



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

of

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

1999

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

Luncheon adjournment at 1.00 p.m. each day.

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

References to the Minutes of Assembly are given in full.

NOTES

MONDAY, JUNE 7

Within Church House

7.00 p.m.—

Divine Service
Constitution of Assembly
Memorial Roll
Election of Moderator

TUESDAY, JUNE 8

Within May Street Church

9.30 a.m.—

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
(Intermission 15 minutes)

Within Church House

11.00 a.m.—

1. BUSINESS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (85-94).
Arrangements Committee.
2. Memorial of Railway Street Kirk Session (94).
3. Reports of Synods and Presbyteries (76-84).
- (11.30) 4. Reception of Corresponding Members and Delegates.
Church of Scotland: Right Rev. John B. Cairns (Moderator), Prof. Herbert A. Kerrigan Q.C., Rev. Scott J. Brown, R.N., Mrs. Ann McCarter.
United Reformed Church: Mrs. Wilma Frew (Moderator), Rev. Peter Brain.
Presbyterian Church of Wales: Rev. W. I. Cynwil Williams (Moderator).
Church of Ireland: Rt. Rev. J. E. Moore, Dr. P. H. C. Trimble.

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

NOTES

The Methodist Church in Ireland: Rev. Dr. Norman W. Taggart, Rev. Roy Cooper, Miss Jill McVitty, Mrs. Mollie Nesbitt.

Presbyterian Church of E.A.: Rev. Patrick Rukenya

Eglise Reformee de France:

Irish Council of Churches: Dr. David Stevens.

5. UNION COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (57-74).

Personnel/Planning Committee

6. Overtures anent Pars. 128(1), 193, 274(5), Appendix 5A of the Code (74-75).

7. Committee on Memorial of Tyrone Presbytery: Report and Resolutions (278-285).

Lapsed Business.

2.00 p.m.—

8. NOMINATION BOARD: Report and Resolutions (106-123).

9. BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS: Report and Resolutions (95-105).

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

(3.30) Intermission (15 minutes).

10. BOARD OF EDUCATION: Report and Resolutions (216-229).

Church Education, State Education, University Education Committees.

11. Committee on Memorial of Dublin & Munster Presbytery: Report and Resolutions (286-287).

Lapsed Business.

(6.30) Close of Business.

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

NOTES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9

9.30 a.m.—

12. Memorial of the Foyle Presbytery (55).
13. GENERAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (5-42).
Church and Government, Moderator's Advisory, Forces', Chaplains', Doctrine, Peace and Peacemaking Committees.

(10.45) Intermission (15 minutes).

GENERAL BOARD (Continued).

Overtures (Various) (42-46).

Lapsed Business.

12.15 p.m.—

Worship.

2.00 p.m.—

N.B. The Alternative Method will be used for the presentation of items marked *. For details see the Report of the Business Board (p. 85 par. 4).

- 14.* BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS: Report and Resolutions (183-195).
Alcohol and Drug Education, War Memorial Hostel, Kinghan Mission, Presbyterian Residential Trust, Social Issues and Resources Committees.

- 15.* YOUTH BOARD: Report and Resolutions (207-215).
Youth Events, Youth Training and Resources, Youth Home Mission, Youth Overseas, Youth Centres, Committees.

(3.45) Intermission (15 minutes).

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

NOTES

16.* INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (124-141).

Irish Church Relations, World Church Relations, World Development, Race Relations Committees.

Lapsed Business.

(6.30) Close of Business.

Meeting of the General Synod of Ulster.

7.45 p.m.— Evening Rally.

THURSDAY, JUNE 10

9.30 a.m.—

17. TRUSTEES: Report and Resolutions (274-276).

18. Appointment of Trustee (277).

19. COMMISSION ON TRUSTS: Report and Resolutions (240).

20. UNITED APPEAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (257-262).

(10.45) Intermission (15 minutes).

21. PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION: Report and Resolutions (177-182).

22. OVERSEAS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (142-166).

Lapsed Business.

12.15 p.m.—

Worship

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

NOTES

2.00 p.m.—

In Private

23. Committee on Reception of Ministers and Licentiates: Report and Resolutions (239).
24. Recognised Ministries Committee: Report and Resolutions (46-48).
25. Appeal of Mr. Clarke Scott and Mrs. Shirley Scott (55).
26. Appeal of Mr. Meredith Dunwoody (55).
27. JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (49-53).
28. Overtures on the Books anent Pars. 95(d), 163, 165(5) of the Code (53-54).
29. Overtures anent Pars 9, 30(1), 205(4) of the Code (54).
30. Overture anent Par. 132(4) of the Code (54-55).
31. AD HOC COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (56).

Intermission (15 minutes).

In Public

- (4.00)
32. BOARD OF MINISTRY AND PENSIONS: Report and Resolutions (263-269).
Central Ministry Fund, Committee on Retirements and Pensions, Retired Ministers' House Fund.
 33. Overture on the Books anent Par. 315(4) of the Code (269).
 34. Overtures anent Pars. 221(2), 223, 321(3), 321(5), 321(6) of the Code (269-271).

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

NOTES

Lapsed Business.

(6.00) Adjournment.

Meeting of Secession Synod at Adjournment.

7.00 p.m.—

Lapsed Business, if any.

FRIDAY, JUNE 11

9.30 a.m.—

35. HOME BOARD: Report and Resolutions (167-176).

Assignment, Home Mission, Church Extension.

36. SHANKILL ROAD MISSION COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (272-273).

(10.45) Intermission (15 minutes).

37. BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING: Report and Resolutions (196-206).

Evangelism, Irish Mission, Christian Training, Divine Healing, Marriage and Family Committees.

38. MOTIONS ON THE BOOKS (206).

39. BOARD OF STUDIES FOR THE MINISTRY: Report and Resolutions (230-239).

Studies, College Management, Magee Fund Scheme, Students' Bursary Fund Committees.

Lapsed Business.

(12.15) Worship.

2.00 p.m.—

40. BOARD OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION: Report and Resolutions (214-256).

Finance and Staffing, Incidental Fund, Getty Bequest, Assembly Buildings, Statistics Committees.

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

NOTES

41. Overture anent Par 286(7) of the Code (256).

42. Notice of Motion (256).

Late Business, if any.

Lapsed Business.

BUSINESS BOARD, Final Report.

CLOSE OF ASSEMBLY.

7.45 p.m.— YOUTH NIGHT

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

NOTES

BUSINESS BOARD

A Guide to Assembly Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. 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.

9. **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.

10. 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

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

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

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

13. 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.

14. **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.

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

16. 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.

17. 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.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND ACCOUNTS 1998 — PREFACE

A preface to the Accounts is submitted herewith.

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

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

1997 Column is period to 31 December 1997.

1998 Column is year to 31 December 1998.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME

	Grand Total		Contributions from Congregations		Congregational Assessments		United Appeal	
	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997
	General Board	21	34	6	7	—	—	15
Business Board	9	9	—	—	—	—	—	—
Communications Board	392	496	—	—	—	—	120	110
Inter-Church Relations	366	393	344	363	—	—	—	—
Overseas Board	1,521	1,645	9	12	—	—	740	715
Home Board	715	712	25	36	4	4	500	445
Social Witness Board	5,645	3,973	14	12	—	—	146	110
Evangelism & Christian Training	477	495	9	9	—	—	265	245
Youth Board	501	476	71	39	—	—	207	199
Education Board	154	168	—	1	—	—	150	155
Board of Studies	891	854	4	7	—	—	448	428
Finance & Administration	1,195	1,133	—	—	891	889	—	—
United Appeal	365	343	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ministry & Pensions	3,790	3,870	—	—	3,070	3,132	—	—
Presbyterian Women's Association	813	766	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sundry Other	355	64	280	—	—	—	—	—
Grand Total	17,210	15,431	762	486	3,965	4,025	2,591	2,434

EXPENDITURE

	Grand Total		Employee and Ministry Costs		Printing Stationery, etc		Administration	
	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997
	General Board	16	25	6	17	—	—	3
Business Board	11	9	—	—	10	8	1	1
Communications Board	397	470	108	118	220	283	35	38
Inter-Church Relations	372	395	—	—	—	9	1	1
Overseas Board	1,496	1,329	104	96	49	27	67	64
Home Board	645	486	76	59	8	8	71	64
Social Witness Board	3,961	4,192	2,526	2,472	395	390	98	201
Evangelism & Christian Training	536	654	339	332	87	89	29	30
Youth Board	491	510	131	122	54	53	35	30
Education Board	206	187	127	116	11	7	30	28
Board of Studies	768	787	332	342	174	139	6	5
Finance & Administration	1,095	1,185	446	410	160	178	132	126
United Appeal	11	22	—	—	11	22	—	—
Ministry & Pensions	3,431	3,403	3,194	3,169	13	13	161	146
Presbyterian Women's Association	825	884	563	631	50	44	46	39
Sundry Other	302	42	—	—	—	—	1	1
Grand Total	14,563	14,580	7,952	7,884	1,242	1,270	716	776

— MEMORANDUM CENTRAL INCOME
1998 Per Board £000's

Trust, Investment Income and Bank Interest		Rental Income (net)		Donations and Bequests		Loan Repayments		Sales: Periodicals & Property		Grants and Fees	
1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	9	7
(13)	(10)	—	—	—	—	—	—	284	396	1	—
15	11	—	—	7	19	—	—	—	—	—	—
156	139	—	—	616	779	—	—	—	—	—	—
99	81	11	11	62	38	14	17	—	80	—	—
180	26	2,914	2,970	288	189	59	50	1,675	94	369	522
12	26	1	—	90	115	—	—	100	100	—	—
9	9	83	67	100	118	—	—	—	—	31	44
2	5	—	—	—	1	—	—	2	6	—	—
236	218	6	10	79	83	—	—	—	—	118	108
(114)	(143)	376	345	14	15	—	—	28	27	—	—
365	343	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
688	704	—	—	32	34	—	—	—	—	—	—
95	105	—	—	667	611	8	8	43	42	—	—
15	13	—	—	—	—	60	51	—	—	—	—
<u>1,745</u>	<u>1,527</u>	<u>3,391</u>	<u>3,403</u>	<u>1,955</u>	<u>2,004</u>	<u>141</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>2,132</u>	<u>745</u>	<u>528</u>	<u>681</u>

Travel Expenses etc		Building Costs		Upkeep of Property		Loans Issued		Home and Over- seas Projects and Grants		Missionaries Field Costs	
1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	6	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
33	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	371	385	—	—
16	15	—	—	20	18	—	—	655	545	585	564
6	9	207	154	20	17	20	12	237	163	—	—
25	37	174	253	635	691	105	146	3	2	—	—
42	34	—	132	3	2	—	—	3	5	33	30
3	4	12	101	48	55	—	—	208	145	—	—
9	7	—	—	14	16	—	—	15	13	—	—
9	8	—	15	67	48	—	—	180	230	—	—
61	64	—	—	208	254	—	—	88	153	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
59	72	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	3	—	—
4	4	—	—	6	7	12	6	131	144	13	9
—	—	—	—	—	—	20	40	281	1	—	—
<u>267</u>	<u>284</u>	<u>393</u>	<u>655</u>	<u>1,021</u>	<u>1,108</u>	<u>157</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>2,184</u>	<u>1,796</u>	<u>631</u>	<u>603</u>

REPORTS: JUNE, 1999

BELFAST

GENERAL BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The General Board met three times during the year. It agreed to transfer the Panel on the Environment to the Inter-Church Relations Board, so its report will now be found under that heading. Reports from all other Panels and Committees under the General Board were received as usual.

NOMINATION BOARD

2. The General Board considered the appointment of specialists to the Nomination Board for the posts of Director of Christian Training and Professor of Practical Theology. It was decided that the following should each appoint one specialist for each post:

The Union Theological College Management Committee

The Faculty of Union Theological College

The Magee Fund Scheme Committee

The Board of Studies

3. The Board also appointed a sub-committee with power to give final approval to the job descriptions for the above-mentioned posts. These job descriptions were duly considered, amended and approved.

4. However, it was not entirely clear which Committee or Board has authority to fix salaries at the Christian Training Centre, so it was agreed that a resolution be submitted to the General Assembly proposing that in future these salaries be determined by the Committee on Finance and Staffing in consultation with the Magee Scheme Fund Committee.

REV DR DONALD WATTS

5. It was with sincere regret that the General Board learned of the intention of Rev Dr Donald Watts to resign as Convener of the Committee on Peace and Peacemaking because of the pressure of other commitments.

6. Since his appointment to this convenership in 1996 he has made an exceptional contribution to this strategic area of the Church's work and witness at this critical period of our history.

7. He brought great gifts of mind and heart to this task and devoted considerable time to it, not least in the arranging of conferences on Sectarianism and "Facing Change". We thank him warmly for an important task well done.

PANEL ON STRATEGY FOR MISSION

1. The 1998 General Assembly asked the General Board to appoint a Panel on Strategy for Mission, to operate under the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training.

2. A Strategy for Mission Panel was therefore appointed as follows:

Very Rev Dr D H Allen (Convener), Revs David J Temple, W J Johnstone, Dr Stephen Williams, John Parkes, Trevor Steele; Mr Douglas Cowan, Mrs Gladys Adams, Miss Sheila Sutter, Mr Norman Chambers, Rev John Faris (or other representative from the Irish Republic).

CHURCH HOUSE STAFF

1. As three senior members of Church House staff, the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and the Secretary of the Overseas Board, will all reach retirement age in the next few years, the General Board, in accordance with previous practice, appointed an ad hoc Committee (Convener Very Rev Dr D H Allen) to consider this situation.

2. The Committee met twice, once on its own and once with members of the Panel of the Overview of Funding.

3. Having considered the need for a period of overlap between the outgoing and incoming office-bearers, and having examined the funding implications, the Committee made the following recommendations.

(i) That the General Board request the Assembly to proceed to the appointment of an Assistant and Successor to the Secretary of the Overseas Board in 2001, that the overlap be for a period of twelve months, with a possible extension but not beyond 15 months in all, and that the Overseas Board fund this appointment from within its own resources.

(ii) That the General Board request the Assembly of 2000 to take steps to appoint an Assistant and Successor to the Clerk of Assembly in 2001, that the appointee shadow the work of both the Deputy Clerk and the Clerk until September 2002, thereafter undertaking the post of Deputy Clerk, while continuing to shadow the Clerk, and that the appointee assume DV the full responsibility of the Clerkship on 1st September, 2003.

(iii) That the post of Deputy Clerk be considered further in the light of Board re-alignments, with a report and recommendation being brought to the General Assembly not later than June 2001.

4. The General Board approved these recommendations at its meeting on 15 April.

OVERVIEW OF FUNDING

1. The Panel considered various items referred to it by the United Appeal Board.

2. It examined plans for celebrating the Millennium and related costs. It was agreed that up to £30,000 should be made available from the Incidental Fund, which is to have the authority to control expenditure.

3. The Panel considered a request of the Presbyterian Residential Trust for a grant of £100,000 towards a programme of refurbishment of certain properties to Nursing Home standards. It was agreed to recommend that the United Appeal make a grant of £50,000 in AD 2000 pending receipt of further and better particulars.

4. The United Appeal Board sought comment on a request from the Board of Social Witness for funding for work on their offices in Church House. The Panel agreed that this was properly a matter for the Assembly Buildings Committee and not the United Appeal.

5. Information is being sought on the costs and achievements of the Video Unit, and similar data is being sought on the post of Promoter of Evangelism before any new appointment is made.

6. Consideration is being given to the costs of early appointments of an assistant and successor to the Clerk of Assembly and to the Secretary of the Overseas Board.

7. In view of increasing demands on the Incidental Fund the Panel recommends that a decision on the proposed additional assessment of 1.75p per £ of stipend for In-Service Training be deferred for two years (see Board of Evangelism and Christian Training - Motion on the Books).

8. Much of the Panel's work occurs in the late spring and arises out of proposals that may be made to the forthcoming Assembly. The Panel will make a supplementary report to the Assembly in Daily Minutes on any matters arising after Easter meeting of the General Board.

INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE ON NORTHERN IRELAND

1. The Inter-Church Committee on Northern Ireland held its annual meeting in Belfast on 2 October. Our Church's representatives were Very Rev Dr John Dunlop, Rev M L Johnston, Sir Eric McDowell and the Clerk of Assembly.

2. The theme of the meeting was "The Role of Forgiveness in the Northern Ireland Conflict". The various projects undertaken by the Committee were also reviewed, the most successful of these being the Business Education Initiative.

3. Over 160 students went to the USA in 1998 to undertake Business Studies. The main aim of the programme is to enhance the skills, experience and qualifications of the participants so that they return to this country better qualified to make a contribution to the success of business here. They are also encouraged to give talks to business, church and student groups while they are away.

4. The Inter-Church Committee gratefully acknowledges the help of the Training and Employment Agency, the participating church-related Universities and Colleges in the USA (about 96 in all) who generously provide free places, and the other main funders of the project, including the International Fund for Ireland and the European Union

COLLEGE AND TRAINING REVIEW COMMITTEE

Rev R F S Poots reports:

1. The General Assembly, in 1997, instructed the General Board, in consultation with the Board of Studies, to arrange for a major review of the training of students, the role of Union College, Magee House and the Director of Ministerial Students. The College and Training Review Committee was set up as a result.

2. Last year the Committee presented a report to the Assembly which was both visionary and realistic. Legislation is before the Assembly this year which, if passed, will bring together the main training agencies of our Church within one cohesive structure under a new Board of Studies and Christian Training. Within the new structures:

- the training of students for the ministry would continue as an important ingredient of the work of our Church;
- training would be provided for elders and church workers and would aim to attract others, including students from overseas;
- in-service training for licentiates and courses for ministers would assume new dimensions and additional degrees would be on offer.

Since the new structures will not become operative until June, 2000 it would seem wise to set up a co-ordinating Committee for one year to facilitate planning and consultation in the interim. A resolution to this effect is appended.

3. Throughout the past year the Committee turned its attention to the accommodation which would be required, keeping in mind the statement in last year's report that training provision "should be centred in one establishment". The professional advisers, who were employed, have presented a preliminary report which identifies six options. The Committee requested them to explore a seventh option, a new building on a site to be purchased. The advisers also identified four property assets, some or all of which could be offered for sale and the proceeds applied to offset the capital costs of refurbishing Union College or making other provision. The options are set out on the summary sheet.

Property Assets and Estimated Values

4. Union College	£2,000,000
26 College Green	£50,000
Magee House	£220,000
Old Forge Manor	£250,000

Options

5. Options 1-4 relate to the refurbishment/extension of Union College. Option 1 would release Olde Forge Manor only for sale. Options 2,3 and 4 would release all properties except the College building. Options 5 and 7 would release all properties. Option 6 relates to the purchase of the College by Queen's University. In this case all properties could be offered for sale with the possible exception of College Green.

**COLLEGE AND TRAINING REVIEW COMMITTEE
SUMMARY SHEET**

Details	Cost	Shortfall	Return p.a.
1. Minimum Refurbishment of Union + Car Parking for letting	£88,060	1 Disposable Property+ £250,000	£72,000
2. Full Refurbishment of Union + Car Parking W.H.Bs. in bedrooms Relocation of chapel and library	£1,486,660	- £966,660	£93,000
3. Full Refurbishment of Union + Car Parking En-suites in bedrooms Relocation of chapel and library	£1,630,146	- £1,110,146	£110,100
4. As (iii) + new bedroom block at Union	£2,402,050	- £1,882,050	£192,500
5. New build on new site involving demolition/refurbishment of a building and extension (30 bedrooms)	£3,808,000	- £1,288,000	£100,000
6. Arrangement with Q.U.B. The College might be purchased by Q.U.B. leased back to P.C.I., or teaching facilities rented from QUB. Provision for the Union library would be made at Q.U.B.			

All figures are estimates

Notes on Summary Sheet

6. Column "Cost" lists the capital cost of each option.

Column "Shortfall" lists the shortfall (or profit) when the capital realised from property sales is deducted from the cost. In each case an estimated figure for VAT and professional fees (12%) has been added to the cost.

Column "Return p.a." lists the projected return per annum achieved by in-house savings, the letting of car parking, teaching facilities and bedrooms especially out of term time etc.

Comments

7. It must be remembered that all figures are estimates and are indicative only at this stage.

8. Option 1 has little or nothing to commend it. It infers no significant change to the existing College accommodation and would neither up-grade the teaching facilities nor bring all training under one roof. It would bring the property up to minimum safety standards to satisfy the statutory authorities.

9. Option 2 would offer a full refurbishment of the College building with modern teaching equipment, such as visuals, in lecture rooms. The present library would be relocated in the chapel thus providing an 80 seat lecture room/worship facility in the main area of the present library with one 30 seat seminar room on either side.

10. Option 3 would provide refurbishment as in Option 2 with the addition of en suite facilities in the bedrooms.

11. Option 4 would provide refurbishment as in Option 3 and a new bedroom block would be built at the rear of the College. The letting of bedrooms and other facilities is financially profitable and would be managed in such a way that teaching staff would not be diverted from their duties.

12. Option 5 would provide a new 'college' in the University area.

13. Option 6 would, undoubtedly, result in the absorption of the 'College' into Queen's University even though each institution would retain its own authority and its separate administrative identity. The 'College' headquarters would almost certainly be located in a house, 26 College Green or similar, and the Gamble Library, considered by some to be the finest collection of theological works in Ireland, could be adversely affected. It must, however, be said that while Queen's has expressed an interest in the event of Union being offered for sale no negotiations have taken place.

14. Option 7 would provide for a new build on a 'green-field' site sufficiently close to the present College location to preserve the value of the association with Queen's made possible by the proximity of Union to the University.

15. After serious consideration by the Committee, and with the support of the General Board, the professional advisers have been instructed to explore in greater depth options 3 and 4 and also to give consideration to options 5 and 7. Their definitive report is expected in May and every attempt will be made to bring a supplementary report to the Assembly.

16. In view of the condition of the fabric of Union College and the constant rise in building costs it would be highly desirable to ask the Assembly

to take a decision in June though whether or not it will be possible to provide the information required for a competent decision within the time scale remains to be seen.

17. Consideration will also have to be given as to how the project can be financed. The Committee is sensitive to the fact that congregations would not welcome a new financial burden, however much they support the need for the highest standards to be maintained in the training of students for the ministry. Alternative methods of funding will need to be explored.

18. The whole review of training holds out exciting possibilities for student, ministerial and lay training leading to a deeper knowledge of God, a mature and competent ministry by all the people of God and, ultimately, for the glory of God and the extension of His Kingdom.

PANEL ON PRIORITIES

19. The Panel on Priorities considered reports from the College Training and Review Committee. At time of writing various options for the future of Union College are still under consideration.

20. The Panel also considered a submission from the Presbyterian Residential Trust, which is facing the twin problems of older properties requiring refurbishment and a changing pattern of demand, including a growing need for nursing home facilities.

21. In view of the ever-growing number of older people in the Church and in the community the Panel was persuaded that this form of Christian witness and service should be supported, especially as the nett financial cost to the Church will be reasonable.

22. The 1997 General Assembly considered the need to allow congregations to retain sufficient financial resources for church work at local level, and agreed that this was a priority. The ending of the Church House Re-development assessment at the close of this financial year will help to achieve that. In addition, the ad hoc Committee on the Memorial of the Tyrone Presbytery continues to consider ways of enabling a congregation's specified sources to increase without an automatic rise in stipend and will submit a separate report to the Assembly on their proposals.

23. It has recently become apparent that the work of the Panel on Priorities is inextricably intertwined with that of the Panel on the Overview of Funding. It therefore recommended that the work of the Panel on Priorities be merged with that of the Overview of Funding.

CONCILIATION PANEL

Rev R F S Poots reports:

1. The importance of the work done by the conciliators and the growing recognition of its value is reflected in an increase to nine in the number of calls for assistance which have come from all parts of Ireland during the year.

2. Five cases involved new, not necessarily first-time, ministries and experience again confirmed the importance of beginning conciliation early on in a dispute.

3. The Panel is convinced of the need for conciliation and person management skills to be included as an integral part of the training of students for the ministry and, also, taught to elders in the year following their ordination, through compulsory Presbytery-organised courses, so that they better understand their responsibility for harmony in the congregation and are equipped to undertake a managerial role rather than having to react when things go wrong.

4. A series of seminars, designed to raise local awareness and underscore the importance of conciliation, is under consideration for Presbytery representatives.

5. Conciliation and the judicial processes of the Church are quite separate from one another. In circumstances where conciliation fails and a 'case' has to be taken up by a Court of the Church, the Court should conduct its affairs as though an attempt to conciliate had never been made. Any attempt to introduce into the Court what had been said or done during the conciliation process should be ruled out of order by the Chairperson of the Court and should not be taken into account during the Court's deliberations or referred to in a Finding.

PRESBYTERY VISITATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Rev J I Davey reports:

1. The Committee thanks those Presbyteries which forwarded comments on the scheme as suggested in last year's Report. There was overwhelming support for the new approach and an appreciation of the kind of questions being asked in the Query Sheets. The Committee has taken on board some of the concerns expressed. As a result, we have decided that the process should be referred to as a "Consultation" rather than "Appraisal" and that only the Conveners of the Consultation Teams should receive training.

2. The Committee is currently working on a "Review of Resources" document which it is envisaged will be completed by a Presbytery Agent with the help of congregational office-bearers once every five years. This deals with human, financial and physical resources as well as with maintenance of records and matters of child protection and environmental awareness.

3. A training session for Conveners, together with a training manual for all members of the consultation teams, is being prepared. It is envisaged this material will be shared with final year students in years to come.

4. The Committee now seeks the approval to set up a number of pilot schemes in the coming year before bringing a resolution to the General Assembly introducing the new scheme throughout the Church. Only after the scheme has been running for a number of years will legislation be introduced to make the necessary changes to the Code.

PANEL ON BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

1. The 1998 Assembly asked "the General Board, through the Panel on Boards and Committees, to examine the current structure of Boards and

Committees, keeping in mind the principle of democratic representation, and report to the 1999 General Assembly” (Mins p 37 res 9).

2. Last year’s Assembly also approved the amalgamation of the Home Board with the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training under the title “Board of Mission in Ireland”. In addition, it was agreed that the Christian Training Committee transfer to a re-named Board of Studies and Christian Training, and the Marriage and Family Committee to the Board of Social Witness.

3. Last year there was some uncertainty about where the Assignment Committee should be placed, but further discussion since then led to the conclusion that it should be placed under the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

4. In order to allow Presbyteries maximum choice in their selection of nominees to the new Board of Mission in Ireland, and to provide for effective representation of women (both members of the PWA and others), it is proposed that each Presbytery nominate three persons (including at least one woman not necessarily from the PWA) and that seven “representative” members of the PWA Executive Committee should also be included on a “g” line. Each Presbyterial Committee of the PWA presently sends one representative to the PWA Executive Committee, but such representatives may or may not be members of the Board where many of the important decisions on expenditure and policy are made.

5. The same situation also pertains in the Overseas Board and the Board of Social Witness. It is therefore proposed that each Presbytery should send three representatives, including one woman, to each of these Boards and that seven members of the PWA Executive Committee should also serve. As there are 21 representative members on the PWA Executive Committee, each such representative would serve on one Board. As they are “representatives” elected by their Presbyterial Committees rather than ex officio members, it is further proposed that they be eligible for inclusion on the “y” line of working committees.

6. The legislation is of necessity complex running to over 80 changes to the Code but for the sake of simplicity and efficiency these have been grouped together. These overtures will be submitted to the 1999 General Assembly to be placed on the Books for final enactment in AD 2000.

7. However, if the new system is to come into force at the next Assembly it will be necessary for Presbyteries to send in their nominations in the new format. A resolution to authorise that is appended.

8. To facilitate debate on any matters not yet decided by the Assembly resolutions are appended dealing with the transfer of the Assignment Committee to the new Board of Studies and Christian Training and the structure of PWA representation. Any debate on these matters could more helpfully take place on the resolution rather than on the overtures. To protect working committees from a sudden and drastic loss of existing members upon transfer to a new Board it is proposed that the committees concerned be able to retain on the “y” line for one year two existing members not nominated to the new Board by Presbyteries.

9. Meantime the Panel continues to consider a more radical review of the Board and Committee structure. The following points are currently under consideration.

- (i) While certain long-established committees (such as Doctrine or CMF) should be retained, could there be fewer “Assembly” committees (with “x” line, “y” line, etc) and more “Board” Committees with the opportunity to involve more people with interest or expertise from outside the core membership of the Board?
- (ii) Need all Boards have the same constitution? In some cases one representative per Presbytery might be sufficient. There are indications that some Presbyteries may be experiencing difficulty in finding enough representatives with both the expertise and the interest to fill all places effectively.
- (iii) Need all Boards follow the same format in their meetings? For some two meetings in the year might suffice, and one of these might be a conference-type meeting, or might use discussion groups.
- (iv) Boards should be seen as mini-Assemblies rather than maxi-Committees.

10. The Standing Committee of the Board of Social Witness submitted a paper outlining a possible alternative structure for that Board, preserving the general outline but considerably reducing its size. This paper has been noted for further consideration, though office-bearers in other Boards have not expressed any serious dissatisfaction with present structures. Any Board that would like to submit proposals for an alternative structure is invited to do so by 31 December.

11. In any event there is an on-going review of the need for so many committees. This year it is proposed that instead of having a separate Getty Management Committee under the Board of Finance and Administration, the Assembly should appoint annually 12 of the Trustees to discharge this function in accordance with the terms of the Will of Mr John Getty. The annual task of allocating around £9,000 among the four named beneficiaries could easily be carried out in conjunction with a stated meeting of the Trustees.

12. The proposal that the work of the Statistics Committee be merged with that of the Committee on Finance and Staffing has much to commend it.

THE MILLENNIUM

Mr Stephen Lynas reports:

1. A Millennium Working Group established by the General Board has met on a number of occasions together with representatives from Presbyteries, Boards, Committees and agencies.

2. The Information Officer has attended meetings of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting Millennium Group and meetings of the organising group working on the National Service to be held in the Waterfront Hall on 2 January, 2000.

3. Opinions vary considerably as to what should be done and the desired emphasis.

4. A Presbyterian Millennium Programme aimed at providing a framework within which congregations and boards can operate, with the

emphasis very much on each doing what is appropriate within its own particular circumstances, was presented to the General Board in February and approved.

5. Small working groups were formed to progress these ideas further.

STATEMENTS

During the year the Board issued major statements as follows:

GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS 29 October 1998

1. The Board expresses its sympathy to the relatives of those killed and to those who have been injured as a result of the bomb in Omagh and prays that they may experience the comfort of God's Holy Spirit so that they may cope with the awesome losses they have sustained.

2. The Board conveys its congratulations to Mr John Hume and Mr David Trimble on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize and applauds the political leadership which they have shown.

3. The Board believes that the potential for a peaceful and co-operative future should not be collapsed either over the decommissioning impasse or over any unwillingness to implement the Agreement. The Board calls upon elected politicians to work together in implementing the Agreement and further calls upon paramilitary groups to fulfil their moral obligations in decommissioning their weapons

GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS 25 February 1999

1. That the Board requests the Government of the Republic of Ireland to introduce an appropriate Charitable Covenant Tax Rebate scheme similar to that which obtains in the United Kingdom.

2. That the Board records its deep concern about the crisis which is being faced by the members of the farming community.

3. That congregational committees acquaint themselves about the needs of disabled people, of the assistance available under Disability Action's Access Scheme and of the obligations of congregations to take reasonable measures to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

4. That the General Board encourages elected members of the Northern Ireland Assembly to fulfil the legal and moral obligations inherent in the Good Friday Agreement and thereby to increase trust in the community and looks forward especially to responsibility being devolved to the elected representatives of the people of Northern Ireland and, in anticipation of that happening, prays for God's blessing upon them.

5. In view of the fact that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been serving the people of Gujarat for over 150 years, the General Board of the Presbyterian Church deplores the actions of extreme Hindu groups in the burning of Christian churches and the disruption of worship, the loss of life and the use of violence against those who are most vulnerable - the poor and social and religious workers - and calls on the Prime Minister and the Government of India to continue to take decisive action to maintain peace and end communal violence.

6. That the General Board of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland calls these serious situations in India and in Indonesia to the attention of the British and Irish Governments.

GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS 15 April 1999

1. The General Board, conscious of the opportunities to move towards a new future in which the different communities in Ireland can honour, respect and co-operate with each other, is deeply concerned about the current political impasse occasioned by mistrust associated with decommissioning and other issues in society.

2. The General Board prays for and encourages the British and Irish Governments and the elected politicians from different sections of this community, as well as the paramilitary groups with which some of them are associated, to value the importance of what has so far been achieved and to do all they can to resolve the current difficulties, as another step on the road towards reconciliation.

3. That the General Board is shocked at what has been happening in Kosovo and its potential for further conflict and calls upon congregations to respond to the Moderator's recent letter with generosity.

4. That the General Board calls on people to continue to pray for all involved in the Kosovan conflict and that a way forward may be found whereby the people of the Balkans may live securely and at peace with one another.

CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

1. By the time the Assembly meets the Church and Government Committee will have met on at least seven occasions during the year.

A PLACE WHERE WE CAN ALL FEEL AT HOME

2. The majority support given to the "Good Friday Agreement" by people in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland in concurrent referenda, along with the subsequent elections and meetings of the new Northern Ireland Assembly, give rise to optimism that we have entered a new era of peaceful political co-operation within and between the people of these islands. We are a damaged and suspicious political community which has been through very difficult times and it will take time to heal these wounds. It remains a priority that trust be built between the different parts of our community and between elected representatives of the people so that co-operation becomes a reality.

3. The ideologies of Ulster Unionism and Irish Nationalism failed to provide everyone with a sense of belonging, while militant Republicanism and militant Loyalism visited untold damage on thousands of people. The opportunity now exists for us to get beyond these exclusive and excluding ideologies to arrangements which will provide us all with a sense of being accepted and honoured. Both parts of this island ought to be places where people from different backgrounds feel at home; where we provide each other with a

sense of belonging; where no-one feels like a stranger and where responsibilities and opportunities are shared.

4. Too often we operate in unhelpful ways out of a sense of being a part of a minority and forget that in a different context we, with others, constitute a majority. Majorities in any locality or town or in the country as a whole need to look out for minorities; asking how they are and how they feel and then being attentive to the answers given.

FOLLOWING THE AGREEMENT

5. The referenda on the “Good Friday Agreement” took place before the 1998 General Assembly. These were followed by elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly and by the appointment of the First Minister (Designate), the Rt Hon David Trimble, MP, and by the Deputy First Minister (Designate), Mr Seamus Mallon MP.

6. A heavy work-load followed for them and the people elected to the Assembly as well as the British and Irish Governments as the details of the implementation of the Agreement were slowly negotiated and eventually agreed, covering the three strands of relationships within Northern Ireland, between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and those within these islands.

7. Meanwhile the following bodies have either been formed or are in the process of formation:

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland.

A Police Ombudsman

The Human Rights Commission

The Equality Commission

The Victims Commission

The Review of the Criminal Justice System

8. As these new arrangements for political co-operation were pursued it is important to note that the necessary compromises occasioned vigorous debate between and within parties and involved the exercise of political leadership. The delay in the negotiations meant that, at the time of the preparation of this report, the Executive has not yet been formed because of an impasse over the issue of the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons. Whatever the difficulties being experienced, much has nevertheless been achieved.

9. The General Board declared in October its belief that the potential for a peaceful and co-operative future should not be collapsed either over the decommissioning impasse or over any unwillingness to implement the Agreement. The Board called upon elected politicians to work together in implementing the Agreement and further called upon paramilitary groups to fulfil their moral obligations in decommissioning their weapons.

10. This is an issue for both jurisdictions in Ireland. Article 15.6.2 of the Irish Constitution states, “No military or armed force, other than a military or armed force raised and maintained by the Oireachtas, shall be raised or maintained for any purpose whatsoever”.

11. Since the cease-fires there has been a most welcome reduction in violence and an overall easing of tension, although some people are still being targeted by paramilitary groups and have had to leave their homes. Compared with what was recently so common, murder and bombing have almost ceased,

although there have been many instances of so called “punishment beatings” carried out by paramilitary groups which are supposed to be on cease-fire. These are explained as punishment for anti-social behaviour, but may also have elements of social control by paramilitary groups as well as being supported or condoned by people in local communities.

12. All of this has to be read against the sombre background of the bombs which exploded in Banbridge on Saturday 1st August and in the busy main street in Omagh on a festival weekend on Saturday 15th August. Twenty-nine people (plus two unborn children) were killed in Omagh and hundreds injured, many of them extremely seriously. They will have to live with their injuries for the rest of their lives. The Christian way in which the people of Omagh and the other affected communities responded to this atrocity won justified admiration from all over the world. Our thanks are due to the people of that town, from both catholic and protestant backgrounds, to the priests and ministers and the medical and social services who tirelessly cared for the injured and bereaved and took time to speak to the media and, in the midst of it all, organised funeral services and the quietly moving public open-air “Act of Prayerful Reflection” one week to the day and hour after the atrocity. Our thanks are due also to the sensitive and informed coverage given by local newspapers and radio and television which brought something of the horror of the event to those of us who looked on from outside and who will never really be able to appreciate the full extent of the loss and the suffering. As in other similar situations of loss the suffering will go on for years and people will continue to need loving and prayerful support.

THE CIVIC FORUM

13. Believing that there ought to be some church-related representation on the Civic Forum since the churches are a significant part of Civil Society, the Committee suggested that the First Minister and Deputy First Minister should consult widely and invite a representative number of people from the churches to serve on the Civic Forum, without asking denominations to make formal nominations. Any such arrangement should not prevent bilateral discussions being held between a particular denomination and Ministers. The proposals accepted by the Northern Ireland Assembly were that “the churches should be invited to form a consortium for the purpose of nominating 5 individuals representing a broad spread of religious belief within the community”. As with all other nominating bodies, the consortium will have to adhere to the following guidelines:

- a gender balance
- a community background balance
- a geographic spread across Northern Ireland; and
- a balanced age profile to include young people and older people.

PARADES AND PROTESTS

14. We do not under-estimate the problems involved in this issue. Interfaces are locations where each side is faced with the apparent unreasonableness of the other side, each side backed by a hinterland of support.

15. In such situations a number of options are available.

- (i) Agreement is reached.
- (ii) For the sake of peace one side voluntarily concedes the case to the other.
- (iii) The Parades Commission determines what will happen and the RUC, assisted if necessary by the army, ensures that people abide by the determination.

16. Knowing that it was likely that there would be difficulty over a number of disputes between those who protest and those who wish to parade, the General Assembly last June urged that “local agreement be reached and, where possible, local ministers or elders offer themselves as facilitators of this process, but where such an agreement about a particular parade cannot be reached, the Assembly remind everyone of their calling to obey lawfully constituted authority, to show a gentle attitude towards everyone (Titus 3) and urge those who parade and those who protest to abide by lawfully taken “determinations” of the Parades Commission”. It is important to note that this applied to both residents’ groups and to those who wished to parade.

17. The Church and Government Committee at its first meeting after the summer on the 7th September commended all those who sought and achieved local accommodation on the issues of parades and protests and additionally all who abided by the determinations of the Parades Commission, even when they did not agree with the determinations. There were a number of interfaces where this was difficult but necessary in order to avoid serious conflict.

18. On the same occasion the Committee issued a statement which deplored the events connected with and precipitated by the dispute between the Portadown District of the Orange Order and the Garvaghy Road Residents’ Coalition. Had all concerned heeded the clear call of the General Assembly that, if no local accommodation were reached, the determinations of the Parades Commission be obeyed, violence and widespread civil disorder would have been avoided. The Committee called upon the leadership of the Orange Order “to implement their own stated aims and principles of ‘liberty under the law’ and call off the protest at Drumcree and all other associated protests, and work towards a peaceful resolution of all situations of conflict”. At the time of writing this report, that protest has not yet been called off.

19. It is to be regretted that the clear advice of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, of its General Board and its Church and Government Committee have been so comprehensively ignored by an organisation which claims to be Christian and which enjoys the hospitality of many Presbyterian Churches. When people come out of a service of Christian worship and confront the security forces and precipitate the whole of Northern Ireland into a predictable crisis which has cost millions of pounds, seen the burning of churches and Orange halls and caused people to be driven from their homes, this commends neither Protestantism nor the Christian faith to the millions who watch all over the world and the millions throughout the United Kingdom who have to pay for the consequences of such activity.

20. We give thanks that individuals are free to go to worship anywhere and at any time in this country. However, parading to and from church is not a similar absolute civil and religious right since it impinges on the rights of other people. The rights of residents groups are not absolute either. It is because of

these unresolved issues that the Parades Commission exists. The officers of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland have told us that it is the policy of the Grand Lodge to have no contact with the Parades Commission. Considerable amounts of time have been spent in attempting to resolve the disputes, especially that associated with Drumcree and the Garvaghy Road, and these attempts have included representatives of the Portadown District and the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition. At the time of writing this report there have not been any direct meetings between them.

21. The Committee pays tribute to the Moderator who throughout this crisis, in numerous broadcasts and public statements, spoke relevantly and clearly and drew attention to the resolutions passed by the General Assembly.

22. The attention of the Assembly is drawn to the full statements issued by the Church and Government Committee and the General Board as these and other events in Northern Ireland unfolded throughout the year.

THE OTHER WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

23. A joint meeting with the Peace and Peacemaking Committee and a wider group of about forty people drawn from a number of congregations took place in Church House on 7th September with Dr Michael Woods TD and Mr Eamon O'Quiv TD, Government Ministers from the Republic of Ireland.

24. A follow-up meeting of similar size took place in Leinster House on 25th November. In the course of a very informative and useful day, opportunity was given for us to meet a number of Government ministers and representatives from different political parties and to receive a briefing on the effects of the Republic of Ireland's membership of the European Union.

25. As part of our continuing consultation process, representatives of the Committee have met members of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland; Mr David Ervine of the Progressive Unionist Party; the First Minister (Designate), Mr David Trimble and the Deputy First Minister (Designate), Mr Seamus Mallon; representatives of Sinn Fein; General de Chastelain and the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning; the Chief Constable, Sir Ronnie Flanagan as well as the senior officers of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. At these meetings representatives of the Committee listened carefully to what was being said to them and explained the Presbyterian Church's position and concerns about a number of relevant issues.

26. The Committee also met representatives of "Greater Shankill Alternatives" who are involved in Restorative Justice programmes. In addition some members of the Committee attended a seminar organised by the Mediation Network of Northern Ireland, addressed by Professor Howard Zeir of the Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, VA, USA. A brief introduction to the concept of Restorative Justice is appended to this report.

27. The Committee drew the attention of the General Board to the increasing concern about the persecution of Christians in different parts of the world. The situations in Pakistan and the Sudan have been known to us for some time. More recent difficulties have arisen in Nepal, in India and in Indonesia following the collapse of economies in the Pacific Rim. The Secretary to the

Overseas Board prepared a report for the General Board which, in turn, authorised various appropriate courses of action.

28. A statement received from the Dublin Council of Churches on the issue of racism and asylum seekers was referred to the Racism Committee.

SUBMISSIONS AND RESPONSES WERE MADE TO:

29. The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (The Patten Commission); (See 1995 and 1998 Reports to the General Assembly).

30. The United Kingdom Government with regard to the *Immigration and Asylum White Paper* (submission prepared by the Race Relations Committee).

31. The Department of Health and Social Services consultation on a new Code of Practice and Regulations consequent on the Government's intention to implement Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. (Mr Norman Chambers of the Board of Social Witness prepared the response.) Part III of the Act will place legal obligations on the providers of all goods and services to the public, whether or not for payment. Under the Act disabled people will have legally enforceable rights. This will have implications for churches with regard to the provision (for example) of ramps, loop systems for the hard of hearing, and reasonable access to toilets. The Act requires providers to make only reasonable adjustments to premises. The enforcement of the policy will rest on a test of what is reasonable. Since the Presbyterian Church will not apply to the National Lottery for financial assistance for any of its work, the Church is disadvantaged in accessing certain forms of financial assistance.

32. The Secretary of State regarding possible funding outside the Lottery for churches consequent on the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act. The Minister, Mr John McFall, replied and drew attention to providers being prepared to take 'reasonable measures'. He accepted that the Presbyterian Church may be placed at a disadvantage due to our principled objection to the National Lottery. He pointed out that some monies might be available through Disability Action's Access Scheme. Over the last 3 years about 25 Presbyterian congregations had received funding through this scheme.

33. The Government of Romania concerning the return of buildings to the Reformed Church of Romania, which were confiscated by the communist government.

34. The First Minister (Designate) and the Deputy First Minister (Designate) that the Northern Ireland Assembly should begin its meetings with prayer. The Assembly has agreed in its Standing Orders that after devolution the following arrangements will be followed "On taking the Chair each day and before the commencement of business the Speaker shall announce the commencement of a period of two minutes silent prayer or contemplation. The period shall be known as Prayers; it shall take place in private and shall be the first item on the Order Paper for the day".

35. The Israeli Prime Minister expressing the concerns of the General Assembly about a bill before the Knesset "Prohibition against Preaching to Change Religion". A reply was received from the Embassy of Israel in London that the coalition whip for the government had said that "this bill will be buried in committee like similar bills before it ... there is no way this will become law".

36. The Minister of Agriculture about the effects of the crisis in farming. A submission from the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane was transmitted and a reply was received setting out what the Government is doing. A report on this issue is appended.

37. The Government of the Republic of Ireland on the question of making Covenant Tax refunds available on the same terms as applies in Northern Ireland.

38. Mr Chris Smith, the Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, at the request of the Board of Communications, asking that the British Government look again at the legislation which prevents an organisation like United Christian Broadcasters from applying for a nation-wide radio licence.

39. The Committee prepared the resolutions which were submitted to the General Board, the final agreed texts of which are listed under the resolutions of the General Board. As is our normal custom, there will probably be a brief additional report and resolutions in the Daily Minutes as the situation may change between the time of the preparation of this report and the meeting of the General Assembly.

JOHN DUNLOP, GEORGE McCULLAGH, Conveners

APPENDIX A

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE 2 July, 1998

1. The first meeting of the new Northern Ireland Assembly on the 1st of July, 1998 was an historic event, and marks a further important step in the direction of mutual respect and constructive co-operation.

2. The Committee conveys its good wishes to the elected members of the Assembly and especially to Mr David Trimble and Mr Seamus Mallon who have been elected as the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

3. The Committee condemns without reservation the scandalous burning of the churches of our Roman Catholic neighbours last night and extends its sympathy to all the priests and members of the parishes whose churches have been attacked.

4. The Committee appreciates all efforts being made to reach a mutually acceptable accommodation in the issues associated with the church parade of the Portadown District of the Orange Order and earnestly hopes and prays that they will succeed.

5. The Committee commends all those who have exercised leadership and abided by recent Determinations of the Parades Commission, even when they have not agreed with such Determinations. Such co-operation has been of service to the whole community.

6. The Committee records its appreciation of the willingness of public-spirited people to be members of the Parades Commission and recognises the difficulty of reaching legally binding Determinations in situations where local agreement has not been reached.

7. The Committee recognises that in the circumstances it was necessary for a Determination to be made by the Parades Commission. The Committee

reminds people of their calling to obey the law and to show a gentle attitude to everyone (Titus 3). In the event of local accommodation of any parade not being achieved, including the immediate one in Portadown, the Committee urges those who either parade or protest to abide by the law.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE 7 September, 1998

THE BOMBING OF BANBRIDGE AND OMAGH

1. The Committee condemns the scandalous and evil activities of dissident republican paramilitary groups which resulted in the bombing of Banbridge and Omagh, the deaths of 29 people and injuries to hundreds of others, as well as the destruction of the property of the business community. The bombing of Omagh was an outrageous act which has visited death and destruction on scores of innocent people and their families. The Committee expresses its sympathy to the relatives of those killed and to those who are injured and prays that they may all experience the grace of God so that they may cope with the awesome losses they have sustained.

2. The Committee commends the stated determination of both Governments to suppress the activities of paramilitary groups which are intent on engaging in lawless activity and welcomes the passing of recent legislation designed to achieve that end. The legislation is far reaching in the power given to the police and the courts and must be exercised decisively but with care and with due regard to the rights of innocent people.

PARADES AND PROTESTS

3. The Committee commends all those who sought and achieved local accommodation on the issues of Parades and Protests and additionally all who abided by the determinations of the Parades Commission, even when they did not agree with the determinations.

4. The Committee deplores the events connected with and precipitated by the dispute between the Portadown District of the Orange Order and the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition. Had all concerned heeded the clear call of the General Assembly that, if no local accommodation be reached, the determinations of the Parades Commission be obeyed, violence and widespread civil disorder would have been avoided.

5. The Church and Government Committee commends the leadership shown by the Rev William Bingham and the chaplains of the Orange Order in their calls for the protest to be abandoned. The Committee calls upon the leadership of the Orange Order to implement their own stated aims and principles of 'liberty under the law' and call off the protest at Drumcree and all other associated protests, and work towards a peaceful resolution of all situations of conflict.

6. The disorder in Portadown over this weekend is inexcusable. Attacks on the security forces and the intimidation of their families by those who protest their loyalty is indefensible.

THE THRESHOLD OF CHANGE

7. We stand at present on the very threshold of the reconvening of the Assembly. The "Good Friday Agreement" provides a basis for this society to move towards one marked by inclusiveness and we call upon all to do their best to make this Agreement work. Obligations are laid upon all parties to fulfil the terms of the Agreement, including those elements which they do not like. Every party has an obligation to say and do those things which will create trust where there is understandable deep suspicion. The political landscape can be changed so that our energies can be deployed in invigorating pursuit of co-operation. The Committee commends the willingness of political parties to engage directly with one another.

8. The Committee welcomes all statements and acts that provide evidence that people are moving from terrorism to the pursuit of their political ideals within a violence-free society. The signals sent from Sinn Fein that violence is a thing of the past are significant and welcome. All paramilitary groups can authenticate those signals by fulfilling the Agreement's clauses about decommissioning.

9. We hold before ourselves the vision that, since God loves all the people of this island in our political, cultural and religious diversity, we ought to strive to create a society for the next century which will be decisively different from the exclusive debilitating divisiveness of the present one.

APPENDIX B

RURAL COMMUNITIES

1. As a country with a large rural population we value the countryside for its produce, its beauty and its people. Within PCI we realise that our rural congregations are a "... heartland and resource which we must cherish and nourish...". 1994 Reports p 305.

2. The present farming crisis has brought substantial hardship both economically and emotionally to many in the rural community. Indeed, the farming community is facing a crisis unprecedented since the war period. Many are finding it difficult to survive financially and in turn are impacting directly other areas of the local economy.

3. The agri-industry employs around 60,000 in Northern Ireland, providing 10% of the total workforce and in Republic of Ireland 135,000 or 13.4%. The industry is a major employer.

4. As recently as a few years ago farm prices were at an all time high, but now incomes have fallen, in some cases by as much as 60% in two years. This was brought about in Northern Ireland by the BSE ban and the strength of Sterling and throughout Ireland by more difficult trading conditions and over production in Europe. The poor weather conditions of last summer have inflicted unexpected feeding bills and will lead to increased repair bills. Added to this has been the downturn in the economies of South East Asia and Russia.

5. Farmers are faced with the twin problems of finding money to live and to repay debts. It is estimated that, as farm incomes have dropped and costs risen, debts in the industry have risen dramatically, to £500m in Northern Ireland

and IR£1.6b in the Republic of Ireland. Despite the fact that they receive some 48% of their income by way of subsidies many farmers earn well below the average earnings for manual workers in other sectors. Beef and sheep farmers are, for the first time since the war period, in a negative income situation.

6. Worries are that many, particularly the small farmer, may be forced out of business and as a result the face of rural communities will be changed irreparably through depopulation and lack of personnel to manage the environment.

7. It is suggested that the solution to the problem will not come about merely through increased government or EU subsidies. There is a reluctance from both national governments and the EU to increase payments, indeed the opposite is the case, and in time such payments will become a less significant part of farm incomes.

8. A Report of the EU Court of Auditors highlights the fact that those who need help most are not receiving it. About 90% of subsidies are received by $\frac{1}{3}$ of farmers who are already well off which means that the remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ receive 10%. It has been remarked that EU subsidies "have become a welfare system for the rich". The EU Court suggested that subsidies should primarily be paid to disadvantaged farmers and not to those who can survive without them. Consequently, some have called for a reform of the Common Agricultural Policy in favour of the small farmer.

9. It is recognised that Governments have been proactive and provided significant aid and have worked hard to secure improvements for all farmers. However, it remains imperative that in the short term adequate financial aid is made available to those in greatest need and that National Farming Organisations recognise that there is no secure long term future in simply asking for more money for everyone. [Although it is worth noting that the agri-industry is not alone in receiving considerable governmental support.]

10. The stranglehold that the large multiplies have, controlling the processors and farmers and enjoying large profits and thus preventing an equitable spread of profit, will need to be examined.

11. While realising that all farmers are competing on a competitive European market it still seems somewhat unfair that supermarkets can promote eg the sale of Dutch ham while the income of local pig farmers is at an all time low or that the mark up on beef can be very substantially greater than that paid to the farmer.

12. That there is need for radical thinking by those involved in the agri-business world, eg farmers, governments, the EU, is without doubt.

13. It may mean that farmers will have to diversify into other fields, or that some small farmers, who find it difficult to survive, may have to give way to the larger farmers or survive through 'off farm incomes.' The early retirement scheme already available in the Republic of Ireland and paid for by the EU could be of benefit if extended to Northern Ireland.

14. A century ago Sir Clive Caird an agricultural journalist noted that the 'industry must adjust to new circumstances'. In the light of present circumstances that must still surely apply. The farming community must become proactive in marketing their goods, in seeking fairer prices on the world market and in the allocation of existing subsidies. It should do more to counteract its

poor public image by promoting the role that farmers play in caring for the countryside while at the same time producing healthy food in an environmentally friendly manner.

15. Future subsidies, from wherever they come, will most probably never reach their previous highs and are likely to be linked to environmental management and conservation rather than exploitation of the land to produce food for which there is less demand. Such rural protection schemes are surely something the taxpayer will be happy to agree to.

16. Leslie Craig, of the Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association, has said, “there is a vital need to address the future of farming. New vision and new thinking into how the industry and government should strategically plan the viable future of farming is absolutely paramount”.

APPENDIX C

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

1. “The Lord has told us what is good. What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God” (Micah 6.8)

2. Restorative justice is an approach to dealing with socially harmful attitudes and actions which seeks to repair the relationships which have been damaged through criminal activity or anti-social behaviour. The relationships include those of the offenders, the victims and the wider community. Crime destroys relationships and corrodes the well-being of communities.

3. Under the present system of retributive justice, an offence occasions a dispute between the offender and the state. The victim is often overlooked and, while the offender may be arrested, charged and punished, relationships are neither addressed nor healed. The large percentage of prisoners who commit further crimes and return to prison indicates that, in most cases, retributive justice does not change attitudes.

4. Restorative justice is more of a philosophy than a programme. It seeks to move the emphasis away from a narrow focus on the punishment of the offender towards one where the offender:

- is held accountable for the crimes committed;
- comes to understand the consequences of crime in the life of the victim;
- acknowledges responsibility for the hurt caused;
- is given an opportunity to repair the damage;
- is offered a pathway to a more socially acceptable way of life;

5. The obligations which the offender is obliged to accept may be experienced as painful, but are not intended as pain, vengeance or revenge.

6. Victims have a primary role in the process, as their experience is central to understanding the effects of crime. Face-to-face encounters are appropriate in some instances while alternative forms of exchange are more appropriate in others.

7. The wider community has a responsibility to address the complex mixture of issues and support the victims and the integration of offenders into the community. Offenders are often people who need help, and healing and

integration into the community are emphasised in the process. The process draws from community resources and, in turn, contributes to the building and strengthening of the community. There is a danger that the process could be used to expand social control by unrepresentative community activists, and this should be resisted.

8. Restorative justice should be seen as complementary to the formal justice system and not as an alternative to it. There are hundreds of Restorative Justice programmes operating in the USA and Canada, in Britain, Japan and in some European countries.

9. Local churches can make a positive contribution to this endeavour, since churches are part of the community and their members are directly affected by the well-being or otherwise of the communities in which they live. As faith communities, brought into being by the grace of God, we have an opportunity to be involved in the restoration of individuals and of relationships.

10. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SIGNPOSTS

(Harry Mika and Howard Zeir, May 1997)

We are working towards restorative justice when we....

- A. focus on the harms of wrongdoing more than the rules that have been broken
- B. show equal concern and commitment to victims and offenders, involving both in the process of justice
- C. work towards the restoration of victims, empowering them and responding to their needs as they see them
- D. support offenders while encouraging them to understand, accept and carry out their obligations
- E. recognise that while obligations may be difficult for offenders, they should not be intended as harms and they should be achievable
- F. provide opportunities for dialogue, direct or indirect, between victims and offenders as appropriate
- G. involve and empower the affected community through the justice process, and increase its capacity to recognise and respond to community bases of crime
- H. encourage collaboration and reintegration rather than coercion and isolation
- I. give attention to the unintended consequences of our actions and programmes
- J. show respect to all parties, including victims, offenders and justice colleagues.

Crime wounds — justice heals

(See also “Changing Lenses” by Howard Zeir.)

DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

1. The Doctrine Committee was charged with the responsibility of reviewing the questions of divorce and remarriage in light of research into the biblical materials since the publication of the 1983 Report on this question to the General Assembly.

2. The Committee has met four times this year and, aware of the importance of this question, has discussed it thoroughly. We have reviewed the relevant literature and appended a bibliography to this report. Although there has been research relevant to this question, notably drawing on the Dead Sea Scrolls, nothing has come to light, to the best of our knowledge, which leads us to review the substantive conclusions of that report. Having said that, two things have impressed themselves on us. Firstly, we wish to underline the strength of conviction expressed in Scripture about the binding and sacred nature of marriage and the need to approach the question of divorce and remarriage in constant awareness of this. Nothing in the 1983 report should be taken to weaken this conviction. Secondly, the social situation in the supervening fifteen years has changed. The incidence of divorce is higher than ever and marriage more precarious than ever. For both these reasons, we propose that the Church attend to at least three areas.

3. First, there is an educational aspect which would include teaching on biblical aspects of marriage. This should form part of an informed and planned pulpit ministry, expounding relevant Scripture passages and applying this teaching to life. It should also be included in Bible class programmes. Consideration should be given to the provision of classes in preparation for marriage. Some Presbyteries and ministers are already engaged in this vital work. The use of books and other material, such as the "Getting Married" leaflet pack, offer ready assistance. Other personnel, such as the doctor, social worker, bank official etc, can offer invaluable help.

4. Secondly, we believe that the Church should be continually working to provide an environment where people will find encouragement to seek help with their marital difficulties. We see this as the pastoral function of the Church, but we refer the matter of how this should be discharged in detail to the Marriage and Family Committee. We acknowledge that the pressures of time and lack of access to all the relevant information mean that church leaders cannot always shoulder all these burdens.

5. The third area to be considered is the difficult matter of maintaining Christian standards in the Church in the midst of an increasingly hostile world. Overlapping to a degree with pastoral responsibilities is the question of discipline. The Church cannot allow the world to determine its standards and practices, and yet the motivation must always be love and the hope of restoration. We must always strive to uphold the highest ideals of Christian marriage in the Church and in the community.

J C McCULLOUGH, Convener

APPENDIX

Appended is a short bibliography of works on divorce written after 1980. The list is not exhaustive nor is it a 'recommended' reading list where the Committee endorses the views expressed in all the articles and books. Rather it is an illustration of the kind of work that has been done on the topic in the last twenty years.

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FORCES COMMITTEE

1. The aims and objectives of the Forces' Committee may be summed up as follows:

- (i) to provide a point of contact for members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland serving with the Armed Forces and
- (ii) keeping the work of our chaplains in the mind of our Church.

In every meaningful sense of the word our chaplains are called to be missionaries in an environment that is profoundly secular in its orientation

2. Our Church has four full-time commissioned chaplains serving with the Regular Forces. At a time of considerable change within the Armed Forces it is satisfying to note that there is a continuing necessity for chaplains to meet the spiritual needs of the men and women who serve in the Forces. There are currently vacancies for chaplains to the Army while the Royal Navy has recently indicated that there are vacancies for one and possibly two new chaplains within its ranks.

3. A number of our ministers serve as chaplains to the Territorial Army and the Army Cadet Force or as Officiating Chaplains to the various garrisons around Northern Ireland. They provide a valuable part-time service and frequently come into contact with men and women who have little regular contact with the Christian Church. We record our appreciation for the work which they carry out willingly in spite of often busy schedules within their congregations. This has been a difficult year nationwide for the Territorial Army. The restructuring of the Territorial Army has resulted in the cutting of a number of chaplaincy positions. We have been fortunate in Northern Ireland that this disruption has been kept to a minimum and all ministers of our Church currently serving as chaplains with TA units have maintained their positions as valued members of their units. With the continuing demands on the Regular Army we have seen increasing use of members of the Territorial Army, including chaplains, serving with Regular units in places such as Bosnia for periods of up to six months.

4. The Rev Terry Maze continues to serve at Northwood HQ as Staff Chaplain to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet. This present ministry gives him an input into the moral and spiritual aspects of operational service. He also has oversight ensuring that the Fleet gets the best possible service from its Naval Chaplains.

5. The Rev Dr Victor Dobbin, MBE, QHC, continues to serve as Chaplain General to the Army. This is a demanding and high profile ministry involving him in a good deal of administrative work and travel.

6. The Rev Norman McDowell at the time of writing this report is in the process of moving from Edinburgh to Wales where he will take up an appointment in Brawdy as chaplain to a Royal Signals unit. He continues to enjoy his ministry and the challenges of working in an environment where young soldiers can hear the gospel in many cases for the first time.

7. The Rev David Edgar continues to serve as CSFC (Church of Scotland and Free Churches) Chaplain at RAF Halton. Because of its nature as a training establishment much of his time is spent in teaching as well as doing the work of a minister. In common with ministers in congregations he shares the joys and frustrations of the work but finds it rewarding to commend the claims of Christ to the men and women who come and go from his Station, especially as many come from backgrounds where they have not previously known the gospel.

8. The Forces Committee seeks to encourage all our chaplains in their work and it also commends those organisations which frequently supplement their work and provide additional support during hard and difficult times. The work of the Sandes Homes, the Officers' Christian Union, the Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association, the Naval, Military and Air Force Bible Society all deserve our prayerful and practical support.

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

S W VAN OS, Convener

CHAPLAINS COMMITTEE

1. The Chaplains' Committee has met on four occasions since last Assembly and continues to co-ordinate, develop, and support the work of our Hospital and Prison Chaplains.

2. Within the Health Service a number of our Chaplains have retired during the last year, some after many years of devoted Hospital Chaplaincy work. We sincerely thank all of them for jobs well done, their wise counsel, and caring influence. We warmly welcome those who have been appointed to fill the vacancies.

3. The guidelines on the mechanism to be followed by Presbyteries when recommending candidates for chaplaincy vacancies which were introduced during the last year have been of benefit to all, and have introduced the consistency of approach which the Committee sought to achieve. Appointments to vacancies are now made by Trusts following nomination by the Committee.

4. The delivery of health care has changed significantly during the last few years, although the Chaplaincy Service in hospitals remains generally unaltered. However, administrators now seem to take a more active interest in the role. We acknowledge the devoted and resolute ministry of part-time Hospital Chaplains and those Deaconesses who work alongside them. Despite the difficulties and frustrations of working within an administrative system which continues to evolve, they provide an essential service to members of our Church, visitors and hospital staff.

The establishment of Trusts and the consequent policy and administrative changes arising from this re-organisation has led to a re-examination of the role

of Chaplains, and full time appointments will soon be introduced in some hospitals.

5. Our full and part-time Chaplains working in the Prison system continue to provide a vital service to those living and working in HMP's Maghaberry, Maze, Magilligan and Hydebank YOC.

The early release of prisoners from Maze will lead to major change in personnel levels if the political process begun on Good Friday last is to continue - a reduction in the prison population must lead to a reduction in chaplaincy requirements. The Committee continues to monitor the changes through regular contact with NIO and will seek to secure the future employment of our Chaplains. We warmly commend and support them as they grapple with the complexities of prison life and new government policies.

6. Steps have been taken which the Committee believes will enhance relationships with the Northern Ireland Hospital Chaplains Association.

7. The Chaplains' Committee is most grateful to those staff involved at Prisons, Hospitals, DHHS, and NIO, who willingly facilitate the work of our Chaplains.

8. The constant prayers of the Church are vital as our men and women seek, through faith, to counsel staff, patients, prisoners and families in a role which can be rewarding, but at times discouraging.

JOHN SCOTT, Convener

MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Moderator's Advisory Committee met three times during the year.

2. In response to requests assessors were appointed under Par 63 of the Code to assist three Presbyteries in dealing with problems arising.

3. Advice was given to the Moderator as necessary.

4. Further consideration was given to the subject of the Moderator's Presbytery tours. In consultation with the Moderator-Designate it was decided that there should be three Presbytery tours per year plus one tour of another kind, eg to Home Mission Charges.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

PEACE AND PEACEMAKING COMMITTEE

1. The Peace and Peacemaking Committee gives thanks to God that, despite the unspeakable tragedy of Omagh, the paramilitary ceasefires have largely held during the last year and there has been significant political progress in Ireland. While there are still immensely difficult problems to be faced, there are also grounds for optimism that our Church will be witnessing in a very different political environment from the one experienced over the last thirty years. This naturally will create its own challenge, not least in facing the reality that the Church's voice may not be so easily heard. However, the Committee

believes that this makes the task of building new and restored relationships all the more imperative. In the Peace Vocation, the General Assembly have agreed that “we must be initiators of programmes of action which will contribute to peace in our community”.

