

COUNCIL FOR GLOBAL MISSION

Convener: Rev Dr SE HUGHES

Secretary: Rev WS MARRS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council for Global Mission is tasked with enabling the co-ordination and delivery of global mission as determined by the General Assembly (Code, Par 115), and especially where it is beyond the ability of the local congregation and not falling under the remit of other mission councils, partners or agencies. This entails the development of a strategy on mission overseas, including partnership with overseas churches and sending global mission workers; promoting world development issues, including providing for an annual appeal; lead thinking on issues of global concern such as the environment, race relations, international relations (Code, Par 278(3))
2. In undertaking this work, it could be said that the Council provides a bridge or threshold between the life and witness of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) as a denomination and that of PCI's partners, so that out of the overflow of such partnerships, opportunities for mission engagement are seized and the stories of mission shared widely.
3. The Council met on three occasions since the last General Assembly. It continues to seek to fulfil its remit through the following Committees, Panels and Task Groups, while recognising the importance of collaborating with and complementing the work of other Councils:
 - (a) **Outreach Ministries Committee** oversees PCI's global outreach initiatives and is particularly focused at present on building teams to take forward church-planting in Europe (Pars 4 to 12).
 - (b) **Leadership Development Committee** supports Leaders in Training through their studies, whether in the UK/Ireland or around the world; and seeks to build vision for global mission amongst church leaders within PCI (Pars 13 to 33).
 - (c) **Global Concerns Committee** grapples with a wide range of issues in relation to world faiths, the stewardship of creation, inter-cultural and international relations, and in this report highlights the issue of climate change (Pars 34 to 55).
 - (d) **World Development Committee** addresses the challenge of global poverty through both the Annual and Moderator's Appeals, with a focus at present on gender justice and the prevention of gender violence (Pars 56 to 65).
 - (e) **Personnel Panel** oversees the support of PCI's global mission

workers, dealing with calls to missionary service; member care development; memorial minutes; and appreciations (Pars 66 to 7).

- (f) **Global Mission Partnership Panel** deals with all partnership related matters, including allocation of grants and in the past year undertook a review of partnerships (Pars 76 to 93).
- (g) **Business and Finance Panel** handles matters of strategy; finance; property; staffing; and risk analysis (Pars 94 to 103).
- (h) **Torre del Mar Task Group** undertook a review of the Torre del Mar Church Plant Project (Pars 104 to 110).

OUTREACH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

4. The Outreach Ministries Committee seeks to initiate and support PCI's global outreach, identifying strategic areas of focus: church planting and evangelism; healthcare mission; conflict resolution; mission through education; integral mission; and Bible poverty.
5. In collaboration with the Global Mission Council's Partnership and Personnel Panels, the Committee seeks to share with PCI's global mission partners and to support global mission workers, wherever initiatives have a clear outreach focus. At present this embraces 19 partners and 29 global mission workers involved in a range of outreach initiatives covering nine countries. The Committee met on two occasions in the past year and reports as follows:
6. **Priorities for the General Assembly and its Councils:** The Committee devoted time to discussing the five General Assembly priorities (leadership, fruitfulness, discipleship, mission, community), and acknowledged them as a set of benchmarks with which to compare its current activities and ultimately sharpen its focus. Proverbs 16:9 states "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps". The Committee was able to observe readily how the Assembly's priorities were already being met through the range of outreach initiatives PCI was engaged in overseas and to affirm the importance of the ongoing review of its strategy in light of these priorities.
7. **Church planting and evangelism:** Last year's Assembly Report highlighted key themes relevant to the Council for Global Mission's ongoing involvement in church planting and the General Assembly resolved to encourage the Council to continue to develop its church-planting strategy, especially in the Western European context. This resolution is an encouragement to the Committee to cement and enhance existing church-planting efforts.
8. The Committee was encouraged to hear that the church-planting team in Porto, Portugal, has been strengthened by the arrival of Pedro and Amada Falcão. Pedro is from Portugal and his wife, Amada, from Brazil. All being well, Chris and Rachel Humphries, Tartaraghan Congregation, will also join the team in the course of the year (see

Personnel Panel Report Par 69). The Committee appreciates that the resourcing of the work in this way is vital to the future growth of 'Comunidade Pedras Vivas' and, more broadly, to the envisioning and encouragement of PCI's global mission partners, the Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal.

9. During the year the Committee devoted time to considering the work of the Torre del Mar Mission Church Project and was represented on the Torre del Mar Task Group (see Torre del Mar Task Group Report Pars 104 to 110). The Committee believes that this is now a 'kairos' moment, an opportune time to pause and reflect on church-planting and evangelism strategy and engagement, especially the recommendations contained in the Torre del Mar Task Group Report. A time also to consider where and how God is leading PCI to be involved in church-planting and evangelism in the European context, with particular reference to Spain, but also reflecting on PCI's work amongst migrant communities in London. To this end the Committee has set up a Church-Planting Task Group which will take this work forward.
10. **Bible Poverty:** A recent visit to Lebanon by Presbyterian Women representatives brought encouraging testimony of God's work in the Middle East. Especially exciting were stories of how God is using the distribution of the Scriptures in Syria, in particular among children and young people, to impact powerfully the lives of many families, not least those facing severe hardships. It is important prayerfully to uphold and commend the work of PCI's partners in this region - the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL), SAT 7, The Near East School of Theology, and The Bible Society of Lebanon.
11. **Engaging the church at home:** Last year the Committee's report reflected on the challenges of mobilising the church at home for greater involvement in global outreach, not least children, teens and young adults, and the need for creative approaches to be explored. It was noted that best practice would involve co-operation with other Councils to reach the target audience. In this regard it is encouraging to report that collaboration is now underway with the Council for Congregational Life and Witness as it seeks to implement its "Go Deep, Go Wide" strategic plan for congregational global mission involvement.
12. **Containers for Malawi:** For many years the Council has been closely associated with a Malawi Container Group, involving PCI members alongside others. The Group has been committed to filling and sending out containers with educational and medical resources to the schools and mission hospitals of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Malawi. While containers continue to be sent out, a decision needs to be taken whether the Container Group should be newly constituted under the supervision of the Council for Global Mission and the Committee has set up a task group to consider this question.

DAVID STEELE, Convener

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

13. Recognising the growth and vitality of the Church in many parts of the world and the challenges such growth brings, the Leadership Development Committee works along with partner churches and institutions for the development of mature, experienced, Christian leadership around the world. This endeavour is in line with the priorities for Councils set by the General Assembly 2017, in particular the development of effective leadership according to biblical patterns and expectations, and also investment in the fruitfulness of PCI's life and witness.
14. The Committee's work involves liaising with the Global Mission Personnel Panel on the placement, support, review and evaluation of Global Mission Workers involved in leadership development; liaising with the Global Mission Partnership Panel on the provision of leadership development grants to partner churches and institutions; and ensuring the story of leadership development is told widely through the PCI website, magazine articles and prayer resources.
15. In the past year the Committee considered possible new partnerships with a leadership development focus. Potential involvement with Southern Theological Seminary (STS), Argentina, remains under consideration, but the Committee believes there would need to be very good reasons for taking this relationship further at this time. PCI's focus, first and foremost, would need to be on building church-to-church relationships in this context.
16. The Committee underlined the importance of grassroots theological training as it confirmed its support and the strategic value of PCI partnering with Theological Education by Extension College, (TEEC) South Africa, whilst resolving to continue their support for Theological Education by Extension Malawi, (TEEM) especially through its forthcoming period of transition in leadership.
17. The Leaders in Training Panel continues to oversee the provision of scholarship funding for partner church 'Leaders in Training' whether for study in the UK, Ireland or further afield. Where required, the Panel liaises with universities and colleges, ensures the provision of pastoral care, reception and orientation for Leaders in Training, and provides guidelines to congregations for sponsoring and supporting Leaders in Training. Leader in Training scholarships totalling £54,129 were approved for the year 2018.
18. The Panel also assists in the preparation of scholarship applications for submission to the Lindsay Memorial Fund. In this regard, it is good to report that Mr Paul Kawale, a health systems researcher who designs and implements public health interventions at Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Nkhoma Hospital, Malawi, successfully defended his PhD thesis on Global Health at Edinburgh University in March 2018 after which he visited Belfast and met with those with an

interest in healthcare mission. The Lindsay Memorial Fund is currently supporting three members of Faculty at Zomba Theological College, Malawi, each undertaking a PhD by distance through Aberdeen University, only travelling to Aberdeen for 'Summer Schools'.

