

Standing Committee Report
Seconder – Mrs Kaye Nesbitt
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Picking up from what the proposer has said on thankfulness, challenges and encouragements of the last year as we have all dealt with the many challenges faced as a result of Covid-19 and our inability to have face to face meeting. Zoom, Microsoft Teams are among many of the meeting platforms we have embraced and while these create difficulties business have continued as you can see from the Standing Committee Report for General Synod – the Honorary Secretaries and the Committees are to be commended for their level of work.

Looking at the report and all its appendices you quickly realise the amount and varied topics discussed, debated and passed or rejected. I have no doubt you have all read the entire report but in case you missed some I would like to draw your attention to two sections of the report.

*Bishops' Appeal Advisory Committee –
referenced on page 174 with full report in Appendix C on page 183*

I am always amazed by the amount donated on an annual basis but often wonder could we do more and in doing so raise the bar in the amount of projects being supported in partnership with other agencies. We only have to look at the educational programmes supported during 2020 which highlight the difference working together makes. In partnership with Mothers' Union (which I am a member of) and CMS Ireland adult literacy and business skills programmes were carried out in Ethiopia and Burundi – skills which we take for granted and where people are empowered to use their new found skills. In health, working with Christian Aid – health clinics were refurbished in Sierra Leone, one of the most dangerous places in the world for women to give birth.

We live in a privileged part of the world even though we probably didn't feel that way for the past year, but our donations can make such a difference to the lives of our brothers and sisters who have much less than us.

*The Children's Ministry Network –
referenced on page 175 with full report in Appendix G on page 203.*

The report highlights the amount of work and support which continued throughout the pandemic as the committee meet initially in person and then by Zoom. The high quality of resources which were produced and shared in order to support children, their families and churches at key times throughout the church calendar was invaluable to many and I include myself in this as I used the resources with my grandchildren. During the summer months a special newsletter was produced called Summer Kindness which provided families with ideas for engagement with their faith. This fully complemented a very creative online diocesan holiday club. Online support continued with regular updates of resources which included ideas for outdoor trails and payer chalk walks. This enabled all dioceses to avail of the excellent resources being provided and in doing so strengthen networks and increased its availability.

This is only a glimpse into the work that the Children's Ministry Network provided I would encourage you to read their full report and I commend their work in what was a very difficult and challenging year.

We would like to thank again all the staff of Church House and especially the Honorary Secretaries who give of their time tirelessly towards the development and mission of the church in what has been an extraordinary year when many challenges were faced.

Your Grace, I am pleased to second the report of the Standing Committee.