

**THE CHURCH OF IRELAND COUNCIL FOR MISSION**

**REPORT 2020**

**MEMBERSHIP (JANUARY 2020)**

Rt Rev Dr Ferran Glenfield (1)	House of Bishops
Rev Adam Pullen (Hon Chair) (5)	Synod
Rev Cliff Jeffers (Hon Secretary) (5)	Cork / Synod
Mr Derek Neilson (Hon. Treasurer) (4)	Dublin
Rev Andrew Quill (4)	Synod
Ms Emma Lynch (2)	AMS
Ms Jenny Smyth (3)	AMS
Ms Catherine Little (4)	AMS
Ms Lydia Monds (1)	Bishops' Appeal
Rev Dr Paddy McGlinchey (2)	CITI
Mr Steve Grasham (3)	CIYD
Very Rev Tim Wright (4)	Meath
Rev Peter Murray (2)	Methodist Church
Mrs Phyllis Grothier (3)	Mothers' Union (from March 2019)
Mr Thomas Stevenson (4)	Armagh
Ven Paul Mooney (2)	Cashel (from March 2019)
Rev Canon Derek Quinn (4)	Derry & Raphoe
Ms Julie Currie (2)	Down & Dromore / Synod
Dr Trevor Buchanan	Down and Dromore Alternate
Rev Charles McCartney (4)	Limerick & Killaloe
Rev Stephen McWhirter (0)	Tuam
Rev Colin McConaghie (4)	Clogher (from March 2019)

According to the constitution of the Council, each diocese is entitled to nominate a representative and an alternate. Alternates attend when the principal representative is unable to. Some members represent more than one possible constituency.

The Council for Mission met five times in Dublin during 2019. We meet alternately between Church House in Rathmines and City North Hotel, Gormanstown, Co Meath.

**Changes in membership since January 2019**

The Mother's Union representative Mrs Ruth Mercer was replaced by Mrs Phyllis Grothier. Cashel and Ossory representative Rev Patrick Burke was replaced by Ven Paul Mooney.

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Clogher representative Ven Kenny Hall was replaced by Rev Colin McConaghie.

The following resigned from the council: Canon Ian Jonas (June 2019), Ms Erin Moorecroft (November 2019)

Rev Stephen McElhinney joined the council representing the Association of Missionary Societies (AMS).

We are grateful to all of the members who have contributed to the work of the Council for Mission over the years.

We continue to use the Anglican 5 marks of mission to focus our activities, which are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (Tell)
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers (Teach)
3. To respond to human need by loving service (Tend)
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation (Transform)
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth (Treasure)

*(Bonds of Affection-1984 ACC-6 p49, Mission in a Broken World-1990 ACC-8 p101)*

### **Items for discussion**

This year we are focusing on Discipleship, the teaching of the Christian faith and Climate, treasuring creation. There are discipleship resources on our stand at Synod of examples of materials which have been used by members of the council which we have found helpful. We would like to encourage the church to engage seriously with Climate Change, firstly as our responsibility to our Creator and also as an opportunity for mission, with an emphasis on connecting with young people who are very passionate about Climate Action.

How can we best facilitate learning opportunities (discipleship) in our parish settings?

In what practical ways can we as a church and in our parishes address our impact on climate change and encourage biodiversity?

We would encourage members of Synod to join us for our Mission Breakfast at General Synod, in the Canal Café on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, which will focus on the 5<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission, Treasuring Creation. Our guest speaker will be Stephen Trew,

### **Report**

At General Synod 2019 we launched the first of five videos on the 5 Marks of Mission on Proclaiming the Good News (Tell). This video is available on the Church of Ireland Website under General Synod / Council for Mission, Vimeo and YouTube. This year, with the support of the Priorities Fund, we have produced two more videos which are being launched at General Synod 2020. These are highlighting the marks of Discipleship (Teach) and Creation (Treasure). These will also be available on the Church of Ireland Website, Vimeo and YouTube.

We encourage the church to use these videos in your parish contexts to promote the five marks of mission, along with the Radiant Faith publication which was launched at Synod 2018, and is available of the Council for Mission page of the Church of Ireland website.

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Next year we plan to complete the series of videos, which will include the third and fourth Marks of Mission), Christian Service (Tend) and Challenging Injustice (Transform).

### **Scoping Study on Justice Issues**

A Scoping Study on Justice Issues was undertaken during the year. The study sought to determine where and how justice issues are being addressed in the Church of Ireland. This study came out of a General Synod Joint Resolution from Council for Mission with Bishops Appeal in 2018. This research was conducted by Consultant Mr Tommy Stewart with a sub-group made up of members of the Council for Mission and Bishops Appeal. We reported back to Synod in 2019 with a summary of the findings of the scoping study. As well as increasing awareness of the role of the Church in challenging injustice, the joint sub-group has continued to work together led by Bishop Patrick Rooke (Bishops' Appeal) and the Consultant Tommy Stewart to develop a simple booklet that can be used by parishes to examine their responses and opportunities in the area of challenging injustice. This booklet will be presented to General Synod this year with a motion to endorse it.