19. The importance of being able to recount 'stories' to celebrate how God has blessed the ongoing work of scholarship and grant recipients was highlighted by the Committee in the course of its engaging in a communications review.
20. The Global Envisioning Panel seeks to envision PCI ministers and students for the ministry through providing an annual series of lectures on the Missiological Short Course and a Licentiates Training Day at Union Theological College (UTC). It also does its best to facilitate overseas missional opportunities for ministers and others in PCI's leadership as part of their sabbatical study so as to promote missiological insight and experience, not least though the witness and example of global Christian leaders from PCI's partners, especially those serving in the context of persecution and hardship. In January 2018 one PCI minister took part in a Ministers Envisioning Team to the Philippines facilitated by the Global Envisioning Panel in collaboration with one of PCI's Specialist Service Agency partners, Wycliffe Bible Translators.
21. On occasions, members of UTC Faculty, PCI ministers and other Presbyterians are supported as they volunteer to undertake concentrated, short-term visits to deliver theological training in global mission partner church training institutions.
22. **Overseas Visits:** The following overseas visits took place with a leadership development focus:
23. **Malawi and Kenya:** Rev Uel Marrs visited Malawi and Kenya in August 2017, and explored the work of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Lay Training Centre where specialist training is being given to ministers for mission parishes in remote areas. He also met with Rev Patrick Muthungu, Director of the PCEA Theological Education by Extension Programme, to discuss recent developments and the role of Naomi Leremore with the programme.
24. **India:** Rev John Faris represented PCI at the Church of North India Synod meetings in Delhi at the end of September 2017 and visited CNI Gujarat Diocese. Rev Sanjay Malaviya is the new Principal of Gujarat United School of Theology (GUST) and PCI's relational support is very much valued. It would be desirable to help the Principal to be upskilled to PhD level using a distance model, and to develop links between GUST and UTC both by UTC students visiting GUST for a month; and visiting lecturers being sent out to help with GUST's doctoral programmes. Aspects of the GUST infrastructure are in poor condition as the building is now 104 years old and financial support for maintenance and renovation is needed.
25. **Hungary:** In October 2017, Rev Dr Peter McDowell visited Balázs Ódor, International Relations Officer of the Hungarian Reformed

Church and undertook some introductory lectures in missiology at Pápa Reformed Theological College where he was hosted by Rev Zsolt Barta. While Hungarian students are currently coming to UTC under the Erasmus scheme, in terms of PCI's engagement it was agreed that providing an opportunity for Hungarian ministers to come to Ireland for short sabbaticals is a good model to pursue. The Very Rev Dr Ivan Patterson continues to be involved in facilitating groups of Hungarian ministers to come to Ireland, and PCI ministers to visit Hungary.

26. **Myanmar:** Rev Dr Peter McDowell visited Myanmar in July 2017, and reflected on the opportunities that exist for short term visits and projects. He noted the prime importance of building relationships, not resorting to a partnership focused on money as a result of geographical distance.
27. Discussion is taking place with UTC regarding the possibility of a member of the Faculty of Tahan Theological College (TTC) undertaking a Masters or PhD by distance. It was agreed that this be pursued under the Leaders in Training Panel in conjunction with UTC.
28. Rev Dr Ian Hart hopes to go to teach Old Testament at Tahan Theological College over the summer months in 2018.
29. **France:** Rev Prof Gordon Campbell visited the Faculté Jean Calvin in Aix-en-Provence in January 2018 where his focus was on continuing to deliver New Testament courses, along with preaching responsibilities.
30. **Latvia:** In March 2018 Rev Prof Gordon Campbell engaged in a week of intensive teaching in John's Gospel at the Baltic Reformed Theological College where he was encouraged by the good attendance.
31. **Lebanon:** Rev Uel Marrs visited Lebanon along with Mrs Elma Leeburn, PW President, and Mrs Pauline Kennedy, Women's Ministry and PW Development Officer. They had a short meeting with Rev George Sabra, Principal of the Near East School of Theology and the focus of that discussion was on the newly published Institutes of John Calvin, two volumes, which have now for the first time been translated into Arabic. The first 1,000 copies have been printed and sold to ministers in the Middle East and North Africa with the hope of a reprint, funding permitting, in the near future.
32. **Jordan:** Rev Dr Martyn Cowan, Lecturer in Historical Theology at UTC is to lecture in the Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS) in May 2018.
33. The Committee expressed its congratulations to Rev Dr Peter McDowell on his appointment to lecture in missiology at Belfast Bible College and its gratitude for all that he has contributed through his involvement with PCI's leadership development initiatives.

JOHN FARIS, Convener

GLOBAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

34. The Global Concerns Committee operates in the interface between the local and the global, seeking to engage the Church with issues of global concern which impact those on this island and yet are much more wide-reaching in scope. Grappling with such issues is an extension of a commitment to mission and discipleship, challenging how PCI thinks, acts and interacts with the world. In an increasingly diverse and secular local context these issues will only become more relevant.
35. In this regard PCI has so much to learn from partners locally and around the world; people who have experienced living with some of these challenging issues. This is particularly so in the interface between world faiths, in contexts of civil conflict and religious persecution, and as people grapple with changing climate and natural disasters.
36. The Committee has engaged in some preliminary exploration of a theology of suffering, seeking to tease out key questions and the lessons for PCI. The faith and resilience, grace and compassion of many in PCI's partner churches has been especially inspirational and provides context and motivation to the work of the Committee's respective panels.

WORLD FAITHS PANEL

37. The World Faiths Panel, convened by Rev Robin Quinn, continues to seek ways to lead thinking within PCI in regards to other world faiths. Initially the focus has been on Islam, compiling a list of resources and questions that church members may be asking. Having piloted the Interserve Friendship First course the Panel is exploring channels to encourage congregations to use it where appropriate, including through a review in the Herald.
38. '30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World' has proved to be a useful resource and will be made available again in advance of Ramadan, which this year is from 16th May to 14th June. A similar 15-day resource on the Hindu world, produced by Interserve and which would be promoted during the Diwali Festival in November, is being considered.
39. The Panel has also been researching the numbers of Muslims in both jurisdictions on the Island of Ireland. The 2016 Census for the Republic of Ireland shows that there are 63,400 people who call themselves Muslim. In Northern Ireland, the 2011 Census does not give a breakdown of 'other religions' of which there are 0.82% or 14,849. These are spread throughout the province with the biggest concentrations in South and East Belfast and North Down. The website of the Belfast Islamic Centre – which is now situated in the former Aldersgate House on University Road – claims there are 6,000 Muslims in Northern Ireland with the majority in Belfast.

40. In response to a clear need for more information, the Panel is drawing up a positive statement on the uniqueness of the Christian Faith which will provide direction for engagement with people of other faiths. Starting from the supremacy and uniqueness of Jesus Christ and an affirmation of what PCI believes, it would then proceed to provide guidance on how to engage with people of other faiths. This would include showing respect and sensitivity, avoiding a militant approach and loving people with whom Christians may not agree.
41. The aim is to equip church members to know and be able to give a reason for what they believe in relation to anyone else, be they Muslim, Hindu, of other faiths or none, and thus building up their confidence to articulate their faith and engage with those around them.

STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION PANEL

42. The Stewardship of Creation Panel, following its interim report to the 2017 General Assembly, has developed a more comprehensive report for the 2018 General Assembly (see Appendix A). The Panel, led by Convener, Rev John Hanson, is to be commended for their work.
43. It is important to acknowledge that, while the vast majority of scientists agree on human induced climate change, there is a significant and vocal dissenting voice. However, the Panel encourages all PCI members to be open to being challenged by this issue and to view it as an essential aspect of discipleship.
44. The Panel believes that it is important that the thrust, energy and spirit of the paper communicates the need for God's love through the respect and care for God's property and highlighting love for one's neighbour, both near and far. This is especially the case for people who are vulnerable. Those in poverty are most likely to bear the brunt of adverse climate conditions.
45. Caring for God's creation and loving ones neighbours are core discipleship principles which must be reflected in Christian lifestyles. Small and incremental steps in adjusting how one lives including reducing, reusing and recycling, can make a significant difference.

