

## COMMISSION FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY AND DIALOGUE

### Report 2013

#### MEMBERSHIP

The Archbishops and Bishops (ex-officio)

The Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh (Chair)	Dr Kenneth Milne (Honorary Secretary)
Rev Canon Patrick Comerford	Mr Trevor Morrow
Rev Canon David Crooks	Rev Daniel Nuzum
Rev Canon Dr Ian Ellis	Rev Niall Sloane (Honorary Records Secretary)
Mr Samuel Harper	Rev Canon Helene Tameberg Steed
Rev Darren McCallig	Ms Catherine Turner
Mrs Roberta McKelvey	
Mr Philip McKinley	

#### Executive summary

It is in the interests of every committee and commission of General Synod to emphasise the amount of work that it is undertaking on behalf of the Church of Ireland. That being said, a cursory glance at the pages of this report would reveal that the Church of Ireland - in the areas of ecumenical and inter-faith engagement - is playing a very full part in the wider religious life of this country and of the global Church, albeit within the undoubted limitations imposed by the budgetary stringency that must pertain at present for the Church of Ireland. These involvements remain crucial, if the Church of Ireland is not to retreat into the status of an introspective sect; *what we are* in relation to other Christian traditions and to other religious faiths, is fundamental to our total self-definition.

The Commission of Christian Unity and Dialogue is, as can be seen, heavily involved in many ecumenical encounters, not only in this country but also on the international stage, in particular through our active membership of a number of Anglican Commissions (most recently the Anglican-Lutheran International Co-ordination Committee), the Conference of European Churches and after a short interval, the World Council of Churches.

In the Anglican context, there has been considerable work undertaken through the Anglican Affairs Working Group in the development of our mutual involvements both with our Porvoo partners and, at a new level, with the Moravian Church in Britain and Ireland. In addition, the Rev Niall Sloane (the Commission's Records secretary) has undertaken a great deal of work in seeking to ensure that the Anglican "networks" (which may prove of particular value in the economic exigencies of the present-day) can be used more effectively.

The inter-faith engagement of the Church of Ireland is maintained at international level primarily through the involvement of the Archbishop of Dublin in a number of inter-faith bodies. In addition, several extremely valuable and interesting initiatives have been launched in Ireland in the field of inter-faith dialogue through the Commission's Inter-Faith Working Group and it may truly be said that the Church of Ireland has, among the Christian traditions, led the way in this area.

Those who give so generously of their time and energy in the essential fields of ecumenical advance and inter-faith dialogue truly deserve the gratitude of the General Synod and the entire Church of Ireland.

### **Ecumenical Affairs working-Group**

*The Irish Council of Churches (ICC) [www.churchesinireland.com]*

Officers 2012-2014

President: Rev Fr Godfrey O'Donnell

Vice President: Rev Dr Donald Watts

Immediate Past President: The Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke

Church of Ireland members of the ICC executive committee:

Dr Kenneth Milne

Rev Daniel Nuzum

Rt Rev Trevor Williams

The annual meeting of the Council was held at Taney Parish Centre, Dublin 14 on 29 March 2012.

The Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke, out-going President drew attention to the 're-branding' of the Irish ecumenical instruments - ICC and the Irish Inter-Church Meeting (IICM) - whereby the title 'Churches in Ireland-connecting in Christ' took precedence over the organisations' titles. He also expressed his good wishes to his successor, Fr Godfrey O'Donnell of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

The Council's Board of Overseas Affairs, which sees its role as one of educating, updating and informing the Churches and wider community as to what is happening around the world has decided that due emphasis should be given to European matters, with special reference to the European Union.

*The Irish Inter-Church Committee (IICC) [www.churchinireland.com]*

The Church of Ireland representatives on the committee (which includes representatives of the Roman Catholic Church) are the Rev Dr Ian Ellis and Dr Kenneth Milne. The Archbishop of Armagh, as immediate past President, is also on the committee.

The Theology forum met with several other members of the IICC to discuss the possibility of ecumenical participation in the Decade of Centenaries that is being observed in both political

jurisdictions of Ireland. The Church in Society forum devoted much of its time to the preparation of a paper on ethical investment for presentation to the Churches.

