

COUNCIL FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY

Convener: Rev N.J. McCULLOUGH

Secretary: Rev T.D. ALLEN

1. Despite the difficulties caused by Covid-19 much of the work of the Council has continued, albeit in a modified form.

Ministerial Training and Development

2. Fourteen applicants were interviewed by three panels consisting of Revs Robin Aicken, Dr Paul Bailie, Gordon Best, Eddie Chestnutt, Michael Davidson, Daryl Edwards, Gary Glasgow, George McClelland, Alastair McNeely, Joanne Smith, Very Rev Dr Ivan Patterson, Mrs Isobel McAuley, Miss Anne Taylor, Messrs Trevor Long, Roy Thompson.
3. Interviews for the ordained ministry were again held online rather than in person. While this was regrettable, the panels and applicants worked hard to make the process work. Having completed the process, fourteen students are being nominated to the General Assembly. Thirteen of these are due to commence their studies in September along with two who had deferred from last year.
4. In September 2021 there will be 35 students for the ministry studying at Union College. This is the highest number of students in College for several years and should be seen as an answer to the prayers of the church to raise up candidates for ministry. Nevertheless, the Council is aware of the large number of vacant congregations within the church and continues to ask God's people to make this a matter for ongoing prayer.

Flexible Pathways

5. Flexible pathways were agreed for five of the ministry applicants this year with arrangements reflecting the range of theological education and pastoral experience of the candidates.
6. The Flexible Pathway Scheme was established at the General Assembly of 2019 as a two-year pilot, with a review to take place after that time. In considering a review, the Council has realised that during this period only two students were enrolled on flexible pathways in the first year of its operation, and five in the second. To date, none of these students have completed their training. While there are some indications of lessons that might be learned at this stage, there is insufficient data for conclusions to be drawn. Therefore, the Council is requesting permission to extend the pilot for two years, with a comprehensive review brought to the 2023 General Assembly.

Summer Placements

7. All of the current second year students were placed on summer assignments along with the first years. This was because they were denied this opportunity last summer due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Licentiates

8. Four Licentiates became eligible in September 2020 with one gaining eligibility in December.
9. It was agreed that any licentiates from the cohort eligible in September 2019 that have so far not secured a call have their period of eligibility extended until 31 May 2021. A licentiate from this cohort has been placed on furlough, with his period of eligibility paused until he returns to work. The intention is to give every licentiate a genuine 12 months of eligibility for a call.

Post Ordination Conference

10. Post-ordination training took place ‘virtually’ yet successfully on 11 and 12 May with Zack Eswine speaking on Spiritual Formation. Conferences are organised for 2022 with Marcus Honeysett and team from Living Leadership on the topic of leadership and 2023 with Gary Millar coming to speak on preaching.

Preretirement Conference

11. The conference planned for 2020 was cancelled due to Covid-19. It is hoped that two conferences will take place in 2021, one in September, and one in November.

Students’ Bursary Fund

12. *Rev. Adrian Moffett, Students’ Bursary Fund agent writes:*
The Students’ Bursary Fund exists to make financial provision for students for the ordained ministry and their families during their time of study.
13. In the academic year September 2020 to June 2021, 21 students were in receipt of grants, all of whom are studying at Union Theological College, Belfast. The cost to the fund of grants, fees and all other expenses for this period was in the region of £383,000.
14. The Students’ Bursary Fund receives its income from offerings at services of licensing of probationers, of ordination and installations of ministers and other special services, and through personal and congregational donations as well as congregational assessment. Thanks are due to all members of the Church who generously support the Students’ Bursary Fund. As the restrictions necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic ease, those who have responsibility for planning a service of licensing, ordination and installation, etc. are asked to ensure full use is made of the Students’ Bursary Fund literature, especially the Gift Aid envelope.

(Experience has shown that where literature is handed out at an earlier service, those attending the special service are more likely to make use of the Gift Aid scheme.) When the restrictions are lifted, this literature will again be available from reception in Assembly Buildings.