INTER-CULTURAL RELATIONS PANEL

46. The Inter-Cultural Relations Panel meets regularly under the Convenership of the Rev Helen Freeburn. Immigration continues to be a 'hot topic'. Sadly, the human dimension can often be lost in the rhetoric and statistics.
47. The Panel continues to develop a Bible Study resource on the Book of Ruth, exploring Ruth's story as an immigrant coming to live in the midst of God's people. This will be a series of six studies which help

us to engage with the biblical text and issues relating to immigration. A complementary audio visual resource relating stories from relevant people and congregations is being developed in tandem. Conversations with the Council for Congregational Life and Witness and with the Creative Production Department are on-going.

48. Syrian refugees continue to arrive in Northern Ireland on a regular basis. There are over 800 to date and this number is expected to double under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The vast majority are Muslim and are dispersed throughout Northern Ireland. About 2,000 have arrived in the Republic of Ireland since the beginning of 2016 under a similar scheme, but the approach here has been more centrally controlled, leading to challenges regarding integration.
49. There are a number of other interesting developments in the Republic of Ireland regarding immigration. These include the Irish Government's commitment to introduce a community refugee sponsorship scheme similar to that of Canada. As in Canada, it is hoped that churches will take a leadership role in sponsoring refugees when this scheme begins. Secondly, a Supreme Court ruling has required the Irish Government to give asylum seekers access to the labour market. However, Churches and other non-government bodies are concerned that the new scheme is so restrictive as to effectively prevent access.
50. Over the past year the Panel has reviewed historic relationships with other bodies. As a result the decision was taken not to continue links with Diakonia Council of Churches in South Africa. While respecting the good work they have done and are doing, and acknowledging that there is still much to be done in the developing of the new South Africa, it was felt that as far as inter-cultural relations was concerned, PCI's focus should lie elsewhere. On the other hand it was agreed that PCI's relationship with local partner Embrace should be strengthened.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PANEL

51. The International Relations Panel is convened by the Rev Dr Donald Watts. The focus of this Panel is on the Middle East with two particular spheres of interest; Syria/Lebanon and Israel/Palestine. Relationship building is undoubtedly the way to a better understanding of the complexities of the region. Key to this is strengthening PCI's relationship with the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL).
52. A recent visit by Presbyterian Women representatives to the region, accompanied by Rev Uel Marrs, was very positive. One aspect of this was following up on the PW Project in support of NESSL's Damascus Congregation, building on the historical involvement of Irish Presbyterian Missionaries who originally planted this congregation in 1866.

53. The Panel is exploring how best to build on these relationships. Possible options include an envisioning trip to Lebanon to connect with NESSL and further historic links with the Near East School of Theology (NEST).
54. The Israel/Palestine situation is a massive and complex issue. The Panel is currently exploring whether the organisation 'Musalaha' is an appropriate entry point to a better understanding of the situation. Musalaha is dealing with reconciliation between Messianic Jews and the Palestinian Christians. Two members of the organisation, Salim Munayer, an Arab Christian, and Lisa Loden, a Messianic Jew, were in Northern Ireland at the invitation of the Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention last August, and met with, among others, members of the Panel.
55. As each of the Panels has engaged with pertinent issues of global concern through this past year, and sought to be relevant and biblical in process and product, there is a sense of gratitude to God for His guidance, and a deep desire to bring glory to Him.

RICHARD KERR, Convener

WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

56. The 2017 World Development Appeal was launched on Thursday, 19th October 2017 under the strapline, 'A Beautiful Idea: Women's Voices in Fragile States' This was the first year in a four-year map which had been laid out for the Appeal earlier in the year, a map designed to offer a longer-term perspective on sustainable development to the wider church.
57. In an ongoing partnership with Tearfund and Christian Aid, the four years will be linked together by an overarching theme: the challenges of sustainable development in fragile states, with a particular focus on gender justice and the prevention of gender-based violence. In years three and four, return visits to the partners highlighted in years one and two will enable PCI to receive from them a fuller perspective and deeper insight into the work they are doing.
58. In cooperation with Christian Aid and Tearfund, two workshops were held in Assembly Buildings in connection with the Appeal, one in June 2017 and one in October (following the launch). These provided an introduction to the issues raised by gender-based violence, and the importance of its prevention as a core task in development work. They were intended primarily for World Development Committee members and Presbytery agents, and the Committee expresses warm thanks to Christian Aid and Tearfund for their support.
59. The partners highlighted in the 2017 Appeal, Action Entraide and Congo Initiative, are based in the Democratic Republic of Congo,

where a focus on gender justice and the prevention of gender-based violence is at the core of peacebuilding and community development. Two videos were produced, one for general congregational use, and one recommended for adults only. A survey of ministers and World Development Agents is helping to assess the Appeal materials provided, both this year and in general.

60. The Committee again expresses its warm gratitude to the congregations and individuals whose generosity and interest are a constant encouragement, and whose support for the Appeal remains a powerful public witness to the resilient good news of the gospel.
61. The Committee is pleased to report that at the meeting held on Thursday, 8th February 2018, it was able to disburse £400,000 from the 2017 Appeal (£200,000 each to Tearfund and Christian Aid). Between 1st October 2017 and 21st March 2018 a total of £555,233 had been received into the World Development Appeal account. A total of £53,106 in the Special Appeal for East Africa account was divided three ways between Christian Aid, Tearfund, and the Presbyterian Relief and Development Agency of the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan. A total of £3,076 remaining in the Special Appeal for Nepal account was divided three ways between Christian Aid, Tearfund, and the United Mission to Nepal.
62. Three Council for Global Mission partner-initiated projects were also supported with Appeal funding this year. The following grants were agreed:
 - (a) £5,000 to the Protestant Church in Timor (GMIT) for the establishment of a Consumers' Union Mart serving women's groups and families in remote areas (with the expectation that the same amount will be asked for and granted in years 2 and 3 of the project);
 - (b) £2,500 towards the insurance costs of the Tuum Girls' Secondary School Bus;
 - (c) £22,526 to the United Mission to Nepal for the Terai Flood Relief Project.
63. During the year, as part of its members' own continuing education, the Committee received reports from both Christian Aid and Tearfund on the importance and use of appropriate amounts of unrestricted funding in sustainable development work.
64. The 2018 Appeal will continue to develop the theme outlined above, with a focus on partners working in Brazil. Plans for a communications trip are underway, and the Committee expects to be able to meet with both women's and men's groups who are addressing the need to prevent gender-based violence from their different perspectives and social locations. The launch of the 2018 Appeal has been scheduled for Tuesday, 23rd October at 12.30pm, following a meeting of the Council for Global Mission.

65. The Committee is grateful for the continuing prayers of the wider church, and remains energetically and proactively committed to the work entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

KATHERINE MEYER, Convener

PERSONNEL PANEL

66. Members of the Global Mission Council's Personnel Panel contribute professional knowledge and experience to the Panel's in-depth discussions and provide advice on matters relating to Human Resources and Member Care for global mission workers under the care of the Council. All significant issues requiring decision-making are referred to the Council and its Assembly Committees. The Panel met twice since the General Assembly 2017 and reports as follows:
67. **Global Mission Workers:** The Panel gives thanks to God for the Global Mission Workers (GMWs) who, as co-workers with God in His Kingdom, are serving in 11 countries around the world, and for those who have passed on from this world's service.
68. Details together with the varied roles and locations for those who are currently serving with the Council are found in Appendix B. This appendix also highlights 14 global mission partners with whom GMWs serve as co-workers in many roles of mission and outreach.
69. Under the Integrate programme (more than two years) of service, Chris and Rachel Humphries (together with Ezra) who are members of Tartaraghan, were interviewed and accepted as candidates for service in Portugal pending the outcome of medical assessment. At the time of writing, Calls were still to be presented and a commissioning date set by Presbytery. The Humphries will join with Comunidade Pedras Vivas in church planting/outreach roles. During the latter part of 2018 they will be involved in preparation before their departure to Porto.
70. The Panel also conducted interviews for a new sphere of service for GMWs Volker and JinHyeog Glissmann who, having completed 8 years of service in Malawi, have been called to serve with the Theological Education Extension College (TEEC) located in Johannesburg, South Africa. Volker and JinHyeog together with their children Lina, Micha, and Lukas will make the transition to this new role, location, and culture during the latter part of 2018. At the time of writing, Calls had still to be presented by presbytery and a commissioning date set by presbytery.
71. Consideration was given to a request from the Council for Training in Ministry to collaborate in the support of Steve and Rosie Kennedy (together with Julia and Lucy) to serve in Romania for three months during the summer of 2018. This opportunity is in response to an invitation from the Hungarian Reformed Church in Transylvania for

Steve, currently training as a Licentiate Assistant within PCI, to provide leadership for their outreach activities. Panel members were pleased to be able to approve this joint training initiative.

