. The Management Committee would also welcome the new Project Worker, Miss Ashley McFaul, who took up this post in January 2010. The Committee is indebted to the team of volunteers who give of their time and

talents. The Committee would like to record its thanks to Julie Gibson, detached Youth Worker in Great Victoria Street Presbyterian Church, Mark Hawthorne and Mark Cunningham and their band of volunteers from Derryvolgie Halls of Residence and other volunteers who help out on a regular basis - their support is invaluable.

20. In August 2009 Stuart Hawthorne from Woodlands Presbyterian Church brought a team of youth leaders to run a week long Holiday Bible Club in Great Victoria Street Presbyterian Church Halls (permission kindly granted). This was a very memorable week.

21. The new extension was completed in January 2010 and the Committee thanks the architects, Knox and Markwell, and builders, Mourne Construction, who have worked hard to complete this new extension to the highest standards. The Management Committee hopes that existing and new projects will be developed as a result of these new premises.

22. There was a wonderful response to the Christmas Appeal. PW Groups, congregations and individuals gave money gifts, toys and household goods, and many people were helped as a result of this generosity. It is also a huge encouragement to the staff team when personal contact is made with the House. The Management Committee would like to record its thanks to all who contributed.

23. The Board of Social Witness and *Presbyterian Women* hope to source additional funding for the future development of Friendship House.

### **Finance**

24. PW Central Committee is very grateful for the ongoing support of its members which enables PW to contribute to the mission of the Church at home and overseas. Income to the Mission Fund for Home and Overseas in 2009 amounted to £572,243.

25. PW gave a grant of £260,000 in 2010 to the Board of Mission in Ireland to partly support 27 Deaconesses, and one Probationary Deaconess, serving in Congregations, the Community, Hospitals and the Prison Service. In addition, PW are currently supporting five Trainee Deaconesses at Union Theological College.

26. PW gave a grant of £190,000 in 2010 to the Board of Mission Overseas.

### **Birthday Project**

27. The Birthday Project runs from 1 May until 30 April each year.

28. The total amount received for the 2008/09 Birthday Project was £71,049, and this went towards Nightlight (Odyssey Complex) and a Women's Empowerment Project in Indonesia.

29. At the time of writing the Birthday Project (2009/10) for supporting the Vine Centre, Belfast and a Widows' Empowerment Programme in Nepal had received over £43,000.

**Wider World**

30. PW Central Committee records sincere thanks to the Editor, Mrs Anthea Harrison, Miss Ruth Mitchell who compiles the children's page, the Editorial Committee and all who contributed to the magazine and its promotion.

31. The Family Focus section which covered issues on family finance, missionary families, Sunday observance and disability continues to receive positive feedback.

32. Each issue has a different theme. The four themes for 2009 were: Prayer, Mission, "All Things New" and Worship.

33. Wider World has a readership of around 19,000. The Committee continues to promote Wider World amongst the members of our Church and would encourage more members to subscribe to this excellent magazine.

34. Selected extracts from Wider World continue to be available on audio tape for those who are blind or partially sighted.

**RESOLUTION**

1. That the Report be received.

# BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev RA LIDDLE

Secretary: Mr LINDSAY CONWAY, OBE

## Strategic Objective 1

“The Board shall deliver an effective service to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the wider community.”

### “God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense!”

1. “My neighbour is great. One night I was very sick and phoned her. She came in the middle of the night to get me to hospital and arrange residential care for my wife.”

“It was great to have some people at the church to look after our learning disabled daughter for a few hours to allow us to do some Christmas shopping.”

“We couldn’t believe the church helped with the funeral. It made the rest of us feel there were people out there that cared.”

“I just don’t know how I would have made it through the grief without the love and support of my friend from the church.”

“You know who your friends are when things go wrong. I never went to church but when the business folded I was so appreciative of the prayers and support of the church.”

2. James 2v17, 18 in The Message reads, “God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense! I can already hear one of you agreeing by saying, ‘Sounds good. You take care of the faith department, I’ll handle the works department.’ Not so fast. You can no more show me your works apart from faith than I can show you my faith apart from works. Faith and works, works and faith, fit together hand in glove.”

3. It can be humbling to hear what others think. When news broke recently of yet another church scandal teachers in a particular staff room were heard to say, “That’s just typical of Christians, bigoted, money-grabbing, lying!” No differentiation between denominations was made. Words can’t persuade people otherwise, but actions can. People are respected for what they do. In the Church CH Spurgeon is celebrated mainly for his preaching – a prince of preachers. Yet near the end of his life Spurgeon said that the most powerful sermon he ever preached was to open a 500 bed hostel in Stockwell in London.

4. The aim of the Board of Social Witness is, “To Live out the Love of Christ through a Caring Church within our Communities.” In a sceptical society the Board of Social Witness seeks to encourage all our congregations to care within their communities and so live out the love of Christ. Also, through its wide variety of projects and ministries, the Board seeks to give tangible expression to the love of Christ. Faith and works, works and faith, fit together hand in glove.

5. The Board of Social Witness operates in two very distinctive worlds, that of church and social care, each in turn can be divided into a number of subsets. When the Board reorganised its structure in 2005 it endeavoured to

harmonise structures with that of partner agencies and organisations. This has greatly improved working relationships with all of the partners and stakeholders. At the same time the Board is able to retain its role as a Christian social care agency.

6. The wide diversity of the Board's work is a major strength, providing a wide range of programmes ranging from student accommodation to nursing homes, addiction services to child protection training, a traditional welfare approach to a number of social issues. In common with the vast majority of this sector the Board is experiencing dramatic underfunding, with further savage cuts forecast in 2011-2012. At the Board Meeting on the 9 March it was agreed that the issue of underfunding should be raised with the relevant Ministers, Trusts and Boards. At a recent meeting of the Social Justice Network it was stressed that in general terms the voluntary/faith sector is supplementing the statutory sector and would be very reluctant to close its doors and refuse admission to anyone.

7. In their book 'Total Church' Tim Chester and Steve Timmis state, "People often talk about evangelism being the priority, but this suggests a list of actions that you work through from the top down. If you do not have time for the bottom items (like social involvement) this does not really matter. But evangelism cannot be separated from social action because mission takes place through relationships and relationships are multi-faceted." (Leicester: IVP 2007 p76.) Paul pointed out that he and his colleagues were not only willing to share the gospel but themselves with the Thessalonians.

8. David Wells picks up the same theme. "Postmoderns want to see as well as hear, to find authenticity in relationship as the precursor to hearing what is said. This is a valid demand. Faith, after all, is dead without works, and few sins are dealt with as harshly by Jesus as hypocrisy. What postmoderns want to see, and are entitled to see, is believing and being, talking and doing, all joined together in a seamless whole." (David F Wells, *Above All Earthly Powers: Christ in the Post Modern World*. Leicester: IVP 2005 p315.) The motto of the Board of Social Witness is '*People matter to God*' and the only authentic follow-on must be that "God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense!"

9. For further information about the breadth and depth of the work of Social Witness the Church is encouraged to make use of the website [www.pcibsw.org](http://www.pcibsw.org). Any comments are welcome and should be directed to the Board Office.

## THANKS

10. The Board serves a wide range of people and meets a wide range of needs due to the dedicated skills and commitment of more than 400 staff who work in homes, projects and in the BSW Office in Church House. A large thank you is also due to the many who serve so faithfully on the Board's numerous committees and panels, and to the Board Convener, the Rev Bobby Liddle, and also to the Secretary and Director of Social Service, Lindsay Conway, who continues to use his huge amount of experience, vision, energy and good humour for the benefit of Board and Church.

11. The Board is grateful to be able to work so closely with a wide range of statutory and public agencies which work with the Board as it seeks to

minister to a broad range of needs in our society. To Department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety, Supporting People (Northern Ireland Housing Executive), Probation Board of Northern Ireland, Access (NI), Garda Siochana , our partner Housing Associations, Department of Education and many others grateful thanks are extended for their continued funding and support.

12. A special word of thanks goes to those within the Presbyterian Family to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, Financial Secretary, Head of Personnel, Information Officer and their staff teams and to the United Appeal Board for their funding and support. It has also been good to be part of a much closer cooperation and consultation between Boards and the Board of Social Witness expresses its thanks to all the Board Conveners and Secretaries. Invitations to visit Presbyteries and congregations to inform of the Board's work are always appreciated and thanks are due to all such for their support.

13. This year the Board benefited from having almost a full complement of Conveners with the Very Rev Dr Donald Patton taking over as Convener of Specialist Ministries and the Rev Anne Tolland as Convener of Family Services. This year the Rev John Noble will step down as Convener of Older People Services. John is to be greatly thanked for his excellent work through a time of significant transition from the old Presbyterian Residential Trust to Older People Services and from diversified to centralised organisation. During his convenership he suffered a prolonged period of ill-health, yet remained informed and continued to take an active interest in the work of Older People Services and the Board in general. The Board thanks John for his faithful service and wishes him God's blessing in his continued ministry.

#### **THE BOARD AT A GLANCE:**

- 20 Locations
- 445 bed spaces
- 450staff
- 200 Volunteers
- £8 + Million operational budget

#### **AREAS OF WORK:**

- **Residential Care** – Older People and Learning Disability
- **Nursing Care**
- **Working with people with Addictions**
- **Working with Offenders**
- **Supported Housing** – Older People and Disabled
- **Student Accommodation**
- **Counselling Service**
- **Sheltered Housing**
- **Child Protection** – Training, Advice and Support
- **Chaplains** – Prison, Hospital, Hospice, University and Forces
- **Ministry to the Deaf**
- **Family Centre** – Young Families, Older People, School Children and Homeless
- **Lobbying and Campaigning**



**FUNDING**

Total income for the year 2009 was derived from the following sources (£000's):

Income from Services	6,980
United Appeal	357
Donations and Bequests	184
Grants	64
Other	345
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>7,930</b>

This enables expenditure across the following areas (£000's):

Older People	5,393
Addiction Services	640
Ex-prisoners	421
Student Accommodation	349
Unemployed People	3
Ministry to Deaf Community	65
Learning Disabled	769
Relationship Counselling	22
Publications	3
Chaplains	245
Management Costs	342
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>8,252</b>

**SPECIALIST MINISTRIES COMMITTEE****Strategic objective 2.**

1. 'Specialist Ministries shall promote and support the work of Chaplains and the Churches ministry to the Deaf Community.'

2. In this increasingly secular age it is a privilege to provide chaplaincy in our hospitals and prisons. Many patients and prisoners welcome ministry from chaplains at an uncertain and fragile time in their lives. The Committee wishes the Rev Rodney Cameron well in his continuing work as Chaplain in Maghaberry prison. At a time of stringent cuts in Health Trust budgets the Committee calls upon the relevant government departments throughout Ireland to give firm commitment to the importance of chaplaincy provision within hospitals and to resource it adequately. It urges ministers and congregations to keep informed and prayerful for this important work.

3. The Committee commends our Forces Chaplains to the prayers of the Church. They share the risks of service personnel in various conflict zones having to minister to the traumatised as well as dealing with their own personal traumas related to these conflicts. It remembers too their families and their anxieties for their loved ones.

4. The work of a student chaplain is often to find ways of making contact with students and staff. They exercise a listening ministry coming alongside those with problems as well as sharing their Christian faith. The Committee commends the Rev Karen Mbayo, our new Chaplain in Queen's University, Belfast, and thank Cindy Bennett, Acting Assistant Chaplain and those working with her, who maintained this work while a new Chaplain was being appointed.

5. The Committee thanks the Rev Joseph McCormick for his work as chaplain at Magee University, Londonderry. Mr McCormick has resigned his position and the Committee is indebted to the Rev Dr Robert Buick for his work as Interim-Chaplain.

6. The Committee thanks Anne Rodgers for her work in the Kingan Church, and commends the congregation to the prayers of the wider Church.

## CHAPLAINS

### *The Rev Dr RFS Poots OBE reports:*

1. The Chaplains Committee continued to supervise and encourage those involved in the significant ministry of hospital, hospice and prison chaplaincy throughout Ireland as well as seeking to make their work more widely known to the whole Church.

2. The Rev SJ Gray retired as chaplain to Altnagelvin Hospital and the Rev Dr SR Jones is currently acting chaplain. The Committee wishes to thank Mr Gray for his years of caring service.

3. The Committee co-operated with the Belfast Trust and the South Belfast Presbytery in the appointment of the Rev Dr RJ Greer as the first Presbyterian Locum Chaplain.

4. The Committee also visited Magilligan Prison where they were shown through the various departments and given a most insightful introduction to the challenges and encouragements which exist within the prison system.

## FORCES

### *The Rev Purvis Campbell reports:*

1. Being a chaplain to Her Majesty's Forces is a multi-disciplinary ministry where a minister is alongside others wherever they are in their lives and where the agenda is set by others rather than by the Church. Chaplains often wear the same uniform as the members of their community, share the same tensions, dangers and celebrations, for where their parishioners go, they go – be it to war or other duties. Like everyone else in the Forces they never stay in one place for very long. Their work is infinitely varied and can be immensely rewarding, but is demanding in so many ways.

2. Those who serve as chaplains remain, first and foremost, a minister of their Sending Church, and their congregation will generally be men and women in the 18 to 40 age range. Military chaplains preach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments; they visit the sick, and offer counsel to the anxious, the bewildered and the bereaved. They prepare men and women for

confirmation and baptise them or their children. In short, military chaplains are the continuing face and presence of the Church, fulfilling a supporting role for much of the time as in civilian life, yet people turned to expectantly in times of need and when deployed on Operational Duty. Consequently, military chaplaincy offers a uniquely challenging vocation to all who serve.

3. This extract from a prayer letter from Padre Jonny Wylie, serving in Camp Bastion, Afghanistan as this report is being written, gives a little insight into conditions there: *“I had the great privilege of covering duty up at the hospital for the chaplain for a day last week. It happened to be a busy day and I was humbled to be asked to pray with a dead/dying American Marine in the middle of the Emergency Department. The role of the Chaplain in the hospital cannot be over-stated and he is integral to the medical team in a way I have never seen before. When I was called to pray by the A & E consultant everyone stopped what they were doing and about 25 doctors/nurses and other staff bowed their heads reverently as a closure on this young man’s life.”*

4. The Committee is grateful to those who serve as regular or part-time chaplains. 2009 saw the closure of RAF Aldergrove, ending a long association of the Royal Air Force with Northern Ireland, and also the retirement of the Rev Derek Weir who had served as officiating RAF chaplain there for 43 years. Thanks are expressed to Mr Weir for his outstanding service to the Royal Air Force and wish him well in his new role as Officiating Chaplain to the Military at Joint Helicopter Command, Aldergrove.

5. The following Ministers of the PCI have served as regular chaplains during the past year:

- Rev David Edgar (Royal Air Force)
- Rev Jonny Wylie (Royal Air Force)
- Rev Norman McDowell (Army)
- Rev Dr Paul Swinn (Army)
- Rev Stephan van Os (Army)
- Rev Mark Henderson (Army)
- Rev Heather Rendell (Army)

The TA Chaplains and Officiating Chaplains are as follows:

- Rev Prof Patton Taylor
- Rev Dr David Latimer
- Rev Derek Weir
- Rev Kenneth Crowe

6. The Committee is grateful to those organisations which support the Christian witness of the chaplains: The Sandes Homes; The Officers’ Christian Union; The Soldiers’ and Airmen’s Scripture Readers Association; The Naval, Military and Air Force Bible Society. Members of these organisations are available to speak at midweek meetings.

7. Each year the support of the Church is sought for The Royal British Legion, The Royal Air Force ‘Wings Appeal’, and the Royal Irish/UDR Benevolent Fund. In the past Congregations have supported these with generosity, and the Committee trusts that this will continue.

## **KINGHAN MISSION**

*The Rev Maynard Cathcart reports:*

1. This has been another frustrating year for the members of the Kinghan Church since the vacancy is now approaching three years. The services have continued to be taken by Mrs Anne Rodgers, the Lay Assistant, the Rev Dr Will Murphy of the Church of Ireland and Minister Emeritus, the Rev Dr George Grindle. The Board is grateful to these folks for leading the Sunday worship services. The day to day pastoral care continues to be provided most acceptably by Anne Rodgers.

2. At the time of writing yet another advertisement is being prepared for the press, again seeking the services of a Minister to lead the work of Ministry to the Deaf community into the future. The Board is grateful for the expertise of Head of Personnel, Laura Palmer, for her guidance and input into all of our advertising. Please pray that God would touch the heart of such a person who will feel the 'call' to minister at Kinghan.

3. The congregation continues to benefit from all its regular activities which are organised by a very active local Church Committee. There have been many improvements to the property over the past year, in fact it has never looked so good. Thanks to Harry Orr for overseeing these repairs and improvements. Thanks also to Lindsay Conway and the Board Convener, the Rev Bobby Liddle, for their interest and practical support.

## **STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE (incorporating War Memorial Hostel Fund)**

*The Rev Dr Robert Buick reports:*

1. The Student Services Committee continues to provide University Chaplains and chaplaincy facilities and seeks to promote the cause of Christ in institutions of third level education throughout Ireland. The reports of the individual University Chaplains follow in this report.

2. Throughout the year, two of our university chaplains resigned. The Rev Steve Stockman had served as Dean of Residence at the Derryvolgie Halls of Residence since 1994 and then became Chaplain in Residence serving Queen's University and Stranmillis College in 2002. Also during the year, the Rev Joe McCormick resigned as part-time chaplain at the University of Ulster, Magee campus. Many staff, students and parents are thankful to God for these unique ministries over the years.

3. In a new development this year it was possible to appoint the Rev William McCully as part-time chaplain at Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

4. The chaplaincy team at Queen's University continue to provide Chaplaincy services both at the Presbyterian Chaplaincy Centre in Elmwood Avenue, where Rumours Café is an integral part of the chaplaincy effort, and in the Presbyterian Halls of Residence at Derryvolgie Avenue, within which is a strong, vibrant, Christian Community and centre for Christian life and service. Eighty-eight rooms are available in the Halls but students are encouraged to

apply early as vacancies are limited. It is hoped to have a new Chaplain in Residence appointed by the start of the next academic year.

5. Though PCI currently has no full-time Presbyterian Chaplains in the Dublin area, for the past ten years PCI has been co-operating with the Methodist Church in Ireland to provide joint chaplaincy services in Trinity College, Dublin and at University College, Dublin and more recently with the Church of Ireland to provide a Protestant chaplain at the Dublin Institute of Technology.

6. Many ministers serve as 'unofficial' Chaplains in Universities and Colleges throughout this island. Please pray for all our Chaplains, as they seek to reach out in the name of Christ to both staff and students in the various institutions of third level education.

## UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINS' REPORTS

### Queen's University

*Dr Cindy Bennett reports:*

1. The academic year 2009-2010 is seeing a full and blessed ministry, both at Derryvolgie Hall and the Elmwood Chaplaincy Centre. We miss Steve Stockman since his departure in November to pastor Fitzroy Church; but Carol McMahon (administrator), Mark Hawthorne and Mark Cunningham (interns), as well as our café staff, Hazel Johnston and Sharon Casey, have worked hard to keep the ministry running smoothly.

2. We have seen the activity at *Rumours Café* and the Chaplaincy Centre thrive with some very busy days and a typically busy Monday night after the Queen's Christian Union meeting. Students, as well as some Queen's staff, find *Rumours* a welcoming and relaxing place on the University campus. The chaplaincy offices prove a vital space for weekly student counselling, and PCI Counselling also made use of the facilities during first term.

3. Outreach on Queen's campus has been active through the co-ordinated efforts of the four main chaplaincies. Together we held a very successful international students' lunch in November, serving about 100 students. The four chaplains/acting chaplains also took a key role in the Queen's Christmas Service which was also very well attended by students, staff, faculty and administration. In March we will host a 24/4 prayer vigil on campus; a St Patrick's day concert and ceili; and an all-day outreach on campus alongside QUB and UJJ administration and student groups to facilitate a safe and enjoyable St Patrick's holiday. Co-operative work also goes on through the weekly outreach of Late Love and SALT in and around the community.

4. Community life at Derryvolgie continues to be dynamic, constructively challenging, and creative. We have about fifty students engaging in our regular all-community events on Sunday and Wednesday nights, and there are more than a dozen students who help out weekly at Friendship House/Sandy Row under the leadership of our interns. Our special events, such as Freshers' Week in September, our annual In-House weekend in November, our formal and 'weeklet' retreat in January, and our Arts Week in March, have all been appreciated and involved significant student leadership.

**University of Ulster, Jordanstown and Belfast Campuses**

*The Rev Cheryl Meban reports:*

1. These reports are written in February and March. Since that time in 2009, we have continued pastoral accompaniment of students and staff on the two campuses, particularly in the wake of the death of a number of students and staff, but also in relation to all manner of family and health issues. It is particularly humbling to now be well enough known on campus that staff will ask that we pray for their situations.

2. The set-up in the University of Ulster is that we are to work collaboratively with other chaplains, and the university allows a modest budget which permits us to organise free soup lunches – a testimony to the grace of Christ available free of charge, and a challenge to the regular chaplaincy-ites, who have to get used to sharing ‘their space’ and making new relationships with all-comers.

3. The people coming to the lunches have been particularly diverse, thanks to the contacts I had developed with international students during the summer. Having been involved with the International Office in welcoming and providing entertainment to the batch of internationals who arrived in July (thanks again to Whiteabbey Presbyterian for their halls and hospitality) we discovered a number of this year’s Chinese students particularly interested in Christian teaching and culture. We have worked with IFES/Christian Union to support iCafé – food, chat and some form of animation every Wednesday night during semester, and encouraged students to attend both the CU and the Whiteabbey Chinese Outreach Group Bible studies.

4. *What’s On the Other Side?* is an opportunity for local students to learn more about their own history, culture and identity, in the context of wider diversity. Predictably, it’s the international students who are most hungry for such a course, but those varied local students who participate in it are finding it really stimulating and worthwhile – a whole education that they could have been to university and missed. Many thanks to John Peacock and Youth Link for facilitating this joint chaplaincy project, especially in resourcing funds and materials for the course.

5. The Methodist and Church of Ireland chaplains in place when I started 2½ years ago both moved on at the end of August, and we are delighted to have been joined by Gail Mercer, who until that point had been Methodist chaplain at QUB.

6. In January our chaplaincy team hosted the CN3 (Chaplaincy Network at Third Level) annual conference at Drumalis in Larne on the theme of ‘Encountering the Other’, and was honoured that the Vice Chancellors of both Queen’s University and the University of Ulster made time to be with us for a special banquet as part of that gathering. It was an invaluable opportunity to reflect on the nature of chaplaincy, and the role of the Church in ‘post-Christian/post-Catholic’ Ireland.

7. In the barrenness of secularity, it was a joy to team up with the Students’ Union at the Belfast campus to provide music and some fun before Christmas – and it was heartening, and very telling, that a handful of voices

singing Christian songs, unrehearsed, could generate such appreciation. Whilst in my work, there are times for rational debate and public proclamation, it is a privilege to have opportunities to “slip past the dragons” that dismiss faith in Christ, and touch the parched soul of thirsty people with the water and music of life.

8. Thanks to the organisations and congregations that have taken an interest, to whom I have spoken about my work. Thanks to Lindsay Conway and especially the Board of Social Witness staff for their support, encouragement and understanding, as we seek to be church without walls. And thanks to PCI for the privilege of serving in their name in this way.

### **University of Ulster, Magee Campus, Londonderry**

*The Rev Dr Robert Buick reports:*

1. During the year the Rev Joe McCormick retired as PCI chaplain at Magee. I have been acting as Interim PCI Chaplain during his absence. At the start of the academic year the University provided a much improved Chaplaincy facility at a better location on campus and I have sought to be available in the office two mornings each week of term time.

2. The Chaplains at Magee are all part-time and during the year we met several times to discuss how together we might ‘do’ chaplaincy better. We took part in the Students Union Carol Service on campus and in the University/Community Carol Service, held in a local church and also tried to run an Alpha Course for staff and students but attendances were very low. I have sought throughout the year to build closer links with both the Students Union staff and members of the Christian Union. With so many students going home at the weekend it has proved difficult to encourage closer links between students and local congregations.

### **University of Ulster, Coleraine Campus**

*The Rev John Coulter reports:*

1. The Presbyterian Chaplaincy in Coleraine is part-time and I spend Wednesdays on campus in and around the Chaplaincy Office. The students take advantage of the “drop in” system and that gives me contact with people from all kinds of backgrounds, many dealing with concerns such as grief, stress, relationship issues, spiritual questions, loneliness and many others.

2. I have had opportunities to speak at the CU this year and also to have input into the lives of some of the young leaders involved, encouraging them in their new found roles. My own congregation in Ballysally have continued the joint service project between the CU and our Homework Club, which is part of our Youth and Community Project. The students provide help for the children of Ballysally estate after school with their varied homeworks and also aim to build relationships within the group. This has proved a great encouragement not only to the children but also to the students and once again they have done an excellent job. This Project also helps me to develop the links which enable me to support and encourage those students involved in the CU.

3. The Chaplaincy Team have been offering an Alpha Course for students again this year and I have had opportunities to chat to the some of them over the light tea that is provided. I have again represented the Presbyterian Chaplaincy at some of the more formal occasions in the life of the University such as the Graduations.

### **Letterkenny Institute of Technology**

*The Rev William McCully reports:*

1. This is a third-level education centre focusing mainly on Business, Science and Engineering. In September 2009, 2,859 students were enrolled. Approximately 90% would be from the island of Ireland and 10% from overseas. My role is chiefly pastoral, offering help and support to the Presbyterian community and others, which this year comprises a significant number. However, my focus is to enable a gospel presence and create gospel opportunities, where possible. Linking with some Christian Union members, in the past year I have conducted talks in one of the main Lecture Halls entitled, 'What are you living for?'

### **Dublin Institute of Technology (campuses at Mountjoy Square, Portland Row, The Conservatory of Music and Drama in Rathmines, and Chatham Row)**

*The Rev Neal Phair reports:*

1. At the Mountjoy Square/Portland Road campuses a link with the local O'Connell's Schools has been established where 60% of its pupils come from a refugee/asylum seeker background. This year 09/10 55 DIT students each week help the chaplain with this project engaging in one-to-one learning with the pupils. Also the northside chaplains have been reaching out to the international community studying in DIT, eg we hold monthly international evenings where approximately 100 students enjoy food, minerals, fellowship and a taste of different cultures. This is also an opportunity for chaplains to try and resolve any issues for them.

2. I also ran a first year friendship lunch this term and 140 students turned up. Other projects during last year included fundraising for Teenagers with Cancer (CANTEEN) and work with the homeless. In November and December 2009, we ran two projects – decorating rooms in St Clare's Nursing Home on Griffith Avenue and also a Christmas party for St Vincent's Primary School. We will carry out another project before May which has yet to be arranged. Around 30 students were involved and students who volunteer with the chaplaincy are given certificates. Last year Mr Bertie Ahearn, former Taoiseach, presented these to the students and commended them on their involvement.

3. Other significant events last year included retreats to Glendalough and Glenstall Abbey, weekly Holy Communion and seasonal services and an interview with RTE Television about the student financial crisis. Also, some



students and I met with Archbishop Desmond Tutu on his visit to DIT and on another occasion I organised a talk by Mr John Lonergan.

### **University College, Dublin**

*Mrs Gillian Kingston reports:*

1. We continue to enjoy excellent and inclusive relationships on the chaplaincy team, which currently comprises three Roman Catholic chaplains and myself as Presbyterian/Methodist chaplain. The Church of Ireland chaplaincy position remains vacant, as a result of UCD's current policy of not filling positions becoming vacant. We work closely and helpfully with the other student support services – student advisers, medical personnel and the Student Counselling Service. Regular meetings are held on issues of mutual concern. We confer frequently on a personal basis and case-by-case.