Deaconesses

15. A new cohort of student deaconesses are due to commence study in September. Heather Healy and Cathy Smith will follow a revised course that has a greater emphasis on student placements.
16. It is encouraging to note that our most recently trained deaconesses have all found posts in which to serve: Paula Burrows in Ballygrainey; Louise Davidson in Bangor West; Sylvia Santos-Bryce in Groomsport.

Union Theological College

17. The College continues to teach out the final cohort of full-time students enrolled in the Queen's University degree. They will complete their studies and will graduate in the autumn. Some part time Queen's students remain. An intake of 16 ministerial students is due to begin studies in September 2021.
18. The arrangements for the undergraduate programme validated by St Mary's University, Twickenham are progressing and the first intake of students is planned for September 2022. The new BA in Theology, which has interim approval at time of writing, will once again enable the College to teach undergraduate students. Advertising for this course is planned to commence following final validation, likely in August.
19. Following a monitoring visit in March 2021, a favourable report on the College is on the QAA website.

Maintenance

20. Some deterioration has been identified in the ceiling of the Gamble Library and the library has consequently been unable to be accessed by students. Repairs are being undertaken over the summer period so that it can operate normally next semester. In addition, a decision has been taken to replace the two boilers in the main building which are faulty and well past their expected life.
21. It is hoped that the repairs to the Gamble Library and the heating system can be carried out without using investments.

Staff Changes

22. Mr Ken Brown retired as Bursar after six years of faithful service and wise counsel and we thank Ken for his valuable contribution to College life. It was decided to review the responsibilities of the Bursar and administrative needs generally. The following appointments were subsequently made: Karen Henderson as Head of Academic Administration and Alan McCormick as Operations Manager.

23. Professor Drew Gibson retires on 31 July 2021 from the chair of Practical Theology. Deep gratitude is due to Prof Gibson for the gracious and consistent service he has given to the College during his fifteen years in post. Dr Zach Cole has accepted a post in the USA and will leave in early August. Again gratitude is due to Dr Cole for the very significant impact he made on the students and the Church in his five years with PCI.
24. Rev David Leach has been appointed as Professor of Ministry and Director of the Institute for Ministry and starts on 1 August 2021. The Institute for Ministry will help the College develop its role as a training hub for the Church. The Council is looking forward to its development of the Institute for Ministry which, it is hoped, will also see collaboration with the Council for Congregational Life and Witness.
25. Following the retirement of Professor Gibson, Dr Alexander reducing hours and the resignation of Dr Cole, three lecturer positions have been advertised and appointments are in the process of being made.
26. Once again, the gratitude of the Church is due to the faculty and staff of the College who have undertaken an enormous amount of work in very challenging circumstances.

Reception of Ministers and Licentiates

27. Enquiries

Ten people contacted the Convener during the year for information about transferring to the ministry of PCI. Four of these have, to date, followed through with formal enquiries. One of these has taken the subsequent step of completing an exploratory week with PCI.

28. Transferring Ministers

Rev Andras Gilicze, a minister in the Hungarian Reformed Church, having successfully completed all required of him in the transfer programme, was declared eligible to receive a call, and has been installed in the congregations of Carrowdore & Ballyfrennis with Ballyblack.

Rev Laszlo Orban, an ordained minister of the Hungarian Reformed Church (in Romania), having successfully completed all required of him in the transfer programme, was declared eligible to receive a call, and is currently seeking a call to a congregation.

Rev Enrique Tagle Aguiar, an ordained minister in Havana Baptist Church, Cuba, having been received as a Transferring Minister and assigned to First Carrickfergus, has been reassigned to an assistantship in St Andrew's Bangor, with a view to eligibility for a call on 1 October 2021.

Rev Mariann Gilicze, an ordained minister in the Hungarian Reformed Church, having been received as a Transferring Minister, was assigned to a two-year assistantship in Gilnahirk.

Rev Trevor Kane, an ordained minister in the Free Church of Scotland, having been received as a Transferring Minister, was assigned to a two-year assistantship in First Portadown.