#### *Greenhills Ecumenical Conference*

In March 2012 the Greenhills Ecumenical Conference Organising Committee sought the view of the Church of Ireland as to the direction which the future of the Conference might take in the light of waning interest in recent years and financial considerations. We responded by acknowledging that the future of the conference was a matter for the organisers to decide, and that, regrettably, we had no funds from which to provide financial support. Having since learned that the organising committee has decided to discontinue holding the conference we wish to put on record our deep appreciation of the valuable part that the Greenhills Conference played in the development of ecumenical relations in Ireland.

#### *Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) [www.ctbi.org.uk]*

The annual general meeting of the CTBI and Senior Representatives Forum were held in Glasgow on 2-3 May 2012. They were attended by the Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke (a trustee of CTBI) and Dr Kenneth Milne (Senior Representative). The main theme of the forum was how the Churches might engage more fully with the wider society, and in particular with those suffering deprivation and poverty. The meeting provided opportunities to meet with members of the local community in one of Glasgow's most deprived districts, the Gorbals, and to experience the various ways in which the Church of Scotland parish was addressing the situation.

#### *Conference of European Churches (CEC) [www.ceceurope.org]*

CEC came into being in the aftermath of World War II at much the same time as the inception of the European project that resulted in the European Union. It is now undergoing a radical review of its purpose and organisation. As part of this process, member Churches were requested to study a consultative document, *The renewal of CEC*, and to respond to a questionnaire. We complied with this request, and the various submissions will form part of the agenda of an assembly in Budapest in July 2013 at which the Church of Ireland will be represented by Dr Kenneth Milne. The assembly will be preceded by one or possibly two preparatory meetings held in England under the auspices of CTBI.

#### *World Council of Churches (WCC) [www.wcc-coe.org]*

The Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy, has been appointed to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches on the nomination of the Church of Ireland following consultation with the Methodist Church. We understand that as a member of the Central Committee he will be invited to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the WCC in Busan, South Korea in October 2013.

*In addition to membership of the above organisations, the Church of Ireland also participates in the following dialogues and conversations:*

*Reuilly Conversations [www.churchofengland.org/media/36073/reuilly\_factsheet.rtf]*

The Church of Ireland is a signatory to ‘the Reuilly Declaration’ of 2001 between the Anglican Churches of Britain and Ireland and the French Lutheran and Reformed Churches. Attendance at the meetings rotates by arrangement between these Churches. The Church of Ireland, the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church take it in turn to attend the meetings. (See *Journal of the General Synod, 2000*, pp 126 and 129 and *Journal of the General Synod, 2002*, p. 139.)

*Meissen Conversations [www.churchofengland.org]*

These talks are between the Church of England and the Evangelische Kirche Deutschland (EKD). However, observer status has been accorded to the Church of Ireland, the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church on a rotational basis, and at present this role is filled by the Church in Wales.

*The Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) [www.leuenberg.eu]*

A memorandum of agreement between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the CPCE (the Leuenberg Fellowship) commits the signatories to (a) exchanging information on their emerging Faith and Order work, (b) meeting approximately every three years for a Faith and Order consultation, (c) exploring together the theological exposition and concrete expression of the Church’s mission, ministry and unity/communion, (d) inviting each other to participate in major projects of theological research and reflection in the service of the Church’s mission in Europe and (e) assisting one another, wherever possible, in developing wider ecumenical relationships in Europe.

This memorandum was approved by the General Synod in May 2012 (the other three Anglican Churches having already adopted it). As our budget makes no provision for any costs that may arise from our being a party to this agreement, we have made an application to the Priorities Fund in that regard.

*Anglican Lutheran International Co-ordination Committee [www.anglicancommunion.org]*

The Church of Ireland has been invited by the Anglican Communion Office to make a nomination by the end of January 2013 for possible membership of this committee.

*Anglican Orthodox International Commission [www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/orthodox]*

We note with pleasure the appointment of our chairman, the Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke, to this commission.

## **Anglican Affairs Working-Group**

### *Membership*

The Rt Rev Michael Burrows Bishop of Cashel & Ossory (Chair)  
The Rt Rev Harold Miller, Bishop of Down & Dromore  
The Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher  
Rev Canon Patrick Comerford  
Rev Dr Maurice Elliott

Rev Canon Ian Ellis  
Rev Canon Helene Steed  
Ms Kate Turner  
Mr Wilfred Baker

The Rev Canon Helene Tarneberg Steed, rector of Clones, and the Rev Canon Patrick Comerford, lecturer in Anglicanism and Liturgy at CITI were invited to join the Working Group.