72. The Panel received the findings of a report from the Torre del Mar Task Group concerning the Mission Church Project in Torre del Mar, noting in particular the implications pastorally for GMW Steve Anderson as his role there as leader/pastor comes to an end following the Spanish Evangelical Church's decision to end the project on the agreed date of 30th June 2018. The Panel recommended and agreed a reasonable period of time to allow Steve to pack up, say farewell, and to be involved in a final home assignment.
73. Memorial minutes recording sympathies expressed in respect of the following former missionaries were recorded by the Panel: Rev Robert Nelson Stewart served in India 1953-59 – died 12th November 2016; Rev Dr David Lapsley served in Jamaica 1963-71 – died 14th May 2017; Dr Thomas John (Jack) Thompson served in Malawi 1970-83 – died 10th August 2017; Dr Patricia (Pat) Hanna served in India 1954-61 – died 4th August 2017; Dr William (Will) Hanna served in India 1953-61 – died 2nd October 2017; Rev Dr Frederick Henry (Harry) Welshman served in Malawi 1973-75 – died 2nd October 2017; Mrs Joan Breeze served in India 1949-51, 1952-53 and 1958-67 – died 27th December 2017.
74. **Human Resources/Personnel and Member Care Development:** The Panel recommended the adoption of four new resources that have been developed and tested as a pilot during 2017. They are:
 - (a) YANG – Young Adults Not Going is a worksheet used in orientation for Global Mission Workers who are leaving young adults behind.
 - (b) 'Explore' is an online 13-week mission training course for those preparing for cross-cultural mission service. It allows Global Mission Candidates to dig deeper into the areas covered during the Council's pre-departure orientation.
 - (c) 'Self-Care Assessment Tool' is for caregivers, for those working overseas, and in ministry. The worksheet is suggestive and flexible and aids self-assessment in the balance of work and life and in relationships.
 - (d) 'From Apprehensive to Quietly Confident' is an online course to help those returning 'home' to learn about reverse culture shock, transition, and how to leave well from their overseas location. This course reminds Global Mission Workers about the areas covered in the Council's pre-departure orientation many years before.
75. The Panel received a progress report following HealthLink360's decision to withdraw their services from Northern Ireland, regarding the closure of InterHealth in London, and approved two recommendations:

- (a) The Council should continue to relate/employ the services of HealthLink360 for all new applications/candidate screening and for Global Mission Workers on final home assignment for a final medical and personal review. This will require travel to and from Scotland and associated costs.
- (b) The Panel will continue to undertake appropriate research and information gathering to explore how best to provide Global Mission Workers with regular in-service medical and personal reviews, bringing recommendations to the Council within the next 12 months.

VALERIE CLARKE, Convener

GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERSHIP PANEL

- 76. The Global Mission Partnership Panel was newly established by the Council for Global Mission in 2017. It reports directly to the Council in the following areas: the norms or principles of engagement in global mission partnerships; policy and strategy including overseas visits and visitors by partners to Ireland; grants for global mission partnership projects; maintenance of a database of global mission partnerships; ensuring PCI's mission engagement through global partnerships is adequately reflected in PCI publications and website; and providing advice and support on partnership matters for other mission councils and the wider church.
- 77. The Relationships with other Denominations Task Group of the General Council presented a report to the General Assembly 2017 entitled *Principles of Partnership in Global Mission* dealing with PCI's relationships with churches, agencies and institutions in the overseas context. It states, "Where these relationships lead at some point to the placement of PCI mission personnel and/or the provision of funding, the relationship is normally referred to as a global mission partnership."
- 78. Given this definition, the Panel recognises that there is a degree of flexibility in partnering and that relationships ebb and flow. There may be a period of time when it will be appropriate to designate a relationship as a 'global mission partnership' and other times when we speak of a past partnership.
- 79. The Board of Mission Overseas Supplementary Report to the General Assembly in 2014 stated that "... while it is good and characteristic of a denominational mission board that there is a spread of partnerships, there is a danger that in trying to sustain too many, the result is shallow relationships and very little achieved. As BMO looks to the future, the challenge is to be able to embrace PCI's global family whilst giving fresh focus to a selected number over the period 2015-2020."

80. With this in mind, one of the first tasks of the Panel was to review the 22 partners identified in the 2014 paper as well as an additional five partners that had been added in the intervening three years.
81. Considering each partner, the Panel first identified the type of partnership, often finding the partner fell into more than one of the following categories: Church planting/evangelism; Leadership development; Sustainable development (including Education and Medical work); Voice for the marginalised; Suffering/persecuted church; Peace-building; Specialist Services Agency; Historical.
82. Using the Criteria for partnership as set out in the 2014 report the Panel looked at five areas in the partnership: Need of the partner for support from PCI; Compatibility; Dependency; Opportunities for development; Reciprocity.
83. Having reviewed carefully all 27 partners, the Panel recommended that the following eleven be given particular focus between now and 2020, for the reasons outlined:

(a) **Europe**

- (i) *Evangelical Reformed Church of Latvia (including the Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary), Latvia*

The seminary supports leadership development and the Church in church planting/evangelism.

- (ii) *Faculté Jean Calvin, France*

This seminary is strategic in leadership development in the Reformed faith in France and in Francophile Africa.

- (iii) *Grupos Biblicos Unidos, Spain*

This organisation supports young men and women to be Christian leaders and to be involved in discipleship and outreach amongst universities and colleges in Spain.

(b) **Middle East**

- (i) *Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary, Jordan*

This work is vital in developing Christian leaders in the Middle East.

- (ii) *National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (including the Near East School of Theology), Lebanon and Syria*

In the midst of conflict in the region this partner is focused on developing leaders in the Middle East and is supporting emergency relief work and education amongst Syrian refugees.

(c) **Africa**

- (i) *Presbyterian Church of South Sudan (including Giffen Institute of Theology, the Presbyterian Relief and Development Agency, and Nile Theological College)*

This has been a longstanding partnership. Given the four years of civil war the church needs PCI's support, especially in leadership development, sustainable development, supporting the suffering church, and peace building.

- (ii) *Church of Central Africa Presbyterian – all Synods in Malawi (3) and Zambia (1)*

Partnership with CCAP has been in place since 1958. There is ongoing need for support with opportunities for evangelism, leadership and sustainable development.

(d) **Asia**

- (i) *Christian Church of Sumba, Indonesia*

There are opportunities here for leadership development and sustainable development in a church that is in need of support.

- (ii) *Evangelical Christian Church of Timor, Indonesia*

As with the Christian Church of Sumba PCI's support is needed particularly in the area of leadership and sustainable development.

- (iii) *Church of North India, including Gujarat Diocese*

The Church of North India has been a longstanding Global Mission Partner. PCI's support is still needed in leadership development and as an international voice for the persecuted church in a country where Christianity is in the minority.

- (iv) *United Mission to Nepal*

This is a longstanding partnership in a country where Christians are in the minority. The United Mission to Nepal is involved in sustainable development, leadership development, peace building and as a voice for the marginalised.

84. **Summary of review:** All current partnerships are valued but the review identified the above eleven partners as those which the Council, through the work of its committees and panels, may wish to give particular focus until 2020. The Panel recognises that there is a need for regular review in this area, being ever mindful of the limited resources and the General Assembly's priority to develop gospel-centred partnerships and to contribute to the development of reformed witness.
85. A review of this nature has meant that the Panel is better able to provide input into Council decisions from a partnership perspective (e.g. in the deployment of global mission workers). A list of current global mission partners is included in Appendix C.
86. **New Partnerships:** In the course of the year the Global Mission Council agreed on a procedure and application process for considering new partnerships to the Council.