2. To assist congregations in fulfilling this vocation, the Committee continues to try to provide inspiration and assistance to agents and peacemaking committees working at the local level. The purpose of the Newsletter, which it is hoped to produce twice a year, is to share ideas and information on resources. In the last edition, reports were given on a “Peace Blanket” project involving six church groups in Whitehead; a visit to Aras an Uachtairin by a joint group from St Malachy’s Roman Catholic and May Street Presbyterian Churches and a joint initiative of the Ballyholme Churches to visit community projects in North and West Belfast. These are only a few examples of creative work which is being undertaken by many congregations, either on their own or with others. The Committee is very much aware of the reality that our congregations are bearing witness in very different situations and what is appropriate and possible in one, may not be in another. Nevertheless, it encourages all congregations to take some step forward in the search for better community relationships. The work of others in this field, particularly ECONI and the “Faith and Politics” Group, is also gratefully acknowledged.

3. In the last report, reference was made to a conference on “Facing Change”. This was considered to be very helpful by the encouraging number who attended. At the time of writing another conference is about to be held, this time on “Restoring Relationships”. The keynote speaker is to be Rev Ron Kraybill, a Mennonite from the USA. The Committee believes that this theme will allow important discussion not only on restoring relationships between people politically divided, but looking at the relationship between prisoners and the community into which they are released; building supportive relationships for victims; and exploring possibilities for the Churches to engage creatively with communities from which they have become increasingly isolated.

4. The Committee responded to the recommendations of the Northern Ireland Victims’ Commissioner, Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, KCB, in his report, “We will remember them”. The report is a timely reminder of how easily victims of violence can be forgotten, and Sir Kenneth writes with power and compassion. The response of the Committee is attached as Appendix (A).

5. One of our Peace Agents in Dublin was instrumental in setting up two meetings between Government Ministers in the Republic and groups of Presbyterians, including members of the Church and Government and Peace and Peacemaking Committees. These meetings were considered mutually beneficial and the Committee is looking at ways in which contacts can be developed to improve understanding. It is clear that the Dublin politicians would value greater insight into Presbyterian thinking.

6. The Committee continues to monitor and respond to developments in setting up the Civic Forum. It is now agreed that the Churches will be invited to form a “consortium” in order to nominate five people, “representing a broad spread of religious belief within the community”. There is on-going discussion within the Churches as to how such a consortium should be brought together,

7. While much of the Committee's work inevitably involves the encouragement of peace-building in Ireland, it is recognised that the remit given by the General Assembly is much broader. Sadly, situations of fractured relationships and violence continue to multiply throughout the world and each one creates new victims. The Committee does not feel that it is possible to comment in detail on every situation, but the Church must be concerned for the deep hurt and suffering which is being caused to so many innocent people.

8. The Committee is both pleased and relieved to note that the Ottawa Convention on Landmines was implemented on 1st March, 1999. While this is a very significant step forward, and the bells of Church House and on other church buildings were rung in celebration, it is a matter of continuing concern that some major powers are still refusing to sign the treaty. As detailed in the report of 1996 there can be no justification for continuing to manufacture and supply devices which cause such horrific injuries to innocent people, sometimes years after the conflict has been resolved.

9. For some time a group, under the leadership of the Rev Dr Malcolm Scott, has been working to provide a report on the Arms Trade. This challenging report is included as Appendix B. It concentrates on the United Kingdom situation because, historically at least, the Republic of Ireland would not be considered a major player on the Arms scene.

10. The Committee would once again offer thanks to all those at Congregational and Presbytery level who have accepted responsibility for peace-building in their own situations, and so "reassert the Church's own proper calling to seek peace and the things that make for peace in our day" (Peace Vocation).

APPENDIX A

RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER

1. The Peace and Peacemaking Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been asked to submit a response to the report of Sir Kenneth Bloomfield on behalf of the Church. We warmly welcome this report, which is a timely reminder to all of us of how easily victims of the violence can be put to the backs of our minds. The report is written with power and compassion. We are indebted to Sir Kenneth for this work. As a Church, we recognise that we have a role to play in ensuring that the victims do not feel forgotten.

2. We recognise that one of the difficulties is deciding who should be included in any definition of victims. In one sense the whole community has suffered, but the concern is obviously for those who have suffered personally and intensely through bereavement or injury. We should not at the same time ignore those who have suffered psychologically through the destruction of businesses etc. Sir Kenneth rightly raises the question of those who have suffered while engaged in unlawful activity. Many prisoners would describe themselves as victims of the troubles. While we understand the claims which are made, and the problems of definition, we assume that the Victims' Liaison Unit

has been set up primarily to focus on those who have innocently been caught up in the violence.

3. It is right for the report to focus on the immediate need for practical help, and the necessity for that to continue long-term. We understand the feeling of many victims that they have been the forgotten people, and welcome the appointment of a minister specifically to champion their needs, as well as the establishment of the Victims' Liaison Unit. Careful thought needs to be given as to how funds are most effectively channelled to those who need them most. Sensitivity needs to be exercised, so that it does not appear as though released prisoners are being treated more advantageously than victims. All those who are dealing administratively with victims need to do so with compassion. While we welcome the additional funds announced recently for victims, and trust that more will be made available, there is concern to ensure that the money reaches the victims individually rather than being used to support organisations, however laudable the work of the organisations may be. The Church would also recognise its responsibility towards the pastoral care of victims.

4. While we believe that, at this stage, the emphasis should be on continuing practical support for victims; the ideas of a Memorial Day and a permanent Memorial Site are interesting. However, we suggest that it is too soon to think of these in any specific terms. When they are discussed they would need to be inclusive and recognise the trauma of the whole community. We do not think that it would be appropriate to try to provide a comprehensive list of names, but there may be ways in which victims are given the opportunity to record their stories. The "An Crann" project may be a nucleus for such recording.

5. The discussion of some kind of "Truth" Commission is also probably too early, as the Commissioner recognises. We do not see one on the South African model, especially as the idea of amnesty would be very difficult. However, it is important that truth is discussed and admitted. It may be that this will gradually be accomplished by a series of initiatives in which all concerned are challenged to face their responsibilities. An example of this could be the present "Bloody Sunday" inquiry. It may be appropriate on other similar occasions for the Government to release factual information, but the paramilitary organisations also have facts which they must tell, eg, about the disappeared. Perhaps we all have to face up to failures in the past, and some kind of training needs to be given in how to deal with it.

6. We wish the Victims' Liaison Unit well in its important role in the present political climate.

APPENDIX B

THE ARMS TRADE

Communities Awash With Weapons

1. One of the most appalling sights in the late 20th century has been the way in which large numbers of children in Angola, Somalia, Rwanda and elsewhere are to be seen carrying guns and are all too ready to use them. They are a very terrible example of the breakdown of societies, particularly in Africa,

but elsewhere too, which are awash with weapons. (These are weapons supplied not just by a few rogue states, or by individual firms, but, in the case of Rwanda, mainly by France and South Africa; and of Somalia by, first Russia and then the United States). Besides the terrible instability, the waste and the appalling loss of life that such arms lead to, there is the fact that had even a portion of the money spent on such weaponry been used for health, education, or agriculture, very great improvements could have been secured in the living conditions of the people of these regions. The Church of Scotland, in its 1991 Church and Nation report, makes a further connection pointing out that the trade with third world countries (two-thirds of Britain's trade is with such countries) hinders positive change in them.

2. "The arms trade represents a burden on the small economies of developing countries and prevents spending on important areas such as health and education, and as a result as strong military force is needed to repress the discontent of ordinary people. ... The arms industry and the arms trade are not simply a diversion of resources away from much needed positive development but tools being used in many countries to prevent such change taking place at all." (Quoted C of S Church and Nation Report 1995 p 172).

3. Such views are not just those of a church or of individuals whose concern for such matters could sell short its country's need for security. In the 1998 Reith Lectures, "War and our World", the very distinguished military historian, John Keegan, asks, "Can There Be an End to War?" In discussing that possibility he makes several points, among them the need for a strong United Nations with the "will to confront unlawful force with lawful force" (73), the need for "progress in aid and development programmes", given that "poor states which have a fragile cultural identity are far more likely to engage in war-mongering or to experience inter-ethnic conflict as a by-product of insecurity" (73).

Need for Disarmament

4. Two pages earlier Keegan writes Disarmament "is a necessary step in [ridding the world of war] (70), demonstrated by the low level of murder in states prohibiting the private possession of firearms. In those regions where significant measures of arms control, disarmament and reduction in the size of armed forces have been achieved, the infrequency, indeed total absence of armed conflict is also noticeable. Such regions are now extensive and extending ... Those dedicated to the disarmament movement, at national, international and supranational levels, may take credit for that." (70)

Assault Rifle a Particular Cause of Instability

5. In other areas Keegan sees the mass-produced assault rifle as a particular cause of instability.

6. "The mass-produced assault rifle, costing one-millionth of the jet-fighter's price is ... an almost universal scourge. Many of the fifty million dead of the wars of this century's second half have been killed by the cheap assault rifle. Its high rate of fire makes it deadly in the hands of an individual, while its lightness and simplicity allows even untrained children - who figure

increasingly in the ranks of unofficial armies - to kill with a profligacy the veteran of the past could not achieve.” (69) He continues “I believe we ought now to consider, as a matter of urgency, whether the next initiative in the international disarmament endeavour should not be that of restricting their distribution and eventually their production.” “Most cheap weapons” he further points out “have been released into the market by governments, often for political rather than commercial reasons.” (69)

Genocide and Disregard of Human Rights

7. Arms sales, frequently to military dictatorships, have also become a scourge for those whose human rights have been violated eg the Kurds and the Marsh Arabs of Iraq, or the inhabitants of East Timor, where, it is said, the inhabitants have suffered a genocide as great proportionally as that which took place in Cambodia.

8. These and other considerations provide strong reasons for looking more closely at the arms trade, for questioning the wisdom of methods employed by governments in furthering it, and for considering involvement in it by the Church.

After the Cold War

9. The end of the Cold War will serve as a starting point for a consideration of the arms trade, primarily as it applies to Europe, and particularly to Britain. Ian Davis writes, “The end of the Cold War, the implosion of the former Soviet Union, the unification of Germany within a changing NATO, and the (re)creation of sovereign states in Central and Eastern Europe have allowed the opportunity for security to be obtained by most states in the international system at lower levels of armaments.” (Davis 195f) This, however, has not happened as it might have done, for while “Spending by the former Warsaw Pact countries ... declined from \$441.4 billion in 1987 to \$133.1 billion in 1993 ... NATO’s rather modest decline [was] from \$552.6 billion to \$480.2 billion over the same period. (Indeed NATO has increased its share of world military expenditure from 44 per cent in 1987 to 56 per cent in 1993 (Davis 198)). Davis later writes “The failure of NATO to respond in kind to the changes in the East (either with equivalent defence cuts of their own or with economic aid for the reform process in Russia) has encouraged a steady retreat by Russian military leaders away from the Gorbchev-era principles of military sufficiency, and linking disarmament and common security to defence conversion.” (199) An opportunity of lessening tension and increasing stability, Davis considers, is in grave danger of being squandered.

Motivations, Economic and Other

10. The desire to retain world dominance may be seen as the chief factor driving the arms industry in the USA where in the Federal Budget for 1996 “it is estimated that an incredible 51 per cent of all the money raised through income tax goes on some form of military expenditure.” (Meaden p 8) Secondary suppliers, like Britain, (currently second to the USA in terms of overall arms sales), France, Italy and Germany are thought to be primarily

concerned with economic motives. Additional motives are that arms exports have been considered to help the state sustain a national defence industry, and the desire to exercise a foreign policy dimension in states to which arms are sold. To take the specifically economic aspect first, "Throughout the 1980's ... the free market revolution was sweeping away government subsidies and intervention, as inefficient ways of competing in export markets. Quite against this tide ..., the arms trade continued to receive more, not less, Government backing." (Davis) This government backing was not only for such things as research and development, but also for providing marketing services and export credits. However a number of states have been unable, or in some cases unwilling, to pay for the weapons they have received and supplier governments have been left with large unpaid debts. France, eg has been left with debts of around \$600 billion for arms supplied to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. Britain is owed \$1 billion by the same country. As for influence, some of the weaponry purchased by the \$1 billion was promptly used against Britain itself!

Economy

11. Even apart from such huge losses, how far such subsidising of the arms trade is in the interest of the material good of Britain as a whole is very questionable. Arms exports, represent less than 3% of UK exports, and the level of employment has fallen by 44% between 1987 and 1995. The arms industry is capital intensive rather than labour intensive. CAAT (The Campaign Against the Arms Trade) in 1997 asserted that each job receives the equivalent of a subsidy of £12,500 per person. The DESO (Defence Export Sales Organisation) employs 700 people and costs £21 million per year to run ... The Department of Trade and Industry employs 1000 people to promote the other 98% of Britain's exports. (p 10 A Farewell to the Arms Trade). Britain, clearly, has a large investment in the industry and it is not being suggested that the industry be simply closed down. What is needed is a change in policy whereby the finance put into the trade should as far as possible be channelled into more socially useful sectors of the economy.

12. Part of the problem, of course, arises from the intense competition with other producer countries, like France, Italy, Germany or the USA. While Britain and other nations have been broadly bound by the limited area of international agreement - and the lead given by Britain in signing up to the anti-personnel landmine ban is to be commended - Britain, for much of the time, seems to have had no consistent policy on arms exports, other than to make money. More recently the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, has sought to promote a more ethical foreign policy, one more sensitive to human rights issues. This has clearly not proved to be easy, given the complexity of the interaction between different government departments, the number of loopholes that continue to be found, and the false promises made by some purchasers as to the use to be made of arms or vehicles supplied. (eg Indonesia).

Human Rights Abuses

13. Many believe respect for human rights forms both part of any meaningful peace and is a necessary path to achieving it. Along with, or nearly

prior to, respect for life is the right not to suffer torture. These are rights which have been appallingly violated in all too many of the military dictatorships, dictatorships which have frequently been the arms buyers. Sadly this would appear to have weighed very lightly with those governments who sell arms, the British government included. The appalling record of Saddam Hussein, the grisly consequences of the gassing of Kurds and Iranians, did little to slow exports there, official guidelines to the contrary. The invasion of East Timor in 1975 by Indonesia, the United Nations ruling against the invasion, and the appalling massacres, has, up to now, not prevented large arms deals by Britain. Most recently, on a lesser, but still serious scale, the mercenary group Sandline's delivery of arms to shamolic Sierra Leone, was known to the Foreign Office, but was, yet again, in contravention of a UK embargo. These and other such deals must be matters of the greatest concern to any church or any group with any concern at all for even the most rudimentary human rights.

Conclusion

14. If righteousness is still thought to "exalt a nation" the preceding paragraphs must raise many questions for the churches themselves in any participation they may have in the arms trade, concern too regarding the kind of questions they should raise with government. In his article Davis writes, "the process of European integration offers the possibility for creating an environment more conducive to control of the arms trade. But for this to happen, new thinking will need to be demonstrated, particularly with regard to our understanding of security." (188) Agreements between European states could help to do away with the free trade, over-production and callous competitiveness in sales which has had so destructive an effect in Africa and elsewhere. In the case of the British government there is a need not only for guidelines, and not only for the greater openness the Foreign Secretary has spoken of, but for a truly effective monitoring system to see that such guidelines are adhered to. The same would apply to European and United Nations guidelines. Davis writes of the need to enhance the scope and coverage of the UN Register of Conventional Arms. He continues, "At a more fundamental level, however, part of the answer lies in recognising the fundamental changes that have taken place in the security environment and transferring resources to building a new security order based on co-operation and conflict prevention." Hopefully the Church will play its part in developing the kind of order that both Davis and Keegan, in their somewhat different ways, point to.

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RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Visitations

2. That the General Assembly approve the piloting of the new Consultation process.

Church and Government Committee

3. That the General Assembly encourage people to go beyond excluding and exclusive concepts of belonging and ask all majorities to be attentive to the concerns of minorities.

4. That the General Assembly, mindful of the suffering occasioned by violence, offer their continuing prayerful support to the relatives of those who have been killed and to those who are injured and pray that they may all experience the grace of God so that they may cope with the awesome losses they have sustained.

5. That, in the matter of contentious disputes between residents' groups and those who wish to parade, the General Assembly call upon all concerned to treat one another with generosity, understanding and respect and further encourage them to discuss their disagreements with one another; to co-operate fully with the Parades Commission and, in the event of no agreement being reached, to abide by the lawfully taken determinations of the Parades Commission.

6. The General Assembly assure members of the farming community that they are aware of some of the difficulties and challenges which it currently faces and of those changes which will inevitably come as European policy changes.

7. The General Assembly welcome the thrust of the concept of Restorative Justice in its emphases on the concerns of victims, the encouragement given to offenders to understand the consequences of their actions and the need to heal relationships which have been damaged through crime and anti-social behaviour.

8. That a grant of £4,520 be paid to the Church and Government Committee from the Incidental Fund.

Forces Committee

8. That the greetings of the General Assembly be sent to our chaplains serving with the Regular Forces.

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

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

11. That the General Assembly recommend the customary observance of Battle of Britain Sunday and Remembrance Sunday in our congregations and

that the appropriate offerings taken up on those days be given to the Royal Air Force “Wings Appeal” and the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

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

Chaplains

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

College Training and Review Committee

14. That the General Assembly authorise the setting up of a co-ordinating Committee for one year to facilitate planning and consultation between the agencies which it is planned to bring together under a new Board of Studies and Christian Training comprised of the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, Rev Principal J C McCullough (Convener), the Faculty of Union College, the Director of Christian Training, the Director of Ministerial Students with the Conveners of the Union College Management Committee, the Magee Fund Committee, the Christian Training Committee and the Board of Studies.

Boards and Committees

15. That with effect from June 2000 the Assignment Committee be transferred to the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

16. That each Presbytery nominate to the next General Assembly three persons, including at least one woman, to each of the following Boards:-

Board of Mission in Ireland

Overseas Board

Board of Social Witness.

17. That with effect from June 2000 seven members of the PWA Executive Committee, chosen from representatives nominated by their Presbyterial Committees to the Executive Committee, serve on each of the following Boards:

Board of Mission in Ireland

Overseas Board

Board of Social Witness,

such Presbyterial representatives to be eligible for inclusion on the “y” line of working committees.

18. That as a transitional provision for the year 2000-2001 working committees transferred to another Board may retain on their “y” line two persons not nominated to the new Board by Presbyteries.

19. That any Board wishing to increase or decrease its number of Presbytery representatives, or the number of official Assembly working committees, or to make other changes to its constitution, submit its proposals to

the Panel on Boards and Committees by 31st December, 1999 for report to the following Assembly.

Doctrine Committee

20. That the pastoral issues arising from the Report of the Doctrine Committee be referred to the Committee on Marriage and the Family.

Peace and Peacemaking Committee

21. That the General Assembly encourage the work of Peace Agents in Congregations and Presbyteries.

22. That the General Assembly welcome the proposal that the Churches be invited to form a consortium to nominate five people to a Civic Forum and ask the General Board to make appropriate arrangements.

23. That the General Assembly commend the British Foreign Secretary's stated intention to develop an ethical foreign policy, sensitive to basic human rights and call on him to close those loopholes which frequently undermine such intentions.

24. That the General Assembly ask the Trustees to consider the Church's investments in the light of the Arms Trade report.

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

26. That the resignation of Rev Dr Donald Watts as Convener of its Committee on Peace and Peacemaking be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev D R Baker be appointed in his place.

Church House Staff

27. That the proposals of the ad hoc Committee on the Clerkship, the Deputy Clerkship and the Secretaryship of the Overseas Board be approved.

General

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

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 114(1)(c) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 114(1)(c) of the Code the words "Home Board" be deleted and that the words "Board of Mission in Ireland" be substituted in their place.

Anent Pars 227, 229(1), (1)(b), 230(1) and (2), and (3)(b), 230(5)(a), 231(1), 232(1) and (2) and (3)(c), 234(1) and (4), 268(4)(b), 274(8)(b)(i), 274(9), 301(1) and (3), 303(3) and (4)(c), 304(3), 305(1), (2), (4), (5) (twice), (6), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), 307(1), (2) and (3) of the Code.

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 227, 229(1), (1)(b), 230(1) and (2), and (3)(b), 230(5)(a), 231(1), 232(1) and (2) and

(3)(c), 234(1) and (4), 268(4)(b), 274(8)(b)(i), 274(9), 301(1) and (3), 303(3) and (4)(c), 304(3), 305(1), (2), (4), (5) (twice), (6), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), 307(1), (2) and (3) of the Code the words “Home Board” be deleted and that the words “Board of Mission in Ireland” be substituted in their place.

Anent Pars 214(1), (3), (4), (5), (7), 215(1), (2)(c), (3), (5), (6)(a)(b), 216, 216(7), 217(1)(a)(i), 217(1)(a)(ii) (twice), 217(1)(a)(iii), 217(1)(a)(iv), 217(2)(i), 217(2)(ii)(I), 217(4), 217(6)(a), 217(7)(a), 217(c)(ii), 217(8)(d)(i) (twice), 218(1)(b), 309(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 214(1), (3), (4), (5), (7), 215(1), (2)(c), (3), (5), (6)(a)(b), 216, 216(7), 217(1)(a)(i), 217(1)(a)(ii) (twice), 217(1)(a)(iii), 217(1)(a)(iv), 217(2)(i), 217(2)(ii)(I), 217(4), 217(6)(a), 217(7)(a), 217(c)(ii), 217(8)(d)(i) (twice), 218(1)(b), 309(1) of the Code the words “Board of Studies” be deleted and that the words “Board of Studies and Christian Training” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 285 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 285 of the Code the words “Studies for the Ministry Board” be deleted and that the words “Board of Studies and Christian Training” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 268(4)(c) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 268(4)(c) of the Code the words “Board of Studies for the Ministry” be deleted and that the words “Board of Studies and Christian Training” be substituted in their place.

Anent Pars 279 and 281 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 279 and 281 of the Code the words “one minister, one elder and one woman (after consultation with the Presbyterian Women’s Association) nominated by each Presbytery” be deleted and that the words “three persons, including at least one woman, nominated by each Presbytery, and seven representative members of the PWA Executive Committee,” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 280 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 280 of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:

280. Board of Mission in Ireland

(1) This Board shall consist of the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the President, one Vice-President and Secretary of the Presbyterian Women’s Association, the Irish Mission Superintendent, the Conveners of the Education, Studies and Christian Training, Youth and Inter-Church Relations Boards and the Union Commission and the Central Ministry Fund Committee, the Presbyterian Mutual Society Agent, two Young Women’s Group representatives, two Youth Board representatives, two deaconess

representatives, three persons, including at least one woman, nominated by each Presbytery, together with seven representative members of the PWA Executive Committee, the Convener and Secretaries of the Board, and the Conveners and members of working committees under the supervision of the Board.

(2) The Board shall, directly or indirectly—

- (a) supervise the work of the Home Mission, PWA Home Department and Church Extension,
- (b) call ministers under the Home Mission Development Scheme, elders, deaconesses or lay agents to recognised Church work and allocate to them their sphere of labour, and
- (c) in association with the Presbytery under whose jurisdiction they are, exercise a general supervision over their life and work in accordance with Mission rules.

(3) The Board shall, directly or indirectly,

- (a) take means to secure such financial support from the Church as a whole, as may be requisite from time to time, for the work of Church Extension and other Home Missions entrusted to it by the Assembly,
- (b) have prepared estimates for the various Home Missions for the appropriate financial year and authorise their submission to the United Appeal Board and/or Finance Committee of the PWA,
- (c) authorise expenditure of the funds received from congregations and the Presbyterians Women's Association and other monies accruing,
- (d) make grants to congregations or other Churches and Societies for the encouragement of Church work and missionary purposes in Ireland, and
- (e) maintain, from funds received, deaconesses and lay agents, defray their expenses and pay their retiring allowances and assist in paying salaries and expenses of ministers in Church Extension and Home Mission charges.

(4) The Board shall -

- (a) seek to provide for the work of evangelism, including evangelistic missions and literature sponsored by the Church, and with power to make grants to other Churches or Societies for similar work;
- (b) supervise the work of the Irish Mission in promoting the circulation of the Scriptures, and in evangelism, Christian training and education, including the employment of agents, or other workers;
- (c) report annually on the state of religion in the Church;
- (d) provide for the Church's ministry in Divine Healing.

(5) The Board may call ministers appointed to positions in evangelistic work to be ministers in recognised service to the Church in such full-time appointments, provided that those who become members of Church courts in virtue of such call and appointment report on their work to the Board as may be required, not less than annually.

(6) The Board shall provide information, arrange conferences and deputations, and seek generally to promote the work entrusted to it by the Assembly.

Anent Par 281(2) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 281(2) of the Code a new sub-paragraph (h) be added as follows:

- (h) seek to uphold the Christian standards of Marriage and the Family, and provide advice in cases of difficulty involving marriage and divorce, and that the Business Board be empowered to nominate an additional four women to the membership of any working committee dealing with these matters.

Anent Par 285(2) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 285(2) of the Code a new sub-paragraph (f) be added as follows:

- (f) develop the training of church members for more effective work and witness.

Anent Par 308(5), (6)(c), (8) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 308(5), (6)(c), (8) of the Code the words “Home and Overseas Boards” be deleted and that the words “Board of Mission in Ireland and the Overseas Board” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 308(6) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 308(6) of the Code the words “Home or Overseas Board” be deleted and that the words “Board of Mission in Ireland or the Overseas Board” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 305(8) and (10) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 305 (8) and (10) of the Code the words “PWA/Home Board” be deleted and that the words “PWA/Board of Mission in Ireland” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 282 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 282 of the Code be deleted.

Anent Par 302(2)(c) and (4)(a) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 302(2)(c) and (4)(a) of the Code the words “Board of Evangelism and Christian Training” be deleted and that the words “Board of Mission in Ireland” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 285(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 285 of the Code there be inserted a new sub-paragraph (3) as follows:

- (3) Shall supervise the assignment of persons as assistants during their College studies, and as licentiates:
- (a) operating through a committee for assignments.
 - (b) acting in consultation with the assistants and ministers directly concerned, and
 - (c) bearing in mind the claims of different areas of Church work.
- And that Par 285(3) be re-numbered as Par 285(4).

Anent Par 198(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 198(1) of the Code the words “Home Board” be deleted and that the words “Board of Studies and Christian Training” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 218(2)(a) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 218(2)(a) of the Code the words “Home Board” be deleted and that the words “Board of Studies and Christian Training” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 303(4)(d) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 303(4)(d) of the Code after the word “Church” there be added the words “in consultation with the Board of Studies and Christian Training”.

Anent Pars 198(1), 218(2)(a) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 198(1) and 212(2)(a) of the Code the words “Home Board” be deleted and that the words “Board of Studies and Christian Training” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

RECOGNISED MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

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

The Committee’s recommendations are as follows:-

<i>Presbytery</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Ards	Rev C D Mawhinney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Mark Spratt	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Armagh	Rev W A Shaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge for a further year.
North Belfast	Rev W M Smyth	To be retained as Minister without Charge.

	Rev C R J Brown	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev L E Carroll	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev C I McKnight	To be retained as Minister without Charge for a further year.
	Mr. N. Patrick	To be retained as Licentiate for a further year.
Belfast South	Rev P A J McBride	To be retained as Minister without Charge for one more year.
	Rev S J Hanna	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev B R Hughes	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Belfast East	Rev R A Crooks	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Dr Eliz Jamison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Dr Samuel Scott	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Rex Pedlow	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev. W J Harshaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Carrickfergus	Rev D R Byers	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Coleraine	Rev Wm Morrison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev J D Mark	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Mr Thomas Mulholland	To be retained as Licentiate
Derry/Strabane	Mr Ernest A Smith	To be retained as Licentiate.
Down	Rev R N Stewart	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Dromore	Rev R J Mattison	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev John Honeyford	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Dublin & Munster	Rev F W Vincent	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Foyle	Rev K Campbell	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Iveagh	Rev E G McAuley	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).

Newry	Rev David McKee	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev A K Duddy	To be retained as Minister without Charge.

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

3. Returns are not required for licentiates who are serving normal assistantships, merely for any who are “without charge”. Currently there are few in that category.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Recognised Ministries Committee on Ministers and Licentiates without Charge.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: THE CLERK

McCloy - v - Gault

1. The 1998 Assembly referred the charges of false accusation and slander brought by Mrs Margaret McCloy against Mr Stanley Gault to the Judicial Commission to hear and to issue.

2. Having considered the documentation submitted by the parties, the Judicial Commission decided to proceed under Paragraph 132(7) of the Code by way of private conference rather than formal trial, and, having conferred privately with both of the parties on 4 November, 1998, the Judicial Commission met again on 5 December and agreed a resolution which included the following conclusion.

3. “The information given to the Commission in the documents and in the course of conference with the parties does not disclose that any statements made by Mr Gault amounted to false accusation or slander of the complainant, Mrs McCloy.”

4. The Judicial Commission also exhorted both parties to work harmoniously with one another and with all other members of Ballykelly congregation in the interests of the Church.

Appeal of K G Patterson and Others

1. The Judicial Commission met on 25 June, 1998 and heard the Appeal of the Rev K G Patterson, Rev G.D. Simpson, Rev J D Paul and Rev Dr C Glass, which had come to the Commission in accordance with Par 165(5) of the Code, against the decision of the Presbytery of Foyle which, on 3 March, 1998, resolved “That the Clerk be obliged to attend all functions and services of the Presbytery”. The Appellants, and Representatives of the Presbytery of Foyle, appeared.

2. The Acting Clerk read the decision appealed against and the reasons for the Appeal and presented the whole record of the Presbytery proceedings including an extract from the Minutes of the meeting of Presbytery, dated 3 March, 1998 and all the relevant documents.

3. The Rev K G Patterson and the Rev Dr C Glass provided written submissions, addressed the Commission and answered questions thereon.

4. The Rev T V Mawhinney, representing the Presbytery, provided a written submission, addressed the Commission and answered questions thereon. Further brief statements were addressed to the Commission by the Rev. N. Hunter and Mr R E Wright, representatives of the Presbytery.

5. After closing submissions were heard the Judicial Commission continued in private and, after preliminary consideration, decided to defer a decision on the Appeal and on an appropriate Finding until the next meeting of the Commission on 3 September, 1998. The Commission appointed a sub-committee to prepare a draft Finding for submission to the Commission.

6. The Judicial Commission met on 3 September, 1998 and agreed the following Finding.

Finding

7. The Appellants' ground of appeal was that the resolution passed at the meeting of the Presbytery of Foyle on 3 March, 1998 discriminated against some members of Presbytery and was contrary to the letter and spirit of the conscience clause introduced at the General Assembly in June, 1990 (Reports 1990 pp 39-40) which specifically states that:

“Those with personal conscientious objections to participating in a particular service have the freedom to decline for themselves, but not to dictate or veto who may be invited by the appropriate Church court or authority.”

8. The Appellants argued that the resolution was discriminatory and that the Presbytery could not properly frame the job description for its Clerk in a way that would effectively preclude applications from those with conscientious reservations about ordaining or installing women as ministers or elders.

9. Any feeling of grievance should be taken seriously and treated sympathetically by the Judicial Commission which is naturally concerned that the Appellants perceived the resolution to be “discriminating against some members of Presbytery and ... contrary to the letter and spirit of the conscience clause introduced at the General Assembly in June, 1990”.

10. However, the issues raised are complex. Guidelines approved by the General Assembly have considerable authority, but do not have the force of law of the Church. Guidelines, by definition, allow for a degree of discretion to be exercised in any particular situation. Furthermore, the 1990 Guidelines are of a general nature and do not deal with particular posts, such as applications for the post of Clerk of Presbytery or, for example, Theological Professor who could not be permitted to complain of discrimination if the job description required the teaching of both male and female students for the ministry. It would be unreasonable and unsafe to apply the 1990 Guidelines to any and every position in the Church without regard to the essential nature of any particular position and the duties involved.

11. Services of Ordination and Installation are public occasions when the Moderator and Clerk are normally present. The Respondents in this Appeal said that Foyle is quite a small Presbytery and that there are quite a few occasions when a Moderator does not attend such services. It would be unreasonable and unsatisfactory if the Clerk were also absent from Presbytery services with any degree of regularity.

12. It is consistent with the polity of the Reformed Church to allow Presbyteries reasonable liberty to order their own affairs within the law of the Church.

13. A requirement by the Foyle Presbytery that its Clerk should attend and act as Clerk when the Presbytery or any Commission thereof is constituted as a Court of the Church would not be contrary to the law of the Church or so perverse or unreasonable or inconsistent with the 1990 Guidelines as to justify reversal on Appeal.

14. The general principle laid down in Assembly Guideline number (vi) is applicable here.

“Conscience may present us under God with competing demands which cannot be resolved by simple logic or legislation but must be faced with the exercise of integrity, charity and humility.”

15. The Judicial Commission consequently dismisses the Appeal because the resolution of Presbytery was neither contrary to the 1990 Guidelines nor discriminatory.

16. However, the Judicial Commission judged the wording of the requirement “that the Clerk be obliged to attend all functions and services of the Presbytery” to be unreasonable and unsafe because the undefined term “functions” could be variously interpreted, while the emphatic word “all” would be unduly demanding.

17. While the Presbytery had not wished to be unreasonable, it did use inappropriate words to express the resolution.

18. The Judicial Commission directs that Presbytery redraft the wording of the resolution in the light of the foregoing paragraphs numbered 13 and 16.

Barrier Act

1. The 1998 Assembly considered the possible removal of the Synod as an Appellate Court. (Reports p 42). Three overtures were then sent down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, and voting was as follows:

Overture anent Par 95(d)			
Presbyteries in favour	21	Against	0
Votes in favour	604	Against	1
Overture anent Par 163			
Presbyteries in favour	21	Against	0
Votes in favour	584	Against	15
Overture anent Par 165(5)			
Presbyteries in favour	21	Against	0
Votes in favour	597	Against	2

2. These three overtures are therefore submitted to this Assembly for a final decision.

Par 132(4) of the Code

3. The Commission became concerned that the present wording of Par 132(4) of the Code would prevent Church courts from investigating charges of very grave offences if the alleged offence was committed more than five years previously.

4. In the case of very grave offences the Commission believes that this paragraph should not confer any kind of immunity on the offenders. An appropriate overture is therefore submitted. A “very grave” offence is one that,

had it been committed by a minister or other office-bearer, could have merited their suspension (see Code Par 133(3)).

Inclusive Language

5. In recent Assemblies changes were made to the Code to provide for the use of inclusive language in services of Ordination and Installation. (See Reports 1996 pp 50-51, 58-59; Minutes 1996 p 64; 1997 p 63).

6. To introduce inclusive language throughout the Code would require a very considerable number of changes and would best be done when a new Code is issued.

7. In the meantime there are some simple changes that are consequential upon the decision of the Assembly in 1997. Appropriate overtures are therefore appended.

First Comber

1. A reference concerning the minister of First Comber was made to the Judicial Commission by the Presbytery of Down under Par 224 of the Code.

2. On 19 February, a Commission of the Presbytery of Down, Rev David Gray accompanied by a friend, and some members of the Kirk Session and of the congregation appeared before the Judicial Commission.

3. Rev Desmond McBride explained why the Presbytery had referred this matter to the Judicial Commission and answered questions. Various others addressed the Judicial Commission and answered questions.

4. The hearing was adjourned until 1 March, when Rev David Gray presented his view of the situation and answered questions. Various others addressed the Judicial Commission, after which Presbytery representatives and Rev David Gray made closing submissions.

5. On 16 March the Judicial Commission met in First Comber and conferred with Rev David Gray alone and in private, then with the elders, then once more with Mr Gray. On 24 March the Judicial Commission met again in First Comber and heard the views of members of the congregation. On 9 April a Finding was drawn up.

6. The Judicial Commission found that the usefulness of the Rev David Gray as Minister of the congregation of First Comber had been seriously impaired within the meaning of Par 224 of the Code, and that the impairment had been caused by a breakdown of the relationships between the Minister and the Elders, between the Minister and leaders of some Church organisations and between the Minister and some members and adherents of the congregation.

7. The Judicial Commission therefore loosed the Rev David Gray from his charge of First Comber on 11 April, 1999 and directed that he be paid a special allowance for six months. It also recommended that he be permitted to remain in the Manse for a reasonable period of time.

8. The full text of the Finding is recorded in the Minute Book of the Judicial Commission.

Special Financial Arrangements

1. The Judicial Commission was consulted by the Union Commission about proposals to make special financial arrangements under Par 226 (b) of the Code for certain ministers resigning their charge. The Judicial Commission examined each such proposal and found it to be in order.

Resignations

1. Due to his acceptance by the Overseas Board for service abroad Rev John Hanson has resigned from the Commission. The Synod of Dublin has nominated Rev Nancy Cubitt in his place.

2. Very Rev Dr A J Weir has tendered his resignation from the Commission on health grounds. During his time as Clerk and since his retirement he made an outstanding contribution to the proceedings of the Commission, where his knowledge of Presbyterian procedures and long experience were invaluable. We wish him well in the days to come.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That Rev Nancy Cubitt be appointed to the Judicial Commission in place of Rev John Hanson (resigned).
3. That the resignation of Very Rev Dr A J Weir from the Judicial Commission be accepted and that he be thanked for his services.

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

Anent Par 95(d) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 95(d) of the Code be deleted and that Par 95(e) and Par 95(f) be renumbered as Par 95(d) and Par 95(e).

R W ALCORN

Anent Par 163 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 163 of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place.

Par 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 so doing 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.

R W ALCORN

Anent Par 165(5) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 165(5) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place.

Every appeal against a decision of a Presbytery or a Synod 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 subparagraph (3).

R W ALCORN

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 9 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 9 of the Code the words “all men” be deleted and that the words “all people” be substituted in their place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 30(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 30(1) of the Code the word “men” be deleted, and that the words “all people” be substituted in its place.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 205(4) of the Code

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

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

Anent Par 132(4) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 132(4) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:

“(4)(a) An offence alleged to have been committed more than five years previously shall not be made a ground of discipline unless:

- (i) the offender thereafter withdrew from the discipline of the Church; or
- (ii) the offence is alleged to have been revived by the offender’s later conduct which requires investigation; or
- (iii) the offence is of a very grave nature.

(b) A court shall not re-open investigation of an offence that had previously been investigated by it except in the case of discovery of new evidence that is considered by the court to be of importance for the possible exculpation of the offender.”

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

APPEALS

Clarke and Shirley Scott (Appellants) - v - Presbytery of Ards (Respondents) re a decision that no further action be taken against Rev Hugh Cubitt and the Kirk Session of Carrowdore Presbyterian Church.

The Synod of Armagh and Down refers this Appeal to the next superior court under Par 21(1) of the Code.

S A MATTHEWS, Clerk

Meredith Dunwoody (Appellant) - v - Presbytery of Armagh (Respondents) re a decision regarding the election of a Congregational Committee at Minterburn.

The Synod of Armagh and Down refers this Appeal to the next superior court under Par 21 (1) of the Code.

S A MATTHEWS, Clerk

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, to meet at Belfast on the 7th day of June 1999.

The Memorial of the Presbytery of Foyle Respectfully Showeth:

That in recent years the Presbytery of Foyle was well served by a Clerk who was a ruling elder. Being a member of the Judicial Commission (and consequently a member of Presbytery) he was eligible for the position of Clerk of Presbytery. However, on ceasing to be a member of Judicial Commission he had to relinquish the Clerkship.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Court to refer to the General Board the issue of the eligibility of persons for the Clerkship as prescribed in the relevant paragraphs of the Code for consideration and report back to the General Assembly in June 2000.

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

Adopted by the Presbytery of Foyle, meeting at Drumachose, Limavady on the 2nd day of February, 1999.

NORMAN HUNTER, Moderator
STANLEY STEWART, Clerk

Licensed and transmitted by the Synod of Derry and Omagh, meeting at Waterside Church, Londonderry on the 10th day of March, 1999, with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

B A HUNT, Moderator
JAMES B McCORMICK, Clerk

AD HOC COMMISSION

Convener: Rev R F S POOTS

1. The Appeal of Mr Joseph A G McDonald against the decision of the Foyle Presbytery not to nominate him as a student for the ministry came before the General Assembly on 4 June, 1998. The Assembly referred the Appeal to an ad hoc Commission to hear and to issue (see Mins 1998 p56).

2. The ad hoc Commission met on 25 June, when Mr McDonald and representatives of the Foyle Presbytery appeared before it.

3. The Convener read the decision appealed against and presented the reasons of Appeal and the whole record of the Presbytery's proceedings and all the relevant documents.

4. Mr McDonald addressed the Commission and answered questions. After the Appellant had made a final submission he and the Presbytery representatives withdrew.

5. After a discussion the ad hoc Commission resolved that the Appeal be dismissed on the grounds that the evidence presented did not include any new evidence which had not been before the Presbytery and that the Presbytery was correct in its decision.

6. The Commission affirmed the Presbytery's recommendation that Mr McDonald should pursue secular employment and continue to serve his local congregation to which he has much to offer. The Commission also recommended and encouraged Mr McDonald to complete his degree course and invoked God's blessing on his future life.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the ad hoc Commission be thanked and discharged.

UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev W J ORR
Secretary: Rev T J STOTHERS

INTRODUCTION

1. The period covered by this Report is from March 1998 to February 1999. One of the most important parts of the Commission's work is granting Leave to Call to vacant congregations. Deputations appear before the Commission with an offer of Stipend and Expenses for a new ministry. The task of the Commission is to reach agreement on terms which take account of both the resources in a congregation and the needs of the wider Church in use of personnel and wise stewardship of the Central Ministry Fund. In the period under review 37 congregations were given Leave to Call, 27 on the figures offered, 8 on a small upward revision of the offer agreed on the day the deputation appeared before the Commission, and 2 with a downward revision. In reaching settlements the Commission has taken account of the difficult financial circumstances prevailing in many rural congregations. 5 congregations had their fraction reduced at the time of granting Leave to Call.

PERSONNEL CHANGE

2. The Rev T J Stothers has indicated his wish to retire as Secretary of the Commission from the date of this Assembly. On his appointment three years ago, Mr Stothers very quickly demonstrated a command of the rules, regulations and precedents which guide the work of the Commission. Aided by his considerable computer skills, he has been meticulous, not only in recording business, but in bringing matters for review to the Commission at the appropriate times. Beyond the detail of the post, Mr Stothers has brought to his work a wisdom, generosity of spirit and love of the Church. The Commission is very much indebted to him and thanks him most warmly.

LEAVE TO CALL MINISTERS

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

Congregation	Stipend	Expenses	Fraction
Craigavon	£9,200	£3,000	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %
Vinecash	£4,750	£2,000	37.5%
Dunfanaghy	IR£3,900	IR£1,300	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %
Carrigart	IR£2,700	IR£1,000	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %
Banbridge Road, Dromore	£21,500	£5,540	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %
Bangor West	£28,000	£5,500	suspended; annual review of Stipend
Finvoy	£18,000	£5,660	37.5%
Seskinore	£8,000	£3,200	37.5%

Edenderry	£5,300	£1,800	37.5%
2nd Castledearg	£13,500	£5,500	suspended; annual review of Stipend and Expenses for at least three years from the February after the first full year of ministry
Alt	IR£2,050	IR£650	suspended; annual review of Stipend and Expenses for at least three years from the February after the first full year of ministry
Magheragall	£13,500	£4,750	37.5%; Stipend to be reviewed after the end of the second full year of ministry
Bellaghy	£8,250	£3,700	37.5%
Knockloughrim	£5,900	£2,100	37.5%
Clarkesbridge & 1st New'hamilton	£4,400	£1,700	37.5%
Garmany's Grove	IR£2,700	IR£1,000	37.5%
McKelvey's Grove	IR£2,100	IR£900	37.5%
Greenisland	£21,500	£5,500	suspended; annual review of Stipend and Fraction reviewed after three full years of ministry
Ballylennon	IR£4,700	IR£2,200	37.5%
St Johnston	IR£5,400	IR£2,500	37.5%
New Row, C'raine	£27,500	£6,000	29%; review after two full years of ministry to ascertain whether a further reduction in Fraction is appropriate
Burnside	£15,500	£5,000	suspended; annual review of Stipend and a full review after the completion of three full years of ministry with a view to setting a Fraction
Cavanaleck	£7,750	£3,100	37.5%
Aughtaine	£4,800	£1,900	37.5%
New'crommelin	£9,750	£3,250	35%
Carnlough/			
Cushendall	£6,750	£2,700	37.5%
2nd Rathfriland	£6,500	£2,400	37.5%
3rd Rathfriland	£10,000	£3,600	37.5%
Banagher	£9,500	£3,900	37.5%; Restricted List
St Columba's,			
Lisburn	£11,000	£4,500	30%; review of settlement in five years in conjunction with representatives from Presbytery
Glengormley	£21,500	£3,700	suspended; Stipend reviewed annually with a view to setting a fraction after three full years of ministry

Dunlop Memorial	£3,500	£1,300	suspended; Stipend reviewed annually with a view to setting a fraction after three full years of ministry
Mountpottinger	£16,750	£4,800	30%
First Newtownards	£25,000	£5,500	suspended; to be set after three full years of ministry with annual review of Stipend
Bessbrook	£15,600	£4,800	37.5%
Cumber	£10,500	£3,000	37.5%
Upper Cumber	£9,500	£2,650	37.5%

Leave to Call renewed

Leave to Call was renewed on the following revised terms from 1st May, 1998:

Garvaghy	£7,400	£2,450
Anaghlonge	£6,600	£2,450

Stipend Review (under the 'twelve months vacant' rule)

As from 20th October 1998:

Dromore (Omagh)	£3,250	£2,200
Drumquin	£6,200	£2,700

As from 1st January 1999:

Ballina	IR£2,050	IR£2,050
Ballymote	IR£625	IR£350
Killala	IR£280	IR£80

Leave to Call withdrawn

Leave to Call was withdrawn from First Dromore on 23rd June, 1998.

Reviews under Terms of Call

In recent years the Commission has given Leave to Call in certain congregations where the financial circumstances are such that it has been necessary to build in a review after a period of years. The first group of these reviews became due in 1997 and were made as follows (Year given refers to year reported to General Assembly)

Glenwherry (1995): Fraction reduced to 35% provided Stipend paid is not less than £19,311. Expenses £5,000. No further review

Burnside (1995): Stipend £14,250. Expenses £5,000. Annual review

Killymurriss (1995): Stipend £20,000. Expenses £5,200. Review again after 1999

2nd Broughshane (1996): Stipend £24,000. Expenses £5,250. Fraction reduced to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %. Review again after 1999

Maghera (1996): Stipend £18,000. Expenses £5,000. Fraction 35%

Hydepark (1996): Stipend £13,000. Expenses £3,250. Review again after 1999

Lylehill (1996): Stipend £9,500. Expenses £2,500. Review again after 1999

Clogher (1996): Stipend £7,000. Expenses £3,670. No further review

Glenhoy (1996): Stipend £4,600. Expenses £1,900. No further review

Conlig (1996): Stipend £15,210. Expenses £5,000. Review again after 1999
 Kilbride (1997): Stipend £24,000. Expenses £5,200. Fraction to continue to be suspended. Annual Review.
 Castlecaulfield (1997): Stipend £9,750. Expenses £3,200. Review after 1998
 English (1997): Stipend £6,250. Expenses £2,100. Review after 1998.

Associate Ministers

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

Congregation	Salary	Expenses	Housing Allowance
Dungannon	£16,000	£3,250	£1,500
Ballyholme	£15,210	£3,200	£1,500
Knock	£16,000	£3,000	£1,500
First Carrickfergus	£15,210	£2,000	£1,500
Bloomfield	£15,210	£4,000	£1,500

Leave to Call renewed

Leave to Call an associate minister was renewed for the congregations of Macrory Memorial, Newington and Sinclair Seamen's as from 1st September 1998.

Associate Ministry extended

The period of service of the associate minister in First Bangor was extended for two years from 31st January 1999.

Associate Ministry Scheme

The detail of this scheme can be found in Assembly Reports 1995, when it came to the Assembly under the Home Board. In the drafting of the scheme originally, two assumptions were made: firstly, that an associate's salary would be paid at the level of the appropriate minimum, and secondly, that if a congregation should choose to pay salary above the appropriate minimum, then the amount above the appropriate minimum would be carried by the congregation without contribution by CMF. In the subsequent operation of the scheme, the Commission has discovered that, while the above assumptions were made, nothing of this was written into the wording of the scheme. The result is, that a congregation employing an associate could decide upon a significantly enhanced salary, but still be assessed at no more than the $\frac{16}{40}$ of the minister's stipend. CMF has been left vulnerable to this possibility; at present, it remains liable to contribute the difference between the congregation's assessment and the associate's salary, whatever that might be. At the invitation of the Home Board, a resolution has been appended to this report which seeks to protect CMF by writing the original intentions into the scheme.

CONGREGATIONS UNITED

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

Clarquesbridge & 1st Newtownhamilton, Garmany's Grove and McKelvey's Grove

- (a) That the congregations of Clarquesbridge & 1st Newtownhamilton, Garmany's Grove and McKelvey's Grove be united as from 1 January, 1999.
- (b) Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and finances.
- (c) Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior courts of the Church.
- (d) In the choice of a minister the three congregations shall act as one congregation and the three Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
- (e) The times of stated services shall be:
Clarquesbridge & 1st Newtownhamilton 11.30am;
Garmany's Grove and McKelvey's Grove on alternate Sundays at 2.15pm; or other such times as the three Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
- (f) The stipends and initial ministerial expenses shall be:
Clarquesbridge & 1st Newtownhamilton £4,400 and £1,700
Garmany's Grove IR£2,700 and IR£1,000
McKelvey's Grove IR£2,100 and IR£900
- (g) The fraction in each case shall be 37.5%
- (h) Shared expenses shall be in the following proportions:
1st Newtownhamilton & Clarquesbridge 50%
Garmany's Grove 25%
McKelvey's Grove 25%
- (i) The minister shall reside in the Clarquesbridge & 1st Newtownhamilton Manse.
- (j) 15% of the annual income from the Manse Farm at McKelvey's Grove (or such proportion as shall be determined from time to time by the Union Commission in consultation with the congregation and Presbytery) shall be applied to a Manse Farm Maintenance Fund, and the remainder shall be divided equally between Stipend and Ministerial Expenses.

UNION DISSOLVED

6. The Union of Waringstown and Bellville was dissolved on 31 December 1998. The Stipend for Waringstown was set at £25,100.

AMALGAMATION

7. The congregations of Glengormley and Dunlop Memorial were united in 1996. The Union Commission, the Presbytery of North Belfast and both congregations are agreed that a more effective ministry could be carried out

in the area if the congregations were amalgamated. An appropriate resolution is appended.

RESTRICTED LIST STATUS

8. The charge of Dromore & Drumquin was removed from Restricted List status from 20th October, 1998.

The charge of Banagher was given Restricted List status from 19th January, 1999.

Two ministers were placed on the list of those eligible to apply for a Restricted List charge.

FRACTIONS

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

1998

Ballyclare: £26,000 Stipend with £5,825 Expenses (Stewardship)

McQuiston Memorial: £22,500 Stipend with further review of fraction after 1998

2nd Killyleagh: £15,200 Stipend with further review after 1998

1999

Newtownstewart: £9,000 Stipend with £3,500 Expenses and Fraction of 37.5%

Gortin: £3,600 Stipend with £1,500 Expenses and Fraction of 37.5%

Magheramason: Fraction suspended. Stipend set at £18,000 and to increase annually at a percentage rate not less than the percentage rate of increase in the basic ministerial minimum.

STATED SUPPLIES

10. The following nominations as Stated Supply have been made:

Rev B R Hughes to the Presbytery of South Belfast for continuation in Nelson Memorial

Rev R J Mattison to the Presbytery of Armagh for continuation in Tassagh

Rev Dr R J Magee to the Presbytery of Dromore for appointment in First Dromore

Rev D Armstrong to the Presbytery of Dromore for appointment in Second Dromara

Rev W J Harshaw to the Presbytery of Armagh for appointment in Bellville

LICENSED ASSISTANTS

11. All central funding will be withdrawn from Licensed Assistantships 15 months following eligibility for call, including those with special arrangements.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

12. Special Arrangements were extended to allow three congregations to continue to employ Licensed Assistants. Special Arrangements were established to allow four congregations to employ Student Assistants with continuation into the Licentiate period; for a minister who resigned; for a final year student in exceptional family circumstances; and to allow two congregations to employ Moderator's Assistants.

MANSES

13. The following business has been completed:

The following congregations were given permission to replace a Manse: Craigavon, Lylehill, Letterkenny, Carnmoney, Joymount, First Lisburn, Dunfanaghy.

The agreement for Eglis of 1993 (Reports page 80) was extended for five years.

Drumlegagh was given permission to sell shares from the Manse Fund to the value of £60,000 on certain conditions which will protect capital in the long term.

Assistance has been given to Cloughey and Portavogie in resolving a difficulty over the jointly-owned Manse.

Ongoing discussions concerning the use of income from Ardglass Manse, should it be sold, have reached a satisfactory conclusion.

Knock was given permission to use part of the income from the Accumulation Fund of their Manse Account to fund the rent of accommodation for their Associate Minister for a period of approximately three years.

Killaig was given permission to sell the site of their redundant Manse and invest the sum realised for the benefit of the Minister.

Permission was given for a Minister to reside in temporary rented accommodation for a six month period.

CHURCH EXTENSION MINISTERS

14. It was decided with effect from 1 January 1998 that Church Extension Ministers be paid the appropriate ministerial minimum, the Central Ministry Fund monthly grant and the figure allowed under Par 316(2)(e) of the Code, plus 5% of Specified Sources and 10% of the basic ministerial minimum.

ASSOCIATE MINISTRY

15. Modifications have been made to the Associate Ministry Scheme as follows:

Extension of Period of Service: (Code Par 193(3)) That, if the Minister, Kirk Session and Associate request, and Presbytery consent, the appointment will be extended for a further 2 years with a revision of the remuneration as agreed with the Union Commission. Thereafter no further extension will take place and the position will cease to exist.

Assessments: (Reports 1995 p156 par 7) That, with effect from 1 January 1998 assessments be levied at the rate of 5% of the cost of assessments at the normal rate calculated on the ministerial minimum. For all new Associate

Ministries and extensions of existing ones congregations will be assessed at $\frac{16}{40}$ ths of the Minister's Stipend or 65% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum, whichever is the higher.

REVIEWABLE TENURE MINISTRY

16. The General Assembly last year encouraged the Commission to bring a scheme for Reviewable Tenure Ministry, and the detail of the response will be seen in the appended overture anent the Code, Par 274(5). It is not envisaged that the scheme, if approved, would be widely employed. However, in an increasingly mobile population, there are circumstances in which it could prove to be helpful and responsible to have a degree of flexibility in ministry. For example, an urban congregation undergoing a sustained numerical decline might well justify Leave to Call at the particular time of a vacancy; but, with no certainty as to its circumstances five to ten years into the future, it would be prudent to have a review mechanism. Again, while it might be desirable to draw a smaller vacant congregation into a union, a partner may not be available in the short term: a ministry under the proposed scheme would keep open the freedom to form a union at the most appropriate time. The principle of terminable ministry is not new, having been accepted in the Associate Ministry Scheme. It will be noted, however, that every effort has been made to consider the welfare of both a minister and a congregation under the proposed scheme.

ILLNESS

17. It was decided that congregations be allowed to retain National Insurance payments refunded by the Department of Health and Social Services when a minister is on Sick Leave.

18. It was decided to reduce the congregational levy for the Sick Supply Fund to £30 per annum for 1999.

HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY

19. An arrangement has been approved whereby the Minister for the time being of Christ Church, Sandymount, will represent the Presbyterian and Methodist denominations in the Tallaght Hospital Chaplaincy without the Terms of Call being affected.

TYRONE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

20. In response to a request from the Ad Hoc Committee on the Tyrone Memorial the Commission commented on two proposals for schemes to replace the present fraction system.

OTHER OVERTURES

21. **Appendix 5A.** Some years ago some lines in Appendix 5A were omitted when the Code was revised. An overture is presented to restore them.

22. **Membership.** As the relevant Committee no longer exists an overture is presented to remove the Conveners of Strategy for Mission from ex officio membership of the Commission.

ELIGIBILITY FOR VACANCIES

23. It is a long established rule that, except for members of the local Presbytery, candidates for a vacant charge may officiate only on the day when they preach on trial and at no other time during the vacancy (Code Par 190 (2) (b)).

24. In larger congregations (350 families or more) there is a further restriction that ministers serving there immediately prior to the vacancy are not eligible (Code Par 193 (2) (a)). This provision excludes assistant ministers, though an assistant to the convener of a vacancy in a smaller charge may subsequently be called by the congregation as minister.

25. Questions have now arisen about doubtful cases, eg where a minister has been Stated Supply or Assistant in one congregation which is then united with another to form a linked charge, or where a minister has been duly called by a congregation under the new Associate scheme and is serving there when the minister retires or leaves. Code Par 193 (2) (a) excludes all these categories, though it could be argued that this paragraph was enacted before the Associate scheme was introduced.

26. It is generally accepted that when a new congregation is fully constituted it may call the minister who has been serving there in its Church Extension phase. Other situations are more difficult.

27. The Union Commission believes that the above-mentioned paragraphs of the Code were introduced for good reason, and that it would be wiser to leave them as they are and comply fully with both the letter and spirit of the law. In the long run that is probably in the best interests of all concerned.

28. However, there could be rare instances where there is a genuine doubt about the eligibility of a candidate, or where a rigid application of the law might not be advisable (eg where a congregation wishes to accept a long-standing Stated Supply as its installed minister). It is proposed that in such situations it should be possible for the Union Commission, after consultation with the Presbytery, to determine eligibility.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION
CHARGES — 1999**

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

	<i>Fully Constituted</i>	<i>Families (†)</i>	<i>Assess 1999 £</i>	<i>Spec. Sources £</i>	<i>Income £</i>
Ballee	1986	232 (183)	274	46,884	85,404
Tullycarnet	1990	231 (160)	240	29,479	51,435
Downshire	1993	221 (186)	279	35,946	57,858
Lisnabreen	1993	252 (175)	262	36,613	67,972
Scrabo	1994	265 (162)	243	30,975	52,939
Burnside	1995	172 (141)	211	37,990	64,653

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES — 1999

<i>Church</i>	<i>Spec.</i>						<i>Total £</i>
	<i>Building £</i>	<i>Srs. £</i>	<i>Stip. £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>	<i>Ch. Ext £</i>	<i>H.M. £</i>	
New Mossley*	3,017	14,632	3,658	1,756	1,170	732	7,316
Ballysally*	34,573	20,056	5,014	2,407	1,604	1,003	10,028
Strathfoyle	277	3,529	1,059	529	353	212	2,153
Taughmonagh	1,018	16,217	4,865	2,433	1,622	973	9,893
Movilla	12,522	27,092	8,128	4,064	2,709	1,626	16,527

* Special Arrangement

LICENTIATES — 1999

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £1,700 from 1st January, 1999 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, 1999

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i>	<i>Congregations Contribution</i>	<i>C.M.F.</i>
Craigy Hill, Larne	G. D. Allen*	07.06.98	21,600	6,480+501 = 6,981	5,220+501 = 5,721
Ballysillan	C. J. Gamble*	07.06.98	18,531	s/a 501	11,700
Dundonald	R. J. Stevenson*	21.06.98	27,120	8,136+501 = 8,637	3,564+501 = 4,065
Newtownbreda	J. A. Peacock*	07.06.98	25,250	7,575+501 = 8,076	4,125+501 = 4,626
Harmony Hill, Lambeg	R. D. McDowell†	19.06.98	24,324	7,297+351 = 7,648	4,403+351 = 4,754
Scarva Street	B. Colvin†	14.06.98	28,055	7,014+351 = 7,365	4,686+351 = 5,037
Kilbride	E. S. McDowell†	19.06.98	24,000	7,200+351 = 7,551	4,500+351 = 4,851
Elmwood	T. D. Hagan*	07.06.98	24,461	7,338+501 = 7,839	4,362+501 = 4,863
Hillsborough	J. M. Wylie†	14.06.98	28,667	8,600+351 = 8,951	3,100+351 = 3,451
Ballygowan	G. J. Kennedy*	21.06.98	25,695	7,708+501 = 8,209	3,992+501 = 4,493
Wellington Street	W. J. A. Moody*	28.06.98	28,009	8,403+501 = 8,904	3,297+501 = 3,798
1st Portadown	D. B. Murphy†	12.06.98	28,441	8,532+351 = 8,883	3,168+351 = 3,519
Richview	M. M. Stewart*	28.06.98	17,001	5,100+501 = 5,601	6,600+501 = 7,101

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance

‡ No House Allowance — House provided by congregation s/a special arrangement

LICENTIATES — 1999

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £11,700 from 1st January, 1999 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, 1999

Congregation	Assistant	Date of Licensing	Ministers		Congregations		C.M.F.
			Stipend	Contribution	Contribution	C.M.F.	
1st Ahoghill	M. Dunn*	13.06.97	22,401	5,600+501 = 6,101	6,100+501 = 6,601		
Cregagh	C. M. Glover†	22.06.97	23,300	6,990+351 = 7,341	4,710+351 = 5,061		
Abbot's Cross	J. G. Jones*	13.06.97	21,106	6,332+501 = 6,833	5,368+501 = 5,869		
Carryduff	P. W. Patterson†	28.05.97	25,407	7,622+351 = 7,973	4,078+351 = 4,429		
McQuiston Memorial	Miss A. E. Tolland†	29.06.97	22,500	s/a 1,000+351 = 1,351	10,700+351 = 11,051		
Greenwell Street	G. Aitcheson*	25.06.97	26,171	7,851+501 = 8,352	3,849+501 = 4,350		
Rathcoole	W. R. B. Martin*	15.06.97	18,519	s/a - + - = -	11,700+1,002 = 12,702		
Whiteabbey	P. D. Thompson*	11.06.97	24,052	7,216+501 = 7,717	4,484+501 = 4,985		
High Street, Antrim	R. W. Gaston*	12.06.97	21,750	s/a 1,600+ - = 1,600	10,100+1,002 = 11,102		
Abbey, Monkstown	A. A. McCullough*	13.06.97	19,725	5,917+501 = 6,418	5,783+501 = 6,284		
1st Coleraine	J. P. Moxen*	15.06.97	23,639	7,092+501 = 7,593	4,608+501 = 5,109		

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance

‡ No House Allowance — House provided by congregation s/a special arrangement

LICENTIATES — 1999

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £11,700 from 1st January, 1999 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, 1999

Congregation	Assistant	Date of Licensing	Ministers		Congregations		C.M.F.
			Stipend	Contribution			
Ist Larne	J. K. A. McIntyre †	21.06.96	28,687	8,606+ - =	8,606	3,094+ - =	3,094
Ist Antrim	J. R. Burnett †	23.06.96	23,897	7,169+ - =	7,169	4,531+ - =	4,531
Trinity, Bangor	M. Henderson †	16.06.96	23,344	7,003+351 =	7,354	4,697+351 =	5,048
Ist Antrim	R. D. Gregg*	16.06.96	23,897	7,169+501 =	7,670	4,531+501 =	5,032
Ballyholme	A. J. A. Rosborough †	07.06.96	23,809	7,142+351 =	7,493	4,558+351 =	4,909
Mourne, Kilkeel	R. I. Abraham †	11.06.95	38,304	11,491+ - =	11,491	209+ - =	209

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance

‡ No House Allowance — House provided by congregation s/a special arrangement

ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 1999
FOURTH YEAR — From 1st January, 1999

<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Date of Ord.</i>	<i>% Min.</i>	<i>Salary</i> £	<i>House Allow.</i> £	<i>Total</i> £	<i>Cong.</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
E. P. Gamble	West Kirk	2.2.94	100	15,600	1,002	16,602	7,431+501 = 7,932	8,169+501 = 8,670
Marlene Taylor	Cooke Centenary	11.1.85	100	15,600	1,002	16,602	8,650+501 = 9,151	6,950+501 = 7,451
T. J. Lavery	West Church, Bangor	29.1.95	100	15,600	1,002	16,602	11,900+501 = 12,401	3,700+501 = 4,201
J. A. Gordon	Kells, Eskylane	2.4.95	100	15,600	702	16,302	12,921+351 = 13,272	2,679+351 = 3,030

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS

Salary

<i>Name</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Paid</i> £	<i>Recovery</i> £	<i>House Allowance Paid</i> £	<i>Assessment Recovery</i> £
S. E. Hughes	First Bangor	16,380	11,235.60	—	943.80
R. A. Liddle	West Church	15,600	11,200.00	1,500.00	471.90
J. G. Millar	Hamilton Road	15,600	12,226.00	1,512.00	471.90
A. M. Bates	First Ballymena	17,640	9,600.00	1,500.00	1,706.10
T. J. Wilson	Rosemary	15,600	9,900.00	1,500.00	471.90
P. Jemphey	Glengormley/ Dunlop Memorial	2,600	1,583.33	—	78.65
D. S. McIlwrath	Carmoney	18,160	12,233.20	3,000.00	2,020.70
D. Montgomery	Knock	16,000	11,586.00	—	713.90
J. R. Lambe	Ballyclare	15,800	10,400.00	1,500.00	471.90
A. J. M. Smith	Ballywillan	20,000	10,408.80	3,600.00	3,133.90
W. M. Brown	Second Comber	15,600	10,694.00	1,500.00	471.90

Where a Housing Allowance is paid C.M.F. contributes £750 per annum

PERSONNEL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Extra Parochial Work

1. Ten Ministers have received permission for extra parochial work, up to six hours per week.

2. Presbytery Clerks are asked to submit an annual report to the Personnel and Planning Committee re Ministers in their Presbytery involved in such work.

Locomotory Expenses

3. The 1999 recommendations for locomotory allowances were set in the usual way, based on an average ministerial mileage of 13,000 miles in a car of 1400cc.

	N Ireland (£)	Rep of Ireland (IR£)
Standing Charges:		
Insurance	330	380
Road Tax	150	175
Depreciation	1955	2211
Loss of Interest	380	400
Running Costs:		
Petrol	1300	1140
Repairs and Servicing	485	494
Total Costs	4600	4800

It was felt that the downward adjustment which had been made to the recommended figures over the past two years to take account of the transition to a calculation based on 13,000 miles, was no longer necessary, and therefore, the Committee recommended the following minimum locomotory allowances for 1999:

N Ireland: £4600 (1998: £4440) ROI IR£4800 (1998: IR£4680)

Inadequate Expenses Grant Scheme

4. Applications for grants towards inadequate expenses were approved for 30 Ministers, the total amount of grant support being, approximately, £39,500, compared to approx. £43,500 in the previous year.