2. Fr Leon O'Giolláin and I have continued the series initiated last year *Food4Soul, Food4Body*. Momentum is building and we are encouraged by numbers attending, especially as this regularly includes representatives from the various Christian groups on campus.

3. At the beginning of the year, a *Multi Faith Directory* in brochure was produced by the chaplaincy. Outlining contact details for the many faith groups in the University and including details of the main Christian churches, this has been very well received.

4. In-service training has included a workshop with Professor Patricia Casey on psycho-social aspects of religious practice.

5. Radio Telefís Éireann recorded a service of worship for transmission on Sunday 28 February. This was led by me, assisted by students and colleagues.

6. As chaplains, we are concerned at the effect of economic recession on the wider student body. There are increasing cases of hardship and we have diminishing resources with which to help. We are aware of an increase in the number of those wanting to come to university as young – and older – people seek to up-skill and because there are fewer opportunities in the job market.

7. The greatest challenge remains to present Jesus Christ in a disillusioned and cynical world – but that is also the challenge in the wider world!

### **Trinity College Dublin**

*The Rev Julian Hamilton reports:*

1. The work of the Methodist and Presbyterian chaplaincy continues to cherish its place in the ecumenical life of Trinity College.

2. This year has seen changes to the ecumenical chaplaincy team, with Fr Kieran Dunne moving to another chaplaincy role, and Fr Peter Sexton SJ coming to join us. Peter has brought considerable experience and depth to the team and is a welcome addition to the ministry in the college.

3. The work of the chaplaincy might be divided into three central categories:

(a) Face to face work with students. This is the most important part of the

chaplains work, and is also the most unpredictable. Whether it is done through sitting in the student common area of chaplaincy and striking up conversations with students, or continuing relationships with regular chaplaincy students, it would seem that there is simply never enough time to feel adequate in this 'loitering.' The other central aspect to face to face work with students is the number of students who will come into my office when the door is open. Usually pastoral concerns – everything from grief and spiritual quests, to loneliness, anxiety and stress are common occurrences in discussion.

- (b) The second central aspect to the work of chaplaincy is special events. Many of these are ecumenical in nature, eg college services (including memorial and official college calendar services). There are also the events run by the Methodist & Presbyterian chaplaincy, eg an alternative worship event called 'Sacred in the City.' All these events, whether worship, social, community building or educational, require planning and carrying out. This past year the special events have included a joint North/South trip to Israel and OPT and in the coming September a trip will be undertaken to South Africa to work with *Habitat for Humanity*. It is primarily the Presbyterian and Methodist chaplaincy that is running this trip.
- (c) The third central aspect to the work of the Presbyterian and Methodist Chaplain is in relation to the broader life of college. Currently, as chaplain, I am a member of the Critical Incident Response team of college, which is varied in nature, but most recently has meant daily meetings on the college preparation for, and handing of, swine flu. I also sit on the college mental health working group, co-ordinating all those within college who are working with those students with mental health issues. There are also many other representative functions within college that arise from time to time aside from these working groups. This aspect to the work will also rise quite considerably next June when it becomes the turn of the Presbyterian and Methodist chaplain to be Chairman of the chaplaincy. This requires a significant rise in administration for the chaplaincy as well as an increased representative function.

4. The biggest challenge to the role as it now stands is the desire to make this chaplaincy full-time. The Methodist Church cannot afford to keep a chaplain in Trinity full-time through its own resources. Discussions are taking place within college to discuss the issue, and representations have been made by the chaplain to various funding agencies. It is the desire of all involved that the chaplaincy does indeed move to being full-time, but the costs of maintaining this will have to be found.

LINDSAY CONWAY, Secretary

## OLDER PEOPLE SERVICES COMMITTEE

### Strategic Objective 3

“Older People Services will deliver a high standard of social and nursing care to all our residents and to campaign on behalf of older people.”

1. We are instructed in the Scriptures to “*show respect for the elderly*” – part of our God-given responsibility and an integral aspect of the church’s social witness for six decades. This year the Board celebrates the 60th anniversary of the opening of its first residential home – Adelaide House in South Belfast. With this new facility came the commencement of the work of the Presbyterian Residential Trust now continuing under the auspices of Older People Services. The Committee gives thanks to Almighty God that He has been pleased to bless this part of the church’s witness as it strives to provide suitable accommodation for elderly members of our society. This continues to be the Lord’s work and the Committee acknowledges it as reverence to Him and out of respect for those of older years.

2. The Committee strives to provide a high standard of residential, nursing and sheltered housing accommodation with a strong spiritual emphasis for elderly members of our own church and other denominations. The Committee also seeks to monitor older people issues and campaign through representation and literature where appropriate on behalf of the elderly.

3. The Committee is conscious of its aging property profile and whilst in the past few years we have opened new facilities at Corkey in North Belfast and Sunnyside in Bangor in conjunction with Housing Associations, the shortcomings of much older buildings is restrictive. The Committee has been considering for quite a period the need to replace Ard Cluan in Londonderry and York House in Portrush but without much progress. Adelaide remains a homely place but lacks modern facilities and whilst River House in Newcastle and Harold McCauley Nursing Home in Omagh are relatively recent buildings, they also require modernising. Renovations at Tritonville in Dublin have improved the level of provision there but the Committee is still faced with the need to upgrade the facilities at St Andrews Bungalows and consider the future use of the Denegarh site at Mallusk. The Committee is being continually pressed to extend the work to other parts of Northern Ireland and the Republic but financial and other constraints have hindered such considerations.

4. One of the strengths of PRT/OPS has always been its dedicated and caring staff; it is they who create the daily atmosphere enjoyed by our residents and their families. Their professionalism, allied to concern for the needs of those given into their charge, is greatly appreciated and the consistently positive nature of reports emanating from the government’s independent Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority speaks volumes about the service that PCI’s homes provide.

5. The Local Support Committees – complemented by Friends groups – have given tremendous encouragement to the work in the past year. Committee members are now involved in monthly monitoring visits and through that help to highlight positives and concerns in each of our units. Terms of Reference for

the local Committees and the conduct of home visits have been subjected to review this year.

6. Whilst the financial position of the work has improved from the alarming figures of the recent past, there is still need for diligence and monitoring. Higher occupancy levels across all units has helped and the Board's new Finance Committee is beginning to reveal its worth in this regard and will greatly assist the OPS Committee in meeting the challenge of operating in stringent times.

7. The present financial climate has produced an improved recruitment/selection position and greatly reduced the number of vacant posts. However, high levels of staff sickness and costs associated with this continue to concern the Committee and a new policy has been drawn up to address the situation.

8. The upgrading of the computer system is planned for the summer and this will greatly assist the daily routine of our operation.

9. The Committee wishes to thank Mrs Linda Wray (Residential Services Manager), her Assistant, Mrs May Gordon, and all in Church House for the efficient manner in which they administer the work and are involved in the homes. This type of work is highly regulated and does not happen without its pressures which all deal with admirably.

JA NOBLE, Convener

## FAMILY SERVICES COMMITTEE

### Strategic Objective 4

"Family Services will promote family life and the general well-being of our members, continue to develop services for the disabled within the Church, support the work of the Taking Care Office, PCI Counselling, PCI Family Holiday and South Belfast Friendship House"

1. In James we are asked, "*what good is it for someone to say that he has faith if his actions do not prove it?*" The Committee continues to seek ways to witness our faith through social action, compassion and concern, fulfilling its objective with the help and support of many professional and voluntary staff.

2. Family Services, in partnership with the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society and Care for the Family, has promoted the support and resources available to congregations through '**Supporting Families' Breakfast Road-Shows**. Information was supplied and an overview of the work of the Board was highlighted. A DVD was produced for use during these breakfast meetings and proved informative and a useful tool to illustrate the broad spectrum of Family Services as part of social witness within our denomination.

3. Part of the strategic objective is 'to develop the appropriate structure to deal with the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional well-being of our members and to support and represent all those with a disability or special need within our Church'. In order to ensure that these objectives are being met, Family Services has initiated the formation of a new committee, 'Disability, Health and Well-Being'. In this manner, all disability – physical, learning and

sensory impairment would be represented and would allow for the development and exploration of structures which support good Mental Health and Well-Being.

4. Tribute should be made in respect of the excellent work being done by Church House Staff, staff in the different Homes and projects and the many volunteers who serve on Local Support Committees and Friends of Groups, ensuring that those in need are not forgotten and receive the care and concern many take for granted. With genuine gratitude for all the work done – Thank You.

## **TAKING CARE**

*Mr Ronnie Orr reports:*

### **Gentle as a dove and wise as a serpent**

1. This quote could sum up both the theme of the last Taking Care Conference and the ongoing work of Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions, Ministers, Designated Persons, Trainers, Children’s and Youth Workers, the Taking Care Committee and the Board of Social Witness Convenor and staff over the entire year. It is all about being conscientious and caring in our approach to children and leaders while at the same time being prudent and alert to risks.

2. That theme from the 2009 Conference, attended by 500 participants, was clear from the title of the book written by the keynote speaker, Rebecca Andrews, “Policing Innocence” and the need to be vigilant in regard to those who would inveigle themselves into positions of trust and then betray that trust. At the same time, there is tremendous good will to care for children selflessly and responsibly. We must always recognise this and celebrate the fact, but there can never be complacency.

3. It is the regular and faithful outworking of good practice that keeps the children in and around our churches safe. This needs to be rooted in the common sense policy and procedures that have been provided in the Taking Care manual and enabled by the training that our leaders have made the effort to attend.

### **Accessible and approachable advice**

4. The Co-ordinator for Taking Care, the Administrator and the Director of Social Service for the Board of Social Witness are a tremendous asset and they provide informed and competent advice whether face to face, by telephone and computer based support, on all matters to do with safeguarding children. Taking Care’s well organised Web page is a mine of information and the printed materials produced, including regular Updates in a magazine format and the trilogy of “We Care 4 u”; “We Care 4 U 2” and latterly for parents the “We Care with You” cards have been widely disseminated. The Boards wishes to again record its appreciation of the Presbyterian Orphan and Children’s Society for sponsoring the production of the cards and congratulates the many congregations that have made the distribution of the cards and the showing of the “Pew Review” video clip a feature of a specific Church service. Such a focus demonstrates the message that congregations mean business about being

responsible for children, as the Word of God is imparted to nurture their development into healthy, balanced Christian citizens.

### **Training on Tap**

5. PCI have a lot to be thankful for with having an experienced group of volunteer trainers who regularly display a sound understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of children and of leaders and how to be confident and enjoy relating to children in a safe context.

It was an encouragement for the trainers to have an “away day” last November, at which the Moderator and Board of Social Witness hosted a reception to show appreciation for all they do.

6. Congregations must understand that when there is a child protection concern, allegation, disclosure or complaint it must be communicated to Church House, where Lindsay Conway is the Designated Person and to the appropriate Presbytery Clerk. Therefore, at the same time as a congregation is dealing with an incident, disclosure or allegation and linking with the child protection agencies locally, there is an expectation of contact with Church House so that further advice is available and any wider and public implications can be managed.

### **Training for Ministers**

7. A significant emphasis over the past year has been placed on the training for Ministers. Just prior to the General Assembly last year 236 ministers attended Taking Care training, representing 42%. The Board wishes to congratulate ministers for taking the subsequent opportunities for training so that the level has reached 91%. There is a small minority, however, who did not respond to the repeated “encouragement” of Clerks of Presbytery and from the Taking Care Office. This training has already made an impact on the pastoral work of many Ministers.

### **Advisory Group for the Republic of Ireland**

8. Deborah Webster and Ruth Craig, a member of the Taking Care Committee and one of the two trainers in the South, have done much along with an Advisory Group to assess and address the specific experience and needs of congregations in the Republic of Ireland. As a different jurisdiction, the members of these Presbyteries and congregations have to meet a distinct set of statutory requirements in relation to vetting and reporting of concerns of abuse. Thanks are due to the National Youth Council of Ireland, which acts as the umbrella organisation to channel vetting applications to the Garda.

It is an encouragement that the Advisory Group has helped to improve communication and provide training. The attendances at Road Shows, particularly in Monaghan and Donegal, have been impressive. It would be good to harness some of that enthusiasm through identifying a couple more trainers to share the load and especially to reduce the distance the trainers have to travel to venues. It is also envisaged that there is scope for co-operation and sharing resources across the various churches in the Republic of Ireland.

### **Preparation for Conference 2011**

9. The work has commenced to prepare for the Taking Care Conference to be held on 8 October 2011. This choice of date is a departure from the usual timing in April and it is not just to avoid a clash with the F A Cup! Rather, it is an opportunity to lay the foundations for dealing with issues that require sensitivity and careful and prayerful planning. The Board is aware of the risks to childhood such as bullying, self harm and substance misuse. These will remain an area of focus. But the Board also needs to begin to consider the experience of those who are hurting because they are the survivors of abuse and that, for them, our congregations should be places where they experience the wholeness and the inclusiveness of Christ's love. Furthermore, the Board also needs to recognise that there are others who are seeking forgiveness and restoration because they have perpetrated abuse and this must prompt a response that is courageous, challenging and rehabilitative, but at the same time assures essential safety.

### **Taking Care Committee – Business Plan**

10. During the year there have been regular meetings of the committee. The faithful and thoughtful input by the members has been vital to its functioning. We have been heartened by the interest and support demonstrated by the attendance both by the Convenor of the Board, the Rev Bobby Liddle and more recently by the newly appointed Convenor of Family Services, the Rev Ann Tolland.

A Business Plan for 2010 – 2012 has been developed; this ties in the aims of Family Services “to promote family life and the general well-being of our members”. A major responsibility for the Taking Care Committee is to develop safeguarding, including checking the suitability of all leaders and workers. Another of our current tasks is the updating of the Taking Care manual of guidance and if you wish to share your ideas please let the Taking Care Office know. Your input will be welcome.

### **Our Mission**

11. Taking Care of so many children, some whose families have little other contact with our Church Family is a part of outreach and of leading them to faith. What we model to these children, both socially and spiritually, calls upon the maintenance of good standards and exemplary behaviour in all we do. The revised guidelines, the dissemination of information, access to advice and training are the means to help you in this calling. All children and young people attending PCI Organisations and Events are safer. Leaders, Teachers, Helpers and Ministers are more informed and better equipped. Parents are aware that we are making every attempt to create a safe place that follows clear procedures and guidelines.

### **PCI COUNSELLING**

*Mrs Stephanie Windrum reports:*

1. It is both a privilege and pleasure to report on another year of growth for PCI Counselling. As service delivery approaches 20 years, it is a time of

reflection and vision for the project. Over the years many things have remained constant. Not least the commitment of our voluntary counsellors, without whom there would be no service. Their dedication, professionally and personally, to growth and development as counsellors, all in a voluntary capacity, can only be generously applauded. They are the most valuable resource imaginable.

2. The increasing number of referrals year on year to PCI Counselling has provided both encouragement and challenge to counsellors. Referrals for 2009 reached 106. The wide range of issues routinely presented by clients keep counsellors on their toes. These include Relationship Difficulties 38%; Stress and Anxiety 23%; Adultery 12%; Depression 10%; Abuse 10 %; Bereavement 7%.

3. Ongoing support and training opportunities for counsellors are an important part of maintaining high professional standards in all areas of work. The recent training on Working with Pornography and Sexual Identity proved inspirational and challenging for the team.

4. As registration and regulation of counselling services is anticipated within the next few years, everyone on the team is actively encouraged and supported to seek individual accreditation through either the Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC) or the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). As an affiliated organisational member of ACC, PCI Counselling greatly values the benefits of being part of a professional Body.

5. The vital role provided by the two external Clinical Supervisors for the team are never under-estimated. The work has been greatly blessed with excellent, focused and hard-working Supervisors, who understand clearly the needs of management, counsellors and clients within PCI Counselling. This is no easy task, so thank you!

6. The re-marriage panel continues to assist Ministers in situations of divorce and re-marriage. This provides an opportunity for couples to confidentially meet with experienced panellists to reflect on past experiences and future expectations within Christian marriage. Both Ministers and couples find the work of the panel meaningful and worthwhile. The advice and support provided to Ministers is often greatly appreciated and valued especially when situations are not straightforward. During 2009 twenty-six couples attended the panel.

7. Finally, sincere thanks to all past serving members of PCI Counselling Committee which has been reconstituted as PCI Counselling Advisory Group. A special note of thanks must be extended to the former Convenor, Mrs Rosemary Simpson, for her many years of dedicated commitment and service.

8. In conclusion a warm welcome is extended to each new member of the Advisory Group, who will provide ongoing support and promote the work PCI Counselling. It is hoped the role will prove rewarding and worthwhile, as the Advisory Group prays for wisdom and guidance to continue providing a quality service to hurting individuals and couples.

## **PCI FAMILY HOLIDAY**

*The Rev Stuart Finlay reports:*



1. The PCI Family Holiday takes place each year from Easter Monday through to Friday at the Share Centre, Lisnaskea.
2. Up to 200 people can be accommodated in the Guest House, chalets and caravans. Among our families are those sponsored by the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society. Like all present they enjoy the relaxed family atmosphere.
3. The Share Centre offers a wide variety of activities and their staff deal very professionally with all participants, both those who are able-bodied and those with special needs. Outdoor activities include canoeing, sailing, windsurfing, banana skiing, climbing, archery, gorge walking and Laser Skirmishing. There are also indoor activities for the more artistic and creative – T-shirt printing, handcrafts and drama. Sadly this year the Centre's indoor leisure pool and fitness suite were out of action due to damage from flooding before Christmas.
4. Participants often enjoy the weekly shopping trip to Enniskillen and, weather permitting, a visit to the Marble Arch Caves. The PCI Youth Team also organises games and activities for the children most mornings and afternoons. What a contribution this team of enthusiastic young Christians always makes to the busy week!
5. Every morning begins with a short time of worship for all ages before the day's activities begin. In the evening there is a time of worship for everyone before the young people go off for their own time of Bible teaching with the Youth Team, leaving the adults to have their time together. Every year there is a visiting speaker and this year the Committee were delighted to have the Rev Bill Parker, Minister of First Antrim congregation.
6. After supper each evening there is a "Fun Time" for all ages, ranging from a Beetle Drive and Table Quiz to a Concert and Farewell Party. It's all good, wholesome fun in which all ages can mix together.
7. The week is always great fun ... and far too short! New friendships are made, old ones renewed, and everyone has the opportunity to learn something new from God. The Committee is grateful for many answered prayers and for a real sense of the Lord's presence with us through the week.

## **LEARNING DISABILITY**

*The Rev Jim Waring reports:*

1. Welcome changes in attitudes towards those with learning disability in society in general have led to a heightened awareness within the Church of the need for a real and effective ministry to all such members.
2. The Committee continues to encourage the Church in this important ministry of reaching out both spiritually and practically in the name of Christ to those with learning disability and their carers.
3. The supported housing projects at Willow Brook and Topley Terrace in Coleraine provide accommodation and personal support for 12 tenants. There Anne Campbell and her staff work tirelessly to provide homes that are pleasant and comfortable and that exist within a caring and friendly environment. Their

work is augmented by the Friends of Willow Brook who make a very positive contribution to both the social and spiritual lives of the tenants.

4. The Board has now assumed full responsibility for Aaron House, Dundonald which caters for those with more profound learning disability, providing both residential and day-care facilities. Here Denise Keegan and her dedicated staff lovingly care for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

5. Whilst the Committee continues to be committed to the expansion of supported housing projects and are still working with the group at Harmony Hill Church in Lisburn, progress on this front is proving to be painfully slow. The restructuring of Health Boards/Trusts and government financial constraints are proving to be barriers to any real progress.

6. The Committee continues to lobby the powers-that-be for more day-care places and respite care that would mean so much to long-suffering carers. Towards this end we continue to meet regularly with other faith-based groups in this field. Together a conference is planned in 2011 that will seek to raise awareness in church, community and government to the needs of the learning disabled and their carers.

7. The Committee is greatly encouraged by the prayerful and practical interest of the Church and asks for your continued prayers and support for those to whom the Church seeks to minister in Christ's name.

#### **SOUTH BELFAST FRIENDSHIP HOUSE**

1. The Board's partnership with PW continues to grow and strengthen. The reopening and rededication of the new building happened on the 26 March. See full report in the Presbyterian Women report.

LINDSAY CONWAY, Secretary

## **ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

### **Strategic Objective 5**

"Adult Services shall manage the work of Thompson House, Carlisle House and Gray's Court and promote an addiction free society through the Addiction Services Committee."

1. The Committee continues to manages two substantial issues, that of offenders and those with addictions The Committee considered that the wording of Strategic objective 5 be extended to include the phrase "To promote an Addiction **and Crime free society.**" After much debate it agreed that a **safer society** would be more achievable than crime free.

2. The Adult Services Committee commends heartily the excellent work which is ongoing through our residential units and follow up non residential programmes and would ask the Board to highlight to the General Assembly the genuine need for urgent extra funding from our partner funders in the Health Trusts, Probation Board and Justice world. It is one thing to commend the units for good practice and to insist on extra staffing requirements but this needs to be met with hard cash provision by our funders. The Committee therefore commends our diligent Directors David Cuthbert and David Farrow and

dedicated staff for their ongoing hard work and loyalty to task in days such as these.

3. Mrs Wenda Bristow convener of Addiction Services is congratulated for an excellent Autumn '09 Residential Conference for Presbyterian Youth Workers at Child Haven, Millisle, in partnership with Hope UK. The Committee looks forward to another conference in 2010 and follow up initiatives to encourage Youth Workers to become trainers.

4. Thompson House was not included in Year One funding from the Department of Social Development and will therefore not proceed to the new development scheme in 2010-2011. The hope is that we will achieve funding in the following year 2 allocation. Meanwhile planning continues to be refined and made ready in partnership with HELM Housing Association for the project to begin as soon as possible.

5. Mr Bryan Marshall succeeds the Rev Jackson Buick as convener of the Thompson House local support committee. The Committee prays blessings upon Bryan as he takes on this role and thank Jackson most sincerely for many years of faithful service. The Carlisle House local support committee continues to be chaired by Mr David McAuley who is thanked for his ongoing service.

6. It was the Committee's great delight to include in its discussions the importance of including SPUD Youth representatives on our Committees. It is therefore tabled as a proposal that SPUD representatives be admitted to BSW Committees beginning with "Family Services", with the hope that Youth Reps will soon be represented on all of the Board Committees.

## **CARLISLE HOUSE**

*Mr David Cuthbert reports:*

7. This has been a year of staff changes. We have been able to fill the vacant Group Facilitator/Therapist posts. Arlene Gray and Julia Neal started with us towards the end of last summer and have been a real breath of fresh air. They have brought with them a different experience and new ideas that have challenged us positively about what we do and how we do it. Hopefully we will be able to hold onto them for a while!

8. Our receptionist, Dorothy McConnell, retired. Penny Owens took up this post in the summer and has become invaluable to the administration team. I had not thought it possible to get someone of such calibre. Penny has been a real help to myself as I have juggled the management of Carlisle House and the completion of my studies. We miss Dorothy and want to wish her a very exciting and fulfilled and retirement.

9. Two new support workers took up their posts towards the end of 2009. Again we have been able to recruit two people, Geradine McCormack and Geoff McKnight, who are very competent and have a real heart for people. We are currently in the process of recruiting six relief or bank support workers. For both these posts we were inundated with applications and people expressing a real interest in joining our team and working in Carlisle House.

10. It has been amazing that with so many changes the team is more cohesive and supportive of each other than it has been for some time. This has

been reflected in our work with people who, for various reasons, have resorted to misusing substances to help them through life. A number of residents who have returned to the Centre have commented on how different it is. They speak of it as being a lot more welcoming, relaxed and positively challenging.

11. We continue to value your support and prayers.

### **GRAY'S COURT**

12. Gray's Court is similar to Carlisle House and works within the same ethos that of acceptance, respect and compassion. It offers people the opportunity to build on the journey they have commenced in a Treatment Centre, and begin to explore opportunities of training, education, voluntary work and employment. A personal development programme is offered to facilitate the developing of self confidence, self esteem and self awareness. A highlight of this programme has been the building of a partnership with the National Trust, which has led to service users engaging in a dry stone walling project over the past winter at Tullyratty, Strangford. To quote the National trust project director, "I am delighted with the dedication, excellent skills and enthusiasm your group has brought to this project. I would like to nominate your group for our Directors conservation award ... I can only hope that what we have done has given some self esteem to people to carry forward the rebuilding of their lives, to learning how good life can be, and the great things we can achieve together." Frances Craig, the project worker at Gray's Court, has to be congratulated for making this happen.

### **THOMPSON HOUSE**

*Mr Bryan Marshall reports:*

13. There has been a notable change in the staffing of Thompson House over the past year. Three members of staff have left and three new staff members have been appointed. Mrs Margaret Blain, the resident cook, will be retiring after faithfully serving the needs of residents for several years. The Committee wishes to thank her for her loyal service and pray for God's richest blessing on her for the future.

14. The new members of staff have proved to be a strength and encouragement to all. The Christian ethos is very evident and the staff show a loving attitude to the residents. In turn the residents appreciate this concern and the healthy relationships that exist. Occupancy has remained steady in the last year with an average 95% of the accommodation being used. The ongoing repairs again eat into our budget but Mr George Crooks monitors closely the spending on property and repairs.

15. The unannounced inspections have proved to be a good guide to any improvements or adjustments needed. Mr David Farrow, the Director of Thompson House, reviews these inspection reports and responds to any requests or questions.

16. Some of the residents take part in the voluntary Bible study groups which are held periodically. These studies have proved to be a great blessing and benefit to those taking part. One of the challenges we face is to follow up those

residents who have left Thompson House and to try to place them in a healthy Christian environment.

17. The application for Thompson House to rebuild on its current site will have to be put on hold for another year. The Committee is hopeful however that a new application will be looked on favourably by the relevant authorities.

18. The Committee wishes to thank the Rev Jackson Buick for his services as chairman of our support committee over the past 17 years. Jackson always took a very keen interest in all aspects of the work and gave his full support to the Director and staff. The Committee wishes Jackson every blessing for the future and prays that he recovers from his recent illness.

### **ADDICTION SERVICES**

19. There is no shortage of Newspaper Headlines or News Reports on the daily impact of alcohol and drug abuse. This results in there being a major drain on the Health Services on both parts of the Island which uses up valuable resources and hospital beds on a service that is already underfunded.

20. Methadone and Legal Highs are a group of stimulants that have recently hit the headlines. Already this substance has been associated with fatalities in local communities. Users report that it produces a similar experience to drugs like Amphetamines, Ecstasy, MDMA or Cocaine. Methadone has now been classified, although this will drive it underground and will criminalise a vulnerable section of our society.

21. In partnership with HOPE UK the Committee plans to continue its training programme. Youth Leaders who have already attended training, stress that greater priority must be given to addictions, suicide, relationships and sexual health.

22. ICAP (Inter-Church Addictions Project) is piloting a Counselling Service for those young people at risk of alcohol and drug abuse.

23. The Committee is benefiting from a number of youth leaders who have recently joined.

COLIN MEGAW, Convener

### **SOCIAL ISSUES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee delayed the production of guidelines for the Church with regard to the rehabilitation of offenders into churches. In the light of new 'Public Protection Arrangements' and a substantial study by the Church of Scotland it was recognised that this matter needed further and wider consultation.