87. **Grants 2018:** In the course of the year the Global Mission Council approved grants for partner projects totalling £43,100 covering sixteen global mission partners in ten countries. It was further agreed that £2,000 of each annual budget be set aside for small grants of up to £1,000, along with a procedure for their allocation.
88. **Global Mission Partnerships (Specialist Service Agencies):** In the General Assembly report of 2009 the Outreach Ministries Committee identified Specialist Services Agencies (SSAs) engaged strategically in four key areas namely Bible translation, Bible printing/distribution, Radio ministry and Satellite television ministry. The agencies/societies identified as SSAs were the Bible Society of Northern Ireland and the National Bible Society of Ireland, Wycliffe Bible Translators, FEBA Radio and SAT 7. Each of these SSAs receives a small grant annually from United Appeal funding and therefore comes under the definition 'global mission partner (SSA)'.
89. **Development Partners:** PCI also partners with two agencies specialising in emergency relief and development, namely Tearfund and Christian Aid, both receiving funding through the World Development Appeal. These are normally described simply as PCI's Development Partners.
90. In PCI we have other relationships with churches, institutions and agencies around the world that do not fit within the above definition of global mission partner. Some of these relationships previously received PCI global mission workers and/or received funding from United Appeal but no longer do so, although there may be ongoing correspondence and congregational ties. By the General Assembly's definition, however, they should not be referred to as global mission partners and at an appropriate time at the discretion of the Council, will be re-designated as past partners and the PCI website should be amended accordingly.
91. **Visits and visitors:** The panel will be reviewing the policy and strategy on visits to and from partners taking into account the desire to strengthen partnerships and the need for member care for PCI's global mission workers.
92. Visits to global mission partners already made or in the planning since the General Assembly of 2017, and some of which may have already been referenced in the reports of other committees and panels:
 - Rev Dr Peter McDowell to Myanmar to meet with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, 9th-20th July 2017.
 - The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Noble McNeely and his wife, Florence, to Zambia to visit with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Zambia Synod, from 24th July to 4th August 2017.
 - Rev Uel Marrs to Malawi to meet with the Malawi Synods of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, 31 July to 10 August and Kenya to meet with leadership of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, 11th-16th August 2017.

- Rev David Steele to Malawi to meet with the Malawi Synods of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, from 31st July to 9th August 2017.
 - Rev James Burnett, to attend the Biennial Assembly of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre Synod, 24th-27th August 2017.
 - Rev John Faris to India, to attend the 16th Ordinary Meeting of the Church of North India, New Delhi, and to visit Gujarat Diocese, from 27th September to 12th October 2017.
 - Rev Dr Peter McDowell to Hungary, to meet with the International Relations Officer of the Hungarian Reformed Church and to visit Pápa Reformed Theological Seminary, 11th-15th October 2017.
 - Prof Gordon Campbell to France, to teach at the Faculté Jean Calvin, Aix-en-Provence, 7th-15th January 2018.
 - Rev Uel Marrs, Mrs Elma Leeburn (PW President), Mrs Pauline Kennedy (Women's Ministry and PW Development Officer) and Mr Ian Leeburn to Lebanon, to meet with the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon and other mission partners from 12th to 20th January 2018.
 - Miss Helen Johnston to Zambia, on a pastoral visit to Diane Cusick and Cody and Suni Dowds, and to meet with leadership of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Zambia Synod, 21st-28th February 2018.
 - Miss Helen Johnston and Miss Valerie Clarke to Spain, to attend a European Member Care Consultation in Malaga, 12th-15th March 2018.
 - Prof Gordon Campbell to Latvia, to teach at the Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary, Riga, 10th-17th March 2018.
 - Rev Richard Kerr to attend the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon International Partners' Consultation, Beirut, Lebanon, 11th-21st April 2018.
 - Rev Dr Liz Hughes and Rev Uel Marrs to visit the Torre del Mar Mission Church Project, 26th-28th May 2018.
 - Rev Dr Donald Watts to Israel/Palestine to attend the 'Christ at the Checkpoint Conference', Bethlehem Bible College, from 27th May to 2nd June 2018.
 - Rev Dr Ian and Pat Hart to Myanmar to teach at Tahan Theological College, Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, June-August 2018.
93. The following overseas visitor was hosted:
- Mr Paul Kawale, Leader in Training at Edinburgh University studying for a Ph.D. in Global Health, visited Belfast from 15th to 16th March 2018.

HEATHER CLEMENTS, Convener

BUSINESS AND FINANCE PANEL

94. The Business and Finance Panel met on four occasions in the past year and reports as follows:
95. **Vision Building and Priorities:** The Business and Finance Panel ensures that strategic planning and co-ordination of the work of the Council is taken forward. In this respect, at the request of the Council, the Panel has overseen the completion of Priorities Reference Panel questionnaires designed to discover whether the Council is fulfilling its remit as set out in the Code and PCI's overall priorities as agreed at the General Assembly of 2017. The questionnaires have been submitted and at time of writing feedback is awaited. The Council's communications strategy is currently under review and is being taken forward by a Link Task Group with a view to reporting to the General Assembly in 2019.
96. **Finance and Property:** The Council records its deep appreciation for the United Appeal funding received each year that makes possible so much of its work, together with the whole-hearted support and generous grant received annually from Presbyterian Women. Council for Global Mission accounts for the year 2018 indicate a net deficit on the Income and Expenditure Account of £81,783 which is close to the budgeted figure. It is recognised that the fairly constant over-spend each year in the region of £80,000 is not sustainable and will be funded by the sale of property to cover the short to medium term, pending further review. Having been pledged a grant from the United Appeal of £1,050,000 for 2018, the Council is requesting £1,085,000 in its budget for 2019.
97. The Panel ensures the oversight, repair and maintenance of Council for Global Mission properties and after receiving a report on occupancy levels in the Council's properties in Belfast, future needs are currently being explored.
98. **Mission Department Staffing:** The Council is very grateful for the dedicated and faithful service of all Mission Department staff during what has been another busy year. Mission Departmental staff meetings and updates have been held periodically throughout the year.
99. Marjorie Coulter, Administrative Assistant (job share), finished work on 8th September 2017 and Kathryn Anderson returned to this role from maternity leave on 11th September, with Emma Love being confirmed in the other half of this job share post on 19th September 2017.
100. Special thanks are expressed to Rev Dr Peter McDowell, Mission Support Officer (Partnerships) who resigned on 31st December 2017 after two and a half years of service in Assembly Buildings in order to take up the post of Lecturer in Missiology with Practical Theology at Belfast Bible College. This Mission Support Officer (Partnerships) role will be taken up by Miss Philippa (Pip) McCracken who is due to commence work on 9th April 2018. Pip will give 50% of her time to the Council for Global Mission and will have core responsibilities for

taking forward work in relation to the Global Mission Partnership, Leaders in Training, and Global Envisioning Panels, along with dealing with funding applications to Misesan Cara.

101. The Council for Global Mission receives 10 per cent of the time of the Mission Development Officer post and was very grateful for the services of the Rev Dr Mark Welsh, who occupied this role up until his resignation on 31st August 2017. The Council warmly welcomes Mr Neil Harrison who commenced this work on 5th February 2018. In his work for the Global Mission Council, Neil will largely focus on reviewing the place of congregational involvement in PCI's global mission engagement, including the implementation of the Council for Congregational Life and Witnesses' "Go Deep, Go Wide" strategy.
102. **Risk Analysis:** At the request of the Council a Risk Analysis Task Group undertook a risk assessment review in relation to PCI's global mission engagement, identifying and reporting, as requested, on the most significant areas of risk for the Council which fall within the areas of political change, sources of income, and staffing capacity.
103. **World Development Committee Convenership:** At the General Assembly 2018 Rev Dr Katherine Meyer will come to the end of her role as Convener of the World Development Committee, having served for the maximum allotted time of seven years. Katherine was originally appointed as Convener in June 2011 and again when the Committee was reconstituted in January 2015, although prior to this, she was involved as an active member of this Committee since 2009. Katherine combined her solid grasp of development issues with great enthusiasm and commitment to the eradication of global poverty. The Council expresses its deep gratitude to Katherine for her dedication to PCI's engagement in global development work through the World Development Committee, collaboration with PCI's development partners, and to the broader work of the Council.