The Committee is very grateful to all Ministers, Congregational Treasurers and Presbytery Clerks / Finance Conveners who pay careful attention to the completion and necessary authorisations on the application form. It draws attention to the fact that grant applications cannot be dealt with unless these sections of the form are fully completed.

5. The recommended limits for 1998 claims under this scheme are as follows:

N Ireland: £4800; Republic of Ireland: IR£5400

6. During the year the Committee considered the matter of income received from Chaplaincies and Clerkships in the calculation of grants under this scheme. It was agreed that the equivalent of 10% of the recommended limits should be disregarded in income from the above sources, in recognition of the additional expenses incurred in fulfilling these duties.

City Area Grants

7. No eligible claims were received from Ministers still entitled to make claims under this discontinued grant scheme. Such Ministers were, however, encouraged to consider applications under the Inadequate Expenses Grant scheme.

Licentiatees

8. The responses from Presbyteries to last year's report re transferring Licentiatees to the care of the Presbyteries in which they are serving produced a very clear verdict in favour of such a change.

The Committee also noted and supported the view expressed in a number of Presbytery responses that Licentiatees should be formally invited to sit and deliberate, and that Presbyteries should involve Licentiatees as fully as possible in the work of the Presbytery.

Appropriate resolutions are appended.

Supply Fees

9. Following an undertaking given at last year's General Assembly, the Committee reviewed the matter of Supply Fees (Code, Par 238).

Information was sought from Vacancy Conveners and from the Pulpit Supply Association which indicated that a very large proportion of Supplies were undertaken by Retired Ministers and Elders, with only a few being undertaken by Students for the Ministry eg of the 56 Supplies provided by the PSA between February and November 1998, 42 were fulfilled by Elders.

The Committee felt that while the present formula for calculating the Supply Fee worked well in principle, it would be appropriate to amend the relevant paragraph of the Code so that the precise details of the formula, and therefore the level of the Supply Fee, could be adjusted from time to time by the Union Commission.

If approved in principle, the relevant amending legislation would be brought to next year's General Assembly, together with revised proposals regarding the setting of allowances for Vacancy Conveners.

Additional Pastoral Personnel

10. The Committee considered and approved applications re the appointment of additional pastoral personnel from four congregations, and was pleased to give general guidance to congregations beginning to consider such appointments. It continues to commend the 1997 General Assembly Guidelines for such appointments.

11. Consideration of the issues raised under the Code, Par 235 re the appointment of additional pastoral personnel was deferred pending the outcome of the report due from the Ad Hoc Committee on the Tyrone Memorial.

R J A BELL, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the congregation of Dunlop Memorial be amalgamated with the congregation of Glengormley from 1st July, 1999 or other suitable date under the name of Glengormley on terms to be agreed with the Union Commission.
3. That the Central Ministry Fund be authorised to pay grants towards expenses incurred by ministers in congregations, up to a limit of £4,800 in N Ireland, and IR£5,400 for ministers residing in the Republic of Ireland, within the terms of Resolution 3, page 70, General Assembly Minutes 1988, as reviewed in the 1995 Report, pages 58f.
4. That when, under the Associate Ministry Scheme, a congregation pays a salary to an Associate Minister which is above the appropriate ministerial minimum, the congregation shall pay the full amount of the difference between the appropriate minimum and the salary paid, in addition to the current assessments.
5. That, upon Licensing, Licentiatees should be supplied with credentials and transferred to the Care of the Presbytery in which they are serving.
6. That Presbyteries should formally invite Licentiatees to 'sit and deliberate', and should involve them as much as possible in the work of the Presbytery.
7. That, in light of the report re Supply Fees, the General Assembly encourage the Personnel and Planning Committee to bring detailed proposals and relevant amending legislation to the 2000 General Assembly.
8. That the Union Commission, with its associated working committee, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 128 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 128 (1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 128 (1) of the Code the words "the Strategy for Mission Committee" be deleted.

Anent Par 193 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that an additional sub-paragraph (3) be inserted in Par 193 of the Code as follows:

(3) Should the application of the foregoing provisions in sub-paragraphs (1) and (2) give rise to serious difficulty the Union Commission shall have power, after consultation with the Presbytery, to determine eligibility.

And that the present sub-paragraph (3) be re-numbered as (4).

Anent Par 274(5) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that a new sub-section (c) be added to Par 274(5) of the Code as follows:

- (c) Arrange for a Reviewable Tenure appointment upon the following terms:
 - (i) the Form of Leave to Call shall provide for the appointment to be reviewed and/or terminated after a specified time or in specified circumstances;
 - (ii) if the congregation concerned is subsequently united with another congregation, and the minister is accepted by that congregation also as its settled minister, the Reviewable Tenure provisions shall be deemed to have lapsed;
 - (iii) except as provided for in sub-paragraph (5)(c)(ii) above, the outgoing minister shall not be eligible to apply for the united charge;
 - (iv) the appointment shall not be terminated without six months notice in writing given by the Union Commission to the minister, the congregation and the Presbytery;
 - (v) after termination of the appointment the minister shall be eligible for salary and pension contributions at the rate of the appropriate ministerial minimum as a charge upon CMF until he/she receives another Call, or for a period not exceeding twelve months, whichever is the sooner;
 - (vi) during such period suitable work may be offered to him/her by the Union Commission. Should such minister at any time refuse to perform the duties thus assigned, without giving reasons deemed satisfactory by the Commission, the above financial arrangement shall become null and void;
 - (vii) the provisions of Code Par 274(8)(b)(ii) shall not apply.
 - (viii) where a congregation granted a Reviewable Tenure appointment receives no application within twelve months the whole arrangement shall be reconsidered by the Union Commission.

Anent Appendix 5A of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Appendix 5A of the Code after the words “for every three years of service” there be inserted the additional words “This Call is made out in conformity with the terms fixed by the Commission on Union of Congregations, a copy of which is herewith attached.”

W J ORR

REPORTS OF SYNODS AND PRESBYTERIES

SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN

The **SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN** report that Rev Frederick Alexander Campbell Wilson, MA, is their Moderator, and that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held at Killinchy on Tuesday 14th March, 2000 at 11.30 am.

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev G F McKeown, BA, DipTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev D G Bailie, BA, BD, Minister of West Church, Bangor retired on 31st May, 1998; the Rev T S Reid, BA, BD MTh, DipEd, DD, Professor of Practical Theology, retired on 30th September, 1998; the Rev D Johnston, BA, Minister of First Newtownards, retired on 31st January, 1999; that the Rev D M Spratt, ALCM, BEd, DipTh, Associate Minister of Hamilton Road, Bangor, resigned on 31st August, 1998 and was received as a Minister without Charge; the Rev W J P Bailie, BA, BD, MPhil, Assistant Minister of Greenwell Street, Newtownards, resigned and was installed to missionary service with the Overseas Board on 20th September, 1998; that the Rev N J McCullough, BSc, BD, having presented credentials from the Newry Presbytery, was ordained and installed in Ballygrainey on 7th May, 1998; that they licensed as probationers for the Christian Ministry Mr C J Gamble on 7th June, 1998; Mr J Wylie on 14th June, 1998; Mr M M Stewart on 28th June, 1998; that they issued credentials to the following licentiates under the care of Presbytery: Mr M C A Gray on 6th October, 1998, having accepted a Call to Carnone and Convoy; Mr W R B Martin on 17th December, 1998, having accepted a Call to Finvoy; Mr A A Cole on 2nd February, 1999, having accepted a Call to Garvaghy and Anaghline; that they have under their care the Revs D M Spratt, C D Mawhinney as Ministers without Charge; Messrs C J Gamble, M M Stewart, J Wylie, Licentiates; Messrs C Ebbinghaus, C A Grant, S Henning, C W P Kennedy, Students for the Ministry; that they have visited the Congregations of Lisnabreen; Streat, Newtownards; Trinity, Bangor; First Bangor; that Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately; that voting on Overtures anent Code Par 95(d); Par 163; Par 165(5) was in each case 49 for and none against.

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev A D Davidson, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev Jonathan Curry, MEng, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry, was ordained and installed as Minister of Second Keady and Drumhillery on 3rd December, 1998; that the Rev Andrew J Thompson,

BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast, was ordained and installed as Minister of Craigavon and Vinecash on 4th December, 1998; that they have under their care the Rev W A Shaw, BD, as a Minister without Charge; that they have under their care as Licentiate, Mr R I Abraham, BA, BD, and Mr J G Jones, BA, BD; that during the year they visited the congregations of Caledon, Cladmore and First Armagh; and that Financial Reports of congregations are being printed separately.

Under care

Visited

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R E Boggs, MA, is their Moderator; that the Rev W N Duncan, BD, MTh, was installed and commissioned to missionary service in India in Edengrove congregation on 9th September, 1998; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge R N Stewart, BA, BD, (Retired); that they have under their care as a student for the Ministry Mr Mervyn Gibson; that during the year they visited the congregations of Raffrey and First Killyleagh; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately; and that the voting on the overtures anent Pars 95(d); 163; 165(5) of the Code was 22 for, nil against.

Installed

Under care

Student

Visited

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev A S Thompson, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev H R C Moore, MA, Senior Minister of Banbridge Road, Dromore, died on 14th January, 1999; Rev D M Scott, BA, BD, DMin, Minister of St Columba's, retired from the active ministry on 30th September, 1998; that Rev G W M Glasgow, BA, MAR, DipThS, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast, was ordained to the office of the Christian Ministry and installed to the pastoral oversight to the congregations of Drumlough and Anahilt Congregations on 2nd September, 1998; that Rev J G Trueman, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh, was installed to the pastoral oversight of the congregation of Banbridge Road, Dromore, on 22nd October, 1998; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs R J Mattison, BD and J Honeyford, BA, BD; that they have under their care as students for the ministry Mr Samuel J Castles, Mr Michael McClenaghan, Mr Niall Samuel Robert Lockhart and Mr William Joseph Moody Parker; that during the year they visited the congregations of Elmwood and Drumbo; and that Financial Statements are being published separately by each congregation.

Died

Retired

Ordained

Installed

Under care

Students

Visited

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev C D McClure, BSc, BD, MSSc, is their Moderator, that the Rev J G Trueman, BA, BD, resigned as the Minister of Second and Third Rathfriland on 21st October, 1998 having received a Call from the congregation of Banbridge Road, Dromore; that Mr T D Hagan, BA, BTh, and Mr J A Peacock, BA, BTh, were Licensed as Probationers for the Ministry in Newcastle on 7th June, 1998; that Mr E S McDowell, BSc, BD, and Mr R D McDowell, BSc, BD, were Licensed as Probationers for the

Resigned

Licensed

Under care
Visited

Ministry in First Rathfriland on 19th June, 1998; that credentials were issued to Mr W A McCully, BSSc, BD, a Licentiate, having received a Call from the congregations of Letterkenny and Trenta; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge (Retired) the Rev E G McAuley, BA, BD, MSc; that during the year they visited the congregations of Scarva Street, Banbridge and Castlewellan and that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Retired

Resigned

Ordained

Licensed

Under care

Students

Visited

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev B McMillen, BA, is their Moderator; that the Rev R Nixon, BA, minister of Bessbrook, retired on 30th September, 1998; that the Rev J Nixon, BTh, BA, minister of Fourtowns and Poyntzpass, retired on 1st November, 1998; that the Rev A K Duddy, BA, BD, minister of Clarkesbridge and First Newtownhamilton, Garmany's Grove and McKelvey's Grove, demitted his charge on 9th June, 1998, and was received as a Minister without Charge; that the Rev D Rankin, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast, was ordained and installed as minister of First and Second Markethill on 8th May, 1998; that they licensed as probationers for the Christian ministry Mr R J Stevenson, BA, on 21st June, 1998, and Mr W J A Moody, BSc, on 28th June, 1998; that Mr N J McCullough, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards on receipt of a call from the congregation of Ballygrainey; that Mr J Curry, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was issued with credentials on receipt of a call from the congregation of Second Keady and Drumhillery; that they have under their care as ministers without charge the Rev A K Duddy and Rev D McKee (Retired); Messrs R J Stevenson and W J A Moody as licentiates; Mr K W J Hanna, Mr K Henderson, and Mr D S Henry as students for the ministry; that during the year they visited the congregations of Jerrettspass and Kingsmills and Rostrevor and Warrenpoint; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately; and that the voting in respect of the Overture anent Par 95 of the Code was 11 for and 1 against, in respect of the Overture anent Par 163 of the Code was 12 for and 1 against, and in respect of Par 165(5) of the Code was 11 for and 1 against.

SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE

The **SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE** report that Rev J H MacConnell, MA, BD, is their Moderator and that the next stated meeting is to be held in First Larne Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, 14th March, 2000 at 10.00 am.

Died

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev D W Brice, BSSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev S M Gray, BSc, BD, minister of Carnlough, Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin, died on 4th October, 1998; that the Rev D A Murphy, BA, BD, MTh, having

presented credentials from the Presbytery of Tyrone, was installed as Minister of Cuningham Memorial, Cullybackey on 26th June, 1998; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Mr R D Gregg, BSc, BD; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Mr L H Eagleson, Mr S D Finlay, Mr C K McDowell and Mr S Richmond; that the congregations of Connor, Buckna and Brookside, Ahoghill were visited; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately in pamphlet form; that the voting on Overtures sent down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act was as follows: anent Par 95 (d) 50 for, 0 against; anent Par 163 49 for, 0 against; and anent Par 165(5) 49 for, 0 against.

Installed

Under care
Students

Visited

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev F A Bradley, BA, BD, is their Moderator; Rev Douglas Armstrong, MA, minister of Greenisland retired on 6th September, 1998; they installed Rev T R Graham, BA, as minister of Joymount on 24th June, 1998, he having presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane; they ordained Mr Stephen A McCracken, a Licentiate under their care, to the Christian Ministry on 24th January, 1999 and appointed him to missionary service in Malawi; they have under their care as a minister without charge, Rev D R Byers, BA, DipTh, as licentiates Messrs Philip W Patterson, Bmus, BD, and James C Simms, BA, BD, and as students, Messrs Colin Burcombe, Ian Carton and Stephen J Lockington; that the congregations of First Islandmagee and Second Islandmagee were visited during the year and that the Financial Statements of congregations are being printed separately.

Retired

Installed

Ordained

Under care

Students

Visited

The **COLERAINE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr B Kingsmore, DipTh, BD, is their Moderator, that on 6th September, 1999 the Very Rev Dr D H Allen, MA, BD, retired from the duties of the active ministry and demitted the charge of New Row, Coleraine; that on 8th September, 1998 the Rev Dr Charles Cameron, MA, BD, resigned the charge of Burnside upon his call to Castlemilk West Church of Scotland, Glasgow, and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Glasgow; that on 3rd September, 1998 the Rev T Peter Fleming, BA, DipGC, BD, MBA, was installed to the oversight of First Coleraine having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Donegal; that on 7th June, 1998 Mr Geoffrey D Allen, BA, BTh, was licensed as a probationer for the ministerial office; that the Presbytery has under its care as Ministers without Charge the Rev J D Mark, MA, BD, and the Rev W Morrison, BA, and as a licentiate Mr Thomas Mulholland, and as students for the ministry Mr David J McClelland and Mr Phillip B Wilson; and that the Financial Statements of congregations are being printed separately.

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Under care

Students

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R F S Poots, OBE, BA, BD, MA, is their Moderator; that Rev S McCartney BD, minister of Finvoy retired on 30th April, 1998; that Rev A C Rankin,

Retired

Installed BSc, BD, was installed at First Ballymoney on 18th June, 1998; that
 Ordained Rev B Martin, BEd, MCS, was ordained at Finvoy on 13th January,
 Under care 1999; that they have under their care as licentiates Mr Gareth Aitcheson,
 Students BEng, BD, and Mr M Henderson, BA, MDiv; and as students for the
 ministry Mr D Steele and Mr G Chestnutt; that during the year they
 Visited visited the congregations of Drumreagh and Dunluce; and that the
 Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J
 Brackenridge, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that on 10th May, 1998,
 Ordained having received Credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast, they
 ordained Mr James Robert Burnett, BA, MPhil, MA, to the Christian
 Ministry and inducted him in First Antrim, as Assistant to the
 Moderator; that on 17th May, 1998, they ordained Mr Rodney David
 Under care Cameron, BD, and commissioned him along with Mrs Denise Cameron
 to Missionary Service in France; that they have under their care as
 Licentiates, Mr C M Glover, BA, (QUB), BA, (Oxon), and Miss A E
 Students Tolland, BSc, PGCE, BD, MTh; that they have under their care as
 Students for the Christian Ministry, Mrs L J Duncan (formerly
 Robinson), BA, Messrs D A Simpson, BTh, A V Stewart, MA; that
 Visited during the year they visited the congregations of Templepatrick and
 Lylehill; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being
 printed separately.

SYNOD OF BELFAST

The **SYNOD OF BELFAST** report that the Rev Professor J Patton
 Taylor, MA, MTh, is their Moderator, and that the stated meeting of
 Synod will be held in Union College, Belfast on Tuesday, 14th March,
 2000, at 10.00 am.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev
 John Nicholl Seawright, MA, is their Moderator; that the Rev James
 Resigned Leslie Casement, BA, BD, minister of the congregations of
 Glengormley and Dunlop Memorial, demitted his charge on 26th
 August, 1998 on receipt of a Call to Sixmilecross and was furnished
 with credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that the Rev Peter
 Fitzgerald Jemphrey, BEd, BD, Associate Minister in the congregations
 of Glengormley and Dunlop Memorial, demitted his charge on 28th
 Installed February, 1999; that the Rev Thomas William Alexander Greer, LLB,
 BD, was installed in Macrory Memorial, Newington and Sinclair
 Licensed Seamen's on 2nd October, 1998, credentials having been received from
 the Presbytery of Omagh; that Mr David Murphy was licensed as a
 Probationer for the Ministry in Immanuel on 12th June, 1998; that Mr
 John Craig Teeney, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was issued
 with credentials on receipt of a Call from the congregations of Carlisle
 Road and Crossroads; that Mr Alan William Carson, a Licentiate under

the care of Presbytery, was issued with credentials on receipt of a Call from the congregations of Donoughmore and Stranorlar; that Mr Gary William Montgomery Glasgow, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was issued with credentials on receipt of a Call from the congregations of Drumlough and Anahilt; that Mr Robert William Gaston, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was issued with credentials on receipt of a Call from the congregations of Second Castleberg and Alt; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs C R J Brown, BA (Retired), L E Carroll, BA, BD, C I McKnight, BA, and W M Smyth, BA, BD, MP; that they have under their care as Licentiates Messrs A McCullough, D Murphy and N Patrick; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Messrs J M Casement, W H G Crawley, W J Hayes and M Jones; that they have visited the congregations of Duncairn and St Enoch's and Abbey (Monkstown); and that congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

Under care

Students

Visited

The **BELFAST SOUTH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev T W Gordon, BA, BD, PGCE, is their Moderator; that Mr James Burnett, BA, MPhil, MA, a licentiate under the care of the Presbytery was issued with Credentials on receipt of a Call from the Congregation of First Antrim to be Moderator's Assistant; that Mr Alan Boal, BA, BD, a licentiate under the care of the Presbytery was issued with credentials on receipt of a Call from the congregation of Abbey, Dublin; that Mr Andrew Thompson, BA, BD, a licentiate under the care of the Presbytery was issued with rredentials on receipt of a Call from the congregations of Craigavon and Vinecash; that they have under their care as Ministers without charge Rev B R Hughes, Stated Supply Nelson Memorial, Rev P A J McBride; that they have under their care as students for the Ministry Miss C Reid, Mr I Harbinson, Mr P McDowell; that they visited the congregations of Shankill Road Mission and Townsend Street during the year; that Finanical Statements are being printed separately.

Credentials

Under care

Students

Visited

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev George Moffett, BTh, MTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev William Harshaw, BEd, BD, resigned his Charge as minister of Mountpottinger on 15th August, 1998; that the Rev D R Baker, BA, MDiv, was inducted as a Minister in Recognised Service under the Social Witness Board in his appointment as Development Officer with Mediation Network for Northern Ireland, on 12th January, 1999; that Mr David J Montgomery, BA, MDiv, presented credentials as a Licentiate of the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster and was Ordained to the office of the Christian Ministry and Inducted as Associate Minister in Knock congregation on 27th November, 1998; that Mr Graeme J Kennedy, LLB, BD, was Licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 21st June, 1998; that the Rev Richard J Montgomery, BA, BD, MA, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus on his receiving a Call to

Resigned

Inducted

Ordained

Licensed

Under care be Associate Minister in the congregation of First Carrickfergus; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs R A Crooks, MA, Dr E Jamieson, BA, MEd, MTh, PhD, H E Lewis, BD, DipEd, L R Pedlow, MA, S Scott, BD, PhD, ThD; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Mr Graeme J Kennedy, LLB, BD; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Messrs Michael N Davidson and Andrew N Kerr; that the congregations of Saintfield Road, Stormont and Strand were visited during the year; and that the Financial Reports for the Congregations are being printed separately.

Students

Visited

SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH

The **SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH** report that the Rev Brian A Hunt, BA, CertTheol, MTh, is their Moderator; that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held in Pettigo Presbyterian Church on Wednesday, 15th March, 2000, at 2.30 pm.

Resigned

Ordained

Under care

Visited

The **DERRY AND STRABANE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Robert Stirling, BD, DipEd, is their Moderator; that the Rev Terence Richard Graham, BA, Minister of Second Castlederg and Alt, having received a call from the Congregation of Joymount, demitted his charge on 23rd June, 1998 and was furnished with credentials to the Carrickfergus Presbytery; that Mr John Craig Teeney, BSc, BTh, a Licentiate under the care of the North Belfast Presbytery, having presented credentials was ordained and installed as Minister of Carlisle Road and Crossroads on 1st May, 1998; that Mr Richard Ker Graham, BA, BTh, a Licentiate under the care of the Presbytery, was ordained and installed as Minister of First Castlederg and Killeter on 18th June, 1998; that they have under their care as Licentiates Mr E A Smith, BA, and Mr M Dunn, BSc, BD; that they have under their care as a Student for the Ministry Mr Robert Alexander Campbell, BA; that the congregations of Strabane and Magheramason were visited during the year; that the voting on the Overture anent Par 95(d) of the Code was for 29, against 0; that the voting on the Overture anent Par 163 of the Code was for 29, against 0; that the voting on the Overture anent Par 165(5) of the Code was for 29, against 0; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Retired

Under care

Visited

The **FOYLE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Clive Glass, BSc, PhD, is their Moderator; that the Rev N Hunter, MA, BD, DipTh, Minister of Banagher retired on 30th September, 1998 and Rev I J Wilson, MBE, MA, PhD, Minister of Cumber and Upper Cumber retired on 30th September, 1998; that they have under their care, as a Minister without Charge, the Rev K Campbell, BD; that they have under their care, as a Licentiate, Mr A J A Rosborough, MA, BD; that during the year the congregations of Ballykelly and First Limavady were visited; that the Financial Statements are being printed separately; that

the voting for the Overtures sent down to Presbyteries by the General Assembly were as follows: Overture anent Par 95(d) for 30, against 0; Overture anent Par 163 for 30, against 0; Overture anent Par 165(5) for 30, against 0.

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev N S Harrison, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev A C Rankin, BSc, BD, minister of Seskinore and Edenderry, demitted his charge on 17th June, 1998, having received a call to First Ballymoney; that the Rev T W A Greer, LLB, BD, minister of Cavanaleck and Aughtentaine, demitted his charge on 1st October, 1998, having received a call from the united congregations of Macrory Memorial, Newington and Sinclair Seamen's, Belfast; that the Rev J L Casement, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast, was installed as minister of Sixmilecross on 27th August, 1998; that they have under their care as a student for the ministry Mr David William Reid; that the congregations of Mountjoy and First Omagh were visited during the year; and that the Financial Statements are being printed together in booklet form.

Resigned

Installed

Student

Visited

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev T J Conway, LLB, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev D A Murphy resigned his charge as minister of the congregations of Bellaghy and Knockloughrim on 25th June, 1998, having received a call to the Cullybackey Congregation and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Mr Adrian T S McAlister, BSc, MSc, and Mr Colin W A Martin, BSc; that during the year they visited the congregations of First Cookstown and Molesworth; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being published separately; the voting for the Overtures sent down to Presbyteries by the General Assembly were as follows: Overture anent Par 95(d) for 28, against 0, Overture anent Par 163 for 35, against 0; Overture anent Par 165(5) for 35, against 0.

Resigned

Students

Visited

SYNOD OF DUBLIN

The **SYNOD OF DUBLIN** report that the Rev Jean Mackarel, BA, BD, is their Moderator; and that the next stated meeting is appointed to be held in Dublin, at Adelaide Road, Donore, on 13th March, 2000, at 7.00 pm, or at other suitable place and date.

The **DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev A W Carson, BSc (Econ), BD, is their Moderator; that on 2nd September, 1998, Rev T P Fleming, BA, DipGC, BD, MBA, resigned his charge as minister of Ballylennon and St Johnston, having accepted a call to First Coleraine congregation, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Coleraine; that Mr Alan William Carson, BSc, BD,

Resigned

Ordained having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Belfast North, was ordained and installed to the pastoral oversight of the congregations of Stranorlar and Donoughmore on 29th May, 1998; that Mr William Alexander McCully, BSc, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh, was ordained and installed to the pastoral oversight of the congregations of Trinity, Letterkenny and Trenta, on 13th June, 1998; that Mr Mark Charles Arthur Gray, BA, MDiv, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards, was ordained and installed to the pastoral oversight of the congregations of Carnone and Convoy, on 30th October, 1998; that voting on Overtures anent Code Pars 95(d), 163, 165(5) was 14 for and 0 against; that the congregations of Milford and Raphoe were visited during the year; that the Financial Statements of the congregations are being published in a Year Book.

Visited

The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev James Carson, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev James Theodore Riddall, MA, died on 23rd October, 1998; that on 6th November, 1998, Rev Alan Boal, BD, was ordained and installed as minister of Abbey congregation; that on 14th June, 1998 Mr Brian Colvin, BA, BD, was licensed to preach the Gospel publicly as a probationer for the ministerial office; that the Presbytery has under its care as a licentiate, Mr Kenneth Gibson; that during the year the following congregations were visited, Dun Laoghaire, Naas and Athy, Trinity, Cork and Aghada; that the Financial Statements of all congregations are being published in a limited edition of a Year Book; that voting on Overtures was as follows:

anent Par 95(d) of the Code: 28 For, nil Against

anent Par 163 of the Code: 24 For, 1 Against

anent Par 165(5) of the Code: 27 For, 1 Against.

Died

Ordained

Licensed

Under care

Visited

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev David Thomas Moore, MA, BD, is their Moderator; that they have no students for the Ministry under their care; that during the year the congregations of Ballyalbany and Glennan were visited; that the financial reports are being printed in Booklet form; that voting on Overtures anent Par 95(d), Par 163, Par 165(5) in each case was 25 For, 0 Against.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BUSINESS BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The arrangement of recent years by which a backdrop was provided for the Assembly platform, and the words of resolutions and amendments were projected on to a screen, is being repeated this year. This procedure helps members to follow other business, but it is only the attested Minutes of Assembly that constitute the authoritative record.

2. Copies of the Annual Accounts are available to members of Assembly upon request to the Financial Secretary's office.

3. This year several requests were received for the "Alternative" presentation of reports. These reports are indicated in the Order of Business in the yellow pages.

4. In the "Alternative" format each Board is given a certain period of time (eg 30 minutes) for a "Presentation" including not only the proposing and seconding of the Report, but the introduction of guests, the showing of videos, etc as may be desired. Outside speakers require the permission of the Business Board. Assembly questions for clarification then follow, and finally the resolutions. The speeches of the proposer and seconder, and any comments from committee conveners should all be included in the allotted period of time, and these officebearers should not speak again (except on a point of clarification or to close the debate on a resolution) otherwise the report is liable to overrun and cause business to lapse.

5. 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.

6. Amendments should be written out and submitted to the Clerk's desk before they are spoken to.

7. If business lapses, Conveners will again have the choice of standing by for the first available slot, or having the item rescheduled for Thursday evening.

8. If lapsed business accumulates, the normal abbreviated timings could be implemented as follows:-

Proposing a group of Reports - 10 minutes reduced to 7

Seconding a group of Reports - 7 minutes reduced to 5

Other speeches - 5 minutes reduced to 3.

9. If business runs late on Friday afternoon the Assembly may adjourn to the Minor Hall or May Street Church.

10. The front row of seats in the Assembly Hall will be reserved for those wishing to speak, who are requested to come forward to these reserved seats in good time.

Review of 1998 Assembly

11. The arrangements for the 1998 Assembly were reviewed. It was agreed that in 1999 Licentiates and Stated Supplies be given "permission to

speak”, and that a resolution be submitted to the effect that they be invited to “sit and deliberate” thereafter.

Other Churches

12. This year the Church of Ireland and the United Reformed Church made changes in arrangements for invited guests.

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

Church of Ireland General Synod 1999: Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson; Mr W H Henry.

Methodist Conference 1999: Very Rev Dr John Dixon, Rev John Faris, Mr William Hull, Mr John Jeffrey.

Presbyterian Church of Wales: Rev W T J Richardson.

Eglise Reformee de France: Rev J Seawright.

14. In addition Rev R J T McMullan who was originally appointed to the URC Assembly, was appointed to the Church of Scotland General Assembly in place of Rev Dr John Lockington.

15. Very Rev Dr John Dixon remains our delegate to the 1999 URC Assembly, along with our voting member, Rev G A J Ellis. That is likely to be the pattern of representation to the URC Assembly in future.

Donegal Memorial

16. In 1998 the Presbytery of Donegal submitted a Memorial stating that “at Presbyteries a high proportion of voting elders are not familiar with the names of nominees being proposed for the position of Moderator of the General Assembly.”

17. The Presbytery accordingly submitted the following proposals.

Proposers wishing to have a nominee considered by Presbytery must provide written information for members of Presbytery. This should be circulated by the Clerk of Presbytery and should reach members not later than two days in advance of the Presbytery meeting.

Information should:

(a) be not more than 200 words;

(b) consist of biographical background, along with the wider interests and activities of the nominee;

(c) be signed by the proposer;

(d) be submitted with the agreement of the nominee.

18. *At the Presbytery meeting, further information or debate on the nominees will not be permitted.*

19. These proposals were sent down to Presbyteries for discussion and report.

20. Returns from Presbyteries revealed very varied reactions. 9 Presbyteries were opposed to these suggestions, 4 were in favour, 4 gave qualified approval and 4 made various comments without coming down clearly on either side.

21. A number of quotations will reflect the wide spectrum of opinions expressed.

“We would resist any change which would lead to official candidates and campaigns being organised - although some feel that it is better that this is done officially than unofficially.”

“The proposal brings the nomination process perilously close to a Presidential election.”

“A Moderator is not chosen because he has submitted his manifesto to the electorate and secured the support of the majority for it. The policy of the Assembly is decided by the Court itself and not by its Moderator.”

“There was agreement that names of those being nominated should be provided before the Presbytery meetings.”

“The proposals would prevent nominees being “sprung” upon Presbytery meetings.”

“The proposals would bring the procedure ... more fully into the public domain. This will heighten media interest.”

“Presbyteries are free to have their own standing orders with regard to this item of business.”

“It would be better for the names of nominees to be made available several months before the voting takes place.”

The requirement of 2 days notice “will add to the burden already imposed on Clerks of Presbytery”.

22. Not all Presbyteries were convinced that the lack of information about nominees is as serious as the Memorial seemed to suggest.

23. From the returns received it would appear that there may be some support for the suggestion that members of Presbytery should have notice before the meeting of the names being proposed.

24. Presbyteries have reasonable freedom to order their own affairs within the general law of the Church, so the precise procedures could vary a little from place to place (eg whether or not all proposals would be passed through a Business Committee some days beforehand).

25. A resolution is submitted to test the mind of the Assembly on this suggestion. There seems to be no consensus on any other proposal in the Memorial.

Board Membership

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 1999-2000, together with the associated Arrangements Committee, is as follows:-

- (a) The Moderator, and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, the former Clerks, preceding three Moderators, all Assembly Conveners and Secretaries of Commissions and Boards, Financial Secretary, Youth and Information Officers.
- (b) Rev. W.T. Corder; W.J. Moorhead — Rev. Dr. J. Thompson; W.H. Scott — Rev. J. Harper; S.B. Cunningham — Rev. S.W.W. Neilly; Alan Robinson — Rev. C.D. McClure; Mrs. G. Chambers — Rev. Dr. M.A. Barry; W. Flack.

- (c) Rev. J.J. Andrews; W.G. McDowell — Rev. J.W. McAuley; R.J. McDowell — Rev. T.J. McCormick; P. McGonigle — Rev. J.A. Thompson; H. Taggart— Rev. D. Bannerman; J.M. Eccles.
- (d) Rev. T.C. Morrison; A.W. Marshall — Rev. Ruth Patterson; M. Kelly — Rev. Dr. W.J.H. McKee; Miss V.J. Wilson.
- (e) Rev. M. Bolton; A. Craig — Rev. J. McWhirter; D. Edgar — Rev. B.A. Hunt; J. Cochrane — Rev. T.J. Conway; R. Kyle.
- (f) Rev. A. Carson; Mrs. I. Scott — Rev. J. Carson; Gordon Henderson — Rev. D.T. Moore; J. Jenkins.

**A. ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE (5) Rev. R. Vallyley,
Convener**

- (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, Deputy Clerk, Information Officer, Hospitality Secretaries, H.W. Templeton, T.H. Cochrane; Rev. R. Vallyley.
- (x) Revs. J.R. Lambe, P.T. Dalzell; G.Y. Crooks, N. Millar.
- (y) Revs. T.C. Morrison, W.T. Corder, T.J. McCormick, T. Conway; Miss V.J. Wilson, A.W. Marshall, W.G. McDowell, M. Kelly.

The Methodist Conference 1998

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson reports:

1. The 229th Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland was held in Centenary Church, Leeson Park, Dublin from Friday 5th June to Tuesday 9th June, 1998.

2. The Presbyterian delegation consisted of Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, Rev C M Hunter, Ms J Cowle and Mr F Newell.

3. The delegation received a warm welcome and conveyed the greetings of the General Assembly.

4. Rev Norman Taggart, the outgoing President, handed over to Rev David Kerr, Superintendent of Grosvenor House, Belfast, who spoke about the changes in society which have taken place, and the need within the church to identify and address the real world issues and to acknowledge that the Christian Church was no longer the principal group defining reality for the world. The pluralist nature of human relationships means that the churches have to take their place, positively and effectively, in the modern world order.

5. A constant theme running through the whole Conference was change and the need to be aware of the changes which are taking place in society and within the churches.

6. The President of the British Conference chaired the conference proceedings in a most efficient manner, combining discipline with humour.

7. All the reports and printed materials used inclusive language and acknowledged the contribution and place of women in the church. The individual Societies were encouraged to use study material produced by the Edgehill Christian Education Centre entitled "Women in the Life of the Church".

8. The reports from the various departments were received and some were debated with vigour.

9. The young people played an ongoing role in the Conference both by helping to lead worship and in their Youth Night, held at Wesley College.

10. It was interesting to hear many of the same concerns expressed about the political and social situation as were evident at the General Assembly.

11. A more informal session entitled, 'Conversation on the Work of God' enabled the wider church to hear of some of the exciting developments in individual Societies.

The URC Assembly 1998

Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson reports:

1. The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church met at the Campus of Nottingham University from 11th - 14th July. This year it was a residential Assembly running from Saturday to Tuesday. I was accompanied by Rev S A Matthews, together with Mrs Hutchinson and Mrs Matthews. Rev Gabrielle Ellis, who represents PCI in our partnership with URC, was present as a full voting member of the Assembly, and read the lesson during one of the worship sessions. The Assembly was held during the period of the Drumcree situation, and the death of the three young boys in Ballymoney. We found amongst delegates a genuine sympathy and concern, and a desire to understand the complexities of our situation.

2. Some things were striking about the format and atmosphere of the Assembly. Worship and Bible Study (taken by Professor Graham Salmon) were an important part of the day. While there were fewer resolutions than at our Assembly, business ran from 9.00 am to 9.00 pm and most members were present for all of the business. The Fellowship of United Reformed Youth (FURY) were very much involved in the life of the Assembly and women played a full part in the proceedings. The Moderator of Assembly was Mrs Wilma Frew and several provincial moderators were women.

3. It was an interesting experience to see a Church in a different setting from our own, and yet often grappling with the same problems. From their Mission Council we heard the familiar challenge about moving from a "maintenance mindset" to a "mission mindset". The report on the environment stressed that the "Greening the Church" is not some extreme notion with overtones of new age thinking, but a return to a fundamental belief about the world as the creation of God and our stewardship role as human beings. Professor Malcolm Johnston drew attention to the expanding sector in the population who are elderly. He produced the astonishing statistic that there are more people living now of retirement age than have ever lived before in the whole of human history. In the over 85 age group the ratio of women to men is four to one. He stressed that all this has implications for the Church, both in terms of using this resource of many retired members who are fit and healthy and also in terms of ministering to those who are not.

4. There was a special resolution emphasising the shortage of candidates for the ministry, and it was apparent during the reception of newly

ordained ministers that many were non-stipendiary ministers. Under the Health and Healing report, mention was made of a Methodist/URC publication "Guidelines for good practice for those involved in the Christian Healing ministry." This Code of conduct seeks to guard against any possible abuse in healing situations. A representative of Churches Together in England introduced the programme for celebrating the Millennium: "A New Start with God. A New Start for the World's Poor. A New Start at Home."

5. The URC was formed from the union of the Presbyterian Church of England, and the Congregational Church in England and Wales and later the Churches of Christ. Continuing to respond its original vision of drawing churches together, the Assembly had before it a scheme of union with the Congregational Union of Scotland. This was accepted and forwarded to the Congregational Union of Scotland for their consideration.

6. Near the end the Moderator made time to meet with visitors and was anxious for us to give our impressions of the Assembly. As I did on that occasion, I would like to record our appreciation for the warm and generous hospitality we received. I personally found this an enriching experience.

The Welsh Assembly

Rev J H MacConnell reports:

1. It was an honour to represent the Presbyterian Church in Ireland at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, which was held at St David's College, Lampeter. The advantages of being a residential Assembly are obvious and the coffee and meal breaks afforded an opportunity to get to know many of those attending.

2. The proceedings of the Assembly are conducted in Welsh, but there is a simultaneous translation facility, which worked well in the College Assembly Hall, though not so well when we adjourned to Bethel Chapel for the opening Communion and Preaching services. The Church is composed of three Associations, North, South and East, the equivalent to our Synods. The Eastern one is largely English speaking, and their representatives address the Assembly in English. From that aspect came a certain amount of feeling about the predominance of Welsh as the language of the Assembly.

3. The theme of the Assembly was 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever', and references were often made to the fact that the end of another millennium is almost upon us, and there is an urgent need for the Church to face the challenges which the new millennium will bring. Foremost in their thinking is the gradual decline in membership, posing a very serious position for the Church in the future.

4. The mission Report stated that life is a pilgrimage in Christ for the Christian. Like pilgrims through the ages there are three aspects to this pilgrimage as the church impacts on society today - pilgrimage is celebration, pilgrimage is movement and pilgrimage is renewal.

5. The Church is not without its vision for the future, and this was reflecting in the appointment of a new General Secretary to replace the retiring, Rev D H Owen. He is the Rev W Gareth Edwards who had been serving as

Assistant Secretary. In addition, a new Professor of Church History was appointed for their College at Aberystwyth, which the corresponding delegates were privileged to visit during the week. The selection of the Moderator takes place one year in advance, so the Rev W I C Williams was duly inducted at the Tuesday evening meeting. His gracious manner, together with a keen sense of humour and a love for telling stories, guided the business through the Assembly with great efficiency.

6. There is an Estates Officer, Mr Eurfyl James, who advises Churches on the maintenance and renovation of their properties. Many former Church premises and Manses are being sold off as they are no longer required, but the funding arising from their sale is being made available for some major projects.

7. I was received as the Irish delegate on 13th July. There was widespread alarm at the news of the death of the Ballymoney children, and the Assembly unanimously resolved to send a fax to the House of Orange requesting the Order to withdraw from Drumcree, together with the pledge that the Church would continue, as it had in the past, to pray for the Ulster situation. On the Wednesday evening at the end of business, a large number of the delegates adjourned to the College Chapel for a time of prayer for Ulster. It was deeply moving to note how seriously they were concerned about the Ulster situation.

8. I found the Welsh experience enlightening, refreshing, challenging and encouraging. The warmth of their friendship was for me the highlight of my time there. It was an experience I shall often recall with pleasure.

Transylvanian District of the Hungarian Reformed Church

Rev Prof J C McCullough reports:

1. The General Assembly of the Hungarian Reformed Church (Transylvanian District) took place in Klosvar on 18-19th May, 1998.

2. The Assembly began with an impressive service of worship in the old church beside the Bishop's Palace. During this 3½ hour long service, forty six young ministers, women and men, were ordained to the ministry. They had completed their training two years earlier and had served for two years as assistant ministers in various congregations. It was a very impressive and moving sight to see so many young women and men taking their vows and seeing the older men of the church lay their hands on them in ordination. On several occasions a son was being ordained by his own father. The Bishop preached an impressive sermon on the need for witness, not just within the church, but outside the church doors as well. At the end of the service the foreign guests were received and we each were able to bring a word of greeting from our home churches.

3. Much of the business transacted was of a local nature but it was encouraging to hear that since the last General Assembly six new churches had been built and eleven new parishes founded. Clearly there is ample work to be done for the Kingdom, both in Transylvania and also in wider Romania.

4. It was a privilege to listen as the work of outreach in Transylvania was being discussed and to bring greetings on behalf of our Moderator, and I am

grateful to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for giving me the opportunity to be present at this Assembly.

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Opening Night

1. The Arrangements Committee appreciates the continuing help and support given by the staff of the General Secretary's office in the arrangements for the General Assembly. They especially note the careful and fair manner in which they allocate the Opening Night tickets. This year we have increased the public allocation of tickets by 100; limited the block booking to four tickets per applicant; dispensed with Ministers' tickets and reverted to Ministers being admitted on presentation of their voting card or other means of identification as a Member.

Hospitality

2. We welcome various guests to our Assembly and appreciate those who provide hospitality for them during the week. Our thanks go to Dr Margaret Haire and Mrs Joyce Moran for all the outings, events and arrangements they make for the guests.

Transport

3. A complimentary limousine for the use of the Moderator has been provided by Bairds of Antrim on Monday evening and by McConnell's of Ballyclare from Monday to Friday.

Conference Equipment

4. The Assembly Buildings Committee has purchased video equipment, screens and platform backdrops as a facility for conferences in the buildings. We are grateful for the use we can make of this equipment without the cost of hiring from an outside source. We are indebted to the Buildings Manager, Mr H Orr, for consulting us when purchasing the equipment and thank him for all his help in the Assembly arrangements. We note with gratitude the gift towards the cost of the equipment from Dr Margaret Haire in memory of her late husband, the Very Rev Dr J L M Haire.

Rev A Begg

5. We look forward to having the Rev Alistair Begg from Parkside Church, Chagrin Falls, Ohio as our guest speaker. He is a gifted expositor of God's Word and will be the main speaker at the Assembly Rally on Wednesday evening.

6. The Moderator has invited Mr Begg to address the House from the Word of God at the Daily Worship sessions, Wednesday to Friday from 12.15 pm. Mr Begg is also the special speaker at the Assembly Youth Nights.

Assembly Rally

7. The Arrangements Committee is never able to ascertain the number who will attend any particular meeting of the Assembly. The Rally in 1998 drew an over-capacity congregation but with the understanding of those attending we seated as many as possible. In 1999 we shall have the Minor Hall available as an overflow facility. At the end of the Rally we would encourage all to exit quickly and carefully as directed by the stewards.

8. The Moderator has called for the offering at the Rally to be donated towards the Jubilee 2000 Appeal sponsored by Christian Aid and TEAR Fund. In response to a request from the Kinghan Mission Committee we shall provide a sign language facility at the Rally for those with impaired hearing.

Catering

9. We encourage Members to use the catering facility within Church House at the Concourse and the Minor Hall for coffee/tea breaks and lunches. Members can assist the flow of customers at tea/coffee break times by purchasing tickets at 6 for £5 available from the Arrangements Desk at the Carrickfergus window.

Voting Cards

10. These should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk at the Carrickfergus window where they are available on Monday evening/Tuesday morning after which Members should contact the Financial Secretary's Office. **Admission to the Private Session is only for those who have and show their own voting card.**

Expenses

11. All Members may claim a daily attendance 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.

Prayer

12. As we congratulate the Rev Dr John Lockington on his nomination as Moderator-designate we encourage Members of the Assembly and of our Congregations to remember him prayerfully and all the Conveners and Officers of the Assembly as they prepare for and conduct the Assembly business. A prayer meeting will be held on Friday, 4th June, at 3.00 pm in the Chapel of Church House.

ROY VALLELY, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommended Order of Business be adopted.
3. That the professional amplification controller and the visual display operator be admitted to the private session.

4. That a grant of £9,500 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.

5. That Presbyteries give prior notice to their members of the names and spheres of service of persons being proposed for the Moderatorship of the General Assembly.

6. That Licentiates serving assistantships and Stated Supplies be invited to sit and deliberate with the General Assembly in future years.

7. That the Business Board, with its associated working committee, for the ensuing year beginning 15 March, 2000 be appointed in accordance with Par 275 of the Code.

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, to meet in Belfast, on 7th day of June 1999.

The Memorial of the Kirk Session of Railway Street, Lisburn, Respectfully Showeth:

That a Report to the General Assembly in 1976 contained the question "Should appointment to the eldership be for life? If not, should there be an accepted retiring age for elders?" It also quoted the view of some "that elderly members of Session should be allowed to ease off in work, or give up altogether, in which case there might be an elder emeritus status for such" (Reports 1976 p 100).

That no action was taken on this suggestion.

That some elders are still interested in this possibility.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to ask the General Board, or other appropriate body, to examine further the suggestion of an accepted age at which those ruling elders who so wish could retire, and to report to the next General Assembly.

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

Adopted by the Kirk Session on 11 January, 1999.

BRIAN GIBSON, Moderator
NORMAN McCLELLAND, Clerk of Session

Licensed by the Presbytery of Dromore at its meeting on 2nd February 1999 and transmitted "simpliciter" to the Synod of Armagh and Down.

DAVID J TEMPLE, Moderator
J I DAVEY, Clerk

Transmitted simpliciter to the General Assembly by the Synod of Armagh and Down at its meeting on 9th March, 1999

F A C WILSON, Moderator
S A MATTHEWS, Clerk

BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

Convener: Rev IVOR SMITH

Secretary: Mr STEPHEN LYNAS

1. As we rapidly approach the end of this century and millennium the committees of our Board are very busy, as these reports will show, in the task of improving communications at many levels.

2. We are delighted that the number of ministers within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who are on e-mail has grown dramatically over the past year to the point where around 150 have this facility. This increases the speed and reduces the cost of internal communications.

3. Following the presentation at last Assembly of a Communications Strategy, we can report that this is now being implemented and the first leaflets for the Board of Social Witness have been completed, with work proceeding on several others. The benefit of this in communicating the work of Boards and Agencies to the wider Church should be seen over the next five years.

4. The Public Worship Committee has engaged in a widespread consultation process on the future use of hymns within our denomination.

5. Mr Stephen Lynas and our team of staff have worked exceedingly hard to let the outside world know what the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is doing in the name of Jesus Christ.

6. This year we bid farewell to Mrs Winnie Cranston from our staff and Rev Trevor Williamson as one of our conveners. Both have served the Board and the Church well and we pay warm tribute to their work.

Mrs Winnie Cranston

7. Mrs Winnie Cranston has been a valued member of staff for some nine years. Her friendly nature has contributed much to the atmosphere in the office and her secretarial work, mainly in relation to the Presbyterian Herald, has been much appreciated. We are glad to note that her health has improved after a long period of illness, and we wish her a happy retirement.

Rev J Trevor Williamson

8. Since 1993 Rev J Trevor Williamson has been Convener of the Church Architecture Committee. With skill and efficiency he has organised the committee's work and guided congregations and ministers through the often complicated areas of alterations to buildings, the erection of new buildings, and the provision of appropriate memorials and windows. His expertise and advice have been invaluable and we are indebted to him for a job well done.

Minister in Recognised Service

Rev Dr Robert Tosh reports:

1. I continue as Chief Producer, Religious Programmes for BBC Northern Ireland. Last year saw a further increase in Religious output on BBC

Radio Ulster with Sunday Sequence now lasting for 1 hour 45 minutes and This New Day 1 hour 30 minutes. For the first time since the programme began some fifteen years ago Sunday Sequence continued to broadcast throughout July and August which allowed us to respond to events like those of Drumcree, the murder of the Quinn children and the atrocity of the Omagh bomb.

2. The horrific event at Omagh presented us, as it did all broadcasting organisations, with an immediate challenge. The Radio 4 Sunday Worship programme the following day happened to be coming from Ballywillan Church and at short notice the service was restructured and the sermon completely re-written. The pre-recorded editions of Thought for the Day were replaced by live talks. The televising of the Act of Remembrance from Omagh was our responsibility and we provided pictures for a huge variety of broadcasters. In addition we transmitted a special edition of Songs of Praise which, through word and music, offered a Christian reflection on the pain and hopes of the town. I mention all this, not to seek congratulation, but as a recognition of how religious programmes (along with many others) were able to help express and reflect the great variety of emotions and reactions of millions of people and to attempt to set these in a wider, more spiritual context.

3. I continue to be aware of and grateful for the support and contribution of a countless number of people in the Churches whose co-operation and enthusiasm makes possible the work we do.

4. At the time of writing I serve the Church also as Convener in charge of the vacancy at Magheragall.

COMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS

1. The significant increase in press releases and the high standard of the department's productions have continued to ensure a heavy workload for the staff. All the main Boards now use the same Presbyterian Church in Ireland logo for identification and are moving towards corporate literature for promotional material.

2. During the year, two members of staff, Miss Jenny Halliday and Miss Victoria Devenney resigned, and two temporary full time appointments were made – Mrs Anne McCully (Secretary) and Mr Martin McNeely (Information Assistant). Mr Alan Sykes was brought in as temporary part-time financial assistant. The new staff are coping admirably with the busy schedule of work. The dedicated help of the PROP ladies in distribution of Points for Prayer booklets and Update leaflets is much appreciated.

3. Mr Stephen Lynas works hard to maintain a high media profile for our Church and to keep our membership informed through the regular news sheets and the increasing use of e-mail.

PRESBYTERIAN HERALD

4. The imaginative editor, Rev Arthur Clarke, along with Mr Ed Connolly and his design team continue to produce an excellent contemporary magazine which has potential for even wider appeal.

VIDEO UNIT

5. The position of a full-time Video Unit director remains unfilled. The current policy for the operation of the unit, whereby larger tasks are contracted out, appears to be working very satisfactorily.

6. The Video Unit's production of 'The Score' for the Board of Social Witness was given the Andrew Cross Award (a UK wide award) and a Gold Award by the Christian Broadcasting Council. The Unit also made five new programmes for the Overseas Board on Eastern Europe entitled 'The Europe File' and a film on Very Rev Dr A J. Weir's most recent visit to China.

W J CARLISLE, Convener

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1. During the past year our Assistant Secretary, Mr Robert Bonar, and our Treasurer, Mr Robert Lyons, both retired. We thank them for the valuable contribution which they have made to the work of the Society.

We welcome our new Assistant Secretary, Mr Alan McMillan, who was a Sub-Librarian at Queen's University, Belfast, from which he took early retirement.

2. The Society has a wide range of interesting publications on historical subjects and further publications are presently in preparation. Throughout the year work has been progressing on a Book of Essays in honour of Professor Finlay Holmes and we have published the latest issue of the Bulletin.

3. As in the past, the Society's programme of events is designed to appeal to a variety of historical interests. During this year we are featuring various aspects of the history of Presbyterians and Presbyterianism in different parts of the world. In particular, we are marking the centenary of the ordination of Andrew Weir of Manchuria and celebrating his contribution to the mission of the Church.

4. We invite all interested to visit the Society's rooms in Church House (Room 220), which are on the second floor and are open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.00am– 12.30pm and Wednesday 10.00am–12.30pm and 1.00pm–3.30pm. Our Assistant Secretary will be pleased to assist callers in whatever way he can.

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

W J H McKEE, Convener

FAMILYBOOKS LTD

1. As an outreach of the Church, Familybooks continues to serve far and wide. From a comprehensive stock of Christian literature, all age groups can confidently rely on having their requests met. The expansion into other relative goods supplements the financial commitment.

2. The staff are always able and willing to help in any aspect of Christian publications.

R J C BOYD, Chairman

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

1. Since our last Report to the General Assembly the Committee has met on six occasions.

2. The Committee dealt with submissions ranging from new buildings to renovation as a result of changing needs or of damage due to faulty building techniques in former times. Most were granted direct approval; some were referred back to Church Committees for further consideration and possible amendment of plans.

3. The work of the Committee would be greatly facilitated if its advice were called upon earlier in the planning process. Some Church Committees have submitted plans, and then by submitting plans to the Planning Authorities, have limited the possible courses of action or amendment which the Architecture Committee can recommend. This can mean that a building is erected which might not serve its purpose to an optimum level. This is especially important in the case of new manses, where the minister and his family are the only ones likely to suffer the inconvenience caused by faulty plans.

4. This matter of early consultation was brought before the Assembly in former years.

5. The Committee would acknowledge the help given by Miss Rosemary Jack as a voluntary adviser in stained-glass window design. Her enthusiasm and talent are freely given to the Church, and those who have benefited not only from her advice in the design, but also her supervision in the manufacture, have good reason to be grateful to her.

6. The Convener and a lay expert have represented the Church in the continuing work of the "Ulster Historic Churches" Trust. The Trust continues to work towards the production of a maintenance manual for the use of church and parish committees.

7. The Church Architecture Committee would express concern about the new survey of historic buildings by the Environment and Heritage Agency, with the result that some listed buildings have been "de-listed". The long-term result could be that the community as a whole may lose some piece of architectural history which can never be replaced.

J T WILLIAMSON, Convener

MEDIA COMMITTEE

1. The Committee has sought to fulfil the remit of the Assembly in a number of ways.
2. Religious advisers for TV and radio have kept us apprised of the impact of rapid change in broadcast media.
3. A media-watch conference examining trends and opportunities in media was organised on 11th March. Areas examined included news and current affairs, the Internet, Digital Broadcasting and Religious Broadcasting. Invitations to attend were extended to members of other Boards, Presbyteries, and all whom we know to be currently involved in broadcasting or media work within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
4. The Committee is monitoring the digital revolution that is now affecting broadcasting throughout the UK and Ireland. It is too early to assess the effect on the current levels of religious broadcasting.
5. The relative cost for access to Digital TV for consumers is a matter of concern, especially as pay per view TV increases. The Committee is concerned that public broadcasting may come under increasing pressure from commercial channels who also own some of the means of transmission.
6. Concern has been expressed to the BBC regarding the change of timing for religious services broadcast on radio.
7. Local coverage of Presbyterian events and productions involving Presbyterians in the media during the last year has been good.
8. A meeting was held with Ulster Television. This offered an opportunity to enquire about and encourage positive presentation in religious and current affairs programmes.
9. Media Watch articles continue in the Herald examining a range of media issues including Internet, Digital Broadcasting, film and theatre reviews.

R HILL, Convener

PUBLIC WORSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Much time and effort was expended during the year on the issue of the proposed new hymnal for our church. In addition to the membership of the Public Worship Committee ten persons appointed by the General Board complemented this Committee and, when meeting with the particular issue of the hymnal in mind, became the Hymnal Committee.
2. During the year Miss Etta Halliday resigned and in her place Rev Richard Hill was appointed. Following the resolution of the last meeting of the Assembly – “that the Public Worship Committee proceed toward the compilation of the new hymnbook” and that a “draft list of items of praise be sent to Presbyteries for comment”, this exercise was implemented. Presbyteries were asked to appoint a co-ordinator to ensure that each congregation had a copy of the questionnaire; to ensure that the questionnaire was taken seriously; and on the basis of information received, to report to the Presbytery concerned and to

send that report plus the questionnaires to the Convener, if possible by 31 December 1998 or after the February 1999 meeting of Presbyteries. The draft list of praises included existing materials, contemporary material, children's material and psalmody (metrical and contemporary).

3. When the Hymnal Committee met on 3 March all Presbyteries had made returns either in the form of reports or questionnaires from congregations. An analysis of these reports/questionnaires revealed that 43% of congregations took part in the exercise. All congregations which made returns used either RCH or CH3. Most congregations used a supplement of some kind, usually Mission Praise or Glory to God. 59% of involved congregations expressed enthusiasm for a new book. 35% expressing little or no enthusiasm. In the light of the fact that in the foreseeable future RCH and CH3 will no longer be available to our Church, it is the considered opinion of the Public Worship Committee that a core hymnal for our church is needed and that a supplement of contemporary materials should be launched simultaneously with this core book to be replaced every 5-10 years in response to either materials going out of fashion or coming into fashion.

4. In response to the request of the Mission Assembly 1997 Committee, consideration was given to the desirability of producing alternative forms of the Communion Service for use of congregations. To date members of the Committee have been circulated with these materials and the discussion continues. The Mission Assembly 1997 Committee also asked us to investigate the feasibility of a central resource for congregations. A question regarding this was included in the questionnaire to congregations. 62% of congregations concerned expressed at least some enthusiasm for this with 24% expressing little or no enthusiasm.

5. At the February meeting of the General Board the Committee was asked to prepare special materials for use at Advent services leading up to the Millennium. This issue will be dealt with at the April meeting of the Committee.

6. A letter from the Church Hymnary Trust was received in January setting out the various options open to us as a Church in regard to our entitlement to royalties in the wake of our Church not proceeding with CH4. After careful discussion it was agreed that until we are clear about where we stand in relation to the proposed new hymnbook for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the position of status quo be adopted for one more year, a fuller report with resolution to be made to the 2000 Assembly.

W T J RICHARDSON, Convener

MEMORIAL RECORD

Rev Stephen Mathieson Gray, BSc, BD, minister of Carnlough and Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin, died on 4th October, 1998 at the early age of 31, in the sixth year of his ministry.

A son of Rev W M and Mrs Gray, he was born in Belfast on 5th July, 1967 and was educated in Belfast and Coleraine, graduating in Science from Queen's University and in Divinity from Union Theological College.

Licensed on 12th June, 1992 by the Presbytery of Ards, and ordained on 29th January, 1993, he served an assistantship in First Portadown before becoming minister of Carnlough and Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin on 26th May, 1995.

Committed to his congregations in the service of his Master and a devoted family man, he loved life and found relaxation in a game of golf. Sustained by the support of many friends and surrounded by the love of his family, he faced the prospect of terminal illness for more than two years with high courage and firm faith.

Mr Gray, who leaves a widow and two young children, is survived also by his parents.

Rev James Theodore Riddall, MA, Senior Minister of Tullamore and Mountmellick, died on 23rd October, 1998 in the 82rd year of his age and the 54th of his ministry.

An Ulsterman by birth and a native of Strabane, Mr Riddall was to spend most of his ministry in England. A man of scholarship, he excelled at Magee University College and Trinity College, Dublin, and for a time he taught classics at Foyle College where he had been a pupil. He pursued his theological studies at the Presbyterian College, Belfast.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Strabane on 28th May, 1944 and Assistant in the congregation of Rosemary, Belfast, it was in the following year that he went to England, serving first in St George's, Blackburn, where he was also a chaplain to Blackburn Royal Infirmary. He moved in 1956 to St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Meols, Hoylake on the Wirral peninsula where he remained for sixteen years until he accepted a call to St Andrew's and North End, Portsmouth. After a ministry of five years there he returned to Ireland and served the congregations of Tullamore and Mountmellick from 1977 until his retirement on 24th April 1982.

He was a member of a number of Assembly Committees; he contributed articles to various journals and produced a history in two of his spheres of ministry.

Extrovert by nature, he was an able mathematician who combined cerebral gifts with skills of hand. In the workshop which became an important adjunct to his retirement home in Belfast, he indulged the particular fascination they held for him in the repair and reconstruction of watches and clocks. In earlier years he had been a keen sportsman.

Mr Riddall is survived by his widow, Vera and by three sons.

Rev Hugh Robert Cecil Moore, MA, Senior Minister of Banbridge Road, Dromore, died on 14th January, 1999 in the 80th year of his age and the 53rd of his ministry.

Mr Moore was born in Belfast on 19th September, 1919 and was educated at Belfast Royal Academy, Magee University and Assembly's College. He was awarded the degree of Master in Arts from Trinity College, Dublin in 1941.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 25th May, 1943, he served as Assistant in Ulsterville congregation and was subsequently ordained in Banbridge Road on 4th April, 1946. It was there that he spent his entire ministry,

establishing a pattern of thoroughness in pulpit preparation, dignity in the conduct of worship and faithfulness in pastoral visitation.

To the Presbytery of Dromore he brought expertise as a member of the Finance Committee and he served as representative on numerous Boards and Committees of the Assembly. The Manse became renowned for a kindly hospitality extended to many and particularly to those who came as new colleagues to the Presbytery. Mr Moore served as Moderator of the Synod of Armagh and Down in 1977.

His interest was expressed and his influence extended in the wider community largely in the sphere of education. He served on the management committees of several primary schools and for 30 years was a member of the Board of Governors of Dromore High School. He was also associated with the Cowan Heron Hospital Committee.

After his retirement on 30th September, 1984 he wrote a history of the Banbridge Road congregation to mark its 150th anniversary.

One who had a high sense of calling, he had many gifts. Compassion and humour were evident throughout his life and a special courage and dignity were his in the lengthy illness which brought progressive debilitation in the last eighteen years of his life.

Mr Moore is survived by his widow, Ethel, herself a daughter of a Presbyterian minister in Canada, and by a son and two daughters.

The Rev John Williamson, BA, senior minister of First Garvagh, died on 5 March, 1999, in the 84th year of his age and the 56th of his ministry.

Born in County Longford of farming stock, he moved with his family to County Antrim and was educated at the primary school near his home, at Bushmills Grammar School, and at Magee University College and Trinity College, Dublin. He graduated in Arts and proceeded to Assembly's College, Belfast, to study for the ministry.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Route in 1939, his assistantship in Mountpottinger congregation coincided with the early years of the war, and the young minister offered his services as ambulance driver and fire-watcher. On 9th September, 1943 he was ordained, having received a call to First Garvagh, to which congregation he brought as a bride the former Miss Reena Black, herself a native of County Antrim and a member of Mountpottinger.

For 43 years, in what was his only charge, he fulfilled a ministry outstanding in quality and remarkable in its achievement, the greater part of it exercised in the Bridge Street premises, until, under his leadership and inspiration, the congregation came to occupy its present suite of buildings. Mr Williamson proved himself a man of strong conviction and singleness of purpose; a preacher who expounded the word with clarity, sincerity and originality, he was also one who knew the needs of his people and made those needs his pastoral concern. He retired on 4th April, 1987.

He found an abiding interest in the Boys' Brigade. The local company owed to him its origin; he was for a time its captain, and for many years he continued to be present at camp and at competitions. He became President of the Coleraine Battalion and was a respected representative on the Northern Ireland District Committee. A good parish minister and a good Presbyter who served as

Moderator on two separate occasions, he took an active part in the life of the wider community too. A member of the Ulster Farmers' Union, he also held office as President of the local Tennis Club for many years, served for a time on Coleraine District Council, and encouraged the establishment in Garvagh of the first rural Intermediate School in Northern Ireland.

His wife predeceased him by less than a year, and he is survived by a son, Rev Trevor Williamson, and by two daughters, Yvonne and Jennifer.

Rev William James McKinstry Wallace, BA, senior minister of First Bangor, died on 17th March, 1999 in the 87th year of his age and the 62rd of his ministry.

Born on 9th February, 1913, he was brought up in association with the congregation of Whiteabbey, where his father was stationmaster, and educated at Carrick Model School, then Belfast Royal Academy, Queen's University, Belfast, and Assembly's College.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 13th May, 1937, after an assistantship in the congregation of Sinclair Seamen's, he was ordained in Bellaghy on 2nd June in the same year, and shortly afterwards married Irene Macauley, who was to be his partner and helper for more than sixty years.

He served the united charge of Bellaghy and Knockloughrim for six years, and for a time was an Officiating Chaplain. On 21st July, 1943 he was installed in First Cookstown, where he ministered until 1951. On 24th January that year he moved to the congregation of First Bangor, where he remained for the rest of his ministry, retiring after twenty-six years in 1977.

In the life and work of that large congregation he became fully absorbed. A gifted and fluent preacher, he was able to relate an enduring spiritual message to the events of the moment. He had time for people and, in addition to regular pastoral visitation, his counselling skills were put to good use in the Church Office which he established, and where he made himself available, alike to members of his own congregation and to casual passers-by, every Monday morning and every Wednesday evening. A succession of students and young ministers assigned to him as assistants benefited from the valuable training he imparted and the warm friendship which invariably accompanied it.

He identified with many aspects of the life of the borough and with a number of charitable enterprises. He played a part in provision for the elderly and retired, and he was a member of the Board of Governors of the local Grammar School. He served as Mayor's chaplain and was a respected Rotarian. He retained a lifelong fascination with ships and sailing and the sea and found recreation also on the golf-course.

He is survived by his widow and two sons.

REPORT BY THE CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES

TO

The General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church of Wales and the United Free Church of Scotland in respect of the year ending 31st December, 1998.

CHURCH HYMNARY THIRD EDITION

1. As anticipated with the prospect of the bringing out of a new edition of the Hymnary, the sales of the existing Hymnaries continued to decline. The decline in 1998 was more marked and a total of only 10,658 copies of the Hymnary in its various forms were sold producing a royalty of £4,038.51 compared with 14,606 copies and a royalty of £5,634.44 in 1997. The decline is expected to continue.