2. The main item considered by the Committee this year has been the revision and replacement of the booklet 'Getting Married.' The booklet is aimed at ministers/deaconesses etc involved in pastoral work and couples considering marriage and is meant to provide practical information and raise matters for discussion between the couple and minister. Currently under production are chapters on celebrating marriage; various scenarios ministers and couples may face with regard to getting married in church; foundational Biblical principles

relating to the marriage relationship; information on marriage preparation; expectations and understanding entering marriage; helpful information on the legalities and the wedding service; and on having children.

3. The Committee is also working on a number of 'Praying Scripture Pastoral Care Leaflets'. The leaflets will include a range of Scripture passages followed by short prayers to help people pray Scripture. They are designed for Ministers, Elders, Deaconesses, Pastoral workers etc to give to individuals struggling with given problems such as fear, depression, worry.

BOBBY LIDDLE, Convener

### OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND

*The Rev WPH Erskine reports:*

1. The Directors report that during the last financial year, which ended 31 December 2009, 92 beneficiaries (35 in the Old Age Fund, 39 in the Women's Fund and 18 in the Indigent Ladies' Fund) received grants.

2. The changes in beneficiaries during the year are as follows:

Beneficiaries Receiving Quarterly Grant	Old Age Fund	Presbyterian Women's	Indigent Ladies Fund	TOTAL
At 1 January 2009	29	36	18	83
New Grants Provided	4	3	1	8
Deaths	-	-	(1)	(1)
Grants no longer required	(2)	(1)	(2)	(5)
As at 31 December 2009	31	38	16	85
Beneficiaries receiving one-off donations	2	1	-	3
Deaths and Grants no longer required (as above)	2	-	2	4
No of Beneficiaries receiving assistance during the year	35	39	18	92

3. The total distribution of the Funds in Grants, Donations and Gifts was £109,613 (£40,556 from the Old Age Fund, £49,500 from the Women's Fund and £19,557 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

4. An annual grant of £1,120, paid quarterly, was sent to beneficiaries during the year (2008: £1,040).

5. A 'Special Gift' of £280 (2008: £235) was sent to every beneficiary prior to Christmas.

6. 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.

7. The Directors assure the Church that all monies that come to the Funds are carefully and wisely spent.

8. 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 outreach.

9. 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.

### RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That the General Assembly emphasise the need for adequate funding of Social Witness Board Projects by Central Government, the Health Trusts, Probation Board, the Justice Sector and Supporting People.

4. That the General Assembly celebrate the success of 60 years continued care of and Christian witness to older people in our communities since the opening of Adelaide House by the Presbyterian Residential Trust.

5. That the resignation of the Rev John Noble as Convener of the Older Peoples Services Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.

6. That the General Assembly campaign and lobby government departments to ensure that services are not cut to unacceptable levels.

7. That the General Assembly thank all those who volunteer within the activities of the Board of Social Witness and those who give freely of their time to supplement the work done and enhance the service provided by the Board.

8. That the Board of Social Witness, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 281 of the Code as follows:

# BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Convener: Rev JONATHAN MOXEN

Director: Miss ROSALIND STIRLING

1. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry continues to know God's blessing in its work for the General Assembly. The task to get alongside congregations in their work to evangelise, disciple, serve and equip the largest people group within the Presbyterian Church is both a challenge and a privilege as this core ministry within our denomination continues to grow.

2. During the past twelve months the Board has sought to develop a strategy for the outworking of the vision of 'covenant based family ministry'. With the appointment of a Young Adults' Development Officer complementing the Youth Development and Children's Development Officer positions, ministry relating to each age group, 0-12, 13-17, and 18-25 is being developed, becoming the means through which the vision of 'covenant based family ministry' is nurtured.

3. The Development Officers' remit of drawing alongside congregations to assist them in their task with the under 25 year olds, seeks to see established a sustainable, Christ-centered ministry in every congregation. Such sustainability grows out of training and resourcing leaders and teachers, resourcing young people to take their place in Church life, envisioning parents and mentoring and encouraging the full time youth or children's staff working in congregations.

4. The development of the Board's work continues through the five General Assembly Committees and their respective working groups. Highlights from the work of each of these Committees demonstrates the means through which the corporate vision is being addressed.

5. The **Training Committee**, through the 'Training Trainers' programme is seeking to make training accessible across Ireland, enabling many congregations to be equipped to carry out effective ministry with the under 25 year olds.

6. The **Ministry Opportunities Committee**, through the Summer Outreach programme, will send thirteen teams this summer to draw alongside congregations, enabling them to do outreach work amongst children and young people within their community.

7. The **Resources Committee** continues to develop the annual Youth and Children's Project. In 2010/11 the project, SAT-7 KIDS, will support a Christian satellite television station in the Middle East. SAT-7 KIDS is the first and only Arabic Christian channel exclusively for children, making the Gospel of Christ meaningful for a generation who need to know the love of God. This exciting project allows PCI children and young people to support Kingdom work throughout the world.



8. The **Events Committee** continues to provide many youth or children's events through the organising function of their working groups, supported by the Youth and Children's Office staff. The Kids' Praise Party Working Group has moved the timing of the event from the weekend at the close of the General Assembly to a Saturday in May, hence supporting the timing of 'year ends' for Sunday Schools. This continues to be an inspiring event for PCI children.

9. The **Research and Education Committee** will pick up the work associated with a resolution that came through the SPUD Youth Assembly: *'to raise awareness within the denomination and among young people themselves regarding the pressures and issues affecting young people during the adolescent years.'* This work will assist many young people across PCI to be better equipped to live healthy lives and be a credible Christian witness in the world.

10. The Board records its thanks to the Rev Steve Stockman for his service as Convener of the Research and Education Committee and wishes him well in his ministry in Fitzroy congregation.

11. The Board records its gratitude to the vast number of volunteer youth and children's leaders and to the growing numbers of youth workers and family workers in local congregations. The many hours of work carried out by these people, who give sacrificially of their time and talents in the service of God, is deeply appreciated. Many congregations could not provide for their youth and children's activities without these faithful volunteers who provide leadership and facilitate programmes that ensure the ministry of evangelism, discipleship and nurture of the young is maintained from year to year.

12. The work of the SPUD Youth Assembly has settled into a rhythm of meeting and bringing resolutions to the Boards and the General Assembly. SPUD has become a crucial element in the life of our denomination, enabling young people to have a meaningful role in the decision making processes of the Church. Through involvement in SPUD, young people move into ownership of the importance of their place in the life of the Church and become an integral part of it, hence ensuring another generation of young adults is not lost to the world.

13. The Board is deeply grateful to those employed to serve the Church though the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry. Miss Roz Stirling, (Director), Miss Barbara McDade (Director of Programmes), and the team of administrative staff, Mrs Lois Gibson (Senior Administrative Officer), Mrs Claire Child, Mrs Janet Maxwell, Mrs Donna Thompson, Mrs Kathy Brown, Miss Pamela Patton, and Miss Liz Harrison. The Board is indebted to Mr David Pattison for his expertise in organising and compiling financial reports.

14. The Youth Development Officer, Mr Graeme Thompson and the Children's Development Officer, Miss Ruth Mitchell continue their work alongside congregations seeking to bring relevant and discerning ministry advice. The Board is indebted to them for their work as it is to Mrs Carol Johnston who has joined this team in the role of Young Adults' Development Officer and Mr Kyle Sampson who continues in his demanding role as Youth and Support worker in Donegal.

15. The Board wishes to record its thanks to the Rev Craig Mawhinney for his work as Training Officer and for all that was accomplished during his time on the Board.

## RECOGNISED MINISTRIES

*The Rev David Stanfield, Centre Director for the Centre for Youth Ministry Ireland, reports:*

1. The Centre for Youth Ministry is the largest provider of Christian faith based training in Youth and Community Work in the UK with over 300 students being taught at five centres. As Director of the Ireland centre I have responsibility as part of the leadership team for the development and delivery of the degree courses being offered. Currently the Ireland centre offers a degree in Youth and Community Work and Practical Theology. The other centres, based in Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Birmingham, offer two further courses one for those working in schools and the other focussing on work with children and families.

2. There have been many challenges this year; new validation and endorsement processes; changes to staffing at CYM; and not least the impact of Government cuts in Higher Education which led to a reduction in the number of places we were able to offer for 2009 entry. As a result, as we approach the end of the second year of the centre, we have 19 students in second year and 14 in first year. Thankfully we are able to offer up to 25 places for 2010 entry as the demand for places remains high.

3. The course is practice based with students working in a Christian/Church based context for 14 hours per week as part of the course assessment. They each have a personal practice tutor to support their development and meet regularly in facilitated small groups for professional formation. They are in placements in 25 different congregations (13 Presbyterian, 6 Church of Ireland, 3 Methodist, 2 Baptist, 2 CFC) and 7 other Christian contexts.

4. Since last year the core team has expanded with Sharon McKibbin proving an excellent Assistant Centre Director. Sharon has specific responsibility for Professional Development and is the key contact with placements. Sharon has been working hard to develop better support mechanisms for line managers in placement contexts.

5. The training of students for ministry is a very labour intensive process and a team of 65 people have been actively involved in teaching, supervising and supporting the students this year.

6. I wish to thank a significant number of Presbyterians from across our congregations who have supported the development of this work in the last 12 months through prayer and encouragement as well as those who have worked as module tutors, professional practice tutors or line managers in congregations who have taken students on placement.

*The Rev John Peacock, Community Relations Manager for Youth Link: NI, reports:*

1. Youth Link during the past year continued to develop best practice. This included the launch of a new website, logo and strapline, 'Churches together building excellence in youth work'.

### **Youth Work Training**

2. The demand for accredited training in youth work continued to grow over the past year. Increased numbers of young people, and part-time youth workers from across the four larger Churches participated in OCN (Open College Network) NI Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 youth work programmes within urban and rural communities and centrally at inter-Church level.

3. The numbers of young people and youth leaders achieving accreditation through Youth Link's programmes not only indicates the high level of participation but is an affirmation of the quality and value of the training offered. The accredited training programmes for young people and adults offer progression and pathways to professional development and qualifications.

### **Peace and Reconciliation Training**

4. Our community is still faced with the huge challenge of moving beyond co-existence to comprehensive reconciliation. The signs are that we are settling for the former which is the easier option but does not build towards a shared and better future. Reconciliation is and remains a generational process which has primarily to do with relationships and not political, religious or cultural ideologies. People are reconciled, not ideological systems. Reconciliation is about the enrichment of diversity and it is a process towards cohesion, sharing and integration. For such reconciliation we require poetic and creative imagination. It is in the context of the larger vision of a reconciliation process that Youth Link locates its strategies and activities.

5. Staff have continued to work in partnership with colleagues across the youth sector in the development and piloting of the new suite of Peace Building and Reconciliation training programmes accredited through OCN NI at Levels 1, 2 and 3. Staff also continue to work collaboratively with Church based youth organisations and groups at headquarter, regional and local level to develop peace building and reconciliation strategies and to embed the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence into organisational policies, procedures and programmes.

6. Youth Link staff have been working with increasing numbers of schools across Northern Ireland to build the capacity of teachers in the areas of peace building, reconciliation and citizenship.

7. During the year Youth Link was successful in securing Peace III funding through the Special European Programme Body to build capacity and social capital within and between communities North and South of the Border, through the delivery of a suite of accredited youth work, citizenship and peace and reconciliation training programmes over the next three years. As a result we have three members of staff working alongside Churches, schools and

communities along the border in Armagh/Monaghan, Fermanagh and Londonderry/Donegal.

8. A highlight of the past year on my work agenda was the 'Up Against the Wall' project. We worked with close to 100 young people and youth practitioners from interface areas across Belfast for 6 months seeking their opinion on the peace walls they lived under the shadow of. This culminated in them gathering at the gates in the peace wall on Lanark Way in West Belfast on Monday 9th November 2009 to mark the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Lord Mayor, Naomi Long, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Patricia Lewsley and visiting representatives from the US Congress attended the event to listen to the views of young people. The young people were then invited to the City Hall to meet and discuss the issue of 'peace walls' with the Lord Mayor and to explain what they have been doing over the past six months as part of the 'Up Against the Wall' initiative. Lord Mayor, Councillor Naomi Long, said this project was a wonderful example of her vision of 'a Belfast without barriers'. "I value the input and views of young people and in particular those involved in this particular initiative," she said. "They are making a positive statement about how we can all work towards the removal of divisions that sadly still exist in our own city. Their commitment fills me with pride and a determination to work with people like them to create solutions to our problems."

### **Organisational Development**

9. The acquisition and refurbishment of a new Training and Resource Centre is at an advanced stage and will enhance Youth Link's capacity to respond more effectively to the growing training and developmental needs of the faith based youth sector. Youth Link values PCI's support of this venture through YAC's 'The Missing Peace' Youth Project.

10. Crucial also to the work of Youth Link is the Management Committee who offer their considerable skills and experience. From their diverse Church backgrounds and involvement in various sectors of public life they model equity, diversity and interdependence and they support and develop Youth Link's ethos and policies. We very much value the contribution of the Presbyterian members of this board and the leadership of Barbara McDade, as this year's chairperson.

### **Hope for a Shared and Better Future**

11. Northern Ireland's desired future is still a long way ahead. Much difficult work needs to be done by politicians, civic society, educators and faith based communities. All of these sectors and others will need each other to develop working models of partnership and collaboration. Youth Link is committed through its staff, management, programmes and activities to playing its part. In this context Youth Link will seek to build cohesion, capacity and infrastructure in sustainable ways towards peace building and reconciliation.

12. The future will see the development of work on a new site located on the Belfast peace line, where there are huge challenges to be met through community regeneration and the building of social capital. There is potential

therefore for Youth Link to be a significant sign of hope and 'missing peace for a missing generation'.

## **TRAINING COMMITTEE**

1. The Training Committee has been working hard to assess its current work and to bring it in line with the aims of the Board, which are to enable congregations in the development of covenantal ministry with children, young people, adults and families. The work of the Committee has concentrated its efforts in the training of leaders for youth and children's ministry. Future developments will see the work of the Committee expand to include training for ministry with parents, families and young adults.

### **Certificates in Ministry**

2. The Youth Ministry Certificate Course has again been facilitated this year in Belfast and Donegal. The course has run on Monday nights at Union Theological College with 26 in attendance and Thursday evenings in Donegal with 16 participants. A residential weekend has again been central to the implementation of the course.

3. The Children's Ministry Course ran at Union Theological College and Hamilton Road in Bangor with 21 participants attending.

4. The Board continues working in partnership with Union Theological College to facilitate a Graduate Certificate in Youth Ministry.

### **'Building Blocks' Conferences**

5. Two conferences were held on Saturday 14 November 2009 in Dublin (180 in attendance) and Saturday 28 November 2009 at Orangefield Presbyterian Church (280 in attendance). Kathryn Copey was the keynote speaker. Ivy Beckwith, author of 'Formation of Children's Ministry' has been invited to be the keynote speaker at this year's event which will take place on 13 November 2010 in Dublin and 20 November 2010 in Belfast, again at Orangefield.

### **Road Trip Training**

6. Road Trip has been facilitated in 5 different locations around Ireland. This form of regional training will continue to be developed by using more personnel trained by YAC staff and working with congregations who have recently had consultations with YAC staff.

### **Youth Link: NI**

7. Youth Link continues to support and complement the work of the Board. Youth Link staff serve the Board as representatives on working groups and Committees.

### **Training Trevor**

8. Training Trevor was facilitated on Friday 4 September 2009 at Orangefield Presbyterian Church and on Saturday 5 September 2009 at Carnmoney Presbyterian Church with a number of smaller outlying events. The Training Committee was delighted that over 300 people attended the event and received first class training. The Committee has an ongoing commitment to such concentrated periods of training and will discern when the next similar event should be facilitated.

### **Training Trainers**

9. A 'Training the Trainers' programme is currently being developed by the Board. Once qualified, these trainers, having been assessed and validated by the Board, will be used to assist the work of training that is currently delivered by YAC field staff. A similar imitative in children's ministry is being developed.

### **Parenting**

10. Two sessions on parenting were included in the Training Trevor programme in September 2009. In light of this, and subsequent Board discussions the Training Committee has committed to investigating how it can offer more training in parenting and covenant based family ministry.

CHRISTOPH EBBINGHAUS, Convener

## **MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee continues its work of seeking to provide opportunities for service through Summer Outreach programmes, overseas teams, camps and the volunteer programme.

### **SWIM Programme**

2. The past year has brought in major changes to the SWIM programme. The 'Year Team' aspect of SWIM, whereby four or five young adults were appointed to work within a congregation for a number of weeks, has been brought to an end. The Board, after careful consideration, agreed to redirect the resources that provided for the Year Team into the post of Young Adults' Development Officer. Congregations have expressed deep concern about the loss of young adults to congregational life and have sought assistance from the Board to address this growing need. The SWIM programme however continues to function supporting individual young adults who apply to serve as an intern in a local congregation. The Board supports both young adult and congregation in this process through assistance in the recruitment process, provision of training and pastoral support for those serving throughout Ireland and, occasionally, overseas.

### **Overseas Teams**

3. During the summer of 2010 teams will be sent from PCI to London, Malawi and Romania. In London, team members will work with PCEA missionaries as they seek to build up their work and their contact with the community around them. The Malawi team are specialists in education who will be working alongside Diane Cussick, PCI missionary, to train local early year educators. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and the Board of Mission Overseas continue to investigate strategic ways to work together.

### **Camps**

4. In 2010, three camps will take place providing for boys adventure, girls activity and tech camp. The Board continues to investigate the possibility of facilitating a children's camp.

### **Summer Outreach Teams**

5. For many years, the Summer Outreach programme has been a very strategic aspect of the work of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry. In the summer of 2009, fourteen teams served in congregations throughout Ireland, which provided an opportunity for 244 young people to participate in programmes of evangelistic outreach in the communities within which these fourteen congregations minister. Through activities such as holiday bible clubs, community football tournaments, or teenage coffee bar programmes, both Church and community kids encounter the gospel. Many come to faith through the Summer Outreach programme, while many more grow in their commitment to Christ. The experience of participating in an outreach team is not only an opportunity for team members to serve but also provides a very fertile context for personal and corporate spiritual growth. Many young people testify to the significant role that being part of a PCI summer outreach team has played in their growth as a disciple. In 2010 thirteen teams will serve throughout Ireland.

JOHN FLAHERTY, Convener

## **RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

1. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry continues to recognise the strategic importance of staying alert to the many influences that our children and young people are exposed to in their daily life. Influences and values that often challenge the message of the gospel, or sideline it as irrelevant, a minority interest for a small section of society. Through the work of the Research and Education Committee, the Board seeks to pay attention to these influences and bring insight to the work of the Board in supporting the development and delivery of youth and children's ministry in the local congregation.

### **Research on Young Adults' Place in the Church**

2. Youth Development Officer, Graeme Thompson, continues to be sponsored by the Committee in what will now be PhD research looking at the

place of young adults in the Church, specifically addressing how young adults are kept and nurtured in involvement in Church life. This demanding research will provide important insights to the Church regarding sustainable ministry with young adults.

### **Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey**

3. The Committee received a report from Children's Development Officer, Ruth Mitchell, on the launch of the results of the 2009 Kids' Life and Times Survey. This research is conducted by a partnership between the University of Ulster and Queen's University. The information gathered through this research and the Teenage Life and Times surveys provide very reliable data that has the capacity to inform the work of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and the wider Church. A working group has been established under the supervision of Research and Education which will access this information for use in the work of PCI and investigate the possibility of using the survey as a vehicle for research questions that would inform the work of Youth and Children's Ministry. Further work will be carried out by the Committee to locate other research bodies who provide up to date data that would be of use to the work of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry.

### **Partnering with Canadian Research Project**

4. In September, the Board welcomed Professor Marv Penner from Brier Crest College in Canada to participate in the 'Training Trevor' event. Professor Penner had recently completed a major survey among young people throughout Canada which had great potential within youth ministry work. PCI have been offered access to the research process which may be used widely within PCI.

### **SPUD Youth Assembly Resolutions**

5. The Committee welcomed the resolution from the SPUD Youth Assembly:

*'That the Research and Education Committee of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry be asked to raise awareness about the pressures and issues affecting young people, both among young people themselves and the wider Church.'*

6. The work of Research and Education during the incoming year will pick up the request coming to them through SPUD. A Working Group of the Committee has been established to progress this. It is anticipated that this group will draw in young people to assist them with their work.

### **Audit of Faith Based Youth Work**

7. Youth Link: NI have been asked to facilitate an in-depth audit of 'faith-based youth groups'. The audit, which will be done professionally, will be funded by the Northern Ireland Youth Council. The Committee welcomed this work as it will serve and inform ministry development within YAC.



### Research and Education Intern

8. The Committee agreed to make a request to the Board for the appointment of an intern to work under the direction of the Young Adults' Development Officer. The Research and Education Committee is aware of the need to source research that has already been done or is taking place. An intern would be an invaluable resource to the work of the Committee to progress this and other projects.

ROZ STIRLING, Interim Convener

## MINISTRY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The work of the Resources Committee seeks to assess how congregations may best be resourced in their ministry with the under 25 year olds. Work continues to seek out suitable materials for use in the nurture and education of our children and young people, alongside the development of specific materials that relate to our Presbyterian context.

### The Website

2. The YAC website has been up-graded, continuing to provide a vital tool for youth and children's ministry personnel in our congregations as well as parents, ministers and young people. The information super highway of www... is now the vehicle of choice for the acquiring of information and accessing resources. This is particularly the case with the under 25s. The Board is therefore committed to having a quality website that is fit for purpose for those working within the YAC ministry area.

### The Youth and Children's Project

3. The annual Youth and Children's Project provides a vital opportunity for our children and young people to participate in mission at home and overseas. Through the raising of substantial funds by our Sunday Schools and youth groups, ministry projects can expand their work or in some instances actually continue to function.

- **2008/09 Project, Treasure Box, Malawi:** £97,000 has been raised to support the Sunday School work of the Livingstonia Synod and the Committee continues to be impressed by the generosity of the Church towards the project. Board of Mission Overseas staff will supervise the distribution of these funds in Malawi. A specialist teachers' team will be going to Mzuzu in Malawi this summer (2010) through the Ministry Opportunities Committee of the Board and the Board of Mission Overseas. Also in the summer of 2010, a youth team will go to Cluj in Romania, developing links made under a previous YAC Project. The Committee is encouraged to see these relationships continue.
- **2009/10 Project, Missing Peace, Nepal and N. Ireland:** Mr Nigel Eves and the Very Rev Dr Trevor Morrow visited Nepal in the spring of 2010 when during their visit they made contact with

those benefiting from this project. The Committee encourages congregations to continue to support the current 2010 project as it seeks to develop reconciliation work at home and overseas.

- **2010/11 Project, SAT-7 KIDS:** The proposed incoming project is in partnership with the Board of Mission Overseas and will focus on SAT-7, a Christian satellite television station run by and for the people of the Middle East. SAT-7 KIDS is the first and only Arabic Christian channel exclusively for children, making the Gospel of Christ known through its work. In the spring of 2010 Children's Development Officer, Ruth Mitchell and Board member, Ruth Elkin, went to Lebanon to visit SAT-7. This is an exciting project and the Committee commends it to the Church as it is launched in September 2010.

### Youth and Children's Workers

4. The Committee is grateful for the work of full time youth and children's workers across our denomination. Graeme Thompson, Youth Development Officer, continues to support the work of these ministry personnel through monthly teaching and training meetings. These are vital opportunities for full time workers to share with colleagues whom they would otherwise have little opportunity to network with. An invitation to join with Methodist Youth Workers in a retreat was very much appreciated and has been recommended to the youth workers. A one day retreat for PCI youth workers is being planned for some time in June.

5. The Board continues to support the General Board's Panel on Ministry regarding terms and conditions for Additional Pastoral Personnel, and encourage both those employed as youth and children's workers, and those employing them, to consider carefully the Panel's findings.

### Youth Centres

6. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry has continued to manage the three residential centres through the period of transition as agreed by the General Assembly.

- **Guysmere:** In October 2009 the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry had to take the difficult decision to close the Guysmere facility as of December 2009. The centre had accrued a considerable debt in recent years. It was therefore considered prudent to close the centre while the future of the facility is addressed. The Guysmere Re-Development Group and the Steering Committee of the Board continue to consider the way forward. The Church's desire for one centre, as expressed by the General Assembly following the review of the residential facilities, continues to be explored on the Guysmere site at Castlerock, a site which affords the possibility of significant ministry in years to come.
- **Lucan:** Sheltered Housing on the Lucan site is being proactively investigated at present. The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Mr Lindsay

Conway, Director of Social Service, along with the Director, have been meeting regularly to progress this.

- **Rostrevor:** The congregation of Rostrevor has agreed to take over the running of the centre in line with the General Assembly's resolution, but they have requested more time to prepare. It was agreed that December 2010 be the recommended date for the final handover. The congregation has also requested assistance from the Board on issues such as day to day operations and employment matters, and they will receive full support in these matters.

### **Preparing Youth to be Peacemakers (PYP)**

7. The Reconciliation Working Group has been reviewing the work of PYP, with particular attention being given to how the momentum of PYP is maintained now that the staff post supporting the work has come to an end. Various ways of supporting this work are being investigated, including the possible appointment of an intern to focus on this area.

8. The Committee reminds the Church of two SPUD resolutions that related to peacemaking. One concerning encouraging the Church to continue to seek monies to replace the peacemaking posts and one requesting support for those working in interface areas. This is a major area of concern for PCI's young people; they passionately believe it is ministry in which the Church and the gospel must be seen to be active.

### **Discipleship Resources**

9. The Committee continues to think through how best to make resources for the discipling of our children and young people available to the church.

- **Presbyterianism Course:** This course is at the final draft stage. The Committee plan to make it available through the website and hard copies will also be available from the YAC Office.
- **SPUD:** A resolution from the SPUD Assembly of 2009 and passed by the General Assembly reads: 'That the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry make available further resources and develop training, which equips youth leaders to empower young people both within and outside our congregations in response to the challenges of contemporary culture.'

10. The Committee will continue to consider relevant resources needed to support youth and children's ministry and direct youth and children's leaders as to where to find them. Time and energy will be needed to research the various resources. Work on this will continue in conjunction with the Research and Education Committee.

11. A further General Assembly resolution that was presented through SPUD encouraged Boards to actively include under 25 year olds on General Assembly Committees. In light of the current structure of General Assembly Committees it is difficult to implement this resolution. The Committee therefore

agreed that the Business Board be approached in regard to this. A resolution to that effect is appended.

GRAEME KENNEDY, Convener

## MINISTRY EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. It has been another busy year in the Ministry Events Committee as through the working groups, work continues to deliver a series of high quality events which will impact the lives of the children and young people of PCI, as well as benefitting their parents and leaders. Through these events Youth and Children's Ministry seek to support the work of the local congregation as they evangelise, enthuse, envision and equip those who participate and, consistent with the overall aims of the Board, the goal is to see the establishment of a "generation of those who seek Him" (Psalm 24).

### **Kids' Praise Party**

2. The vision for the Kids' Praise Party, now in its fourth year, is to bring children of primary school age from across PCI together in one venue, in order to promote within each of them the awareness that they are part of a much bigger Church than that which they experience through one congregation. The event is also designed to allow the children to participate in lively interactive praise and to hear the Bible explained to them in creative ways. One significant change in 2010 is in the timing of the event – it was decided to bring it forward to Saturday 22 May in Carnmoney Presbyterian Church, in order to facilitate Sunday School groups, many of whom may have already broken up for the summer by mid-June. This year's theme is 'Walk with God' and the speaker is Karen Webb, a Church Army staff worker and member of the Working Group

### **Youth Night**

3. Youth Night has been arranged for the end of General Assembly week, taking place in Church House on the evening of Saturday 13 June 2010. This event has for many years provided a focal point for young people from all parts of our island to gather for praise and teaching. Dave Dickinson and his band from Carnmoney Presbyterian Church, along with speaker, Andy Croft, who has been deeply involved in recent years in Soul Survivor, head up this year's programme.