### *Anglican Covenant*

The working group continued to follow the local and international developments on the Anglican Covenant. This included the meeting of Anglican Consultative Council (ACC 15) held in New Zealand from 27 October to 7 November 2012.

### *Anglican Networks [www.anglicancommunion.org/networks]*

ACC 15 provided an opportunity for the Communion as a whole to review the level of participation by the various provinces in appropriate networks – it is encouraging to note that the level of involvement by the Church of Ireland is recognised as being comprehensive, please see appendix.

### *Porvoo [www.porvoochurches.org]*

Regular informative reports on meetings, activities and news in the Porvoo Communion were made by the Rt Rev John McDowell (the Church of Ireland Porvoo contact person).

The Porvoo Communion of Churches continued its regular programme of Consultations and Conferences throughout 2012 with the aim to enhancing the common life of its members Churches.

A Conference was held on Diaspora and Migration in Turku, Finland, with a contribution from Mr Philip McKinley on behalf of the Church of Ireland. A Consultation was held on Sacraments and Mission in Dragor, Denmark with a resource paper delivered by the Archbishop of Dublin.

The Porvoo Contact Group had its annual meeting in October 2012, also in Dragor, Denmark. The Group exchanged Country Reports from each member and observer Church and agreed the programme to be submitted to the Porvoo Primates at their meeting in 2013.

This programme includes a Third Consultation on the Diaconia, to be hosted by the Church of Ireland in Dublin in April 2013. In order to prepare the ground for our own contribution to this Consultation a representative group of those serving in diaconal-type ministries met for a half day seminar in CITI in Dublin to explore Church of Ireland experiences of diaconal

ministry. The Revd Canon Patrick Comerford attended a similar gathering organised by the Scottish Episcopal Church to explore its understanding of diaconal ministry in preparation for the April Consultation.

Other planned events are:

The Primates Meeting and Contact Group Meeting in Iceland in October 2013.

A Consultation on Economics and ethics to be hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania in 2014.

A Lay and Ordained Church Leaders' Conference and Contact Group Meeting to be held in York in 2014.

The contribution of the Church of Ireland is greatly valued in the Porvoo Communion and although parish and Diocesan links have declined in recent years the Churches of the Communion are very open to closer ties with Ireland.

*Moravian Church [www.moravian.org.uk]*

Discussions were continued with representatives of the Moravian Church. The Working Group has been particularly tasked by the Standing Committee to examine the document *Finding our delight in the Lord* which has provided the basis for a relationship of full communion between Anglicans and Moravians in the United States and to explore whether its agreed principles provide a basis for similar developments here. This amounts to a significant ecumenical initiative and the work will focus on a residential encounter between representatives of the Church of Ireland and the Moravian Church to be held in Kilkenny in January 2013. While the Moravian Church in Britain and Ireland is structured as a single province its discussions with the Church of Ireland are taking place as a bilateral conversation and the participants include bishops of both traditions.

*Old Catholics [www.willibrord.org.uk]*

The Bishop of Cashel and Ossory continues to attend meetings of the Society of St Willibrord which promotes relationships between Anglicans and Old Catholics.

## **Inter-Faith Working-Group**

### *Membership*

The Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin (Convenor)

The Rt Rev Trevor Williams, Bishop of Limerick

The Rt Rev Patrick Rooke, Bishop of Tuam

Rev Darren McCallig (Honorary Secretary)

Very Rev Sandra Pragnell

Rev Canon Glenn West

Ms Georgina Copty

Dr Susan Hood (to November 2012)

Mr Tom Tate (from April 2012)

Rev Ása Björk Ólafsdóttir (from January 2013)

Supporting and resourcing the Church's engagement with people of other faiths remains the central focus of the Inter Faith Working Group. In the past year the group organised two seminars, one in Belfast in October 2012 and one in Galway in March 2013.

Questions of religious diversity and education were the focus of the half-day seminar held in St Thomas' Church, Eglantine Avenue, Belfast on Saturday 13 October. The event, entitled 'Educating for Understanding' provided a space to address some of the theological, pastoral and practical implications of our increasingly multi-cultural and multi-religious society. The main speakers were the Rev Dr Inderjit Bhogal, leader of the Corrymeela Community; Dr Katy Radford, a social anthropologist working at the Institute for Conflict Research and a member of the executive council of the Northern Ireland Jewish community; and Mr Norman Richardson, lecturer in religious education and diversity/intercultural education at Stranmillis University College, Belfast.