REVISED CHURCH HYMNARY

2. There were no significant sales of the Revised Church Hymnary in 1998. 7,340 copies were sold during 1997, producing a royalty of £2,192.

SCOTTISH PSALTER 1929

3. In total, 859 copies of the Scottish Psalter bound with the third edition of the Hymn Book were sold in the year 1998. The 1997 figure was 1,329 copies.

IRISH PSALTER

4. The sales of the Irish Psalter totalled 1,504 copies compared with the 1997 figure of 9,720.

STATE OF FUNDS

5. The Trustees are confident that they have sufficient funds to meet the costs of the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Hymnary.

POSITION OF CHURCH HYMNARY THIRD EDITION ON THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEW HYMNARY

6. The Trustees in their report last year intimated that they had received advice that it would be desirable that on the publication of the new Hymnary, the Third Edition of the Hymnary would cease to be available. No dissent to this course was reported to the Trustees and they intend to proceed on that basis.

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

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly note with appreciation the work of all the staff in the Communications Department and commend to the Church's prayers and support the work of the Information Officer and the editor of the Presbyterian Herald.
3. That the resignation of the Rev J T Williamson as Convener of the Church Architecture Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his contribution to the work of the Committee, and that the Rev Laurence Hilditch be appointed in his place.

Communications Administration

4. That the General Assembly note with satisfaction the start made in implementing the corporate communication strategy presented at last Assembly and urge all boards and agencies to be supportive of this strategy.

5. That the General Assembly thank Familybooks for the ongoing excellent service they provide to ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and in an increasingly competitive commercial climate ask for continued support for the shop and the Mobile Book Service so that this valuable ministry can be maintained.

Public Worship

6. That a copy of the book of Public Worship and Experimental Revision be presented to First Year Students at Union College.

7. That a praise grant of £50 be made to every congregation of not more than 10 families.

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

9. That the Public Worship Committee proceed towards the production of a new Irish Presbyterian book of praise, including Psalms, Paraphrases, Hymns and Children's material, all of which would reflect traditional and contemporary styles.

10. That the words of the new book of praise be made available in electronic format.

11. That the Public Worship Committee produce a supplement of contemporary and other material to be sold together with the new book of praise as one item.

12. That the Public Worship Committee, in consultation with the Panel on the Overview of Funding and the Board of Studies, investigate further the possible provision of a resource centre for worship materials, and report to the next Assembly.

13. That the General Assembly authorise the Public Worship Committee to proceed towards the compilation of alternative forms of Communion Services for inclusion in the Experimental Revision Folder.

Historical Society

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

Church Architecture

15. That a grant of £1,750 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church Architecture Committee.

General

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

NOMINATION BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The Nomination Board met during the year as required.

PROCEDURES

2. The Board continues to keep its procedures under review. Following consultation with the General Assembly's solicitor last autumn the Opinion of Senior Counsel is being sought. Any suggestions that may emerge will be reported to the Assembly for its consideration.

3. The Nomination Board agreed to the introduction of application forms and noted the solicitor's suggestions about assessment sheets and training for those involved in nomination procedures. A draft application form was approved.

4. The following appointments were made:

Assessors: Rev Dr Wm Storrar (Glasgow) for the Chair of Practical Theology and Dr David Goodbourn (Edinburgh) for the Director of Christian Training.

Contact Persons: Rev Prof L S Kirkpatrick for the Chair of Practical Theology and Rev W T J Richardson for the Director of Christian Training.

PROFESSOR OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

5. As directed by last Assembly the Nomination Board proceeded to the nomination of a Professor of Practical Theology. The position was duly advertised and eight applications were received. The Shortlisting Sub-Committee decided that three candidates should be interviewed.

6. Interviews took place on 19 March and the Board resolved to nominate Rev Dr William P Addley for this appointment. (See further Appendix I).

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING

7. As directed by last Assembly the Nomination Board proceeded to the nomination of a Director of Christian Training. The position was duly advertised and four applications were received. The Shortlisting Sub-Committee decided that three candidates should be interviewed.

8. Interviews took place on 24 March and it was agreed that the Board nominate Dr T D Alexander for this appointment, but that in accordance with Par 276 (3) of the Code, the name of Rev J D Maxwell, having received one-third of the votes cast, be also forwarded for final decision by the General Assembly.

9. Rev J D Maxwell subsequently withdrew and in accordance with the directions of the Assembly in 1995 (Mins p 29 res 7) the Nomination Board met again on 1 April, when a further vote was taken.

10. In accordance with Par 276 (3) of the Code the name of Rev G S Finch, having received one third of the votes cast, was forwarded along with that

of Dr T D Alexander for final decision by the General Assembly. (See further Appendix II)

11. A supplementary report on later developments will be made to the General Assembly in Daily Minutes.

APPENDIX I

NOMINATION BOARD

FORM OF APPLICATION

For Chair of Practical Theology

Full Name William Palmer Addley
 Address 54 Beechfield Drive, Bangor, BT19 7ZN
 Telephone 01247 469157

I submit this application for: The Chair of Practical Theology

Signed Wm P Addley
 Date 24th February, 1999

Personal and Family Background

Date & Place of Birth 8th January, 1941 Belfast
 Marital Status Married to Ruth Eleanor Carson
 14 April, 1970
 Family Details (if applicable) 3 grown up daughters
 Present Congregation Conlig, Presbytery of Ards

Education

Post Primary Education Belfast Royal Academy 1952-1959

Tertiary Level Education (including awarding bodies and dates of degrees)

Queen's University Belfast BA (hons Classics) July 1963
 University of Edinburgh (New College) BD (hons New Testament) July 1966
 University of Edinburgh (New College) MTh July 1972
 Fuller Theological Seminary, California DMin June 1983
 Queen's University Belfast PhD July 1995

Title and date of any major Theses

MTh: "The Sayings of Jesus in the Epistles of St Paul" July 1972
 DMin: "The Body of Christ in the New Testament: A Strategy for Renewal and Growth for Ebrington Presbyterian Church" June 1983
 PhD: "A Study of the Birth and Development of the Overseas Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland up to 1910" July 1995

Training for Ministry**Details of any full-time employment prior to the commencement of ministry**

None

Place and dates of theological training

University of Edinburgh (New College) 1963-1966

Presbyterian College, Belfast 1966-1967

Date of Licensing

28th May 1967

Date and Place of Ordination10th December 1967 at Joymount
Carrickfergus**Career****Spheres of Ministry or other appointments with dates**

Student Assistant, Craigsbank, Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1964-1966

Student Missionary, Presbyterian Church of Canada, Summer 1964 and Summer 1965

Student Assistant, Licentiate, and ordained Assistant, Joymount Presbyterian Church, Carrickfergus, 1966-1967

Chaplain (Presbyterian) New University of Ulster, 1968-1974

Stated Supply, Hazelbank Church Extension Charge, 1973-1974

Minister, Ebrington Presbyterian Church, Londonderry, 1974-1987

Missionary, Overseas Board, Brazil, 1987-1996

Missionary, Overseas Board, Spain, 1996 (during final furlough from service in Brazil)

Minister, Conlig Presbyterian Church, 1996-present

Responsibilities in Church Courts

I served two terms as Moderator of the Presbytery of Derry, and have also served on the following:

General Board

Doctrine Committee

Overseas Board

Recognised Ministries Committee

Board of Studies

Western Committee

Board of Evangelism & Christian Training

Christian Training Committee

Board of Education

Guysmere Centre Committee

Government Committee

ad hoc Committee on Theological
Education (1975)

In Brazil I was a member of the Presbytery of Londrina of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPIB), and on its Reception of Students Committee. In Spain I was a member of the Presbytery of Andalucia of the Spanish Evangelical Church (IEE).

I have also been

a representative at the Ballymascanlon Talks

on the Panel of Youth Evangelists

on the Planning Committee of Flame 74.

Development**Academic Publications (Title and Date)**

'Matthew 18 and the Church as the body of Christ', *Biblical Theology* 26.1.1976

'The Evangelist in Ephesians 4' *Church Growth Digest* 1985

'Irish Presbyterian Attitudes to Mission before 1840', in Jack Thompson (ed) *Into all the world. A History of the Overseas Work of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, Belfast 1990 pp 11-24

Accepted for publication:

'O Corpo de Cristo, dons Espirituais, e Amor' ('The Body of Christ, Spiritual Gifts and Love'), 1993.

'The "Famous Five" and Foreign Fields - Irish Student Volunteers and Overseas Missions', Lecture, Annual Meeting of the Presbyterian Historical Society, 1998, by *the Bulletin of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland*

Current Study (institution, course, date of commencement, anticipated completion and qualification)

None

Community Interests, Hobbies etc.**Level of involvement in non-church organisations**

Chairman, Board of Governors, Conlig Primary School

Interests, hobbies, sports, social activities

Walking, swimming, music, and (occasionally) looking for wayward golf balls

Other Relevant Information (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)**Teaching Experience**

At present I am teaching the Ecclesiology (PS9) course at Union Theological College.

In January 1999 I was appointed Visiting Lecturer in Bible and Mission in the master's programme (MTh) at Fortaleza Theological Seminary in Brazil.

From 1988 to 1995 I served as a professor at the Londrina Theological Seminary of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPIB).

In addition, I gave various lecture courses at ISBL, a seminary run by the Oriental Missionary Society. This brought me into working contact with students and professors from the Wesleyan-Holiness theological tradition.

In 1993 I acted as an external tutor in the master's programme of the Baptist Seminary in Brasilia.

In Ireland, I have given several courses in the Belfast Bible College, most recently teaching 'Christian Doctrine' in 1995, and have advised on a MTh paper.

Teaching Levels

I have teaching experience at four different levels:

1. **Undergraduate.** In the 4 year full time BTh course at Londrina Seminary, and PS9 at Union Theological College (see above).
2. **Post-graduate.** In the two year part-time post-graduate 'Specialization in Theology' at Londrina Seminary.
3. **Extramural.** In the lay leadership training courses organised by Londrina Seminary, and at Belfast Bible College.
4. **In-Service training.** In the course for serving missionaries of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil to bring them up to ordination level.

Subjects taught

I have taught in three areas:

Biblical, especially New Testament
 Missiology and Practical Theology
 Church History

The Practical Theology courses which I have taught are:

the Theory and Practice of Evangelism
 the Theology of Mission
 the History and Theology of Missions
 a Seminar on Pastoralia
 Ecclesiology

Administrative Experience

From 1993 until my return to Ireland I served as Academic Dean at Londrina Seminary. This involved certain administrative responsibilities, as well as being academic advisor to students, and the intermediary between the faculty and the student body.

My earlier service as chaplains' representative on the Executive Committee of the University of Ulster gave me direct experience of university administration at the highest level.

As an undergraduate, I was on the Executive Committee of the Students' Representative Council, and was President of the Christian Union.

Research Interests

I am interested in the biblical, theological, historical, and practical aspects of the church's ministry and mission, that is, how the church understood and put into practice its mission throughout the Christian era, and how it should do so today. At present I sit on the Executive Committee of the British and Irish Association for Mission Studies.

International Experience

As the first missionary of the PCI to work with the in Brazil, I act as a 'link-person' between the PCI and the two main Presbyterian denominations in Brazil. I have represented the Overseas Board at various conferences and meetings in the UK, Ireland, Brazil, Portugal and the Caribbean.

My brief spell with the Spanish Evangelical Church introduced me to the work among the English-speaking community on the Costa del Sol.

Other Relevant Experience*Education*

Board of Governors of Foyle and Londonderry College, Clondermot Secondary School, and Ebrington Primary School.

Social and Community Work

Chairman, Ard Cluan Management Committee, Presbyterian Residential Trust

Founder Patron, Waterside Churches Advice Centre, Londonderry

Member, Corrymeela Community

Volunteer, the Samaritans, Coleraine

Member, Londonderry Temperance Council

Evangelistic Work

Secretary, Executive Committee, Evangelism Explosion (Ireland)

Irish Representative, Council of the British Church Growth Association

Londonderry City Mission Committee

Local Steering Committees, Billy Graham and Leighton Ford Evangelistic Associations

Names and addresses of persons to whom confidential reference may be made (at least one from a Church source and at least one from an academic source):

- | | | |
|-----|----------|--|
| (a) | Name | Very Rev R F G Holmes MA MLitt DD |
| | Address | Ballygrot Cottage
16a Kathleen Avenue
Helen's Bay BT19 1LE |
| | Position | Professor Emeritus,
Union Theological College, Belfast |
| (b) | Name | Rev R J T McMullan BA |
| | Address | 1 Bladon Drive
Belfast BT9 5JL |
| | Position | Executive Secretary, Overseas Board |
| (c) | Name | Rev Joseph Thompson BA BD MTh PhD |
| | Address | Greenfield Manse
72 Newry Road
Armagh BT60 2EF |

Position Minister, The Mall, Armagh;
Clerk, Armagh Presbytery

APPENDIX II

NOMINATION BOARD

FORM OF APPLICATION

For Director of Christian Training

Full Name Thomas Desmond Alexander
Address 108 Kings Road
Belfast BT5 7BX
Telephone 01232 794204

I submit this application for the post of: Director of Christian Training

Signed T D Alexander
Date 23rd February, 1999

Personal and Family Background

Date & Place of Birth 21st January, 1955 Ballymoney, N Ireland
Marital Status Married
Family Details (if applicable) Two Children: Jane (age 10) and
David (age 8)
Present Congregation Fitzroy
Denomination (if not PCI) -

Education

Post Primary Education (place and dates) Ballymena Academy 1966-1973

Tertiary Level Education (include awarding body and dates of degrees)

BA with First Class Honours in Semitic Studies, The Queen's University of
Belfast, July 1977
PhD The Queen's University of Belfast, July 1983

Title and date of any major Theses

A Literary Analysis of the Abraham Narrative in Genesis (presented in 1983)

Training for Ministry (if any)

Places and dates of theological training

Date of Licensing -

Date of Ordination -

Career**Spheres of Ministry or other appointments with dates**

Lecturer in Semitic Studies, The Queen's University of Belfast, 1980 to present.
Visiting Lecturer at the Discipleship Training Centre, Singapore from January to March 1991.

Responsibilities in Church Courts

Member of Doctrine Committee (1987-1997)

Development**Academic Publications (Title and Date)**

See attached list.

Current Study (institution, course, date of commencement, anticipated completion and qualification)**Community Interests, Hobbies etc.****Level of involvement in non-church organisations**

Chairman of the Biblical Theology Group of the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research from 1997 to present

Interests, hobbies, sports, social activities

I enjoy relaxing with my family, undertaking gardening and house restoration, and keeping fit by running several times weekly.

Other Relevant Information (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

See attached sheets

Names and addresses of persons to whom confidential reference may be made (at least one from a Church source and at least one from an academic source):

- | | | |
|-----|----------|--|
| (a) | Name | Professor Gordon J Wenham |
| | Address | Dept of Religious and Theological Studies
Cheltenham and Gloucester College
Cheltenham
GL50 2QF |
| | Position | Professor of Old Testament |
| (b) | Name | Rev David Searle |
| | Address | Rutherford House
17 Claremont Park
Edinburgh
EH6 7PJ |
| | Position | Warden of Rutherford House |

(c)	Name	Rev Kenneth Newell
	Address	64 Maryville Park Belfast BT9 6LQ
	Position	Minister of Fitzroy Presbyterian Church

Other Relevant Information

In offering myself as a candidate for the post of Director of Christian Training I would like to highlight various aspects of my church and work experiences which I see as being of particular relevance. I came to a personal faith in Jesus Christ in my mid-teens, having been nurtured within the congregation of Clough Presbyterian Church. Within several years I moved to Belfast to commence studies at Queen's University with thoughts of proceeding to ordination as a minister within the Presbyterian Church. However, upon completion of my BA degree in Semitic Studies, the opportunity arose to pursue postgraduate studies in Old Testament, and this eventually led to my being offered a full-time lecturing post within the Arts Faculty of Queen's University. As I look back on this period of my life, I am very conscious of God's hand guiding me into what has been my career for the past twenty years.

When I got married to Anne in 1984 we settled in Belfast and became members of Fitzroy Presbyterian Church. After several years, I was ordained there as a ruling elder and so have had experience of participating in both Session and Committee. Over the years Anne and I have been involved in the church's ministry to young people. For the past five years I have had the privilege of overseeing, with others, the youth ministry. This now involves supervising two full-time staff, as well as helping on a weekly basis in a youth club which reaches out to teenage boys from the lower Ormeau Road.

Our involvement in Fitzroy Church has provided a challenging and loving environment in which to develop different aspects of Christian ministry, and has brought us into contact with Christians who seek in a wide variety of ways to serve Christ, at home and overseas. Fitzroy seeks to be a worshipping and witnessing community. Through worship, which aims to be both contemporary and relevant, we seek to grow in love for each other, creating an environment in which each member is valued. Individuals are encouraged and provided with opportunities to develop and use their spiritual gifts, so that the whole body may be built up in love. As a Christian community, however, we strive not to become introverted, for Christ calls us to proclaim the Good News through both word and deed. This Christian environment has influenced me very deeply over the past decade.

Outside of Fitzroy, I have been actively involved at different times in my life in the ministry of various Christian organisations: eg Boys Brigade; Scripture Union; Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship; Scripture Gift Mission; Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research. This has contributed in different ways to broadening and deepening my understanding and experience of Christian living.

Since starting Queen's in 1973 my life has been dominated by the study of the Bible. After seven years of undergraduate and postgraduate study, I started

teaching university level courses in Hebrew and Old Testament. Over the years I have been responsible for creating and teaching a wide range of courses, involving both the Old and New Testaments. While most of these courses were designed for students at degree level, I have also offered for adults extra-mural courses through the Institute of Continuing Education at Queen's, and taken part in in-service training days for RE teachers. With almost twenty years' experience of preparing and delivering such material I would welcome as a fresh challenge the opportunity to produce courses in Christian training. While this of necessity will involve the preparation of new material, I would wish to continue offering courses and developing training materials relating to the Bible itself.

An important aspect of my academic career has been research. This requires the ability to understand and assimilate what others are saying on a particular topic, and then to evaluate and interact with this critically. I would see these skills as particularly important in making the transition from my present occupation to that of Director of Christian Training. I do not claim to come with all the answers neatly prepared, but I believe that I have skills which would enable me to develop in a positive and creative way Christian training within the PCI.

Over the years I have undertaken a wide range of administrative responsibilities within Queen's and elsewhere. The following are some of the more significant. From 1990-1994 I was assistant dean to the Faculty of Theology in Queen's, a position which involved, among other things, liaising with students and staff in all of the different theological colleges in Belfast. From 1991-1993 I was a team-leader involved in the production of *The NIV Thematic Study Bible* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996). In 1994 I became secretary to the Tyndale Fellowship Biblical Theology Study Group; for the following three years I had responsibility for planning the annual programme of lectures and seminars which are usually held in Cambridge. Since 1997 I have been chairman of this study group. Nearer to home, I assisted in the planning of the afternoon sessions for 2020 Vision.

Another dimension to my academic work has been the writing of materials at various levels for publication. While I have contributed at a scholarly level to journals and books, I have also enjoyed writing at a popular level. Recently, this has involved producing daily reading notes for Scripture Union, and a book, entitled *The Servant King*, published by Inter-Varsity Press. In addition, I have received training at Queen's regarding the preparation of material for the Internet, and have been jointly responsible for creating pages relating to the School of Greek, Roman and Semitic Studies. The experience gained through all of this would be of considerable benefit for different aspects of the post of Director of Christian Training.

An interesting part of my present job has been the opportunity to be involved with Christians from all over the world. In addition to teaching for three months in Singapore in the early 90s, I am presently working on several dictionary projects which have contributions from biblical scholars from around the world. I would hope that these international links could be used to build up the work of Christian training in Ireland. I see this, however, as a two-way process in that it provides opportunities to discover what is happening elsewhere. Thus, for example, I have been invited to teach for two weeks at the

year 2000 summer school of Regent College, Vancouver. Furthermore, in my role as an external examiner for the International Christian College (formerly Glasgow Bible College) and the Evangelical Theological College of Wales, I have the opportunity to see something of how Christian training is approached in two different contexts within the UK.

Having had the opportunity to devote myself full-time to the study of the Bible over the past twenty-five years, I see the post of Director of Christian Training as providing me with a unique opportunity to contribute to the life of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. My academic studies have enriched my own spiritual life and given me a deeper understanding of the Bible and how it relates to everyday life. Through my involvement in Fitzroy I see church life from the pew, and this, I believe, would be a real advantage in terms of relating to other lay members within the church. From my experience of rubbing shoulders with fellow believers in Fitzroy, and elsewhere, I am conscious of a tremendous, but unfortunately not fully developed, potential within the lay membership of the PCI. As we move into the next millennium the future well-being of our denomination will rest upon our ability to involve fully each and every church member in the service of Christ's kingdom.

T Desmond Alexander
23rd February 1999

List of Academic Publications of T D Alexander

Books

- Jonah* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988). Pp 86.
- From Paradise to the Promised Land: an Introduction to the Main Themes of the Pentateuch* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998). Pp xxv, 227.
- Abraham in the Negev: A Source-critical Investigation of Genesis 20:1-22:19* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1997). Pp ix, 172.
- Pentateuchal Criticism Today: A Guidebook for Beginners* (Leicester: Religious and Theological Students Fellowship, 1998). Pp 83.
- The Servant King: The Bible's Portrait of the Messiah* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998). Pp 171.
- The New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (co-editor) (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press) (in preparation).
- Exodus* (London: Harper Collins) (in preparation).
- Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (co-editor) (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press) (in preparation).

Articles

- 'Genesis 22 and the Covenant of Circumcision', *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 25 (1983) 17-22.
- 'Lot's Hospitality: A Clue to His Righteousness', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985) 289-291.
- 'Jonah and Genre', *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985) 35-59.

- 'The Old Testament View of Life After Death', *Themelios* 11 (1986) 41-46.
- 'The Psalms and the Afterlife', *Irish Biblical Studies* 9 (1987) 2-17.
- 'From Adam to Judah: the Significance of the Family Tree in Genesis', *Evangelical Quarterly* 61 (1989) 5-19.
- 'The Wife/Sister Incidents of Genesis: Oral Variants?' *Irish Biblical Studies* 11 (1989) 2-22.
- 'Justice and the Old Testament Laws', *Christian Arena* 42, No 3, (1989) 2-5.
- 'The Hagar Traditions in Genesis xvi and xxi', in J A Emerton (ed) *Studies in the Pentateuch* (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, 41; Leiden: E J Brill, 1990, 131-148.
- 'Jonah - God's Missionary to Nineveh? *Asian Challenge* 21 (1991) 12-13.
- 'Are the Wife/Sister Incidents of Genesis Literary Compositional Variants?' *Vetus Testamentum* 42:2 (1992) 145-153.
- 'Abraham Re-assessed Theologically: The Abraham Narrative and the New Testament. Understanding of Justification by Faith' in R S Hess, P E Satterthwaite and G J Wenham (eds) *He Swore an Oath: Biblical Themes from Genesis 12-50* (Cambridge: Tyndale House, 1993) 7-28.
- 'Genealogies, Seed and the Compositional Unity of Genesis', *Tyndale Bulletin* 44.2 (1993) 255-270.
- 'Exodus' in D A Carson, R T France, J A Motyer, G J Wenham, *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994) 92-120.
- 'The Passover Sacrifice' in R T Beckwith and M Selman (eds), *Sacrifice in the Bible* (Carlisle/Grand Rapids: Paternoster/Baker, 1995) 1-24.
- 'Messianic Ideology in the Book of Genesis' in P E Satterthwaite, R S Hess and G J Wenham (eds) *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts* (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Baker/Paternoster, 1995) 19-39.
- Introductory articles on the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Lamentations for *The NIV Thematic Study Bible* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996), pp 533-34; 571-2; 666-7; 701-2; 863.
- Articles on 32 Hebrew words in W VanGemeren (ed) *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), vol 1, pp 475-476, 487, 484, 823, 834-836, 1133-1134; vol 2, pp 18-19, 287, 311-312, 323-324, 358, 592-593, 840, 857, 870-871, 1058; vol 3, pp 14-15, 226, 438-440, 446, 507-508, 577, 609, 825, 865-868, 1003, 1120, 1206, 1207; vol 4, pp 255-256, 287-288.
- 'Further Observations on the Term "Seed" in Genesis', *Tyndale Bulletin* 48.2 (1997) 363-367.
- 'Royal Expectations in Genesis to Kings: Their Importance for Biblical Theology', *Tyndale Bulletin* 49.2 (1998) 191-212.
- 'A Religious Book in a Secular University' in R S Hess and G J Wenham (eds) *Making the Old Testament Live: From Curriculum to Classroom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 93-100.
- Articles on 'Endangered Ancestress', 'Mustard Seed' and 'Passover' in L Ryken, J C Wilhoit and T Longman (eds) *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove/Leicester: IVP 1998) 233-234, 578, 629-630.
- 'The composition of the Sinai Narrative in Exodus xix 1-xxiv 11', *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999) 2-20.

'Exodus 19-24' in A Clark (ed) *Encounter with God* (Scripture Union: Milton Keynes, 1999) 21-35.

Videos

Old Testament Ideas. Belfast, Centre for Learning Resources. Television programme, colour. 31 minutes. 1987.

Literary techniques and Hebrew exegesis. Singapore, Biblical Graduate School of Theology. Television programme, colour. 75 minutes. 1991.

Book Reviews

Review of R K Harrison, *Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary, Themelios*, 7 (1981) p 33.

Review of G D Fee and D Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for all its Worth, Journal of the Irish Christian Study Centre*, 2 (1984) pp 74-75.

Review of C E Armerding, *The Old Testament and Criticism, Themelios*, 10 (1985) pp 36-37.

Review of W C Kaiser, *Toward Old Testament Ethics*, and C J H Wright, *Living as the People of God. The Relevance of Old Testament Ethics, Irish Biblical Studies*, 7 (1985) pp 53-56.

Review of W C Kaiser, *Malachi: God's Unchanging Love, Christian Arena*, 38 (1985) p 38.

Review of C Westermann, *Genesis: 1-11, Irish Biblical Studies*, 7 (1985), pp 167-169.

Review of H Blocher, *In the Beginning, Evangelical Quarterly*, 58 (1986), pp 258-259.

Review of S Niditch, *Chaos to Cosmos: Studies in Biblical Patterns of Creation, Irish Biblical Studies*, 8 (1986), pp 46-47.

Review of D Kidner, *Wisdom to live by: an introduction to the Old Testament's wisdom books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes: with some notes on the teachings of Israel's neighbours and of the Old Testament Apocrypha, Evangelical Quarterly*, 59 (1987), pp 163-164.

Review of R T Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church, Evangelical Quarterly*, 59 (1987), pp 259-261.

Review of T E McComiskey, *The Covenants of Promise: A Theology of the Old Testament Covenants, Irish Biblical Studies*, 9 (1987), pp 82-84.

Review of D E Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament, Irish Biblical Studies*, 9 (1987), pp 84-85.

Review of R N Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study, Irish Biblical Studies*, 10 (1988), pp 156-158.

Review of C Westermann, *Genesis, Evangelical Quarterly*, 61 (1989), pp 262-263.

Review of C Westermann, *The Living Psalms, Irish Biblical Studies*, 12 (1990), pp 96-98.

Review of D J A Clines, *Job 1-20, Irish Biblical Studies*, 12 (1990) pp 198-199.

Review of A A Anderson, *2 Samuel, Evangelical Quarterly*, 63 (1991) pp 257-259.

- Review of C C Broyles, The Conflict of Faith and Experience in the Psalms: A Form-Critical and Theological Study, *Evangelical Quarterly*, 63 (1991) pp 259-260.
- Review of C Wright, OT Law, *Christian Arena*, 44:1 (1991) pp 20-21.
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NOMINATION BOARD**FORM OF APPLICATION***For Director of Christian Training*

Full Name Rev Graham Somerville Finch
 Address 13 Bath Street
 Stonehaven AB39 2DH
 Telephone 01569 762876

I submit this application for the post of: Director of Christian Training

Signed Graham Finch
 Date 24th February, 1999

Personal and Family Background

Date & Place of Birth 22-10-50, Falkirk, Stirlingshire
 Marital Status Married
 Family Details (if applicable) Wife Louise is a primary headteacher. Son John (20) is in third year at Stirling University. Daughter Katie (16) is in fifth year secondary.
 Present Congregation Stonehaven, Fetteresso
 Denomination (if not PCI) Church of Scotland

Education

Post Primary Education (place and dates) Falkirk High School 1962-68

Tertiary Level Education (include awarding body and dates of degrees)

1968-72 MA, University of St Andrews - Mediaeval History (Hons)

1972-75 BD, University of Aberdeen - Church History (Hons)

Title and date of any major Theses

Training for Ministry (if any)

Places and dates of theological training

Aberdeen (see above)

Date of Licensing June, 1975

Date of Ordination 20th July, 1977

Career

Spheres of Ministry or other appointments with dates

1975-77 Probationer Minister at St Giles, Edinburgh

1977-78 Minister, Sanday, Orkney

1978-83 Minister, North Ronaldsay linked with Sanday, Orkey
 1983-present Minister, Stonehaven, Fetteresso

Responsibilities in Church Courts

See separate sheet.

Development

Academic Publications (Title and Date)

None

Current Study (institution, course, date of commencement, anticipated completion and qualification)

My level of involvement with national committees has left little time for formal study. I am considering a DMin course over two years run by Aberdeen University in association with Pittsburgh Seminary, but I would not pursue that if my application for this post is successful.

Community Interests, Hobbies etc.

Level of involvement in non-church organisations

I have in the past been secretary and treasurer of Sanday Community Association, and been involved in setting up a drama group; in Stonehaven, I chaired the School Board of a local primary school, and am involved with the Folk Club.

Interests, hobbies, sports, social activities

Golf, photography, reading, folk music. I also enjoy theatre, concerts and watching rugby.

Other Relevant Information (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

See attached sheet

Names and addresses of persons to whom confidential reference may be made (at least one from a Church source and at least one from an academic source):

- | | | |
|-----|----------|---|
| (a) | Name | Rev Dr David Fergusson |
| | Address | Divinity Department
University of Aberdeen
Aberdeen |
| | Position | Professor of Systematic Theology |
| (b) | Name | Mrs Yvonne Teague |
| | Address | 46 Craigmock Avenue
Edinburgh
EH4 3PX |

	Position	Education and Development Officer, Board of Ministry, Church of Scotland
(c)	Name	Mr J A Kerr
	Address	Garron View 4 Baird Street Stonehaven AB39
	Position	Session Clerk, Stonehaven, Fetteresso. Retired Deputy Director of Education with responsibility for Further Education.

From: Graham Finch

Information re application for post of Director of Christian Training

Qualifications

MA hons Mediaeval History St Andrews 2nd class (undivided) 1968-72
BD hons Church History Aberdeen 2.1 1972-75.

Parishes

1975-77: Probationer Assistant at St Giles Edinburgh

1977-78: Minister of Sanday, Orkney

1978-83: Minister of North Ronaldsay linked with Sanday

1983-present: Minister of Stonehaven Fetteresso

Committees

1985-86, 1987-91: Convenor of Church and Ministry Committee, Presbytery of Kincardine and Deeside.

Presbytery representative on national Committee on Maintenance of the Ministry; member of Committee on Probationers, Transference and Admission of Ministers.

1986-87: Moderator, Presbytery of Kincardine and Deeside

1988-92: Assembly appointed member of Committee on Education for the Ministry; served on sectional committees on Supervision of Students and In Service Training.

1991-94: Vice Convenor Committee on Probationers

1991-present: Pastoral Adviser, Presbytery of Kincardine and Deeside

1992-96: Member of the Judicial Commission

1992-present: Presbytery representative on Aberdeen Liaison Committee

1994-98: Convenor, Committee on Probationers; includes ex officio membership on Supervision of Students and Ministry Development

1995-97: Member, Review Group on Ministerial Education

1997-98: Member, Review Implementation Group

1998-present: Vice Convenor, Board of Ministry; Convenor of Education and Training Committee

Other Relevant Experience

Twice supervised attachments

Supervised three probationers

Rev Graham Finch - additional information relevant to application for post of Director of Christian Training.

In 1992, the Church of Scotland introduced a new training scheme for its probationers. I have been involved in managing that scheme since its inception, first as vice-convenor then as convenor of the Committee on Probationers.

Part of my involvement has been the planning of a conference programme which brings our probationers together regularly for periods of 3-5 days. I have attended and chaired most of the conferences since 1993, and took an increased role in choosing speakers and topics following the illness and subsequent retirement of the full-time member of staff responsible. Additionally, I have shared in the training of supervising ministers and helped develop a new programme of ministerial training.

Our church has also been developing its programme of in-service training for ministers, and because of the need for this to be co-ordinated with probationer training, I have been involved with some of the planning and running of these Ministry Development conferences.

I believe that this experience is relevant to items b, c and d in the list of duties for the Director. Although I have less experience in developing Christian training for the wider Christian community on a national basis, I have been a parish minister for over twenty years, and have offered training for new and existing elders, for those involved with children's work and for leaders of groups within the congregation. I would certainly welcome the opportunity to develop this area of my experience.

In my local community, in Presbytery and in my work for the national church, I have enjoyed co-operating with a wide variety of ministers, probationers, elders and members. My links with Divinity staff at Aberdeen through the Liaison Committee have also been very positive. I would look forward to the challenge of developing relationships in an entirely new setting, and in particular to working closely with Faculty staff, and with the Director of Ministerial Students.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That Rev W P Addley BA BD MTh DMin PhD be appointed Professor of Practical Theology.
3. That _____ be appointed Director of Christian Training.
4. That the Nomination Board be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 276 of the Code as follows:

INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS BOARD

Convener: Rev R HERRON

1. The Board met on three occasions during the past year. All items of business are included in Committee reports.

Rev Dr ROGER PURCE

2. Rev. Dr. Roger Purce has come to the end of his seven-year term as Convener of the World Development Committee. During his convenership he emphasised three main areas of concern: advocacy on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves, educating the Church on issues relating to poverty and raising monies for development projects. The Board expresses thanks to him for the work he has undertaken.

Rev DOUG BAKER

3. Rev Doug Baker has completed six years as Convener of the Race Relations Committee and due to pressure of work has indicated his intention to resign. He brought to his convenership a breadth of experience and concern about the issues addressed by the committee. His task has been to highlight to the wider Church race issues at home and abroad. He deserves the thanks of the Church for his contribution to this work.

Ministers in Recognised Service

Rev David Campbell reports:

1. During the past year I have had the privilege of visiting the Bible Societies in Lebanon, Turkey and Zimbabwe. In Lebanon I visited the southern part of the country and saw the distribution of New Testaments in that area. In Turkey I attended a Fundraisers Conference and had the opportunity to hear about the work of the Turkish Bible Society in a strongly Muslim country. In Zimbabwe I visited the Shona Bible Translation project being undertaken at the Bible House in Harare.

2. In addition to its pledge to the United Bible Societies, the Bible Society in Northern Ireland donated £10,000 to build a Bible Centre in Beirut and a further £10,000 was donated to fund various projects in the Gulf States.

Rev Andrew Gibson reports:

1. There have been few changes in my work at Belfast Bible College this year. We continue to train men and women for Christian service in Ireland and overseas, for 'full time Christian work' and as responsible Christians being salt and light in our community at large. One of my main tasks this year has been the development of a Masters level programme aimed at ministers, missionaries

on furlough and others who wish to know more about Christian mission and ministry and to develop their gifts in these areas. I have also been doing some work attempting to develop a contextualised local theology for Northern Ireland that reflects our history, present experiences and hopes for the future.

Rev Desmond Maxwell reports:

1. After twelve years at the Belfast Bible College this report has taken on a certain predictability. Obviously my primary responsibility continues to be in the lecture room on campus but increasingly opportunities for wider ministry open up and I continue to have a deep interest in The Ukrainian Bible Training Association. One of the highlights of the past year was a trip to Malawi where I visited many of our own missionaries and conducted a retreat at Ekwendeni Hospital. It is always enriching to travel but BBC continues to attract many from all over the world to our own doorstep.

Rev David McCarthy reports:

1. The work of the Evangelical Alliance in Northern Ireland has continued to be focused on the four main areas mentioned in last year's report. Key projects which we have initiated or are assisting, include: a major youth survey; a series of workshops on change in Northern Ireland society and the profound implications of this for local churches re evangelism and discipling; and Trailblazers, a interdenominational, inter-agency promotion of world mission.

2. Integral to our ongoing work is bridge building between the various points of focus within evangelicalism and resourcing and challenging evangelicals to engage with the communities within which they find themselves.

3. In the spirit of servanthood, the Evangelical Alliance seeks to promote evangelical unity and truth and represent evangelical concerns to the wider world.

Rev Ruth Patterson reports:

1. Restoration Ministries is growing as more people from Ireland and elsewhere become aware of our ministry. Our mailing list numbers 600. Some highlights are:

- (i) A counselling course; 14 volunteers received basic accreditation with the Association of Christian Counsellors.
- (ii) Continuation of 'Hand of Friendship' project.
- (iii) Visit of Clay & Mary McLean (U.S.A.) - theme 'The Inner Peace Process'.

2. Last summer I gave an interdenominational retreat in Denmark, and spoke on reconciliation at the international gathering of Faith & Light in Quebec.

3. It has been a privilege this year to be chaplain to Belfast's Lord Mayor, Councillor David Alderdice.

ENVIRONMENTAL PANEL

Rev Samuel Millar reports:

1. The Panel is encouraged to see that the environment continues to receive prominence in the press and elsewhere.

2. We were particularly pleased to see that Northern Ireland's Assembly Members collaborated in a tree planting ceremony at Stormont, especially as we have contacted each congregation in Northern Ireland to encourage planting as part of the Millennium Tree Campaign, organised through Conservation Volunteers (Northern Ireland). Presbyteries in the Republic were provided with the same information and encouraged to contact the relevant voluntary bodies there.

3. Mr David Boyd represented PCI at the inaugural assembly of the European Christian Environment Network in the Czech Republic in October. Many important contacts were made there; one of the most relevant was Dr Donald Bruce, Director of the Sciences, Religion and Technology Group of the Church of Scotland. Closer links with that body are now being established.

4. Several members of our Panel, along with many other PCI members, attended the Earth Rights Gathering in Derry in November, a most inspirational event which brought together members of various churches and community groups. We examined our beliefs and lifestyles; we also thought about what changes are needed to achieve sustainable communities and to restore right relationships with the rest of God's Creation. We were much encouraged by the good attendance and welcomed the opportunity of sharing our ideas and hopes with others.

5. The Panel's work was commended by the Church of England's Living Churchyards and Cemeteries Project, who wish us to participate in a Northern Ireland equivalent of an educational project linked to the National Curriculum.

6. The Panel was privileged to be invited by NIGEN to Kilroot Power Station to receive a presentation on that company's proposals for future power generation. In his Green Page article in the March issue of the Presbyterian Herald, Mr Joe Furphy raised a number of the social and environmental issues we are now addressing in our consideration of NIGEN's proposals.

7. We have been encouraged by developments during the year - the lifting of the beef ban, although farming remains in dire straits; we congratulate Broughshane in achieving, for the third consecutive year, the Nations in Bloom award; we also congratulate Mrs Alison Harbinson of the Aghadowey congregation on receiving the MBE for her services to the environment, which includes the development of an educational trail at her farm.

8. The subject of genetically modified plant material frequently made the headlines during the year. The Panel is investigating the pros and cons of this controversial and potentially damaging or life-saving activity (depending on one's source of information) so that a recommendation on the Church's position can be made.

9. At an earlier Assembly it was agreed that congregations should be asked to prepare an environmental audit at Visitations, and a suitable format was duly circulated. In the light of the proposed changes in arrangements for

Visitations, the Panel wishes to make two recommendations. First, that as part of the property architectural/building report, the revised form of environmental audit introduced last year should be completed for each Visitation, and secondly, each congregation should be encouraged to include an environmental audit in its annual report. The Panel is concerned that, despite this audit indicating ways to implement both environmental improvements and cost savings (sometimes considerable), few congregations have grasped their responsibilities and opportunities in this significant aspect of our stewardship. We are prepared to meet with Presbyteries or congregations to discuss how audits can be carried out.

10. With the wide range of environmental issues now on national and international agendas, and the latent interest taken by the public at large, we encourage our church to become better informed on these issues so that it can speak out clearly and with authority on the Christian response to them.

IRISH CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Irish Council of Churches

1. The autumn gathering took place in the Emmaus Centre in Swords on October 8th 1998. Paul Reid from Lifelink, a network of churches working in partnership, described the history of these churches and their common and distinctive practices.

2. The Board of Overseas Affairs held a study day with the Irish Missionary Union on the topic "New ways of sending, new ways of receiving."

3. The AGM was in the Emmaus Centre in Swords, on March 19th and 20th. Included on the agenda was the Bridges of Hope project.

Irish Inter-Church Meeting

4. In September 1998 the IICM celebrated its 25th anniversary in Ballymascanlon Hotel. To commemorate the occasion, Rev Dr Ian Ellis and Fr Michael Hurley were invited to write essays on the history of ICCM. The essays have been published and can be obtained at the IICM office. Dr Mary Tanner spoke on the subject of 'Irish Ecumenical Developments in an International Context'.

5. The next meeting of ICCM will be held on 23rd and 24th April 1999. Topics will include the "Moving Beyond Sectarianism Project", with Drs. C Clegg and J. Liechty; a presentation on Refugees in Ireland including work done by the Department of Social issues on racism and asylum seekers; and a look at what the churches are doing for the Millennium.

6. A pamphlet entitled "Ministering to Inter-Church Couples" - Help for Clergy, has been published.

7. Plans for the Millennium include a national service on Sunday 2nd January in the Waterfront Hall in Belfast. Discussions are taking place regarding a similar service in Dublin. At Pentecost 2000 congregations are being

encouraged to organise an appropriate event in their own locality designed to help develop relationships between members of the Christian community.

8. A consultation is to be held between the churches on “One Bread One Body”, the latest report from the Roman Catholic Church on the Eucharist in the life of the Church and the established norms on sacramental sharing.

9. The Department of Theological Questions is working on a project entitled “Into the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit”, which has the subtitle “Christ and the Church today.”

10. Last year the General Assembly agreed to send to Presbyteries, for debate and comment, the draft proposals for constitutional changes to the Irish inter-church structures. The proposed changes are an attempt to regularise an already existing situation. All twenty-one Presbyteries responded and a wide range of views were expressed. Four Presbyteries were strongly opposed to any ‘formal or institutional’ arrangements between the churches. Others noted that the proposed changes to the Irish Inter-Church Meeting were explicitly not about structural church unity but mutual co-operation in an increasingly secular age. Eight Presbyteries commented on the value of encouraging better relationships between the churches. In the responses received there were common concerns raised about specific proposals. Fourteen Presbyteries commented on the proposed theological basis of membership. Some felt it was inadequate and others welcomed its inclusion. Five Presbyteries raised concerns about the authority of the body in relation to the authority of the member churches. Five Presbyteries were unhappy about the 50% Roman Catholic/ 50% Protestant composition. Three Presbyteries concluded that the percentage of places for members of PCI was low in comparison with the number of places allocated to the smaller churches. These concerns were sent to the IICM Review Committee and were addressed alongside the concerns expressed by other churches. The following outcomes were agreed:

- (i) The concerns regarding the confessional statement were recognised. In the appended constitution there is no confessional statement, instead, membership is *‘open to all those Christian Churches or associations of local churches within one Christian tradition in Ireland willing to join in united efforts to promote the aims’* (Constitution para. 3.1).
- (ii) Decisions at the various levels in the inter-church body will be made by a process of deliberation, reflection and consultation. IICM has never taken a vote at any of its meetings but works by broad consensus. The proposed constitution states that if a vote is taken it will require the approval of 90% of those present and voting. This ensures agreement must be reached between the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Ireland and Presbyterian Church in Ireland. (Constitution para. 7.1)
- (iii) Some of the smaller churches in the ICC were concerned about their lack of representation on the IICM. This has been addressed by giving each member church a place on the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee would meet every six months and is the primary group through which the body would function. As a result of this

change, Presbyterian representation has increased from the original proposal of three to four.

- (iv) Since the Roman Catholic Church is the largest Church on this island and asked to pay for half the income of the body it was agreed that the representation should continue to be 50% Roman Catholic Church and 50% Protestant and other churches.
- (v) The Methodist Church proposed a name change from the Irish Inter-Church Meeting to the Conference of Churches in Ireland. This was accepted by the Review Group and is incorporated in the constitution. The name of the Irish Council of Churches remains.

The Constitution of the Conference of Irish Churches is sent for the approval of the Assembly (Appendix III). Appendix I is the Report of the Review Group and Appendix II is an Explanatory Memorandum. The Assembly is reminded that all churches participating in the IICM have been asked to approve the constitution. If any church rejects the proposed constitution the present arrangements remain until agreement is reached.

11. Week of prayer for Christian Unity literature is made available through the Irish-Inter Church Meeting. The Evangelical Alliance World Prayer Week leaflet can be received from the Evangelical Alliance office.

TONY DAVIDSON, Convener

APPENDIX I

REVIEW OF THE IRISH INTER-CHURCH MEETING

REPORT OF THE REVIEW GROUP

The Review Group has carefully considered the comments of the member churches on the proposals submitted to them in February 1998.

These comments centred round the following:

- the basis of membership of a reorganised and formally constituted body
- the involvement of the smaller churches
- the composition of the body
- the safeguarding of the authority of the member churches
- how the issuing of any public statements is to be handled
- the name of the body

The Review Group has taken these comments fully into account and has made certain changes to its original proposals. The attached Constitution incorporates these changes.

The aims remain basically the same but different structures are proposed to allow for the fuller participation of the smaller churches in decision making, but with a smaller implementing body. An Irish Churches Gathering is proposed to encourage broader involvement. Care has been taken to secure the authority of the member churches and a new name is proposed.

We hope that these proposals as incorporated in the attached Constitution will command broad acceptance in the member churches.

We suggest that a review be carried out five years after the formally constituted body comes into operation.

Mr A Connolly
 Most Rev G Clifford
 Rt Rev Mgr P Devine
 Rev Dr I M Ellis
 Most Rev Dr A Farquhar
 Rev R Herron
 Rev E Hewitt
 Rev Dr J Nelson
 Rev Dr T Norris
 Dr R D Stevens

APPENDIX II

CONSTITUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES IN IRELAND

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. Name

The Conference of Churches in Ireland is the proposed renaming of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting.

2. Background

The first Irish Inter-Church Meeting between the member churches of the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) and the Roman Catholic Church took place in 1973. Since then the Irish Inter-Church Meeting (IICM) structure has grown and developed.

The Review Group, which reported to the churches in 1998, suggested a reorganised and properly constituted IICM was required for the following reasons:

- the increasing agenda of IICM as more issues are dealt with on a fuller inter-church basis, reflecting the relationships that have developed over the years.
- the development of IICM as a representative body relating to governments, etc.
- the lack of a proper constitutional and legal basis to support the current work and allow for future developments.
- the ICC carrying the main administrative burden of IICM at present.
- the need for a rationalisation of inter-church structures.
- the ICC has been used up to now as the main servicing agent of the IICM and the need for a more equitable sharing of burdens.

3. Proposed Activity of Reorganised Body

The emphasis of the reorganised body is on:

- Providing opportunities for the member churches to meet, develop understanding, deliberate and consult together.
- assisting the churches to co-operate and act together. The Departments of Theological Questions and Social Issues already do this. It is envisaged that some work currently carried out under the auspices of the ICC would be transferred to the reorganised body but the focus would be on promoting co-ordination and co-operation between appropriate people and committees in the member churches.
- supporting and facilitating local church initiatives.
- encouraging communication and links between different Christian groups, and between the Christian world and secular society

4. Structures

The proposals seek to maintain the 50% Roman Catholic Church 50% Other Christian Churches ratio of the present IICM in the various proposed structures.

The primary body in the structures would be the Standing Committee, which has representatives from all the member churches and a smaller implementing body, the Steering Committee. The Irish Churches Gathering would be similar to the present Meeting, which takes place every couple of years.

5. Finance

Based on the proposals sent to the churches in 1998 illustrative subscriptions would be as follows:

Roman Catholic Church	£36,500
Church of Ireland	£12,720
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	£12,720
Methodist Church in Ireland	£ 6,360
Other Member Churches	£ 4,700

APPENDIX III

CONSTITUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES IN IRELAND

1. Name

The name shall be “The Conference of Churches in Ireland”.

2. Aims

The Conference of Churches in Ireland (hereinafter referred to as CCI) is constituted by Christian Churches in Ireland with aims, which are hereby declared to be exclusively charitable and are as follows:

- (i) to be a forum where the member churches meet, discuss and consult together;
- (ii) to assist the member churches to grow in their understanding of each other, in accordance with the will of Christ;

- (iii) to assist the member churches to co-operate and act together as appropriate;
- (iv) to assist and facilitate inter-church initiatives at local level;
- (v) to liaise and co-operate with relevant secular agencies and authorities and other Christian bodies and to make known to the churches and community what is happening at all levels in the area of inter-church activity;
- (vi) to take forward the work carried out under the name of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting;
- (vii) to take forward work hitherto carried out under the auspices of the Irish Council of Churches, if so agreed with the said Irish Council of Churches.

CCI shall not be a forum for church union negotiations.

3. Membership

3.1 Membership of CCI shall be open to all those Christian Churches or associations of local churches within one Christian tradition in Ireland willing to join in united efforts to promote the Aims.

It is anticipated that the founder member Christian Churches (hereinafter called Founder Member Churches) shall be:

The Church of Ireland,
 The Coptic Church of Ireland,
 The Greek Orthodox Church in Britain and Ireland,
 The LifeLink Network of Churches,
 The Lutheran Church in Ireland,
 The Methodist Church in Ireland,
 The Moravian Church, Irish District,
 The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland,
 The Presbyterian Church in Ireland,
 The Religious Society of Friends,
 The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland,
 The Salvation Army, Ireland Division.

3.2 Following the inauguration of CCI applications for membership shall be considered and determined by the Standing Committee.

4. Structures

4.1 General Principles

4.1.1 The structures of CCI are designed (i) to maintain the authority of the member churches, (ii) to be directly answerable to them, and (iii) to enable them to act together to further the Aims.

4.1.2 Consideration shall be given by the member churches to the balance of gender and age in their representation on the various bodies.

4.1.3 The composition of the various bodies of CCI shall always be in the proportion: fifty percent Roman Catholic Church, fifty percent other member Christian Churches, and the numbers on the various bodies shall be adjusted by agreement of the member churches to preserve this proportion when a Christian

Church hitherto not a member is admitted to membership, or a member church ceases to be a member.

4.2 CCI will operate through the following bodies:

4.2.1 The Standing Committee

- (a) The Standing Committee shall be the primary body through which CCI enables the member churches to share, consult and co-operate together to further the Aims. It shall be responsible for determining the work of CCI. The Standing Committee shall receive reports from the Steering Committee, Departments, committees, working groups, etc. It shall approve the budget annually, receive the accounts, and shall, on the nomination of the Steering Committee, appoint the auditors. The Standing Committee, on the nomination of the Steering Committee, shall appoint the General Secretary and the Treasurer.
- (b) The Standing Committee shall be composed of representatives appointed annually by the member churches and shall have the following composition:

Roman Catholic Church	18
Church of Ireland	4
Methodist Church in Ireland	2
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	4
Other Member Churches	1 each

The member churches shall be able to appoint alternates. Names of alternates must be given in advance to the General Secretary.

The General Secretary, Treasurer, Moderators of Departments and representatives of such committees and working parties as agreed from time to time by the Standing Committee shall attend as non-voting members.

- (c) The Standing Committee shall normally meet twice a year.

4.2.2 Steering Committee

4.2.2.1 The Steering Committee shall be responsible for:

- (i) the implementation of policies agreed by the Standing Committee;
- (ii) continuing the work of CCI between meetings of the Standing Committee;
- (iii) the overall management of staff and resources;

The Steering Committee shall report back to the Standing Committee.

4.2.2.2 The Steering Committee shall be composed of members of the Standing Committee and have the following composition:

Roman Catholic Church	7
Church of Ireland	2
Methodist Church in Ireland	1
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	2
Other Member Churches	2

The Roman Catholic Church, Church of Ireland, Methodist Church in Ireland and Presbyterian Church in Ireland representatives shall be appointed annually by these Churches. The other Founder Member Churches shall devise an appropriate system of rotation for the other two places at a meeting specially

called for that purpose. Alternates shall be able to be appointed. Names of alternates must be given in advance to the General Secretary.

The General Secretary, Treasurer and Moderators of Departments, shall attend as nonvoting members.

4.2.3 Departments, Committees, Working Groups

The Standing Committee may appoint or cause its Steering Committee to appoint and supervise such Departments, committees, working groups of its own members and other persons from its member churches as it may from time to time decide as necessary for the carrying out of the work of CCI, each of which shall report back to the Standing Committee.

4.2.4 The Irish Churches Gathering

4.2.4.1 The Irish Churches Gathering shall normally meet once every two years and its role shall be to:

- (i) provide an opportunity for deepening the relationships between the member churches;
- (ii) discuss and deliberate on issues of importance to the member churches;
- (iii) help to establish the direction and priorities of the CCI.

4.2.4.2 It shall have the following composition:

Roman Catholic Church	46
Church of Ireland	12
Methodist Church in Ireland	6
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	12
Other Member Churches	2 each

Ex-officio: Treasurer, General Secretary, Moderators of Departments.

Other persons may be invited as observers and guests with a right to speak, but not to vote.

5. Officers

5.1 Presidents

The Standing Committee shall appoint two Presidents from the membership of the Steering Committee for a two year period; one being nominated by the Irish Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church; and the other being nominated by another member church under a system of rotation. The Presidents will as appropriate, chair meetings of the Standing Committee, the Steering Committee and the Irish Churches Gathering and, as occasion demands, represent CCI on public occasions, and make statements on its behalf.

5.2 General Secretary

The Standing Committee, on the nomination of the Steering Committee, shall appoint the General Secretary. The appointment shall be governed by the terms and conditions set down by the Standing Committee, on the recommendation of the Steering Committee.

5.3 Treasurer

The Standing Committee, on the nomination of the Steering Committee, shall appoint the Treasurer and shall determine the term of office.

6. Finance

6.1 CCI's work shall be maintained by annual grants from the member churches. The churches' contributions shall be based on the principles and methods of assessment as agreed from time to time by CCI.

6.2 CCI will also have authority to receive individual, congregational, corporate and government financial contributions, endowments and bequests for the benefit of its general funds and for any special funds established by it, or for other special purposes.

6.3 CCI has the power to lend and advance money to any persons, churches, charitable bodies, firms or companies on such terms, as CCI deems expedient.

6.4 CCI has the power in promoting the Aims

- (i) to purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any real and personal estate which may be deemed necessary or convenient for any of the purposes of CCI;
- (ii) to construct, maintain, and alter any houses, buildings, or works necessary convenient for any of the purposes of CCI;
- (iii) to take any gift of property, whether subject to any special trust or not, for any one or more of the objects of CCI;
- (iv) to sell, manage, lease, mortgage, dispose of or otherwise deal with all or any part of the property of CCI;
- (v) to raise funds (but not by means of taxable trading); to borrow money and give security for loans.

7. Rules

7.1 The rules and procedures of meetings shall be determined by the Standing Committee. Decisions at the Irish Churches Gathering, the Standing Committee and the Steering Committee shall not normally be made by voting, but by reaching a broad consensus through a process of deliberation, reflection and consultation. If a vote is decided upon decisions shall require the approval of ninety percent of those present and voting.

7.2 Public statements made by CCI shall express a broad consensus of the member churches. The Standing Committee shall make public statements on behalf of CCI but it may in its discretion delegate this responsibility to the Steering Committee or the Presidents.

8. Amendments to the Constitution

All changes in the Constitution must allow CCI to remain a charity in law and must be approved by ninety percent of those present and voting at two successive Standing Committee Meetings. In addition, no amendments of Articles Two, Three, Four and Eight of the Constitution shall be valid unless approved by the governing bodies (or equivalent) of the member churches.

9. Dissolution

That in the event of the winding-up or dissolution of CCI there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, its disposable assets (excluding any real or chattel real property) shall be allocated

to its member churches in proportion to their several ordinary grants made to CCI in the financial year preceding such dissolution. Any real or chattel real property shall be given or transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions, having objects similar to the objects of CCI, or to a charitable institution which will use the property for ecumenical purposes, such institution or institutions to be determined by the Standing Committee at or before the time of dissolution, and if and so far as effect cannot be given to such provision then to some charitable object.

APPENDIX IV

INTER-CHURCH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met in January, 1999. The members of the Committee are:

Church of Ireland	Methodist	Presbyterian
The Bishop of Limerick (Chairman)	Rev D C Bain	Rev A D Davidson
Rev I J E Knox	Rev T M Kingston	Rev R Herron
Ven G A McCamley	Rev E T I Mawhinney	Mrs E Cobain
Canon J Mayes	Mrs H O'Neill	Rev R F S Poots OBE

2. The Chairman welcomed Rev Canon John Mayes and Rev Des Bain and the Committee noted the appointment of Rev Stephen Hancock to St Patrick's, Waterford.

3. The Committee noted that the draft Constitution for Christ Church, Sandymount made no provision for Circuit Stewards to serve on the Church Council and decided that this issue could be addressed locally.

4. The innovative development of joint-chaplaincy in the Adelaide and Meath Hospital was commended. The Rev Dr R W J MacDermott represents the interest of both the Presbyterian and the Methodist Churches.

5. The ministerial vacancy at St Columba's, Lisburn will result in an initial review, by Presbytery and the Lisburn Circuit, of the joint scheme which provided for both Presbyterians and Methodists to be represented on the Congregational Committee and Methodist representatives to sit and deliberate in Kirk Session.

6. Reports were received from two joint Methodist/Church of Ireland schemes

(a) **Christ Church / Centenary, Leeson Park, Dublin.**

The scheme, which originated in an arrangement to share a church building when Centenary Methodist was destroyed by fire some 28 years ago, has developed into a sharing of liturgies and services especially during the special celebrations of the Christian Year as well as in a monthly service. More recently St Bartholomew's has participated. The Methodist Church is the numerically stronger partner.

(b) Movilla Abbey, Newtownards

Jointly owned buildings, which are shared by both denominations, were opened in 1980 near the historic Abbey founded by St Finian in 540 AD. Today, a new building is planned, funded locally and centrally by both denominations, to accommodate a weekly attendance of 400 worshippers fairly equally divided between Methodists and Church of Ireland. The jointly run youth organisations attract 400 children. Evening services provide joint worship and the sacraments are celebrated together following different liturgies. The services of the Christian Year are also celebrated jointly.

RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The need for greater awareness and action on the part of both government and our own church members on race relations issues in both the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom have been particular concerns of the Committee during this past year. The inquiry into the police investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence is only one of many reports in the past year which highlight the need for more education of the majority population on race relations issues, including the provision and enforcement of adequate race relations legislation, fair treatment of asylum seekers, and examination of various forms of institutional racism.

2. The Committee is, therefore, encouraging the Department of Social Issues of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting in the production of study/resource materials for use in all of the churches. A booklet on race relations aimed at adults is currently being written as part of the “What the Bible Says About...” series. Work also continues by the Churches Peace Education Programme on materials for use in schools.

3. As part of the Belfast Agreement, current plans are for the Northern Ireland Commission for Racial Equality to be subsumed in a new umbrella Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. This new Commission will supersede the role of the Fair Employment Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Northern Ireland Disability Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality. The Committee understands that during the early stages of the new Equality Commission’s operation work will be done through separate Directorates to reflect the importance of the four statutory areas and ensure continuity of work at the changeover. Six strategic priority areas of work have been identified: Employment and employability; Goods, facilities, services and housing/premises; Combating discrimination; Mainstreaming equality in legislative, economic and social policy; Public sector statutory duty; Building an effective and efficient commission.

4. The Committee encourages congregations to observe Race Relations Sunday on the second Sunday in January and/or to give attention to race relations issues in worship and in the programme planning of various organisations throughout the year. Members of the Committee are available as speakers to help congregations with this.

5. The Committee brings a resolution through the Board to continue support for the work of the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre and, in particular, the Minority Ethnic Health Liaison Project. Isolation is one of the main problems facing many ethnic minority individuals. This can often contribute to physical and mental health problems. Not understanding the health system or being understood by those serving within it are further problems. The Minority Ethnic Health Liaison Project, co-ordinated by Mrs Elma Greer, a member of this Committee, seeks to address both of these issues by producing leaflets on health services and issues in a variety of languages and offering training to health service workers which will help them to develop a knowledge of and sensitivity to ethnic minority individuals.

6. In line with our concern about the plight of refugees and asylum seekers in Britain and Ireland the Committee brings resolutions through the Board to support the work of the Churches Commission for Racial Justice, with particular reference to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom, and the work of the Association of Nigerian Asylum Seekers in Ireland. ANASI, formed in 1998, is a non-profit initiative positioned to address specific issues pertaining to Nigerian Asylum Seekers in Ireland whilst awaiting decisions on their applications.

7. The Committee continues to be concerned about the development of positive race relations in South Africa. To that end the Committee brings a resolution through the Board to continue support for the Leadership Exposure Programme of the Diakonia Council of Churches in Durban South Africa, which takes clergy and lay leaders from member churches to settlements, hostels for migrant workers, township schools and rural areas to become better informed about the conditions under which many are living and to motivate the wider church to work for structural changes required for positive relations and healthy development.

DOUG BAKER, Convener

WORLD CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. During the past year the Committee has continued to be actively involved in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the Conference of European Churches (CEC), and the Leuvenberg Church Fellowship (LCF). The Committee has also been developing relationships with the Church of Scotland (C of S) and the United Reformed Church (URC).

United Reformed Church

2. Rev Gabrielle Ellis attended the URC Assembly held at Nottingham University in July 1998 as a voting delegate. She also attended two meetings of the Ecumenical Committee of the URC at Yardley Hastings in September 1998 and at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon in February 1999.

Church of Scotland

3. The possibility of summer pulpit exchanges continues to be explored with the hope that there will be a number of exchanges in the summer of 2000.

Conference of European Churches

4. The Central Committee of CEC has admitted the Church of God in Croatia as a full member. This church with Pentecostal roots was founded after Croatia had gained international recognition and independence.

World Alliance of Reformed Churches

5. Rev John Kirkpatrick, a member of the European Area Committee (EAC), continues to serve on the Christian Education in Europe Committee. Proposals are currently being considered on co-operation between churches in Ireland and member churches of WARC. The proposals include prayer, twinning, loving your neighbour, sanctuary and children. Last year Krister Andersson, the President of EAC, visited Ireland. During his visit he made contact with various church representatives from PCI and other churches.

Leuenberg Church Fellowship

6. The Fellowship is made up of Reformed Churches, Methodist Churches and Lutheran Churches. The basis for Leuenberg is pulpit and table fellowship between these church traditions. A sub-committee has been set up to make arrangements for the Leuenberg Church Fellowship Assembly to be held in Belfast from 19-25 June 2001 and also the Leuenberg Executive Committee meeting to be held in Belfast from 16-18 June 2000. The sub-committee consists of 9 members, 4 from PCI, 4 from the Methodist Church in Ireland and 1 from the Lutheran Church in Ireland. Professor Cecil McCullough continues to represent PCI on the LCF Executive Committee.

General

7. The Committee Convener had opportunity to preach in Moda Presbyterian Church Istanbul, Turkey and convey greetings from the Inter-Church Relations Board. Links are now being established with this church which is the only congregation in the denomination. The Convener also preached in Maburuku Presbyterian Church near Harare, Zimbabwe. This church is part of the Central and Eastern Africa Presbyterian Church.

8. Preliminary discussions are taking place with the United Reformed Church and the Church of Scotland regarding the possibility of a tripartite meeting between representatives from the URC, Church of Scotland and PCI in 2001. The purpose of the meeting would be to look at issues common to the Reformed Churches in Britain and Ireland.

DAVID CAMPBELL, Convener

WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. 1998 saw the beginning of a new three year campaign 'Let my People go ...' We aim through Christian Aid and Tearfund to help people who are trapped in poverty and injustice and cannot free themselves. The campaign is firmly rooted in the biblical understanding that God revealed his intention for all humankind when he challenged Egypt to free the slaves.

2. In the first year of the campaign we focused on the most basic of all freedoms - freedom from hunger. The main projects we are supporting illustrate the varying reasons why people are hungry - the aftermath of war, drought and crop failure, or because they are denied land on which to grow the crops they need to feed their families. Without food security it is almost impossible to plan for the future. All long-term development such as health care and education is dependent on people having enough to eat. Having enough to eat frees people to work for a better future.

3. The annual appeal raised £380,000 in the year to the end of March. This was in addition to £150,000 for special emergency appeals for Sudan and Central America in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch

4. We have sought to support Jubilee 2000, a coalition of many organisations such as Christian Aid and Tearfund and the churches, that seeks a one off cancellation of the backlog of unpayable debt for the world's poorest countries - which either cannot be paid, or can be paid only with enormous human suffering. This would not be setting a precedent for cancelling all debts repeatedly. Rather it would be to mark the millennium showing that debtors and creditors alike have made mistakes and the slate needs to be wiped clean. This would change millions of lives, without taking away the responsibility of debtors to repay their future debts. While the cancellation of debts will not, of itself, eradicate poverty it is an essential prerequisite. The World Development Committee has organised a church-wide petition which it hopes to forward to the meeting of the G8 in Cologne in mid June. Without a cancellation of debt it is estimated seven million children will die each year in Africa alone.

5. The role of advocacy, which is an essential part of development, is in response to God's command to us to do justly, which involves us in challenging the structures that make and keep people poor to the point of slavery.

ROGER PURCE, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Irish Church Relations

2. The General Assembly accept the proposals to reorganise and constitute the Irish Inter-Church Meeting as they are expressed in the Constitution of the Conference of Churches in Ireland (Appendix III).