### **MAD Weekend**

4. Arrangements are at an advanced stage for 'MAD 12' which is planned for 22-24 October 2010 at the University of Ulster, Coleraine. The unavailability of 'The Diamond' at the university has added some complexity to the planning process this year, but the Working Group anticipates that the use of other facilities on campus will in no way diminish the quality of the MAD experience. One practical effect of these ongoing refurbishments is to reduce the capacity at MAD to 500 this year; the Working Group has put clear policies in place to cope with this, through publicity and setting a maximum number of 36

delegates per group. The Committee is delighted that the speaker at this year's event will be Duffy Robbins from the USA, continuing a long association between the Board and this renowned author and teacher. Once again, Alastair Bennett and his band have been invited to lead the worship at MAD 12.

### **Route 66**

5. A consultative panel was established to spearhead the review of this event with the aim of delivering a similar type of programme in 2011. This group is drawing on the experiences of many who have been involved with Route 66 in the past, as well as the fresh insights of some of the young people who have emerged from the SPUD Youth Assembly process. The Board is concerned to provide a place of nurture and teaching for the young adults within our denomination. The experience of the Route 66 Bible teaching conference during the ten years of the ministry was extremely positive. The consultation process will seek to determine the best means of building on the work already achieved through Route 66.

### **Thanks**

6. The Committee continues to be so aware of God's goodness and guidance and are keen, above all, that the events organised are glorifying to Him. The Committee offers its sincere thanks to the very committed members of its Working Groups, as well as to the hard-working and efficient YAC field and office personnel who greatly assist us in its work.

ANDREW THOMPSON, Convener

## **RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly direct Presbyteries to appoint a panel, including at least two people under 25, to examine the SPUD report on 'Young People and the Church', to consider the appended questions and to report back to the SPUD Working Group through the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry by the end of December 2010.
3. That the General Assembly ask the Business Board to take the appropriate steps to ensure that those under 25 years of age are represented within General Assembly structures.
4. That the General Assembly approve the Youth and Children's Project to support the work of SAT-7 Kids television channel in the Middle East.
5. That the resignation of the Rev Steve Stockman as Convener of the Research and Education Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.
6. That a grant of £9,545 be paid from the Incidental Fund to Youth Link: NI.
7. That the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed as follows:

# BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Convener: Rev G MOORE  
Secretary: Rev TD GRIBBEN

1. The Board of Christian Training has had a busy but interesting year, the fruit of which is contained in this report and appendices.

2. The year has been overshadowed by the fire which destroyed the Training Resource Centre at Union Theological College just a couple of weeks before handover.

3. The Board remains encouraged by the number of candidates seeking to explore God's will in regard to ordination but realises that a steady supply of ministers is essential for the Church's wellbeing. Believing that a sense of call usually emerges within the context of the local Christian fellowship the Board would continue to urge Ministers and Kirk Sessions to keep this issue before their congregations as a matter for prayer. Likewise those members of congregations who have the appropriate gifts, are encouraged to listen for God's call to this most rewarding sphere of service.

4. The Board is convinced that whatever else congregations need they require ministers who are trained to face the challenges of ministry and mission in the 21st Century. The denomination needs to continue to invest resources into this training so that we have a steady stream of ministers who are able preachers, caring pastors and effective leaders.

5. The Board is indebted to those ministers who so readily agree to facilitate applicants and candidates required to undertake congregational placements. The provision of such opportunities remains a vital component in the initial selection and training process.

6. The Board is happy to report that there has been yet another significant increase in the number of undergraduates who have chosen Union College for their course in theology. This is a most valuable opportunity to teach the Christian faith at this level, and will prove a wise investment in helping to train future teachers, and Church leaders, and hopefully in helping some to hear God's call to the ordained ministry.

7. In the light of the very difficult current financial situation in PCI, during the year the Priorities Committee of the General Board asked all Boards to undertake a review of their existing areas of work and to determine whether these could or should be:

- (a) Continued/Expanded
- (b) Scaled Down or
- (c) Ceased

8. The Board recognised that the only possible area of significant saving that could be scaled back, though only as a temporary measure, would be with regard to the new post of Principal of Union Theological College with executive responsibilities. Therefore, at its stated meeting in March 2010, the Board

decided, as an interim measure, to recommend to the General Board that this post be advertised internally, as a fixed term post of 3 years. In doing so, and in securing the funds for the necessary additional teaching in the area of the member of staff who was 'seconded' to be Principal, a saving of at least £30,000 per year could be achieved for each of the three years.

9. On the basis of the General Board's acceptance of this recommendation, at its stated meeting in March 2010, the Board agreed to reduce its budget request to the United Appeal Board for a three year period in this manner. The Board also recognised that following this course of action would also enable it to review the Principal's post in three years time, both in the light of experience and taking account of other envisaged changes in staffing.

10. **The Rev David Brice** has served as Convener of the Union Theological College Management Committee for 6 years and has given sterling leadership to this very busy and important Committee. He has overseen the redevelopment of the old Principal's house into the Training Resource Centre and has given a lead in the transformation of the Management structures of the College, and of the Committee itself, following the decisions of last year's General Assembly. The Board would express its thanks to David as he steps down as Convener of the Management Committee and looks forward to his continuing active involvement as the Convener of the College's Finance, Property & Administration Sub-Committee.

11. **The Rt Rev Dr Stafford Carson** has been Convener of the Training and Resources Committee, in its various forms, from 2006 to 2009. He had initially intended to resume this Convenership after his Moderatorial year, but has since taken over as Convener of the Curriculum Sub-Committee of the Union Theological College's Management Committee. During his tenure as Convener of Training and Resources Stafford oversaw the production of a new Elders Training Course and a number of helpful leaflets on baptism, electing Elders and electing a congregational committee. The Board looks forward to his continuing active involvement in its work as the Convener of the College's Curriculum Sub-Committee.

*The Rev Trevor Gribben, Secretary of the Board of Christian Training, writes:*

12. **The Rev George Moore** took up the Convenership of the then Board of Studies and Christian Training in June 2004 having previously had a long association with the Board and its work. Over the years of his Convenership the Board has further developed both its work and its structures, becoming the Board of Christian Training in June 2006. George's leadership and capacity for work have greatly contributed to this development. His commitment to the concept of lifelong training for those involved in Christian ministry, in all its forms, has always been to the fore. His advocacy that the time of preparation for the ordained Ministry be seen as a vital time of ministry formation, reflected both in students gaining knowledge and skills and also growing spiritually, has assisted the Board in its review of theological education. The Board would express its sincere thanks to George for his work on its behalf and for the leadership he has given. The Board would wish him every blessing as he continues his ministry in Kilbride, freed from the demands of an ever increasing

number of Christian Training meetings – meetings which the Board is sure he will secretly miss!

### **Student's Bursary Fund**

*The Convener, the Rev Stewart Mackay, reports:*

1. The Students' Bursary Fund exists to make financial provision for students for the ordained ministry and their families.

2. In the year Sept 2009 - June 2010 there have been 52 students for the ministry. The cost of grants, fees, and other expenses for this period is over £646,000. This is met through offerings at services of licensing, ordination and installation of ministers and elders, personal and congregational donations, and, from 1 January 2010, by assessment. With an expected number of students in October 2010 being 57, there is obviously a need for continued income from these sources.

3. Thanks are due to those members of the Church who support the Fund in these ways. The Board would request that those involved in planning services of licensing, ordination and installation, ensure that full use is made of the literature available at reception in Church House; the bookmark and especially the Gift Aid envelope. Ideally these should be given out at the previous service to enable members to come with the information already written on the envelope. The more support the Fund is given through these services, the less will be needed by way of assessment.

### **Assignment Committee**

*The Convener, the Rev Dr Donald Watts, reports:*

4. This year the Committee has been able to assign a total twenty-nine students and others and is grateful to those Congregations and Ministers who accept the mentoring of student assistants as an important contribution to the life of the Church.

5. The Committee recognises that, with the increased use of schemes such as the Additional Pastoral Personnel Scheme, several Congregations who used to take an Assistant Minister are now no longer doing so. It is important that the Church continues to provide the opportunities necessary for a new generation of Ministers to avail of vital 'on the job' training, prior to receiving a call to Congregations of their own. The Committee would encourage both Ministers and Kirk Sessions to consider how they can assist in this important work.

## **COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. The Director of Ministerial Studies (DMS), the Rev Ronnie Hetherington continues to fulfil his duties in relation to students in training and



prospective candidates, according to the Regulations of the General Assembly. He acts as an efficient Secretary to the Committee and conducts his pastoral care of the students with sensitivity and consideration.

2. In the academic year of 2009/2010 there were 49 students under the care of Presbyteries, as listed in the appended Schedule (see Appendix I).

### **Training of Supervising Ministers**

3. Following a successful One-Day Course for Ministers with staff, it was agreed that a course adapted more specifically for the supervision of assistants should be held on a regular basis. It was further agreed that normally, from 2011, no congregation should be assigned an assistant unless the minister has attended such a course or agreed to do so at the earliest opportunity.

4. Unfortunately some of the plans for the Post-Ordination Training Programme (POTP) have been delayed due to the fire and destruction of the new Christian Training Resource Centre. A pamphlet with relevant information will be made available outlining the ministerial development programme and the first of the annual conferences for the POTP will be held from 16 to 18 November 2010.

### **Biblical Languages**

5. The qualification requirements in Elementary Greek and Elementary Hebrew were reviewed and the subsequent recommendations were agreed:

- (i) *In first year there will be a single course-unit: "Introduction to Biblical Languages". This will cover a basic outline of both languages; one semester for each.*
- (ii) *This introductory course in Hebrew and Greek will be stripped of all non-essential grammar, will make maximum use of computer software, and will focus on ensuring that students will actually be able to use their language knowledge effectively in future ministry.*
- (iii) *There will be normally no age exemption. However an exemption will be considered for those with specific 'learning difficulties'.*
- (iv) *In a student's second and third years, there will be the option of Old Testament and New Testament courses in which they will be able to use, apply and further develop their language knowledge/skills.*
- (v) *Those who opt not to continue further language study beyond the new first-year introductory course will undertake alternative classes, based on texts in English.*

### **Upper age Limit for Applicants**

6. The introduction of an age limit for candidates for the ministry was considered in light of there being an increase in the number of applicants over fifty years of age and the proposed introduction of other recognised preaching and pastoral opportunities in the church. It was agreed to recommend to the Assembly that, as from 15 September 2011, applications should be accepted only from candidates who will not yet have attained the age of 55 years on the projected date of their eligibility for a call.

### Interviews

7. The interviews of 24 candidates were held in Union Theological College on 30 March 2010. The Interviewing Panel comprised: Revs Alistair Bates, Robert Beggs, Robert Bell, Amanda Best, Gordon Best, Robin Brown, Mervyn Burnside, John Coulter, Kenneth Crowe, Gabrielle Farquhar, Mark Goudy, William Henry, John Hutchinson, David McIlwrath, Adrian McLernon, Brian McMillen, Ian McNie, Adrian Moffett, Colin Morrison, Bill Parker; Ivan Patterson, Brian Savage, William Sinclair, David Thompson; Mr Basil McCorrison, Mr John Magowan; Dr Lena Morrow; Miss Anne Taylor; Mrs Isobel McAuley and Mrs Jayne Wright. Dr Joan McQuoid acted as Vocational Consultant, the Rev George Moore as Chairman, the Rev Noble McNeely as Secretary, and the Rev Ronnie Hetherington as Co-ordinator. The Rev Trevor Gribben, Secretary to the Board, was also present for most of the day.

8. Having completed the interviewing process 18 are being nominated to the General Assembly by the Board of Christian Training, along with one additional candidate who, being previously deferred, was re-interviewed and subsequently recommended by the Panel concerned.

JNI McNEELY, Convener

## COMMITTEE ON TRAINING AND RESOURCES

1. This Committee does all of its work through Panels and the three Panels have met frequently dealing with the briefs given to the Committee by the General Assembly.

2. The Panels on Leadership and Pastoral Care made major presentations at the Board's Day Conference and they have integrated the feedback from that event into the reports printed as Appendices 2 and 3.

3. The Accredited Preacher Panel continues its work of developing the outline scheme approved by the General Assembly in June 2009. Plans are well advanced for a pilot training course in two or three Presbyteries in 2011.

4. The members of all three Panels have invested a great deal of time, experience and energy into these important aspects of our Church's work and the quality of their product is seen in the reports themselves. It has been a privilege to work with them during my year as acting convener.

RB SAVAGE, Acting Convener

## UNION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. The most obvious event of the past year was the destruction of the new Training Resource Centre, 3 weeks from completion. The Management Committee commends all the emergency services for ensuring the fire did not spread to other areas of the building and preventing risk to residents. Special commendation must be paid to the College's two Residence Wardens: Jennifer McConnell and Ben McDonald. The Rev Trevor Gribben, Secretary to the

Board of Christian Training, and Mr Desmond Fulton, the Committee's representative to the Professional Team, have been key to liaising with the insurers and to terminating the old contract and commencing a new contract - a lengthy and painstaking process. The new Student Common Room was not harmed by the fire and is in use and much appreciated by students

2. In the midst of the disruption a dedicated staff team has ensured that there has been no disruption to the working life of the College. Thanks are due especially to the College Administrator Mrs Sandra McKinney for leadership and willingness to take on so many of the additional tasks which have resulted from the fire.

3. The College has once again enjoyed teaching a large number of ministry and Queen's students, the figures below indicate the high numbers attending college.

Ministry	49	
Deaconess	5	
Overseas	2	
QUB	222	(excludes 34 Ministry)
Other	44	
Total	322	

4. The Management Committee are in the process of implementing the review agreed by the Assembly last year. Faculty now operate with three departments. Dr Desmond Alexander has joined the Department of Biblical Studies and his lectures are being appreciated and enjoyed by students. The two sub committees of the Management Committee are now established, Curriculum and Finance Property and Administration. The review has also brought the College into a closer liaison with the Board of Finance and Personnel. Clive Knox, Jonathan Kelly and Laura Palmer have been unstinting in their support as the process of implementing the review continues.

5. Mr Stephen Gregory, the College Librarian intends to retire at the end of June 2010 and the College would wish to thank him for his many years of faithful and efficient service. Stephen has brought a high degree of professionalism to the Library and laid a firm foundation for future development.

6. Another major event of the past year was the Calvin Conference celebrating 500 years since the Reformer's birth. It was widely recognised as a great success and Faculty hope to organise similar events on varied themes in the near future.

7. As this report is being written discussions are on-going with the Presbyterian Historical Society regarding the possibility of providing them with accommodation at 26 College Green. Both the Board of Christian Training and the Council of the Society have agreed in principle to this new cooperative venture and the details are in the process of being finalised. It is hoped that final details can be reported at the Assembly.

8. Finally the Management Committee would wish to place on record its thanks to the Principal, Faculty and Administrative staff for enabling the smooth running of College life throughout this past year.

9. It is with regret that the Committee was made aware of the resignation of the Rev Prof LS Kirkpatrick from his role as Principal of Union

Theological College, effective from 31 March 2010. The Committee thanks Prof Kirkpatrick for the contribution he made to its work and to the College as a whole and thanks the Rev Prof A Gibson for taking on the role of Acting Principal in the absence, on sabbatical, of the Vice-Principal, the Rev Prof SN Williams. The Committee looks forward to the appointment, at the 2010 General Assembly of a new Principal, with Executive responsibility.

DW BRICE, Convener

## APPENDIX 1

### Schedule of Students

ARDS	David Conkey	-
	Andrew Conway	Union
	Aaron Ditty	Union
	Peter Douglas	Union
	Fiona Forbes	Union
	Andrew Galbraith	Union
	Graeme McConville	Union
	Paul Orr	Union
	Owen Patterson	Union
	ARMAGH	Seamus Burke
Ashley Graham		Union
Simon Hamilton		-
David McCullagh		Union
Mark Proctor		Union
BALLYMENA	Michael Currie	Union
	Philip Kerr	Union
	Scott Moore	Union
	Norman Smyth	Union
NORTH BELFAST	Ivan Ferris	Union
	Richard Houston	Union
	Jane Nelson	Union
	Gareth Simpson	Union
	Jackie Spence	Union
	Lachlan Webster	Union
	Jonathan Abernethy-Barkley	Union
SOUTH BELFAST	Corrina Heron	Union
	Colin Millar	Union
	Andrew Boreland	Oxford
EAST BELFAST	Peter Bovill	Union
	Jonathan Boyd	Union
	Alan Buick	Union
	Stephen Cowan	-
	David Gray	-
	Gareth Maclean	Union
	Edward McKenzie	Union
COLERAINE & LIMAVADY	Jonathan Doey	-

	Jonathan Frazer	Union
	Keith Hibbert	Union
	Stephen Hibbert	Union
	John Stanbridge	Union
	Neil Stewart	Union
DERRY & DONEGAL	Jonathan Cowan	Union
	Brian Smyth	Union
DUBLIN & MUNSTER	Damien Burke	Oak Hill
	Helen Freeburn	Union
	Kevin Hargaden	-
IVEAGH	Mark Dodds	Union
NEWRY	Alan Smyth	-
OMAGH	Rodney Beacom	Union
	Jonathan Dunn	Union
	Daryl Edwards	Union
ROUTE	John McConaghie	Union
	Stephen McNie	Union
	John Mullan	Oak Hill
TEMPLEPATRICK	Stuart Morrow	Union
TYRONE	Trevor Boyd	Union
	David Lennox	-
	Noel Mulholland	Union
	Graeme Orr	Union
	Ben Preston	Union

## APPENDIX 2

### TOWARDS DEVELOPING CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP WITHIN PCI

#### 1. What do we mean by leadership at the congregational level?

1.1 “A Christian leader is a person with a God given capacity and the God given responsibility to influence a specific group of God’s people towards God’s purpose for the group.” (J Robert Clinton, cited in Leadership Next, Eddie Gibbs, IVP Leicester 2005, page 20.)

1.2 This specifies the Christian character basis for leadership; leadership’s origin in God’s call; its outworking through God’s gifting; its purpose being the achievement of God’s purpose for a group of His people; its relational nature.

#### 2. Context of Leadership at the congregational level

2.1 Congregational Leadership is identified as resting in the teaching elder (minister) and ruling elders together in the Kirk Session. This is where much of our attention needs to be placed as this biblical structure of leadership is the one that lies at the heart of our denominational identity and theology.

Whilst we must recognise with gratitude that there is much good leadership in our denomination, there is also much bad leadership.

2.2 If this biblical structure of eldership is not working well the starting point is not to throw out the structure but to look at the people involved. It is at this level of Kirk Session that leadership development must be directed, not only for the individuals within Kirk Session but also for the whole team of elders who sit and work together as a team on Kirk Session. The corporate issues of leadership in plurality must not be ignored.

2.3 It must be noted, however, that leadership exists at many other levels within a congregation and can be both formal and informal. Leadership at these levels will also need to be addressed, as these are the levels at which implementation of most congregational initiatives occur. Indeed in any process of leadership development and the change which is hoped for from this, the wider congregation must also be involved.

2.4 Kirk Sessions are often criticised for slowness, irrelevance and an inability to engage with the strategic issues and develop vision, in a contemporary and relevant way. The reality is that the question is often raised about the salvation and spirituality of ruling elders.

2.5 The minister occupies a key role in congregational leadership as first amongst equals. The reality is that the question is often raised about his or her ability to lead, and the tendency of ministers to play safe and/or act as a cork in the bottle. As first amongst equals the minister has a key role in facilitating the development of individual, team and congregational leadership.

### **3. Purpose of leadership at the congregational level**

3.1 To achieve the Church's mission by fulfilling the Great Commission of making more disciples and better disciples.

3.2 This covers both mission to and conversion of non-believers (evangelisation); and believers' life-long growth to spiritual maturity and unity within the congregation. Discipling, pastoring, disciplining etc – surely biblical functions of the ruling eldership – are all included within this.

3.3 This purpose delivers the attitudes necessary to implement congregational mission plans and to develop the believers upon whom this will be dependant.

3.4 This leadership paradigm is the unifying (and missing) factor which provides the framework within which vision, strategy, delegation etc can all take place, whilst still serving the congregation and building the Kingdom.

3.5 Leadership has been defined functionally by John Adair (Action Centred Leadership) as the process of achieving a task, by building and sustaining a team, through developing individuals. Whilst some criticise this as overly simplistic, it nonetheless offers an excellent, conceptual model, which is widely used across many organisations and sectors.

### **4. Leadership functions at congregational level**

We can sum these up as:

4.1 **Being the right person**, in terms of spiritual maturity, personal integrity, gifting, prayer and experience of/engagement in spiritual warfare. This will engender trust and confidence in its leadership amongst the congregation.

4.2 **Doing the right things**, in terms of owning the mission of the church to fulfil the great Commission and the biblical definition/purpose of leadership, and having the spiritual insight to understand the times and know what needs to be done. (1 Chronicles 13.22) Vision, strategy and planning are part of this.

4.3 **Inspiring the right cause**, in terms of identifying and communicating God's purpose to God's people with passion and conviction.

4.4 **Working in the right way**, in terms of loving, caring for and pastoring God's people, overseeing the congregation and being involved in hands on witnessing, disciplining and pastoring (in the widest sense.)

## 5. Leadership characteristics

5.1 It is founded upon and dependent upon Christ-like character and spiritual maturity. Leaders must first be followers of Christ themselves, and have given proof of their character, calling and giftedness in previous ministry. It involves specific things:

- Christ follower - lifelong learner, in accountable relationships
- Character - the fruit of the Holy Spirit
- Called by God
- Competence - gifted by Holy Spirit; previous ministry and life experience
- Congregational knowledge
- Contextually aware - the context of the congregation, its communities, and the culture of the contemporary world in which we exist
- Courage - based on faith
- Compassionate and connected – people focused
- Confident - in Christ and the Gospel
- Conviction - about biblical authority and doctrine
- Collectivity - team player
- Committed - to the Kingdom through the local congregation
- Consistent - in life and doctrine
- Clarity - about mission of the Church, vision of the congregation and the purpose of leadership

(The above list is based partly on Bill Hybels – *Courageous Leadership*, Grand Rapids Zondervan 2002 and Eddie Gibbs – *Leadership Next*, IVP Leicester 2005, page 113ff)

5.2 Core values of leadership - God glorifying; Christ centred; Spirit filled; bible based; prayer covered; taking spiritual warfare seriously.

5.3 Whilst all the above should be present to at least some degree in every elder, a team of elders – the Kirk Session – should possess them in a greater, more balanced degree.

## 6. A flavour of a way forward

This does not set out a comprehensive overview of any definitive plan; rather it identifies key areas that any plan will need to address and suggests some possible action steps within those areas. Obviously any way forward will need to be clearly identified; comprehensively planned and fully resourced.

### **6.1 Basic tasks will include:**

- (a) Cast vision for leadership (with high expectations and high commitment) at congregational level - within Kirk Session, congregational organisations and congregation primarily, but also within Presbyteries and the General Assembly.
- (b) Generate ideas for short term developments in the way things are done
- (c) Address issue of helping existing ministers, ruling elders and leaders be equipped, both as those responsible for leading and managing large scale change within a congregation and as those able to develop other leaders within a congregation.
- (d) Establish processes to help new leaders develop.
- (e) Establish monitoring and support mechanisms to ensure vision, mindset, changes and development all remain in place.
- (f) The issue of rolling out the leadership mindset to all levels of the congregation is important as Kirk Session often does not deliver initiatives, others do so, and therefore they must all be involved.

### **6.2 Changing the way we do things in the short term**

- (a) Kirk Sessions to be encouraged to meet frequently, to pray and study together; to learn and grow together as leaders, and to deal with strategic issues, as well as routine business.
- (b) Minister and Kirk Sessions to be encouraged to include a significant amount of time in devotional/teaching bible study and prayer at Kirk Session meetings
- (c) Minister and Kirk Sessions to be encouraged to address issues of length and content of agenda etc.
- (d) Model of strategy group to be recommended to all ministers/Kirk Sessions with more than 12 members.
- (e) Model of action teams/working groups to be recommended to all ministers/Kirk Sessions, which focus upon specific issues/functional areas and report back with recommendations etc to full Kirk Session for decisions.

(Note: both of the models in points d and e can include non Kirk Session members)

### **6.3 Support Mechanisms**

- (a) Could Presbyteries become more proactive in facilitating regular elders training e.g. clerks of session training evenings and other elder training on an on-going basis?
- (b) Could Presbyteries pro-actively enhance their role in consulting with and approving (and possibly training) new ruling elders, as per the Templepatrick Presbytery model?
- (c) Presbytery consultations could be expanded to review all areas of Kirk Session life and leadership, and the place of deliberate and intentional discipleship and leader development in congregational life.
- (d) Union Commission could review leadership and leadership development within a congregation as part of their "leave to call" process.



- (e) Ensure effective processes are in place to ensure and support the application of training back in Kirk Sessions, organisations and congregations.

#### **6.4 Structural changes**

The following areas will need to be considered as part of the overall delivery of a strategy for leadership development at congregational level:

- (a) the promotion of deliberate and intentional leadership development within all congregations – to include both preparatory and in-service training, as well as succession planning for all areas of leadership;
- (b) the resultant refocusing and enhancing of the leadership training and resources provided by the Board of Christian Training for new ruling elders, students for the ministry, licentiates and ministers post ordination;
- (c) the issue of holding leadership positions for life – the consideration of active participation in leadership on a ‘term basis’ and the enabling of retirement or stepping aside ‘with dignity’;
- (d) the consideration of how Presbyteries and the central church can be more flexible in addressing conflict that has its root in change within a congregation.

### **APPENDIX 3**

#### **TOWARDS DEVELOPING CONGREGATIONAL PASTORAL CARE WITHIN PCI**

##### **A. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Pastoral Care Panel of the Board of Christian Training has been tasked with looking at models for delivering basic pastoral care in congregations.

2. The Panel has not been specifically looking at either specialist pastoral care, e.g. counseling etc, nor at the role of the Minister as Pastor Teacher, but rather has been focusing on that regular and ongoing pastoral care that is provided to all members in the congregation. This care has been traditionally provided by the district elder, and whilst elders will continue to have a major role in its provision, in many places the traditional model of elders districts alone is no longer as effective as it once was.

3. The Panel also recognizes that much of the effective pastoral care in congregations happens informally as believers care for one another within the body of Christ. In any new models for pastoral care, the vital ‘one another’ factor should never be overlooked.

##### **B. PASTORAL CARE - THE AIMS**

To communicate a clear message that, irrespective of your attitude to God and Church:

- (i) You matter to God
- (ii) You belong to this congregation
- (iii) We care for you

- (iv) We want you to know Christ and grow in your knowledge of Him

### **C. A NEW MIND SET**

1. There are several key factors that we need to keep before us:
  - (a) Though Ministers are key to pastoral care, they are not the only pastoral visitor.
  - (b) Though family units are central in our congregations, thinking in terms of family units alone for pastoral care can result in individuals being overlooked.
  - (c) Though visitation in homes remains an important element of pastoral care, visits or other arranged contact, at a mutually convenient time and venue, could prove to be much more beneficial.
2. There are several policies that could usefully be adopted:
  - (a) Pastoral Care in most congregations will require a major overhaul
  - (b) Where appropriate, responsibility for organising pastoral care should be allocated to a specific person
  - (c) Delivery of Pastoral Care at various levels needs to be delegated to a range of people working in teams, including elders and others.