LIZ HUGHES, Convener

TORRE DEL MAR TASK GROUP

104. The Torre del Mar Task Group met on 8th November and 1st December 2017 to review PCI's involvement with the Torre del Mar Mission Church Project of the Spanish Evangelical Church (SEC). The work had been relaunched in 2014 with the involvement of Steve Anderson, who was appointed as a global mission worker to pastor and disciple the congregation and to develop outreach to the local community.
105. The Task Group considered background information on the history and development of the Torre del Mar Congregation; a detailed report by Steve Anderson covering the congregational profile, activities, partnerships, personal and pastoral perspectives, and challenges of

outreach in the Torre del Mar location; correspondence from the Torre del Mar Church Secretary reflecting on the congregation's relationship with the wider SEC, thanking PCI for sending Steve Anderson and commending Steve for his work; correspondence from the SEC's National Council setting out the aims of the Torre del March Mission Church Project, indicating the factors that ultimately led to their difficult decision to bring the Project to an end.

106. In the prayerful discussions that followed, in which Steve Anderson was invited to share at an appropriate point, the Task Group expressed its concern that the Torre del Mar Congregation, a small fellowship with a committed core of six people, found itself needing to take a close look at its identity and come to decisions about the future in light of the SEC's decision; the Task Group also gave careful consideration to any future involvement by the Council with the Torre del Mar Congregation, should it choose to continue independently of the SEC; and it recognised that the implication of the congregation's closure (subsequently agreed as 30th June 2018) that there would in effect no longer be a level of engagement alongside the SEC that could be described as a global mission partnership.
107. The Task Group concluded at its first meeting that the Costa del Sol is not the right place for PCI to be engaged in a church planting initiative in the foreseeable future and that there would no longer be a role for a PCI global mission worker in Torre del Mar beyond the end of June 2018. Helen Johnston and Peter McDowell travelled to Torre del Mar to communicate this to Steve Anderson and subsequently Steve met with the Task Group at its second meeting.
108. As an important expression of the Council's pastoral commitment to the congregation in the current circumstances, it was agreed that Steve Anderson would remain in Torre del Mar to work out a process of transition for those currently attending the congregation and at an appropriate time two representatives of the Council would visit the congregation.
109. The Task Group shared its concern that ongoing and appropriate pastoral care would be made available for Steve Anderson as his work in Torre del Mar came to an end and he too faced a time of transition, and this was conveyed to the Personnel Panel.
110. In reporting to the Council, the Task Group recommended carrying out a root and branch review of the Council's church planting and evangelism strategy in Europe, especially in Spain, over the next two years. In this regard, a set of recommendations was conveyed to the Outreach Ministries Committee that:
 - (a) The Outreach Ministries Committee give consideration to setting up a Church Planting Task Group to conduct a root and branch review of church planting initiatives in Western/Southern Europe (Portugal, Italy and Spain) in the spirit of Luke 14:25-30.

- (b) Robust research and analysis be undertaken to discover the most suitable regions of any country in which to base outreach to local people, including discussion with any existing church planting churches and agencies.
- (c) The importance of collaboration with the Council for Mission in Ireland in the field of church planting, as suggested by the 2017 General Assembly resolution, be highlighted.
- (d) There be a careful review, in consultation with the Global Mission Partnership Panel, of the best models of partnership in regard to church planting in the European context, with consideration given to the place of new collaborative and networking approaches to supporting church-planting initiatives.
- (e) Any engagement by PCI (in Spain or any other country) should focus on reaching out to the national language population.
- (f) A review of the Mission Department's capacity to sustain further church planting initiatives is needed in consultation with the Business & Finance Panel.
- (g) Global mission workers' engagement should be as part of a team which aims to include local people (conversant with language and culture).
- (h) Global mission workers need to focus on learning and fluency in the local language and culture.
- (i) Further exploration of a pastoral support strategy for those serving on church-planting teams be carried out in consultation with the Personnel Panel.
- (j) A tent-making approach to any new church-planting initiative is an important consideration, especially where team ministry is being supported.
- (k) Measureable goals need to be set over a defined period of time in each church-planting initiative.
- (l) Budgeting for the cost of supporting a church planting team comprised of PCI's global mission workers and local workers needs to be undertaken in consultation with the Business & Finance Panel.
- (m) The potential for support in church planting from PCI Congregations needs to be fully explored.

LIZ HUGHES, Convener

APPENDIX A

STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION REPORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

That the Council for Global Mission, through the Stewardship of Creation Panel, take forward the development of a Biblical position on the causes and effects of climate change and report to the 2017 General Assembly.

1. INTRODUCTION

“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it” (Ps. 24:1). So why are we so sore on the Lord’s property? According to the Word of God, the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. The second greatest commandment is to love our neighbour as ourselves. How can we say we love God if we treat His earth badly? And if what we do harms our neighbours near or far, should we not stop doing it or at least do it less and less?

The role of this paper is not to determine whether or not climate change is happening. Its purpose is to develop a Biblical position on what a very substantial and significant scientific population believe to be the causes and effects of climate change. The scientific material and the Biblical material will lead us to some principles of stewardship of creation and finally to some practical application of what we can do as a denomination, as churches and as individual members to care for God’s world and to reduce our adverse impact on it.

2. CLIMATE CHANGE: CAUSES AND EFFECTS

The ‘greenhouse effect’ is a natural process which keeps the earth’s temperature high enough for people to live comfortably on the planet. Some of the heat from the sun is absorbed by the earth, re-emitted and then trapped in the earth’s atmosphere by ‘greenhouse gases’ such as carbon dioxide, water vapour and methane acting like a blanket around the earth.

Since the beginning of the industrial age, there has been a dramatic increase in ‘greenhouse gases’ in the atmosphere, trapping more heat and raising the earth’s temperature. According to the International Energy Agency ‘Global greenhouse gas emissions are increasing rapidly.’ (International Energy Agency, World Energy Outlook, Executive Summary 2013).

Many climate scientists believe that the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, gas and oil by industry, for transport and to heat and light our homes is the main cause of this enhanced greenhouse effect. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a United Nations body, has concluded that climate change is occurring as a result of human activity (IPCC 2013 Working Group 1 Approved Summary for Policymakers p.2, 12, www.ipcc.ch) and it predicts temperature

rises of between 1.5C and 4.8C by the end of this century. (IPCC 2013 Working Group 1 Approved Summary for Policymakers p.15, www.ipcc.ch).

According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) the evidence for rapid climate change, largely humanly-induced, in recent times can be demonstrated by the following nine effects:

- (a) Sea level rise: global sea level rose about 17 centimetres (6.7 inches) in the last century. The rate in the first decade of this century, however, is nearly double that of the last century. Several small pacific islands are close to disappearing and other larger countries such as Bangladesh are especially vulnerable as are many coastal cities and communities.
- (b) Global temperature rise: all three major global surface temperature reconstructions show that earth has warmed since 1880. Most of this warming has occurred since the 1970s, with the 20 warmest years having occurred since 1981 and with all 10 of the warmest years occurring in the last 12 years.
- (c) Warming oceans: the oceans have absorbed much of this increased heat, with the top 700 metres (about 2,300 feet) of ocean showing warming of 0.302 degrees Fahrenheit since 1969.
- (d) Shrinking ice sheets: the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets have decreased in mass. Greenland lost 150 to 250 cubic kilometres (36 to 60 cubic miles) of ice per year between 2002 and 2006, while Antarctica lost about 152 cubic kilometres (36 cubic miles) of ice between 2002 and 2005.
- (e) Declining Arctic sea ice: both the extent and thickness of Arctic sea ice has declined rapidly over the last several decades.
- (f) Glacial retreat: glaciers are retreating almost everywhere around the world – including in the Alps, Himalayas, Andes, Rockies, Alaska and Africa.
- (g) Extreme events: the number of record high temperature events has been increasing, while the number of record low temperature events has been decreasing since 1950. There has also been increasing numbers of intense rainfall events. Prolonged droughts in already vulnerable areas, is becoming an increasingly common feature.
- (h) Ocean acidification: since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the acidity of surface ocean waters has increased by about 30 per cent. This increase is the result of humans emitting more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and hence more being absorbed into the oceans. The amount of carbon dioxide absorbed by the upper layer of the oceans is increasing by about two billion tonnes per year.

- (i) Decreased snow cover: satellite observations reveal that the amount of spring snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere has decreased over the past five decades and that the snow is melting earlier. (<http://climate.nasa.gov.evidence>).