3. That the following appointments be made:

To the Irish Council of Churches - Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, Revs C J Aitcheson, W Bingham, S J Campbell, J M Cathcart, A D Davidson, G A J Ellis,

Dr R J G Gray, R Herron, J G Johnstone, D Mark, C McClure, D Nesbitt; Mrs P Crossley, Miss D Gilmour, Mrs M Irwin, J A Patterson, Ian Scott, Mrs E Sheppard, David Whitcroft.

To the Irish Inter-Church Meeting - Revs J M Cathcart, A D Davidson, Dr J Dunlop, R Herron, Dr S Hutchinson; Mrs M Irwin; Revs Dr T W J Morrow, Dr J C McCullough.

To the Irish Inter-Church Committee - Revs A D Davidson, R Herron.

World Development Committee

4. That the PCI seek to raise £1m for development through its annual Appeal for World Development to mark the millennium, making full use of special gift-aid arrangements, where possible.

Conveners

5. That the resignation of Rev Dr D R Purce as Convener of the World Development Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Mrs Hazel McCall be appointed in his place.

6. That the resignation of Rev D R Baker as Convener of the Race Relations Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Rev Dr R J G Gray be appointed in his place.

General

7. That the following grants be made from the Incidental Fund:

Irish Council of Churches	£25,600
Irish Inter-Church Meeting	£4,000
Conference of European Churches	£3,198
Leuenberg Consultation	£500
World Alliance of Reformed Churches	£8,133
World Alliance of Reformed Churches Partnership Fund	£811

Race Relations Grants:

(i) Multi-Cultural Resource Centre, Bryson House, Belfast	£750
(ii) Diakonia Council of Churches	£1,500
(iii) Churches Council for Racial Justice (Refugees and Asylum Seekers UK)	£375
(iv) Association of Nigerian Asylum-Seekers in Ireland	£375

General Work of the Board £5,000

8. That the Inter-Church Relations Board, with its associated working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 278 of the Code as follows:

OVERSEAS BOARD

Convener: Rev S J CAMPBELL
 Secretaries: Rev R J T McMULLAN
 Miss E BRIAN

CHRIST FOR THE WORLD – THE WORLD FOR CHRIST

1. Approximately two thousand years ago Jesus Christ, who is both Lord and Saviour, commissioned his disciples to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1) so that the whole creation might hear the good news of salvation. That commission is still in force and our Church must seek to fulfil it in a world where millions of people have not heard the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. This is the challenge that faces us and also the opportunity we must take up as we approach the new millennium.

2. It was in 1989 that the General Assembly urged the Overseas Board 'to establish the priorities of our Church in world mission for the last decade of this millennium'. Two years later the priorities were established and in its report to the 1992 General Assembly the policy and strategy of the Board was set out as follows:

POLICY

3. *The Presbyterian Church in Ireland accepts the unchanging commission of Christ, its Lord, to proclaim the gospel in word and action to people throughout the world. The Overseas Board accepts its responsibility to stimulate the interest and active involvement of individuals, congregations, organisations and Presbyteries and to encourage and support missionary service.*

4. *Mission overseas is part of the wider mission of the Church to all people in a world which faces the claims and challenges of different ideologies and faiths. Mission is based on:*

- *the revelation of God as loving, righteous and just;*
- *the work of Christ sent to be Saviour and Servant;*
- *the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the Church, the body of Christ.*

5. *Missionary service springs from a personal experience of the love of God, through faith in Jesus Christ which, in obedience to the Lord's command, desires to make this love known to others by word and action in order that people everywhere should be brought to embrace salvation so freely offered in the gospel.*

STRATEGY

6. *Our strategy includes working in partnership with Churches and agencies through our involvement in:*

- *direct evangelism*
- *church planting*

- *pastoral work*
- *theological and general education*
- *medical work, technical and administrative work*
- *development activities*
- *and other appropriate means of witness and service*

7. In the intervening years we have been implementing this policy and strategy and setting objectives for the work of the Board. In 1997 the General Assembly “encouraged the Overseas Board to determine in the coming year, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, what further steps need to be taken in world mission as we approach the end of the millennium”. In response to this resolution the Overseas Board has conducted a review of its policy and strategy and also examined possible new directions in world mission and reports as follows:

POLICY

8. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland accepts the great commission given by Christ, our Lord, to proclaim his gospel in word and action throughout the world.

In the work of the Overseas Board, we enthusiastically accept our responsibility to:

- stimulate prayer and practical interest and engage in the education of individuals, congregations, organisations and Presbyteries throughout Ireland;
- support and encourage those whom Christ has called to his witness and service overseas;
- maintain and develop relationships with partner Churches and organisations sharing our common calling.

9. The review of our policy and strategy produced the following recommendations:

- that we need to find a new word or phrase to describe the person who is still called ‘a missionary’ and is sometimes called ‘a mission partner’ or ‘a co-worker’;
- that we need to relate to the new generation of Christians, the present ‘teens and twenties’ age group, and communicate in ways that they will easily understand;
- that we need to strengthen the links with our partner Churches in the receiving and sending of personnel, in the sharing of resources on a Church to Church basis and in decision-making;
- that we need to enable congregations and Presbyteries of PCI to establish partnerships with congregations in our partner Churches which will result in the sharing of resources and visits by personnel;
- that we need to foster a greater sense of ownership of our overseas mission by individuals, congregations, organisations and Presbyteries and to provide to all who are supporting the overseas mission general and specific information and prayer topics on a regular basis;
- that we need to further develop a heart for God’s world and God’s work in the whole wide world and adopt a much more wide-ranging

approach to the complex question of resourcing people to support and pray for world mission.

10. These recommendations will be referred to the appropriate Board Committee for discussion and implementation over the coming months so that we enter the new millennium prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities for the spread of the unchanging gospel.

11. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland faces the tremendous task of motivating its people to engage in the mission of Christ in Ireland and into the world beyond, and it is our prayer that the Overseas Board and the other mission agencies will be given the resources to take up the opportunities for the spread of the gospel.

ASIA

12. Over the past months we have received reports which indicate that in many countries in Asia the minority communities, and especially Christians, are under great pressure from Moslem fundamentalists in Pakistan and Indonesia, and from extreme Hindu groups in India. Despite the persecution, the Church continues to grow and although Christians are a tiny minority in these countries, it is their growth in numbers that seems to attract the opposition.

13. Over the past year the economic collapse in most countries in South East Asia has led to serious unemployment, unrest and violence in several situations with the accompanying loss of life and destruction of property. In Indonesia this unrest and violence has been turned into a conflict between Christians and Moslems and in Ambon and Timor many churches and mosques have been destroyed and people have been killed due to the activity of fundamentalist Islamic groups.

14. In **India**, the largest democracy in the world, where religious freedom and the freedom to propagate one's religion is guaranteed by the constitution, an extreme Hindu group has been actively encouraging attacks upon Christians and their church buildings because they are opposed to the growth of Christianity in the rural areas particularly. During a ten-day period, beginning on Christmas Day, thirty-seven churches in the Dang District of South Gujarat were destroyed or seriously damaged. Another example of anti-Christian violence was when a mob broke into the IP Mission Girls' High School in Rajkot, collected a pile of New Testaments provided by the Gideons, and publicly burned them. The Indian Government has opposed these atrocities yet at the same time prominent leaders are calling for a debate on the issue of conversion to Christianity.

15. Our partnership with the **Church of North India**, which came into being in 1970, continues to grow in the exchange of personnel and resources. We are now linked to the Dioceses of Gujarat and Agra and one of our Deaconesses is serving in Agra and several of our personnel are teaching in Woodstock School.

16. The church in Gujarat is growing, especially in South Gujarat, and the Bible Society Auxiliary is co-operating with the Diocese in outreach and evangelism as well as in holding conventions for young Christian people at several locations throughout the state. Bishop Malaviya, who spent two years studying in Ireland in the eighties and nineties, encourages his people to grow in their faith and to share their faith with others. The work of the Rural Service

Centre in Ankleshwar, under the leadership of Idrack and Rachel Din, continues to make a significant contribution to the development of the people in South Gujarat and is a great encouragement to the Church.

17. The tenth ordinary Synod of the Church of North India confirmed Rt. Rev Vinod Peter, Bishop of Nagpur, as its Moderator. The CNI Partners in Mission Committee, meeting in January in Aurungabad, near Mumbai (Bombay), approved the policy of encouraging its partner Churches to establish links with Dioceses other than those with which they have historic relationships. The CNI is also encouraging the formation of Sunday Schools so that children may be taught the faith and through its Board of Health Services is addressing many health issues including the increasing problem of AIDS.

18. **Seva Sadan** 'House of Service' was opened in 1970 in the Sparkhill area of Birmingham in co-operation with the Presbyterian Church in England and served the needs of the Gujarati community for well over twenty years under the leadership of Hazel McClenaghan, Hansa Shah and Kumud Christian. In 1993 the work took on a different nature due to the movement of Gujaratis out of the area and Seva Sadan was taken over by a Committee of Management from the United Reformed Church and the Methodist Church. Kumud Christian continued to work in the Asian Community under the guidance of the Management Committee but on 31 March 1999, convinced that her work in the area was finished, she returned to her home church and her family twenty-five years after her first arrival in England. We thank all who have served so faithfully in Seva Sadan, especially Kumud, and we wish her God's richest blessing as she settles back among her own people.

19. The work among the community in the **Wembley area** has been carried on faithfully by the Macwan family over the past year with the encouragement of the Wembley Park URC, the Parish of St James, Alperton, and the members of the Support Group. There has been a great increase in Christian work in the Asian communities in England in the past years and the annual visit of a youth team for two weeks of Holiday Bible Clubs each year has been a great encouragement to the churches in the Wembley area.

20. The Christian Church in **Nepal** has experienced remarkable growth since the move towards democracy in 1990, though there has been much opposition experienced by Pastors and people alike in this Hindu Kingdom nestling in the foothills of the Himalayas. Member bodies of the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) are in the process of determining how they relate to the young Nepali Church and the Board has recently decided that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should relate to the growing Church in Nepal through the UMN and its Church Relations Officer and not directly with any individual congregation or Church grouping. Our personnel working in different projects of UMN are able to relate positively to and encourage their local Churches.

21. Last December Mr Michael Askwith took over as Executive Director of UMN and he is already starting, together with the Co-ordinating Committee, to plan for the future involvement of UMN in the development of the nation. We have twelve personnel currently serving in Nepal who seek to bear witness to their faith as they serve the people of Nepal in the Name and Spirit of Jesus Christ. The Board has been conscious that many of our personnel live in very

tense and difficult situations and seeks to support them in prayer and practical ways.

22. During the past year the Government of **Pakistan** returned all schools and colleges to the Presbyterian Church which now faces the great challenge of rehabilitating the buildings and providing education for those who can pay and those who cannot afford it. The Church continues to minister to the people through various social development projects of the Society for Community Development for the benefit of rural people, and by providing health care and curative medicine through the Memorial Christian Hospital in Sialkot. We continue to support ministry in the rural areas through the training of pastors and evangelists in development and we are keen to recruit an experienced minister to work in the Presbyterian Church teaching in Gujranwala Seminary and being an encouragement to pastors in rural areas.

23. In **China** the liberal policies of the Government introduced in the early 1980s ended in the early 1990s due to the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the rapid growth of the Church in certain areas of China and the unrest which ensued after Tiannamen Square. Today there is a recognition that religion is here to stay and large-scale persecution is gone, but there is a crackdown on sects, groups and churches. The aim is to control religion and religious activities through administrative means and eventually to destroy it because it is believed that Christianity and Buddhism are superstitions. The official or registered Church seeks to have a good relationship with the government, but also maintains its vision to witness to and serve the people of China.

24. It is now thirteen years since the Amity Teachers' Programme commenced and it is still proving to be an effective means whereby Christian teachers can live and witness in several parts of China. Our two teachers are encouraged by their ability to relate to the local church and to the students whom they serve. We attend, as observers, the China Forum of the Church's Commission On Mission, and learn much about the developing situation in China in relation to the Christian Church.

25. In **Indonesia** we are in partnership with the Christian Churches in Halmahera, Timor and Sumba in the eastern part of Indonesia known as the Moluccas and with Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Central Java. These are growing Churches and we have sought to support them in their ministry of the Gospel to their largely rural people. In Timor, and to some extent in Sumba, but not so far in Halmahera, the life of the community has been disrupted by the recent political unrest which has been used by extreme elements to introduce inter-religious conflict in these islands where the people lived at peace with one another.

26. Our partnership with the Christian Church in Sumba has been growing over recent years, and a young volunteer is currently teaching English in Wira Wacana School of Economics. Our children and young people and our Young Women's Groups have contributed almost £100,000 for the development of training facilities and training programmes for women and young people in agriculture, rural and economic development, and we thank them most sincerely. Eben Nuben Timo and his family returned for a six-week sabbatical to Timor from his studies in The Netherlands. He reports that inter-religious conflict

broke out in Kupang, which is noted for its tolerance, and there has been a great deal of suffering because of the economic situation with some Ministers being paid in kind.

27. The Presbyterian Church in **Myanmar (Burma)** continues its ministry in the northern parts of the country and its outreach to the mainly tribal peoples of that area. We supported the first Pastors' Conference where over eighty ministers came together for a week for Bible Study, reflection and fellowship and to seek the Lord's direction for the ministry of the Gospel. Rev Lal Tin Hre has been involved in the Falam Bible revision and it is hoped to publish the New Testament in AD 2000.

28. The Church of Christ in **Thailand** is our partner Church in this Buddhist country where other minority religions are also in evidence. 'The Lamp' is the outreach ministry of the Church, which provides Bible study correspondence courses in Thai for children and adults. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been supporting this ministry for twenty years and it has proved to be an effective means of bringing the Gospel to many who would not otherwise have heard. In the past year the ministry of 'The Lamp' has grown and Mrs Supaporn Insaeng (Director) and the team continue to visit schools, prisons and churches in different areas of the country to meet with and encourage those who use the correspondence courses and who have come to faith in Jesus Christ.

THE MIDDLE EAST

29. At the time of writing the political situation in the Middle East gives cause for much concern. The 'Peace Process' is at best on hold and would seem to many to be, in effect, dead. The lengthy run-up to elections to the Knesset in Israel and the recent death of King Hussein underline the general uncertainty.

30. Through Principal McCullough's visit to **Lebanon** last April contact has been re-established with the three major Churches – The Presbyterian Synod, the American Union and the National Protestant Church – and with the Near East School of Theology (NEST) and the Agazian College. We expect Dr Mary Michael, the President of NEST to visit us later this year and the Board has agreed to fund a scholarship for one student, probably from Sudan, and make a grant towards the radio work of the Middle East Reformed Fellowship.

31. In **Israel** a Bill proposed by a member of Knesset over a year ago has passed preliminary readings. It calls for a three-year prison sentence or NIS 50,000 (£7,500) fine for anyone found guilty of "preaching with the intent of causing another person to change his religion". The final outcome may depend on which party or coalition of parties forms the next government.

32. The work in Stella Carmel has continued throughout the past year and due to changes in leadership Colin Dickson has acted as Director for two periods before the new Director, Don Stanley, arrived in January this year. Our personnel continue their work at the Centre and also with their language study, and relate to people in the surrounding area.

EUROPE

33. Our Church is beginning to realise that we who live in the island of Ireland are linked economically and socially and also religiously to the other

countries in the Continent of Europe. Over the past year the Board has continued to develop its relationships with Reformed and Presbyterian Churches in West and Central Europe and to encourage congregations and Presbyteries to establish living links with congregations and other groups. The series of five videos called 'The Europe File' was released last December and is being widely used throughout our Church and also by our children and young people for their project entitled 'Making A Difference in Europe'.

34. We have continued to develop relationships with the **Église Réformée de France (ERF)** and Rev John Seawright will represent our Church at the National Synod of the ERF from 13-16 May and also visit Stephen and Deborah Pacht who are working among Jews in Paris. Rev Rodney and Denise Cameron and family have been serving in the parish of Privas and Flaviac in the Ardèche since last July and have settled well into their new situation. Rev Gordon and Sandra Campbell went last July to Aix en Provence where Gordon is Reader in New Testament in the Free Faculty of Reformed Theology. Over the summer we expect to receive two teams from France led by the Camerons and Rev Pascal and Helene Geoffrey and we are glad of these continuing links with our fellow Christians in France.

35. Over the past year we have continued to support the work of Stephen and Deborah Pacht among Jews in Paris. The outreach in Paris last summer proved to be fruitful; a French-Jewish believer is now full time in the work and there is continued contact with the churches in France regarding this ministry to the people of Israel. Stephen Pacht reports slow progress in the work with many contacts with Jewish people and growing numbers of enquirers.

36. Dani Reyes, who studied at Union Theological College from 1993-97, was ordained to the Christian ministry in the **Spanish Evangelical Church (SEC)** on 28 March 1999. Together with his wife Ruth (née Jamison), he has been ministering in the English-speaking congregation in Torre del Mar since October 1997 and helping with youth work in the Presbytery of Andalucia. He will be installed in a Spanish-speaking congregation in the Presbytery in July and we are seeking to identify experienced ministers who could care for the congregation in Torre del Mar for periods of up to one year. We are expecting five pastors from the SEC to visit our Church from 6-13 September to visit local congregations and meet with ministers working in similar situations to their own. We hope that out of this visit may come the twinning of a congregation of our Church with a congregation of the Spanish Church.

37. Mrs Frederika Anna Harpur, daughter of the late Dr Arnold Frank of the **Jerusalem Church, Hamburg**, celebrated her one hundredth birthday on 3 May last year. Four Deaconesses came from Hamburg to be with Mrs Harpur on that important occasion. Regarding the Church property in Hamburg, the General Assembly agreed in 1961 to transfer the property in Schaferkampsallee and Moorkamp to the Lutheran Church without any direct or indirect monetary compensation. In consideration of this transfer, the Lutheran Church undertook to preserve the continuity of the work, viz that the (Jerusalem) Church continue to be a centre of Jewish Mission and a home for Jewish Christians. The Board resolved at its meeting last October as follows:-

"That the Board, in view of the fact that the Jerusalem Church has ceased to be a centre of Jewish Mission, allows the relationship to wither."

We continue to keep in touch with the Minister of the Jerusalem Church, Dr Siegfried Bergler, and occasional visits are made to Hamburg by members of the Board, the most recent visit being by Rev John Seawright last year.

38. Our relationships with the Church of the Brethren in the **Czech and Slovak Republics** have continued to grow and we welcomed Rev Stanislav Stebel to Union Theological College and to our Church in February 1999. On his return to the Czech Republic in June he will become the minister of the Ostrava congregation in succession to Rev Jaroslav Orawski. Susan Clarke, a member of Fitzroy, has been appointed as a short-term missionary in the Czech Republic, working to develop the catering services in the coffee shop outreach of the Ostrava congregation. Relationships between congregations of PCI and the Church of the Brethren in both republics continue to grow and these bring blessing and encouragement to both our Churches.

39. Due to the withdrawal of the small state subsidy, the Churches in the Czech Republic must soon become self-supporting. The Evangelical Theological Seminary of Prague was opened during 1998 with Rev Karel Taschner being its first Director. The Seminary hopes to move to a new purpose-built building later this year and the Church and its partners-in-mission, including PCI, have contributed towards this work. Several team visits have taken place during the year, both to and from the Church of the Brethren, and further visits will take place during the summer months.

40. We have maintained strong relationships with three of the six districts of the **Reformed Church in Hungary and Romania**. In the Kiralyhagomellek district Dr Laszlo Tokes was re-elected Bishop last November with Rev Barnabas Balogh being elected as his deputy. Unfortunately these elections have caused dissension in the district and the matter is still to be resolved. The Reformed University in Oradea is growing and one of our short-term personnel is teaching English and working with and among the students.

41. We are developing our relationship with the Transylvanian district where Dr Kalman Csiha is Bishop. We received Ilona Sackacs-Nagy who has completed five years of theological study in the Seminary in Cluj; Rev Edit Somfalvi a minister of the Reformed Church; and Mr Zsolt Barta, a theological student from Trans-Carpathia Ukraine. All are at Union Theological College and gaining pastoral experience in local congregations. We expect a team to go to teach English to young people in Transylvania in the summer and a Youth Board team will again this year spend two weeks working with disabled children from Chernobyl at a camp near Debrecan in Hungary.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

42. In Latin America, and particularly in the country of **Brazil** with its one-hundred-and-sixty million people of diverse cultural background, the Christian Churches are taking up the opportunities for the spread of the Gospel to people who have never heard of Him who is Lord and Saviour. Both Presbyterian Churches have a vibrant and growing national mission and we rejoice that PCI has mission workers in the Caiua Indian Mission in Mato Grosso do Sul, and working with a team in the state of Paraiba in the North East to establish churches in new areas. The Caiua Mission has been working among the Indian peoples for over seventy years and in recent years Mabel Colson has

been privileged to visit Christians in many Indian villages and to see what God is doing through the witness of the evangelists and missionaries who were trained at the Institute.

43. Last July Rev Dr Bill and Dr Ruth Addley visited Brazil on behalf of PCI and Dr Bill Addley represented our Church at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB). We are in the process of entering a partnership with the IPB and our relationship will be enhanced by the visit of the Moderator and Mrs Dixon to Brazil to meet with Church leaders and to visit the areas where our missionaries are serving Jesus Christ. We hope that the Independent Presbyterian Church (IPI), our first partner-in-mission in Brazil, will be able to identify a minister to work within our Church for up to a year in the near future.

44. Over the past year the **United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands** has sought to meet the social, moral and economic challenges facing its people, many of whom are unemployed and live in very difficult circumstances. We rejoice that the Church, under the leadership of its Moderator Rev Dr Oliver Daley, has continued to bear witness for Christ in the life of the nation. The United Church is a caring church which seeks to help and minister to the most vulnerable groups in society - the children, the elderly, the many thousands of unchurched people trapped in downtown Kingston where "every community looks to its own interests" and where violence and robbery are common.

45. The United Church continues to provide spiritual and material help and encouragement for children, young people and the elderly through its children's and senior citizens' homes where several of our personnel serve. In each of the Councils, training programmes are in operation providing resources for those in leadership in the congregations, and we are privileged to share in this ministry.

46. Mrs Phyllis Sleith, Central President of the Presbyterian Women's Association, represented the Board and the PWA at a service of celebration and thanksgiving for Claire Trueman's thirty-six years of faithful service to the Church in Jamaica, which was held on 13 December last in Andrew's Memorial Church in Mandeville. Mrs Sleith also conveyed a message from our Moderator to Claire on this very important occasion thanking her for the contribution she had made to the life and witness and service of the Church in Jamaica. Claire is on final furlough and returns to Jamaica in June to her retirement and further service in the United Church.

AFRICA

47. The story of the spread of Christianity in Africa south of the Sahara is a thrilling one. To have read of the times when African countries and Churches worked to free themselves from the control of their colonial masters and the domination of western churches and missionary societies, has been a difficult experience for many. Several of our missionaries in Africa have witnessed the demise of dictatorial regimes and the rise of new democracies in several nations in recent years, and the desire for greater equality within the Churches has proved a very challenging experience.

48. We are privileged that many of our missionary personnel are still able to serve in our partner churches at their invitation. They do so within very

different cultural, social and political settings and have to display great sensitivity as they minister and serve within the host Churches. They and we at home have to learn to listen as Christians in Africa share their God-given insights to the Gospel of redeeming grace in Jesus Christ with us and show us how best it can be proclaimed to their people.

49. Yet so often in the past thirty years tragedy has struck at the heart of African nations as ethnic conflict has erupted and developed into civil war, as in the Sudan. This has resulted in untold suffering for thousands of people as their homes and food supply are destroyed, they are displaced from their lands and find themselves in camps where their traditional practices are being eroded and in some cases destroyed. Despite the suffering, the people have hope in Jesus Christ and have shown great resilience and determination to maintain their faith and minister to their neighbours in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. So often we are put to shame by the great joy and hope they demonstrate in their daily lives despite their suffering.

50. We continue to support, with other partner Churches, the **Presbyterian Church of Sudan** as it ministers to its people in North and South Sudan, and to displaced communities in Ethiopia and in Northern Kenya. Rev John Gatluok Chol was re-elected Moderator last July, but this unfortunately led to a division in the Church, which has not so far been healed. There are many training to be evangelists and ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the Nile Theological College in Khartoum; the Griffen Bible School in Malakal; and the Mobile Bible School which holds month-long courses in several locations in Upper Nile province.

51. The Presbyterian Relief and Development Agency (PRDA) is in the process of establishing an operations base at Lokichoggio in Northern Kenya and has been implementing development programmes in several communities in upper Nile province under the leadership of Rev Gabriel Gai Riam. We have provided support for some of the programmes as has Christian Aid.

52. Peace in the Sudan is as elusive as ever and it appears that the Government of Sudan, and indeed some of the liberation movements, are not interested in peace, but are rather following their own agendas. The Churches recognise that peace and the conditions for peace must be created, and for the past year have been concentrating on bringing together the Nuer and Dinka people, in order to effect reconciliation between these major ethnic groups.

53. **Kenya** is host to displaced persons from most of the nations which surround its borders, and the Churches have played a significant role in welcoming and caring for these displaced people in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time ethnic conflict has continued within Kenya and this has brought untold suffering and loss of property and livelihood to those who live as minorities in the areas of the major ethnic groups. The Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) continues to work for reconciliation and peace in the Church and in the country of Kenya.

54. The PCEA is also concerned to minister to the pastoral peoples in Kenya, particularly the Maasai and the Samburu. The Nendeni (Outreach) Board has placed Ministers, Evangelists and development workers in several locations in the more marginalised areas of Kenya. We share in this outreach work through several of our personnel, who, together with their Kenyan colleagues,

seek to share the Gospel and help these pastoral people preserve their way of life and culture. This requires patience and perseverance and those who give themselves to this very demanding work are beginning to see some fruit for their labour.

55. Because of the rapid growth of Christianity in Africa all sorts of sects and 'isms are pouring resources into countries like Kenya in order to try to capture the hearts of its people. The PCEA and the other denominations face the tremendous challenge of preparing and training women and men who will teach the faith and preach the Gospel in all its fullness in the new Millennium. The development of the Pastoral Institute into the Presbyterian University in the coming years is part of the Church's response to this situation, and Theological Education by Extension (TEE), started in 1982, continues to provide appropriate Biblical training for Elders and church members in local congregations.

56. Some years ago the PCEA recognised the need to train primary school teachers in a Christian context and the Presbyterian Teachers' College at Rubate, now five years old, has trained over five hundred teachers who go as Christians into the primary school sector. The PCEA hospitals at Chogoria, Kikuyu and Tumutumu, where some of our personnel served, are ministering to the people in these locations, but are also providing orthopaedic and eye services not available elsewhere in Kenya. The PCEA is in the process of determining the future role of these Church hospitals since the Church is increasingly unable to find the resources to provide these very expensive medical services.

57. As well as our missionary personnel being able to share in the areas of theological education and TEE, the PCEA has provided locations in parishes where over the past two years three students for the ministry of our Church are serving Jesus Christ and gaining much experience in ministry in a different cultural and religious context. We thank the PCEA for providing these opportunities for service and trust that they will send to PCI another Minister to serve in one of our congregations in the near future.

58. **Malawi**, often described as the warm heart of Africa, has experienced great change socially, morally and politically since democracy was introduced in 1993. It has also become more pluralistic in religious terms with the introduction of several Islamic institutions, the influx of new sects, and the flooding of the country with a new wave of Jehovah witnesses. For many years the Christian Churches, including the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) which is the major Protestant denomination, have been growing rapidly, and have been providing health care and education for many through their hospitals and schools. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the CCAP to provide the personnel and resources to maintain their schools and hospitals without increasing support from the partner churches and the international community.

59. The CCAP wishes to maintain a Christian ethos in the ministry provided through their hospitals and schools, and at the same time be able to meet the challenges of the new Islamic institutions, the sects and Jehovah Witnesses. We continue to share in the healing ministry of the Church hospitals and in the education of young men and women in the Secondary Schools and our personnel are delighted at these opportunities for witness and service for the furtherance of the Gospel and the building up of the Church.

60. Well over 90% of Malawi's thirteen million people live in rural areas, which are rapidly becoming overpopulated. The available arable land is insufficient to maintain the required food supply for its increasing population, and several seasons of drought have led to a situation where there is much malnutrition, especially in children, and this results in much loss of life. The Synods of the CCAP, through their development and relief programmes, are providing training and appropriate resources to enable communities to be healthier and better fed than they have been in the past. We are privileged to share in this ministry through our serving personnel and by providing some project funding, together with Christian Aid and other funding agencies.

61. The CCAP is being challenged to find more appropriate ways of preparing candidates for ministry to the people of Malawi and also in providing training for Elders who do much of the preaching and teaching of the faith in parishes. Zomba Theological College, where several of our personnel serve, seeks to provide appropriate theological education for candidates for ministry in the Protestant Churches and in-service training and refresher courses for those already in the ordained ministry. The Wives School provides training for women who will share in the ministry of their husbands in the rural parishes where they will serve. Theological Education by Extension (TEE) in Malawi continues to provide courses which enable Elders and Church members to prepare themselves for the tasks of preaching and teaching.

62. The Student Christian Organisation (SCO) and Scripture Union (SU) minister and reach out to young people in schools, colleges and the University and to those working in the towns and cities. Together with the Churches they seek to prepare young people to live for Christ in their daily lives. We are supporting the SCO and SU in these ministries and are also funding for three years a literature secretary for the two organisations.

MISSION EDUCATION

63. Regular prayer support continues to be vital to the ongoing work of mission overseas, particularly at a time when the church of Jesus Christ in many parts of the world (most notably in Asia) is facing increasing opposition and persecution. Our partners in the Gospel and our personnel overseas not only value regular prayer support but give witness to the immeasurable power of prayer under the hand of God, as they strive to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ in the situations in which they live and work.

64. The format of the 1999 Points for Prayer Handbook is largely the same as last year, apart from two changes. A new cover design seeks to emphasise its purpose, with the word 'Prayer' in prominent red lettering and the names of Presbyterians serving with other mission agencies have been moved to the back where details are given of the 150 members of our church serving with around 30 mission agencies in some 50 countries worldwide. It is important that these members of our church are also remembered as we engage in regular prayer for the work of mission overseas.

65. The substantial increase in the number receiving Prayerline each week via e-mail has been very encouraging and the number now stands at over 230, up almost 200% in a year. We would encourage even wider use of this excellent means of keeping in touch with the needs of the Church of Jesus Christ

in its mission in countries overseas. Prayerline continues to be available by telephone on Belfast 326009, with some 80 callers using this service each week, whilst an unknown number obtain Prayerline via the PCI Web-site. Since 6 January 1999, Prayerline has been issued on Wednesday each week and not Thursday as formerly, mainly to facilitate office routines.

66. In the light of the increasing use of Prayerline, with its more detailed content, we are currently evaluating whether the Prayer Update leaflet should continue to be produced bi-monthly. Many find Prayer Update in its present format very useful, but we wonder whether some change might not be helpful, possibly to a quarterly publication with scope for more content per topic per day.

67. During the year a small editorial sub-committee was established to undertake a strategic review of the Board's educational materials and to make proposals for the development of new materials. One of the objectives of the committee is to find a number of volunteers to assist the Education Secretary in the task of gathering and editing materials for a number of publications, most notably the annual World News broad-sheet and the Points for Prayer Handbook.

68. The late publication of the 1998 edition of World News meant that many congregations were unable to use it to maximum effect. Steps are being taken to ensure that production of the 1999 edition will be completed in time for distribution to Presbyteries by the end of August. World News is a 'free issue' paid for by the Overseas Board and produced in sufficient numbers to allow one copy to be given to every family in every congregation. We would encourage ministers and their Kirk Sessions to make full use of this important publication.

69. A new overseas video series, 'The Europe File', was launched in January this year. The series comprises five programmes on aspects of the life and witness of the church in three central European countries: namely, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania. Two programmes focus on the developing partnership between two PCI congregations and churches in this region, sharing the benefits that can accrue when a whole congregation has a specific focus on mission overseas. Another programme focuses on work amongst children and is proving a valuable aid for the 1998/99 Sunday School and Youth Project 'Making a Difference in Central Europe'. This new video series is commended for use in all congregations and organisations.

70. In this day and age the new technology has a vital part to play in effective communication. Funds have recently been received by the Board for the purchase of new equipment, which will enable us to develop new multimedia educational presentations on overseas mission. We are grateful for this gift and look forward to the benefits this will bring to the task of mission education throughout our Church.

71. Mission Tours were held in Monaghan, Tyrone and East Belfast in the autumn of 1998 and in Donegal, South Belfast and Ards in the spring of this year. We continue to make every effort to present the needs and opportunities of overseas mission in relevant and challenging ways. In some Presbyteries support for these Tours has been disappointing but overall we have been encouraged by positive reactions from many with an ongoing interest in mission overseas. We would encourage Ministers and elders to support these Tours and encourage

their members to attend meetings arranged in the Presbytery for children, young people and adults.

72. Plans are in hand to hold an education in mission seminar (or seminars) for Presbytery mission agents with four objectives:

- (i) to brief them on their role in the promotion of world mission;
- (ii) to encourage them in their work;
- (iii) to provide guidance and ideas on how to be more effective in promoting interest and involvement in overseas mission at congregational level, and
- (iv) to review the role the Overseas office plays in mission education and to identify what more can be done or done differently to better effect.

PERSONNEL, VISITS AND VISITORS

73. During the year the following missionaries passed to higher service: Mrs Frances Boyd, India 1954-74; and Mrs Marion C Cayton (nee Young), China 1935-43.

74. We give thanks to God and record our appreciation for the faithful witness and service of Rev John and Mrs Betsy Mann in Blantyre Synod, Malawi 1989-99; Rev Uel and Mrs Gill Marrs in Theological Education by Extension, Kenya 1989-98; Sheena McKean in Woodstock School, India, 1996-98; Mark McMullen in technical training, Jamaica, 1992-98; Trevor Purvis, English teacher, Hungary, 1996-98; Shirley Stronge at Embangweni Hospital, Malawi, 1998-99; Claire Trueman in the United Church, Jamaica, 1962-99; Mrs Kate O'Ceallaigh (nee Warnock) at Kiriani Community Training Centre, Kenya, 1996-98; Dr Max Watson and Dr Alison Rodgers at Tansen Hospital, Nepal, 1990-98.

75. Having read the reports of our missionaries for 1998, it is clear that they are faithfully serving Jesus Christ in a variety of situations, and are committed to the spread of the Gospel in word and deed together with their co-workers. Our Mission family continues to grow and we record our thanks to the whole Church for the support in prayer and finance given to all of our missionaries and their families.

76. In the past year the following visits were made to attend consultations called by our partner churches and the United Mission to Nepal, and to meet with our missionaries to bring them encouragement as they serve in their mainly rural situations: Principal Cecil McCullough to Hungary and Romania; Rev Dr Bill Addley and Dr Ruth Addley to Brazil; Rev Terry McMullan to Kenya to visit the PCEA and our personnel and to attend the Sudan Consultation; Rev John Seawright to Hamburg and France; Rev Alan Martin to Hungary and Romania; Mrs Phyllis Sleith to Jamaica; Rev John Kirkpatrick to the Czech Republic and Nigel Eves to Nepal. The Moderator and Mrs Dixon expect to be in Brazil and Jamaica for four weeks in March and April meeting Church leaders and visiting the locations where our missionaries serve in Brazil, meeting our personnel in Jamaica and attending the Synod of the United Church.

77. During the year fifteen missionaries were appointed to serve overseas, mostly in long-term capacities – in China (1), France (2), India (1), Kenya (6), Malawi (2), Nepal (2) and Romania (1) (see Appendix), and one missionary to Kenya after study leave. We praise God for these new

missionaries and would encourage our people to pray for them as they and their children settle into their new locations. In addition eight volunteers-in-mission are serving for up to a year in Hungary (1), India (1), Indonesia (1), Jamaica (1), Malawi (1) and Nepal (3).

78. Dr Jack Thompson, who served for fourteen years in Malawi with his wife Phyllis, has continued his work in the past year at the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World. The Africa Christianity Project, funded largely by the Pew Charitable Trust, completed its six-year life last December with a conference in Zimbabwe. The results in terms of research into and the publishing of books about African Christianity are considerable. Dr Thompson continues teaching courses on "Issues in Modern Mission" and "History of African Christianity" and supervising Masters and Doctoral students researching into non-western Christianity. His new book "Touching the Heart: Xhosa Missionaries to Malawi 1876-88" is with the publishers and later this year he goes to the USA for a sabbatical and to continue his research into African Christianity. Both Jack and Phyllis are Elders in St Andrew's and St George's Parish Church and are involved in the Malawi-Scottish network.

79. Last summer ten young adults served as volunteers in India, Jamaica, Malawi and Nepal and medical, dental, physiotherapy students spent up to two months on overseas elective periods in the institutions of our partner churches. Two candidates for the ministry of PCI with their wives are gaining pastoral experience in the PCEA parishes of St Andrew's, Nairobi and Nakuru West, and another candidate for our ministry is teaching in Daystar University and gaining pastoral experience in a PCEA parish. We also arranged an overseas placement for one Bible College student in Kenya. A team went to two locations in Romania to teach English in camps and holiday Bible Clubs and Youth Board teams went to a camp near Debrecan in Hungary to work with disabled children from Chernobyl and to Wembley to work with the Macwans in holiday Bible Clubs in two of the local churches. We rejoice with these young adults in their experience over last summer and thank them for the deputation meetings they have undertaken throughout our Church during the past year.

80. Last year we were delighted to receive Rt Rev Dr Jesse Kamau, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, and Mrs Alice Kamau on an eleven-day visit to our Church which included the General Assembly meetings: Rt Rev Vinod Malaviya, Bishop of Gujarat, and Mrs Fulmani Malaviya, for a seven-day visit in July - they also visited the work among Gujaratis in Wembley being carried on by Christopher and Nivedita Macwan and Mrs Usha Harry, as well as attending the Lambeth Conference; and Rt Rev Morris Andrews, Bishop of Agra and Mrs Harshlata Andrews for a three-day introductory visit to our Church prior to the meetings of the Lambeth Conference. We welcomed Mr Stanley Dharam Sewak from St George's School, Agra under the CNI Bursary Scheme, for a semester of postgraduate study at Stranmillis College.

THE HOME BASE

81. The Overseas Office, situated on the second floor of Church House, is the administrative centre of the mission and we record our sincere thanks to the staff for their hard work during the past year and for the way in which they

have dealt with enquiries and welcomed the public seeking information about the work overseas. We have added a Junior Secretary post to our office staff over the past year and have installed new computers which are linked to the central database and the network in Church House and the necessary software to enable us to communicate effectively with Churches at home and our partner Churches and missionaries overseas. To provide for an orderly succession to the post of Overseas Mission Convener, the Board agreed to request the 1999 General Assembly through the General Board, to approve the appointment of an assistant and successor to the Overseas Mission Convener and Executive Secretary to the Overseas Board.

82. Rev Brian Gibson and his family returned home in 1989 from Kenya after over seven years of missionary service in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa where he was highly respected by all with whom he came in contact. He became a member of the Board in the following year and was appointed Convener of the then Southern, now Africa, Caribbean and Latin America, Committee in 1991. He brought to this Convenership his many gifts and his considerable experience of mission and Church life in Africa and on several occasions represented our Church at meetings and consultations with partner Churches and missionaries in Kenya, Malawi, Brazil and Jamaica. We appreciate all that Mr Gibson has contributed to the work of the Overseas Mission over the past seventeen years as missionary and Convener and also wish to thank his present congregation of Railway Street, Lisburn for releasing him from his preaching and pastoral responsibilities to represent our Church overseas.

83. We continue to appreciate the support and encouragement given by the Presbyterian Women's Association and its members to all our missionaries, particularly through prayer and the writing of letters. We also welcome the increasing co-operation we enjoy with the Presbyterian Women's Association in all aspects of the overseas work of our church and not least in the on-going support financially and in prayer of nineteen of our women missionaries. We were happy to welcome back to the overseas work Miss Elizabeth Brian after her lengthy illness, and are glad that she has resumed responsibility for all of our missionaries in Nepal.

84. The Presbyterian Women's Association contributes to the work of the Overseas Board and its seven working committees through its Executive Secretary, Central President and Overseas Vice President and Treasurer and through the women's representatives from the twenty-one Presbyteries of our Church. They bring to the work of the Board and its Committees their enthusiasm for mission in to-days world and are able to enthuse others to share in this very important work.

85. We are glad to report that the financial needs in 1998 of the Overseas Mission have been met through the giving of our people through the United Appeal, and in other ways, and for this we give thanks to Almighty God. We now have over seventy long and short-term missionaries serving overseas but in the future we will only be able to send additional missionaries overseas as serving missionaries return home after completing their term of service. The Board recognises that in future it will not be able to respond to all the invitations

we receive from our partner churches and missions for missionary personnel due to financial restrictions.

86. The financing of the work of the Overseas Board into the new millennium will present a great challenge to our Church, in the light of the increasing needs of our partner churches and missions for personnel and grants. The Board has agreed that the scheme drawn up and implemented in 1991 for the remuneration of missionaries be reviewed, and this review may have financial implications for the Board. The introduction of the Millennium Gift Aid Scheme in the United Kingdom has made it possible for tax relief to be available for cash gifts of a minimum of £100 to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland “to advance education and relieve poverty in the world’s poorest countries”, up to 31 December 2000.

87. We are encouraged at the support received by the Overseas Mission from individuals and congregations of the General Assembly in the following ways:

- the quality of the people who offer for missionary service
- the dedicated support of our missionaries and their colleagues in our partner churches in prayer and finance
- the willingness of individuals to support the Overseas Mission through the United Appeal and in extra-mile giving.

During 1998 almost £200,000 was given by individuals, groups, organisations and congregations for special projects and to support health care and development ministries in our partner churches and missions.

88. The pastoral care and the safety of our missionaries and their families is a matter of great concern. Living, as many do, in rural situations, we keep closely in touch and are quickly alerted to any particular difficulty or need. We are currently reviewing how the best pastoral care can be provided for all of our personnel who serve under the direction of our partner churches and united missions. Doctors and nurses working in overseas hospitals are exposed to viral diseases in the course of their daily work, and during the year we have drawn up “Advice and Guidelines regarding the provision of best medical care for those who experience accidental occupational exposure to virus infections, especially to HIV”.

89. The Board gives thanks for all who give their time and their expertise to the work of the Overseas Mission by travelling to visit our missionaries and partner churches, by interviewing those inquiring about missionary service and by their attendance at one or more of our seven committees, and by speaking on behalf of the Overseas Mission in congregations and organisations.

90. We congratulate and say thanks to the children and young people who contributed over £86,000 to Project Sumba which will be used to provide much needed education and training facilities for young people in the Christian Church in Sumba, Indonesia; to the Young Women’s Groups whose members contributed £12,500 for women’s training courses at the Lewa Training Centre of the Christian Church in Sumba; to the Presbyterian Women’s Association whose Birthday Thank Offering refurbished an apartment in one of our furlough residences and provided furnishings and equipment in the two other apartments; and to the Junior Boys’ Brigade which contributed £17,500 for the equipping of Vocational Training Centres in the Diocese of Gujarat.

91. Through our membership of the Evangelical Missionary Alliance and our attendance as Observers at the Forums of the Churches Commission On Mission we have received much information about new developments in world mission and have shared fellowship with those called to fulfil the great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. An ad-hoc group has been set up in Ireland to study and keep abreast of developments and trends in missiology and to research mission issues.

92. We welcome the co-operation received from the departments in Church House which, like the Overseas Board, are engaged in the furtherance of the mission of Jesus Christ at home and overseas. The 1998 General Assembly directed the General Board to examine the current structure of boards and committees keeping in mind the principle of democratic representation. The Board seeks to ensure that its seven working committees are effective instruments to further the mission of Jesus Christ to the world, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

93. Finally, we give thanks to Almighty God who has guided and sustained us in the past year as we have prayed and worked to spread the Gospel of Christ in all the world. We thank all who have supported our missionaries over the past year by their prayers and interest. It is our prayer that we will be equipped by God to take up the challenges and opportunities for missionary work in the new millennium.

APPENDIX

In this report most of the names of missionaries and volunteers-in-mission have not been mentioned but their names and spheres of service are listed below and are to be taken together with this report.

BRAZIL

Mabel Colson	1990	Caiuá Indian Mission, Dourados
Lynn & Heather Cochrane	1996	Independent Presbyterian Church National Mission in Paraiba State

INDIA

James & Willi Barton	1966	Woodstock School
Linda Jackson	1996	Woodstock School
Norman & Joan Duncan	1994	Layman's Christian Fellowship and CNI
Brian Wilson	1996	Woodstock School
* Elizabeth Matthews	1998	St John's College, Agra

ISRAEL

Colin & Marjorie Dickson	1997	Stella Carmel Centre
Fiona Smyth	1997	Stella Carmel Centre

JAMAICA

Claire Trueman	1962	United Church
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James & Pat Cameron	1990	Directors, Children's Homes
Leonora Wasson	1994	Associate Regional Director, Cornwall Council
Diana Winfield	1997	Associate Regional Director, North Middlesex Council
Christine McMahon	1998	Director of United Church Senior Citizen's Home

KENYA

Stephen & Angelina Cowan	1985/9	Outreach & Development Work, PCEA Tuum
Deborah Ford	1996	Teaching at PCEA Pastoral Institute
Naomi Martin	1991	Teachers' College, Rubate, PCEA
* Derek & Linda Roulston	1998	Development work: Honi Farm, PCEA
* Paul & Anne Bailie	1998	Pastoral Institute and TEE, PCEA
* Andrew & Clerah Clenaghan	1999	Development work, PCEA

MALAWI

Freda Algie	1969	Principal, Wives School, Zomba Theological College
Richard & Brenda Kerr	1991	Synod Medical Co-ordinator and teaching, Mzuzu
Margaret Young	1995	Midwife, Ekwendeni Hospital
Diane Cusick	1995	Wives School, Zomba Theological College
Dick & Moreen Gordon	1996	Zomba Theological College & Medical work
Colin Dick	1996	Medical Officer at Ekwendeni Hospital
Neil & Sara Kennedy	1997	Medical Officer & teaching, Embangweni
Clare McIntyre	1997	Karonga Girls' Secondary School
Shirley Rutherford	1997	Naming'azi Farm Training Centre
* Stephen & Ruth McCracken	1999	Chaplaincy and teaching, Mzuzu

NEPAL

Linda McKee	1985	Assistant to Executive Director, UMN
Joy Gowdy	1992	Tutorial teacher, Butwal
Pauline Orr	1993	Nurse/Tutor, Tansen Hospital
Amanda Christie	1995	Kathmandu International Study Centre
David & Sandra Rodgers	1995	Director, Amp Pipal Hospital
Sharon Creighton	1996	On furlough
Helen Johnston	1996	Personnel Officer, UMN
Peter Lockwood	1996	Khimti Hydro Power Project
Richard & Denise Ross	1996	Gandaki Boarding School

ROMANIA

Ilona Veres 1993 On furlough/study leave

FRANCE

Gordon & Sandra Campbell 1989 Reader in New Testament in Faculty of Theology in Aix en Provence

Rodney & Denise Cameron 1998 Eglise Réformée de France: Privas and Flaviac

GREAT BRITAIN

Jack & Phyllis Thompson 1970 New College, University of Edinburgh

Christopher & Nivedita Macwan 1989 Working among Asians in Wembley

Short term missionaries serving for a minimum of two years, are supported in overseas locations. Their names and spheres of service are as follows -

CHINA

Stephen Graham 1996 Teaching English, Shangrao Teachers' College

* David Conkey 1998 Teaching English, Tai'an Teachers' College

NEPAL

* Valerie Moore 1998 Kathmandu International Study Centre

* William Rose 1998 Medical Officer, Tansen Hospital

JAMAICA

Karen Gilmer 1997 Teaching at Oberlin High School

MALAWI

Donald & Patricia McNutt 1998 Teaching at Livingstonia Secondary School

ROMANIA

* Nigel Craig 1998 Teaching English and Church work, Oradea

* Appointed 1998/99

Volunteers-in-Mission are sent into overseas locations for up to one year and their names and spheres of service are as follows:

NEPAL

James & Patricia Rutherford 1998 Kathmandu International Study Centre

Margaret Neill 1998 Kathmandu International Study Centre

KENYA

Lisa Carson 1998 Physiotherapist, PCEA Tumutumu Hospital

MALAWI

Rachel Maxwell 1998 Scripture Union, Mzuzu

JAMAICA

Fiona Gunning 1998 Youth work, United Church

INDONESIA

Mervyn McCullagh 1998 Teaching English and writing English courses, Sumba

Candidates for Ministry on overseas placement:

KENYA

David & Maggi Steele 1997 St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Nairobi

Stephen & Janice Richmond 1998 PCEA Nakuru West Parish and Health Centre

Karen Williams 1999 Daystar University and PCEA Loresho Church

We work together with partner Churches and United Missions and we list below those in leadership with their respective positions:

BRAZIL

Rt Rev Leontino dos Santos President, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)

Rev Eber Ferreira Silveira Lima Executive Secretary, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)

Rt Rev Guilhermino Cunha President, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)

Rev Wilson de Souza Lopes Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)

CHINA

Bishop K H Ting Hon. President, China Christian Council

Dr Wenzao Han President, China Christian Council

Rev Su Deci General Secretary, China Christian Council

CZECH REPUBLIC

Rev Pavel Cerny President, Church of the Brethren

Mr Karel Fojtik General Secretary, Church of the Brethren

Rev Pavel Smetana President, Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

FRANCE

Pasteur Michel Bertrand President, Eglise Réformée de France (ERF)
 Pasteur Marc Richalot General Secretary (ERF)
 Pasteur Yo Ludwig Secretary: International Relations & Mission (ERF)

HUNGARY & ROMANIA

Bishop Gusztav Bolcskei Presiding Bishop, Hungarian Reformed Church
 Bishop Kalman Csiha Transylvanian District of Reformed Church, Romania
 Bishop Laszlo Tokes Kiralyhagomellek District of Reformed Church, Romania

INDIA

Most Rev Vinod A R Peter Moderator of the CNI Synod
 Dr V S Lall General Secretary of the CNI Synod
 Rt Rev Vinod M Malaviya Bishop of the Gujarat Diocese of the CNI
 Rt Rev Morris Andrews Bishop of the Agra Diocese of the CNI

INDONESIA

Rev Dr Beni Fobia Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Timor
 Rev A N Aesh Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera
 Rev S S Duan General Secretary, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera
 Rev Yosua Kodu Bili General Secretary, Christian Church in Sumba

JAMAICA

Rt Rev Dr Gordon Evans Moderator, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands
 Rev Dr Richmond Nelson Acting General Secretary, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands (until September 1999)
 Rev Maitland Evans General Secretary, United Church (from October 1999)

KENYA

Rt Rev Dr Jesse Kamau Moderator, Presbyterian Church of East Africa
 Rev Patrick Rukenya Secretary General, Presbyterian Church of East Africa

MALAWI*Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP)*

Rev K R M Nyirenda	Moderator, Synod of Livingstonia
Rev Dr O P Mazunda	General Secretary, Synod of Livingstonia
Rev T N Maseya	Moderator, Synod of Blantyre
Rev G H Mputeni	Acting General Secretary, Synod of Blantyre
Rev E N Kamunga	Moderator, Synod of Nkhoma
Rev A A Sasu	General Secretary, Synod of Nkhoma
Rt Rev C L Chimkoka	Moderator, CCAP General Synod
Rev J J Mphatso	Senior Clerk, CCAP General Synod

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Rev Dr Lalengzaua	Administrative Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Myanmar
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NEPAL

Mr Michael Askwith	Executive Director, United Mission to Nepal
Pastor Robert Khartak	Senior Pastor of the Church in Nepal

PAKISTAN

Rev Dr Arthur James	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev Dr Maqsood Kamil	Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev Amos Maud	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan

SPAIN

Rev Enrique Capo	President, Permanent Commission, Spanish Evangelical Church
Rev Alfredo Abad	Secretary, Permanent Commission, Spanish Evangelical Church

SUDAN

Rev John Gatluok Chol	Moderator, Presbyterian Church Of Sudan
Rev Shawish Nyawelo Kir	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church Of Sudan
Rev Paul Bol Kuel	Associate Moderator, Presbyterian Church Of Sudan/Akobo
Rev Peter Gai Lual Marrow	Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church Of Sudan/Akobo

THAILAND

Mrs Supaporn Insaeng	Director, Lamp of Thailand (a ministry of the Church of Christ in Thailand)
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TOGO

Pasteur Fatsema Amiou
Pasteur Mathieu Ahogo

Moderator, Presbyterian Church in Togo
General Secretary, Presbyterian Church in
Togo

ZAMBIA

Rev David Chiboboka

General Secretary, Synod of Zambia of the
CCAP

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly welcome the revised policy statement and recommendations contained in the Report and encourage the Overseas Board to implement them fully in the new millennium.
3. That the General Assembly commend to the whole Church our missionary personnel and their families for prayer and support as they bear witness to and serve Jesus Christ together with their colleagues in our partner Churches in a rapidly changing world and give thanks for their faithful witness and service during the past year.
4. That the General Assembly encourage and support our partner Churches and all Christian people in Indonesia, India, Nepal and Pakistan as they respond in the Name and Spirit of Jesus Christ to increasing ethnic, religious and community tensions and in some places persecution.
5. That the General Assembly welcome the growth of the Churches in Asia and encourage our partner Churches to find new ways of communicating the Gospel to the millions who have never heard of Jesus Christ.
6. That the General Assembly urge prayer and support for the United Mission to Nepal as its role in the development of the nation and its service in the Name of Jesus Christ to the people of Nepal for the next five years is decided.
7. That the General Assembly encourage the whole Church to pray for the Christian Church in China as its people take opportunities for evangelism and Church growth in a period of continued repression by the authorities.
8. That the General Assembly give thanks for the living faith of Arab and Jewish believers in the Middle East, encourage the continued proclamation of the Gospel and the growing desire for greater unity in the body of Christ and pray that new initiatives may be taken which will result in a lasting peace in the region.
9. That the General Assembly rejoice at the growing partnerships at Board, Presbytery and congregational levels with Reformed Churches in the Czech and Slovak Republics, France, Hungary, Romania and Spain and encourage the Board to continue to facilitate these relationships.
10. That the General Assembly give thanks for the continued development of our relationship with the Presbyterian Churches in Brazil and our involvement in their national mission and pray for their outreach to the poor and the ethnic minorities in the more remote areas in Brazil.

11. That the General Assembly encourage the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands as it continues to minister to urban and rural communities and serve the poor and needy in the Name of Jesus Christ.

12. That the General Assembly, in view of the continued suffering and deprivation of the peoples of Africa due to civil war, famine, disease and ethnic conflict, encourage prayer and support for our partner Churches in Kenya, Malawi, Sudan and Togo as they live out the Gospel in their communities and seek to build up the Church.

13. That the General Assembly encourage our partner Churches in Africa as they minister to their people in health, education and rural development and as they work and pray that peace will be established in their communities.

14. That the General Assembly give thanks for the growth in prayer and support for our missionaries and our partner Churches and encourage the Board to take new initiatives in communicating to all of our people the challenges and opportunities for mission.

15. That the resignation of Rev Brian Gibson as Convener of the Africa, Caribbean and Latin America Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his valuable contribution to the work of the Board and that Rev Robin Quinn be appointed in his place.

16. That the Overseas Board, with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 279 of the Code as follows:

HOME BOARD

Convener: Rev Dr J B MOORE

Secretaries: Rev R F S POOTS

Miss E BRIAN

1. Ireland is going through a period of transition and change.
2. In the Republic traditional beliefs are giving way to a pick-and-mix pluralism, a liberal hedonism and a 'new age' spirituality.
3. In the North life is polarised and increasingly secular. The political situation is full of ultimatums, recriminations, punishment beatings and out-of-date rhetoric.
4. The Spirit is moving in some parts of the land but not, sadly, in others.
5. This is the context of the Church's task in Ireland on the threshold of a new millennium.
6. In response the Home Board endeavours to
 - (i) support churches in Belfast and Dublin, Galway, Limerick, and Cork;
 - (ii) establish experimental ministries in Carlow and Clonmel, and the 'Golden Mile' in Belfast;
 - (iii) promote ministries in housing estates, like Movilla, in small isolated churches in the South and West;
 - (iv) assist the work of deaconesses in their varied ministries in hospitals, community advice centres and congregations.

Pray for us!

7. The future will be one of change as a new Board of Mission in Ireland is set to take over from the Home Board and the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training, but whatever the shape of the future the challenge remains while there are hungry hearts in Ireland, or elsewhere with their desperate need of Christ.

8. The Church as always owes a huge debt to the Board's office-bearers. Our new Convener, the Rev Rob Craig, has slotted easily and efficiently into a demanding role and is already making a valuable contribution.

9. It has also been good to have Miss Elizabeth Brian back after her serious illness. We thank God for her recovery and pray for her renewed strength. During her absence Mrs Phyllis Sleith, PWA President, stepped in most capably and acceptably, and we wish to express the Board's sincere gratitude to her.

10. The Board also benefits greatly from the unremitting labours of the Rev Derek Poots, his visits to Home Mission congregations and ministers, and his counsel.

11. We also thank the Church Extension Conveners, the Rev George Moffett and Mr Hubert Taggart, for their assiduous efforts, and Mr J W Russell, Agent of the Presbyterian Mutual Society, which fulfils a particular need most successfully.

ASSIGNMENT COMMITTEE

1. Interviews for fifth year students, and some others who are taking theological courses outside Ireland, were held on 21 December, 1998.

2. Fifteen requests for assistants were received. Nine students were available for assignment, all of whom were placed. In addition one student who had been given a temporary placement last year was re-assigned. Some difficulty is being experienced in the re-assignment of one licentiate.

3. About six students will be available for assignment next year and about five in 2001. The attention of the Personnel/Planning Committee is being drawn to the problems this shortfall may create for congregations.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE

PWA HOME DEPARTMENT

Miss E Brian reports:

1. In 1998/99 PWA has continued to work in association with the Home Mission Committee to "provide for the recruitment, training, organisation and support of deaconesses and woman workers in various areas of the Church's life and interest". There are 25 deaconesses and 1 woman worker serving within PCI.

Personnel

2. Recommendations from the PWA/Home Board Personnel Committee enabled the following appointments and decisions to be made.

3. Miss Sybil Hogg, West Kirk, resigned on 31st August, 1998 to begin studies at Belfast Bible College in September.

4. Mrs Jackie O'Neill was Commissioned and Inducted to Christ Church, Dundonald, on 29th November 1998.

5. The Home Board renewed the appointment of Miss Frances Wright to Joymount following the Installation of Rev Richard Graham and also gave approval for Miss Wright to extend her service for six months.

6. Approval was given for Mrs Leta Halliday to extend her service as woman worker in McQuiston Memorial until August 1999.

7. Miss Carole Cathcart, St Enoch's and Hope House, was granted permission to work part-time from September 1998.

8. Miss Anne Burrows (Belvoir Park Hospital) and Miss Sarah Swindle (Musgrave Park Hospital) will continue to work part-time from 1st February 1999 until 31st January 2000.

9. A sub-committee under the Convener'ship of Rev Denis Bannerman has been established to examine the Role of the Deaconess. Miss Jean Gwyn represents the Deaconess Association on this committee.

10. PWA has not recruited any candidates for deaconess training in 1998/99.

11. Deaconess posts in several congregations remain unfilled.

12. Guidelines for in-service deaconess training have been established.

13. Application Forms for Deaconess Training and Reference Forms have been revised.

14. Following a full review of the situation in East Belfast, both in Friendship House and the surrounding area, and after consultation with the relevant PCI bodies, the PWA Executive Committee decided with regret that it could no longer sustain the work of the Friendship House. The House will close at the end of June 1999.

15. The Home Board approved a new salary structure for deaconesses and woman workers with effect from 1st April 1999. Each salary scale has been reduced from 25 years to 10 years. The deaconess salary scale is based on the basic ministerial minimum starting at 80% and will now rise over a period of 10 years, nor 25 years as formerly, to 100%. The woman worker salary scale will use the same percentage levels but is based on 90% basic ministerial minimum. Incremental increases will be given on 1st January 2000 and subsequently at the beginning of each calendar year.

16. In the light of the new salary structure PWA is revising the guidelines for financial support from congregations in order that this may be more equitable and that the Association may be able to continue financial support in areas of need.

PRESBYTERIAN MUTUAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Mr J W Russell reports:

1. The Directors are pleased to report that this year the Society has recorded its largest ever inflow of new investment which has reached £2.6 million during this financial year bringing the total assets to over eight million pounds.

2. Despite the recent trend of falling interest rates we were very pleased to be in a position to declare a dividend of 7% on all shareholdings for the financial year ended 31 March 1999. Our sound financial position has enabled us to distribute in the region of £480,000 of our profits to almost 1800 shareholders.

3. The origins of the Society are based in the farming community and the agricultural sector continues to make an important contribution to the annual revenue. The Society is very conscious of the current crisis facing many farmers and is attempting to alleviate the situation for individual borrowers by offering greater flexibility on loan repayment terms.

4. Over recent years, a greater emphasis has been placed on increasing the diversity of the loan book by encouraging applications from business sectors, other than agriculture, as well as offering personal loans for cars, home improvements, etc. From 1 April 1998 over £2.4 million has been advanced for new loans covering a broad range of purposes including loans to congregations.

5. We conclude with our thanks to God for all He has enabled us to do over the past year and pray for His continued blessing in the future.

HOME MISSION GENERAL

Introduction

1. The Home Mission is grateful to God for the willing and faithful service of its many ministers, for the loyal support of elders and church members and for the prayers and interest of the wider Church. Change seems to be the word which sums up modern Ireland. In our changing society the call to Mission in Ireland is a call to change the wineskins while preserving the wine of the gospel.

Personnel

2. Within the Home Mission family we welcome as minister in St Patrick's, Waterford, Mr Stephen Hancock who is a probationer with the Methodist Church. In a short time he has gained the confidence and support of the congregation. Together they face tough decisions about the usefulness and the future of their church building and consideration is being given to selling off part of the property and moving to a greenfield site.

3. To the congregations of Dunfanaghy and Carrigart we welcome the Rev Jim Lamont. Given the depth of his experience from congregational life in Ballynahinch and Newtownards, as well as the wider Church, we wish God's blessing upon him as he takes up fresh challenges in Donegal. Similarly, we welcome to Ballina, Killala and Ballymote the Rev John Mann whose wide experience will enrich his ministry there.

Development Ministries

4. A five years review of the 'development ministry' in Carlow has been carried out. On most Sundays, a steady congregation of 50 gathers for worship; children's work continues and in this past year a small youth work has begun. Church members speak appreciatively of the ministry of Rev Stephen Johnston. In this work Mr Johnston finds fellowship and partnership in the Gospel with Mr Philip Kelso (Irish Mission). We were encouraged to be able to recommend a further five years of 'development ministry' in Carlow.

Rev Stephen Johnston reports:

5. We have settled happily, as a family, into the Carlow community. We were very encouraged by the Home Board's decision to extend the work here and would thank all those involved. The last year has seen further slow but steady progress. The decision to move the Church services from afternoon to morning has proved to have been the right one. Attendance at Sunday worship is encouraging and some people are attending regularly who were not coming one year ago.

6. The team ministry with Mr & Mrs Philip Kelso (Irish Mission) is a great encouragement and continues to function very positively. This past year saw the beginning of a youth club which, after a slow start, seems to have established itself. Weekly work amongst children has developed and work with students in the local college has been worthwhile. This past winter also saw the

start of monthly Sunday evening meetings which were well attended. We plan to continue these during the autumn and winter months.

7. 1999 marks the Bi-centenary of the birth of the Rev James Morgan who ministered in Carlow from 1820-1824. Mr Morgan and like-minded ministers from other churches often prayed together and worked for the “revival of religion” in the Carlow region. They saw God answer their prayers. We look for the same in days of far greater opportunity than those ministers ever knew.

Rev Dr Samuel Mawhinney reports:

8. As a family we are well settled in Clonmel. Our third son David was born on 17th July, 1998. We are all in good health and are thankful to God for His blessing.

9. It has been a difficult year without the support of an Irish Mission worker. Our plans for children’s work did not materialise and opposition to our presence in town became apparent. We have held a special outreach event at Christmas which was very positive and since the new year we have been holding a bible study in one of the local hotels. These have brought in ten different people over this time and good contacts and relationships are being established. We would ask for your prayers for the work in Clonmel.

10. The work at Cahir has continued with weekly services at 12 noon. We are grateful to God for bringing to us an organist and for the ongoing proclamation of His word. At present we are investigating putting a heating system into the church as a cold building is neither comfortable nor very attractive.

11. Our Irish Mission partners, Mr and Mrs Peter Maitland are due to arrive in May. With their support we are hopeful of seeing the work develop in both Clonmel and Cahir.

12. The refurbishment of the Fermoy Church building was completed and the building re-opened on 16th October, 1998. The Moderator of the General Assembly preached a clear gospel message and each person present received a copy of the gospel of John. We were very encouraged to have many people from the community present.

13. Services in Fermoy are now held each Sunday at 10 o’clock. The bible study in the Hotel continues each Thursday following the children’s club run by Mr & Mrs Harry Moreland (Irish Mission). We thank God for his blessing in all these activities in terms of spiritual growth, interest and numbers attending.

Property and Finance

14. In the past year the Home Mission made repairs grants to congregations to a total of some £100,000. We are grateful for the support of the Church through the United Appeal and, also, for the gifts, donations and bequests which have been received. Thanks is due, in particular, to First Antrim whose donation of £15,000 made the refurbishment of Fermoy possible, to the generosity of Nightlight supporters who provided over £13,000 and also to the Young Women’s Groups whose generosity has financed an assistant director of Nightlight for one year, Mr Paul Jamieson.

15. In respect of some properties major decisions are pending. In Waterford the cost of renovating the listed (pre-Reformation) church building would exhaust our total annual budget and some more. The minister and congregation are imaginative as they consider a range of possible options.

16. In Mountmellick the condition of the old manse suggests that it can be of no further use to the congregation. Again the Home Mission is seeking to be of assistance to the minister and congregations as they consider the best way forward.