### **Guest speakers**

We had two excellent **guest speakers** who came to talk to us about their engagement with mission during the year. The following is a short summary of their ministries.

1. In November we had **Rev Dr Laurence Graham** from the Methodist Church in Ireland (MCI) come and talk to us about their approach to addressing the Persecuted Church and general Justice Issues. They have been trying to raise the awareness and profile of Justice related issues with their 60 overseas mission links.

They have also partnered with 'Church in Chains', which is led by Mr David Turner and based in Bray, Co Wicklow. They produce a 'Global Guide' of where Christians are currently facing persecution. The Methodist Church added a wrap-around cover and made this guide available to their churches. Other similar agencies are Open Doors and Barnabas.

Dr Graham also gave some examples of partnerships in Israel, Nepal and South Africa where the MCI are being fruitful. Key to being effective in the area of seeking justice is the building up of relationships over the medium term.

Through his visit we recognised that the CoI has a very different structure, with most overseas missionary activities engaged through missionary agencies (e.g. AMS, Bishops Appeal, etc) and not dealt with directly by the Church centrally or at local level. This could have the effect of having us somewhat more removed from the justice issues being faced by our fellow Christians in other parts of the world.

We should make more of the experience and expertise of our missionary agencies in engaging with global Justice issues through their partner relationship overseas. Maybe the Council for Mission could channel some of these stories back into the church and develop resources to bring them to the attention of the church community for prayer and support.

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2. **Mr Stephen Trew** came to visit the CFM in January to highlight climate issues relating to our carbon footprint and the environment. He highlighted the fifth mark of mission as being an opportunity for Mission. As a church at all levels; RCB, House of Bishops, Dioceses, Parishes and as individual members, we must become more aware of our responsibility to treasure creation and take real and practical action to minimise our impact of God’s wonderful creation. If you would like to hear more about his perspective, come along to our mission breakfast on Friday morning of synod, where he will be our guest speaker.

### **International consultations**

Rev Adam Pullen and Very Rev Tim Wright were delegates to the **Anglican Communion Office** who have appointed a new **International Discipleship Officer**, Rev Joylon Trickey. There are representatives from Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. Discipleship has become a focus for the Anglican Communion in recent years. The church is not currently where it should be in the area of discipleship, and the question is ‘What should we do about it?’

The CoE is currently putting much time, effort and resources into discipleship. The term ‘Jesus shaped life’ is being used. Church planting is very popular in the UK, but **Church Revitalisation** is the real challenge in our context. Some examples of what is happening in the UK are: Holy Trinity Brompton sending teams to struggling churches to bring them to life in their own tradition. Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) has a few good programs worth looking at, like ‘Parenting for faith’ and ‘Holy Habits’. Participation in ‘Thy Kingdom come’ for the 10 days between ascension and Pentecost is also highly recommended. The area of discipleship is getting significant attention in the Anglican Communion, and as a Church we also need to rise to the challenge of teaching the faith to our communities, both young and old.

### **Conference on Creation and Climate change**

The Council for Mission in order to focus on the fifth mark of mission, to treasure creation, are considering holding a conference in the coming year on Creation and Climate change and what we can do to respond. These are in the early planning stages, but with the level of concern and attention being given to our global environmental challenges we believe this should be an area of focus for our church.

### **AMS Report for Council for Mission Report to General Synod 2020**

The Association of Mission Societies (AMS) has actively participated on the Church of Ireland Council for Mission through regular attendance at meetings by 4 of its members and communication with the council throughout the year. This connection enables good cooperation between the mission agencies and the Church of Ireland in facilitating missional initiatives.

Members of AMS remained active on the Council for Mission, working with sub groups throughout the year based around the 5 Marks of Mission to produce resources to follow up on the Radiant Faith initiative.

At the 2019 AGM Rev Stephen McElhinney (SAMS Ireland) was voted as chair, many

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thanks to Ms Emma Lynch (TEAR Fund Ireland) whose term as chair concluded. AMS also welcomed a new member, CMJ Ireland. AMS continues to meet 3 times a year, 2 of which are located at CITI, giving members the valuable opportunity to preach at Chapel and engage with students twice a year. . A Mission Fair was held in CITI in November attended by students and visitors with positive engagement. A new initiative this year is the input of AMS to the Continuing Ministerial Education (CME) for curates. AMS will conduct one mission focused session each year over the 3 year CME programme. The purpose is to broaden understanding of integral mission, cross cultural awareness, international development and the range of ways the societies can facilitate ordained ministers and their congregations in their missional involvement.

The AMS Advent Carol Service was held in St Mark's Armagh in December on the theme 'Light in the darkness'. Member agencies shared inspiring stories of transformation from partner churches around the world.

Combined initiatives during the year included the Missions Zone at General Synod in May and participation in the Missions Breakfast at General Synod which was well attended.

We look forward to working with Council for Mission in the coming year to encourage mission within the Church of Ireland.