Mr Mark Haugh, originally from Northern Ireland and theologically trained in the Presbyterian Church in America, having been declared of equivalent to Licentiate status in PCI, was interviewed and received as a transferor. He has been assigned to a two-year assistantship in the congregation of Vinecash. If the General Assembly approves the principle of licensing transferors who are determined to be equivalent to PCI Licentiate status, he will be licensed by the Armagh Presbytery.

29. Applications to be received as Transferring Ministers

Rev Jason Lingiah, an ordained minister in the United Free Church of Scotland, has completed an Exploratory Week in Ireland, but has not submitted a formal application to transfer to PCI.

30. Ministers without Charge & Licentiates not in Assistantship

Under the Code, Par 219(4), Presbyteries seek authorisation through the Committee for the retention of Licentiates not serving an assistantship under Code Par 219A, and of Ministers without Charge. The Committee is grateful to Clerks of Presbytery for making annual returns in good time so that requests may be received in time for recommendations to be included in the Report Book. In light of the Covid-19 situation it was decided that, for this year, no changes be recommended to the status of any retained ministers and licentiates.

31. Requests for Permission to Preach in Vacancies

There were no requests for Ministers from other denominations to preach in vacant charges.

32. Transferring Licentiates

During the year the situation regarding transferring licentiates was discussed. As there are a variety of practices in the churches that transferors come from, it was felt that all transferring licentiates, and those deemed to be equivalent to licentiates, should be licensed in the presbytery in which they serve their transferring assistantship.

The Council also believes that where a transferor does not reach the point of eligibility for call, the status of licentiate should lapse. A resolution to this effect is included.

33. Recognised Ministries

Rev Dr WJP Bailie, Mission Africa, writes:

Mission Africa (The Qua Iboe Fellowship) is in its 134th year of operation. Mission Africa continues to pray that God might continue to be pleased to use the mission for His sovereign purposes.

The mission concentrates on three areas of ministry: 1) evangelism and Church planting, generally in difficult places and circumstances; 2) the strengthening of the African Church through theological education; 3) medical and compassionate ministry, especially women, children and the elderly.

Our work has been hampered by the Covid-19 crisis, but the majority of our activities have now resumed.

As Chief Executive, I have responsibility for strategic planning; pastoral care of Missionaries; supervision of personnel and finance at home and overseas and partner relations with a variety of Churches and agencies. I am particularly involved in promoting theological education in Africa and police and military chaplaincy in Africa.

I am also grateful to report that my status as a Minister in Recognised Service permits me to play an active role within my Presbytery (Ards) and the Council for Training in Ministry and the subsidiary committees of the CTM (RMLC and APS/AMS). I am particularly glad to serve the Church through part-time teaching of Old Testament at Union Theological College, and ACF chaplaincy. I am currently vacancy convener for Second Ards.

34. *Rev Dr Ruth Patterson, Restoration Ministries, writes:*

Like everyone else, life has been very different for us in Restoration Ministries during this past year. I have continued with spiritual direction, usually via zoom or telephone. I have given a number of retreats/conferences also via zoom. In June of this year I gave my first face to face 6-day retreat in over 15 months. We keep in touch with our friends of the ministry around the world and have become increasingly challenged to be aware of and live in the present moment. As always prayer is our constant heartbeat and support.

Pastoral Care of Ministers and their Families

35. The Council for Training in Ministry has a responsibility for encouraging and resourcing Presbyteries in their provision of pastoral care for ministers and their families. In March 2021 the Council launched the *Refresh Initiative* as a means to creating space for ministers to reflect, fellowship together, and be recharged, following the challenges of ministry in the midst of the pandemic.
36. Presbytery based *Refresh Groups* met across the church in April / May providing opportunity for listening and mutual support among small groups of ministers.
37. A *Refresh Week* followed (7-13 June) which included a *Refresh Morning Conference* on 9 June, addressed by the Moderator, Dr Andrew Collins, and Jonathan Lamb. 210 ministers registered for this conference, which was held in Assembly Buildings and was livestreamed to venues in Armagh, Ballymena, Drogheda and Londonderry.