Nairobi-born Dr Bhogal, who is a former president of the British Methodist Conference, emphasised the fruits of interreligious dialogue. Engaging with members of other traditions, he said, deepens our understanding both of our own faith as well as that of the other. Dr Radford, who authored a comprehensive report on inter faith and healthcare provision, said that many of the issues which arise in hospitals also arise in schools: the need for single-gender facilities, dress codes, sensitivity to holy days and seasons when preparing timetables, diet, etc. Mr Richardson drew attention to the 'four pillars of education' as outlined in a 1996 report to UNESCO: learning to live together, learning to know, learning to do, and learning to be. The papers from the Belfast seminar are available on the Church of Ireland website.

Then, in March 2013 a workshop on inter faith engagement was held in Galway. The workshop was based around the Porvoo Communion's study guide 'Keys to Inter Faith Engagement'. The aim of the 'Keys' document, and of the workshop, was to enable people to consider the situation where they live with their neighbours from different faith communities, and to support and develop inter faith dialogue. The event (held at the Chapel of Saint Columbanus on the campus of the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI) was led by the Rev Canon Andrew Wingate. Canon Wingate was the founding director of the Saint Philip's Centre for Study and Engagement in Leicester, and is now a consultant/teacher in the area of inter faith relations, particularly within Scandinavia.

The Working Group hopes that the Belfast and Galway seminars will help to build capacity among the network of diocesan inter faith advisers and also call the wider Church's attention to the enrichment as well as the challenges which a multi-religious society provides.

The group noted the launch by the Archbishop of Dublin in November 2012 of the report *Land of Promise? An Anglican exploration of Christian attitudes to the Holy Land, with special reference to Christian Zionism*. The document was prepared by the Anglican Communion's Network for Inter Faith Concerns of which Archbishop Jackson is chair at the request of the Anglican Consultative Council. The publication was sent to the Dublin Jewish and Muslim communities for comment and is available on the Anglican Communion website.

Finally, there were a number of membership changes during the past year. Dr Susan Hood resigned, while Mr Tom Tate and the Rev Asa Bjork Olafsdottir were co-opted onto the working group.

### **European Affairs Working-Group**

#### *Membership*

The Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke

Miss Janet Barcroft

Mr Robert Cochran

Rev Canon Adrian Empey

Rev Canon David Hutton Bury

Rev Canon Eithne Lynch

Rev Canon John Merrick

Dr Kenneth Milne

Mr Robert Roe

Rev Canon Terence Scott

Professor Ben Tonra

It has been the custom for the Church and Society Commission (CSC) of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) to seek a meeting of representatives of the Churches and government representatives at the start of each new European Union (EU) presidency. The Irish government has held the presidency since 1 January 2013 and the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) is in discussion with the CSC of CEC in order to arrange such a meeting. At a one-day conference held under the auspices of the Institute of International and European Affairs on 23 November, at which we were represented, ministers announced that the Irish government's priorities for its presidency include (a) economic recovery, with special emphasis on youth employment, (b) regulation of the financial sector and (c) agreement on an EU budget. It is important that Church perspectives on such issues are conveyed to the presidency.

We were also represented at a seminar in Dublin on the implications for Ireland and Northern Ireland of the proposed referendum on Scottish independence, and at a number of briefing sessions and presentations arranged by the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA).

As reported last year, the Board of Overseas Affairs of the ICC now includes on its agenda matters relating to Europe, which are most effectively addressed ecumenically. Given the highly structured channels of communication between the Roman Catholic Church and the agencies of the EU through the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE) it is highly desirable that the other Irish Churches are kept aware of current and pending issues and also, as appropriate, make their views known.

We are at present preparing a directory of Anglican, Ecumenical and Inter-faith links with the Church of Ireland which will be shortly available to members of the Church.