### **D. TOWARDS NEW STRUCTURES FOR THE PROVISION OF PASTORAL CARE**

#### **1. A Pastoral Care Convener**

- appropriately gifted
- ordained ideally/non-ordained also possible
- full time/part time
- salaried/volunteer
- responsible to Session
- to organise care
- share in delivery of care
- assisted by small group/committee

(Whilst it is recognised that in some congregations, particularly very small situations, much of this role will be undertaken by the Minister, to have another individual co-ordinating pastoral care under the direction of the Minister and Kirk Session, could well be a very useful model.)

#### **2. Larger areas/regions to be cared for by groups of elders/carers**

Pastoral care on the ground is best delivered by those who are suitably gifted and prepared. In a congregation this will of course include elders, though not necessarily all elders, but should also include those non-elders whom God has gifted for such ministry. Larger areas/regions, either geographic or divided up in other ways, cared for by a team of pastoral careers, under the oversight of the Kirk Session, could prove a very effective structure.

### **E. THE DELIVERY OF PASTORAL CARE**

Delivery no longer simply needs to be by an elder, in the home, to the family, but needs to be delivered as opportunities present themselves.

#### **1. Small Group Care:**

- Home groups

- Prayer meetings
- Organisations - youth, sports, other

A Named person in each small group/organisation should be responsible to communicate needs that arise to the person with overall responsibility for pastoral care in the congregation, to ensure that conversations in small groups are understood as part of a pastoral care system.

## **2. Individual Care:**

Many individuals in a congregation are *not* members of any small group, but will still require pastoral care. A system of care will need to be designed appropriate to each congregation and operated in such a way that no-one will fail to receive an offer of pastoral care i.e. avoid people '*falling through the net*'.

## **F. TIME AND PLACE**

1. Anytime – anywhere: Pastoral care delivered in casual places at unusual times needs to be clearly identified as pastoral care from the congregation and not just a social meeting.

2. Sundays at Church: Elders and other pastoral carers should always be looking out for members for whom they have responsibility – building relationships, being open to those who might want to talk or need to be followed up, watching out for those who are missing and generally seeing Sunday as a time for genuine fellowship and caring for one another.

## **G. SUPPORT MINISTRIES**

Various ministries/services to be available on request to elders/carers inc.

- Prayer Ministry
- Fellowship Meetings
- Social Care Support:
- Transport
- Care for Carers
- Sitting service ( for babies, housebound elderly etc
- Meals
- Home Repairs
- Assistance re claiming benefits etc
- Listening, etc etc

## **H. TRAINING FOR PASTORAL CARERS**

Once a consensus has been reached on possible new models for pastoral care, and once the new Christian Training Development Officer is in post, a programme designed to further equip and resource those involved in pastoral care will be developed and delivered.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the following candidates, their nomination having been sustained by the Board of Christian Training, be accepted as students for the Ordained Ministry, and placed under the care of their Presbyteries:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>
Gary Ball	Second Comber	Down
Philip Cleland	First Portadown	Armagh
Ross Collins	Belvoir	South Belfast
Chris Cordner	First Coleraine	Coleraine and Limavady
Nathan Duddy	First Dromore	Dromore
Russell Edgar	Druminnis	Armagh
Robert Hamilton	Trinity, Greyabbey	Ards
Mark Johnston	Muckamore	Templepatrick
Nigel Kane	Curran	Tyrone
Edward Kirwan	Trinity, Bangor	Ards
Ivan Linton	Castlerock	Coleraine and Limavady
Philip McClelland	Harryville	Ballymena
Reuben McCormick	Lucan	Dublin and Munster
Gordon McCracken	First Coleraine	Coleraine and Limavady
Stuart McCrea	Millisle	Ards
Alan Moore	Woodlands	Carrickfergus
Stephen Orr	Wellington	Ballymena
Matthew Simpson	Cloughwater	Ballymena
Roland Watt	Pomeroy	Tyrone

3. That the General Assembly agree that from 15 September 2011, applications to be received as Students for the Ministry should be accepted only from candidates who will not yet have attained the age of 55 years on the projected date of their eligibility for a call.

4. That the General Assembly warmly welcome the report "Towards Developing Congregational Leadership within PCI" and instruct the Board of Christian Training to develop further the issues within the report and bring to the General Assembly of 2011 proposals for a scheme for developing leadership at the congregational level based on its contents.

5. That the General Assembly warmly welcome the report "Towards Developing Pastoral Care within PCI" and instruct the Board of Christian Training to develop further the issues within the report and develop and promote, along with others as appropriate, a programme designed to further equip and resource those involved in pastoral care within congregations.

6. That the resignation of the Rev David Brice as Convener of the Union Theological College Management Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.

7. That the resignation of the Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson as Convener of the Training and Resources Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev Dr Brian Savage be appointed in his place.

8. That the resignation of the Rev Noble McNeely as Convener of the Ministerial Studies and Development Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev Bill Parker be appointed in his place.

9. That the resignation of the Rev George Moore as Convener of the Board of Christian Training be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.

10. That the Board of Christian Training, together with the appropriate working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 285 of the Code, as follows:

# COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

Convener: Rev Dr RA RUSSELL

Secretary: Mr STW LYNAS

1. This past year, with a new Convener, the Board of Communications has covered initial attempts to address the basic remit for the Board as agreed by the Communications Panel and included in the supplementary reports of the 2009 Assembly. During that time the Board has been considering the staffing of the Communications Department and there have been certain frustrations in implementing some of the plans formed at the October meeting of the Board. However, the Board believes it is securely on course for a programme of work from which the outcomes will become increasingly obvious. The Board is implementing plans to establish working groups to support various aspects of the responsibilities and activities that it has been commissioned to accomplish and it is expected that these will be in operation soon.

2. In his work as Communications and Press Secretary, Mr Stephen Lynas covers a wide range of responsibilities from his supervision of our Church's public relations and media services to managing the work of the Communications Department. The Board has appreciated his judgement and the experience he has gained over the years in guiding those who respond on PCI's behalf through difficult and sometimes delicate relationships with the press and other media. In addition Stephen has been editing the *Herald* since the beginning of 2008. He has been successful in developing the magazine in a fresh and relevant direction and the Board did explore the possibility that he might retain the position of editor on a permanent basis. However, it has become increasingly clear to the Board, and to Stephen, that it will be increasingly difficult for him to continue in this role, even if another member of staff were appointed to relieve him of other work. The Board will, therefore, be taking steps to appoint a new editor for the *Herald* as soon as it reasonably can.

3. The Communications Department continues to incorporate the offices of information, publication and the production of the *Herald*. The Board acknowledges once again the work of its dedicated and skilled staff: Mrs Anne McCully (Administration Manager), Mr Edward Connolly (Production Manager), Mrs Sarah Harding (Projects Manager), who the Board is very pleased to welcome back after maternity leave, and Mr Sai Kelly (Video Producer). The Board is looking forward to the time when they will be able to move from their rather cramped temporary accommodation on the periphery of the building to a location where there is the opportunity to display and give better access to our Church's communication resources. It is the Board's hope and intention that the planned working groups will give support and encouragement to the various roles and skills of the departmental staff.

4. Finally, the Board expresses its gratitude for the work of the Committee Conveners. Maurice McNicholl, as Convener of the Communication Administration Committee, has already demonstrated the valuable and relevant skills and experience he has brought to the position. His Co-Convenor, Ivor

Smith, continues to raise awareness of the work of the Presbyterian Historical Society. The Church Architecture Committee, which also functions under the supervision of the Board, is ably convened by the Rev George Simpson. The Board would pay tribute to their thoughtful and thorough work as outlined in their Committee reports.

5. It could be argued that, of all the Boards, the Board of Communication has experienced the greatest change in its circumstances of service. It has had to respond to the continuing pace of technological change and the development of media production and fashion since the Board changed from being 'Publications and Aids to Worship' to 'Communications' nineteen years ago in 1992. A lot has happened in the course of a 19 year old's life! The Board has also had to contend with a transformation in the work of what are now termed 'Mission Boards' which have increasingly taken on internally what they would once have asked the Communications Board to do for them. Thus, the Board has a particular responsibility to show initiative, to be proactive in watching for the communication standards of our whole Church and alert to exploit the opportunities, as well as spotting the threats, that developments in communication will inevitably bring. Above all the Board must never forget that our commission is in the name of Christ and for the good of His Church and so it would value the prayers of the Assembly and the co-operation of the other Boards as it seeks to discover how it can best be of service.

## COMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The attention of the Committee focuses on the administration and finances of the Board, the Communications office and the Presbyterian *Herald*. In addition it is responsible for the role of PCI in the Presbyterian Historical Society.

### Department

1. The Communications Department incorporates the offices of information, publication and the production of the *Herald* and the Committee endorses the thanks already expressed in the Board of Communications report for the work of Stephen Lynas and to the various members of staff. The Committee appreciates the variety of skills and the conscientious application they bring to their work.

### Presbyterian Herald

2. Stephen Lynas has placed his own particular stamp on the *Herald* and his achievements have been in keeping with the developing demands and changes within our Church and surrounding society. Having investigated the possibility of making this a permanent part of Stephen's work the Committee has become aware of serious difficulties in combining the roles of press officer and editor and is taking steps to appoint a new editor for the magazine. In the

meantime, it is planned to have a series of guest editors under Stephen's supervision.

### **Historical Society**

3. The activities of the Society continue to be represented within the Committee by its joint Convener, the Rev Ivor Smith. Miss Valerie Adams was appointed Assistant Secretary/Librarian and took up this role in January 2010.

M McNICHOLL, Convener

## **CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee met on nine occasions since the last report.
2. Fifty-eight submissions were dealt with and these ranged from new Church buildings, new Church halls, new manses, major and minor renovations.
3. During the year a number of site visits were arranged and proved very beneficial.
4. Once again the Committee would request that congregations submit plans at an early stage and preferably before working drawings are produced. The Convener is happy to give guidance regarding procedure.
5. In September members of the Committee visited Churches which had been recently built - Immanuel, Wellington and Green Pastures in Ballymena. This was a very interesting Autumn Tour.
6. During the year the Committee was involved in drawing up guidelines for building projects as per resolution of the General Assembly from the Environmental Panel (Appendix 1).
7. As Convener I would like to pay tribute to the Committee for all the hard work during the year. The Committee is dedicated and enthusiastic in approaching the task. Sincere thanks to Anne McCully for sending out the minutes each month. A special thank you to our architects who give their time and advice completely free of charge.

G SIMPSON, Convener

### **APPENDIX 1**

#### **Design stage sustainability guidelines for building projects**

Sustainable design views the building holistically and observes how it interacts with the environment. This awareness can inform decisions about energy efficiency, whether to build on a watershed area, or choosing not to disturb a natural environment. Additional deliberation can include conserving water, incorporating geothermal heating or grey waste water that reuses water through re-filling systems, or how to select materials outside and inside of the building that are sustainable and are sourced from environmentally responsible suppliers, for example the use of FSC accredited timber.

There is a variety of environmental and sustainability standards which can be pursued at the design stage of a new build, including BREEAM Bespoke



2008, BREEAM Education 2008 Environmental & Sustainability Standard, BREEAM Office 2008 and Code for Sustainable Homes.

The following provides a brief summary of some of the key minimum and mandatory design stage elements from each of these standards, providing ideas and guidance on how a design team can make some early considerations of sustainable design for a new building and surrounding ground, in response to the most heavily weighted environmental impacts.

## **1. ENERGY**

### **Energy efficiency and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**

Reduction of predicted building CO<sub>2</sub> emission rate (BER) against the target CO<sub>2</sub> emission rate (TER) improve the energy efficiency of the building's fabric and services will result in lower building operational related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Design stage should consider building elements:

- Good insulation roof, external/sheltered wall, ground floor, windows, junctions between building elements
- Ventilation, air tightness, moisture control
- Reduce the heat loss parameter (HLP) from the building
- Encourage use of energy labelled white goods

### **Use of energy efficient light fittings internally and externally**

Encourage the specification of energy efficient light fixtures for external and internal areas.

### **Use of low or zero technologies (LZC)**

Reduce carbon emissions and atmospheric pollution by encouraging local energy generation from renewable sources. A feasibility study can be carried out by an energy specialist to establish the most appropriate local LZC. Examples of recognised renewable technologies with better payback periods include:

- Ground source heat pumps
- Geothermal heating systems
- Solar hot water
- Biomass boilers
- Community heating

### **Cycle storage and car park facilities**

- Consideration to the provision of cycle storage to encourage the wider use of bicycles, reducing the need for short car journeys
- Provision of underground car parking to reduce the building footprint. Perennial gardens could be built on top of the underground parking which could be irrigated by rain water collected and could encourage local ecology

## 2. WATER

### Internal water consumption

Minimise the internal consumption of potable/mains water in sanitary applications by encouraging the use of low water use fittings.

- Urinals, WCs and showers that consume less potable/mains water in use than standard specs for the same type of fitting.
- Grey water, eg rainwater recycling (appropriate collection, treatment and storage of used shower, bath and tap water for use, instead of potable water, in WCs and/or washing machines).

### External water use

- Provision of a system to collect rainwater for use in irrigation of internal or external landscaping (examples include rainwater butts and central rainwater collection systems).

### Management of surface water runoff

Ensure that the surface water runoff from the site is no greater after the development than before in order to protect watercourse and reduce the risk of localised flooding, pollution and other damage.

- Use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) such as soakaways or settlement ponds.

## 3. MATERIALS

### Environmental impact of materials

Encourage the use of materials with lower environmental impacts over their lifecycle. Mandatory requirement for a number of the standards is to achieve a green guide rating of between A and D for at least five elements of the building envelope.

### Responsible sourcing of material

Further sustainable considerations can be achieved through encouraging the specification of responsibly sourced materials for basis building elements. For example 100% of timber from legally sourced Forest Stewardship certified sources, or use of particular material specifiers who operate an environmental management system.

## 4. WASTE

### Construction site waste management plans

Evidence of a plan to ensure that the amount of non-hazardous construction waste generated on site by the development is the same as or better than good practice and that a significant majority of non-hazardous construction waste will be diverted from landfill, reused or recycled.

**Use of recycled or secondary aggregates**

Encourage the use of recycled or secondary aggregates in “high-grade” build aggregate uses.

**Provision of dedicated recyclable waste storage**

Ensure the provision of dedicated storage facilities for recyclable waste streams.

**5. POLLUTION**

- Encourage the supply of heat from a system that minimises NOx (Nitrogen Oxide) emissions
- Encourage the use of insulants and refrigerants with a low global warming potential (GWP)

**Minister in Recognised Service**

*The Rev Dr Bert Tosh reports:*

1. The BBC has been very much in the spotlight over the past year, with questions about salaries and expenses; a major strategic review and the appointment of a Muslim as the Head of Religion and Ethics – something which aroused not a little controversy in certain quarters.

2. Locally, the Religious Department in Belfast continues to maintain a considerable volume of output, particularly on a Sunday where the audiences for *Morning Service* and *Sunday Sequence* continue to be excellent. *Sunday Sequence* has a very broad remit – that whole area where religion, ethics and culture interface and during the past twelve months considerable attention has been paid to the unfolding story of the Presbyterian Mutual Society. William Crawley, the presenter has recently presented some editions of the Radio 4 programme *Sunday*.

3. As always, I am extremely grateful to all those people who contribute to and take part in the various programmes for which I am responsible.

4. Since September 2009, I have been the Convener in charge of the vacant congregations of Drumlough and Anahilt.

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That a grant of £1,000 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church Architecture Committee.
3. That a grant of £15,750 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Presbyterian Historical Society.
4. That the Board of Communications together with its associated Committees be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with paragraph 227 of the Code as follows:

# BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Rev ROBERT HERRON  
Secretary: Rev TREVOR GRIBBEN

1. The remit of the Board of Education is to act in the name and in accordance with the instructions of the General Assembly in all matters affecting education in Ireland. The Board attempts to represent the Church's interests in the various branches of education, from early years to university in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

2. Due to its limited resources, often the Board finds itself responding to issues rather than being proactive. As the Board continues to protect and develop the church's interests in education and to ensure equality in education between the religious traditions it is an opportune time for the church to consider the use of its own resources.

3. Funding is provided by the United Appeal. The 2009 General Assembly agreed an allocation in 2010 of £3.3 million to be shared between seven mission boards of PCI. The sum of £27,000 was allocated to the Board of Education, representing less than 1% of the United Appeal's budget. If the allocation to the Board of Education was increased to 3% (approx £100,000) it would greatly enhance the work of the Board and enable PCI to be a much stronger partner in education.

4. At present, the State Education Committee is the only Committee of the Board. The Board plans to change the manner in which it conducts its business, therefore the Assembly is not being asked to reappoint a State Education Committee.

## **Rev Dr Colin McClure**

5. The Rev Dr Colin McClure has completed four years as Convener of the State Education Committee. He brought to his convenership knowledge and experience of the education system having served for many years as a school governor and a member of an Education and Library Board. Colin continues to represent PCI on the Executive Committee of the Transferor Representatives' Council and chairs the RE Advisory Group in conjunction with the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). The Board expresses thanks to him for his contribution to the work of the Committee.

## **Rev Robert Herron**

*The Rev Trevor Gribben, Secretary of the Board of Education writes:*

6. The Rev Robert Herron has completed six years as Convener of the Board of Education. He brought to his convenership a wide experience in educational administration, both at School and Education and Library Board levels, and this has proved invaluable at this time of unprecedented change in the organisation of education in Northern Ireland. Robert is widely respected in educational circles, and his advocacy, combined with his seemingly endless

capacity for work, has helped to both protect and enhance the Presbyterian Church's legitimate role in this area of the public square. At times his convenership has literally meant going the extra mile, attending meeting after meeting at Stormont and other similarly distant points from his home in Omagh. The Board expresses thanks to Robert for his contribution to its work and for the vision and leadership he has brought to that work.

## **STATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

### **NORTHERN IRELAND**

#### **Introduction**

1. The unprecedented quantity and range of educational policy matters has ensured an even more exacting, eventful and industrious year for Board and Committee. Probably as never before the Committee has recognised the value and necessity of working through the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) with our Church of Ireland and Methodist partners in support of a shared Christian vision and ethos. The challenge of fulfilling our responsibilities has called for judicious prioritising and delegation as we seek to engage meaningfully in matters as diverse and yet interrelated as the status of ESA (Educational and Skills Authority), the consolidation of area education boards, TRC structure, sectoral support, area based planning, teacher training provision, curriculum support for RE and the Entitlement Framework.

2. In a year when new school Boards of Governors have been constituted many new transferor governors had to be identified. School governors deserve honour for the contribution they make within their local communities. The Committee commends transferor governors who are continuing to prove themselves as stalwarts for localised and principled action and reflection on educational provision. At this time they are also a key resource for the Church serving our wider community.

#### **Review of Public Administration (RPA)**

3. The Education Bill, introduced to the Northern Ireland Assembly by the Minister of Education in December 2008, is the key enabling legislation proposing to reorganise educational governance with the setting up of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA). Through the TRC, the Board expressed its serious concerns and reservations on several issues, including the future arrangements for the Controlled sector and the loss of transferor rights on decision-making bodies for such schools.

4. The proposals not only break faith with our existing legal rights but wantonly disregard our denomination's longstanding commitment and contribution to the educational enterprise for all our children and young people. Moreover, whilst other sectors of education could consolidate their position, the Controlled sector's ability to meaningfully engage in future developments would be undermined through lack of coherence and not having the privileges ownership confers.

5. By previous legislation the transferor churches nominate a certain proportion of the membership of each Education and Library Board. This was in recognition of their current stakeholder status alongside other community representatives (e.g. local councillors and educational professionals) and their ongoing guardianship of schools established by the churches and subsequently transferred into state control. If the Board of ESA proceeds as the Bill envisages transferors will neither have a role by right on the ESA Board nor on any ownership body for Controlled schools which may be formed. Therefore, no matter what the stated intentions, as presently formulated (such matters have proved remarkably fluid!) the proposed structure will deliver a grossly inequitable educational structure. A dissipated Controlled sector will effectively be denied the strategic support and capacity from which other sectors will be well placed to benefit. Despite political, legislative and bureaucratic frustrations the Board is fully committed to work with the various educational stakeholders in achieving the best outcome for all our children and young people.

6. In the absence of the required political agreement the target date for the establishment of ESA, i.e. 1 January 2010, was not achieved. Consequently the churches were belatedly asked to co-operate in the setting up of greatly scaled-down interim Boards. Within stringent timescales the church education secretaries responded robustly. On the clear undertaking that nominees would only be required to serve for the month of January, transferor nominations were made in good faith to the interim Boards.

7. At the time of submission of this report, and with no realistic possibility of a commissioned ESA, it is the Minister of Education's intention that transitional Education Boards will be established. These Boards will have fewer members than the Boards have had in the past. They will also work towards a convergence of services. Transferors have been asked to make 10 nominations for four Boards. There is no indication that the South Eastern Board will change from its present position under commissioners. The Committee is grateful for the commitment of PCI's nominees to their corresponding Board: Belfast – the Rev Norman Hamilton OBE; North Eastern – the Rev Selwoode Graham MBE; Southern – Mr Ronnie McVeigh and Western – the Rev Robert Herron. It is not possible to predict as to the term of these transitional Boards. However, unless there is political agreement there is every possibility that they could adopt a semi-permanent status!

### **Controlled Schools – Future Representation and Ownership**

8. So many of the matters under the remit of the Education Board and State Education Committee are interconnected that movement in one aspect usually has repercussions in another. As well as proposing new structures for educational governance the RPA sought to establish sectoral support bodies to represent the various sectors on the Northern Ireland scene. This would include a Controlled schools support body that could be a focus for a clearer identity and advocacy. A working group, including TRC, has been established by the Department of Education. Preliminary work has been undertaken to define vision and ethos, remit and composition, a communication strategy and a business plan for such a body. However, without a political resolution to the

issue of Controlled school ownership, the integrity and capacity of such a support body will be inevitably undermined to the point of irrelevance.

9. In October 2009 the Department of Education issued a draft second Education Bill setting out proposals for a “Holding Company”. This notional company would have a duty of care for the Controlled schools’ estate – currently valued at approximately £2.3 billion. Yet again the Department cite equality and anti-discrimination provisions from section 6 of the NI Act (1998) as barring transferors from membership as of right. The TRC continues to contest this interpretation, not least because the result will lead to an even greater inequality. In a cavalier disregard of historic contexts and agreements the transferor churches will be further excluded whilst other sectors will further consolidate their position.

10. Considerable energy has been expended in lobbying and preparing briefing papers for all the political parties. The TRC has responded to invitations from the education spokespersons of the Democratic Unionist Party, the Ulster Unionist Party and Sinn Fein. Meetings with the First and deputy First Ministers have confirmed their support in finding a resolution that will deliver a solution fit for purpose.

### **Special Education**

11. From the constituent churches the TRC Education Secretaries convened a working group representing parents of children with special educational needs and relevant professionals to respond to ‘Every School a Good School: The Way Forward for Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Inclusion’.

12. Extensive proposals included an emphasis on early identification and intervention, replacing statutory statements with co-ordinated support plans, widening the remit of Special Needs Co-ordinators in schools and renaming them as Learning Support Co-ordinators, reviewing teacher training and development, a broader concept of additional educational need, better partnerships amongst special schools and other schools in the community, as well as across learning communities and between statutory provision in education, health and social care.

13. The working group broadly welcomed the focus on SEN provision and inclusion. However, the substance of the consultation was highly idealised and aspirational. The resource implications for any moves towards “supportive inclusion” must be more detailed in financial, personnel and domestic terms.

### **Arrangements for transfer to post-primary schools**

14. The Education Minister has issued guidelines for transfer that do not include the use of academic criteria. Some schools, mostly Grammar, have opted to use testing mechanisms to admit pupils for the school year beginning in September 2010. The Minister believes that such schools will be beset by legal challenges; the schools concerned believe their tests to be part of a robust selection system. The two main testing consortia seem committed to working towards an eventual single system for testing. However, the uncertainty in this

issue is further compounded by the apparent ambiguity of some grammar schools in the Catholic sector with regard to selection.

15. Transfer cannot be considered in isolation. After many reports and consultations over an extended period we are all aware of the ever present need for strategic planning, including rationalisation. Whilst this has partly been engaged with in area-based planning, the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education Post Primary Review – entitled “Catholic Education for All” – has embarked on more detailed and localised planning within the Catholic maintained sector, having regard to issues such as demographics, curriculum and sustainability. Clearly, if individual sectors can proceed with detailed planning and rationalisation it may seriously curtail the options subsequently available to others in more extensive area-based planning.

### **Religious Education in schools**

16. In conjunction with the TRC churches PCI representatives value termly meetings with the remaining RE Advisers from the Education and Library Boards. This allows the prompt identification of pertinent and topical issues relating to the delivery of quality RE in schools. For instance, the Committee has been made aware that the uncertainty surrounding the establishment of ESA has created a deficit in the support of RE teachers and teaching. This concern has been conveyed to the Assembly Education Committee.

17. The Committee Convener chairs the RE Advisory Group in conjunction with the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). This group has been ably and energetically serviced by its support officer, Mr Stephen Livingstone, a seconded primary teacher. This year’s focus has been on the development of support materials for primary teachers that enable RE to be taught in the thematic way familiar to other Areas of Learning. Thematic units have been developed for Year 5 and Year 6/7 “boxes” entitled St Patrick and People of Faith; and Faith and Light respectively. These should be available later in 2010. A further unit – “Food for Thought” – will be provided for Years 3/4 if necessary funding is secured.

18. As teachers are now familiar with support literature corresponding to the revised curriculum the Group is working on a non-statutory guidance document for RE more in keeping with the revised curriculum.

### **Proposed merger of Stanmillis University College and Queen’s University of Belfast School of Education**

19. The TRC churches are currently gathering information on the preparation of student teachers undertaken in Northern Ireland’s teacher training institutions to deliver the RE curriculum in Controlled schools. In addition to these broad concerns the TRC churches have made representations to relevant parties involved in the plan for a QUB Centre of Excellence for Education in the Stranmillis site.

20. The business plan for the merger has been approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel. It is anticipated that a public consultation will issue shortly from the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).



## REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

### Primary Schools

1. A small but significant number of Primary Schools in the Republic of Ireland are under Presbyterian Patronage. The Board is thankful to those who fulfil the responsibilities of oversight of these schools, especially those who are involved in very hands on ways in their management. The Board also recognises the support given to such schools through the Church of Ireland Board of Education.

### Secondary Education Committee

*Mr Brian Duffy, Director of Secondary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:*

The Secondary Education Committee received approximately €6.5m from the government and awarded 1,622 day grants and 924 boarding grants. The Committee agreed to increase grants for the school year 2010/11 on a scale from boarding €1,140 – €4,947 (€1,140 – €6,699) day €480 – €2,820 (€480 – €2,505). An increase in certain allowances was also agreed in relation to the reckoning of assessments. This resulted in improved access to grants for a number of families.

### Educational Developments

2. Following the removal by the government of significant funding (about €2.8m per year) from voluntary secondary schools under Protestant management and the worsening of the pupil teacher ratio for those schools, the sector embarked on a public campaign to raise awareness of the losses and of their discriminatory nature. As well as lobbying politicians and significant public figures, a public conference was held and was well attended by parents, teachers, school governors and educationists. Under threat from further swingeing cuts proposed by the McCarthy Report on public spending, a submission was made to the government. A political agreement between the Green Party and Fianna Fail resulted in the shelving of the worst proposals for the life of the current government.