Accredited Preachers and Auxiliary Ministers

38. The 2020 Accredited Preacher Course was postponed and then combined with a 2021 course. As a result 18 candidates will attend the Intensive in Union College from 5 to 9 July 2021.
39. The teaching element of the 2020 Auxiliary Ministry course was completed in March 2021 and pastoral practice is currently ongoing.

A Service of Accreditation is planned to take place on Sunday 19 September 2021 in Elmwood Presbyterian Church, Lisburn.

Conciliation

40. During periods of Covid-19 lockdown and tighter restrictions, the Conciliation Service was not called upon to provide any case support or training, although both were still available, as appropriate and possible within current regulations. Since March 2021, requests for both training and case support have resumed and conciliators have begun work again on several cases, with some course delivery also planned. Update and development training for conciliators continued remotely, with sessions held in November 2020 and April 2021. In order to expand the current pool of supervisors, four of the more experienced conciliators also undertook a supervision training session remotely with Rev Doug Baker.
41. Following Rev Jim Stothers' retirement as Conciliation Service Co-ordinator, Rev Dr David Allen has taken over this role and he brings considerable experience as a conciliator and Conciliation Panel member. Thanks and appreciation are due to Mr Stothers for all that he has contributed to the development and co-ordination of the Service.

APPENDIX 1**SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS**

ARDS	Paul Bradley	Union
	Andrew Frazer	Union
	Wallace Moore	Union
ARMAGH	Mark Hawthorne	Union
	Scott McMenemy	Union
BALLYMENA	Billy Abwa	Union
	Martin Delaney	Union
	Matthew Houston	Union
	Matthew Kelso	Union
	Mark Rodgers	Union
NORTH BELFAST	Stephen Cairns	Union
	Stephen Gaston	Union
	Matthew Horner	Union
	Michael Wylie	Union
SOUTH BELFAST	Paul Lutton	Union
EAST BELFAST	Andrew Ferguson	...
	Neil Stewart	Union
DOWN	Ellis Hanna	...
	Thomas Moore	Union
DROMORE	Tom Finnegan	Union
	Stephen Kerr	Union
	Andrew Martin	Union
OMAGH	Jeff Gawn	Union
	Graeme Read	Union

APPENDIX 2

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING MINISTERS WITHOUT CHARGE AND LICENTIATES NOT SERVING AN ASSISTANTSHIP UNDER CODE PAR 219A

Presbyteries have sought authorisation for the retention of the following as recognised licentiates or ministers without charge under Code Par 219(3)(c) (i), and the Council for Training in Ministry makes recommendation as detailed.

Ards

Rev C.D. Mawhinney to be retained as minister without charge
 Rev M.R. Catney to be retained as a minister without charge
 Rev L. Wilson to be retained as a minister without charge

Armagh

Rev J.W.P. McConnell to be retained as minister without charge for one year and that he be advised to apply to a local reformed denomination for reception under their care.

Ballymena

Rev D.C. Millar to be retained as a minister without charge

North Belfast

Rev Dr L.E. Carroll to be retained as minister charge
 Mr D. McCarthy to be retained as licentiate
 Rev S. Newell to be retained as minister without charge
 Rev W.A. Shaw to be retained as minister without charge
 Rev W.M. Smyth to be retained as minister without charge (retired)

South Belfast

Rev Dr L.H. Eagleson to be retained as Minister without charge
 Rev K.M. Mbayo to be retained as minister without charge
 Rev Dr P.G. McDowell to be retained as minister without charge

East Belfast

Mr Samuel Bostock to be retained as a licentiate
 Rev J.M. Casement to be retained as minister without charge
 Rev W.J. Harshaw to be retained as minister without charge (retired)
 Rev Dr D.J. Montgomery to be retained as minister without charge
 Rev Dr M.J. Welsh to be retained as minister without charge