**Resolutions:**

- (a) That the report of the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue be received
- (b) That the following be appointed members of the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue

The Archbishops and Bishops

Rev Ása Björk Ólafsdóttir  
Rev Canon Patrick Comerford  
Rev Canon David Crooks  
Ms Georgina Coptý  
Rev Canon Dr Ian Ellis  
Mr Samuel Harper  
Rev Darren McCallig  
Mrs Roberta McKelvey

Mr Philip McKinley  
Dr Kenneth Milne  
Mr Trevor Morrow  
Rev Daniel Nuzum  
Rev Niall Sloane  
Rev Canon Helene Tarneberg Steed  
Ms Catherine Turner

## COMMISSION FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY AND DIALOGUE NETWORKS

The Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue appoints representatives to the various networks it is associated with. With the advancement of electronic communication many of these networks converse through email groups/forums thus greatly reducing costs and increasing interaction. These networks include: Anglican Affairs, Network for Inter Faith Concerns (NIFCON), Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and Church Action on Labour and Life (CALL). Full information on the networks may be found at: [www.ireland.anglican.org/index.php?do=news&sid=16](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/index.php?do=news&sid=16).

A number of new networks have been formed in recent months and it is hoped to make appointments to these by June 2013. The Network coordinator is the Rev N Sloane, Hon Records Secretary of the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue.

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### ANGLICAN NETWORKS

The official Networks of the Anglican Communion, coordinated from the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) office in London, draws together Anglicans involved in particular aspects of mission and ministry. The Church of Ireland is represented on the following committees.



<b>International Anglican Women's Network (IAWN)</b>	Canon D Clements
<a href="http://www.iawn.anglicancommunion.org">www.iawn.anglicancommunion.org</a>	
<b>International Anglican Family Network (IAFN)</b>	Mrs R McKelvey
<a href="http://www.iafn.anglicancommunion.org">www.iafn.anglicancommunion.org</a>	
<b>International Anglican Youth Network (IAYN)</b>	Mr D Brown
<a href="http://www.iayn.anglicancommunion.org">www.iayn.anglicancommunion.org</a>	
<b>Anglican Health Network</b>	Rev D Nuzum & Ms Lydia Monds
<a href="http://www.anglicanhealth.org">www.anglicanhealth.org</a>	
<b>Anglican Communion Safe Church Network</b>	<i>Vacant</i>
<a href="http://www.safechurch.anglicancommunion.org">www.safechurch.anglicancommunion.org</a>	
<b>Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion</b>	<i>Vacant</i>
<a href="http://www.cuac.anglicancommunion.org">www.cuac.anglicancommunion.org</a>	
<b>Anglican Theological Education Network</b>	Rev Dr M Elliott
<a href="http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/theological/teac/index.cfm">www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/theological/teac/index.cfm</a>	
<b>Anglican Peace and Justice Network (APJN)</b>	Rt Rev T Williams
<a href="http://www.apjn.anglicancommunion.org">www.apjn.anglicancommunion.org</a>	
<b>Anglican Refugee and Migrant Network (ARMN)</b>	Mr P McKinley

[www.armn.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.armn.anglicancommunion.org)

**Anglican Communion Environmental Network (ACEN)**

*Vacant*

[www.acen.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.acen.anglicancommunion.org)

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NETWORK FOR INTER FAITH CONCERNS (NIFCON)  
NIFCON links those in different provinces with a particular concern for inter faith relations, and coordinates news and resources in this area.

Most Rev M Jackson

[www.nifcon.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.nifcon.anglicancommunion.org)

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**CTBI NETWORKS**

Many issues facing the church benefit from a unified approach. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland works with member churches to co-ordinate responses, share resources and learn from each other's experiences. There are currently six main work areas.



The Global Mission Network

[www.ctbi.org.uk/CA/13](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CA/13)

Rev P Hoey

The Churches International Student Network

[www.ctbi.org.uk/CC/15](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CC/15)

Rev D McCallig

Church and Public Issues

[www.ctbi.org.uk/CF/18](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CF/18)

Mr T Morrow

Faith & Order Reference Group

[www.ctbi.org.uk/CG/19](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CG/19)

Most Rev M. Jackson

China Desk

[www.ctbi.org.uk/153](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/153)

Most Rev M Jackson

Consultative Group On Ministry Among Children

[www.ctbi.org.uk/201](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/201)

Rev A Taylor

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**CHURCH ACTION ON LABOUR AND LIFE (CALL)**

An Ecumenical Initiative to Promote Social Europe

Dr K. Milne

[www.ceceurope.org/cec-newsletters/call-church-action-on-labour-and-life/](http://www.ceceurope.org/cec-newsletters/call-church-action-on-labour-and-life/)