There is no doubt that the rich world's extravagant use of oil and gas has a huge effect on the environment. Everyone is affected, but the poor, the old and the young suffer most from pollution, the failure of food production and rising sea levels.

Bob (Robert) White, Professor of Geophysics in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Cambridge and a member of Christians in Science says, "It is increasingly clear that our use of oil and gas in the West is driving rapid climate change in the whole world... The effects of more extreme weather events will fall disproportionately on the very young and very old, on the poor and the marginalised in places such as sub-Saharan Africa. One quarter of the planet's population lives in poverty and is extremely vulnerable to changes caused by drought or flooding, to the failure of agricultural crops or to rising sea levels. If we take caring for our global neighbour seriously, we need to consider the impact of our lifestyles on them."

As these effects take place on God's good creation, life in the sea, on the land and in the air is affected including vegetation, animals and humans. Many development agencies are working on climate change because they see its impact on poor communities.

Tearfund's partners in the developing world are reporting changes to their climate. A partner in Mali said, "The climate has changed and the rainy season has become unpredictable. The water levels fall year by year and some kinds of animals and vegetation have disappeared. The future is bleak for farmers." And from Mexico, "We expect the impacts of a changing climate to increase, with a greater area of our country becoming desert, more woods and jungle being lost, torrential rains, hurricanes and greater seasonal instability." (*Tearfund: Climate change Q&A October 2013*).

It isn't just developing countries that are affected. The hurricanes which passed through the Caribbean in September 2017 wrecked not only poor island communities but also large parts of Texas in the USA. In Ireland an agricultural scientist Dr. Ethel White has said, "Agriculture in Ireland is already being detrimentally affected by changing weather patterns, creating difficulties for farmers in 2017 and in recent years."

Not everyone agrees about the causes or effects of climate change and there is not agreement among scientists either. Scientific ideas are always being reviewed and revised. For example a recent study has found that computer modelling used to predict how quickly global average temperatures would rise may have forecast too much warming (published in *Nature Geoscience* September 2017). In addition, while the NASA study referred to earlier states that Antarctica lost about 36 cubic miles of ice between 2002 and 2005 a more recent NASA study

of satellite data published in October 2015 in the *Journal of Glaciology* states "... the Antarctic ice sheet showed a net gain of 112 billion tons of ice a year from 1992 to 2001. That gain slowed to 82 billion tons of ice per year between 2003 and 2008."

It is difficult for lay people to judge between conflicting assessments and interpretations of scientific data. Christians too have different views about not only God's World, but also God's Word. One certainty however is that God does not change nor does His Word. And regardless of the degree of climate change, Christians can be in agreement that the earth belongs to God and if we love Him, we will treat his property with care and respect. In addition, Christians who love God will also love their global neighbours by behaving in ways that will be good for them or at least not do them any harm.

Having looked at what is happening to God's World, we turn now to God's Word which should be our source of faith and practice.

3. BIBLICAL POSITION

The Christian Church in general and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in particular derives its authority from the Bible, the Word of God which from beginning to end, witnesses to God's glorious purposes in creation and redemption. The Biblical narrative is concerned, first, last and throughout, with God's will to bless, renew and perfect creation as a whole.

The Old Testament, in all its diversity, bears witness to the sovereignty of God over all aspects of His good creation, and in particular in the history of Israel, His covenant people. In the New Testament the sovereignty of God finds definitive expression in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, thus giving His new community, the church, the missionary mandate to proclaim this good news to all people in the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is the incarnation, and the inaugurator of God's new creation in which redemption, reconciliation, restoration and eternal life is established in triumph over evil's manifold forms.

The Old Testament begins with the most comprehensive context for God's loving purposes, the entire creation in all its wonder, beauty, intricacy and diversity. The first verse of the Bible is one of the most majestic statements ever made: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

Humanity is the special recipient of God's blessing (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 8:5) and the first human being is given the name 'Adam' which means 'of the dust' (Genesis 2:7), indicating his kinship with God's good earth as well as God.

While human beings are given the subordinate role of dominion of the earth (Genesis 1:26, 28) this is not to be construed as domination or exploitation but stewardship demonstrated in tending and cultivating what is essentially a divine gift. The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it (Genesis 2:15).

The Hebrew word for care is *shamar* and can be translated as keep, tend, guard, take care of, look after – essentially, the stewardship of creation.

The fall of humanity which ensues (Genesis 3) is contrary to God's will yet its evil consequences affect every dimension of creation, human and extra-human (Isaiah 24; Hosea 4:1-3).

The unfolding of the biblical narrative involves the mutual involvement of two great realities: divine sovereignty and human responsibility expressed in Psalm 115:16, "The highest heavens belong to the Lord; but the earth he has given to humanity." In effect, God remains the landlord of the earth while we are the tenants not the owners and therefore ought not to defy God's commands by doing as we please without regard to the consequences (Leviticus 25:23).

The promises, visions and actions of God to save and renew are therefore articulated in terms of creation as a whole and not just humanity in isolation.

Leviticus 25 is a command for Israel to renew its corporate life by letting the land rest every seventh year (the Sabbath Year) and then having a celebratory year of restoration every fiftieth year (the Year of Jubilee).

Psalms 8, 19, 65, 67, 104 and 148 express the glory of how God ordains and sustains the intricate interactions of humans and the rest of creation to their mutual benefit and blessing.

Job witnesses to the awesomeness of God's handiwork in the often overwhelming powers of nature's intriguing features and strange creatures, above and beyond human comprehension or utility.

Hosea 14 and Amos 9 articulate God's promise to restore human happiness in conjunction with earth's replenishment.

Isaiah writes with prophetic insight and poetic sensibility in the artistry with which he conveys God's stupendous visions of comprehensive blessing for humanity as part of a new creation in all its fruitful splendour (Isaiah 35, 55, 65).

In the New Testament, we read of how God's plan of renewal, restoration and salvation reached its climax in the incarnation. God's words and works of re-creation were now embodied in divine/human form on the earth. As John put it, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." (John 1:14)

Before Jesus began His ministry, He spent 40 days and nights in the primal purity of the wilderness, in the company of wild animals but unaccompanied by humans.

In his summary of the Old Testament Law, Jesus indicated that loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and loving our neighbour as ourselves are both necessary for entry into the Kingdom of God (Luke 10:25-28). Jesus taught that the responsibilities of God's people to both God and fellow human beings are continued from the Old Testament era to the New.

Jesus' parables and other teachings about the kingdom of God make use of analogies from nature at large as well as human actions in natural settings. He even refers to Himself as the true or real vine (John 15) and the bright morning star (Revelation 22) a chapter in which He is also called the Lamb.

Paul speaks about 'the whole creation groaning' as it awaits its sure redemption in Jesus: human salvation to be sure, but not without the rest of creation (Romans 8). The apostle opens his letters to the Ephesian and Colossian churches with doxologies to Jesus Christ through whom and for whom creation has been made, kept together and brought to final completion.

John's great vision brings the Biblical witness to a fitting climax in his vision of a new heaven and a new earth in which God dwells with his servants in a setting where human beings, city streets and nature's garden all conjoin (Revelation 21-22).

The Biblical narrative is therefore concerned, first, last and indeed, throughout, with God's will to bless, renew and perfect creation as a whole.

4. PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

Given the above Biblical meta-narrative it is therefore incumbent upon the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to consider how we live on the earth and use its resources as well as respond appropriately to whatever threatens the well-being of God's good creation.

The following principles will help to provide a transition from scientific information about climate change in our world today and theological information from God's Word about His view of creation, to practical action for individuals, churches, communities and nations.

- (a) God made the earth and the universe. They continue to be good, very good.
- (b) The earth is still the Lord's and everything in it. If we love him with all our hearts, then we will love and respect His creation too.
- (c) God has given humanity the privilege and responsibility to care for the earth and its resources. He is the Landlord, we are the tenants and are accountable for how we use His property.
- (d) Sin, including selfishness, greed, indifference, sins of both commission and omission have brought untold suffering and sadness to God, to His creation and to His creatures.
- (e) The people of God are His representatives, His image bearers in the world and on the earth. They seek to do what God would do if He were on the earth as they relate to His world including people, animals, plants and planet. They ask, 'what would Jesus do?' They try to love their neighbours both near and far, both present and future by being good stewards of creation now.