17. Refurbishment at Corboy and at Stonebridge is nearing completion and services of thanksgiving have been arranged involving the Moderator and the Home Mission Secretary.

18. Discussions are taking place with Galway County Council about development of the dilapidated Church building at Ballinasloe by the Council for use as a library with a worship facility provided at no cost to the Church in which services and other meetings could be held. The property would remain in the ownership of the Presbyterian Church and any agreement would have to include clauses to guarantee that no events contrary to the standards and ethos of Church would be held within it.

19. The terms of the Trust restrict the use of the property to the celebration of religious worship and other proper and necessary public and other meetings connected to its use by a congregation of Presbyterians in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The General Assembly would require to remove these restrictions in order to facilitate the development proposal. A resolution is appended.

Nightlight

20. A five years review of Nightlight, carried out by a small committee under the Clerk of Assembly, has endorsed the value of this ministry, congratulated Mr John Luke and the volunteers and recommended that it be continued and again reviewed in five years time.

21. Volunteers are 'on the streets' from 11 pm until 2 am or even longer each weekend. A tea-bar outside the Kinghan Church is proving a useful contact point at which deep human needs are revealed. Further training for the volunteers is being considered to equip them in dealing with specific cries for help from, for example, drug abusers and homosexuals. In recent weeks opposition has been encountered from groups on the streets, as a result of which plans are being laid for prayer cover during the night hours when the volunteers are witnessing and also for 'hotline' prayer to be called upon by telephone in moments of crucial need.

22. Night tours are still popular and are especially well supported by Young Women's Groups; requests for deputation are too numerous to be met but a ten minutes video is available.

23. Opportunities for Nightlight type ministry are likely to increase as plans to expand nightlife facilities into the harbour and cathedral areas of the city come to fruition. Some city congregations are contemplating night outreach around their doors.

24. With the agreement of the Home Board, the Nightlight General Committee has been discharged and the work will be guided by an Executive

Committee under the chairmanship of Mrs Rosemary Thompson. The Home Mission is grateful to God for her interest, for the leadership of Mr John Luke and the deputy director, Mr Paul Jamieson, for the volunteers and all who support this ministry. We encourage the whole Church to give its prayerful support.

Alternating Ministries Scheme

25. The Committee met in the autumn and decided not to initiate changes in any of the present alternating or federal schemes. One innovation has been the appointment of the Rev Dr R W J MacDermott to represent the interests of the Methodist and the Presbyterian Churches as a chaplain to the new Adelaide and Meath Hospital at Tallaght, Dublin. It is planned that he and future Ministers of Christ Church, Sandymount will devote 50% of their time to this chaplaincy and that an appropriate contribution will be paid from health sources in Dublin towards the cost.

26. The Committee also approved a new draft constitution for Christ Church which has since been approved by the Home Board and which is printed as an Appendix and presented for the approval of the General Assembly.

Urban Mission

27. The remit of the Home Mission requires it to promote urban mission. Consequently, the financial costs of the present assistant minister in Ballygomartin are met out of Home Mission funds. Guidelines for a properly structured urban mission support scheme have been approved by the Board which will permit the Mission to give financial support to congregations situated in areas of social need to employ additional personnel for specific, time-limited outreach schemes. The guidelines are as follows:

1. a congregation demonstrates high priority for evangelistic outreach;
2. the emphasis is on personnel, not property;
3. specified sources are low;
4. the area is one of high incidence of social deprivation;
5. there is no significant local disposable income or resources;
6. a time-limited project is proposed;
7. some local financial input is available except in exceptional circumstances;
8. applications have been commented upon by presbytery;
9. the agency is ineligible to apply for United Appeal funding.

28. The Home Mission is involved in exciting ministry at a time rich with opportunities for the Gospel throughout Ireland and it appeals for the prayerful support of the whole Church.

R L CRAIG, Convener

APPENDIX**CHRIST CHURCH, SANDYMOUNT****Revised Constitution****PREAMBLE**

1. The congregation, consisting of the united Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Sandymount, shall be known as Christ Church, Sandymount.

2. The congregational property is held by the Trustees of the Methodist Church.

MINISTRY

1. The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches shall provide the minister alternately, for such period as the alternating Ministry Committee of the two Churches may decide.

2. The minister may also be required to serve as Methodist/Presbyterian chaplain to the Adelaide and Meath Hospital, Tallaght.

COUNCIL

1. There shall be a Church Council which shall oversee the spiritual, temporal and financial affairs of the congregation.

The Council shall consist of the Elders of the congregation, together with ten members elected by the congregation for a three year period. The Council shall have the power to co-opt up to two additional members.

3. The Council shall appoint an honorary secretary and an honorary treasurer from within its membership.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. The Annual General Meeting shall be held each year in February or March when a report on the work of the congregation, and a financial statement for the previous year, shall be given.

2. When there has been an election to the Council, the name shall be announced at the AGM.

CHURCH EXTENSION COMMITTEE

1. The following is a summary of the work of the Committee during 1998.

Newtownards Area*Movilla*

2. The congregation continues to grow (248 families) and is looking forward to the completion of the new church. The foundation stone was laid on the 28th November, 1998, by the Moderator.

3. The congregation is considering memorializing the Assembly in June 2000 to be fully constituted.

Belfast Area

Taughmonagh

4. Under Rev W D Moore's able and innovative leadership community work continues to develop. The congregation maintains its witness and faithfully seeks to share the Good News.

New Mossley

5. Concern has been expressed about the fluctuation in numbers within the congregation. This reflects movement of people in the estate.

6. The minister is encouraged to see God working in the lives of people.

Coleraine

Ballysally

7. There has been an increase in the number of families since last year (1997 150, 1998 160). Sustained efforts are being made to contact those on the fringe of the congregation.

8. Considerable progress has been made in the Buildings Improvement Plan implemented in 1998 and the congregation is to be congratulated on its efforts to raise funds. The Committee gave a grant of £8,000 towards this work.

Londonderry Area

Strathfoyle

9. Rev Stanley Stewart reports that the Foyle Presbytery would like a review of Church Extension within Glendermott's parish bounds. The Committee agreed that this would be valuable and the Presbytery will be asked to carry out a survey.

Sites

10. At present we have sites in Lisburn, Carrickfergus and Antrim.

11. In the work of Church Extension, looking to and planning for the future is essential. The Committee requests Presbyteries to forward relevant information regarding housing development within their bounds.

Sunday School Support

12. In 1998 Sunday School contributions to Church Extension totalled £1,954.96. We thank Sunday School teachers for their regular support.

Elders in Church Extension Charges

13. The subject of elders in Church Extension Charges has been discussed a number of times over the years. It would seem that the present

system would be difficult (not impossible) to change. The value of having elders from within the congregation is recognised.

14. An alternative would be for a Church Extension charge to apply to come under the Home Mission if it did not develop to the point of being fully constituted within an agreed number of years.

Visits to Church Extension Charges

15. Visitations of Church Extension Charges are carried out by Presbyteries in the normal way. The Committee agreed that it would be helpful and beneficial, both to the Charge and the Committee, for representatives of the Committee to make annual visits.

16. United Appeal Allocation for 1999 is £275,000.

17. The Committee thanks all those who prayerfully and financially support the work of Church Extension and to those who serve in Church Extension Charges.

G MOFFETT, H TAGGART, Conveners

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Alternating Ministries Committee

2. That the General Assembly appoint the Home Board Convener, the Home Mission Convener, the Home Mission Secretary, Revs D C Caskie, Dr R W J MacDermott to the alternating Ministries Scheme Committee.

3. That the Constitution for Christ Church, Sandymount be approved.

Ballinasloe

4. That the General Assembly resolve to free the Church meeting house at Ballinasloe from such restrictive terms of trust as would prohibit the development of a library and worship facility or other appropriate use as the Home Board of the Church may determine and empower the General Board, acting in the name of the General Assembly, to determine and decide any and all related issues which may arise.

General

5. That the Home Board, with its associated working Committees, for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 280 of the Code as follows:

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Executive Secretary: Miss ELIZABETH BRIAN

Theme for the year: "God is in Control"

(This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Home Board and the Overseas Board)

1. In a world of chaos and confusion it is reassuring to know that God is in Control. To trust in God's providence regardless of circumstances is the lesson of faith for every individual. Habakkuk had learned this lesson and there is no greater affirmation of faith than to be able to say with the prophet:-

"Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines;
Though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food...
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour.
The Sovereign Lord is my strength,
He makes my feet like the feet of the deer,
He enables me to go on the heights."

2. God's sovereign care was very evident at all levels of the Presbyterian Women's Association during 1998/99. In the absence of the PWA Executive Secretary, the Central President, Mrs Phyllis Sleith, assumed part-time duties in the PWA office from February until October 1998. Through these additional responsibilities and her involvement in various committees she made a vital contribution to the work of both the Home and Overseas Boards and shared in the pastoral oversight of personnel. She also travelled extensively throughout Ireland on deputation and represented not only PWA but also PCI on overseas visits to Kenya and Jamaica.

3. Mrs Sleith completes her term of office in May 1999. Her two years have been characterised by wise leadership and willing service for Christ and His Kingdom.

PWA Executive Committee

4. The Executive Committee, which is responsible for progressing the work of the Association, met on eleven occasions throughout the year.

5. A sub-committee under the convenership of the Central President was established to review the PWA Constitution and the PWA Handbook. This task will take account of proposed changes to the structure of Assembly Boards and Committees.

6. Membership of Executive Committee 1998/99

Mrs M Russell (Ards)

Mrs G Irwin (Foyle)

Mrs M Thompson (Armagh)

Mrs M Patterson (Iveagh)

Mrs A Erwin (Ballymena)

Mrs G Drennan (Monaghan)

Mrs H Murdock (N Belfast)

Mrs C Finlay (Newry)

Mrs D McMullen (S Belfast)	Mrs H Greer (Omagh)
Mrs L Robinson (E Belfast)	Mrs M Binnie (Route)
Mrs Z Valley (C'fergus)	Mrs P Sleith (T'patrick)
Mrs H Hull (Coleraine)	Mrs P Orr (Tyrone)
Mrs E McLaughlin (Derry/S'bane)	Mrs M Pepper (YWG)
Mrs P Johnston (Donegal)	Mrs A McCaughan (Wider World)
Mrs M Boggs(Down)	Miss E Brian (ex officio)
Mrs H Jess (Dromore)	Mrs R Maguire (ex officio)
Mrs C Poynton (Dublin/Munster)	Moderator's Wife (ex officio)

7. Office-bearers 1998/99

Central President:	Mrs Phyllis Sleith
Home Vice-President:	Mrs Lois Robinson
Overseas Vice-President:	Mrs Margaret Thompson
Home Treasurer:	Mrs Marbeth Russell
Overseas Treasurer:	Mrs Gwen Irwin

8. Office-bearers to be installed at the Annual General Meeting on 6th May 1999

Central President:	Mrs Margaret Thompson
Overseas Vice-President:	Mrs Maureen Patterson

9. New members for Executive Committee 1999/2000

Mrs Sheila Fell	Derry/Strabane
Mrs Patricia Colvin	Dublin/Munster
Mrs Jane McClure	Iveagh
Mrs Amanda Blair	Omagh

10. Co-option to Executive Committee 1999/2000

Mrs Cherry Poynton	Dublin & Munster
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11. Executive members represent PWA on the following bodies:-

Young Women's Groups Central Committee	Mrs Annie Erwin
Union Commission	Mrs Annie Erwin
Women's Link	Mrs Annie Erwin, Mrs Cherry Poynton
Women's Church Organisations (Belfast Comm)	Mrs Lois Robinson
Sudan Support Group	Mrs Margaret Binnie

Management Committees:-

Vine Community & Advice Centre	Mrs Helen Murdock
South Belfast Friendship House	Mrs Doreen McMullen
East Belfast Friendship House	Mrs Lois Robinson

12. The Millennium Sub Group under the convenership of Mrs Alison McCaughan has drawn up plans for PWA's celebration of the Millennium. The schedule will include events at individual, branch, Presbytery and national level.

The Programme Planning Committee has worked in conjunction with the Millennium Group to produce a Millennium Resource Pack.

Events 1998/99

13. The Annual Prayer Meeting was held on 7th May 1998 in the Chapel, Church House. Prayers were led by Mrs Phyllis Sleith.

14. The Annual Meetings were held on 14th May 1998 in the Assembly Hall, Church House. Guest speaker, Dr Lena Morrow, gave a challenging address on the theme "God is in Control".

15. The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr John Dixon was guest speaker at the Executive Committee meeting held in Malone Church Hall on 3rd September 1998.

16. The PWA Annual Conference was held on 12th September 1998 in Stormont Church Hall. Both Home and Overseas personnel highlighted issues of service and joined in fellowship with members of General Committee.

17. Mrs Annie Erwin and Mrs Doreen McMullen attended a Four Nations Celebration and Conference for women in Durham from 17th to 19th April 1998. The theme of the conference was "Forward to the Promised Community".

18. A Coffee Morning for PROP and retired personnel was hosted by the Executive Committee in the Minor Hall on 28th May 1998. Mrs Elizabeth Clarke was the guest soloist.

19. The PROP Thanksgiving Service was held in High Street, Holywood on 24th May 1998 and was attended by Executive members. Grateful thanks are extended to the ladies of the PROP group for their continued practical support of the work of PWA.

Finance

20. PWA continues to receive the generous financial support of its branches - a generosity which was evidenced by an increase in givings to the General Fund in 1998. This faithfulness on the part of individual members enables PWA to meet its financial commitments and is acknowledged with a deep sense of gratitude by the Executive Committee.

21. In 1998/99 the membership fee was fixed at a minimum of £2.00.

22. During the year the PWA Finance Committee carried out a review of deaconess salaries and after consultation a new salary structure was drawn up. The new salary scales for deaconesses and woman workers were approved by the Home Board on 24th February 1999 and were implemented on 1st April 1999.

23. In 1996/97 a decision was taken that PWA would in future give financial support in part to **all** missionary personnel. From 1st January 2000 a grant will be given each year to the Overseas Board. This grant will be determined annually by the PWA Executive Committee.

Birthday Thankoffering

24. The 1998/99 Birthday Thankoffering to date amounts to £18,268.93 and will provide staff and student accommodation at Zomba Theological College, Malawi.

25. The 1997/98 Birthday Thankoffering raised a total of £21,390.45 and was used to completely refurbish Flat 3, 44 Marlborough Park North. It also helped provide equipment and some minor refurbishment in Flats 1 and 2.

Bequests and Gifts

26. PWA acknowledges with thanks the following bequests:-

Bertha R Geddes	£2,543.10
Herbert and Elizabeth Morrison Trust	£37,744.35
Dorothy Noreen Davis	£300.00
Elizabeth Margaret Dickson	£1,000.00
Sarah Elizabeth Ballantine	£388.25
Florence Elizabeth Curry	£50.76
Elizabeth Morrison	£1,000.00

27. PWA also acknowledges with thanks the generous gift of shares from Rev J & Mrs Watt.

Home Personnel

28. In all matters relating to home personnel PWA values the advice and encouragement given by Rev Derek Poots, Secretary of the Home Board.

29. During 1998/99 PWA office bearers and office bearers of the Deaconess Association met at regular intervals.

30. Miss Jean Gwyn attended the European Diakonia Conference in Sweden from 24th June until 29th June 1998. The theme of the conference was "Images of Diaconia - Work, Life and Growth".

31. The Deaconess Carol Service was held on Friday 11th December 1998 in the Kinghan Church. Members of Executive joined with other guests for morning coffee and shared together in the service led by the Ards Prayer Group.

Overseas Personnel

32. PWA would pay tribute to Rev Terry McMullan for his wise counsel, understanding and generous support in all matters relating to overseas personnel.

33. PWA continues to support overseas personnel, pay a proportion of some grants to partner churches and have responsibility for the upkeep of the PWA flat. In 1998/1999 the following missionaries were supported by PWA.

Brazil	Miss Mabel Colson
India	Miss Linda Jackson
	Mrs Elizabeth Matthews
Israel	Miss Fiona Smyth
Jamaica	Miss Claire Trueman
	Miss Leonora Wasson
	Miss Diana Winfield
Kenya	Miss Naomi Martin

Malawi	Miss Freda Algie Miss Diane Cusick Miss Clare McIntyre
Nepal	Miss Margaret Young Miss Amanda Christie Miss Sharon Creighton Miss Joy Gowdy Miss Helen Johnston Miss Linda McKee Miss Pauline Orr
Romania	Mrs Ilona Veres (nee Walsh)

34. In the summer of 1998 Miss Ilona Walsh celebrated her marriage to Mr Csaba Veres. Both Mr & Mrs Veres are now studying at Moorlands Bible College in England for two years.

35. In December 1998 Mrs Phyllis Sleith travelled overseas to Jamaica. In a busy week she met with representatives of the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands and also with missionary personnel. The highlight of her visit was attendance at a special service of celebration on Sunday 13th December in Mandeville to mark 36 years of missionary service for Miss Claire Trueman. Mrs Sleith conveyed greetings from the Moderator and from PWA for Miss Trueman's faithfulness in her calling to serve Jesus Christ in Jamaica.

Administration

36. Miss Elizabeth Brian resumed her role as PWA Executive Secretary in November 1998. During her illness and subsequent treatment she was greatly encouraged by the prayerful concern and support of PWA and the wider church both at home and overseas.

37. In Miss Brian's absence additional responsibilities were undertaken by the staff of the PWA office - Administrative Assistant, Mrs Rita Maguire; Deputation Secretary, Miss Margaret Young and Junior Secretary, Miss Naomi Campbell. The Association would pay tribute to each of them for their loyalty and dedication.

38. The PWA office has now established email at the following address: pwa@presbyterianireland.org.

39. A range of promotional materials bearing the PWA logo has been available in the PWA office throughout the year. Newly designed PWA brooches in gold and silver are produced to order.

Wider World

40. "Wider World" has had an excellent year and circulation remains at a steady level. The magazine has included articles about PCI work at home and overseas.

41. 26,000 copies of "Wider World" are printed every quarter. Copies of the magazine are sent to partner churches on all five continents. The Editor, Mrs Alison McCaughan, is encouraged by the many positive comments which she receives.

42. Sincere thanks are due to all the contributors to the magazine and to the congregational agents who work very hard to promote the magazine within their local churches. Special thanks are due to the staff of the PWA office who deal with all administrative inquiries.

Young Women's Groups

43. The 1998/99 theme "God is in Control" was shared by YWG and PWA. The YWG Annual Rally was held in Banbridge Road, Dromore, on 30th April 1998. The address was given by Miss Jenny Lyttle from Scripture Union and cheques for £12,500 each were handed over to Mrs Lynda Gibson for the Vine Community and Advice Centre and to Rev Jim Campbell for the Sumba Project in Indonesia.

44. Office Bearers 1998/99

Chairman:	Mrs Margaret Pepper
Secretary:	Mrs Christine Bell
Treasurer:	Mrs Wendy Nesbitt
Magazine Editor:	Mrs Amanda Cooper

45. The YWG Home Project is financing a part-time director for 'Nightlight' in Belfast and the Overseas Project is supporting medical work in the five CCAP hospitals in Malawi. Cheques for these projects were handed over at the Annual Rally held in Terrace Row, Coleraine, on 29th April 1999.

46. Office Bearers installed at the Annual Rally on 29th April 1999:

Chairman:	Mrs Pamela Martin
Treasurer:	Mrs Daphne Caldwell
Magazine Editor:	Mrs Katrina McCullough

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev J M CATHCART
Secretary: Mr N J CHAMBERS

1. Society is in “free fall!” - “going down the tubes”. Every day the News brings us another litany of horror stories, about the destruction of the property, the person or the character of very ordinary people, some young and some old. To use an old saying, “It makes our blood boil”, and yet we so often feel utterly helpless to do anything to help. These stories sharpen our focus on the moral, social and spiritual decay that is all around us. They certainly ought to remind us that, as a Church, we have a responsibility to demonstrate the grace of God in such situations. As a Church and as God’s people we must come alongside those in need, and not stand on the touchline.

DEPUTATION

2. The two factors most evident when doing deputation on behalf of the Board are (1) how little people know about its work and (2) scepticism about whether the Church should be involved in social witness. So the Board is developing its communication strategy by improving the quality of information to Churches and by providing deputation speakers with up-to-date information packs. The Board’s new publicity leaflet is the first in a series being produced by the Board of Communications covering all of the work of Boards and Departments.

PASTORAL CARE AND SOCIAL WITNESS

3. For a congregation to determine its priorities it needs a clear statement of mission or purpose. Priorities will vary from congregation to congregation, as will available resources and opportunities. If the Church is to function as a vibrant witnessing and worshipping community, pastoral care and social witness must feature in congregational priorities. This will just not happen; it requires vision and leadership. Vision to see opportunities in a local situation and leadership to put vision into action.

4. To be effective, social witness in the community will often take place in partnership with others. Partnership presents opportunities and threats; opportunities to demonstrate the compassion of Christ and to form personal relationships outside of the local congregation. Partnership, however, can present threats to our sense of ownership and to the control normally exercised by the Kirk Session. Those who have the skills to work in the community need to be released from other tasks in the Church.

5. The Board believes that congregational life will be strengthened if these principles are followed, that the Church will become a warmer and more welcoming fellowship, and that there will be a greater depth of discipleship. The ministry of the Church will be broadened and the Church will be more pro-actively evangelistic. The Board of Social Witness will continue to develop its capacity to support and advise congregations in developing pastoral care and

social witness initiatives. These need not be major events, but a gradual and focussed commitment to engaging with people where they are and in terms of need as they experience it.

THE FUTURE

6. This year the Presbyterian Residential Trust celebrates its 50th Anniversary of caring for elderly people. In the friendly, caring, Christian atmosphere of the homes, elderly folk are able to live the latter years of their lives, free from many of the worries and concerns associated with maintaining their own homes. If this ministry is to continue, many of the homes need to be upgraded to meet current Government regulations, therefore the Church will need to invest in the Residential Trust over the next few years.

7. A major problem facing our society is the continuing abuse of drugs and alcohol. The Church, through the work of ADE and Carlisle House Management Committees, is well served in the field of education and the treatment of addictions. These two Committees are considering opportunities for closer co-operation.

8. The Board is rightly proud of its Volunteer Scheme and the opportunities that this has given to many young people to express their faith in very practical ways. One of the aspirations of the Board is to provide a wider range of opportunities, not only for young people, but also for those who have taken early retirement, and so make many more skills available to the church at large.

THANKS

9. The Board has been very fortunate to have had the skill and expertise of **Mrs Rosemary Thompson** as Honorary Treasurer over the past ten years. Her knowledge of the financial world and of the ways of the Church has been put to good use in that time. We thank her most sincerely for her dedicated service.

10. Over the years, as the work of the Board has developed, it has been necessary to call on the good offices of **Mr Charlie Robinson**, Personnel Officer. We wish to thank him for his support and invaluable advice on personnel matters.

11. The **Rev Henry Gray** has been chairperson of the Carlisle House Management Committee from the beginning of its work. His skilful leadership over the years has been instrumental in the development of a service of the highest quality. The fact that Carlisle House is held in such high regard for its treatment of addictions is a measure of the time and effort that he has put in. Rev Henry Gray is succeeded as Chairperson by Rev Robert Love.

12. **Mr Bill Matthews** has been Chairperson of the PCI Enterprises Management Committee for some six years. He has steered the work of this social action project with skill and enthusiasm and the Board wishes to thank him for his invaluable contribution to its work.

13. Warmest thanks are due to Norman Chambers, Director of Social Service; Linda Wray, Residential Services Manager; Richard Gamble, Finance Manager; to the office staff at Church House, Arlene Wilson, Ellen Wilmont and

Jennifer Patton; and to the staff at Denegarath, Patricia Large, Jean Gourley, Karen McCracken and Rosemary Henderson.

14. We also acknowledge the guidance and the vital financial support received from a number of Government departments and agencies, which is crucial to the work of the Board.

Rev K P Meyer, Convener of the Southern Social Witness Development Committee, reports:

1. The volunteer scheme continues to develop in Dublin, with young adult volunteers placed in both Abbey and Adelaide Road Donore congregations. Their primary responsibilities are with the Dolebusters employment resource centres, but they are encouraged to become involved where possible with other local and congregational activities.

2. The Committee spent some time this year helping to formulate the Statement of Belief and Guiding Principles for Social Witness Activity which has recently been approved by the Board. Our work in this area encouraged us to begin to take a more critical and imaginative look at the current opportunities for social witness in the Republic, particularly in light of the research which is being conducted for the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster on new church development in the greater Dublin area.

3. We are working with the Dublin Area Strategy for Mission Group, and are excited by the possibilities which we see emerging, and we appreciate the continuing interest and prayers of the General Assembly.

Minister in Recognised Service - (Called by the Board of Social Witness under Code Par.281.3)

Rev Douglas Baker, The Mediation Network for Northern Ireland, reports:

1. Following approval by the 1998 General Assembly of The Mediation Network for Northern Ireland as a suitable agency for Recognised Ministry, the Board of Social Witness issued a call to me in October as Development Officer, with primary responsibility for the Churches Programme of The Mediation Network. In January I was inducted by the Presbytery of East Belfast.

2. The Mediation Network seeks to promote the use of third party intervention in the resolution of various disputes and to support creative responses to conflict. The aim of the Churches Programme is to enhance the churches capacity for handling internal conflicts constructively, understanding particular challenges of ministry in a divided society, and contributing positively to the resolution of conflicts in society. My work involves me in some actual mediation, quite a bit of conflict counselling with one party in a dispute, and extensive training with clergy and lay leaders to develop skills both for handling and preventing conflicts. In particular, this year several "Handling Conflict in the Church" courses have been offered in various parts of Northern Ireland and attended by clergy of all denominations. This same training has taken place with PCI Licentiates and students at the Church of Ireland Theological College. A number of requests have also been received to work on conflict awareness with Kirk Sessions or leaders in congregations. Mr Joe Campbell, Assistant Director

of Mediation Network and an elder in First Holywood, and I also continue to work with the PCI Conciliation Panel, providing refresher training and, in some cases, supervision to the panel of conciliators. Explorations are underway to develop similar panels for the Methodist Church in Ireland and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Armagh.

3. I continue to serve as a member of the Peace and Peacemaking Committee and have been acting as a consultant for the Church of Ireland Diocese of Down and Dromore in the development of their Community Bridge Building Programme. In addition, I have facilitated a number of training events, evaluations and strategic planning sessions for local inter-church groups and various projects connecting churches with their local community.

THOMPSON HOUSE

1. Thompson House accommodates 16 residents, nine in Thompson House and seven in the McCormick Suite. The Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the main funding body, expect the hostel to operate at 80% occupancy level. This target was reached for 1998.

2. Staff have attended training on mental health issues to update their knowledge and skills.

3. Many of the residents come from disturbed backgrounds and at times present difficult and challenging behaviour. In addition to their offending behaviour many have difficulties with alcohol, drugs and anger management. Staff have to work with sensitivity as they try to rehabilitate the residents back into the community.

4. The largest group of residents are men who have been discharged from prison (43%) having completed their sentences. The second group are men who are on parole from prison (21%). These are men in the last year of their sentences, who receive one weekend parole a month to prepare them for life back in the community. 17% of residents are men who are on Probation Orders. These men have been sentenced to between six months and three years imprisonment and they must agree to being supervised in the community by a Probation Officer. A fourth group of residents are men who are on bail awaiting trial (10%). 9% of residents are men who have been on probation and who have requested further assistance to prevent them re-offending.

5. Over the last 18 months a group of residents has met weekly for Bible study. This is conducted by the Chairperson assisted by members of staff.

6. The Management Committee wishes to express its appreciation for the prayerful support it receives from the General Assembly.

J C BUICK, Chairperson

PCI ENTERPRISES

1. PCI Enterprises, based in rented accommodation at Annesley Street, north Belfast, has over the past 14 years managed a Training and Employment Agency sponsored Action for Community Employment scheme focused mainly on the provision of skills training through established training organisations and also work experience to the long-term unemployed.

2. Initially the programme operated on a Province wide basis, but successive changes in T&EA policy resulted in:-
 - (i) the retraction of the PCI Enterprises programme, primarily in north Belfast;
 - (ii) the gradual run down of ACE which will be 'wound up' at the end of July 1999. ACE is being succeeded by New Deal, the criteria for which PCI Enterprises is not equipped to meet.
3. The main implications of the demise of ACE for PCI Enterprises are:-
 - (i) termination of its operations at Annesley Street which could not be sustained in the absence of ACE or other financial support
 - (ii) redundancy of its three core workers who have now been given their statutory redundancy notice; and
 - (iii) repayment of its grant obligations to T&EA of approx £13,000.
4. The Committee of PCI Enterprises is concerned at this turn of events in light of the fact that 30% of the City's long term unemployed live in the area and also that the area has the lowest level of industrial development and new job creation in the City according to the North Belfast Partnership Board. In light of these facts and their experience of working in the area, the Committee is currently examining the feasibility of acquiring premises on York Road to establish a Job Club on the lines of the Dublin Dolebusters. The project would, in particular, aim to assist those unemployed who are or have been unable to benefit from the various statutory training programmes through lack of basic skills, by providing Life Skills Courses, Employment Preparation Courses, Numeracy and Literacy, Job Club facilities and Community Centre based accredited training for specific jobs.
5. Applications for grant aid towards the cost of acquisition and refurbishing of premises at York Road, Belfast and also the cost of running the project have been made to potential funding bodies.
6. After clearing its financial obligations to T&EA and given a favourable outcome to its grant applications, PCI Enterprises will still have a modest sum left to initiate the new project.

W MATTHEWS, Chairperson

CARLISLE HOUSE

1. Mrs Helen Harrison was appointed Director of Carlisle House on 1 October 1998. Dr Anne Watts was appointed to a new position as Consultant with responsibility for Training, Development and Professional Audit. In February 1999 Miss Louise Kane was appointed to a full-time position as Development Worker at Insight, with responsibility for our literature work.
2. The demand for the variety of services, both residential and non-residential, offered by Carlisle House remains high, with a waiting list for assessment and admission. The average bed-fill rate has risen consistently over recent years and currently remains close to the maximum of 14. This is due to increased awareness of the existence of the services provided and to the high regard in which the work is now held.
3. The extension to the building, begun in January 1998, is now completed and provides much needed space for group meetings and recreational activities. Plans for second stage accommodation are at an advanced stage and

work is expected to begin by July 1999, with a group of seven flats being ready for occupation by July 2000. These will be used by residents who have no suitable accommodation to move on to upon completion of the Carlisle House addiction programme. The capital development cost will be met by the Habinteg Housing Association.

4. The spiritual welfare of the residents remains a concern of the staff, and pastoral support continues to be offered in individual and group situations within the House.

5. Rev Henry Gray retired as Chairman of the Management Committee at the end of 1998, and the Committee and staff thank him for the considerable contribution he has made to the work of Carlisle House since it opened in January 1993.

R LOVE, Chairperson

ALCOHOL AND DRUG EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The Alcohol and Drug Education Committee gives thanks to God for His continued blessing over the past year. The ADE Volunteer Pilot Scheme continues to greatly encourage us. Sadly, one volunteer had to withdraw due to ill-health but the other six have begun to conduct meetings as part of their practical training. The faith and enthusiasm of these volunteers is a credit to them and a challenge to the rest of us. Please continue to pray for them and consider inviting them to conduct meetings in your church. New volunteers are in the process of being recruited and interviewed for the September 1999 intake. It is with pleasure that we report the appointment of Mr Roger Porter to co-ordinate this scheme. He will be based at Insight in Upper North Street, Belfast and all enquiries about the scheme should be addressed to him.

2. The Committee was delighted to hear of the success of our video "The Score". It received the Andrew Cross Award and was also voted best video and given a Gold Award by the Christian Broadcasting Council. A small handbook is being produced for use with "The Score".

3. Statistics gathered in England suggest that drug use amongst professing Christians is only slightly less than that in the wider community. Society in Northern Ireland is noted for being more conservative than on the mainland. It would be very useful to have some idea of the attitude to and use of all kinds of drugs within Presbyterian community. With that in mind, a survey is being conducted to ascertain attitudes and practices. This will assist the Committee in targeting its work over the next few years.

4. The Committee is pleased to report that co-operation with Carlisle House has greatly increased over the last twelve months. ADE Volunteers feature Carlisle House in their deputation work and we are co-operating in the operation of the Insight Resource Centre in Belfast. In February 1999, the ADE Committee and the Carlisle House Management Committee held a joint meeting to help everyone understand each other's work. This trend will be encouraged further in the next year.

5. The Committee responded to the Government's consultation paper on opening hours of licensed premises over the Millennium holiday and the

Convener made representations to a number of District Councils to express our distaste of the suggestion of 36 hours of continuous opening over New Year 2000.

6. Please continue to pray for the work of the ADE Committee and in particular remember the dedicated work of our volunteers.

W B BOYD, Convener

PRESBYTERIAN WAR MEMORIAL HOSTEL COMMITTEE

1. Derryvolgie Hall on the Malone Road provides a home for 88 young adults, mainly students, and it continues to run successfully.

2. We pay tribute to the work of Rev Steve Stockman and his staff at Derryvolgie Hall. We thank Mr Andrew Kyle our former administrator who left us this year. His replacement Miss Lorna McMahon takes on a new job which includes pastoral support alongside her administrative duties.

3. Derryvolgie continues in its attempt to be biblical and contemporary. Bible studies, discussion groups and interesting multimedia events attempt to give the residents an understanding of what it is to live in the love of God and to follow Jesus Christ at the turn of the millennium. There is a full range of social activities, including sport, art and leisure, which are also important in the building up of a vital Christian community at Queen's University.

4. Now that the sale of the property in Howard Street and Brunswick Street has been completed, the Committee is actively considering future developments, including, as one possibility, the provision of new residential accommodation on part of the Union College site.

J H MARTIN, Convener

PRESBYTERIAN RESIDENTIAL TRUST COMMITTEE

1. 1999 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Residential Trust. We give thanks to God for the vision of a caring ministry amongst the elderly and His enabling grace and power to maintain and develop the work through the years.

2. **HOMES.** From the first home in Adelaide Park, Belfast the work has now blossomed to six Residential Homes, one Nursing Home, and two Sheltered Housing Projects. To this we have now added further nursing provision in a project shared with Dublin Central Mission in the Sandymount area of Dublin. We now provide accommodation for just under 250 people with a high quality of care in a Christian environment.

3. Under new regulations, all of our properties have undergone a fire-risk assessment during the past year. Substantial expenditure in the coming year will be necessary to meet the requirements. The Committee has also agreed to

upgrade some of the rooms at Sunnyside House, Bangor to provide en-suite facilities and to modernise some of the bathrooms at Adelaide House.

4. **STAFF.** We employ over 250 staff with a wide range of skills and experience, but with a common sense of commitment to quality care. Registration and Inspection Unit reports regularly comment appreciatively on the work of our staff. At Denegarth House, the administrative staff ensure that the Trust is run smoothly and in a business-like way. The Committee is conscious of the increasing amount of employment legislation and the burden which this places on Heads of Home and others involved in staff recruitment and management.

5. The Committee records its thanks to all staff and, in particular, to Mrs Linda Wray the Residential Services Manager who gives selflessly of her time, energy and expertise. During the year Mrs Rosemary Thompson resigned as part-time Administrative Officer, we again thank her for several years of dedicated service.

6. **RESIDENTS.** The Committee is pleased to report a continued high level of occupancy in almost all the homes. We are aware, however, that though places are available in some homes and people are wanting to occupy them, financial constraints experienced by some Health and Social Service Trusts leaves beds empty, elderly people vulnerable and their families struggling. Low occupancy within our homes has an immediate and adverse impact on our financial position.

7. The Committee is also conscious of an increasing level of dependency amongst residents, which leads to additional work and responsibility for members of staff.

8. **FUTURE.** The Committee is continuing to consider further development of the Tritonville Sheltered Housing Complex in Dublin. It is hoped that definite progress will be made during this coming year. A new project in Lucan to provide sheltered housing for elderly people is also progressing and it is hoped that all legal matters will be completed before June 1999.

9. The Report of the Royal Commission on the Long-term Care of Elderly People and proposals regarding Health and Social Services Trusts in Northern Ireland indicate that we can expect significant changes in expectations and resources in the next few years. The Committee is also aware of estimates that the number of elderly people over 80 years is expected to double in the next 20 years.

10. The Report of the Royal Commission recognises the many problems and injustices in the present system and proposes that all personal and nursing care, long term or short term, be paid for from taxation. Elderly people with assets between £10,000 and £60,000 would pay towards their living and household costs on a means-tested basis. The Report would, in principle, encourage the care of elderly people in their own homes. If the proposals of the Royal Commission were enacted by Parliament many anomalies and injustices would be removed.

11. The PRT Committee recommends strongly that the Government be called upon to press forward with the legislation that is needed to implement the Royal Commission's recommendations.

12. The Committee believes that PRT not only provides a valuable and appreciated service but also extends the caring ministry of our Church to a section of the community who can often feel vulnerable to exploitation, isolated from familiar comforts, and anxious about coping with change.

13. To consolidate the present work, and to prepare for future work, the Committee has contributed to the Board of Social Witness's Business Plan. We have also appreciated the skills of Mr Richard Gamble, who was appointed in August 1998 as the Board's Financial Manager. His work has encouraged the Committee to develop a strategy which will allow for better co-ordination of our financial affairs. Due to the prevailing financial climate the fee structure is being given careful consideration. The Committee is also clarifying the roles and responsibilities of House Committees, whose work is appreciated, especially in the pastoral and practical support of staff and residents.

14. **50th ANNIVERSARY.** A former Convener of PRT Committee, Mr William McCaughey, has published his "Reflection on Fifty Years of the Presbyterian Residential Trust" under the title "Keeping the Flame Burning". The Committee thanks Mr McCaughey for his industry in what we know was "a labour of love", and commends the publication to a wide readership.

15. An exhibition relating to the history and development of PRT has been prepared and will be used throughout this year to inform and encourage support for our work. The exhibition will be taken to locations near to our present homes, and to any other locations to which we are invited. A Thanksgiving Service will be held later in 1999.

T J McCORMICK, Convener

SOCIAL ISSUES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Social Issues and Resources Committee continues to provide a Christian perspective on issues that confront our church today. During the past year we have focused on three issues.

2. **Childlessness and Infertility:** It is hoped that the long awaited booklet on Childlessness will be available by the time of this Assembly. It will be of benefit to those who are struggling with the trauma of childlessness and those who offer care and counsel to couples.

3. **Homosexuality:** The Committee has prepared a Bible Study on this issue. It is hoped that it will be the first of a series of Bible Studies on "Challenging Issues" that face us today. The resource, in addition to looking at the Biblical material, provides a further reading list and details of some organisations that specialise in counselling homosexuals.

4. In particular, this resource on homosexuality aims to address two worrying trends. Firstly, the gay lobby has become more vocal and persuasive over the past 20 years and a number of prominent Christian leaders have spoken in favour of homosexual partnerships. The biblical passages that have been referred to in the past have been re-interpreted by the homosexual lobby, often to mean something totally different from the traditional understanding of them. This has led to confusion amongst clergy and church members.

5. Secondly, we believe that there continues to be a misunderstanding of homosexuality; a spirit of judgmentalism, and even homophobia, exists which is not proper in the Christian church. We need to respond to homosexual people with compassion and understanding but many of us, if we are honest, struggle with how to do this.

6. The Study seeks to address these trends by looking at the biblical material in a balanced and sensitive way while upholding the orthodox Christian teaching in some concluding affirmations and recommendations.

7. **Disability:** The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 will have major implications for our churches as it comes into force from October 1999. We hope to provide guidance for churches on this matter very shortly. We believe that churches should be in the forefront of care and concern for people with disabilities but sadly this is often not the case on the ground, and in particular as regards our church buildings. Many of our churches have inadequate facilities and poor access for people with disabilities. The Act encourages providers of services (which includes churches) not to discriminate unjustifiably against those who are disabled.

8. By October 1999 churches will be obliged to (a) amend any practice, policy or procedure that makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to access a service; and (b) to take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids and services to assist disabled people.

9. By 2004 there will be a further requirement to remove, alter, or provide reasonable means of avoiding physical features that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use a service. It should be said that the Act requires service providers to make only reasonable adjustments to premises and in assessing reasonableness, affordability will be taken into account.

10. SIRC plans to produce a video and a leaflet on disability to help churches think through issues that affect disabled people and how they can be more proactive in assisting them.

CHILD PROTECTION WORKING PARTY

1. The Child Protection Monitoring Group continues to provide help and guidance to congregations in the implementation of the Child Protection Guidelines. We are indebted to Mrs Stephanie Windrum who has helped to train leaders and designated persons over the past year. She finishes in her role as Child Protection Trainer in June 1999.

2. The Monitoring Group have focused on three areas over the year. In November 1998 it issued a new edition of the Explanatory Notes to the Guidelines. This incorporated all the material issued over the past two years, updated it and provided some new information.

3. The Monitoring Group has been encouraging congregations to adopt a Child Protection Policy as soon as possible, certainly by January 2000. A sample Policy is appended to the New Explanatory Notes for the assistance of Kirk Sessions. Such policies are of added importance as it is understood that future funding of youth work from government departments may be dependent on such policies being in place. Resolutions are appended relating to this matter.

4. The need for the ongoing awareness training of new youth leaders is a concern. It is hoped to meet this need partly through training some Designated Persons to train youth leaders and ministers on a Presbytery basis. The process of identifying and training trainers is well under way and has been facilitated by Mrs Stephanie Windrum.

N A L CAMERON, Convener

KINGHAN MISSION COMMITTEE

1. We thank God for another exciting year of opportunity, challenge and blessing in the Kinghan Church.

2. The Presbyterian Church continues to support the work most generously through the United Appeal and individual and group donations. Our own members' giving has increased by 50% but alone we would not be able to fund this work. We are thankful for financial and for prayer support.

3. Attendance at our weekly services, at our monthly family services and at our Wednesday night meetings has increased. We are grateful for the support of parents at our family service - without their help many young deaf people would have no contact with this church.

4. For many years we have been using an overhead projector at our services. It now seems appropriate to introduce a video projector with computer input for our hymns, Bible readings and sermon illustrations. This, we believe, would be more professional and help inspire us in our worship.

5. A sub-committee has been set up to explore the way forward to have a suitable person ready to take over as Superintendent when Mr Grindle retires. He will be eligible to retire in 2003.

6. Staff changes. In April Mrs Anne Rodgers joined us as lay assistant. She has fitted in well and is already sharing in preaching, pastoral work and deputation. In December Miss Kathy McClurg, our part-time secretary for three years left us to take up full-time employment. We miss her and wish her well in her new position.

7. A new venture this year has been the monthly Family Fun Night. Under Mrs Rodgers' direction this is doing well after a slow start. Deaf adults and young people mix well with "hearing" adults and children, and all look forward eagerly to each meeting.

G GRINDLE, Superintendent
H GRAY, Convener

OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND

1. The Directors of the above Funds report that, during the last financial year which ended 31 December 1998, 159 beneficiaries (39 in the Old Age Fund, 94 in the Women's Fund and 26 in the Indigent Ladies' Fund) received grants.

2. The total distribution of the Funds in grants, donations and gifts was £73,200 (£19,364 from the Old Age Fund, £40,696 from the Women's Fund and £13,140 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

3. During the year five grants ceased because of the deaths of beneficiaries and four beneficiaries withdrew because of improved financial circumstances. Fourteen new beneficiaries were added to the Roll.

4. A 'special gift' of £100 was sent to every beneficiary prior to Christmas.

5. During the year the Directors responded sympathetically to various problems which had been brought to their attention. They gave one-off donations, as needed, to assist in particular cases where immediate financial aid was more appropriate than annual grants. Ministers are asked to bear in mind the possibility of help from these funds.

6. The Directors assure the Church that all monies that come to the Funds are carefully and wisely spent.

7. The Directors of the Funds deeply appreciate the kindness and thoughtfulness of those who have remembered the work of the Funds, either by gift or bequest, and hope that their example may encourage others to support this vital aspect of the church's outreach.

8. The Directors of the Funds wish to thank the Staff for the sensitive and sympathetic way in which they carried out the efficient administration of the Funds during the year.

9. At the January meeting of the Board it was reported that Mrs May Leckey would be retiring from her position of Assistant Secretary after the Annual General Meeting of the Funds. The Board placed on record its appreciation of the dedicated service of Mrs Leckey over 30 years to the Funds. Her excellent service, loyalty and commitment to the Funds had been greatly valued by members of the Board. All those ministers and individuals who experienced her thoughtful and caring approach over the years, and those who became beneficiaries of the Funds, will know how much she will be missed. The Directors wish her a deservedly long retirement in health and happiness.

W P H ERSKINE, Hon. Sec

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly warmly commend the work of the ADE Volunteers and encourage all congregations to make effective use of them.
3. That the General Assembly recognise the need for a survey of attitudes to and use of all kinds of drugs within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and encourage all congregations to respond to the ADE Questionnaire on these matters.
4. That the General Assembly commend the recommendations contained in the Report of the Royal Commission on Long Term Care of Elderly People and call upon the Government to introduce to Parliament, without delay, the necessary legislation which will give effect to these fair and just recommendations.

5. That the General Assembly commend the Bible Study *Challenging Issues: Homosexuality* to the Church for use in mid-week services and individually.

6. That the General Assembly believe that homosexual relationships involve far reaching social, personal and moral consequences. Those under age eighteen are especially vulnerable to persuasion and seduction which can result in the making of sexual choices which may later be regretted. The General Assembly urge the Government not to lower the age of consent for homosexual practice.

7. That the General Assembly commend the initiative to provide suitable accommodation for learning disabled adults.

8. That the customary grants made by the Social Issues and Resources Committee, up to a total of £1,920, be met by the Incidental Fund.

9. That congregations continue to implement the Child Protection Guidelines and have in place a Child Protection Policy by 31 January 2000.

10. That congregations aim to review their Child Protection Policy at least every three years.

11. That congregations take account of the new edition of Explanatory Notes about Child Protection issued November 1998.

12. 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 EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Convener: Very Rev Dr D H ALLEN

Secretary: Rev D J TEMPLE

1. The Board of Evangelism and Christian Training has met on three occasions during the year.

2. As we approach the end of another century and the threshold of a new millennium, we are aware of the ongoing challenges of our age and also of the thrilling privilege of responding to the age-old Commission of our Lord, to reach out with the Good News which still meets the need of every heart.

3. We are delighted that so many of our congregations have used the opportunity of "LIFE 2" to advance the work of the Kingdom of God. Many have come to faith in Jesus Christ and others testify to much blessing received.

4. Prayer has been given greater priority, especially through the Prayer Triplets and in corporate prayer times. This has brought a freshness and warm spiritual glow to many lives. This could and should be maintained in the future.

5. The Board commends all who have been involved in any way in "LIFE 2" the Presbytery Evangelism Agents who have encouraged congregational participation, Rev D.H.S. Armstrong who has edited the Prayer Updates and Rev Dr B Kingsmore who has laboured tirelessly to promote the cause of evangelism, especially through "LIFE 2".

6. Once again the Conveners and their Committees have been using the opportunities given to further the work of the Kingdom in their different spheres. We extend to them the thanks of the whole Church for such dedicated service. We are yet again indebted to Rev D Temple and the Irish Mission staff for their ongoing valued help during the year.

7. As Rev Dr B Kingsmore's period of service draws to a close, we thank him for the long hours and many miles taken up in the cause of Evangelism, especially for his vision and enthusiasm for "LIFE 2". We wish him a good retirement.

The Board is concerned that this work should not fall behind as we enter a new millennium. We are anxious to maximise the results of the "LIFE 2" initiative and carry forward the work of evangelism.

We believe that in some form, this post should be continued for a further period and would urge the Church to give enthusiastic support for such a decision.

8. We would pay a warm tribute to Rev W J Johnstone who is retiring from the Convenership of the Christian Training Committee. He has done a colossal amount of work during his Convenership and in his meticulous, patient way has placed the Church in his debt and left a hard act to follow.

9. The plans for the formation of a Board of Mission in Ireland are moving forward. New legislation for changes to the Code will be presented at

the General Assembly. Details of the new Board will be submitted (DV) to the 2000 General Assembly.

IRISH MISSION COMMITTEE

1. As we prepare to enter the new Millennium, we need to realise how much Ireland is changing. Many towns and cities in Northern Ireland have seen major rebuilding developments, some as a result of the Troubles and some brought about by a movement of population or industrial openings or closures. Some changes have been for the benefit of many people, eg better housing, while others have experienced setbacks through unemployment and social problems within families. Many churches in protestant areas, which were once filled every Sunday, are now empty or closed and this concerns many of us. The political situation in the Province has moved a vast distance in the last year - changing at a frightening pace and many of us are not clear where we are going politically.

2. There are also amazing changes taking place in the Republic of Ireland. The same social changes referred to above are very evident throughout our island home. Many Ulster rugby supporters went to the European Cup final at Lansdowne Road and were surprised at the enthusiastic welcome and support received from the citizens of Dublin. It was a unique occasion for the team from the north to be cheered on by the whole of Ireland. Many of us think of the Republic as a staunch Roman Catholic country but do we realise that in some housing estates in Dublin only 20% of the people attend Mass on any Sunday? 1 in 3 of the people in the Republic are under 17 years of age.

3. We want to quote from an article in the Irish Times in January.

- Proportionally the Irish Youth generation is Europe's largest national youth class. They are young, gifted, self-assured, self-centred and hedonistic. With the Irish economy being the sensation of Europe, they are among the continent's most privileged young people.
- Materialism is more important than spiritualism, for which sexual freedom is the norm.
- They have a low opinion of authority figures, especially church leaders and politicians.
- Marriage is an irrelevance - 9 out of 10 see no harm in living with a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- 65% of those under 25 believe that the influence of the church will continue to wane.

4. It is in this changing, exciting and challenging situation that the Irish Mission is called to work and witness. We seek to speak the truth in love to this generation who need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ, the only hope for all the people of Ireland.

5. We have 10 Irish Mission Workers in the Republic and 1 in Northern Ireland at present. All are involved in work among children and young people. There has been much encouragement with new clubs opening, often after Holiday Bible Clubs started by summer mission teams. Many of the children come regularly and some have become Christians; some face difficulties without

any support and encouragement from home. They need our prayer support. Some of our Workers could undertake more clubs but require more assistance from helpers and this is a cause for concern. The seed is being faithfully sown among children in different places but the task is immense - far too many children are growing up with no knowledge of the Gospel.

6. Dublin is an exciting international city, full of people from all over the world and great numbers of young people. There are more Moslems than Presbyterians living in the city. The Irish Mission has appointed two workers to the city. Mr Stephen McGookin has been Superintendent of the Dublin City Mission for the last two years. Last summer he had to undergo major surgery and moved back north with his family during his long slow recuperation period. At present the work of the City Mission has closed and the Irish Mission Committee will be discussing the future of mission work in Dublin city with the Presbytery Strategy for Mission Committee and other interested parties. Our other Worker in the city, Mr David Boyd, works in the Dolebuster scheme run by Adelaide Road/Donore congregation. The scheme seeks to help people who are unemployed or have other problems and he seeks to develop spiritual awareness among them.

7. Work among adults continues in a variety of ways. New Hotel Bible Studies in Monaghan and Clonmel have started encouragingly, in some cases with the assistance of local ministers and congregations. Others are finding a good response to the offer of the Jesus video which people can view in their own home and then our Worker follows up with a visit soon afterwards. Each situation is different, there is no magic formula, but we believe that the seed of the Word of God is being sown and the Lord is speaking to many people throughout Ireland in these days.

8. During the year Mr Keith Preston and his family moved from Clonmel to Clones and he has started work in the Monaghan/Cavan area. In May Mr Peter Maitland and his wife Christine moved to Clonmel to work alongside Rev Dr Sam Mawhinney.

9. We are very pleased that a number of congregations have adopted an Irish Mission Worker as their partner. This is a great encouragement to the individual Worker and his family and also helps the members of the congregation to understand the problems, frustrations and joys experienced. This informed and personalised prayer support is vital for the development of the work.

10. We want to pay tribute to the work of the Superintendent of our Mission, Rev David Temple. He travels extensively throughout Ireland to visit our staff and their families, meet other church bodies and do very effective deputation work for the Mission. We are very grateful to him for his commitment and vision. Many throughout the church appreciate his thoughtful editorials in the Christian Irishman. We commend this publication to the Church as a very readable and encouraging magazine about what God is doing in Ireland and in many other parts of the world. We also pay tribute to the very faithful work carried out by our office staff and Workers serving our Master together.

11. We believe that our great God wants to do great things throughout Ireland in these days. There is a lot of indifference to spiritual things in many

places but we have a great message to share - we ask for the support of the whole Church as we seek to fulfil our calling.

DOUGLAS C COWAN, Convener

CHRISTIAN TRAINING COMMITTEE

1. The work of the Christian Training Committee is largely taken up with the writing, editing and publication of training materials for use by ministers, leaders and church members. The committee aims to provide publications that are biblical, relevant and attractively presented. Working from the original ideas and drafts to the final publication is often a slow process, but it is always rewarding to see materials in print and in use by the church.

2. This year the Committee has concentrated its efforts on the preparation of a basic instruction booklet for new communicants. Many have expressed the need for this kind of booklet. Input to this production has come from ministers, professors of theology and church members. The material has also been used in classes for new communicants. We are grateful to all who have given time to this project and trust that this new publication will be of great benefit to all new communicants and those who instruct them.

3. "On Profession of Faith" was published by the Committee some time ago. This is a study guide and workbook, which provides teaching on the chief doctrines of the faith, the meaning of the sacraments and instruction for new communicants. Many have found it helpful and sales have been encouraging. Some time ago the Committee decided that this handbook should be reprinted and also reshaped into the more user-friendly A5 size with some new chapters added. This year work has continued on this project and progress made towards its completion.

4. It is encouraging to report that our publications continue to be of service to the church in many different situations. Recently a student group was provided with copies of "Firm Foundations" as it discussed issues relating to the sovereignty of God. Though well taught in their home churches many students only begin to think about the main doctrines of the faith when they meet with Christians from other denominations and traditions in the wider world of university life. Through our links with the church overseas the leaflet on the Jehovah's Witnesses has been made available for printing in Malawi where there has been increased activity by this sect. Once again the quality and worth of our materials have been recognised by interest shown in them by other publishers. As a church we must be thankful for all who serve us in the writing of Christian literature.

5. In the 16th century the printed page was a vital element in the reformation of the church and the spread of the gospel. As the 20th century draws to a close the electronic page is already one of the most powerful channels of information. The 21st century will probably see Christian training materials on the church website allowing leaders and members instant access to resources. Individual ministers and congregations often produce Bible studies and teaching materials, which could be of great use to other congregations, if they could be quickly and easily accessed. Modern technology could make this possibility a

reality. Whatever the medium there will still be the need to write and produce Christian training materials, and so the Committee asks for your prayers and interest as this work is carried on.

6. As retiring Convener I wish to thank past and present members of the Christian Training Committee for all the work they have done. Serving the Committee has been an enriching and rewarding experience. Special thanks are due to Rev David Temple, Secretary of the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training. His interest and expertise in the design and preparation of materials for publication is a great asset to the Committee. Thanks are also due to Mr Nehru Dass and the secretarial staff of the Irish Mission. Their willing help with administration, literature sales and stock control is essential to the committee's work and is much appreciated.

7. Until He returns Christ has commanded His Church to go and make disciples of all nations. The great commission begins with evangelism, the making of converts, but is not fulfilled until the converts are trained as disciples. The training of church members, therefore, lies at the heart of Christ's mission to the world. May God give us grace to fulfil our Master's will.

W J JOHNSTONE, Convener

DIVINE HEALING COMMITTEE

1. Recently, much of the work of the committee has been focused on the issue of stress in the ministry. We have achieved most of what we sought to do in this area. Part of this has been to produce an abridged version of the report on the survey into stress in the ministry - 'The Human Cost of Caring'. Stress in all walks of life is a problem which will not go away and so we continue to look for ways in which we can help.

2. As a committee we are concerned about the confusion which exists in the whole area of health and healing. The increasing availability of alternative therapies, the continued use of charms and cures and the confusion between 'faith healing' and 'divine healing' have muddied the waters in many ways. We are looking at how we may best help to clear this confusion.

3. We seek to promote and encourage the ministry of healing throughout the church. This is a vital ministry, for the Church has a contribution to health and healing which no other agency can provide - the gospel of redemption and forgiveness through the grace of God, without which we cannot hope to be truly healed.

STEPHEN WILLIAMSON, Convener

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COMMITTEE

1. The Presbyterian Marriage Care Counselling - PCI service continues to offer counselling to people experiencing difficulties within relationships. We encourage more ministers to use this valuable service and to make it more

widely known within their congregations. Anyone can arrange an appointment with one of our trained counsellors by telephoning 01232 322284 any week day during the hours 9.30 am to 4.30 pm and asking for Marriage Care Counselling.

2. Marriage Care Counselling - PCI is an affiliated organisation of the Association of Christian Counsellors. This affiliation helps us to aim for high standards in training, competence and supervision in Christian counselling. The service was instituted as a pilot scheme in June 1991. In order for the pilot scheme to become a fully operational service a counselling centre run by a trained co-ordinator needs to be established. (All directly involved in running the service are agreed that Church House does not provide the anonymity usually needed for a counselling centre). However, it is unlikely that the Board will support such a development with the greater demands it would place on church funds.

3. Marriage and Family issues have been the focus of considerable debate in our wider society during the past year. The Convener has been given several opportunities to represent a church opinion in media debates and in government consultations regarding reform of Marriage and Family related government legislation. This is a vital aspect of the ongoing work of our Committee. It is one way in which we can be salt and light in our society.

4. Much new work needs to be done in providing relevant and attractive resources for the Church as it seeks to promote Christian Marriage and Family values within our denomination and in wider society. However, we would commend to the Church the valuable work that has been done and is being done by other organisations and groups which specialise in these areas. The Committee encourages our Church to become familiar with such resources and make full use of those that are useful. We can only welcome the great increase of work being done in this needy area in recent years.

5. The Rev J W McAuley continues to act as Secretary to the pastoral interviews of couples who plan to marry where one or both have been divorced. This has become an increasingly demanding task and we thank him for his valuable behind-the-scenes service in this way.

TREVOR STEELE, Convener

APPENDIX

REPORT ON THE INTER-CHURCH STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIXED MARRIAGES

1998-1999

The Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages met in Dundalk on November 13th, 1998. In the absence of the Rt Rev Michael Mayes, the Most Rev Anthony Farquhar, Auxiliary Bishop of Down and Connor, Co-Chairperson of the Committee, acted as Chairperson for the meeting. The Rev John Brackenridge acted as secretary for the meeting.

1. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that the Rev Ronnie Nesbitt, Church of Ireland Rector of Bangor Parish, has taken the place of the Very Rev Hamilton Lecky who had previously retired from the Committee. The Rev Nesbitt and Mr Ken Dunn, representing the Rt Rev Michael H G Mayes, were welcomed to the Committee.

The Committee heard apologies from Rt Rev Michael Mayes, CoChairperson, and the Rev Aidan O'Boyle, both of whom were unavoidably absent.

2. REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE INTER-CHURCH STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIXED MARRIAGES, 1997-1998

There was a brief discussion of the previous year's Report and it was noted that this has been approved and distributed to each of the Churches.

3. REPORT ON MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSES

Mgr Patrick Devine reported on arrangements for Inter-Church Marriage preparation in the Greater Dublin Area. Additional courses are planned for the coming year due to increased demand.

The new team approach for these courses which began last year using six couples from the Association of Inter-Church Families and chaplains from the 4 Churches, has worked well. It was noted that the growing numbers of couples attending included a substantial representation of couples from rural areas.

The Rev Brendan Murray and Rev John Brackenridge reported on Pre-Marriage Courses, which had been organised this year in the Greater Belfast Area for couples preparing for Inter-Church Marriage. These courses continue to be well received by participants and, as a general rule, take place twice yearly. Ken Dunn highlighted that only a small percentage of the total number of Inter-Church couples avail of the courses.

It was felt that every effort should be made by each church to publicise the dates of the courses in an effort to support and commend them to all engaged Inter-Church couples.

It was also noted, that any initial concerns couples may have had at the outset of the courses were largely dispelled very rapidly and feedback received after the courses had finished was both positive and encouraging.

4. RECENT TRENDS IN INTER-CHURCH MARRIAGE

Recent trends in the celebration of Inter-Church Marriage Services continue to be, in the main, positive. The Committee continues to express concern over the growing numbers of couples within each of the traditions who choose co-habitation before, or in place of marriage.

It was acknowledged by the Committee that initial approaches to clergy from Inter-church couples are occasions for pastoral care and sensitivity and all strategies should be used to encourage such couples to choose Christian marriage. The Committee also notes the corresponding decline in traditional courtship - a trend which is in part facilitated by the number of young folk who move away from the parental home to establish a home of their own.

In all circumstances we underline the need to care in the first place for the couple but also for any parents or family of the couple with whom clergy come into contact.

5. DOCUMENTS ON INTER-CHURCH MARRIAGES AND BAPTISM OF CHILDREN OF INTER-CHURCH COUPLES

It was noted that a further draft of the documents on Inter-Church Marriages and Baptisms of children of Inter-Church couples, subtitled 'Help for Clergy' has now been circulated to the Churches. The Committee commended Dr David Stevens for his work and undertook to forward to him any comments and observations on his paper.

6. NEXT MEETING OF THE INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE

It was agreed that next year's meeting of the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages would take place in Mount Oliver, Dundalk on Friday, November 12th, 1999 at 2.30 pm.

Members of the Committee

Rev John Brackenridge	Most Rev Gerard Clifford
Rt Rev Mgr Patrick Devine	Most Rev Anthony Farquhar (Co-Chairperson)
Mrs Olive Marshall	Rt Rev M H G Mayes (Co-Chairperson)
Very Rev Brendan Murray	The Rev Ronnie Nesbitt
Rev Aidan O'Boyle	Rev David Turtle

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

1. The Committee has been very encouraged by the widespread positive response to LIFE 2. Presbytery Agents report that the vast majority of congregations throughout the country have taken up the challenge of reaching out in their area and community with the gospel. Some have used the tried and tested method of inviting a visiting speaker for a special series of services in the church building. Others have sought to reach out in new ways, using a variety of premises and different means to share the same gospel.

2. We have been delighted at the number of congregations and people who are involved in the Prayer Triplets scheme and the Operation Andrew initiative. This can only be for the good of our church.

It is impossible to calculate how much use was made of the Prayer Updates sent out bi-monthly, but in one of the issues over 150 congregations made a contribution.

3. It is our intention to compile a list of the various methods used in LIFE 2, which will be made available at a later date and will be a useful reference source for the future.

4. Consideration is being given to a Thanksgiving Rally or Rallies sometime in 2000, although we do not want to give the impression that LIFE 2

is finished. Rather we want to encourage each congregation to make evangelism an integral part of its ongoing life and witness.

5. Much thought and discussion has been given to the possibility of continuing the post of Promoter of Evangelism. While understanding the difficulties this would present and being aware of the financial restraints and implications at this time, we are convinced of the importance of evangelism and the absolute necessity of encouraging our congregations to be pro-active. We therefore are asking the General Assembly to continue and develop this post for a period of five years. We do so for three main reasons:-

- (i) because of the impetus given by LIFE 2, providing a foundation on which to build. It is true to say that LIFE 2 would never have happened without the work of the Promoter.
- (ii) because of the increasing secularisation of our society providing a still greater challenge to the church to reach out with the gospel. We need someone to help us do that effectively.
- (iii) because of the challenge that a new millennium brings us to be salt and light and to be such in a relevant way in a rapidly changing society. Over the next vitally important five years a guiding hand, humanly speaking, would be invaluable.

Another consideration is the place of evangelism in a new board structure.

6. We have again this year given grants of £200 each to:-

The Scripture Gift Mission
The Bible Society
National Bible Society of Ireland.

JOHN PARKES, Convener

EVANGELISM PROMOTER'S REPORT

Rev Dr Brian Kingsmore reports:-

1. It is with a considerable sense of thanksgiving and praise that I submit this, my last report, as Evangelism Promoter. This past year has been one in which more churches have been engaged in, or preparing for, evangelistic outreach that I can ever recall in all my ministry. LIFE 2 has undoubtedly struck a chord in the hearts and minds of a great number of P.C.I. churches. I am happy to be part of this on-going evangelistic work and commend it to all. The fact that LIFE 2 is an open-ended endeavour, ie it goes on and on, needs to be stressed. Biblical structures have been set in position in those churches that have been using the LIFE 2 handbook, in order that Evangelism per se becomes the normal way of life for the local church. The new Evangelism Promoter, if appointed, will therefore be in a strategic position to continue the growth and building up of the P.C.I. as we move into the new millennium. I especially commend the Prayer Triplet Ministry. This approach to prayer, if followed correctly, will not only involve many more praying people but also will teach people to pray publicly. Surely one of the reasons, if not the main one, that souls have been saved through LIFE 2, has been the tremendous upsurge of prayer through all the regular prayer efforts, but especially Prayer Triplets.

2. As I look back over my five-year tenure, I have seen a very definite change in the evangelical temperature of our church. In my first two years I was groundbreaking. My thanks to all Sessions, Special Groups, Presbyteries and Synods for the opportunities to advance my work. The last two years have been concentrated on LIFE 2 but I am glad to report that more are beginning to take steps to ensure that evangelism is to be an ongoing way of life for the local church members, not a sporadic event “for the fanatical few”! I also detect a willingness to develop team ministries, with the Minister as team leader but laity making up the rest. Much more work needs to be done to encourage the discovery of spiritual gifts and develop opportunities to use these. I wish to record my thanks to God Almighty, for not only saving me over fifty years ago but calling me to minister in our own beloved P.C.I. I have been entirely fulfilled in my position as your Evangelism Promoter. My work has been made much easier by the guidance of the two Evangelism Board Conveners (Rev Jackson C Buick and the Very Rev Dr Harry Allen) and Rev Graham Connor. From the practical office-side of my work, words cannot adequately express my gratitude to the whole of the Irish Mission staff and especially the Superintendent Rev David Temple, who willingly shared his office for over five years. My prayer is that the PCI will continue to grow as she goes into all the world to preach the Good news of the Gospel.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Christian Training Committee

2. That the General Assembly encourage ministers, elders, leaders and church members to make full use of the materials produced by the Christian Training Committee and commend the new booklet on the Lord’s Supper for the instruction of new Communicants.