3. At the invitation of officials in the Department of Education and Science, a working party has been established to engage with them on the future funding of Protestant education in the Republic. The outcome of these talks, which are likely to be lengthy and comprehensive, remains to be seen.

4. The effects of the budget cuts and the moratorium on public service appointments is now being felt in Protestant schools. In particular, the inability to replace significant management positions such as Year Heads, Examinations Co-ordinators, Special Needs Co-ordinators etc is leading to a very heavy workload for Principals and Deputies and can only result in the closure of schools on health and safety grounds if no alleviation is forthcoming in the medium and long term.

## School Chaplain's Report

### Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe

*The Rev Stanley Stewart reports:*

1. My role as school chaplain continues to develop and in addition to the routine duties of taking assembly, conducting special services, teaching RE classes, being a Form Teacher, supervising students, liaising with the Boarding department, being a counsellor and supporting the Christian Union. I highlight a number of significant matters impacting on my chaplaincy during this past year:

- (i) **Pastoral Care:** This has been a challenging and busy year – a member of the pastoral care team has been off ill for significant periods of time; this coupled with the tragic death by suicide of one of our students in July 2009, has meant it has been a busy time. However, we have experienced the presence of God in a remarkable way; the support and comfort offered was a blessing to many. I say a sincere thanks to the many who continue to intercede on our behalf. The importance of promoting positive mental health for young people has been reinforced.
- (ii) **Partnership:** The development of a partnership link with Bombi Primary School in Galana, Kenya has been a source of blessing and enrichment. Derek Roulston, a past pupil of the school and missionary of PCI working with the PCEA, has helped and supported this partnership. The grants from the Worldwide programme of Irish Aid have been very effective – proving a little can go a long way. The teacher visit to Kenya in July 2009, followed by a student visit in October 2009, has truly formed links which have been life changing for all concerned. The reciprocal visit from 3 Kenyan teachers to Donegal has been delayed because of problems with Visas but it is now hoped they will visit in early May 2010. Another group of teachers and students plan to visit Bombi School at the end of June 2010. It is a real thrill to see young people respond to the challenges of living in the developing world and to witness the richness of a vibrant faith in circumstances of material poverty.
- (iii) **Pressure:** The Economic downturn is really testing the public services and its servants in the Republic; schools and their staff are under immense stress to deliver a service for greatly reduced remuneration and without adequate resources. Senior staff retiring, with no middle management promotions, is escalating organisational problems; reducing stress and pressure on individual staff members is now a very important part of the Chaplain's work.
- (iv) **Preaching and Presbytery:** I valued the time spent as a stated supply in Stranorlar congregation but pressure of time when appointed Clerk of the new Presbytery of Derry and Donegal meant this reluctantly had to be forfeited. The opportunities to serve God and minister through the work of Presbytery are very varied! The wider view from outside a congregational context can be helpful but keeping on top of the wide

range of issues and situations takes careful juggling. I am thankful for the understanding, flexibility and support of my Principal and colleagues when church matters intrude on school!

COLIN McCLURE, Convener

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly unreservedly support the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) in seeking the continuation of rights given to the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Methodist Church in Ireland, on the transfer of their schools to the State, namely the legal right to appoint governors to those transferred schools and their successors and the right to membership of the regional ownership and decision making bodies for those schools and their successors.
3. That the General Assembly, recognising that the Controlled Sector has had from its outset a Christian ethos which reflects its church-related character and origin, call upon the Minister for Employment and Learning and the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure, with regard to any proposed merger between Stanmillis University College and the Queen's University of Belfast, that:
  - part of the training of teachers for this sector will both make them aware of the sector's distinctive ethos and also equip and prepare them to teach within it;
  - teachers will be adequately prepared to teach the Religious Education syllabus within Controlled schools, with its distinctly Christian and Biblical basis.
4. That the General Assembly, aware of the difficult economic circumstances both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, call upon the government in each jurisdiction to ensure that the education of children and young people remains a priority.
5. That the resignation of the Rev Dr Colin McClure as Convener of the State Education Committee be accepted and that he be thanked for his services.
6. That the members of the State Education Committee be thanked for their services and that the Committee be discharged.
7. That the resignation of the Rev Robert Herron as Convener of the Board of Education be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev Dr Colin McClure be appointed in his place.
8. 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 FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Convener: Mr JOHN HUNTER

1. Since the last General Assembly the Board of Finance and Personnel has continued to discharge its important responsibilities for the oversight of the Church's finances, the refurbishment of Church House, Mall lettings and the management of staff employed by the General Assembly. Detailed Committee reports are attached, together with a significant report from the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel.

2. The Board is very conscious of increasing concern across the Church at what are perceived to be very high levels of assessments at a time when many Church members are experiencing financial difficulties in the wake of the "credit crunch". Against that backcloth the Board has sought to pare assessments to the minimum. The proposed assessments, set out below, reflect a fall in interest rates and investment returns, as well as continuing pressure on the PCI Pension Scheme 2009. Despite the transfer to assessments of the Students' Bursary Fund of 5.25p in the £ stipend, the Board proposes to limit the overall increase in the assessments to 1.75p making the 2010 total 73.50p.

	2010	2009	2008
	p	p	p
Central Ministry Fund	18.50	20.00	18.00
Retired Ministers' Fund	2.75	4.25	6.00
Widows of Ministers' Fund	4.50	5.00	5.50
Prolonged Disability Fund	0.25	0.50	0.25
Incidental Fund	5.00	5.00	5.00
Ministerial Development Fund	0.25	0.25	0.25
Special Assembly	0.25	0.25	0.25
Church House External Work	3.50	3.50	3.50
Sick Supply Fund	0.25	-	-
Students' Bursary Fund	5.25	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Sub-total	40.50	38.75	38.75
PCI Pension Scheme(s)	33.00	33.00	26.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	73.50	71.75	64.75

3. At its meeting on 9 March 2010 the Board approved a proposal to strengthen the IT department. It fulfils a role of critical importance to the Church and its Boards. The new appointments will enable the further development of IT services and provide support in an increasingly regulated environment.

4. The Board continues to monitor developments regarding the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and awaits further guidance from the Charity Commission (CCNI). An information booklet has been issued to all

Ministers and Treasurers outlining the requirements and this will be updated as further information becomes available. The Board understands the financial reporting requirements will come into force in April 2011, which in the Church context will mean that the first accounts will have to be submitted to the CCNI for the year ended 31 December 2011. The Board responded to the consultation document issued by the CCNI on the Public Benefit Test.

5. The Board welcomes progress in developing various employment policies. It also notes the helpful assistance provided by the Retired Ministers' House Fund to Ministers seeking to make provision for their retirement home. Following the bequest of land in Cullybackey a number of years ago progress has been made regarding planning permission for part of the site and it is planned to sell this as soon as possible, taking appropriate professional advice.

6. The Board notes continuing difficulties in letting shops on the Mall, offset only to a limited extent by the welcome news of the re-opening of the bookshop on a temporary basis.

7. The refurbishment of Church House continues to exercise the Board as detailed in the Property Management Committee's report. The Board proposes that in order to take advantage of keen tendering the work agreed at the last Assembly (provision of a new entrance from Fisherwick Place, a new reception area on the ground floor and the refurbishment of offices on the third floor) at an estimated cost of £1.8m should be extended to include the offices on the second floor and the Assembly Hall, at a total estimated cost of £4.7m including VAT and professional fees. A supplementary report will be provided to the General Assembly with updated estimates. This work would be paid for by a continuation in the current assessment of 3.5p to around 2028 (an additional 12 years) – depending on interest rates and future rental income from the Mall and conference facilities.

8. The Tyrone Memorial Review Panel was appointed by the General Assembly in 2008 "to carry out a review of the Tyrone Memorial with representatives from the Union Commission, Board of Mission in Ireland and other interested parties". An interim report to last year's General Assembly highlighted issues of continuing concern in the working of the Tyrone Memorial, notably the gap between the highest and lowest stipends. The Panel advised the Assembly that the Panel was considering "the introduction of a system based on a minimum with increments reflecting years of service and a smaller "local allowance" based on agreed criteria" which would narrow the range between minimum and maximum stipends. The report also envisaged a review of the way in which assessments are levied, together with the protection of current levels of stipend. The Board was instructed by the Assembly: "to prepare detailed proposals for an alternative basis for the provision of financial support for Ministers and to make a further report to the General Assembly in 2010." That report is attached (Appendix 1).

9. The Panel's discussions were predicated on the belief that every call is a call from God and the Church has a responsibility to provide adequately for the needs of every Minister, no matter where the call takes him or her. The report proposes that a new stipend scale be introduced with five yearly service increments of 5% over a 20 year period (amounting to 20%). The present scale provides for five yearly service increments of 2.5% over a 30 year period

(amounting to 15%). In addition, and depending on local congregational circumstances, a local allowance would be payable of up to 30% of the basic ministerial minimum and authorised by the Union Commission. Finally, a discretionary grant to replace the “Bonus” would be payable, and this would include the amount due from the Regium Donum. Existing call arrangements would continue to apply until a vacancy arises, supported by the introduction of transitional arrangements to provide protection for Ministers adversely affected.

10. Although it was not explicitly part of its remit, the Panel considered the option of narrowing the range between the minimum and maximum stipends by increasing the former. However, it concluded that this was unaffordable at the present time.

11. The Panel explored the cost implications of its proposals and concluded that on the grounds of fairness and the ability to pay, assessments should change from one based on stipends to one based on unrestricted income. This conclusion is consistent with the conclusion of the General Board’s Panel on Pensions and Assessments. If the report from the Tyrone Memorial Panel is approved by the General Assembly, amendments to the Code would be required, including the new method of assessment.

12. The Accounts of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland have previously been qualified by the auditors, as the disclosure requirement of Financial Reporting Statement no 17 on Pensions had not been made. The Board had agreed to defer compliance until the merger of the pension schemes had been completed. This having now been substantially achieved the necessary disclosures have been made in the accounts for 2009 and it is anticipated the auditors will no longer have to qualify their opinion.

13. Finally, the Board wish to thank the staff in the Financial Secretary’s office for all their work on behalf of the General Assembly. It has been a very heavy year for them, not least in their unstinting support of the various reviews ongoing during the year. They have been very supportive and have gone to considerable trouble to provide any information requested. In addition, the Board know they have given considerable help to Ministers, congregational Treasurers and others in responding to their requests for help and advice.

## **PENSIONS AND ASSESSMENTS COMMITTEE**

1. The deliberations of the Pensions and Assessments Committee have, in the past year, been heavily influenced by the decision of the 2009 General Assembly to finance the Students’ Bursary Fund by way of congregational assessment rather than through the United Appeal.

2. The Committee has, in recent years, made strenuous efforts to reduce the burden of assessments on Congregations. This has not always appeared obvious because of the seemingly inexorable increase in the cost of the Ministers Pension Scheme 1978 (MPS), increasing assessments from 16.25p per £1 of Stipend in 1999, through 20.75p in 2004, 26.00p in 2008, to the current level, under the combined PCI Pension Scheme 2009, of 33.00p per £1 of Stipend.

3. The Committee considered that simply passing the full additional assessment for Students Bursary Fund directly to Congregations, particularly in

the light of recent pension scheme assessment increases, would place an additional heavy burden on Congregations which would result in fewer resources being available for mission.

4. In order to lessen this potential burden, the Committee has had to consider ways in which other assessments could be reduced. Such reductions must be consistent with the Committee's stated objective which is to recommend appropriate assessments for the funds under its remit and to maintain a prudent reserve.

5. The Retired Ministers Fund (RMF) and the Widows of Ministers Fund (WMF), both of which have substantial reserves, provide pension benefits in respect of pre 1978 service and therefore will, over time, require a decreasing amount of money, each year, to meet their commitments.

6. The Committee considered, and agreed to recommend, that assessments on these funds should be reduced and a phased release of reserves be used to 'take up the slack', over the expected period during which substantial benefits are to be funded. The Committee believe that this recommendation is consistent with the objective set out in Paragraph 4.

7. The effect of this recommendation is set out in the Paragraphs below, relevant to these funds.

8. Stipends also gave rise to much thought. In 2009 the sterling minimum increased by 4.5% and the euro minimum by 3.9%, broadly reflecting the increase in living costs in both jurisdictions.

9. In the last year the economic crisis resulted in the cost of living indices, on both sides of the border, showing deflationary figures.

10. The Committee considered recommending a 1% increase at minimum stipend level only. The Board, however, felt that awarding any increase in stipends, at a time when a great number of our people are suffering economic hardship, would send out the wrong message to the Church at large.

11. Accordingly, it was decided to recommend that there should be no increases in the Ministerial Minimum or in the Tyrone Memorial 'bands'. The Board, whilst recognising that Congregations have a right to exceed the recommendation, strongly encouraged Congregations who pay their Minister more than the minimum not to exacerbate any disparity in treatment between the lower and the higher paid by awarding any increase for 2010.

12. The General Assembly, in 2009, passed a resolution 'authorising the Board of Finance and Personnel to set provisional assessments for existing funds which can be applied from 1 January each year and approved, or otherwise, at the ensuing General Assembly when over or under-provisions can be corrected'.

13. Recommendations were made by the Pensions and Assessments Committee and approved by the Board in October and provisional assessments have been applied since January.

14. The recommendations for each fund are set out in the Paragraphs below.

### **Central Ministry Fund**

15. At the end of 2009, CMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £2,166,929 an increase of £142,621 on 2008.

16. The reasons for the surplus were an increase in assessment of 2p per £1 of stipend and a reduction of circa £130,000 in the General Expenses allocation applying to the Fund as a result of a change in the basis such expenses are apportioned.

17. Adverse factors were a decrease in Bank Interest on reserves of circa £86,000 because of unprecedented falls in interest rates owing to the global financial recession; an increase in Augmented Grants of circa £55,000; together with an increase of circa £100,000 in grants for Licensed Assistants caused by an increase in numbers and changes to the conditions under which Licentiates become eligible for call.

18. Taking all these factors into account, the Committee concluded that it could recommend a reduction in the assessment for CMF.

19. The proposed rate of assessment for 2010 is therefore 18.5p per £ of Stipend, a decrease from 20p in 2009.

20. No increases were set by the Board under the Tyrone Memorial Scheme.

21. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2010:

(a) **Ministerial Minimum**

	Northern Ireland 2010	Rep of Ireland 2010
Ministerial Minimum	£22,416	€35,241
After 5 years' service	£22,977	€36,123
After 10 years' service	£23,538	€37,005
After 15 years service	£24,099	€37,887
After 20 years service	£24,660	€38,769
After 25 years service	£25,221	€39,651
After 30 years' service	£25,782	€40,533

(b) **Family Grants 2010**

	2010		2009	
	£	€	£	€
Birth to 10 years	335	982	335	982
11 to 15 years	502	1,548	502	1,548
16 years and over				
At school	752	2,862	752	2,862
At university	2,503	4,774	2,503	4,774
<b>Bands – Joint Incomes</b>				
<i>Reduction - Nil</i>	26,771	40,940	25,673	39,404
<i>Reduction - £1 for every £5</i>	36,002	55,066	34,538	52,999
<i>Reduction - £1 for every £2</i>	36,002	55,066	34,538	52,999

(c) The grant in respect of any child who is 16 years + falling into category (b) and who is in receipt of a maintenance or training grant shall be reduced by £1 every £1 by which such grant or other sponsorship or scholarship exceeds £1,000.



- (d) The amount a Minister may earn, apart from congregational work, without the augmented grant being affected, shall be £4,680 under Par 316(2)(d)(i) of the Code or £2,350 under Par 316(2)(d)(ii). The maximum under the above paragraphs shall be £4,680
- (e) That in reckoning augmentation for 2009, the CMF shall not take account of a sum not exceeding the annual bonus, being income from the Commutation, Sustentation and Central Ministry Funds. Code Par 316(2)(e).
- (f) The Board recommended that in the light of the strain placed upon CMF funding by the continued growth in Bonus payments as highlighted in Reports 2008, p 238, par 5, CMF Bonus for 2009 continue to be held at £1,518 pa. The future of bonus should form part of the discussions of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel.

### **Widows of Ministers Fund**

22. At the end of 2009, WMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £986,156, a decrease of £57,268 on 2008.

23. The factors contributing to the reduction in the retained balance were a decrease in assessment of 0.5p per £ of Stipend together with a decrease in Bank Interest on reserves of circa £44,000.

24. The Committee, nevertheless, wish to reduce further the assessment for the reasons stated in Pars 3 to 6 above.

25. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2010:

- (a) That the assessment for 2009 be 4.5p per £ of Stipend, a reduction from 5.0p in 2008, continuing with the pattern of reductions over recent years.
- (b) That the maximum Widows Pension be £6,165
- (c) That widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension receive a maximum of £6,165 plus £475.
- (d) That widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension or PWFA receive a maximum of £6,165 plus £500.
- (e) That widows whose husbands were not eligible for Northern Ireland State Pension receive a maximum of £6,165 plus £5,018.

26. The recommended reduction in assessment implies, on budgeted figures, a further reduction in reserves during 2010 of some £54,000.

### **Presbyterian Widows Fund Association**

27. All Ministers, under the provisions of the Code, are required to join this Association at ordination. The annual membership subscription is 1.25% of the Ministerial Minimum for active Ministers and is 0.2% for retired Ministers. An additional 0.1% is charged to Ministers not under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Membership provides an annuity to widows, which is currently £1,200.

**Retired Ministers Fund**

28. At the end of 2009, RMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £1,749,451 a decrease of £170,864 on 2008.

29. The factors contributing to the reduction in the retained balance were a decrease in assessment of 1.75p per £ of Stipend together with a decrease in Bank Interest on reserves of circa £76,000.

30. The Committee, nevertheless, wish to further reduce the assessment for the reasons stated in Pars 3 to 6 above.

31. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2010:

- (a) That the assessment for 2010 be 2.75p per £ of Stipend, a reduction from 4.25p in 2009, continuing with the pattern of reductions over recent years.
- (b) That the maximum Basic Retirement Allowance be £11,208.
- (c) That Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic of Ireland with no State Pension is currently £8,037 married, £5,018 single.

32. The recommended reduction in assessment implies, on budgeted figures, a further reduction in reserves during 2010 of some £289,000.

**PCI Pension Scheme (2009)**

33. Following the Actuarial Valuation of the scheme, at 31 December 2008, the funding rate required for the provision of future benefits and to repay the actuarial deficit, is 34.4% of pensionable earnings, 7% of which is paid by the scheme members and 27.4% by the Church.

34. Congregational contributions to the scheme are collected by an assessment on stipend rather than as a percentage of pensionable income.

35. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2010:

- (a) That the assessment required to fund the agreed contribution is 33p per £ of Stipend, the same as in 2009.

36. Since the last Assembly, the following were granted leave to retire, at or over age 65, by their Presbyteries: Rev Dr J Fell (Ebringdon), Rev DR Byers (Cladymore and Tassagh), Rev J McVeigh (Gilnahirk), Rev Dr JM Finlay (Harryville), Rev TC Wright (Alexandra), Rev JT Magowan (St James's, Ballymoney), Rev JT Williamson (Sion Mills and Urney), Rev AA Cole (Kilmore).

37. Leave to retire early on ill health grounds was granted to Rev DC Porter (Second Dromara), having been approved by his Presbytery and Pensions and Assessments Committee.

38. Unanimous approval was given to the Rev NE Dorrans (Ballycastle and Croaghmore) to seek the permission of the 2010 General Assembly to retire on or after his 64th birthday, on 30 June 2010.

39. The Trustees did not award any discretionary increase for pensions in payment, accrued pre 1997, in excess of the Guaranteed Minimum Pension.

**Ministers Prolonged Disability Fund**

40. At the end of 2009, the fund had a retained balance of £747,357, a decrease of £5,900 on 2008.

41. This fund remains 'sensitive' to low interest rates, as historically interest represents a significant proportion of its income.

42. The Committee, however, feel that it is prudent to reduce the assessment.

43. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2010:

(a) That the assessment for 2010 be 0.25p per £ of Stipend, a decrease from 0.5p in 2009.

(b) That the maximum level of grant for 2010 increase to £11,298.

44. In 2009, 4 Ministers received benefits under the fund.

45. In addition to annual grants, pension contributions to MPS are paid by the fund until the beneficiary returns to work or attains his or her normal retirement age. In broad terms the cost to the fund, for each person receiving benefit, including pension contributions is in excess of £19,000pa.

### **Incidental Fund**

46. At the end of 2009, the Incidental fund had a retained balance of £156,876, a decrease of £146,107 on 2008, but substantially less than the projected deficit of £274,505.

47. The variance is explained by smaller expenditure, to date, than budgeted for legal and professional services in connection with the Pensions Review, together with an increase in congregational assessments.

48. Grants from the Incidental Fund are approved by General Assembly under resolutions pertaining to individual Boards. It is the role of the Board of Finance and Personnel, acting on advice from its Pensions and Assessments Committee, to recommend an appropriate assessment, sufficient to meet the grants agreed and to maintain a prudent reserve.

49. On budgeted figures, should the assessment remain at 5p per £ of stipend, the underlying reserve in the Incidental Fund at the end of 2009 will be circa £49,750. The Committee consider this to be not quite at the level that would be considered desirable!

50. Being mindful, however, of the burden of assessments on Congregations, the Committee agreed to recommend that the assessment for 2010 should remain unchanged.

51. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2010:

(a) That the assessment for 2010 be 5.0p per £ of Stipend, the same as in 2009.

### **Collection of Congregational Assessments**

52. The current financial difficulties and the effect of resources being 'frozen' in PMS, has led to some Congregations finding difficulty in meeting the full amount of their assessments on time. The Committee seek to treat such situations sympathetically and continue to monitor this area carefully.

### **The Students Bursary Fund**

53. Responsibility for recommending the assessment for the Students Bursary Fund lies with the Board of Christian Training.

**The Ministerial Development Fund**

54. At the end of 2009, the Ministerial Development Fund had a retained balance of £381,620. Responsibility for recommending any assessment for this fund lies with the Board of Christian Training.

**Church House Stonework Repair**

55. Responsibility for recommending any assessment for repairs to Church House stonework lies with the Property Management Committee.

DOUGLAS CROWE, Convener

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee met on two occasions during the year.
2. Thanks are due to Mrs Laura Palmer, Head of Personnel, and her team who continue to provide an excellent, professional Human Resources service.
3. The work of the Retired Ministers' House Fund continues to benefit from the efforts of Mr Herbie Smyth and Mr Ian McElhinny, both of whom also deserve the Committee's thanks.

**PERSONNEL MATTERS**

4. Progress has continued on the roll-out of the Job Evaluation Scheme. The evaluation of the administrative posts is almost complete and the evaluation of the executive posts has now been started.
5. Following the decision reported last year, the increases applied to Ministers stipend under the provisions of the Tyrone Memorial system and the increases applied to Administrative and Executive scales in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland were both decided at the October 2009 meeting of the Board.
6. The Personnel Advisory Panel has continued with the work of policy development during the year. Policies on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders and on Acting-Up Allowances have been approved by the Board while policies on the Acceptable Use of Electronic Media and Continuous Professional Development are in progress.
7. Following the handover of Aaron House to the Board of Social Witness, the transfer of staff under TUPE was successfully completed.
8. The contract with Peninsula was renewed during the year and work on a manual for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland is planned.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS**

9. The Health and Safety Panel has continued to push forward this important area of work.
10. Risk Assessment seminars have been held in Church House and Dungannon. The Committee is indebted to the Fire and Rescue Service who took the lead role in a Fire Risk Assessment seminar held in Church House in April 2010. A separate publication on Fire Risk Assessment is to be issued.

11. The Panel is also working on the production of advice for Congregations on the use and maintenance of Church minibuses.

### **RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSE FUND**

12. Work has continued on the property in Cullybackey that was bequeathed to the Fund by Miss Jane Megaw. Steps are being taken to purchase some additional land to provide a turning lane in the access road and to provide improved sightlines. Agents are being selected with a view to marketing the site in the near future.

13. The Fund continues to provide assistance either by loans or letting of available property. During the year, a property was sold after having been advertised in the Ministers newsletter and no interest having been forthcoming.

DAVID LAMB, Convener

## **APPENDIX**

**Sterling Salary Scales of Staff in post on 1 January 2010 (inclusive of a discretionary 1.5% increase with effect from 1 January 2010, following the annual review of salaries.)**

### **EXECUTIVE POSTS**

#### **Scale 1 (£22,200 - £26,565)**

Communications Officer, BMI  
General Secretary, PW  
Payroll and Assessment Manager

#### **Scale 2 (£25,201 - £30,519)**

Taking Care Trainer and Co-Ordinator  
Assistant Residential Services Manager  
Buildings Manager & Safety Officer  
Children's Development Officer  
Director of Nightlight  
Financial Manager  
Finance Manager, BMI  
Project Manager, Willowbrook  
Support Officer, BMI  
Youth Development Officer  
University Chaplain UUJ

#### **Scale 3 (£28,316 - £34,730)**

Director of Programmes  
Education in Mission Officer, BMO  
Mission Development Officer, BMI  
Personnel Officer, BMO

**Scale 4 (£31,311 - £39,367)**

Head of Personnel  
 Residential Services Manager  
 Senior Financial Accountant  
 IT Development and Support Manager

**Scale 5 (£34,730 - £42,539)**

Communications Secretary and Press Officer  
 Director of Youth & Children's Ministry  
 Board Secretary BMI  
 Deputy General Secretary

**Scale 6 (£37,374 - £45,750)**

Board Secretary, BMO  
 Director of Social Service

**Scale 7 (£42,539 - £55,006)**

General Secretary  
 Financial Secretary

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS****Scale 1 (£12,205 - £14,250)**

Clerical Officer (FSO)  
 Secretary/Receptionist (BMO)  
 Secretary/Receptionist (BSW)  
 Secretary (GSO)  
 Telephonist

**Scale 2 (£13,208 - £15,431)**

Resident Warden, Guysmere  
 Clerical and Resource Officer, Nightlight  
 Clerical/Secretarial Assistant (FSO)  
 Handyperson  
 Personnel Assistant (2)  
 Receptionist/Telephonist  
 Secretary (JS), (BMI)  
 Secretary/Receptionist (PW)  
 Taking Care Administrator  
 Office Secretary, BMI

**Scale 3 (£14,944 - £17,435)**

Co-ordinator-Counselling Services  
 Clerical Officer (FSO)  
 Deputy Building Manager  
 Nightlight Development Officers (one FT)

Personnel Assistant (BMI)  
 Secretary (YACM)  
 Senior Secretary (BSW)  
 Senior Secretary (PW)  
 Senior Secretary (BMO)  
 Senior Secretary (BMI)  
 Senior Secretary (GSO)  
 Senior Secretary, Finance (YACM)  
 Video Camera Operator/Editor

**Scale 4 (£17,066 - £19,805)**

Administrative Assistant (JS) (YACM)  
 Administrator, Derryvolgie  
 Departmental Secretary  
 Lay Assistant-Kinghan  
 Payroll and Clerical Assistant  
 Personnel Administrator  
 Personal and Administrative Assistant, Magee Institute  
 Personal Secretary (FSO)  
 Senior Secretary (GSO)  
 Senior Secretary (JS) (YACM)  
 Wages Clerk

**Scale 5 (£18,766 - £21,819)**

Communications Co-Ordinator  
 Assistant Accountant  
 Development Officer, PW, (FT)  
 Financial Assistant  
 IT Support Assistant  
 Office Supervisor and Personal Secretary, BMI  
 Personal Assistant to the Director of Social Service  
 Production Manager  
 Regional Youth & Support Workers (Euro Scale), (FT)  
 Resident Manager, Tritonville Close (Euro Scale)

**Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£20,828 - £23,953)**

Assistant Chaplain, QUB  
 Personal Secretary and Office Supervisor (GSO)  
 Personnel Officer  
 Senior Administrative Officer (BMO)  
 Senior Administrative Officer (YACM)

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### Capital Projects

1. The contract for the refurbishment to the external fabric of Church House and Fisherwick Buildings, including stonework, windows and roofs, is progressing in a satisfactory manner. The quality of the work is good, the project will be completed at a cost that is under the approved budget and within the agreed time period, namely by the end of July 2010. Payment for this project will continue to be paid at 3.5p per £ of stipend as approved at the General Assembly in 2007.