- (f) Being a disciple of Jesus means to obey Him in all aspects of discipleship, including prayer, church involvement, evangelism and in care of creation.
- (g) The theology of the end times gives believers the incentive, not to abuse God's world before the end of the age since we are accountable to Him, but to prepare for the new heaven and the new earth by treating it carefully now.

5. CLIMATE CHANGE AND STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

At the end of the day, it is what we do or don't do that matters. Everything we do has an impact on God's wonderful world. Everything we buy has been made using materials and energy provided by God. So just by living a 'normal lifestyle' in a consumer based society we are automatically responsible to God for the care of His earth. We have an effect on God's creation simply by spending our money, driving our cars, heating our homes, watching our TVs and spending time on our computers and smartphones. We don't have to 'do' anything (more) to affect God's earth, we are already doing it by just living!

But there are many actions we can take to reduce our negative impact on the created order. The very first step must be repentance for abusing and mistreating God's World and all that is in it, for all that we have done and do to feed our greed rather than our need. This will involve prayer, a turning away from sinful, selfish paths to the paths of righteousness and to a change of attitude and behaviour involving everyday lifestyle choices.

This will involve both prayer and care, our words and actions. Our talk must be matched by our walk. Prayer, resolutions and conferences are important; so too are everyday actions, life-style choices and behaviour which is mindful of our global neighbours. As James said, Faith without works is dead.

The following are some suggestions for practical action for churches and members of PCI.

(a) Churches

- (i) Download a copy for the Environmental Audit of the Congregational Consultation from the PCI website, fill it in and see what your congregation can do to reduce the damage to God's creation, reverse the trend of wastefulness and help restore God's wonderful world.

(b) Members

- (i) Remember it's God's World. Always be aware that the earth is the Lord's and everything in it. That includes people, animals, the soil, plants, everything. Despite climate change, it's still a wonderful world. God takes joy in His creation and His disciples can do so too. So enjoy a regular walk in the great outdoors and thank God for the wonder of His creation.

- (ii) Reduce, reuse, recycle. Do we really need all the 'stuff' we have? If we're finished with it, could it go to a charity shop so that someone else can use it? Recycling a tin can saves 75% of the energy needed to make steel from virgin materials.
- (iii) Transport. Use public transport if feasible; for short journeys walk or cycle if possible. Lobby politicians to promote the development of shared use paths along more roads so that more people can feel safe to walk and cycle. If we must use a car, use it as little as possible and get the most energy efficient one you can afford.
- (iv) Home. Can we reduce our carbon footprint by improving the insulation properties of our homes? Could we turn the heating down several degrees and wear an extra layer of clothes in the home? Switch to a renewable energy provider, use low energy light bulbs. Would it be possible to add some renewable energy source to our homes such as solar or photo-voltaic panels?
- (v) Be a Steward of Creation. Pray for those badly affected by climate change, for governments to work hard to tackle the problem and for all of us to respond by changing our lifestyles. And make sure the prayer leads on to action; prayer and care go together.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Whatever the extent of climate change, God's Word is clear that:

- (a) This earth belongs to God,
- (b) He has given human beings the privilege and responsibility to use and care for His creation, and
- (c) We must love our neighbours as ourselves by not behaving in ways which harm them, and by behaving in ways which help them and contribute to their well-being.

Now is the time to prepare for Jesus coming again, back down to the earth to complete the work of re-creation. The Good News is that ultimately creation will be reconciled to God in and through the saving power of the cross.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross (Colossians 1:19-20).

APPENDIX B

GLOBAL MISSION WORKERS

The names, spheres and category of service of PCI's Global Mission Workers are listed below and are to be taken together with the Personnel Panel Report.

INTEGRATE PROGRAMME – service of two or more years

Brazil

Naomi Keefe	2004	Outreach programme, The Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB), Recife
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Great Britain

Christopher and Nivedita Benjamin	1989	Ministry among Asians in Wembley, London
Edwin and Anne Kibathi	2009	Ministry among East Africans in East London

Italy

Alan and Tracey Johnston	2014	Associate Pastor, Sola Grazia Church, Coram Deo Ministry Church Plant, Mantova
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Kenya

Stephen and Angelina Cowan	1985 1989	Outreach and Development Work, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Tuumba
Naomi Leremore	1991	Theological Education by Extension, PCEA, Nairobi
Gary and Mary Reid	2000	Outreach and Development Work, PCEA, Olkinyei

Malawi

Volker and JinHyeog Glissmann	2010	Executive Director, Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), Zomba
Lyn and Johnny Dowds	2011	Doctor, DGMH, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Livingstonia

David and Pamela McCullagh	2013	Ministry Coordinator Scripture Union Malawi, Lilongwe
Middle East		
Colin and Marjorie Dickson	2016	Academic Coordinator and Lecturer in Practical Theology Academic Department Assistant Librarian - JETS
Nepal		
Peter and Valerie Lockwood	2012	Programme Advisor United Mission to Nepal (UMN), Kathmandu
Peter and Jayne Fleming	2017	Integral Development Advisor UMN, Kathmandu Teacher, Kathmandu International Study Centre
Portugal		
James and Heather Cochrane	2008	Church Planting – Comunidade Pedras Vivas Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal (ICPP) in Senhora da Hora, Porto (since 2013)
Romania		
Csaba and Ilona Veres	2001	Co-ordinator – SERVANT Mission of Diakonia Cluj
	1993	Mera Children's Project
Spain		
Steve Anderson	2014	Community Development and Outreach, Torre del Mar, Spanish Evangelical Church, Torre del Mar
Derek and Jane French	2000	Student outreach with Grupos Biblicos Unidos (GBU), Bilbao
Zambia		
Diane Cusick	1995	Early Childhood Development Officer, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Zambia Synod (since 2016).

Candidates**Portugal**

Chris and
Rachel Humphries

2018 Church planting/outreach
Comunidade Pedras Vivas, Senhora
da Hora, Porto

APPENDIX C**Global Mission Partnerships**

PCI is currently engaged in global mission partnership with the following churches, institutions and agencies:

Europe

- The Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal
- Coram Deo Ministries, Italy
- The Evangelical Reformed Church of Latvia (including the Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary)
- Faculté Jean Calvin, France
- Grupos Biblicos Unidos, Spain
- The Hungarian Reformed Church, in Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine

Africa

- The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre, Livingstonia, and Nkhoma Synods, Malawi
- Scripture Union, Malawi
- The Student Christian Organisation of Malawi
- Theological Education by Extension Malawi
- The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Zambia Synod
- The Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya
- The Presbyterian Church of South Sudan and Sudan (including the Presbyterian Relief and Development Agency, Nile Theological College, and Giffen Institute of Theology)

Middle East

- Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary
- The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (Including the Near East School of Theology)

Asia

- The Christian Church of Sumba, Indonesia
- The Evangelical Christian Church of Halmahera, Indonesia
- The Evangelical Christian Church of Timor, Indonesia
- The Church of North India
- The Presbyterian Church of Pakistan (including Gujranwala Theological Seminary)
- United Bible Training Centre, Pakistan
- United Mission to Nepal

Caribbean and Latin America

- The Presbyterian Church of Brazil

RESOLUTIONS

1. The General Assembly commend the Report on Climate Change by the Stewardship of Creation Panel and encourage congregations to consider how its conclusions might challenge lifestyle choices.
2. The General Assembly recognise the rich contribution to PCI of partner churches, agencies and institutions living and working in challenging situations and acknowledge the privilege and mutual benefit of sharing and standing in solidarity together.
3. That the General Assembly give thanks for the gracious and sustained generosity shown by congregations and members of PCI in supporting the World Development Appeal, and commend the 2018 Appeal to all congregations.
4. That the General Assembly acknowledge PCI's commitment to share in the training of key leaders from PCI's global mission partners and encourage PCI's ministry students and ministers to explore sabbatical and other short-term opportunities that might prove envisioning for global mission engagement and a catalyst for congregational global mission involvement.
5. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the dedicated service of PCI's Global Mission Workers, both overseas and in sharing the story of God's work with the Church at home, and encourage the Council for Global Mission and the Council for Congregational Life and Witness as they collaborate on the 'Go Deep, Go Wide' strategy for developing greater congregational involvement in global mission.
6. That the Report of the Council for Global Mission be received.