3. That the resignation of the Rev James Johnstone, as Convener of the Christian Training Committee be accepted that he be thanked for his services and that Rev Dr R M Crooks be appointed in his place.

Divine Healing Committee

4. That the General Assembly encourage the membership of the Church to read ‘The Human Cost of Caring’ as a way of helping in the understanding of the problem of stress in the ministry.

Evangelism Committee

5. That the General Assembly recognise with gratitude to God the positive response to LIFE 2 and encourage congregations to continue to make evangelism an integral part of their life and witness.

6. That the General Assembly thank all who have served as visiting evangelists during the past year and also the congregations who have released to the wider church those with evangelistic gifts.

7. That the General Assembly note the retirement of Rev Dr Brian Kingsmore from the post of Evangelism Promoter and that he be thanked for his dedicated work in the whole field of Evangelism and in particular during "LIFE 2".

8. That the General Assembly approve the continuation and development of the post of Evangelism Promoter for a further period of five years and agree that a new appointment be made.

9. That the General Assembly support Bible Sunday on 5 December 1999 and call on the Church to continue to pray for all involved in the translation of the Scriptures and production of Bible Sunday materials and aids throughout the world.

General

10. That the Board of Evangelism and Christian Training, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 282 of the Code as follows:

MOTIONS ON THE BOOKS

That the decision of the 1997 General Assembly
 "That the Strategy for Mission Committee become a committee of the
 General Board from June, 1998"
 be rescinded.

W A KENNEDY
 D J McKELVEY

That a levy of up to 1.75p in the £ of stipend be added to the Incidental Fund as from 1 January, 2000.

W A KENNEDY
 D J McKELVEY

AMENDMENT

That a decision on the proposed additional assessment of up to 1.75p per £ of stipend be deferred for two years and that the motion be left on the Books.

W C LYNAS

YOUTH BOARD

Rev DANIEL J KANE, Convener
Miss ROSALIND STIRLING, Youth Officer

1. Never has the Youth Board been more aware that we cannot use yesterday's tools in today's world to meet tomorrow's challenges. This is especially, but not exclusively true in the whole area of ministering effectively to young people. It is a sad fact, but plain for all to see from the statistical evidence, that business as usual is not working as far as reaching and keeping young people for Jesus in our denomination is concerned. The Youth Board remains committed to helping young people engage with the eternal truth of God's Word in ways which are culturally relevant to them. We long to see young people who have an authentic and growing relationship with God through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, living in the power of the Holy Spirit, young people who know what they believe and know how to defend it in the face of the incredible opposition from the increasingly godless culture in which they live.

2. 'Equipping Leaders into the Next Millennium' is the theme of a conference for ministers, elders, parents and youth leaders which will provide a forum where the issues we are struggling with in regard to youth work and ministry to young people can be raised. This conference will take place from 8th - 10th September 1999 in Stranmillis College and Church House. The speakers and seminars will aim to equip those who have leadership responsibilities within our congregations through casting a vision for biblical leadership, improving our knowledge and understanding of youth ministry and presenting models of how it could be done in the Irish Presbyterian context, both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It is our prayer that everyone will leave the conference renewed, envisioned and with new tools in their hands that will enable them to implement more effective youth work as a denomination.

3. Miss Roz Stirling continues to have vision and enthusiasm for her strategic role as Youth Officer within our denomination. Despite severe health problems, she has driven the vision of our work with passionate commitment and tireless dedication. During the year Mrs Felicity Atwell resigned from the Youth Office after almost ten years of devoted service which often went far beyond the call of duty. Mrs Ann Creighton has been appointed to fill this vacancy, who along with Miss Lois McIlrath, Mrs Claire Child and Mrs Helen Bruce, comprise a top rate administrative/secretarial team which services an extremely busy office. Mrs Jean Murray, who was employed under the ACE scheme through PCI Enterprises, was replaced by Miss Mary Tobin. We thank God for each one of these hard working people, and put on record our grateful thanks for their service.

4. The Youth Development Officers for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have continued to serve our congregations tirelessly as they have travelled the country delivering training programmes, setting up support networks, and encouraging ministers, youth leaders and young people. We thank them for their invaluable, visionary and energetic work. It is with regret that we

have accepted the resignation of Miss Iris Stevenson, YDO for Donegal/Monaghan and Cavan. She will be greatly missed. We thank her for the tremendous contribution she has made to the work and witness of our denomination through her service as a YDO. We also record our deep gratitude to Mr Graeme Thomson and Rev Keith McCrory for their continued commitment to their respective YDO roles. The Youth Board continues to seek outside funding for the continuation of Mr Graeme Thompson's post. The current political context within Northern Ireland has however hindered this process. Once the new Northern Ireland Assembly has been given control of public spending it will be possible to seek significant government support for this post.

5. Mr Ian Scott, Youth Board Programme Director, has been busy preparing and implementing the 'Preparing Youth for Peace' programme which will be funded by the Community Bridges Programme of the International Fund for Ireland. It is essentially a single identity programme for our own denomination and will in part be delivered at the Lucan Youth Centre where he is the Director. We congratulate him on the quality and creativity of his work, and assure him of our continuing support.

6. The Youth Board record their sincere gratitude to Mr Maurice Kennedy, Youth Board Development Officer, for his tireless work on behalf of our Youth Centres. His energy continues to challenge the Board in the objective of developing our centres as centres of ministry. We thank him for the good job done in researching possible sources of financial support for the overall work of the Board.

7. The Youth Board is pleased to support the imaginative and energetic work done by a growing number of full-time youth workers based in a wide range of congregations, and the unstinting commitment of volunteer youth workers who shoulder the lion's share of our work with young people. Our field staff and many of our events are programmed to equip and support these crucial people.

8. The Board wishes to thank all those who supported the 'Making a Difference in Central Europe' Youth and Sunday School Project for 1998/99, and commends the project for 1999/2000.

9. The Board is grateful for the generous support of our Church, not least through the financial assistance we receive from the United Appeal Board. We thank congregations for meeting their United Appeal Targets of Honour, which resulted in our grant allocation of £200,000 for 1998 being met in full. We are also thankful to the Department of Education of the Government of the Republic of Ireland for their substantial grant for Youth Development Work in their constituency.

10. Youth Link NI has gone through a period of considerable change. A strategic review of the organisation highlighted a major difference in understanding between staff and management about the basic nature of the organisation and the purpose of its existence. The current Team Leader's contract was not renewed. The process of review continues with a root and branch evaluation of the organisation currently being undertaken.

11. Nexus Ireland has enjoyed a fruitful year. In October a very successful United States Study Tour brought thirty-four North Americans to

Ireland to experience the cultural, political, religious and economic diversity of this island. Through interaction with ministers of our denomination, local politicians and journalists, a clear understanding of the context in which we minister was gained. The ensuing support from our North American partners continues to be an essential part of the Nexus ministry.

12. The Youth Board has decided in view of the increasing work load and impending vacancy in the convenership to appoint a co-convener.

YOUTH EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Events Committee continues to bring young people together for worship, Bible teaching, fellowship and fun. This is being done through five working groups.

2. Over the past 15 years Youthreach was hosted by the Youth Board for Presbyterian young people and their friends at Coleraine in August. With gratitude to God for all the blessing He has placed upon Youthreach, it was decided to diversify into two major new events that would serve an even wider range of young people.

YOUTH NIGHT WORKING GROUP

3. Last year Mr Dave Male presented 'I want to know what love is'. This year on Friday 11th and Saturday 12th June we welcome Rev Alistair Begg with the theme 'The Millennium Bug'.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES WORKING GROUP

4. The aim of the working group is to connect young people with issues facing our society today, to motivate young people and challenge the church in this area, to be evangelistic incorporating elements of fun, learning and action.

5. TGI Christmas 1998 was a tremendous success with £1800 raised for Thompson House, Carlisle House, Dole Busters and the Kinghan Mission (Board of Social Witness projects). TGI Christmas this year will be held on 17 December 1999.

STARTING AS A STUDENT

6. Starting as a Student gives relevant information, help and advice to new students at tertiary level. Many have found this event an invaluable preparation for student life and a great opportunity to meet fellow students who may well be going to the same third level institution. Starting as a Student will take place again this year on Saturday 4 September 1999 in Church House.

ROUTE 66

7. This is a fabulous, thought provoking, highway of discovery about the Word of God. A better head knowledge of God is not the aim: it is longingly anticipated that Route 66 will take our young people into a deep and personal relationship with the living God as they grapple with His Word. Route 66 is a Bible school with a difference. It will, we believe, equip our young people to

know and defend their faith, but above all else, to know the author of that faith. Route 66 for those 17+ will be the last weekend of August (Thursday 26th - Monday 30th August) at Loughry Agricultural College, Cookstown.

MAD YOUTH WEEKEND

8. We invite youth leaders to bring their young people to a ready planned and prepared weekend where all the work is already done - speakers, accommodation, food, activities and all the other time consuming aspects of making a Youth Weekend happen have been arranged. This will give leaders the opportunity of spending quality time building relationships with their young people, of mentoring without distraction and listening without interruption. The Mad Youth Weekend is being planned for the October half-term holidays (29th - 31st October) at the University of Ulster at Coleraine.

R J HYNDMAN, Convener

YOUTH TRAINING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. This Committee seeks by the provision of training, the highlighting and developing of resources and other opportunities to encourage local church youth leaders to be more effective in reaching, nurturing, equipping and challenging young people to be disciples of Jesus Christ within the context of Ireland. This work is carried out through four working groups.

TRAINING WORKING GROUP

2. While the Basic Youth Leadership Training Course continues to impact more than thirty youth leaders each year, it has been a great encouragement to many local churches that we have been able to develop training packages that meet their specific needs. This new development could not have happened without Mr Graeme Thompson, the Youth Development Officer for Northern Ireland, as he has been both developing and delivering these courses. This has proven to be the most effective way to meet the training needs in local churches.

3. The Working Group have been liaising with Union Theological College with a view to develop a twelve week Youth Ministry Course, based on a model adapted from 'The Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry' to be offered from September 1999. It would initially be delivered at UTC, with a desire to offer the course at a location outside Belfast in the year 2000.

RESOURCES WORKING GROUP

4. Over the last few years it has become increasingly obvious that many youth leaders and local churches seem unaware of the resources (personnel, materials and events) that are currently available to them either through the Youth Board, Youth Office and Officers or through other agencies (boards, youth departments of other churches, Youth Link NI and local book shops).

5. Under Mr Graeme Thompson's chairmanship, the Working Group has developed strategies to make local churches and their leaders more aware of what is available and how it can be used. In this process they have enlisted the help of resource experts from Familybooks and Scripture Union. Their aim is that God will guide them into establishing networks (through local churches, Presbyteries and other agencies) to promote effective resource use so that leaders are enabled to meet their objectives of powerfully influencing young people's lives and empowering them to impact their world for God's glory.

RECONCILIATION WORKING GROUP

6. Mr Ian Scott, the Chairperson of the Working Group, has been working through the various stages of establishing the strategic plan 'Preparing Youth for Peace' adopted by the Board in 1998. The scheme seeks to train a small group of facilitators over the next twelve months so that they are capable of enabling youth leaders, and subsequently young people, to become more confident in their own identity as Presbyterians and able to open up opportunities to build bridges within their local communities across all sorts of divisions (not just Catholic/Protestant).

TRAINING TREVOR WORKING GROUP

7. This year's event has been moved from its usual date in June to connect with the Leaders Conference 'Equipping Leaders into the Next Millennium' in September. A special Training Trevor Day for youth leaders will be held on Saturday 11th September 1999 in Church House with experts (such as Mark Oestricher, who is in charge of Ministry Resources at 'Youth Specialties') who have over 20,000 youth leaders attending their seminars each year. Walt Mueller, who is recognised as one of the world's experts in the area of understanding young people and their environment, and Andy Hickford who needs no introduction, will also take part.

D STANFIELD, Convener

YOUTH HOME MISSION COMMITTEE

1. We are thankful to God for all His help and guidance in our work throughout the past year. Our thanks go to the Chairpersons of the Working Groups of the Committee, especially to Miss Anne Taylor (Year Team) who leaves us due to the nine year rule. She has given so much leadership in this exciting work of the Youth Board and her expertise was much valued during her years on the Working Group and as Chairperson. Our thanks too to the Youth Office staff who work very hard as they service the work of this Committee.

SUMMER OUTREACH

2. Many churches are aware of the opportunity that summertime brings to reach out into their community with the Good News of Jesus Christ. This we are glad to see, and herein lies the difficulty. The Youth Board would like to expand its work every year, but it comes down to getting enough personnel to

come and be part of a team. Fourteen teams are planned for this summer. That will take 250-300 people. The Rev John Flaherty and the Working Group work very hard processing applications from churches wanting to host a team and organising leaders and team members. All of this takes a great deal of time and we thank them for their work. We are finding it increasingly difficult to expand this work, as the number of people applying to come on teams is decreasing. We would ask congregations to encourage their members (from the age of 16+) to think about giving one or two weeks to Summer Outreach.

YEAR TEAM

3. The Year Team continues as one of the vital ministries of the Youth Board. We are grateful to God for allowing us to develop this work over the years. We see it as an opportunity to help local congregations to commence and/or develop their work in the community. The size of the team and the programme of the hosting church determines whether we send the whole team or a 'teamlet'. There is no doubt that the young people gain in experience in this service to God and the church. We would ask ministers and leaders within congregations to encourage their 18-25 year old members to think seriously and pray about this area of service for Christ.

4. We thank Miss Roz Stirling for all her help and enthusiasm for Youth Home Mission. Our thanks go also to the Development Officers as they have worked with and alongside Summer Outreach Teams and the Year Team.

M G McCLELLAND, Convener

YOUTH OVERSEAS COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Overseas Committee has been taking a long, hard and honest look at its work, aims and operation over the past year. The main purpose has been to develop a role that is mutually beneficial to our young people and also to the Church. We believe that contact with churches and Christians from other parts of the world is an extremely profitable experience and we are trying to have in place a structure that enables this to take place effectively.

2. The Committee is organised under three working groups.

OUTGOING TEAMS WORKING GROUP

3. During the summer of 1998, three groups went overseas under the auspices of the Youth Board. One team went to Nepal visiting different missionaries and projects around the country. This was a mission exposure and education experience and through it God spoke deeply to those who travelled. A second team travelled to Hungary to work on a camp for children from the Chernobyl area of the Ukraine. They worked closely with Paul Visky a Pastor in the Hungarian Reformed Church in association with the Dorcas Aid project. This proved to be a trip which deeply touched the young people who were on it and stretched them in putting their faith into action both by word and compassion. The third team was placed in the Wembley area in North London

to work in Holiday Bible Clubs in two churches along with Christopher Macwan. As has been the experience in the past, the team really enjoyed the work and the cross cultural exposure which might not have been expected in such a 'local' situation.

4. Plans are well under way for the trips this summer; a return to Dorcas in Hungary; working alongside the Klicek Foundation (featured in the "Making a Difference in Central Europe" Youth and Sunday School Project) in the Czech Republic; and also back to Wembley. The Working Group is also striving to work further ahead and plans are already under way for the trips in 2000, recognising that this amount of preparation is required to ensure these trips are as well organised and effective as possible.

INCOMING TEAMS WORKING GROUP

5. In the summer of 1998 we had a visit from groups from the Republic of South Africa, France and Seattle, USA. Each of the groups stayed with different congregations throughout Ireland and met together at their official welcome in Church House. Expressions of thanks have been received from their respective churches.

6. As far as preparation goes it has been a quiet year for this working group. In September 1998, an invitation was issued to the Hungarian Reformed Church to send a group of young people in the summer of 1999. To date, March 1999, no reply has been received.

MISSION PROMOTION WORKING GROUP

7. The youth fellowship programme, 'Take 5' is currently at draft stage and will be completed by the working group later this year. This Group is examining how to create further opportunities to encourage young people to look beyond Ireland and to develop a passion for mission, both evangelical and social not only at home but also around the world.

PETER C LYLE, Convener

YOUTH CENTRES COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Centres Committee continues to be encouraged by the activities held each year at the Centres: Guismere, Lucan and Rostrevor, and reports that during the past year a large number of young people and leaders have benefited from the facilities.

2. It is the constant desire of the Centres Committee to seek to develop our facilities where young people can be challenged by the claims of the gospel, taught in the Word of God, and instructed in how to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of the Church of Jesus Christ and their fellow citizens throughout the length and breadth of this land and further afield.

3. Our centre at Lucan continues to thrive under the directorship of Mr Ian Scott and his staff, Mr Andy Morby, Mr Derek Bolton and Mrs Monica Power, whose commitment to its aims and objectives throughout the past year

has enabled its ministry to impact the lives of many within the local community and beyond.

4. This year our centres are continuing to be used to facilitate various camps in keeping with our objectives that each centre has associated with it a very distinctive ministry. Rostrevor will host a music camp providing workshops and seminars for those with musical talents from 18-24 July. The Lucan Soccer camp, 1-6 August, alongside the Summer camp, 16-22 August, is undoubtedly a repeatable activity from last year. The Guysmere Girls' Camp, 30 June - 7 July, and the Boys' Camp, 9-17 July, will be exciting holidays for many campers. For those who have a greater sense of adventure we have the Adventure Camp held at Shannaghmore in Newcastle, 9-13 August, and following the success of the soccer camp in Lucan we have three additional day camps for soccer enthusiasts at Guysmere and Ballymoney from 9-13 August and Belfast 16-20 August. These latter camps are serviced by a group of enthusiastic young people who travel each year from Canada and the United States. The Committee thank all who put time and energy into the organising and staffing of these camps.

5. Mr Maurice Kennedy, our Youth Board Development Officer, continues to focus his attention in developing and expanding the work of our centres at Guysmere and Rostrevor and as a Committee we place on record our appreciation to him and his wife Helen for all the energy expended in respect of the work.

6. It is the Committee's desire to continue to develop high standards of service to young people through our three centres. We thank God for those who over the past year have come to faith, and for young Christians who have been challenged into further avenues of service as a result of ministries within the centres.

7. Thanks are extended to individual members at local level who serve on the Guysmere, Rostrevor and Lucan Management Committees and also to the staff of the Youth Office for their willingness to promote the work with graciousness and enthusiasm.

D I J McNIE, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

General

2. That the General Assembly appoint the Revs David Stanfield, Mairisine Stanfield, Mr Graeme Thompson and Mr Trevor Long to be representatives on the Board of Management of the Churches Youth Service Council.

3. That the General Assembly extend their financial support of the Youth Development Officer (NI) post for up to a further 12 months.

4. That the General Assembly appoint the appropriate Youth Board personnel to the management structures of Youth Link (NI).

5. That the following grants be paid from the Incidental Fund:

Youth Link (NI) - £6,500

PCI Family Holiday - £6000

6. That Rev R J Hyndman be appointed Co-Convener of the Youth Board.

7. That the resignation of Rev R J Hyndman, as Convener of the Youth Events Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that _____ be appointed in his place.

Youth Events Committee

8. That the General Assembly commend Youth Night 1999, TGI Christmas, Starting as a Student, Route 66 and the Mad Youth Weekend to the prayers of the Church and ask congregations to encourage their young people to attend.

Youth Training and Resources Committee

9. That the General Assembly encourage congregations to make the most of the resource and training opportunities provided by the Youth Board.

Youth Home Mission Committee

10. That the General Assembly actively encourage congregations to pray for all young people who offer themselves to the work of the PCI Year Team and Summer Outreach Teams.

Youth Overseas Committee

11. That the General Assembly encourage congregations to support their young people in pursuing cross cultural opportunities in mission education through participation in outgoing and incoming teams in association with partner churches overseas.

Youth Centres Committee

12. That the General Assembly commend the three Youth Centres, Guysmere, Lucan and Rostrevor, to the support and prayers of the Church.

13. That the General Assembly commend the nine camps being held in the summer to the Church: The Girls' and Boys' Camps; the Soccer Camps at Guysmere, Ballymoney and Belfast; the Adventure Camp at Shannagh-More; the Music Camp in Rostrevor; and the Soccer and Summer Camps at Lucan.

General

14. That the Youth Board, with its associated working committees, for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 283 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Rev J McALLISTER, OBE
Secretary: Rev R F S POOTS, OBE

1. As we reach the end of the 20th century there is a remarkable similarity to the end of the 19th century. For example, a hundred years ago there was a necessity for everyone who wanted to play a realistic part in life to be able to read and write. There seems to be the same necessity now for anyone wanting to be a realistic practitioner in life to be computer literate.

2. At the turn of the century the great science-versus-religion debate was still very much alive, with philosophy mirroring biology in its pursuit of progress. Today educational philosophers are boldly declaring that, while the last two millennia were driven by religion and philosophy, the next two will be driven by Information Communication Technology (ICT) and science. This is a serious challenge that cannot be discussed casually with a few random scripture texts. Those who espoused spiritual values (which for us are Christian values) must rise to this challenge with intelligent argument, informed conviction and constant enquiry of and direction from the Holy Spirit.

3. No doubt these issues will surface in Ireland. It is, however, fairly certain that the divine obligation laid upon the Church of Christ to declare the gospel of reconciliation and to be the community of reconciliation will have repercussions in the education field, not least in the lively issue of integration. This is an area where we have been active in the past, and, while there is no wish to dictate, we are anxious that the Church of Christ should be heard in the clamouring market place of integral ideas.

Recognised Ministries

Rev David Bruce, General Director of Scripture Union (Northern Ireland), reports:

1. In the 1998 Report we highlighted the decline in reading among children and adults, pointing out the vital way in which this trend will undermine the very foundations of Christian witness in Ireland. This year, as part of its response to this trend, Scripture Union has entered into a partnership with Bible Society to mark the millennium with a Bible reading initiative. "*Luke the Book*" will offer a millennium gift of a copy of Luke's Gospel to every child in key stages 2 and 3 in Northern Ireland. This is a brand new publication in full colour, designed and produced in Northern Ireland with Northern Irish young people in mind. It will be offered to all children in the controlled, maintained and integrated sectors. Funding is being supplied through Scripture Union and Bible Society supporters who have adopted this project as their official millennium initiative. Distribution to schools will commence at the start of October. We commend "*Luke the Book*" to the prayers of the Assembly.

2. Scripture Union in Northern Ireland continues to provide a comprehensive programme of CSSMs and Camps over the summer months and

seeks to develop a growing ministry in schools. There are currently 300 SU groups meeting weekly in Northern Ireland schools in both the primary and post-primary sectors.

3. The Assembly should note that Frontier Youth Trust is now operating as an autonomous organisation in Ireland after almost twenty years of partnership with Scripture Union (NI), working with at risk and marginalised young people outside normal Church programmes. It is our prayer that these new arrangements will enhance the work of FYT throughout Ireland.

Rev Robert McMullan, General Director of Scripture Union (Republic of Ireland), reports:

1. Densmore Lodge, the new residential and Conference facility for Scripture Union at Ovoca Manor, was opened by Her Excellency, President Mary McAleese, in September. Her warm endorsement of Scripture Union's work was very encouraging to all who attended this very special occasion.

2. The President spoke of SU centres around the world providing a vital lifeline to those who realise the importance of God in their lives, who want to keep in touch with their faith and who want to build on their relationship with God.

3. Elva Byrne has been appointed Regional Co-ordinator. Formerly manager of Footprints, her role is seeking to encourage churches and fellowships throughout the country to become both more informed about the work of SU and more involved in its ministry.

4. Scripture Union continues to enjoy wide support and recognition as a support in many aspects of Christian work. The bookshops sell a lot of materials and its committee, along with council, seeks to encourage Christians in other towns who are hoping to open up similar shops.

5. Christian teacher groups are now established in Dublin and Cork and it is hoped to repeat this in other places.

6. Along with APSO (Agency for Personnel Service Overseas), Scripture Union is now sponsoring two families working with the Aid for Aids Programme SU in Zimbabwe, one couple with the programme in Tanzania and one couple in a hospital in Uganda. The movement hopes to develop this link in the future to send other young people overseas. SU is very grateful to their government for this funding.

7. Council and staff continues to be very grateful for the interest which the Assembly has in the work of Scripture Union in the Republic of Ireland.

8. As a result of a call from New Row congregation, Coleraine, I concluded my work with Scripture Union at the end of April.

Rev Patricia McBride, Chaplain at The Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe, Donegal, reports:

1. A decline in committed Church membership among teenagers is a cause for concern faced, as they are, with a variety of lifestyle choices and value systems. It is against this background that the support of the School Chaplains' Association is useful as is the freedom of schools to express explicit values under the guidance of the Chaplaincy ministers.

2. Pupils are invited to consider the spiritual aspect of life at morning assembly and at worship services throughout the year.

3. Scripture Union provides informal times of Bible study and prayer and pupils are beginning to accept more active leadership roles.

4. Religious Education is soon to become an examination subject with the first schools due to start teaching the syllabus, which seems to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of pupils, in September, 2000.

5. Classroom teaching, Open Days, Parents' Days and occasional school trips facilitate my integration into the mainstream life of the school and the deepening of relationships with pupils, staff and parents.

6. The pastoral care of pupils continues to be a very important part of my work and I value the prayerful support of the Church.

STATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

NORTHERN IRELAND

1. During the year, the State Education Committee has continued to monitor movements in the educational field, to comment on discussion and policy documents from the Department of Education and to be pro-active, along with our sister Churches, in making submissions to the Minister of Education.

Meeting with the Minister

2. Termly meetings with the Minister have continued as well as meetings with civil servants. Representatives of the three main Protestant Churches have impressed upon him the desirability of legislation to permit transferor governors to serve on the Boards of Secondary Schools without being required, as at present, to serve on the Board of Governors of a primary school; the concern of the transferor interest about the reduction to two of transferors' representatives on the Western Education and Library Board which has resulted in the inability to appoint reserves to the Teaching Appointments' Committee and impacted adversely on transferor input to the other committees of the Board; and no less a concern about effects on teacher training and employment in Northern Ireland of the increasing numbers of integrated schools and the religious requirements for teachers within the maintained schools' sector.

Secondary Schools' Boards of Governors

3. The change in legislation which brought about the right of transferor governors on the boards of 'feeder' primary schools to nominate representatives to serve on secondary schools' boards, was welcomed by the three main Churches.

4. However, a problem arose in some areas because transferor governors did not attend the meetings called to nominate to secondary boards with the result that the full complement could not be nominated.

5. Consultation will be taking place with the area boards' chief executives to see how the problem can be addressed, but the importance of transferor governors attending meetings and playing a full part in the affairs of

schools cannot be over-emphasised if the privileges which the churches currently enjoy in education are to be protected.

6. The Committee is keenly aware of the time pressures and responsibilities upon governors today and gratefully acknowledges the commitment they give.

Nominations to Boards

7. Nominations to various boards were made as follows:

Stranmillis College: Mr John Magowan

South Eastern Education and Library Board: Rev Dr D J Watts

Donegal Protestant Board of Education: Mr A O Buchanan, Mr T A Morrow, Rev Brian Brown, Rev W A Watson

Royal School, Dungannon: Rev R I A Allely, Dr Helen Kennedy.

Mrs Myrtle Thompson, Dublin, was appointed to a Committee, set up by the Church of Ireland Board of Education, to review the Religious Education Curriculum for Primary Schools in the Republic.

Stranmillis University College

8. The Committee extends congratulations to Stranmillis on becoming a University College and commends the College to the prayerful support of the Church. Its training, over the years, has made an outstanding contribution to the teaching profession in Northern Ireland.

NICIE

9. Talks have taken place between the Transferor Representatives' Council and representatives of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education. The TRC was pleased to learn the importance NICIE places on a Christian ethos in schools and discussions are on-going about forming a closer working relationship.

10. Both bodies have agreed to assist in building effective relationships between the local minister and the integrated school close to a congregation.

TRC

11. The Transferor Representatives' Council, which is made up of representatives of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland Churches, meets regularly and has produced responses to official consultation documents, including "Towards a Culture of Tolerance". One member of the TRC was invited to serve on the working party which produced the draft and another on the Steering Group for Qualifications for Head Teachers.

12. Representatives of the TRC met and exchanged views with representatives of the Ulster Unionist Party and of the Alliance Party. It is hoped to continue this practice with other political parties and, particularly, with members of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

General

13. The Committee is conscious of the excellent work of principals and classroom teachers, not forgetting those who serve at further education and

tertiary levels. Difficulties have not diminished as schools wrestle with inadequate funding and an increasing number of unruly pupils. Churches and others must impress upon all parents the need to support teachers and to take on responsibility for the behaviour of their children.

14. The Church is grateful to those who accept the heavy commitment of serving on area boards and to board officers for the support and guidance provided for schools.

15. We commend all involved in the educational system throughout Ireland to the prayers of the Church, not least the children who hold centre stage in educational provision.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Primary Schools

Rev. J S B Drennan, Director of Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:

Funding

1. The strongly held view of a meeting, called last September by a local branch of the Irish National Teachers Organisation and attended by a number of TD's, is that the current level of funding for primary education is inadequate and that the requirement to contribute financially towards the education of children breaches the pledge of Government to provide free education.

School Transport

2. The Review Committee on School Transport was set up to improve the present system without any increased cost to the country. One of its proposals is to make a small charge for the transport of primary school pupils.

Dundalk National School

3. Consultations about the provision of a new school, possibly on a greenfield site, have been taking place for some time, still, apparently, without a positive result.

St Andrews National School

4. A new agreement between the parties involved in the tri-partite school has been agreed and the deeds will be signed by the three church bodies. This has been made necessary by the changes in the Board of Management created by the new Education Act.

Government report on the weight of schoolbags

5. In recent years the weight of pupils' schoolbags has become a source of concern to parents with an interest or involvement in aspects of education. The report concludes that scope for a major initiative in reducing the size and

weight of textbooks exists and that this is particularly important during the junior cycle of secondary school.

Secondary Schools

Mr B Duffy, Director of Secondary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:

1. The Education Act 1998 has now been passed into law and will govern the operation of the education system in the Republic for generations to come. There is much in the Bill which the Church would support and welcome. It places education in the Republic on a statutory basis for the first time and it repeals the restriction on the examination of Religious Education in state examinations imposed by the Intermediate Education Act of 1878, so we should soon see the implementation of the Junior and Senior RE syllabi which have received a great deal of attention from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. In addition, the Bill charges schools with the responsibility to promote the moral and spiritual development of pupils.

2. The Church should also welcome the support which the Bill will give to groups of people wishing to open new schools and the emphasis on the right of parents to choose the type of school to which they wish to send their children. The ethos of existing schools seems to be well protected by the Bill and the provision that the state will lease land and buildings to prospective new school patrons is a major step forward for the provision of a wide variety of types of school.

3. Also very welcome are the statutory recognition of the rights of parents and pupils, and the attention given to special needs and the disadvantaged. Particularly important are the rights of parents to involvement in the management of schools and the right of pupils to establish student councils.

4. Schools are encouraged to establish Boards of Management composed of representatives of the Patron of the school (usually Boards of Governors in the Republic), parents and teachers according to a formula yet to be negotiated. All of the interests currently involved in managing the 21 Protestant secondary schools have had a united position since 1994 of insisting that there be flexibility in the final agreement for different models of participatory management and that the Governors maintain a majority control of their schools. They are supported in this by the National Protestant Secondary Schools Parents Association and by the Irish Schoolheads Association. The five Protestant comprehensive schools are currently working on a model which would suit their own particular needs.

5. The Secondary Education Committee is composed of representatives of the Presbyterian Church, the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church and the Religious Society of Friends and exists partly to disburse a Block Grant of government money to Protestant families by means test, thus enabling them to choose the type of school to which they wish to send their children. The committee has recently welcomed two new members of staff, Rev Dr John McCullagh (Church of Ireland) as Secretary and Mr Richard Kilroy, as Administrator of the grant scheme. The Committee continues to be very

concerned that the level of the grant from the government should be raised in order to protect the level of grants to families for the next few years.

Religious Education in Day Schools

Rev W T J Richardson, Organiser of Religious Education in Day Schools, reports:

1. It is rare to find new thinking in the RE Reports which come to me. However, this year full marks go to Limavady High School with its excellent Mission Statement. It reads - "At the heart of Limavady High School lies the Christian belief that each individual is unique and valuable. Our mission is to provide a secure, caring, happy and challenging learning environment in which all individuals are encouraged to respect others, and develop to their maximum potential". Surely this is a worthwhile goal for a school or, indeed, a Church.

2. I am indebted to the Agents of 14 of the 18 Northern Presbyteries for their reports. Ards, Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Tyrone provided not only their reports but also the required statistical information. Despite strenuous efforts and a number of Presbytery Agents conferences over the years, a number of Presbyteries still make no returns or do so without statistical information. The frustration which I experience in this regard is shared by my Church of Ireland and Methodist colleagues.

3. On the whole, our ministers are well satisfied with the ethos and teaching of RE in Day Schools Primary/Secondary. Almost all schools and teachers speak well of the biblically-based Core Curriculum. Many reports referred to how well our ministers are received within the schools and how much their interest and support is appreciated. A paragraph from the Ards Presbytery return sums up the point I am making:

"We thank Principals and Teachers who give a generous welcome to ministers and clergy when they visit, and I urge my colleagues to cherish and foster the fine relationship between Church, School and Home as fundamental for the health, mental, moral, spiritual and physical development of children".

4. The commitment of teachers is also referred to on many occasions as is their willingness to give of their best against the background of enormous pressures to deliver the curriculum, keep within the tight budget and bear the brunt of many initiatives. Their wide and imaginative use of a variety of methods such as videos and other visual aids, music, drama, crafts and computer learning makes the teaching of RE both interesting and relevant.

5. Although we recognise that it is no part of the school's task to catechise in the interest of any particular denomination, we do well to remember that, with falling numbers in our Sunday Schools, the onus for teaching God's Word is increasingly falling on the day school teacher. We surely owe them, as a Church, all the support and encouragement we can give in the prayer that, with a thorough knowledge of God's Word, young people will be equipped as they leave school to face the moral and ethical perplexities of life.

CHURCH EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1 Training Classes have been held, during the year; Sunday School teachers, Bible Class, Holiday Club and Children's Church leaders and Presbytery classes were held in the East Belfast, Templepatrick and Donegal Presbyteries. The Sunday School Organiser has also delivered a series of lectures in Union College and has conducted children's, youth and other special services.

2. The Sunday School department continues to publish annually, Teachers' Guides and Worksheets with a 'Presbyterian flavour'. The four lessons for 1998/99 on the theme of *Following Jesus* are 1. Leadership, 2. Evangelism, 3. The Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society and 4. Worship. The four lessons for 1999/2000, taking up a Millennium theme, have draft titles as follows: i. Sunday School & Bible Class into 2,000; ii. God's love in action into 2,000; iii. Witnessing in Ireland into 2,000; and Mission into 2,000. Congregations are encouraged to incorporate these within their programme.

3. The Making A Difference Sunday School and Youth Project 1998/99, has brought in the magnificent sum of £22,660 Sunday School & Youth Groups who contributed so generously to this project are thanked for their support.

4. The Sunday School & Youth Project for 1999/2000 will be called the Making A Difference Project 2000, focusing on the Children's Hospice for Ireland, and the provision of Sunday School & Bible Class materials for India, Jamaica, and Africa

5. The proceeds of the Gosford Fun Day, on Saturday 8 May 1999, will also benefit this project.

6. The Committee expresses thanks to the administrators of the Local Bible Fund for enabling it to make the following awards of Bibles during the year:

- 17 teachers with 30 years or more service;
- 37 children with 5 years or more unbroken attendance;
- 1 child for repeating the Shorter Catechism.

7. The Committee expresses thanks to Mrs Donna Thompson for the willing and efficient job she does in ensuring the smooth running of the Sunday School Office and responding to requests for assistance.

8. A Training Manual for Sunday School Teachers and Bible Class Leaders has been published by the Education Board. Ministers and Superintendents are encouraged to facilitate its use in their congregations.

9. Union Theological College will provide in-depth training, conducted by the Sunday School Organiser, for those who are working with children. There will be a four hour Foundation Course (introduction), over two evenings, followed by a fourteen hour Certificate Course over seven evenings for those who wish to develop further skills. The Courses will be called (1) Foundation Course in Children's Ministry and (2) Certificate Course in Children's Ministry. It would be intended, once the course has been piloted at U.T.C., to provide the same courses at appropriate locations so that teachers throughout Ireland will have the opportunity to attend.

I T McKEE, Convener

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. In previous Assembly Reports the proposal that the three main Protestant churches consider working together to strengthen chaplaincy work in the Dublin area was considered. The Committee has now embarked on discussions with the other main Churches with a view to establishing the feasibility of the proposal. In the meantime we are very well served by both Rev Keith McCrory and Rev Katherine Meyer, both of whom have been very active in their particular spheres of service.

2. At Queen's, the Bush and Derryvolgie Hall continue to flourish. Both have had considerable impact on the witness to students and staff. Revs Noel Williamson and Steve Stockman continue to lead in advancing Christ's Kingdom on the Queen's and Stranmillis campuses.

3. At the University of Ulster, refurbishment of the Mixers Bar at Jordanstown has been completed. Rev David Stanfield has been leading in the developments there. This year we have welcomed Rev J McCormick as part-time chaplain at Magee College.

4. Our parish ministers in Cork, Galway and Limerick are also involved in University and other third level chaplaincy work. They are always pleased to hear of students or staff who come to any of these Institutions. With growing numbers at third level these are important points of witness.

5. The Committee is aware of proposals to build a new campus at Springvale, and is preparing for that eventuality.

6. We commend to your prayers the work of all those who have pastoral responsibilities in the third level institutions in Ireland.

Queen's University

Rev Noel Williamson reports from Queen's University:

1. More than 500 Presbyterian students registered in full-time undergraduate courses this September, a substantial increase (400) on 1998 reflecting the more open access policy of government to higher or further education. There are now some 12,000 full-time and over 3,000 part-time undergraduates at Queen's, with a further 3,000-4,000 students engaged in post-graduate studies at higher degree or diploma levels.

2. A full complement of around 1,600 nursing students is now very much in evidence around the main campus and constitutes the largest faculty in the university.

3. Queen's staff restructuring plans inevitably dominated the past year, receiving wide publicity in the media.

4. The Bush continued to attract many students to enjoy the fine food provided by the team of June, Iris, Debbie and Helen. There has been a varied programme of study and discussion groups, and a successful Lewis reading group. Inter-chaplaincy seminars and services proved successful and are considered by all the chaplains as an important part of our ministry. Trips to Rome, Israel and Iona were also arranged on an inter-chaplaincy basis.

5. My thanks again to the staff and committee and also to Prof Hasley Mitchell for their support through the year.

University of Ulster

Rev David Stanfield reports from the University of Ulster at Jordanstown:

1. This has been an encouraging year from many perspectives.
2. In relation to facilities, we have seen an increase in the number of students we make contact with through the social area in our office. This is often the first point of contact with a student. The Prayer Room is being used by more groups for organised prayer times, there is also an increase in individual use. After a complete renovation, Mixers is back in operation and is most appreciated by Campus-based students. An addition to our facilities this year is a counselling room which the University built for us. They continue to be very supportive and appreciative of our presence.
3. We have been running Alpha Courses for three years now and have an established pattern of an Alpha Course first semester, mainly attended by freshers. The course seems to make a significant impact in most participants lives. It was encouraging to see most of those who had been through Alpha coming to a follow-up course in the second semester using the Willow Creek "Network" course.
4. Other activities include teams helping build houses with Habitat for Humanity, some of whom are going to Romania in the Summer as part of a joint QUB/UU Team.
5. There is fundraising for aid agencies such as Tear Fund, Christian Aid and Trocaire. A prayer healing ministry also seems to be developing with a number of students experiencing physical healing.
6. The Christian Union held a well organised mission in February and we made available our resources, experience and advice in preparation for, and during, the two weeks.
7. I thank the Church for its continued interest and prayer support.

Coleraine Campus

Rev Peter Lyle reports from the University of Ulster, Coleraine Campus:

1. The past year has been good with a number of encouraging signs. Approximately 32 first year students registered with me in September 1998 making a total of approximately 100 Presbyterian students registered. Thinking in terms of the percentage of total students with a Presbyterian background I believe this to be the highest percentage registration among the denominations on the Coleraine Campus.
2. Maintaining a Presbyterian witness around the Campus is very important - students and staff do appreciate it and young people from other denominations and faiths enjoy making contact and learning about us.
3. Wednesday continues to be my day 'on duty' in the Chaplaincy Office. On that day I am available for anyone who wishes to call in - and many do with different problems to discuss and questions to ask. My involvement can

go beyond the bounds of Presbyterian members in helping young people from other denominations. I have a good core group of students who come along to a Wednesday Fellowship. Here we have Bible study, prayer and visiting speakers and then share together in lunch afterwards. My aim is to help them prepare for life beyond university and to raise their understanding of the Christian faith so that they are equipped to face the challenges that the world throws up. My wife and I also have the students out to our home or go out for more socially orientated events. We feel that we are making more than contacts - we are building friendships. During the past year I have seen some of the group go on CSSM's etc as a result of their involvement in the chaplaincy group.

4. I share in the inter-chaplaincy work and have spoken at a number of student and training seminars in the University, bringing a Protestant understanding to issues such as caring for those in hospital.

5. In October, we had a visit from the Moderator, Dr John Dixon and Mrs Dixon. They spoke with a group of students and then met with the other chaplains and senior Presbyterian university staff. I have also introduced a visit from the Moderator of Coleraine Presytery to get the local Presbytery more involved.

6. I continue to share on the CU advisory group set up by UCCF and in February this year was invited to be the main speaker at one their weekly meetings.

7. The work continues to be thoroughly enjoyable, challenging and fulfilling and I gave glory to God for the privilege of being involved in it.

Magee Campus

Rev David Stanfield reports re the University of Ulster, Magee Campus:

1. After a number of years of helpful service in Magee Rev Robert Davey stepped down from the post and Rev Joe McCormick is now settling in.

2. Because of the small numbers of Presbyterians on Campus it can be quite difficult for a chaplain to make his presence known so please pray for him in this new role.

Dublin

Rev Katherine Meyer reports from Trinity College, Dublin:

1. The 25th anniversary of the present Trinity College Chaplaincy, involving chaplains from the four largest Churches in Ireland and the shared use of the College Chapel, was celebrated with a number of special events in 1998. The high point came in February when a special Service of Thanksgiving was held in the College Chapel. Representatives from the four Churches were involved in the service, and guests from a number of smaller Churches were also invited. The preacher was Dr Geraldine Smyth, OP, the Director of the Irish School of Ecumenics, and the President of Ireland, Mrs Mary McAleese, was in the congregation.

2. The Wild Goose Resource Group, from the Iona Community in Scotland, visited the College in February. It conducted a series of very well-

attended lunchtime services, and led an evening workshop on music from the world church. It also met with students, informally, sharing their own faith journeys and hopes for the churches.

3. Our annual programme continued during this anniversary year with our shared Tuesday morning prayer service at the heart of each week. Our November weekend away was entitled “The Road to God Knows Where: A Journey with Celtic Christians” and was led by Rev Dr Johnston McMaster of the Methodist Church. In February, we organised a day trip to the 1798 Interpretive Centre in Enniscorthy, which involved both students and staff in looking in a fresh way at our shared history. The day finished with an evening prayer service which focused on thanksgiving for the communion of saints.

4. I have continued to try to make contact with any Presbyterian students whose names and addresses are given to me throughout the year, and I regularly see both students and staff, from a number of backgrounds, on a one-to-one basis. I continue to be involved in facilitating the Student Bereavement Support group which forms each spring after Easter. Although services in the Presbyterian tradition are not held on a regular basis in the College Chapel, a small number of articulate and committed students, from various Reformed traditions, are contributing very significantly to the development of shared worship in College, challenging both ignorance and stereotypes in the process.

5. I want to express my thanks once again to the University Education Committee for its prayers and on-going interest in my work.

University College Dublin

Rev Denis Campbell reports:

1. This year there is the greatest number of Presbyterian students since I became chaplain thirteen years ago. Contact is made through visitation and through a reception for students hosted jointly with the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplains.

2. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was marked by a service and lunch for all the groups which use the chaplaincy centre, St Stephen’s.

3. The Roman Catholic chaplains launched a mission to the University in the second term. All the chaplains and some students from other denominations took part in the discussions and debates and joined in the worship events.

4. Several students worship on Sundays at local Presbyterian churches.

5. All the chaplains meet together for prayer and planning on Wednesday mornings.

Dublin City University and Dublin Institute of Technology

Rev Keith McCrory reports:

1. 1998/9 has again been an enjoyable year in my role as part-time chaplain in the ever-changing environment of Dublin.

2. The rapid development of Dublin City University (DCU) continues, with some of the new campus facilities nearing completion just as work for

others gets going. Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) has also expanded further with the change over to its faculty-based structure dovetailing with the acquisition of a major new inner city campus site. Both Universities reflect the fast growth of our capital city and their booming student population levels, including many from Northern Ireland.

3. The busyness, and expense, of modern campus life takes its toll on staff and students alike and this additional pressure has firm implications for the role of the chaplaincy service. More and more, our ability, as chaplains, to offer effective pastoral care to those in need is based upon our pre-existing one-to-one relationships with them and not upon our professional role. This has radically changed the model chaplaincy must follow if it is to be effective and is one of the major reasons why the current proposal to replace the various part-time chaplaincy positions within PCI, the Church of Ireland and the Methodist church in Dublin with fewer full-time chaplains is surely much needed.

4. For my own part, through involvement in student lunches, trips out, barbecues, even a murder mystery evening, and my role as President to the Christian Union in DCU, I have continued to seek to find meaningful ways to serve those under my care.

5. Many thanks to all who have so faithfully remembered us in prayer.

R H MITCHELL, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Church Education Committee

2. That the General Assembly thank Sunday Schools and Youth Groups for their generous support for the current MAD Project and commend the new MAD Project 2000.

3. That the General Assembly encourage all Sunday Schools and Bible Classes to use the four Guides and Worksheets published by the Committee.

4. That the General Assembly encourage all ministers to use the Training Manual for Sunday School Teachers.

5. That the General Assembly encourage Sunday School Teachers to consider making application to attend the new Certificate Course for Sunday School Teachers at UTC.

University Education Committee

6. That the General Assembly commend the work of all those involved in chaplaincy activity and in pastoral care of students to the prayers of the Church, and urge all of our young people attending Universities and Colleges in Ireland to actively participate in the opportunities provided within the chaplaincies.

7. That the General Assembly welcome the planned provision of more Higher and Further Education places in Northern Ireland, and urge the

Government to ensure that the necessary resources are provided to support the increase.

General

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 STUDIES

Convener: Very Rev Dr A W G BROWN

Secretary: Rev J H ROBINSON

1. The work of the Board of Studies this year has been marked by a keen sense of anticipation, reflected in the work of its several committees. The feeling is abroad that we are moving into the new millennium with adventurous plans and high hopes of new and exciting developments just around the corner.

2. The recommendations of the Strategy for Mission Committee are already being implemented in so far as the Board itself will incorporate the work of the Christian Training Committee, relocated from the Evangelism Board. The proposals for in-service training for ministers have not been taken further this year. We await the decision of Assembly on how this project is to be funded.

3. The appointment, however, of a new Director of Christian Training and the closer integration of this department within the work of the College all point forward to a new era of training not only for the ministry of word and sacraments but for ministry in its widest sense in the life of the Church as a whole. One of the tasks of the new Director will be to source and develop courses suitable for in-service training of ministers. These developments are in themselves the outcome of the first part of the College and Training Review as reported through the General Board to last Assembly. We await with anticipation proposals about the future development of the College buildings, hopefully at this Assembly.

4. As well as welcoming the new Director of Christian Training we shall be welcoming a new Professor of Practical Theology. Meantime a most successful beginning has been made with the new part-time degrees and it is anticipated that when the full cycle of these courses is complete it will result in a substantial increase in the outreach of the College.

5. The teaching of the new MDiv Degree and a taught Masters in Christian Ministry and Christian Mission (both of QUB) will commence in the next academic year, while a new Diploma in Ministry is now in place, and eventually MMin and DMin degrees will be offered, possibly through the Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland.

6. The Rev Margaret Johnston retires after seven years as Convener of the College Management Committee. To this demanding task she has brought a deep interest in all that concerned the College and its staff, together with a wide experience of management, and of employment practice gained from her years as a senior civil servant. At a time of rapid transition in many aspects of College life, she has carried out her duties with integrity and imagination. The General Assembly has cause to be deeply grateful to her for her hard work, and for the immense enthusiasm which she has consistently shown for the highly important tasks with which this Committee and its Convener are charged.

Rev C J C McMullan, Convener of the Magee Fund Scheme Committee, writes:

7. The Rev Dr Harold Graham began as the General Assembly's first Director of Christian Training on 22 September 1980. This has been a

pioneering work which has gradually raised the profile of in-service training throughout the Church. Central to his ethos has been the equipping of the Church as the people of God to face the challenges of today's world. His courses have been comprehensive and challenging. In content they have combined the inspirational with the wisdom of experience and practical common sense. He leaves behind a wide legacy from outstanding Summer Schools of Theology to excellent pre-ordination training for elders. His meticulous administrative and organisational skills have established the necessary structures and ensured the smooth running of the Christian Training Centre. He has brought to the post vision, enthusiasm, enterprise, tireless energy and conscientiousness. The Magee Fund Scheme Committee pays the highest tribute to his workmanship, and wishes him and Mrs Graham a happy retirement.

COMMITTEE ON STUDIES

1. The Committee met three times during the year.
2. Through the Director of Ministerial Students it continued to give advice to prospective candidates and to set courses and administer examinations in accordance with the Regulations of the General Assembly and the direction of the Board of Studies.
3. In the academic year 1998/99 there were 39 students under the care of Presbyteries as listed in the appended Schedule.
4. Four students were granted permission to study at Universities/Colleges other than Union: one at Aberdeen, one at Edinburgh, and two at Regent, Vancouver.
5. The Committee expresses its thanks for the work of the following external examiners:
 - OT Language and Biblical Theology - The Rev I J Patterson, BA, MTh.
 - NT Language - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD.
 - NT Greek (Qual) - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD.
 - Systematic Theology - The Rev D Bradley, BA, BD.
 - Church History - The Rev T N Hamilton, BA, BD.
 - Homiletics, Public Worship and Pastoral Work - The Rev Dr D C Irwin, MA, BD.
6. A change in QUB's definition of an 'occasional student', effectively closing off the 2-years non-graduating Arts route, elicited the Committee's consideration of pathways for applicants 'over 30, but under 40'.
7. The following routes are recommended:
 - (a) ongoing use of the existing two years non-graduating Arts pathways (where offered).
 - (b) new pathways, as follows:
 - (i) That candidates over 30 and under 40 be permitted to undertake normally 4 modules of part-time BD study (taken over not less than 2 years) prior to acceptance by the General Assembly as students for the ordained ministry and thereupon complete 3 years full-time theological study and training, normally leading to the degree of BD (QUB)

- (ii) That candidates over 30 and under 40 be permitted to undertake 6 modules of part-time study normally in Humanities (excluding theology, and some at 2nd and 3rd level) and thereafter be required to complete three years of theological study and ministerial training, normally leading to the degree of BD (QUB)
- (iii) That candidates over 30 and under 40 whose professional qualifications are deemed acceptable by the Board of Studies, on the recommendation of the Qualifications' Committee, be permitted to undertake three years of full-time study and ministerial training, normally leading to the degree of BD (PTFI).

Study in a Missionary Partnership

Rev Dr Ian Hart reports:

8. Students who are studying for the ministry of our Church at Union College are encouraged to spend one of the 3 theological years (or, if they prefer, a "year out") studying theology in a country where we have a missionary partnership. Such a time can be a very enlightening and stimulating experience. For example, overseas churches are often struggling with very different issues from those we are preoccupied with in Northern Ireland. We sometimes need to be freed from localistic practices, and we may realise that we have been following social conventions rather than the gospel. In recent years students have taken up this opportunity in Kenya (St Paul's United Theological College, Limuru), in Jamaica (United Theological College, Kingston), and in Singapore (Trinity Theological College).

Pre-Theological Summer School & Phase I Interview

9. The Pre-Theological Summer School and Phase I Interview was held in Union College from Monday 15 to Friday 19 June 1998. The Interviewing Panel comprised: The Revs R F S Poots OBE, Dr W D Patton, J S Carson, T C Morrison, D I J McNie, F A Bradley, Messrs H R F Plester & S Agnew MBE and Mrs M Robinson, together with the Very Rev Dr A R Rodgers (Director), the Rev J H Robinson (Secretary), and Dr D E Eagleson MA, DipVocG and Mrs H Mullan BSc PGCE (Vocational Consultants acting as advisers to the Panel).

Four candidates were in attendance and completed the normal aspects of the interviewing process. Of these, two are being recommended to this General Assembly, one is not being recommended at this time, and one is not being recommended.

The 1999 Pre-Theological Summer School and Phase I Interview is planned for 14th to 18th June - the size and personnel of the Interviewing Panel having been approved by the Committee.

J STAFFORD CARSON, Convener

APPENDIX**SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS**

ARDS	Christoph Ebbinghaus	Regent Vancouver
	Cecil A Grant	-
	Simon Henning	Union
	Chris W P Kennedy	-
BALLYMENA	Lee H Eagleson	-
	Samuel D Finlay	Union
	Colin K McDowell	Union
	Stephen Richmond	Kenya
EAST BELFAST	Michael N Davidson	Union
	Andrew N Kerr	Union
NORTH BELFAST	J Moore Casement	Union
	William H G Crawley	Union
	William J Hayes	-
	Mark Jones	Regent Vancouver
SOUTH BELFAST	J R Ian Harbinson	Union
	Peter G McDowell	Union
	Cheryl A Reid	Union
CARRICKFERGUS	Colin Burcombe	Union
	R Ian Carton	Union
	Stephen J Lockington	Union
COLERAINE	David J McClelland	-
	Philip B Wilson	Aberdeen
DERRY & STRABANE	Roy A Campbell	-
DOWN	Mervyn Gibson	Union
DROMORE	Samuel J Castles	Union
	Niall S R Lockhart	-
	Michael McClenahan	Union
	William J M Parker	Union
	Kenneth W J Hanna	Union
NEWRY	Kenneth Henderson	Union
	David S Henry	QUB
OMAGH	David W Reid	Union
ROUTE	Glenn A Chestnutt	-
	David J Steele	-
TEMPLEPATRICK	Louise J Robinson	Edinburgh
	David A Simpson	Union
	Angus V Stewart	Union
TYRONE	Colin W A Martin	Union
	Adrian T S McAlister	-

UNION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. During the year 1998 the Committee met on 6 occasions. Meetings of sub-Committees were also held.

2. The Rev Professor J C McCullough has succeeded the Rev Professor Emeritus T S Reid as Principal of the College. Principal McCullough has been instrumental in developing the College information technology systems and, with members of the Faculty - in particular Professors Taylor and Kirkpatrick - in designing and implementing new courses especially evening classes open to part-time students. We wish him God's blessing at a critical time in the history of the College. Interim arrangements for the preaching of Pastoral Theology were made for the Academic Session 1998-1999. Professor Kirkpatrick joined the Management Committee in place of Principal Reid.

3. The Rev J H McIntyre resigned from the Committee because of new commitments with the Education Board. The Committee expresses its appreciation of his service. The Rev D B Knox was appointed in his place.

4. The Training and Review Committee continues its study of the College.

5. Over the year, the Committee continued its review of expenditure and arrangements for College administration. Concern was expressed at the increasing administrative burdens being carried by professorial staff. Academic staff, as a condition of recognition by universities, are expected to undertake research and publications and this is becoming increasingly difficult because of administrative demands.

6. One of the results of this examination, and of continuing examinations of financial efficiency, has been the contracting out of catering and cleaning services to Mount Charles Catering. This has proved successful both financially and in removing the administrative burdens from academic staff. The post of Domestic Bursar was, however, redundant. The Committee records its appreciation of the work of Miss Ellen White and those members of staff who were transferred to Mount Charles.

7. Negotiations are taking place, together with the Baptist and Methodist Theological Colleges and the Belfast Bible College, with the Department of Education about tuition fees for non-ministerial students. Special arrangements exist for such fees but these may be discontinued.

8. Concern was expressed by the Committee about the fall in intake of ministerial students over the past few years. However, current applications seem to have reverted to a more normal pattern.

9. The Principal reports that -

(a) In the academic session 1998/9 there are 127 students in total. A partial breakdown is:

Ministerial	Non-Ministerial	
1st Year	3	19
2nd Year	4	15
3rd Year	16	13

In addition, we have now 25 part-time students and 14 students taking Theology modules as part of their degree courses in other Faculties.

- (b) Our evening classes have started and have enabled more students to study part-time. At the moment we have 15 students taking the evening courses (the other part-time students take the same courses during the day). We continue to explore the possibility of developing Access courses for students whose academic achievements do not allow them immediate entry to the part-time BD or BTh. In co-operation with the Christian Training Centre we hope to further develop evening classes to cater for those who wish to take courses of general interest to the development of Christian ministry.
- (c) Courses in Youth Work are being offered from September 1999 in co-operation with the Youth Board. We hope to develop these courses in the coming years.
- (d) The Institute of Theology is on target to introduce the M Div degree in October 1999. We continue to explore the possibility of developing Masters and Doctors Degrees in Ministry for those who are already engaged in Parish Ministry.

10. In accordance with College Bye-laws, the Committee carried out a visitation of the Department of New Testament Studies. Members were impressed by the developments which have been, and are being, made and by the quality of teaching and course design and record their appreciation of the work of Principal McCullough and the part-time teaching staff.

11. Heating facilities and rewiring have been completed at No 26 College Green (Professors' Studies). A substantial savings on heating costs is anticipated.

12. The overall deficit of £10,286 (1997) has been turned round to an overall surplus of £13,214 for the first time in a number of years. In our favour, we had increased funding from the United Appeal of £45,000 and reduced spending on retired Professors' Pensions of approximately £12,500. We did however have increased spending on repairs, maintenance and exceptional furnishings for the Hostel which in total amounted to over £33,000 spent under these headings in 1998. We are conscious of the need to increase our income and carefully monitor our expenditure. Regarding the former we have increased the number of courses offered, which has and will result in an increase in our fee income.

13. The UTC and Edgehill Co-ordinating Committee met on one occasion.

14. The Management Committee records its appreciation of the work of the College's academic and administrative staff for their interest in the students and in promoting new courses and financial and administrative efficiency.

MARGARET L JOHNSTON, Convener

STUDENTS' BURSARY FUND COMMITTEE

- 1. The Committee met three times during the year.

2. There were 27 students for the Ministry who received benefit from the Bursary fund in the last academic year.

3. Because of the decline in the number of students our total expenditure for 1998 was £176,042, a decrease of £53,519 over 1997.

4. We thank all who contributed to the fund during the year. This could have been by direct giving or through offerings at services of licensing, ordination or installation. These financial offerings are very much appreciated. We would remind conveners and Presbytery clerks that an attractive leaflet in the form of a bookmark is available to publicise the fund at such services. The Pulpit Supply Association, administered by the students at Union College, contributed £1,939.19.

GEORGE MOORE, Convener

MAGEE FUND SCHEME COMMITTEE

The Rev Dr A Harold Graham, Director, writes:

1. In this my final report after 19 years as Magee Director, my first words must be those of thanks to God for His guiding, protecting and sustaining hand. To Him is the glory for anything that may have been accomplished during this time.

2. My thanks must also go to the General Assembly for giving me the privilege of starting a new work completely from scratch. Dr A J Weir, Dr Robert Brown and others had done much hard work in negotiating what emerged as the Magee Fund Scheme. Under this the new Director was appointed to organise in-service training courses for ministers, elders and others in leadership positions in congregations and to work in co-operation with the Professor of Practical Theology.

3. In 1980, through the good offices of the late Professor J L M Haire, a large two-storied house was rented from Queen's University and this became the base for the Christian Training Centre. The building was bare. My first job was to furnish and equip the CTC and in this I worked closely with the Rev Dr Robert Brown. As the first convener of the Magee Fund Scheme Committee he was invaluable in giving wise advice and helping in every way possible to lay firm foundations for the practical working of the Centre. These principles have changed very little over the years and have proved very effective.

4. The Rev W T J Richardson succeeded Dr Brown as MFSC Convener and he helped develop the work even further. During his Convenership it was decided to negotiate with Queen's University to purchase 7, Rugby Road. Following the purchase major refurbishment of the CTC took place. As Convener Mr Richardson had significant input into making sure that the best possible job was done within the limitations of the available budget.

5. The third Convener, Rev Charles McMullen, was appointed in 1993 and his flair and enthusiasm have helped further expand the work being done by the CTC. He is currently involved in discussions concerning the future development of the Christian Training Centre. Hopefully the terms negotiated will be a springboard for a significant way forward for Christian Training in the new millennium.

6. I have been most fortunate to work with three Conveners who have assisted me in developing Christian Training. They have been deeply interested, wise in counsel and always willing to help promote the CTC. As Director I could not have asked for more. The Magee Fund Scheme Committee members have also been supportive in every possible way.

7. Initially I had part-time secretarial help during my first year and after that the late Miss May Black joined me as secretary. For 4 years she did an excellent job in establishing and organising the office to accommodate the increasing workload. During the past 14 years Mrs Mary Coles has been an integral part of the Christian Training Centre. Working as secretary and providing administrative assistance has made her invaluable. My thanks must go to her for all the conscientious, gracious and effective work she has done in developing the Christian training programme.

8. There are many others who must be thanked. In the early days of formulating a programme of training courses, the late Professors J L M Haire and J R Boyd were always willing to be consulted. Professor Stanley McIvor was instrumental, together with Professor Buick Knox, Dr Robert Brown and Dr Joseph Thompson in preparing the material for the Bible Correspondence Course, which today continues to attract enrolments. My thanks also go to all the members of Union Theological Faculty for their willingness to participate and co-operate.

9. Presbytery agents play a vital role and without their help life would have been much more difficult. In trade union terms they are the local shop Stewards! They try to generate interest and support for courses taking place locally, and at times it is not a very easy job. My thanks and appreciation go to them - without their help some courses would not have been possible. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank personally the many thousands who have over the past 19 years supported the CTC programme by their attendance at courses, seminars and conferences.

10. In June 1995 I restarted the Summer Schools of Theology and since then three others have followed successfully. A Millennium Summer School will be held from 19 to 22 June 2000 and details appear in the 1999/2000 programme booklet. The two main speakers will be Professor Larry Hurtado and Rev Dr Derek Tidball with members of Faculty, together with my successor, completing the team.

11. Over the years the CTC has been fortunate to have had outstanding speakers from America, Australia, France, and the UK mainland. There have been Residential Conferences in Ireland and also Joint Residential Conferences in Scotland and England. Combined with international speakers we have had ministers and laity that have made excellent contributions to the programme each year. Thanks go to everyone who helped by speaking at the different courses.

12. The two books I have written - "*Living Leadership*" and "*Valuable Visiting*" - continue to be in demand and are available from either Familybooks or the CTC. The various training videos listed in the programme booklet continue to be widely used and can be hired from the CTC.

13. A new programme booklet for 1999/2000 has been prepared which, in co-operation with my successor, will commence in September and it is hoped

that when I retire at the end of that month, courses will be well under way. May I ask ministers to become more pro-active in supporting the programme locally, either by attending courses organised for them or in encouraging any of their members who might benefit to attend. It sounds simple but that is all that is needed to make a programme work. Needless to say regular prayer on behalf of the work of CTC can make a real difference. Prayer and practical support are key ingredients in building an exciting training programme for a new millennium.

14. A foundation has been laid over the last 19 years. My prayer and hope is that greater things may develop in Christian Training for the glory of God and the up-building of the people of God in the days and years ahead. Christian Training is not an optional extra – it is essential if our church is to face the challenge of a new age.

15. My prayerful good wishes go to my successor and I trust that God's richest blessing will be upon him in all he seeks to do.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly accept the retirement of the Rev Dr A Harold Graham as Magee Director of Christian Training from 30 September, 1999.
3. That the thanks of the General Assembly be given to the Rev Dr A Harold Graham.
4. That the books "Living Leadership" and "Valuable Visiting" be commended to elders and lay workers to help and encourage them in their work and witness.
5. That the Bible Correspondence Course and the training videos available at CTC be recommended for wider use throughout the Church.
6. That the General Assembly encourage support for the Summer School of Theology to be held at UTC and CTC from 19th - 22nd June, 2000.
7. That the General Assembly accept the resignation of the Rev Margaret L Johnston as Convener of the Union Theological College Management Committee, that she be thanked for her services; and that Rev G Connor be appointed in her place.
8. That the work of the Director of Ministerial Students be commended to the whole Church for support and prayer.
9. That the new pathways for candidates 'over 30, but under 40', as set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Report of the Committee on Studies, be approved for an experimental period of five years.
10. That the following grants be paid from the Incidental Fund:

June Residential Course and Interview	£550
Pre-Term College Retreat	£975
Applicants' Overnight Course	£350
Licentiate Courses	£250
Meetings for students and spouses	£600
Honoraria for Extern Examiners	£295
Communication Skills for students outside Ireland	£85

TOTAL £3,105

11. That the General Assembly note that the Students' Bursary Fund Grant for 1999/2000 will be £3,350 and the married allowance £1,450; and that the children's allowances will continue to be paid at CMF rates.

12. That the following candidates, their nominations having been sustained by the Board of Studies, be accepted as students for the Ministry and placed under the care of their Presbyteries:

Knox Anderson Jones	Upper Clonaneese	Tyrone
Paul Ernest Linkens	Magheramason	Derry & Strabane

13. That the Board of Studies, together with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 285 of the Code as follows:-

COMMITTEE ON THE RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES

1. The Committee held three stated meetings during the year.

2. Three ministers applied to be received as Ministers without Charge during the year. Their Church backgrounds were the United Reformed Church, the Free Methodist Church, and an Independent Evangelical Church in Wales. The Committee considered each application sympathetically, but required more details in each case. Up to the time of writing, no further correspondence has been received from the applicants.