2. Last year the General Assembly approved that work should proceed on the provision of a new entrance from Fisherwick Place, a new reception area on the ground floor and the refurbishment of the offices on the third floor at an estimated cost of £1.8 million. The 2009 Assembly also requested that proposals be brought to this Assembly for the phased implementation and financing of further work to the office accommodation and to the Assembly Hall.

3. The way forward in this regard has now been considered, and it is suggested that the work to the second floor offices and the refurbishment and upgrading to the Assembly Hall should be included in a comprehensive contract comprising all the work referred to above. The reasons for recommending one enlarged contract include the extremely competitive tenders that builders are submitting at this time, the savings that should be realised in one larger single contract, and the minimising of the disruption period to all users of the building.

4. It is estimated that this work will cost an additional £2.9 million, making a total in the region of £4.7 million (including VAT and professional fees). The project should be completed within a 9/10 month period, allowing for completion and handover in time for the 2011 General Assembly. It is anticipated that Tenders will be received in May 2010 and a detailed recommendation brought to the Assembly.

5. Payment for the external works is due to continue until 2016 and it is suggested that there should be no increase in the current assessment of 3.5p per £ of stipend to finance this additional project, but that this assessment should be allowed to continue until final payment is made, anticipated to be about 2028 (an additional 12 years) if rental income and interest rates remain at similar levels to today. However, as this payment period is very sensitive to changes in income and interest rates, it will be necessary to reconsider this assessment at regular intervals.

### Management of Shopping Mall and Conference Facilities

1. The Spires Mall continues to trade in the midst of an increasingly gloomy retail climate. Nationally, 2009 was described by one analyst as a year "littered with insolvent retailers, rising unemployment and plummeting values." Locally it was reported, in September 2009, that retail property rents have fallen by as much as 33% due to a downturn in demand. Inevitably the Mall struggles to attract new tenants to occupy vacant units and the Committee is increasingly aware of the economic pressures faced by many of the tenants. The Property



Management Committee continues to make every effort to ensure that the tenants meet their Rent and Service Charge liabilities, but the task is challenging.

2. Regrettably one of our long term tenants, Wesley Owen, ceased trading in early 2010. However we are delighted to report that the Nationwide Christian Trust has re-opened the Bookshop, on a short term agreement, as “Living Oasis.”

3. Through our agents we are continuing to market the vacant shop units. However successful lettings will continue to be difficult, not only for the reasons listed in paragraph 1 but also the commencement of the internal repair work to the Church House entrance and ancillary work which will inevitably impact the Mall.

4. The total income for the hire of the Assembly Hall and ancillary rooms was significantly less in 2009 than in the previous year. This may be attributed to the ongoing recession, the reopening of the Ulster Hall and the impact of the stonework repairs. Income for 2010 will likewise be affected due to the commencement of the the internal repair work to Church House.

5. The office accommodation on the 2nd and 3rd floors of Fisherwick Buildings is currently vacant. During 2009/2010 this space was used to accommodate Church House Departments who had to decant during the exterior stonework repairs to Church House. Following the completion of the external work this accommodation will be actively marketed providing it is not required for decanting purposes.

6. The Committee wishes to put on record our thanks to the staff who are dedicated to the management and operation of the building throughout what has been a difficult year.

HUBERT MARTIN, ADRIAN McLERNON, Co-Conveners

## FINANCE, LEGAL AND IT COMMITTEE

1. We have pleasure submitting the report of the Finance, Legal and IT Committee.

2. **General Expenses** – General Expenses for the year ended 31 December 2009 were in line with budget and considered to be satisfactory.

Budgeted expenses for the year ended 31 December 2010 reflect an increase of about 9.1% compared to 2009. This reflects the 1.5% increase in salaries approved by the Board for 2010, the additional IT posts (see par 14 below), maternity cover, inflation and staff incremental point increases.

3. **Auditors/SORP accounts** – For year ended 31 December 2009 two sets of SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) accounts have been prepared. One for the activities under the General Assembly and the other for the Trustees who have separate legal status. The audit opinion is expressed on these accounts and the auditors attach to the individual accounts of Boards/Committees a report to confirm they are included in the audited accounts of the General Assembly. Following compliance with the reporting requirements of Financial Reporting Standard No 17 on pensions it is anticipated the audit opinion will be unqualified.

4. **Statistics** – see appended tables
5. **Regulation of Charities** – The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 will result in some significant administrative changes over the next few years. An update on the practical consequences of the legislation was issued in draft to Ministers and Treasurers. The capitalisation of Church Halls and Buildings was dealt with in the draft update but it is anticipated that further advice will be required. The Charity Commission on Northern Ireland issued consultation documents on the Public Benefit requirements, which the Church responded to.
6. **Statistics Form and Statement of Recommended Practice** – The sub-committee set up to consider revisions to the statistics form and the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, has made good progress during the year. Two “approved” accounting packages are now in use in Congregations. Work continues on the Chart of Accounts and finalising the accounts and statistics formats.
7. **Statistical Returns from Presbyteries** – It was agreed by the General Assembly in 2009 that an annual Financial Return from Presbyteries should be submitted to the Board of Finance and Personnel with the first year being 2010. A “trial run” was completed for 2009.
8. **Gift Aid** – A note was issued to Treasurers on the allocation of Gift Aid. In summary, the note provided guidance that, in the absence of any instruction from the donor, Gift Aid Reclaims should be allocated to the same funds as the donation. This guidance is in accordance with guidance issued by HMRC.
9. **Risk Assessment** – Risk Assessment is ongoing. A questionnaire is issued annually to all Board Conveners/Secretaries to enable them to report to the Board. At the time of writing nothing as yet has come to the Committee’s attention which needs to be reported.
10. **Bank Overdrafts and deposit accounts** – The Committee continues to receive reports on overdrafts and deposit accounts. The four banks used at present meet the agreed minimum credit ratings in accordance with the Board’s policy set in 2009.
11. **Ministerial expenses** – 9 Ministers failed to submit their Ministerial Expenses Returns for the 2008/9 tax year and their names were reported to Presbytery Clerks accordingly.
12. **Handbook for Treasurers** – The update of the handbook, last updated in 2002, has been deferred until the full implementation of the Charities legislation.
13. **Insurance** – The Committee put out a tender for insurance services to four insurance brokers. Oval James was reappointed. Guidance was sought from the Assembly Solicitor to determine the legal status of various “associated” agencies of the Church, and whether the Church’s Trustee and Officer Indemnity Policy should cover the trustees and officers of these agencies. Confirmation was received that as these associated agencies were responsible to the General Assembly they should be included in the policy.
14. **Information Technology** – Mr McMurray has made an extremely valuable contribution with respect to IT and continues to provide valuable support to the IT systems in Church House and at various Board projects and locations. Demand for IT services is currently outstripping the available

resource and consequently projects are having to be prioritised and in some cases deferred. Due to the many IT issues arising an IT subcommittee was set up to undertake a strategic review of the Church's Central IT services. A Strategy Report on IT was issued in December 2009. The appointment of an additional IT Support Officer and an IT development officer was agreed following approval by the United Appeal Appraisals Committee. A need to review the Church's governance arrangements in this area was also identified.

15. The Committee continues to work on a number of other tax, finance, legal and IT matters.

16. Special thanks go to the team in the Financial Secretary's Office for their hard work and assistance to the Committee during the year.

MICHAEL FITCH, Convener

## TABLE ONE

## PERSONS AND AGENCIES

	2008	2009	Increase	Decrease
Retired Ministers	205	205		
Ministers in Active Duty	384	385	1	
Retired Missionaries	10	11	1	
Missionaries in Active Duty	50	46		4
Total Ministers and Missionaries	649	647		2
Licensures	19	10		9
Congregations	549	549		
Total Families	107,433	106,340		1,093
Persons of All Ages	255,557	251,231		4,326
Contributors to FWO or Stipend	85,462	84,487		975
Baptisms	1,820	1,687		133
Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time	1,929	2,067	138	
Communicants	109,629	108,271		1,358
Attended at Least One Communion during year	67,341	65,717		1,624
Ruling Elders in Kirk Session	6,778	6,685		93
Number on Rolls in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes	26,291	25,536		755

**TABLE TWO**  
**CONGREGATIONAL INCOME**

	2008		2009		% Difference		R. of I.
	£	€	£	€	N.I.		
Specified Sources	30,697,279	3,152,993	31,310,598	3,177,488	N.I.	2.0%	0.8%
Building Fund etc.	17,327,985	1,741,785	16,512,860	1,930,667	-4.7%		10.8%
Received "For Others"	7,663,342	581,079	7,666,006	637,261	0.0%		9.7%
Raised from other sources	7,064,273	1,346,666	4,802,357	1,064,911	-32.0%		-20.9%
Bequests, Loans, Transfers etc.	10,667,287	1,578,218	5,452,976	906,302	-48.9%		-42.6%
Total Receipts	73,420,166	8,400,741	65,744,797	7,716,629	-10.5%		-8.1%
Total Receipts Less Bequests etc.	62,752,879	6,822,523	60,291,821	6,810,327	-3.9%		-0.2%
Bequests	1,746,960	91,953	2,100,960	211,305	20.3%		129.8%

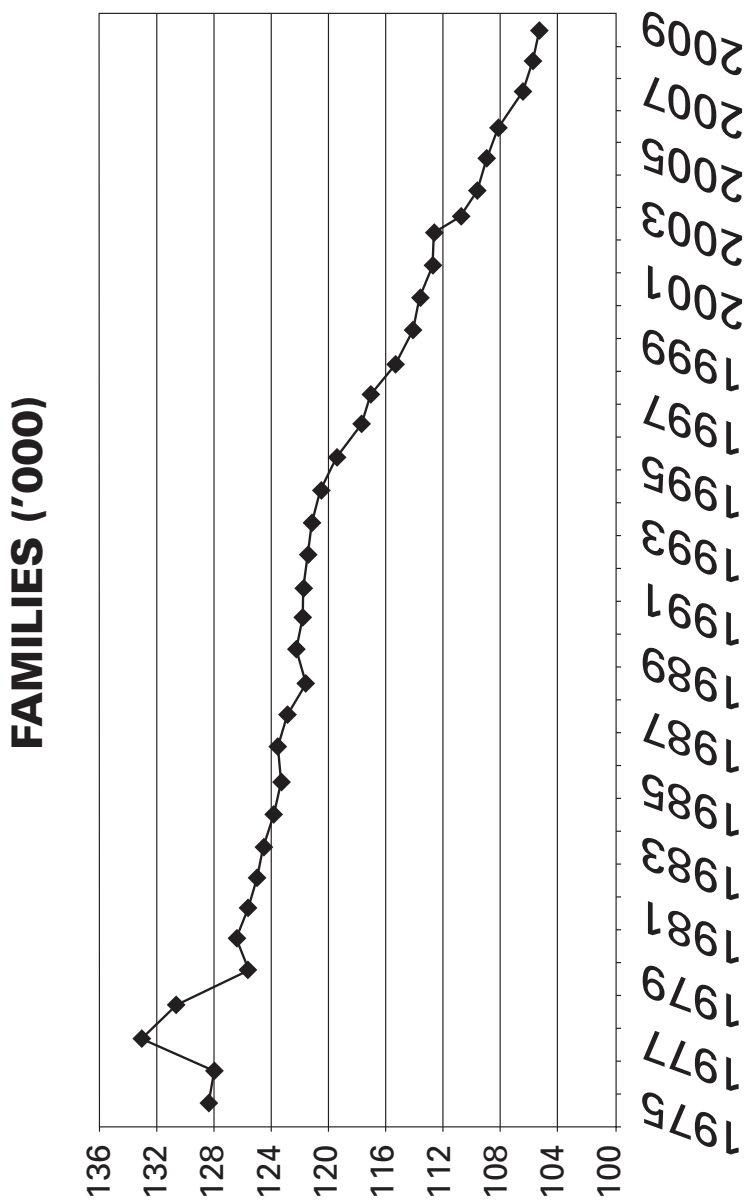
**TABLE THREE**  
**CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE**

	2008		2009		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others	16,723,589	1,537,616	17,479,256	1,735,177	4.5%	12.8%
Payments under Assembly Assessments	5,863,982	558,424	6,689,601	679,470	14.1%	21.7%
Building, Repairs, etc.	20,738,664	3,513,130	16,855,771	2,617,467	-18.7%	-25.5%
United Appeal Schemes	3,361,717	237,474	3,380,108	230,527	0.5%	-2.9%
Supplementary Schemes						
Other Religious and Charitable Objects	5,430,530	576,707	5,373,785	567,416	-1.0%	-1.6%
General Expenses	10,068,276	1,489,256	10,355,634	1,297,771	2.9%	-12.9%
Total Payments	62,186,758	7,912,607	60,134,155	7,127,828	-3.3%	-9.9%

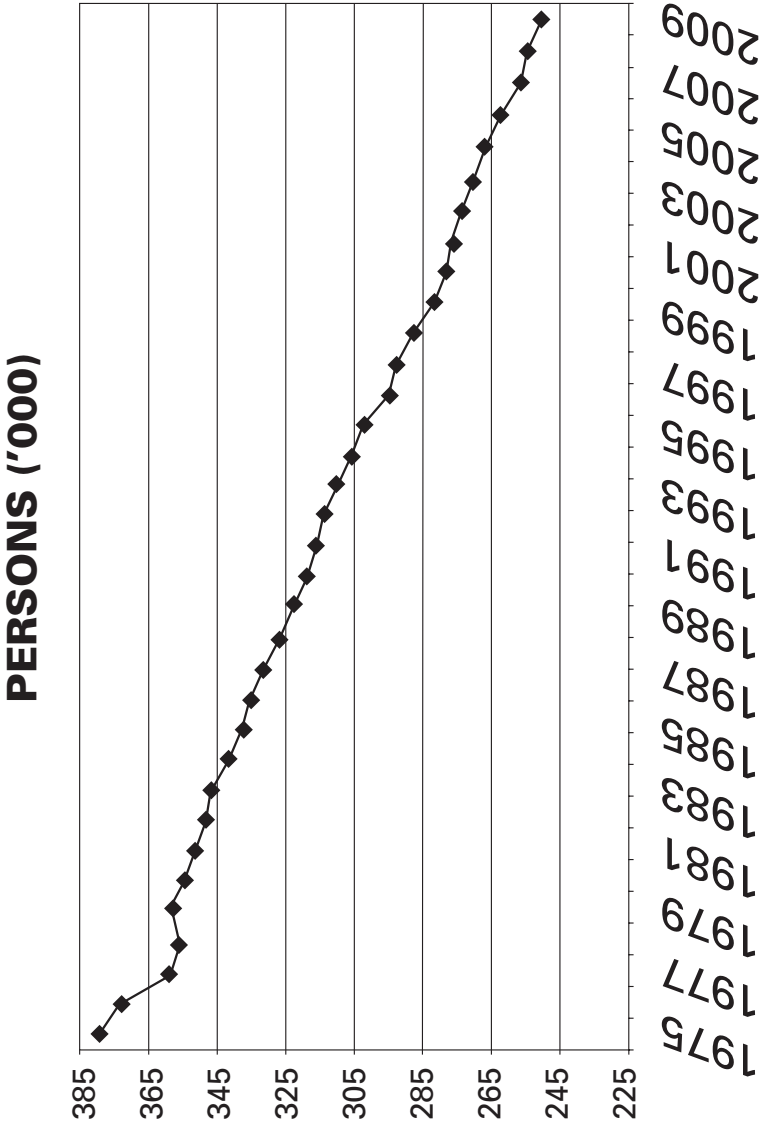
**TABLE FOUR**  
**CONGREGATIONAL BALANCES**

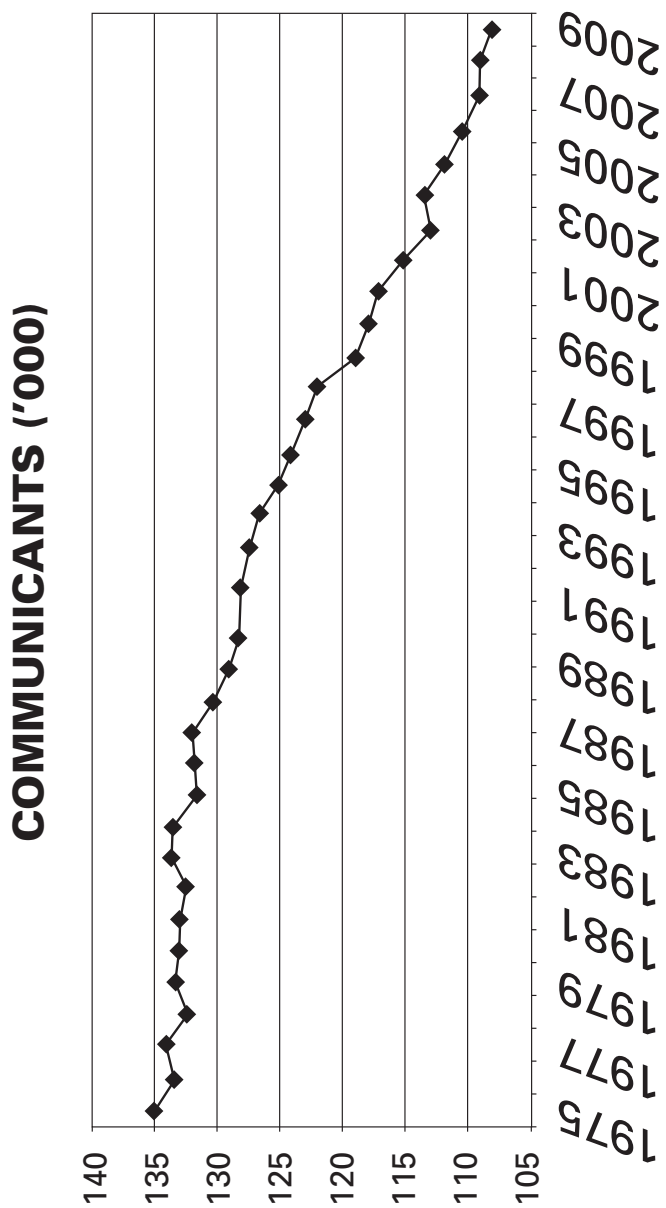
	Closing 2008		Opening 2009		Closing 2009		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Credits	45,529,771	5,195,564	45,358,887	5,200,545	47,912,168	5,061,792	5.6%	-2.7%
Debits	6,651,667	487,580	7,072,901	384,449	8,813,756	338,076	24.6%	-12.1%
Net Credits	38,878,104	4,707,984	38,285,986	4,816,096	39,098,412	4,723,716	2.1%	-1.9%



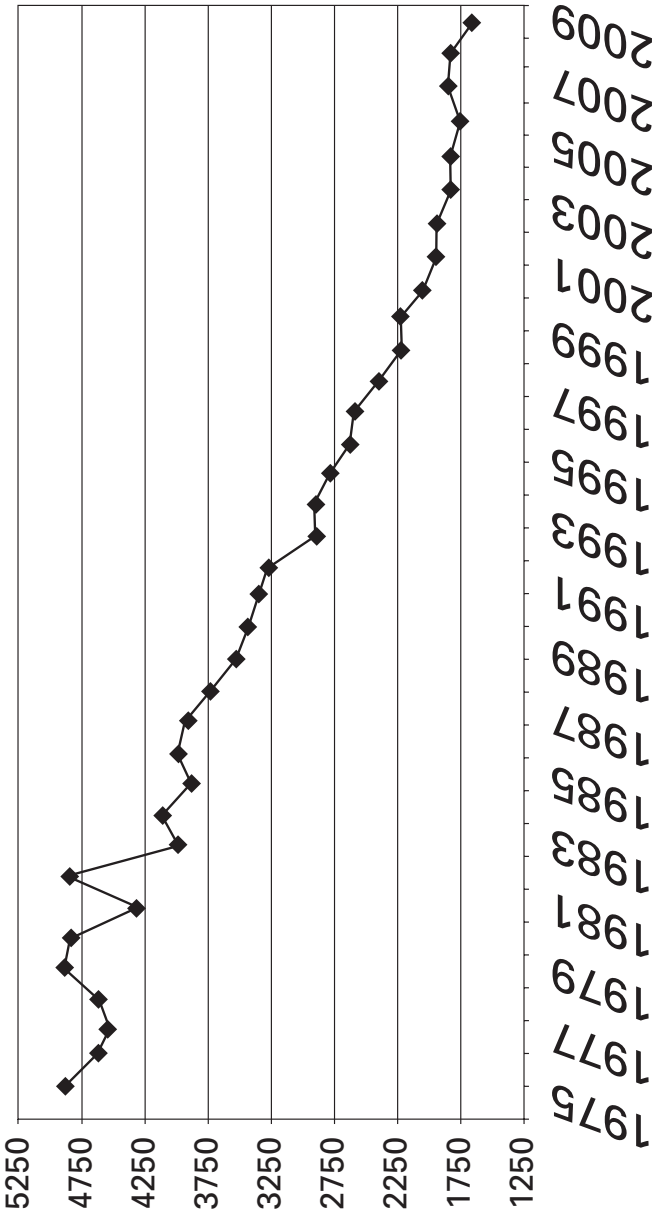








# BAPTISMS



## APPENDIX 1

### TYRONE MEMORIAL REVIEW PANEL

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with a resolution of the General Assembly in June 2009 this report outlines new proposals for the financial support of Ministers. In bringing forward these proposals the Panel wishes to reaffirm the original aims of the Tyrone Memorial and address some of the issues arising out of its implementation and operation. It is proposed that a new Stipend Scale be introduced, with five-yearly service increments over a 20-year period. In addition, and depending on circumstances, a local allowance may be payable. Payment outside these arrangements would not be permitted. Present call arrangements would continue to be honoured and, if approved by the General Assembly, these proposals would only be implemented in respect of all future leave to call arrangements.

These proposals also include arrangements to change the basis of congregational assessments from stipend to income.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

At the General Assembly in June 2008, it was agreed that the Board of Finance and Personnel should “prepare detailed proposals for an alternative basis for the provision of financial support for Ministers and make a further report to the General Assembly 2010”.

The Board delegated this work to the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel, which includes representatives from the Board, Union Commission, the Board of Mission in Ireland and other interested parties.

The membership of the Panel is:

John Hunter (Board Convener), Revs Drew Abernethy, David Porter, Leslie Casement, Dr Uel Matthews, Dr Michael Barry, Dr Donald Watts (General Secretary), Messrs James Livingstone, Douglas Crowe, Douglas Cowan and Clive Knox (Financial Secretary).

#### 3. AIMS/OBJECTIVES

In considering an alternative basis for the financial support of Ministers the Panel reaffirms the main aims of the Tyrone Memorial and in particular:

- to reduce the inequality in Stipends / disparity between Ministers
- to enable Bible teaching on giving to be carried out free from the accusation of self interest on the part of Ministers
- to enable Congregations to retain income for local mission

Based on experience of the Tyrone Memorial and in line with its original aims the Panel’s objective is to:

- (i) eradicate as many as possible of the present anomalies (e.g. Congregations exceeding recommended increases, the anticipated timescales required to reduce the gap between the highest and lowest

stipends, varying rates of annual increase under the Tyrone Memorial etc.)

- (ii) reduce the disparity between the highest and lowest stipends to not more than 50% and to take account, where terms permit, of additional sources of income such as bequests, land lettings and manse rents. *(The Panel notes that at one time the highest stipend paid was more than 2.6 times the minimum. At present apart from one instance no Minister has a stipend in excess of twice the minimum.)*
- (iii) address the anomaly which has arisen under the operation of the Tyrone Memorial arrangements where some stronger Congregations are contributing proportionately less by way of assessment than previously was the case.

While it is not within the remit of the Panel to increase the Ministerial Minimum the Panel did consider this matter but concluded that the additional cost to central funds would result in a considerable increase in the rate of the assessment for the Central Ministry and other assessment funds.

The Panel recognises that while some allowance needs to be made for additional responsibilities and pressures it believes the Church ought to recognise every call as a call from God and has a responsibility to provide adequately for the needs of every Minister no matter where the call takes him or her. The Panel does not believe that financial reward should be a contributory factor in a call.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

The Panel proposes that a Minister's remuneration is made up of 4 elements

- (i) A Basic Ministerial Minimum
- (ii) An Incremental Allowance reflecting years of service
- (iii) A Local Allowance (where appropriate) reflecting local congregational circumstances
- (iv) A Discretionary Grant which includes the amount due from the Regium Donum (this is an amount that used to be paid by the Crown to Ministers until a lump sum payment was made by the Crown to the Church to take over the payment of this. The amount received is invested in the Commutation Fund. The annual income from this Fund is paid through the Sustentation Fund to the Central Ministry Fund which pays the "bonus" to Ministers under the provisions of The Code Par 315.)

The total of (i) and (ii) above is referred to as the "Appropriate Ministerial Minimum" i.e. the minimum amount of remuneration a Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should receive based on their years of ministry.

Throughout this paper, references to "Stipend" mean the amount a Congregation contributes or pays towards a Minister's remuneration and not the total amount paid to a Minister.

##### **(i) The Basic Ministerial Minimum**

The Basic Ministerial Minimum is the minimum amount of remuneration a Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should receive.

**Current:**

The Basic Ministerial Minimum for 2010 is £22,416. The Panel compared the minimum with that in other denominations and found that the basic ministerial minimum compares favourably, taking into account the additional bonus of £1,518 Ministers received from the Central Ministry Fund. However, some other denominations have better incremental allowances for those with longer service. The Panel therefore decided that rather than increasing the basic ministerial minimum it ought to consider improving the incremental allowance.

**Proposed:**

No change is proposed. The Basic Ministerial Minimum should continue to be reviewed annually by the Board of Finance and Personnel under the provision of The Code, Par 314 in light of relevant factors and where appropriate a discretionary increase applied.

**(ii) An Incremental Allowance****Current:**

At present Ministers are entitled to an increment of 2.5% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum after each period of 5 years up to a maximum of 15%, i.e. after 30 years service). The Panel considered a number of improvements to the incremental allowance but the costs of implementing some of these improvements were considered to be more than the Church could pay at this time.

**Proposed:**

It is proposed that the 5 yearly increments are increased from 2.5% to 5% but only up to 20 years service i.e. maximum of 20% after 20 years

The proposed STERLING scale (using 2010 as a base year) is as follows

Year	STIPEND			%
	Current (2.5%) £	Proposed (5.0%) £	Increase (2.5%) £	
<b>Increment</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>560</b>	
1 to 5	22,416	22,416	Nil	
6 to 10	22,977	23,537	560	2.44%
11 to 15	23,538	24,658	1,120	4.76%
16 to 20	24,099	25,779	1,680	6.97%
21 to 25	24,660	26,900	2,240	9.08%
26 to 30	25,221	26,900	1,679	6.66%
31 +	25,782	26,900	1,118	4.33%

The proposed EURO scale (using 2010 as a base year) is as follows

Year	STIPEND			%
	Current (2.5%)	Proposed (5.0%)	Increase (2.5%)	
	€	€	€	
<b>Increment</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>560</b>	
1 to 5		35,241	35,241	Nil
6 to 10	36,123	37,003	880	2.44%
11 to 15	37,005	38,765	1,760	4.76%
16 to 20	37,887	40,527	2,640	6.97%
21 to 25	38,769	42,289	3,520	9.08%
26 to 30	39,651	42,289	2,630	6.66%
31 +	40,533	42,289	1,748	4.33%

The Panel notes that the Board of Finance and Personnel has undertaken a review of the differential between the Sterling and Euro scales. In the light of current cost of living and other relevant factors the Board has concluded that no changes are required to the differential at this stage, but will keep the matter under review.