Carrickfergus

Rev T.N. Bingham to be retained as a minister without charge

Coleraine and Limavady

Rev Dr R.A. Kane to be retained as minister without charge

Derry and Donegal

Rev S.W.K. Glendinning to be retained as minister without charge

Down

Rev Dr B.C.G. Black to be retained as minister without charge

Dromore

Rev W.J. Todd to be retained as minister without charge

Monaghan

Rev D.J.M. Boyle to be retained as minister without charge

Newry

Rev A.D. Mullan to be retained as minister without charge

Rev B.A.H. Wilson to be retained as minister without charge

Route

Rev P. Douglas to be retained as a minister without charge

Rev P. Turton to be retained as minister without charge

Templepatrick

Rev J.A. Gordon to be retained as minister without charge

Rev J.L. Tosh to be retained as minister without charge

Tyrone

Rev W.I. Ferris to be retained as minister without charge

Rev J.D. Montgomery to be retained as minister without charge

2. That the General Assembly encourage the Council for Public Affairs to make submissions to, and interact with, statutory authorities and related bodies on this island, attempting as far as possible to reflect the views of members in both jurisdictions.
3. That the General Assembly express its continued support for the devolved institutions in Northern Ireland; its view that this is the best place for new policy and legislative decisions to be made within Northern Ireland; and express its grave concern about the undermining of the devolution settlement by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland through the imposition of legislation on matters within the competency of the Northern Ireland Assembly, including abortion and the cultural package.
4. That the General Assembly express sincere appreciation to all those involved in education across the island of Ireland – governors and school managers, principals, teachers, classroom assistants, support staff and parents – for the many ways in which they have responded to the challenges experienced through the Covid-19 pandemic.
5. That the General Assembly commend the non-denominational Christian ethos of controlled schools as a sound framework for developing the educational, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing of children and young people.
6. That the report of the Council for Public Affairs be received.

COUNCIL FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY RESOLUTIONS

11.45am Wednesday morning

1. That the following candidates, their nominations having been sustained by the Council for Training in Ministry, be formally accepted as students for the ordained ministry, and placed under the care of their presbyteries:

Name	Congregation	Presbytery
Daniel Ballantyne	Druminnis	Armagh
Jonathan Boyd	First Coleraine	Coleraine and Limavady
Ryan Higgins	Markethill	Newry
Jordan Jones	Hill Street, Lurgan	Armagh
Francine Magill	Scrabo	Ards
Josh McCance	Donabate	Dublin and Munster
Stephen McCleery	Greenisland	Carrickfergus
Keith McIlroy	High Kirk, Ballymena	Ballymena
John McKee	Mourne	Newry

Stuart McKimm	Donacloney	Iveagh
Jamie McMillan	Carnmoney	North Belfast
Samuel Scott	Eglinton	North Belfast
Myles Tyrell	Woodlands	Carrickfergus
Steven Woods	Railway Street, Lisburn Dromore	

2. That the Flexible Pathway Scheme be extended for two years, with review brought to the 2023 General Assembly.
3. That all Transferring Licentiates and Transferors deemed to be of equivalent status to a Licentiate be required to be licensed in the Presbytery in which they serve their transferring assistantship. The status of such Licentiates will lapse for Transferors who do not complete the transferring pathway to eligibility for call.
4. That the recommendations concerning those whose retention as licentiates and ministers without charge has been sought by presbyteries be adopted.
5. Consolidated Resolution:
 - (a) That the assessment for the Ministerial Development Programme be set to raise £130,000.
 - (b) That the assessment for the Students' Bursary Fund be set to raise £175,000.
6. That the Report of the Council for Training in Ministry be received.

RESOLUTIONS RELATING TO OVERTURES

Wednesday afternoon

RESOLUTIONS RELATING TO OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS FROM 2020

General

1. That the Overtures anent Par 260, and anent Pars 223(1) and (2) and 223(3) of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.

Training in Ministry

2. That the Overtures anent Par 207(3), anent Par 219(5)(a), anent Par 219(6), and anent Pars 220 and 219A of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.