3. The Committee agreed unanimously to support the policy of the Overseas Board of our Church of encouraging ministers from the Presbyterian Church in East Africa to come to work in Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for short-term ministries of two to three years, provided that the standards of our Church are fulfilled.

ROBERT G JOHNSTON, Convener

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

COMMISSION ON TRUSTS

1. Attention is drawn to the Capital Account of the General Investment Fund. The Commission advised the acceptance of the Trust Funds.

A J RANKIN, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Commission on Trusts for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 130 of the Code as follows:-

BOARD OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Convener: O J G WHITE

1. The Board met three times during the year and was represented on several sub committees during that period.

2. In many respects 1998 was a quiet year for the Board. This reflected the smooth and efficient running of the Finance Department by Mr Henry and his team. Under the surface however much important work continued in the area of computer systems and personnel procedures.

Year 2000 Compliance

3. As is well known, many computer and digital storage systems express dates using only the last two digits of the year and will thus require modification or replacement to accommodate the year 2000 and beyond in order to avoid malfunctions and resulting disruption. This is a complex and pervasive issue. The operation of the Church depends not only on our own computer systems, but also to some degree on those of our suppliers and customers. This could expose us to further risk in the event that there is a failure by other parties to remedy their own Year 2000 issues.

A programme designed to address the impact of the Year 2000 on the critical systems of the Church is under way.

Much of the cost of implementing the action plans will be subsumed into the recurring activities of the Church. The total cost of modifications to our computer software is estimated at £56,000. This cost has been capitalised and will be written off over 5 years and charged to the missions and agencies through the allocation of general expenses. Of this £56,000 total, expenditure of £41,000 has been incurred during the year and the remaining £15,000 is expected to be incurred in 1999.

The Board appreciates the long hours and effort put in by Mr Jonathan Kelly and his team in checking and implementing the new systems. Progress has been steady and the finished project should ensure a smooth roll over into the year 2000.

4. In the area of personnel the Board is again indebted to Mr Charles Robinson for all his hard work and expertise. The seemingly endless stream of new legislation relating to human resources has all been dealt with efficiently and effectively by him. All the internal procedures necessary to comply with the legislation have been implemented. To ensure that the outstanding work done by Mr Robinson is maintained, the Board has agreed to the appointment of a part-time Personnel Officer to ensure that the Church's employment procedures are adhered to.

5. Mr Robinson comes to the end of his term of office as Convener of the Finance and Staffing Committee at the June, 1999 Assembly. The Board wishes to put on record its appreciation of the many hours of dedicated effort put in by him. His expertise came at just the right time to ensure that the procedures

developed and implemented for the Church complied with the spirit of the legislation enacted. It is vital that the Church is seen to be scrupulously fair in its employment procedures. The work done by Mr Robinson has given Church House very firm foundations for its approach to all personnel matters. However, it is not only for his expertise that Mr Robinson will be remembered. He has consistently shown an endearing manner which made even the most difficult decisions palatable. His quiet and unflappable approach ensured that the disagreements which occur from time to time when people work together under pressure did not escalate into mountains of discontent. His ability to listen and then give good advice on a very wide range of issues ensured many long lasting friendships among all the departments within the Church. All of his friends and colleagues join in thanking him for a job very well done.

Rev J H MacConnell writes:

6. As Convener of the Board, Mr John White brought to his position his many wide experiences gathered through many years of service in the Church and in the world of business. His gifts of wisdom and common sense, as well as a great desire to do what is best for the Presbyterian Church which he loves, led him to give unsparingly of his time and energy to the work of this Board.

7. It is often said that if you want someone to undertake a task, ask a busy man. No one is more involved in Christian work than Mr White. As Clerk of Session of the large congregation of Finaghy, he has more than enough to engage his time. There is also his commitment to Belfast Bible College, which he has served faithfully over many years. All this experience has been put freely at the service of this Board. His ready smile and charming disposition as well as a ready listening ear and his gentle persuasive nature have served the Board well. We thank him for his commitment and know that there will be other avenues of Christian service clamouring for his skills in the days to come. We have been fortunate in the Board of Finance and Administration to have had his services.

Committees

8. Two of the Assembly Committees under the Board of Finance and Administration have reached the end of their useful life. With the advent of modern technology most of the work needed to compile annual statistical returns is now undertaken by staff in the Cash Office, with the assistance of the Convener and a few others, so that it has only been necessary for the Statistics Committee to hold an occasional formal meeting. The work of designing the necessary form and collating returns could be adequately done by the Committee on Finance and Staffing.

9. The Board would, however, place on record its appreciation of the excellent work done by the outgoing Convener, Mr David Lamb. As a fully qualified accountant, he was able to discharge his duties promptly and efficiently and supply the Church with the information necessary to discern current trends in membership, finance etc. We hope that his talents will not be lost to the Church as he undertakes other responsibilities for the Board, but in the meantime we express to him thanks that are both warm and sincere.

10. Alternative arrangements are also being proposed for the administration of the Getty Bequest, details of which are set out in the report of that Committee. Meantime the Board conveys its thanks to the outgoing Convener of the Committee, Mr T H Cochrane, JP, CDipAF, AFCS, for services rendered. As Deputy Financial Secretary he carries a heavy burden of responsibility in many areas, but he served the Committee on the Getty Bequest willingly and well. His advice and guidance will still be needed in the new arrangement, but in the meantime we express our appreciation of his services as an Assembly Convener.

ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

1. The Committee meets regularly during the year and maintains a responsible oversight of the affairs of Church House, the Assembly Hall and the Spires Shopping Centre.

2. The Renovation overdraft at the end of 1998 had been reduced to £1,113,000 and the Committee would reiterate their promise to cease the 10p in the £ of stipend assessment through the Incidental Fund at the end of this year.

3. The Committee is grateful for the sacrificial support for this Scheme over the years.

4. Income from lettings for the Assembly Hall and ancillary accommodation has been maintained in spite of the loss of the Pantomime.

5. One unit is not let at present and the Letting Agents are marketing it vigorously.

6. Comfort Cooling was installed in a section of the 2nd floor of Church House. This has generally been met with appreciation. A possible installation in another area of Church House was examined but it was decided not to pursue with this in the short term, due to the detrimental effect it would have on the present overdraft.

7. The Committee is pursuing Rent and Service Charge arrears and endeavours to keep these to a minimum.

8. The Committee maintains a programme of cyclical decorations to the building and has had to do some repair and renovation work during the year.

R I A ALLELY, Convener

FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met three times during the year.

2. Overdraft facilities were constantly kept under review.

3. The computer system was replaced during the year.

4. The Committee agreed that the Board of Social Witness should now be approved as an Employing Agency (see Mins 1997, p79 res 7).

5. The Committee would wish to express its gratitude to all staff for their work often in difficult circumstances caused by changes in working systems and at times by staff changes and illnesses.

C ROBINSON, Convener

GETTY BEQUEST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Allocation of Income

1. The Convener advised that the account for the year 1998 showed that the balance available for distribution was £9,036 compared to £9,056 in 1997.

2. After consideration, it was agreed to continue the same proportions for the income of the years 1999 and 2000 and to allocate £9,000 as last year in the following proportions:

	1998
	£
Overseas Board - Foreign Mission	1,287
Overseas Board - Jewish Mission	644
Home Mission	1,800
Belfast City Mission	5,269
	<hr/>
	£9,000

Par 286 (7) of the Code

3. Consideration was again given to the small amount of business with which the Committee has to deal. The Church's Solicitor has stated that it should be possible for the Trustees to transact the business each year. In view of this, it was agreed that the General Assembly should be asked to delete Par 286 (7) of the Code and appoint annually 12 persons from the Trustees (6 Ministers and 6 Lay Persons) to allocate the income and transact any other relevant business. The appointees would not have the status of a working Committee.

T H COCHRANE, Convener

INCIDENTAL FUND COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met on three occasions during the year.

2. The Fund Account (including General Purposes Fund) showed a credit balance at the year end of £63,000.

3. The Committee indicates a possible loss of £8,000-10,000 against a loan granted to the 2020 Vision Committee for the production of CD's and Tapes.

4. The Committee records thanks to Familybooks for the repayment of a loan (£50,000) granted in 1995.

5. The Committee reviewed applications for funding and recommends that the following grants be paid in 1999.

	£
Arrangements	9,500
Inter-Church Relations	50,242
Public Worship	800
Social Witness	1,920
Youth Board	6,500

Architecture	1,750
Peace and Peacemaking	2,500
Historical Society	13,700
Church and Government	4,520
Environmental Panel	150
Board of Studies	3,105
Conciliation Panel	3,000
	£97,687

6. That the Incidental Fund recommends that the mileage allowance in respect of attendance at Boards and Committees be increased to 12p per mile with effect from the General Assembly, 1999.

7. Thanks are recorded to all who give of their time to this Committee.

J D McCLEERY, Convener

STATISTICS COMMITTEE

1. Despite the undoubted hard work carried out in many Congregations and Presbyteries with regard to the completion of the Statistical Returns, the poor performance of a minority led to much unnecessary work in Church House. Attempts will be made to ensure a satisfactory degree of consistency across all Presbyteries in the future.

2. Statistical and financial data for 1998 is summarised in Tables 1-5. Comparative figures for the preceding year also appear in these tables.

3. The trends for the headline statistics over the last 20 years are shown by way of line graphs.

4. The Committee reviewed the statistics in some depth and noted the continuing decline. Details have been provided to the General Board so that they can decide on any action to be taken by other Boards and Committees.

5. A church-wide census will be carried out in January 2000, along lines previously agreed with the Evangelism Committee. Congregations will be encouraged to participate so that the January 1997 involvement level is exceeded.

6. Work on the handbook for those involved in finance and statistics within our church has been delayed by the need for clarification on the extent of the auditing guidelines to be included. It is intended to proceed using the approach of the Charity Commissioners in England and Wales regarding what is termed as an 'independent examination' of accounts. Appropriate amendments to the Code will be brought before the General Assembly in 2000.

D W LAMB, Convener

TABLE ONE

PERSONS AND AGENCIES

	1997	1998	Increase	Decrease
Retired Ministers	185	192	7	
Ministers in Active Duty	427	423		4
Retired Missionaries	4	4		
Missionaries in Active Duty	61	75	14	
Total Ministers and Missionaries	677	694	17	
Licensures	12	14	2	
Congregations	560	558		2
Total Families	117,530	116,220		1,310
Persons of All Ages	295,297	290,193		5,104
Contributors to FWO or Stipend	98,345	97,164		1,181
Baptisms	2,581	2,395		186
Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time	1,912	1,911		1
Communicants	121,814	120,465		1,349
Attended at Least One Communion during year	80,808	78,940		1,868
Ruling Elders in Kirk Session	7,324	7,264		60
Number on Rolls in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes	36,960	35,551		1,409

TABLE TWO
CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

	1997		1998		% Difference N.I.	R. of I.
	£	IR£	£	IR£		
Specified Sources	19,323,566	1,002,827	19,873,599	1,016,109	2.8%+	1.3%+
Building Fund etc.	8,925,511	581,322	11,001,499	987,117	23.3%+	69.8%+
“For Others”	4,159,513	216,377	4,607,723	250,169	10.8%+	15.6%+
Raised from other sources	3,586,341	521,638	3,759,245	495,984	4.8%+	4.9%—
Bequests etc.	4,469,571	117,845	3,590,087	148,707	19.7%—	26.2%+
Total Receipts	40,464,501	2,440,006	41,832,152	2,898,086	3.4%+	18.8%+
Total Receipts Less						
Bequests etc.	35,994,930	2,322,161	38,242,065	2,749,379	6.2%+	18.4%+
Bequests	1,774,116	64,981	877,332	72,232	50.5%—	11.2%+

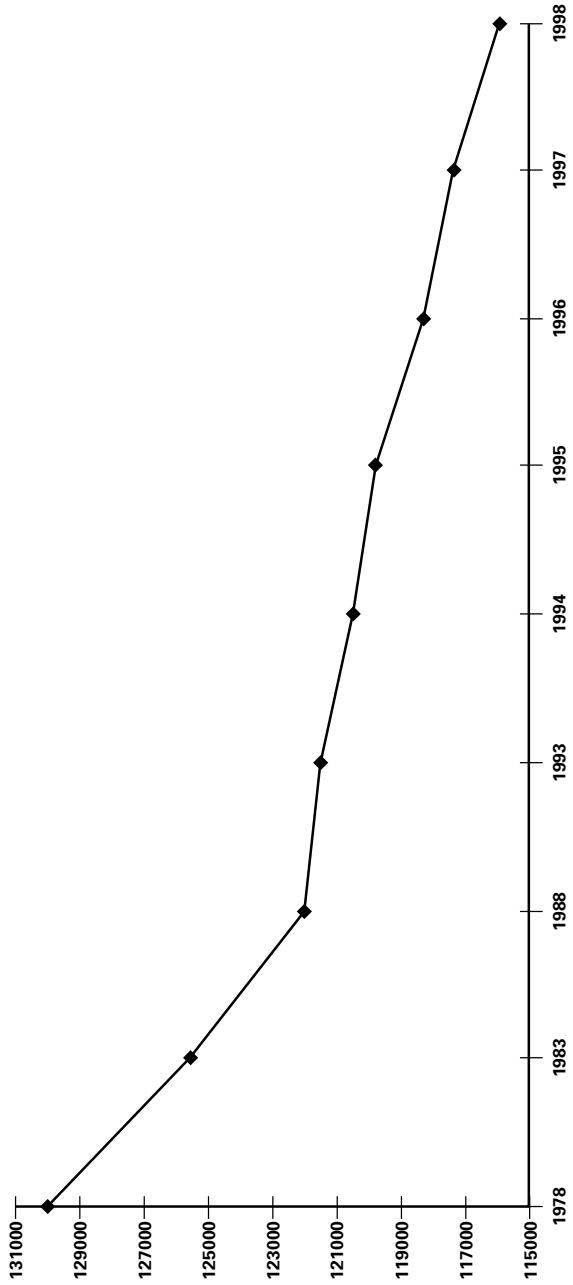
TABLE THREE
CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE

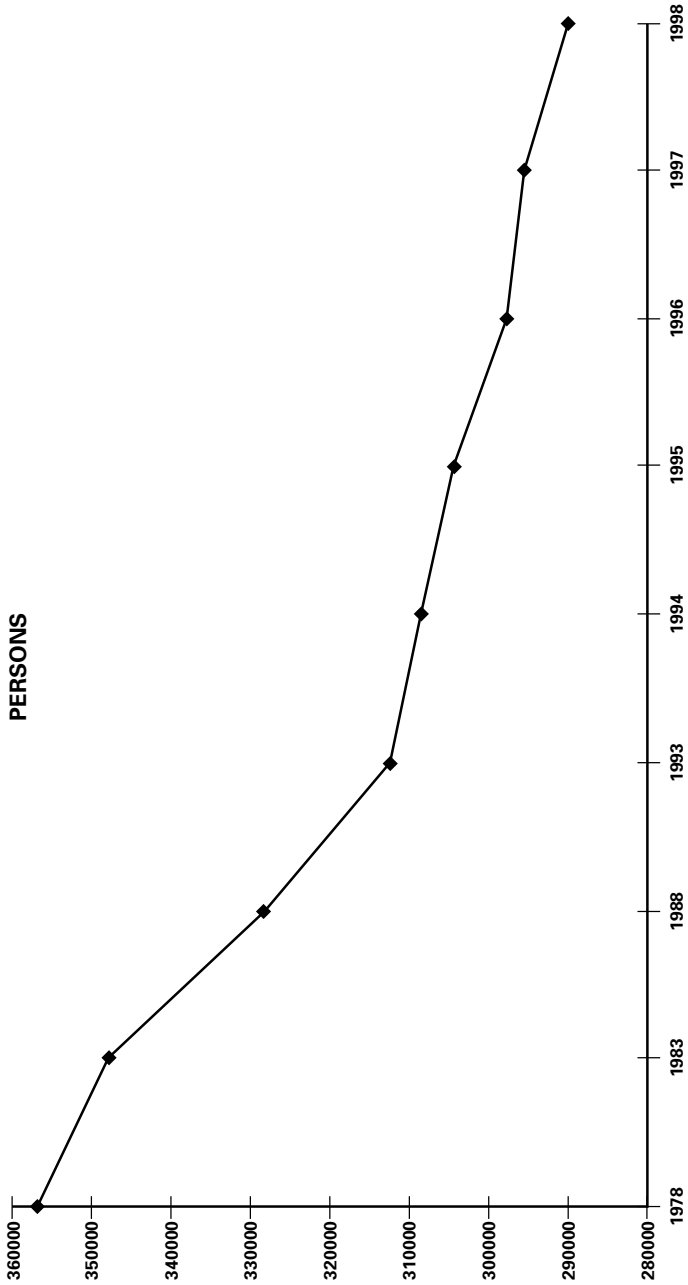
	1997		1998		IR£	% Difference N.I.	R. of I.
	£	IR£	£	IR£			
Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others	10,725,705	580,098	11,075,172	577,596		3.3%+	.4%—
Payments under Assembly Assessments	4,818,767	277,453	4,828,409	271,093		.2%+	2.3%—
Building, Repairs, etc.	9,997,984	549,787	11,171,656	682,564		11.7%+	24.2%+
United Appeal Schemes	2,454,705	103,146	2,448,216	100,274		.3%—	2.8%—
Supplementary Schemes							
Other Religious and Charitable Objects	2,418,707	177,672	2,868,579	204,790		18.6%+	15.3%+
General Expenses	5,656,726	474,195	5,650,443	519,783		.1%—	9.6%+
Total Payments	36,072,594	2,162,351	38,042,475	2,356,100		5.5%+	9.0%+

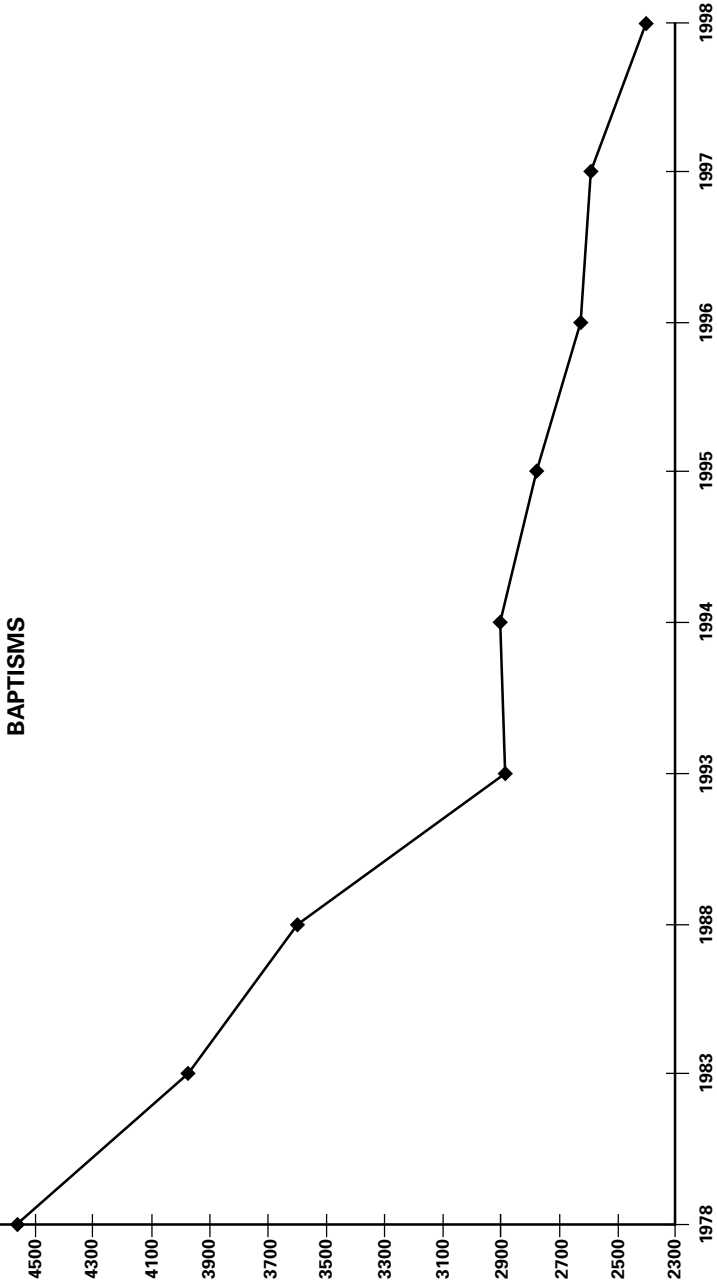
TABLE FOUR
CONGREGATIONAL BALANCES

	Closing 1997		Opening 1998		Closing 1998		% Difference	
	£	IR£	£	IR£	£	IR£	N.I.	R. of I.
Credits	16,106,169	1,142,188	16,286,533	1,164,207	17,393,858	1,525,504	6.8%+	31.0%+
Debits	3,848,266	66,128	3,833,491	64,423	3,645,943	53,641	4.9%—	16.7%—
Net Credits	12,257,903	1,076,060	12,453,042	1,099,784	13,747,915	1,471,863	10.4%+	33.8%+

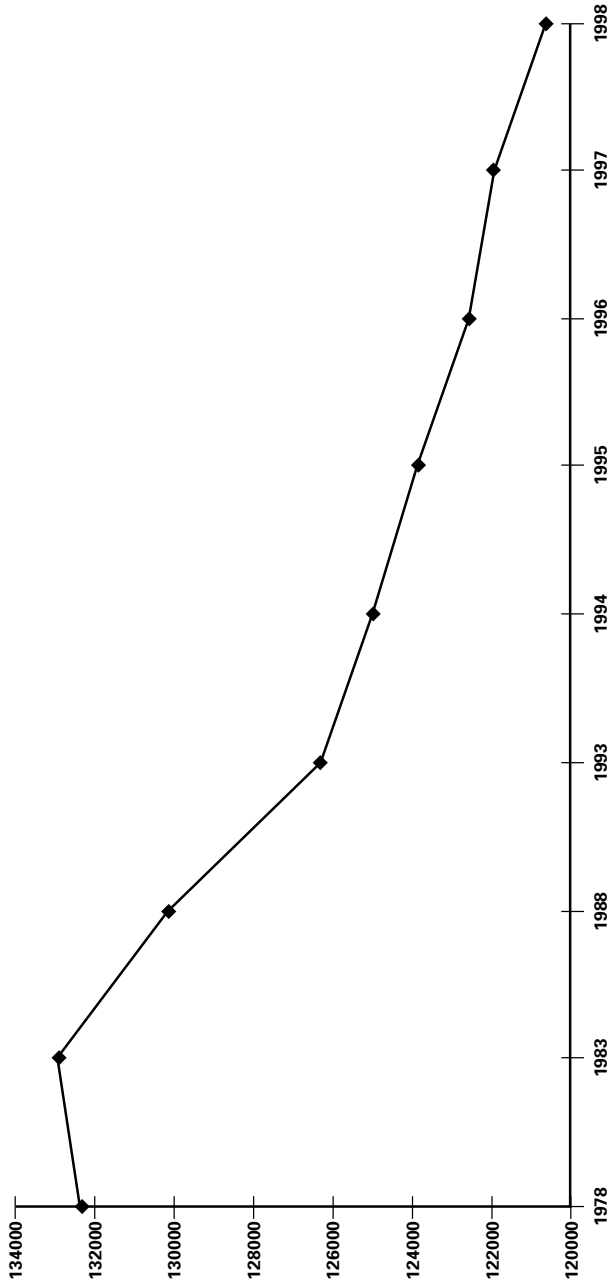
FAMILIES







COMMUNICANTS



APPENDIX

Salary Scales of Executive and Administrative Posts. (The undernoted figures are inclusive of a 3% increase applied as from 1 January, 1999 following the annual review.)

EXECUTIVE POSTS**Scale 1 (£16,440 - £19,668)**

Building Manager
Youth Development Officer

Scale 2 (£18,660 - £22,596)

Dean of Residence
Director of Nightlight

Scale 3 (£20,964 - £25,716)

Executive Secretary, PWA
Secretary for Education in Mission
Promoter of Evangelism
Sunday School Organiser/Christian Education Secretary
Financial Accountant

Scale 4 (£23,184 - £29,148)

Youth Officer
Superintendent of Irish Mission
Residential Services Manager

Scale 5 (£25,716 - £31,500)

Deputy Financial Secretary
Director of Ministerial Students
Convener of Overseas Mission
Director of Social Service
Information Officer

Scale 6 (£27,672 - £33,876)

Deputy General Secretary

Scale 7 (£31,500 - £40,728)

General Secretary
Financial Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS**Scale 1 (£8,328- £9,780)**

Junior Secretary
Telephonist
Building Manager's Assistant

Scale 2 (£9,780 - £11,424)

Secretary
Telephonist/Receptionist
Information & Technology Assistant
Design Assistant
Information Assistant

Scale 3 (£11,064 - £12,912)

Senior Secretary
Administrative Assistant

Scale 4 (£12,636 - £14,664)

Personal Secretary
Information and Technology Officer
Financial Assistant
Administrative Assistant

Scale 5 (£13,896 - £16,152)

Personal Secretary
Computer Controller
Administrative Assistant
Production Manager

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That Ernst and Young be appointed as auditors of all the Committees, Boards, Trusts, Commissions and Agencies of the General Assembly for the year 2000.
3. That the assessment for the Incidental Fund for 1999 be 4p in the £ of stipend.
4. That the assessment for the Re-development of Church House project for 1999 be 10p in the £ of stipend.
5. That the Board of Social Witness be approved as an Employing Agency within the terms of Section 4a of the 1997 General Assembly resolution (Mins p 79, res 7).
6. That the resignation of Mr John White as Convener of the Board of Finance and Administration be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Mr Franklin Adair be appointed in his place.
7. That the resignation of Mr Charles Robinson as Convener of the Committee on Finance and Staffing be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Mr David Lamb be appointed in his place.
8. That the Statistics Committee be thanked for its services and discharged, and that the Committee on Finance and Staffing compile the annual statistical returns.
9. That Mr David Lamb be thanked for his services as Convener of the Statistics Committee.

10. That the Committee on the Getty Bequest be thanked for its services and discharged.

11. That Mr T H Cochrane be thanked for his services as Convener of the Committee on the Getty Bequest.

12. 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, and that they report to the General Assembly through the Trustees:

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, Revs J McAllister, W D F Marshall, Very Rev Dr A J Weir, Very Rev Dr T J Simpson, Rev Herbert Courtney; Mr Wilson Ervin, Sir Eric McDowell, Mr David Bell, Mr A T Ross, Mr W H Henry, Mr T H Cochrane.

13. That Boards and Presbyteries consider all the available statistics on the continuing decline in families and persons in membership, especially among younger people, and forward their comments and suggestions to the Clerk of Assembly by 30 November, 1999.

14. That the Board of Finance and Administration, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 286 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 286 (7) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 286 (7) of the Code be deleted.

O J G WHITE

NOTICE OF MOTION

That in view of his service to the Church, especially as honorary Personnel Officer, Mr Charles Robinson, be made a member of Assembly under Par 97(i) and Par 107(a) of the Code.

O J G WHITE

UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: M H STEWART

Secretary: VERY REV DR SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

1. The Board is pleased to report that once again the “Target of Honour” set for 1998 has been exceeded by some £30,000. It expresses thanks to all who gave to the United Appeal and particularly those congregations which have been able to give more than their target figure.

2. The Board was able to pay in full the proposed allocation for 1998.

3. During the year the Board consulted with the Communications, Education, Home, Overseas, Social Witness and Youth Boards as well as the Presbyterian Residential Trust.

4. After considering all the financial statements and budgets and consulting with the Panel of the Overview of Funding, the Board has proposed a Target for the Year 2000 as set out in Schedules III and IV.

5. The Board gave further consideration this year to paying grants on account to agencies during the year in order to relieve the burden of interest and assist with cash flow. For the year 2000 the Board therefore proposes to pay 10% of each agency’s grant quarterly in arrears, ie leaving 60% of the grant to be paid as previously. In order that the Board can consider increasing this payment on account in the future it is seeking permission from the Assembly to increase the amount for contingencies included in its budget for the Year 2000 to £200,000, ie 7.6% of the total Appeal as against the 5% permitted by the Code. This would result in an increase in the Board’s total Appeal for the Year 2000 of 4.8% over the Appeal for the Year 1999.

6. In this respect the Board would encourage Congregations to honour the spirit of the Code which “encourages Congregations to endeavour to transmit to Church House, one quarter of their allocation each year in quarterly instalments and the total in any case before the 31st December”. This would greatly assist in properly financing the agencies of our church and considerably reduce the interest which they have to pay at present to carry out their work.

7. The Board is also considering how best it can improve its literature and educate and encourage members to improve their contributions to the United Appeal.

SCHEDULE I

Presbytery	Contributing Families 1997	United Appeal 1999 £
Ards.....	10,358	258,884
Armagh.....	4,125	103,099
Ballymena.....	8,069	201,674
Belfast North.....	7,802	195,000
Belfast South.....	4,497	112,396
Belfast East.....	9,927	248,112
Carrickfergus.....	6,261	156,485
Coleraine.....	4,832	120,769
Derry & Strabane.....	3,720	92,976
Donegal.....	1,315	32,867
Down.....	5,125	128,092
Dromore.....	5,357	133,891
Dublin & Munster.....	1,345	33,616
Foyle.....	3,063	76,556
Iveagh.....	3,679	91,952
Monaghan.....	1,006	25,144
Newry.....	2,809	70,207
Omagh.....	2,549	63,709
Route.....	3,581	89,502
Templepatrick.....	4,833	120,794
Tyrone.....	4,092	102,274
	98,345	2,458,000

SCHEDULE II

	Requested 1999 £	Proposed Grant 1999 £
Home Mission.....	230,000	230,000
Church Extension.....	278,784	275,000
Christian Training & Evangelism.....	59,000	55,000
Irish Mission.....	257,000	250,000
Education Board.....	175,000	155,000
Students Bursary Fund.....	50,000	45,000
Chaplains Committee.....	21,000	21,000
Youth Board.....	231,538	220,000
Rostrevor Centre.....	2,000	2,000
Guysmere Centre.....	5,000	2,000
Lucan Centre.....	2,500	2,000
Social Witness Board.....	64,450	57,000
Social Issues & Resources Committee..	1,500	1,000
ADE Committee.....	30,000	30,000
Thompson House.....	10,000	5,000
PCI Enterprises.....	3,000	1,000
Carlisle House.....	40,950	35,000
Old Age Fund.....	0	0
Residential Trust.....	35,000	5,000
Shankill Road Mission.....	20,000	5,000
Overseas Board.....	806,350	785,000
Publications Committee.....		
Department of Communications.....	115,523	100,000
TV/Broadcasting Committee.....	60,000	50,000
Union Theological College.....	258,830	230,000
Kinghan Mission.....	40,000	30,000
Forces Committee.....	0	0
Board of Studies.....	52,000	52,000
Contingencies.....		100,000
	2,849,425	2,743,000
Less Bequests		285,000
		2,458,000

SCHEDULE III

Presbytery	Contributing Families 1998	United Appeal 2000 £
Ards.....	10,094	267,611
Armagh	4,084	108,275
Ballymena	8,027	212,811
Belfast North.....	7,670	203,346
Belfast South.....	4,350	115,327
Belfast East	9,584	254,090
Carrickfergus.....	6,227	165,089
Coleraine	4,672	123,863
Derry & Strabane.....	3,715	98,492
Donegal	1,317	34,916
Down.....	5,050	133,885
Dromore	5,361	142,130
Dublin & Munster.....	1,298	34,412
Foyle	3,055	80,994
Iveagh.....	3,650	96,768
Monaghan	1,016	26,936
Newry.....	2,775	73,570
Omagh.....	2,557	67,791
Route.....	3,831	101,567
Templepatrick	4,745	125,799
Tyrone	4,086	108,328
	97,164	2,576,000

SCHEDULE IV

	Requested 2000 £	Proposed Grant 2000 £
Home Mission.....	230,000	200,000
Church Extension.....	296,934	275,000
Christian Training & Evangelism.....	30,500	25,000
Irish Mission.....	336,000	275,000
Education Board.....	225,000	190,000
Students Bursary Fund.....	25,000	5,000
Chaplains Committee.....	22,000	22,000
Youth Board.....	225,744	220,000
Rostrevor Centre.....	2,000	1,000
Guysmere Centre.....	2,000	1,000
Lucan Centre.....	3,000	1,000
Social Witness Board.....	72,000	55,000
Social Issues & Resources Committee..	5,000	5,000
ADE Committee.....	30,000	25,000
Thompson House.....	2,000	2,000
PCI Enterprises.....	13,000	10,000
Carlisle House.....	25,000	25,000
Residential Trust.....	100,000	50,000
Shankill Road Mission.....	24,000	5,000
Overseas Board.....	870,974	820,000
Department of Communications.....	117,500	115,000
TV/Broadcasting Committee.....	60,000	55,000
Union Theological College.....	239,615	220,000
Kinghan Mission.....	25,000	10,000
Board of Studies.....	54,000	54,000
Contingencies.....		200,000
	3,036,267	2,866,000
Less Bequests	290,000	290,000
	2,746,267	2,576,000

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the United Appeal Board increase the amount for contingencies to £200,000 for the year 2000.
3. That the United Appeal for 2000 be as set out in Schedules III and IV.
4. That the United Appeal Board for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 287 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF MINISTRY AND PENSIONS

Convener: Rev D S GRAHAM

1. The Board is pleased to be able to report once again that it has felt able to adjust the level of assessments in overall terms. It is proposed to reduce CMF assessments by 2.75p in £ stipend paid while at the same time increasing RMF assessments by 2p in £ stipend paid. This will result in a nett saving to congregations of .75p in £ stipend paid.

	1997	1998	1999
CMF	33.33p in £ Stipend	28.75	26.00
WMF	6.50p in £ Stipend	6.75	6.75
RMF	8.25p in £ Stipend	9.5	11.5
MPS (1978)	16.25p in £ Stipend	16.25	16.25

2. The Board was encouraged by the initial reaction at last year's Assembly to the possibility of introducing early retirement for ministers at 64 years of age. Consequently, we are presenting this year proposed changes in the Code to allow this to happen and also to simplify the procedures necessary when a minister intends to retire from active duties.

CENTRAL MINISTRY FUND COMMITTEE

1. At the end of the year the CMF had a retained balance of £1,614,525 which represents an increase on 1997 in spite of a decrease in the assessment; steady increase in stipends, and no longer having to make a subvention payment to the RMF have made this possible. The expenditure from the Fund shows that the shift from the payment for Ordained Assistantships to the support of Licentiate-Assistants and Associate Ministers continues; the signs are that there is an increasing interest in Associate ministries.

2. The basic ministerial minimum has been increased to £15,600 from £15,210, with comparable increases in the scale of increments. The passing of the overture last year has provided for increments at 5 year intervals throughout the scale. With the allowance made for augmentation, this means that the basic minimum has been increased by 3.35%.

3. The CMF is proposing to reduce its scale of assessment by 2.75p in £ of stipend, 2p in £ being a transfer to the RMF and 75p being a reduction in assessments. This is a further significant reduction, bringing the CMF assessment from 33.33p in £ in 1997 to 26p in £ in 1999, thus enabling

congregations to have more funds available for other congregational purposes while paying an adequate stipend. These steps have only been possible through the continuing generosity of members of congregations, particularly at a time of economic difficulty in rural communities. The CMF Committee gladly acknowledges this, and relies on the Church for continued support.

4. The Committee has continued to examine possible changes in the scope and scale of Family Grants. It was agreed that an in-depth review of third level provision is now needed in view of the changes being implemented in payment of student grants and provision of loans in Northern Ireland, and possibly also in the Republic. The Family Grants Sub-Committee is considering this and will bring a general resolution to the Assembly. There is also an Overture on the Books anent par 315 (4) of the Code.

5. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 1999:

(a) Ministerial Minimum	£15,600	(£15,210)	
After 5 years' service	£15,990	(£15,591)	
After 10 years' service	£16,380	(£15,972)	
After 15 years' service	£16,770	(£16,350)	
After 20 years' service	£17,160	(£16,731)	
After 25 years' service	£17,550	(£17,112)	
After 30 years' service	£17,940	(£17,493)	
(b) Family Grants , payable as per regulations:			
	Northern Ireland	Republic of Ireland	
Birth to 10 years	£190	(£190)	IR£440 (£440)
11 to 15 years	£285	(£285)	IR£690 (£690)
16 years and over			
(i) at school or similar	£400	(£400)	IR£1,275 (£1,275)
(ii) at university or similar	£1,000	(£625)	IR£2,350 (£2,350)

The grant in respect of any child who is 16 years of age or over falling into category (b) and who is in receipt of a maintenance or training grant shall be reduced by £1 for every £1 of which such maintenance or training grant exceeds £850.

- (c) Augmented Grants – the amount a Minister may earn, apart from congregational work, without the Augmented Grant being affected shall be £2,500 under Par 316 (2) (d) (i) or £1,500 under Par 316 (2) (d) (ii) of the Code, the total in no case exceeding £2,500.
- (d) Bequests – a Minister may receive up to £750 per annum from the bequests received during his/her ministry without grants being affected.
- (e) Differential Grant – the Republic of Ireland differential for 1999 shall be IR£1,650 (1,650).
- (f) The payment of £15 per month to Retired Ministers is to be continued.

- (g) That in reckoning augmentation for 1999 the Central Ministry Fund shall not take account of a sum not exceeding £1,050 (900) being income from the Commutation, Sustentation and Central Ministry Funds. (Code Par 316 (2) (e)).
- (h) That in reckoning Family Grants for 1999 the Central Ministry Fund shall not take into account the above mentioned sum of £1,050 (900).

JOHN McVEIGH, W J ALEXANDER, Joint Conveners

COMMITTEE ON RETIREMENTS AND PENSIONS

WIDOWS OF MINISTERS' FUND

1. The Fund showed a surplus of £15,914, leaving a retained balance of £82,883.
2. The Board approved the following recommendations for 1999:
 - (a) Widows Pension - £3,900;
 - (b) Widows not in receipt of NI State Pension - £3,900 plus £475;
 - (c) Widows not in receipt of NI State Pension or PWFA - £3,900 plus £500;
 - (d) Widows whose husbands were not eligible for NI State Pension - £3,900 plus £3,471;
 - (d) Eire Differential – IR£800.

Presbyterian Widows Fund Association

All ministers join the Presbyterian Widows Fund Association at ordination. Membership provides an annuity to widows which is presently £1,140 pa. The above benefits under the Widows of Ministers Fund, together with the pension to widows from Ministers Pension Scheme 1978, and also the annuity to widows from the Southern Association Widows' Fund were distributed through the Association. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Directors and officers of the Association for services provided.

RETIRED MINISTERS' FUND

1. The Fund showed a deficit of £75,603, leaving a retained balance of £303,184.
2. The Board approved the following recommendations for 1999:
 - (a) Basic Retirement Allowance - £7,800;
 - (b) Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic of Ireland with no State Pension - £5,548 (married), £3,471 (single).
 - (c) Eire Differential – IR£1,200.

MINISTERS' PENSION SCHEME 1978

1. The reports from the Trustees, Auditors and Investment Manager for the year ending 31 December, 1998 are included in the published accounts.

2. The Trustees have awarded a discretionary increase of 3.2% on all pension payments (in excess of the guaranteed minimum pensions) for the year commencing 6 April, 1999.

3. All 17 serving ministers who opted out of Scheme membership have now rejoined the Scheme.

Negotiations are proceeding with their insurers to agree terms for fully reinstating the benefits forgone during the opted-out period.

Such terms have already been settled for 9 of the 17 ministers.

4. The Committee had been asked by the 1998 General Assembly to investigate the feasibility of an early retirement option at a neutral cost to the fund.

It has concluded that there are no technical or current personnel problems in making the option available.

However, on the grounds of caution, it recommends restricting the option to those who have attained 64 years of age. The position can be reviewed from time to time in the light of personnel experience.

5. Also at the request of the 1998 General Assembly the Committee has issued to all ministers an informative statement on the pensioning of earned income not qualifying for pension benefit under MPS 1998. This statement is reproduced as an Appendix.

6. The Committee has been examining the Code with three specific objects in mind:

- (a) To give Presbytery the authority to approve the retirement of ministers who have reached 65 years of age – rather than having to seek Assembly approval.
- (b) To reserve for Assembly approval early retirement and other special situations.
- (c) To regard age 65 as the normal retirement date to mirror the provisions of the MPS 1978 Scheme booklet.

7. The Actuarial report for the triennium ending 31 December, 1997 was received during 1998. This revealed a healthy surplus of assets over liabilities with the Fund then standing at almost £31m. By the end of December, 1998 the Fund value had increased to £33½m.

Mr R Kerr writes:

8. The Committee notes with regret the retirement of Rev R I A Allely as joint convener but wholly recognises the pressure he is under with his remaining Church House commitments alongside his normal pastoral duties. During his years of office he has been unfailingly efficient, helpful and courteous in all his dealings and his welcoming presence and ready smile will be missed.

We would like to record our sincere thanks and appreciation to Mr Allely for his significant contribution to this Committee over the years and we wish him well.

R I A ALLELY, R KERR, Joint Conveners

APPENDIX

1. The 1998 General Assembly asked the Board of Ministry and Pensions through its Committee on Retirements and Pensions “to investigate ways of providing information on personal pensioning with regard to non-pensionable income ...”

2. The Committee in consultation with the Financial Secretary has determined the types of income receivable by ministers which would be regarded as qualifying income under MPS 1978 and thereby attract pension entitlement - and conversely what income would not.

3. The income which is pensionable under MPS 1978 and which excludes payments for expenses, is as follows:

- (a) Congregational Stipend
- (b) Income from designated full-time employment under an Assembly Board.
- (c) Payments from CMF and other funds administered in Church House excluding family grants.
- (d) Endowment Income
- (e) Income from Manse Farm or Glebe
- (f) Presbytery or Synod Clerkships.

All other income is non-pensionable under MPS 1978 and would for example include the following, inter alia:

- Hospital Chaplaincy Income
- Income arising out of a vacancy convenership.

4. The legislation permits individuals with more than one source of earnings, one or more of which is non-pensionable, to effect a personal pension in respect of their non-pensionable earnings. Individuals already receiving a pension are not debarred if they are otherwise eligible - ie they have non-pensionable **earned** income and are under 75 years of age.

- The legislation lays down limits on the amount of contribution that can be made in any year. The contributions are age-related and expressed as a percentage of the non-pensionable earned income varying from 17½% to 40%.
- Tax relief is available on contributions at the highest rates of income tax payable by the individual.
- The benefits can be drawn at any age between 50 and 75.

5. It is important that ministers are made aware that this source of pensioning is available to those with earned income which does not qualify for MPS 1978 benefit.

6. Ministers in doubt as to whether or not any specific source of income is pensionable under MPS 1978 should refer to the Financial Secretary’s Office.

7. Those ministers with non-pensionable earnings who wish to effect a personal pension should contact their financial advisers for further information since Church House is not authorised under the Financial Services legislation to give such advice.

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSE FUND

1. The Committee has continued to provide assistance to ministers, widows and deaconesses seeking homes for their retirement. During 1998 loans amounting to £105,000 were made to 6 applicants. Several other applicants were offered loans during the year but the offers had not been taken up by 31st December.

2. A bungalow in Portrush which had been left to the Fund was sold during the year but a suitable offer has not yet been received for an adjoining building plot. We also received a gift and a bequest totalling £13,500. The Committee is grateful for these gifts to enable us to continue our work which is greatly appreciated by those who benefit from it. At present about 50 members and their families are in receipt of assistance of one kind or another, but many others have benefited from short term loans which have reduced at least some of the problems of those facing retirement.

3. The Committee is concerned to assist those who have the greatest need and it has been decided that priority should be given to those who are within 5 years of retirement. The facilities provided by the Fund have also been drawn to the attention of deaconesses and missionaries in that category who may not have been aware that they too may benefit from the Fund.

4. This year interest rates have fluctuated dramatically and this has led to some problems for the Committee. It has been agreed that in future the Executive Committee will meet in December and June to finalise the rate to be charged for each half year. The guideline approved by the Board is 50% of a figure based on the Bank of England base Rate + 2%.

5. The Financial Secretary's Office continues to process all applications for assistance and we are grateful to Mr Ted Jackson and those who are involved with him in this work. Those who require further details about the Fund should apply to him or to either of the Conveners.

N McLAUGHLIN, L CASEMENT, Joint Conveners

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Central Ministry Fund

2. That Retired Ministers be paid in the current year a special grant (Code Par 315 (5)) of £15 per month from Central Ministry Fund.

3. That the rate of Assessment for CMF in 1999 be 26p in £ Stipend.

4. That the CMF Committee continue to examine how, in the reckoning of Family Grant, the total family income might be taken into consideration.

Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

5. That the rate of Assessment for 1999 for MPSF (1978) be 16.25p in the £ of Stipend as shown in the Column "Stipend paid to the Minister" or as fixed by the Union Commission in the case of a vacancy.

6. That, subject to Assembly approval, ministers may opt for early retirement from age 64 with an actuarially reduced benefit.

Retired Ministers' Fund

7. That the rate of Assessment for RMF for 1999 be increased from 9.5p in £ Stipend to 11.5p in £ Stipend.

8. That permission be given to the following to retire on or after their 65th birthday:

Rev James Frazer (Ballywillan), Rev Dr Arthur Harold Graham (Christian Training Centre), Rev Dr John Lappin (Carndonagh and Malin), Rev Arthur O'Neill (Fintona, Ballynahatty and Creevan), Rev Dr William O'Neill (Howth and Malahide), Very Rev Dr Rodney Sterritt (Greenwell Street, Newtownards), Rev David Clarke Caskie (Dun Laoghaire), Rev Arthur Clarke (Glascar and Donaghmore) Rev Robert Gilbert Johnston (First Saintfield), Rev Frank Russell (Castlerock), Rev James Tolland (First Donegore).

Widows of Ministers Fund

9. That the rate of Assessment for WMF for 1999 remain unchanged at 6.75p in £ of Stipend.

General

10. That the resignation of Rev R I A Allely as Joint Convener of the Committee on Retirements and Pensions be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Rev D J Boden be appointed in his place.

11. That the Board of Ministry and Pensions, with its associated working Committees, for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 288 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS

Anent Par 315 (4) of the Code

It is hereby Overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 315 (4) of the Code the words "provided that post secondary level studies are towards a primary degree, or other recognised third level qualification, as determined by the Board; that the student is not in receipt of income above the level to be determined annually by the Board and that these studies are commenced not later than 31 December following the student's 21st birthday", be added following the words "educational institution".

JOHN McVEIGH

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 221 (2) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 221 (2) of the Code be deleted, and that the following be substituted in its place:

221 (2) grant leave to a minister to retire early, nor transmit the request of a minister for leave to retire early from the active duties of his office, without affording the congregation, at a meeting duly convened for the purpose, an opportunity of expressing their views on the subject.

D S GRAHAM

Anent Par 223 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 223 of the Code be deleted, and that the following be substituted in its place:

223 (1) A minister who reaches 65 years of age is entitled to retire from the active duties of the ministry, with the emoluments accruing to a retired minister from the funds of the Church, if:

- (a) when applying to retire, he is a minister in good standing, and
- (b) the congregation affected by his proposed retirement engage to pay to the Central Ministry Fund according to the rules applicable to his case.

(2) The Presbytery shall have power, in the name of the General Assembly, to grant leave to retire to a minister who has reached 65 years of age.

(3) Other ministers in congregations, including those who have reached 64 years of age, may be granted special leave to retire by the General Assembly, upon terms to be determined by the Assembly after recommendation to the Board of Ministry and Pensions by the Committee on Retirements and Pensions.

(4) Ministers retiring from special work shall do so in accordance with the terms of their appointment, and with the consent of their Presbytery and the appropriate Assembly Board. Such retirement shall not entitle the minister to emoluments accruing to a retired minister from the funds of the Church, apart from such arrangements as may specifically have been made under the terms of his appointment.

- (5) In any event a minister shall retire not later than his 70th birthday.

D S GRAHAM

Anent Par 321 (3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 321 (3) of the Code be deleted, and that the following be substituted in its place:

321(3) Ministers who have reached 65 years of age who are granted leave to retire, shall, on the recommendation of the Board, receive a pension equal to one thirty-fifth of the full pension for each year's service in this Church prior to 1st April, 1978, on condition that the sum thus calculated shall not exceed the full retirement pension.

D S GRAHAM

Anent Par 321(5) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 321 (5) of the Code be deleted, and that the following be substituted in its place:

321(5) A minister demitting his charge after at least five years' ordained service in this Church completed before 1 April, 1978, may, upon application to the Board, be granted a pension equal to one fortieth of the full retirement

pension for each year served in this Church, beginning at age 65 or on his date of retirement, if later, or on becoming permanently incapacitated for duty. No back payments shall be made for more than one year from the date of application.

D S GRAHAM

Anent Par 321 (6) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 321 (6) of the Code be deleted, and that the following be substituted in its place:

321 (6) A minister retired under special arrangements, other than for reasons of health, shall not be entitled to any benefit from the Fund until he has reached 65 years of age, save as permitted by Par 223 (3); but the Assembly shall have power, on the recommendation of the Board, to authorise ex gratia payments in cases of particular hardship.

D S GRAHAM

SHANKILL ROAD MISSION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev J S DALLAS

Superintendent: Rev W M CAMPBELL

1. In the year that has passed, Shankill Road Mission Commission sought to fulfil the Lord's command to provide food for those who were hungry, a drink for those who were thirsty, clothing for those who needed clothes and a welcome to the stranger.

New Convener

2. Rev J S Dallas (Senior Minister, Whiteabbey) was appointed Convener and has settled in well to his new task.

Mission Facilities

3. The Clothing and Furniture Shops, under the able leadership of Mrs Sandra Irwin provided an important service to the Shankill Community as well as much needed revenue for the Mission's Outreach.

4. The Café and Coffee Shop were well-used and Mrs Rosalind Wilson and her staff worked extremely hard, not only in providing a varied menu, but a warm, welcoming atmosphere for people to come and enjoy a meal.

5. The Hostel for Single Homeless men, after a period of turbulence and upset due to external factors, settled down once more to a happy routine.

6. Mr John McFarlane and his staff worked hard to create a homely Christian environment for these men to begin to regain their dignity and sense of worth.

Government Cuts

7. Continued Government cuts to the Action for Community Employment Scheme resulted in more posts being lost. The final demise of the Scheme is set for July 1999 with its consequent problems for not only the Mission but many other providers in West Belfast.

Mission Worker

8. The Commission agreed to the appointment of a worker who would be responsible for DIRECT EVANGELISM into the Lower Shankill Area.

9. The person appointed would prioritise the work and seek to:

- (i) present to all, in a sensitive manner the claims of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord according to the Scriptures;
- (ii) set up and co-ordinate neighbourhood Bible study and prayer groups.
- (iii) befriend the unchurched and seek to motivate them to come to the Mission and to encourage former Church members to return to their fellowships.

Thanks

10. The Commission would commend and thank the mission staff for their faithful and enthusiastic work during the year.

11. The Commission would thank all those Congregations and individual supporters of the Mission who gave financially and prayerfully to the work. Without the continued goodwill and committed support of so many in the wider family of the Church, the work of Shankill Road Mission would become even more difficult than at times it is.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That Shankill Road Mission Commission be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 129 of the Code as follows:
 - (a) Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, Revs. J M Cathcart, W McB Campbell, J S Dallas; Moderator and Clerk of Belfast South Presbytery, Clerk of Session of Shankill Road Mission Congregation.
 - (x) Revs Dr I Hart, K McConnell, G F McKeown, G Moffett, J W Neilly, E D Smyth, N M Williamson, A W Boyd; Miss D Pinkerton, W Caswell.

TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

1. The following is an extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Trustees at their Annual General Meeting held in Church House, Belfast, on 15 April, 1999.

2. The Report of the Executive Committee and the Statement of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 1998 of the following were laid before the Trustees, and were adopted by them:

- The General Investment Fund
- The Commutation Fund
- The Non-Participating Trust Funds
- The Magee Fund
- The Tops Wilson Trust Fund
- The Fire Insurance Trust Fund
- The Fortune Mission Bequest

3. Moved by Mr W H Scott, seconded by Mr A L Jamieson 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 Mr W H Scott, Mr A L Jamieson and Mr W C Henderson and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

4. It was reported that the Executive Committee had also received and examined the audited Accounts for 1998 of the Getty Trust, Union Theological College, The War Memorial Hostel and The Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) and had accepted these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly. On the proposal of Very Rev Dr A J Weir, seconded by Mr D Bell, this report was received.

5. Two retiring members of the Executive Committee were re-appointed for a further three years, these being Mr Wilson Ervin and Mr David Bell CB.

6. Mr D Bell and Mr John Millar were nominated members of the General Assembly, according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iii).

Trust Funds

7. **Mrs A M Davidson Trust.** The total income available in 1998 for distribution was £6,372.50. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Union Theological College	£2,800.00
Church House Redevelopment	£2,800.00
Nexus	£772.50
	£6,372.50

8. **Sir Wm V McCleery Estate.** The total income available for distribution is £33,271.00. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Central Ministry Fund	80%
Retired Ministers' Fund	10%
Widows of Ministers' Fund	10%

9. **Estate of Miss Irene Scott:** The total income for 1998 available for distribution amounts to £6,893.50. The Board of Trustees recommend to the General Assembly that this be allocated as follows:-

Carlisle House	£2,893.50
Church House Redevelopment	£3,000.00
Guysmere Development	£1,000.00
	£6,893.50

10. **Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown.** The total income for 1998 available for distribution amounts to £4,424.00. The Board of Trustees recommend to the General Assembly that this amount be paid to the Church House Redevelopment Account.

GENERAL INVESTMENT FUND

11. Declaration of Dividend	15.4.98	15.10.98
Number of shares qualifying	4,127,196	4,213,291
	£	£
Income from investment for distribution and income tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers' Fees	502,381	658,000
Dividend per share	11.00p	14.00p

In the year 1998 £116,000 was transferred to the Dividend Equalisation Reserve and the balance on the Dividend Equalisation Reserve at 31 December, 1998 is £376,500.

12. The combined annual Dividend of 25.00p per share is to be compared with 23.50 for 1997; 22.00 for 1996; 21.50 for 1995; 21.00 for 1994; 22.00 for 1993; 25.50 for 1992; 25.00 for 1991; 23.50 for 1990.

13. Valuation	15.4.98	15.10.98
	£	£
Valuation of Investments	26,191,614	23,340,763
Cash on Deposit	394,975	508,362
Dividend Equalisation Reserve	308,500	376,500
Property and Ground Rents	2,390,007	2,390,007
	£29,285,096	£26,615,632
No of Shares Issued	4,127,796	4,213,291
Share Value	£7.0946	£6.3171

Crescent Church Loan Fund

14. The Committee considered applications from congregations seeking loans from the Crescent Church Loan Fund. Loans totalling £70,000 were made.

Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

15. The joint sub-Committee, representative of the Trustees and the Board of Ministry and Pensions, continues to monitor the investments, meeting regularly with the Fund Managers. In accordance with statutory requirements the Report of the Trustees and the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) together with the Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 1998 are included in the Volume of Accounts.

16. Separate minutes are now kept by the Trustees when acting in their capacity as Trustees of the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978).

Armaments

17. The Trustees have continued to keep the matter of ethical investment on their agenda. They are grateful to the Committee on Peace and Peacemaking for a major study on the arms trade, which is printed as an appendix to that Committee's report to Assembly.

Rev Dr T H Mullin

18. It was with regret that the Trustees received the resignation of Rev Dr T H Mullin, who had acted as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for forty years. He was also a very committed member of the Executive Committee.

19. As one with an extensive knowledge of the world of investments, Dr Mullin served the Church with grace and diligence. The Trustees particularly appreciated his willingness to travel regularly from Coleraine to attend their meetings.

20. They wish him and Mrs Mullin every blessing in the years to come.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Secretary

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendation regarding the Mrs A M Davidson Trust be adopted.
3. That the recommendation regarding the Sir Wm V McCleery Trust be adopted.
4. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Irene Scott Trust be adopted.
5. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Ida Mary McGeown Trust be adopted.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW TRUSTEE

Nomination of the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine - Rev Robert McC Bell

RESOLUTION

That Rev Robert McC Bell be, and is hereby nominated and appointed by the General Assembly as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in room of Rev Dr T H Mullin, resigned, and of the due appointment of Rev Robert McC Bell as a said Trustee attestation is made by the signature of the Moderator of the General Assembly and of the Clerk of the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Act, 1871.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE TYRONE MEMORIAL

Convener: Rev R KELLY

1. The Committee held a further four meetings this year. Discussion centred on the two schemes under consideration and responses to them received from the Board of Ministry and Pensions and the Union Commission.

2. The two schemes received some adjustments in the light of these further discussions.

SCHEME 1 BASIC FORMAT (Detailed examples in Appendix I)

3. Under Scheme 1 each congregation would be asked to increase the present stipend paid, by an amount determined by the Central Ministry Fund, in an annual review. In order to equalise the amount of increase payable on lower and higher stipends, this increase would operate on a sliding scale as indicated in Appendix I. While an increase of 3% is used in this illustration over the 9 year period, in practice the increase could vary annually.

SCHEME 2 BASIC FORMAT (Detailed examples in Appendix II)

4. Under Scheme 2 each congregation would be given a "stipend factor". The Central Ministry Fund would set a "base figure" each year, replacing the minimum. Stipend for any given year would then be calculated by multiplying this "base figure" by the "stipend factor" ie

$$\text{STIPEND} = \text{BASE FIGURE} \times \text{STIPEND FACTOR}$$

In order to calculate a congregation's "stipend factor", the "present stipend" would be divided by the minimum for that year ie

$$\text{Stipend Factor} = \frac{\text{Present Stipend}}{\text{Minimum}}$$

EXAMPLES

Present Stipend	(P)	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	30,000	35,000
Base Figure (Min)	(B)	15,210	15,210	15,210	15,210	15,210	15,210
Factor =							
	(B)	0.66	0.99	1.31	1.64	1.97	2.3

Because congregational finances may have good years and bad years, an average factor calculated for the past five years could be used to correct any imbalance at the introduction of the scheme. Again, an increase of 4% is utilised to project future stipends. This is also variable.

NOTES RELEVANT TO BOTH SCHEMES

5. Congregations would retain all income received above that required to cover increase in stipend and associated assessments. (Appendix III)

6. Congregations would be permitted to pay more than the calculated stipend figure, if they so desired. However, assessment would continue to be calculated on the basis of stipend actually paid to minister.

7. The ministerial minimum and the associated incremental payments would remain in place.

8. Congregations in unions would be treated as individual congregations in calculation of stipend, as at present.

9. The Union Commission would review the initial stipend, (Scheme 1), or the stipend factor, (Scheme 2), at the time of a vacancy and in the 7 year review process.

10. If a congregation experienced a dramatic change in its congregational base, eg growth or decline, the stipend could be reviewed on request to the Union Commission.

MAIN ADVANTAGES

11. On approval being given, either scheme could be implemented easily and immediately.

12. Both schemes allow congregations to retain more of the income generated through an increased giving.

13. Ministers' stipends would not be tied rigidly to specified sources as under the present system. Therefore, it would be less embarrassing for ministers to appeal for increased giving.

14. Either scheme removes concern over what is or is not to be included as 'specified sources'.

APPENDIX II
SCHEME 2

PROJECTED INCREASE IN STIPEND OVER 9 YEARS

Base	Present	1st Yr	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	4th Yr	5th Yr	6th Yr	7th Yr	8th Yr	9th Yr
Figure	£15,210	£15,666	£16,136	£16,620	£17,119	£17,633	£18,162	£18,706	£19,268	£19,846
Cong Factor	Present Stipend£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
0.66	10,000	10,340	10,647	10,969	11,299	11,638	11,987	12,346	12,717	13,098
0.99	15,000	15,509	15,974	16,454	16,948	17,457	17,980	18,519	19,075	19,648
1.31	20,000	20,522	21,138	21,772	22,426	23,099	23,792	24,505	25,241	25,998
1.64	25,000	25,692	26,463	27,257	28,075	28,918	29,786	30,678	31,599	32,547
1.97	30,000	30,862	31,788	32,741	33,724	34,737	35,779	36,851	37,958	39,097
2.30	35,000	36,032	37,113	38,226	39,374	40,556	41,773	43,024	44,316	45,646

Note:

- (1) In this illustration the base figure is increased by 3.0% per annum.
- (2) The figures given in this illustration represent the amount paid by the congregation towards stipend. Present legislation concerning additional payments from Central funds would remain in place.
- (3) As the application of the minimum would remain, no actual salary would fall below this figure as under the present system.

APPENDIX III
IMPLICATIONS FOR CONGREGATIONAL FUNDS

Under the present system					
Specified sources	50,000	75,000	100,000	125,000	150,000
Fraction %	37 1/2	32	25	23	20
Stipend	18,750	24,000	25,000	28,750	30,000
Total Assessments 80% of Stipend	15,000	19,200	20,000	23,000	24,000
Under the present system					
An increase of 5% and 10% respectively in congregational giving would have the following implications:					
Increase 5%	2,500	3,750	5,000	6,250	7,500
Increase Stipend	938	1,200	1,250	1,438	1,500
Increase assessment	750	960	1,000	1,150	1,200
To congregational funds	812	1,590	2,750	3,662	4,800
Increase 10%	5,000	7,500	10,000	12,500	15,000
Increase Stipend	1,875	2,400	2,500	2,875	3,000
Increase assessment	1,500	1,920	2,000	2,300	2,400
To congregational funds	1,625	3,180	5,500	7,325	9,600
Implementation of SCHEME 1 (5% increase)					
Increase (5%)	2,500	3,750	5,000	6,250	7,500
Increase Stipend	713	768	775	805	780
Increase assessment	570	614	620	644	624
To congregational funds	1,217	2,368	3,605	4,801	6,096

Implementation of SCHEME 1 (10% increase)

To congregational funds	3,717						
Implementation of SCHEME 2 (5% increase)							
Increase (10%)	2,500						
Factor	1.23						
Increase Stipend (base £15,818)	706						
Increase assessment	565						
To congregational funds	1,229						
Implementation of SCHEME 2 (10% increase)							
To congregational funds	3,729						
	6,118	8,605	11,051	13,596			
	3,750	5,000	6,250	7,500			
	1.58	1.65	1.89	1.97			
	992	1,099	1,146	1,161			
	794	879	917	929			
	1,964	3,022	4,187	5,410			
	5,714	8,022	10,437	12,910			

Note:

Under both scheme 1 and 2, an increase of 10% in congregational giving would not affect the increase payable in stipend or assessment. As a result additional funds would be retained by the congregation.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee be sent down to Presbyteries for comment and report to the Convener, the Rev R Kelly, by 30th November, 1999.
3. That the Ad Hoc Committee on the Tyrone Memorial be reappointed for a further year as follows:

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE MEMORIAL OF THE DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY

Convener: THE CLERK

INTRODUCTION

1. In 1998 the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster submitted a Memorial to the General Assembly on the subject of the payment of certain ministers. (Reports pp 243-244). The Memorial asked for examination of “the anomalies which exist within the current system”.

2. The matters raised in the Memorial were referred to an ad hoc Committee, which obtained further details from the Presbytery about its underlying concerns.

3. The Committee then considered the issues arising. It now submits the following as its “interim report ... to the 1999 General Assembly”. (Mins 1998 p 60).

4. Two main questions emerged:

(i) why do terms and conditions vary?

(ii) which ministers in special posts are full members of Church courts?

REMUNERATION

5. Ordination confers ministerial status, including the authority to administer sacraments, conduct weddings, etc, but does not of itself confer financial rights; salary and expenses depend on the particular appointment.

6. The remuneration of those in Recognised Ministries with bodies not under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly is a matter for those external bodies and not for the Church. The normal system of manses, CMF, augmentation, equal dividends, bonuses, incremental payments and children’s allowances was designed for parish ministers (including Home Mission ministers) and is not applicable to others.

7. Special ministries under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly include those serving in Union College and in Church House, and in a relatively small number of diverse appointments.

8. Ministers may also apply for and be appointed to certain other posts (such as Youth Development Officer) that do not require an ordained person. Ministers in such posts receive the same remuneration as any similar post-holder. Ordained status does not of itself entitle them to a different salary scale.

9. There are too many differences between congregational work and the wide range of non-parochial appointments to make simple comparisons or to attempt complete uniformity. While the ad hoc committee found no evidence to the contrary, the terms and conditions, including salary and expenses, for non-parochial appointments should always be set out clearly in writing, and candidates for such posts should satisfy themselves on these matters before

accepting the post. The appointment of one person to two part-time posts under different Boards may sometimes be necessary but is liable to cause difficulties.

10. The cost of buying or renting accommodation in certain areas (eg Dublin) can be exceptionally high. If Boards are contemplating making appointments in such areas and there is no “manse”, they should seriously consider providing rented accommodation or a “weighted” allowance.

11. Boards which currently have ministers serving in non-parochial posts (other than in Union College or Church House) should review their terms and conditions of service to ensure that such ministers are not worse off than those on the minimum.

CHURCH COURTS

12. The standing of ministers in church courts as voting members or “under care” (or neither) depends on whether or not they have been duly installed by Presbytery to the post in question.

13. The position of Stated Supply presents particular problems as it exists in various forms, part-time, full-time, active ministers, retired ministers, etc. To alter the composition of Presbyteries would be a major constitutional change, but arrangements are currently being made to include Stated Supplies who are not otherwise members of church courts on mailing lists. They should also be invited to attend Presbytery and Synod meetings and be given copies of Assembly Reports and Assembly Minutes.

14. It is recommended that the ad hoc Committee be continued for one more year to deal with any further matters that may arise.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That Boards which currently have ministers serving in non-parochial posts outside Church House and Union Theological College review their terms and conditions of service to ensure that such ministers are not worse off financially than parish ministers on the Minimum, and report to the ad hoc Committee by 31 December, 1999.
3. That the ad hoc Committee on the Memorial of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery be re-appointed for one further year as follows:-

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