The Panel proposes the following:

- (a) A Minister should be remunerated on the appropriate point on the scale and Congregations should not make any additional payment other than the local allowances if authorised by Union Commission.
- (b) An annual discretionary increase should be applied to the scales as approved by the Board of Finance and Personnel based on cost of living increases and other relevant factors.
- (c) The new scales should apply to all calls issued after 1 January 2012 following General Assembly approval of the Scheme and, from the same date, to all existing arrangements where a Minister is on the Basic Ministerial Minimum or Appropriate Minimum.
- (d) In the case of augmented Congregations, the Union Commission will continue to set the Stipend when leave to call is being granted. The Stipend paid by the Congregation should be increased annually in line with the annual discretionary increases in (b) above.

### (iii) The Local Allowance

In addition to the Basic Ministerial/Appropriate Minimum, Ministers may be entitled to a local allowance as agreed by the Union Commission. The maximum allowance is 30% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum, which for 2010 would be £6,725 (30% x £22,416). In deciding the amount of the local allowance Union Commission will take into account a number of factors including, but not limited to

- the size of the Congregation in terms of families, membership etc
- the staffing resource of the Congregation
- specific ministerial responsibilities

- any local congregational issues which may be appropriate and require additional responsibilities and experience (including missional issues)
- the general needs and resources of the Congregation.

A Congregation's ability to pay will not be a determining factor in setting the level of the local allowance.

Congregations will normally be expected to pay the full amount of the local allowance as determined by the Union Commission.

**(iv) The Bonus (including the Regium Donum) (to be renamed The Discretionary Grant)**

**Present:**

Under the provisions of The Code Par 315(2) every "qualified" Minister receives a bonus. The amount of the bonus is calculated in accordance with the provision of Par 315(2) or is fixed by the Board of Finance and Personnel. For 2010 the Board of Finance and Personnel has fixed the bonus at £1,518

The Bonus is paid to all active Ministers in Congregations and Ministers who have retired from a Congregation. It is paid to active Ministers, as a monthly amount of £30 i.e. £360 for the year plus an annual bonus paid in December of £1,158. Retired Ministers receive the total bonus on a monthly basis. The following table summarises the position and approximate annual costs based on 360 active and 205 retired Ministers.

	RETIRED MINISTERS	ACTIVE MINISTERS		ALL MINISTERS
When Paid	Monthly	Monthly	Annually	Total
Amount per annum	£1,518 (£126.50/ month)	£360 (£30/month)	£1,158	£1,518
Active Ministers (360)	—	£129,600	£416,880	£546,480
Retired Ministers (205)	£311,190	—	—	£311,190
Total Bonus	£311,190	£129,600	£416,880	£857,670

In the first place the bonus is paid out of income received from the Sustentation Fund (this includes the income from the Commutation Fund, the "Regium Donum"). In keeping with the principles of the Sustentation Fund, and based on present levels of income, each Minister should receive approx £550 per annum (assuming 565 eligible Ministers). The remainder of the bonus is paid for out of the Central Ministry Fund and it is this part which is discretionary.



**Proposed:**

It is proposed that the term Bonus is no longer used and a “Discretionary Grant” of an amount to be determined annually by the Board of Finance and Personnel, and set initially at £1,500, is paid to “qualified” Ministers. This is to be paid to active Ministers in December each year and monthly to retired Ministers. This Discretionary Grant is to include the amount due for the Regium Donum.

**5. OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME**

Ministers will be entitled to receive in addition to the Basic Ministerial/Appropriate Minimum and Local Allowance any bequest or endowment income where the terms specify that it is “**for the benefit of the Minister**”. Bequest or Endowment income “**for stipend**” is a source of funds contributing to the cost of stipend and therefore should be applied for that purpose by the Congregation and not paid in addition to stipend.

Existing arrangements should continue to apply until a vacancy arises.

**6. MINISTERIAL EXPENSES**

The initial level of Ministerial Expenses is agreed when leave to call is granted. Congregations are entitled to review the level of the expenses allowance to cover actual expenses incurred but expenses should not be used as a means of increasing the level of ministerial income.

The Panel support expenses being paid to Ministers based on a reimbursement of actual expenses incurred and recommend that the Board of Finance and Personnel undertake a review of the present system in conjunction with the Union Commission. The review should take account of the impact any change in arrangements would have on a Minister’s current level of remuneration.

**7. EXISTING LEAVE TO CALL ARRANGEMENTS**

It is proposed that where the level of remuneration from the Congregation in an existing leave to call arrangement exceeds the proposed stipend scales the original leave to call arrangement should continue to apply until the Congregation becomes vacant. In other words where a Minister’s stipend at the date of implementation is higher than the proposed scale their stipend will be “protected” and not reduced. However, in such circumstances the annual increases should be limited to 50% of the normal discretionary increase.

Where a Ministers existing level of remuneration is below the proposed scale, the new scale should be applied with effect from the introduction of the scheme. It is expected that non-augmented Congregations will meet in full the additional costs, but where this creates genuine financial difficulties for a Congregation, they may apply to Union Commission for a review.

**8. CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENTS**

The Panel has also considered whether the assessments, which Congregations have to pay in addition to stipend, should continue to be based on the stipend paid to Ministers in the preceding year. The Pensions and

Assessment Panel of the General Board which was initially set up to review pensions but has had its remit extended to look at the level of assessments has also been considering this matter. It appears both panels are minded to recommend a change in the way assessments are levied to one based on Income rather than Stipend. The Panels view is that this will lead to a fairer distribution of the burden of assessments.

The change from Stipend to Income as a rule will mean that the level of assessment will better reflect a Congregation's ability to contribute. The rates of assessment for the various Assessment Funds will continue to reflect the ongoing expenditure requirements of those funds.

## 9. COST IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

In estimating the cost implications of the proposals it has been assumed that if a Congregation is currently augmented it will continue to be augmented and no increase in stipend will be requested from the Congregation. If the proposed scales were to be applied in 2010:

- (i) the overall cost of stipends to the Church would reduce from approx. £9.1m to £7.9m. There would, however, not be a saving of the difference as these proposals include provisions to protect the stipend of Ministers in excess of the proposed scales.
- (ii) it is estimated that the additional annual cost of augmentation to the Central Ministry Fund would be £180k. For those Congregations not augmented whose Ministers receive less than the proposed scales there would be an additional cost of £38k.
- (iii) There are currently 69 Ministers in Northern Ireland and 32 in Republic of Ireland receiving augmentation (via augmented or incremental grants).

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the rate of assessment for the Incidental Fund for 2010 be 5.00p in the £ of stipend.
3. That the rate of assessment for the Central Ministry Fund for 2010 be 18.50p in the £ of stipend.
4. That the rate of assessment for the Retired Ministers' Fund for 2010 be 2.75p in the £ of stipend.
5. That the rate of assessment for the Widows of Ministers' Fund for 2010 be 4.50p in the £ of stipend.
6. That the rate of assessment for the Prolonged Disability Fund for 2010 be 0.25p in the £ of stipend.
7. That the rate of assessment for the Church House External Work for 2010 be 3.50p in the £ of stipend.
8. That the General Assembly send the proposals set out in the Paper on the Review of the Tyrone Memorial to Presbyteries and Congregations for discussion and comment, with report to the Board Convener by 31 December 2010, and that the Board bring a report with appropriate Code changes to the 2011 General Assembly.

9. That the General Assembly ask the Board of Finance and Personnel to undertake a review of ministerial expenses in conjunction with the Union Commission and bring a report to the 2011 General Assembly.

10. That the General Assembly approve a program of repairs and renovations to the Assembly Hall (upgrade cooling, lighting, sound and decor) and to the second floor offices at an estimated cost of £2.9m. and that this is funded by continuing the existing rate of assessment for External Repairs to Church House.

11. That under the provisions of the Code Par 223(3), the Rev NE Dorrans be given permission to retire on or after his 64th birthday and that his pension be in accordance with the Code and Rules of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009).

12. That the Board of Finance and Personnel, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 286 of the Code as follows:

### OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

#### **Anent Par 124(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 124(1) of the Code the words 'Ministers' Pension Fund (1978)' be deleted and the words 'Pension Scheme (2009)' substituted in their place.

JOHN HUNTER

#### **Anent Par 125(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 125(1) of the Code the words 'Ministers' Pension Fund (1978)' be deleted and the words 'Pension Scheme (2009)' substituted in their place.

JOHN HUNTER

#### **Anent Par 125(A) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 125(A) of the Code the words 'The object of the **1978 Ministers' Pension Scheme Fund** shall be to provide the appropriate Funds for the contribution to be made to the Ministers' Pension Scheme 1978' be deleted and the words 'The object of the **Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) Fund** shall be to provide the appropriate funds for the contribution to be made to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009)' substituted in their place.

JOHN HUNTER

# UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: Rev RIA ALLELY

Secretary: THE CLERK

1. The Board is very aware of the sacrifice many Congregations have had to make this year in realising their “Target of Honour”, and the on-going financial crisis resulted in only 2 Presbyteries actually exceeding their Target.

2. The Board regrets that when the 2009 Accounts were finalised, it failed to achieve the Target by £373,702 (£233,953 in 2008). As usual, far too many Congregations were late in remitting their collection to the Financial Secretary’s Department. Nevertheless, the Board agreed to pay the various Boards the budgeted grants in full for 2009. Since the Accounts were finalised £282,365 was received as late payments to the 2009 Appeal (£199,694 in 2008).

3. The Board, having analysed the statistics, discovered that 51 Congregations did not pay by the deadline (31.1.2010) and a further 119 failed to reach their target. Many Congregations appear to have “made it up” by taking funds from their General Account. 215 Congregational contributions exactly reached their target. This obviously withdraws resources from other areas of ministry.

4. The pattern of using United Appeal monies to bolster up General Account balances is a common feature of many Congregational finances and this must be discouraged. It is recommended that as soon as money is received in Congregations for the Appeal, it should be remitted to the Financial Secretary’s Department, or at least every three months, and always before 31 January.

5. From a cursory examination of Statistical Returns it would appear that more than a few Congregations are not applying Gift Aid Receipts in accordance with the requirements of the Code. Treasurers are asked to ensure the accuracy of their returns to Presbytery.

6. The Board, being painfully aware of the financial burdens faced by our denomination, carefully examined the budgets presented by the various receiving Boards. The result, after many hours of careful and prayerful deliberation is shown in Schedule 4. The Board, guided by its Finance Committee, agreed the 2011 Appeal at £3,190,000 – a decrease of 3.62% (See Schedules 3 and 4).

7. The Board would have preferred to grant receiving Boards their full amounts requested, but despite their vision for the future, reductions have had to be made. Recognising this we have increased the amount released from our reserves from £175,000 last year to £200,000. If this trend continues we will soon be in a position where we will be unable to assist.

8. Conscious of discussion at the General Board Conference on the general level of giving of Christian people to the Church, the Board is bringing a resolution to ask the General Assembly to appoint an ad-hoc Committee to consider ways to encourage planned and generous giving throughout the Church.

9. The Board of Communication has produced 2 DVDs about specific projects whose Boards are in receipt of funds. These are excellent and more are planned for the future. These are easily downloaded from the website and we recommend their usage during worship services. This, together with the Briefing, should keep our people better informed. A number of Board members are willing to visit Congregations to speak about the work of the United Appeal – contact the Convener for more information.

10. As we anticipate a satisfactory resolution to the PMS situation, we look to the sovereign guidance and encouragement of the Lord in all matters spiritual and material. Let us honour our calling and the teaching of Matthew 10:8 which reminds us: “*Freely you have received, freely give*”

11. Finally, the Board is most appreciative of the guidance and help of the team in the Financial Secretary’s Office and acknowledge the huge debt owed to them by the Church.

### APPRAISALS COMMITTEE

*The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:*

1. During the year the Appraisals Committee met as required to examine new posts and capital projects. The Committee looks at new work in great detail and the Board wishes to place on record its appreciation of the time given by Committee members.

2. There was discussion during the year of the number of proposed “training officer” posts being proposed now that the Board of Christian Training has indicated that it will only be directly offering training in “generic” work not covered by specific Boards. The United Appeal instructed that no posts should be approved until the Board of Christian Training indicated its view on the co-ordination of training posts. This has now been received.

3. During the year approval was given to:

- Development of South Belfast Friendship House (PW/BSW)
- Part-time catering posts at the Elmwood Chaplaincy Café (BSW)
- Conversion of bed-sits to one-bed apartments at Tritonville Close (BSW)
- Minor changes at Harold McCauley Home and Camowen Terrace (BSW)
- Communications and Development Officer for PW (initial 3 year appointment)
- IT Support Officer (BFP)
- Software Developer (BFP)

### RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the United Appeal for 2011 be as set out in Schedules (III) and (IV).
3. That the General Assembly support a Church-wide policy to encourage Presbyterians to plan their Christian generosity as a percentage of

their income and appoint an ad-hoc Committee to plan how this policy may be encouraged throughout the Church.

4. That the General Assembly commend the DVDs on the work of the Boards and encourage Congregations to download them from the website.

5. That the United Appeal Board for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with par 287 of the Code as follows:-

## SCHEDULE I

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2008	Specified Sources 2008 £	United Appeal 2010 £
Ards.....	8,308	3,019,944	311,500
Armagh.....	3,891	1,786,394	164,445
Ballymena.....	7,428	2,902,945	288,624
Belfast North.....	5,773	1,971,936	210,140
Belfast South.....	3,673	1,701,040	155,967
Belfast East.....	6,501	2,776,031	264,344
Carrickfergus.....	5,400	1,735,787	191,139
Coleraine and Limavady....	5,693	2,215,060	220,719
Derry and Donegal.....	5,077	1,837,010	189,935
Down.....	4,910	1,541,582	171,966
Dromore.....	4,935	1,905,269	190,589
Dublin and Munster.....	1,230	1,149,423	81,148
Iveagh.....	3,677	1,419,742	142,013
Monaghan.....	1,094	559,228	49,077
Newry.....	2,763	1,123,815	109,555
Omagh.....	3,524	1,218,942	129,035
Route.....	3,668	1,284,991	135,118
Templepatrick.....	4,232	1,519,039	157,713
Tyrone.....	3,685	1,509,156	146,627
	85,462	33,177,334	3,309,654

50% of the allocation for 2010 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Specified Sources. Specified Sources for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to euro on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2008 of 1.27.

The above allocations reflect the move of Congregations to new Presbyteries from March 2009. Presbyteries affected: Coleraine and Limavady, Derry and Donegal, Dublin and Munster, Monaghan, Newry, Omagh.

**SCHEDULE II**

	Requested 2010 £	Proposed Grant 2010 £
BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND	1,180,000	1,040,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION	27,500	27,500
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING	944,154	325,454
BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	460,000	470,000
BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS	321,000	321,000
BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS	1,050,000	962,000
BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS	165,000	115,000
	<hr/> 4,147,654	<hr/> 3,260,954
Currency losses		
Contingencies		223,700
Allocation from reserves		(175,000)
		<hr/>
Appeal to Congregations		3,309,654



**SCHEDULE III**

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2009	Specified Sources 2009 £	United Appeal 2011 £
Ards.....	8,133	3,149,620	300,696
Armagh.....	3,893	1,811,868	158,149
Ballymena.....	7,504	2,994,155	281,557
Belfast North.....	5,631	2,007,644	200,106
Belfast South.....	3,631	1,750,081	150,316
Belfast East.....	6,267	2,811,634	249,676
Carrickfergus.....	5,291	1,809,100	184,411
Coleraine and Limavady....	5,611	2,238,085	210,496
Derry and Donegal.....	5,019	1,917,426	184,338
Down.....	4,813	1,593,691	165,324
Dromore.....	4,918	1,966,347	184,716
Dublin and Munster.....	1,286	1,312,997	85,624
Iveagh.....	3,655	1,429,806	135,805
Monaghan.....	1,108	648,163	51,201
Newry.....	2,745	1,149,108	105,511
Omagh.....	3,499	1,217,458	122,939
Route.....	3,594	1,286,133	127,941
Templepatrick.....	4,244	1,519,905	151,134
Tyrone.....	3,645	1,524,926	140,060
	84,487	34,138,147	3,190,000

50% of the allocation for 2011 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Specified Sources. Specified Sources for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to euro on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2009 of 1.12.

**SCHEDULE IV**

	Requested 2011 £	Proposed Grant 2011 £
BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND	1,190,000	1,070,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION	40,000	40,000
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING	407,000	390,000
BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	500,000	490,000
BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS	367,000	350,000
BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS	1,000,000	882,000
BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS	135,000	130,000
	<u>3,639,000</u>	<u>3,352,000</u>
Currency losses		
Contingencies		38,000
Allocation from reserves/other income		(200,000)
Appeal to Congregations		<u>3,190,000</u>

# 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.

AJ 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:-

# TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Hon Secretary: Rev Dr DONALD J WATTS

Financial Secretary: Mr CLIVE KNOX

1. The following is an extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Trustees at their Annual General Meeting held in Church House, Belfast, on 16 March, 2010.

2. The Report of the Executive Committee and the Statement of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2009 of the following were laid before the Trustees, and were adopted by them:

The General Investment Fund

The Commutation Fund

The Non-Participating Trust Funds

The Magee Fund

The Tops Wilson Trust Fund

The Fire Insurance Trust Fund

The Fortune Mission Bequest

The Lindsay Memorial Fund

Trust Funds

3. Moved by the Rev Dr RJT McMullan, seconded by Mr RW Alcorn, and unanimously agreed, that the Report and the Statements of Accounts be adopted, signed by three Trustees, inserted in the Appendix to the Minute Book and lodged with the Clerk of Assembly to be laid before the Assembly in June. The Report and the Statement of Accounts were, therefore, signed by the Rev Dr RJT McMullan, Mr Lyle Cubitt and Mr RA Wilson and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

4. It was reported that the Executive Committee will also receive and examine the audited Accounts for 2009 of the Getty Trust, Union Theological College and The War Memorial Hostel and accept these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly. On the proposal of the Rev Dr RJT McMullan, seconded by Mr John Millar, OBE, this report was received.

5. Three retiring members of the Executive Committee were re-appointed for a further three years, these being the Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson, Sir Eric McDowell, and Mr AT Ross.

6. The Executive Committee were authorised to nominate members of the General Assembly according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iii).

### Trust Funds

7. A summary Account of the various Trust Funds is included in the Book of Accounts 2009. The following Trust Funds are distributed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Trustees.

As in 2009 the Trustees have agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that, where the terms of Trust permit, these should be distributed via United Appeal rather than directly to various agencies or projects as had been the practice in the past.

**Mrs A M Davidson Trust:** The total income for 2009 available for distribution is £7,137.20. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£7,137.20</u>
---------------	------------------

**Sir Wm V McCleery Estate:** The total income for 2009 available for distribution is £37,263.52. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Central Ministry Fund	80%
Retired Ministers' Fund	10%
Widows of Ministers' Fund	10%

**Estate of Miss Irene Scott:** The total income for 2009 available for distribution is £7,720.72. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£7,720.72</u>
---------------	------------------

**Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown:** The total income for 2009 available for distribution is £4,954.88. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£4,954.88</u>
---------------	------------------

**Estate of Mr Victor Morrow:** The total income for 2009 available for distribution is £1,615.04. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£1,615.04</u>
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### GENERAL INVESTMENT FUND

The General Investment Fund was originally established under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 1964. It is a common investment Fund in which any charity connected with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland can invest.

At 31 December 2009, the total value of the Fund was £37m of which £7m. was held by individual congregations, £26m by central Boards, Agencies and charities of the Church and £4m by the Trustees for various funds under their direct control. All investments are in made accordance with the ethical investment policy of the General Assembly.

Investments in the fund or shareholdings tend to arise from trust funds, bequests or donations which often have particular terms or restrictions attached regarding the application of the capital and income.

On occasions the Trustees are notified of bequest where the terms may state they are for the “benefit of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland” or to the “Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland”. The present policy of the Trustees is to investment these in the Trustees Discretionary Fund in the General Investment Fund, unless a specific project requiring funding is identified, and then to distribute the income annually. In allocating capital or income, and while recognising no restriction have been expressed by the donor, the Trustees will have regard to expressions of wish or known interests of the donor.

In accordance with the Scheme Rules, dividends are declared on shareholdings in the fund, at 15 April and 15 October and the shares are also valued on these dates. Recent dividend levels and share valued are set out below

Further details about the General Investment Fund, the investment performance and investment holdings is available in a booklet available from the Financial Secretary’s office. The accounts are in included in the Book of Accounts presented to the General Assembly.

8. <b>Declaration of Dividend</b>	15.4.09	15.10.09
Number of shares qualifying	5,370,499	5,283,668
Income from investment for distribution and tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers’ Fees	£770,698	£600,180
Dividend per share	15.00p	13.00p

During 2009 £86,697 was transferred from the Dividend Equalisation Reserve, in accordance with the Scheme Rules, and the balance on the Reserve at 31 December, 2009 is £514,469.

The combined annual Dividend of 28.00p per share is to be compared with 33.00p per share for 2008; 31.00p for 2007; 30.00p for 2006; 27.00p for 2005; 27.00p for 2004; 29.3p for 2003; 28.5p for 2002; 28.00p for 2001; 28.00p for 2000.

9. <b>Valuation</b>	15.4.09	15.10.09
	£	£
Valuation of Investments	29,823,697	35,047,055
Cash on Deposit	(260,296)	84,697
Dividend Equalisation Reserve	566,289	408,796
	<u>£30,129,690</u>	<u>£35,540,548</u>

No of Shares Issued	5,378,678	5,290,285
Share Value	£5.6017	£6.7181

The Trustees meet with Investment Managers, Newton Investment Management Limited, three times a year to review investment performance. During 2009 there was a positive return of 20.1% compared to a benchmark return of 18.7%.

**Crescent Church Loan Fund**

10. During 2009 loan requests of £150,000 were approved. Interest is currently charged on loans at half the total of bank base rate plus 2% (currently 1.25%) on the average balance outstanding over the term of the loan.

**Getty Bequest**

11. The allocation of grants out of the income of the Trust Estate of John Getty for the year ending 31 December, 2009 was as follows:

Overseas – Foreign	2,330
Overseas – Jewish	1,270
Home Mission	3,070
Belfast City Mission	2,330
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£9,000</b>

**Magee Fund**

12. To facilitate Union Theological College in completing further development and refurbishment of the College facilities the Magee Fund provided, in February 2009, an interest free loan of £366,000. This is in addition to an earlier loan of £300,000. The loan is secured by a 6½% interest in the College property.

**Lindsay Memorial Fund**

13. The Fund is to be used for charitable purposes in connection with the education and training of persons of integrity and excellent character domiciled in any part of Africa who wish to study at a school, college or university in the United Kingdom and who have promised to undertake, for not less than five years, employment in Africa approved for each beneficiary individually by the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Grants up to £70,500 were approved for the 2009/10 and 2010/11 academic years.

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendation regarding the Mrs A M Davidson Trust be adopted.
3. That the recommendation regarding the Sir Wm V McCleery Trust be adopted.
4. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Irene Scott Trust be adopted.
5. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Ida Mary McGeown Trust be adopted.
6. That the recommendation regarding the Victor Morrow Trust be adopted.
7. That in accordance with the Will of the late John Getty the following be constituted as the Committee for the “direction and management of the application” of the income from the Getty Bequest:

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, Revs Dr DJ Watts, RJA Bell, WJ Orr; Mr Wilson Ervin, CBE, Sir Eric McDowell, Mr David Bell, CB, Mr AT Ross, Mr John Millar, OBE.



# 2010 SPECIAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE

Co –Conveners: Revs DH THOMPSON, TC MORRISON

1. The Committee has continued with its detailed planning for the CONFIDENT IN CHRIST Residential Assembly to be held at the University of Ulster, Coleraine from Monday 16 to Thursday 19 August, 2010.

2. The keynote speaker at the evening rallies is the Rev Ajith Fernando. The speakers at morning worship are the Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson, the Rev David Bruce and the Rev John Woodside.

3. The comprehensive seminar programme relates to each of the daily themes:

Tuesday: Jesus is Lord in the face of global challenge

Wednesday: Jesus is Lord in the face of social change

Thursday: Jesus is Lord in the face of the church on the margins

4. At the time of writing in mid March, bookings are beginning to be received. By the time this report is received the Committee hope is that the residential places will be filled.

5. The Committee believes that the Assembly can be a key stimulus to the ongoing mission of the Church and the implementation of congregational mission plans as, confident in Christ, we proclaim Jesus is Lord in face of the changes and challenges in the 21st century.

6. The Committee covets the prayer of the whole church for the ongoing preparations and of course for the Conference itself, that Jesus the Lord may be honoured, His people encouraged and His Kingdom extended through this Special Assembly.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the ad hoc Committee for the Special Assembly be reappointed for a further year as follows:

**OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS**

Pars.	40(4)	195
	62; 98	112
	124(1); 125(1); 125(a)	303

**OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**

Pars	33; 81; 272(4)	113
	280(1);	195
	300(4); 302(3)(a)	196
	57	153
	106(g)	154
	128(3); 128(5)(a); 128(5)(d); 128(6)(b); 190(2)(c); 233(4);	
	238(1); 245(1); 245(2)(a); 260(f); 274(4); 274(5);	
	274(5)(c)(ii) and (iii); 274(6); 274(6)(a); 274(6)(c); 274(6)(d);	
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Doctrine	23	George Moore (256); JA Noble (227); WTJ Richardson	
Family Services (BSW)	216	(112); WJA Sleith (112); RS Stockman (241).	
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Global Concerns	34	William Chestnutt (10); RG Craig (9); WDF Marshall (8); JA	
Leadership Development (BMO)	160	McKay (8); WC McReynolds (9); WJ Parkes (7); MD	
Ministerial Studies &		Wasson (11).	
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		Future of Peace-making Panel	101
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Installed RS Agnew (12); TN Bingham (9); JM Browne (10); Graham Connor (10); CH Deering (8); GWM Glasgow (9); AJ Gordon (12); JM Gracey (13); MCA Gray (11); TD Hagan (12); S Henning (7); DJ Hutchinson (7); DJ Irvine (12); CWP Kennedy (11); JE McDowell (9); RG McElnea (12); RSJ McIlhatton (9); Raymond McKibbin (11); AF Nel (10); RN Orr (12); WJM Parker (13); JWD Rogers (9); WS Smart (12); DJ Steele (13); RS Stockman (8).		Presbyterian Women	197
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Judicial Appeals, Ad Hoc Committee on	66	Resigned RD Cameron (12); G Connor (9); KA Drury (8); AJ Dunlop (7); GWM Glasgow (11); MCA Gray (8); TD Hagan (10); DJ Hutchinson (10); DJ Irvine (13); CWP Kennedy (9); JE McDowell (7); SWW Neilly (7); WJM Parker (11); JWD Rodgers (8); DJ Steele (7); RS Stockman (8).	
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Leadership Panel (BCT)	249	Saintfield Road Memorial Panel	103
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