

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD
OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND**

The aims of the General Synod Board of Education are, to:

- Define the policy of the Church in education, both religious and secular and, in promotion of this policy, to take such steps as may be deemed necessary to co-ordinate activities in all fields of education affecting the interests of the Church of Ireland;
- Maintain close contact with Government, the Department of Education and Skills, Diocesan Boards of Education, and other educational and school authorities with a view to ascertaining the most efficient and economical use of resources including funds, transport facilities and teachers;
- Study any legislation or proposed legislation likely to affect the educational interests of the Church of Ireland and take such action with respect thereto as it may deem necessary;
- Deliberate and confer on all educational matters affecting the interests of the Church;
- Make such enquiries as it shall deem to be requisite and communicate with government authorities and all such bodies and persons as it shall consider necessary.

Appointment of NI Secretary to Incumbency

The General Synod Board of Education wishes to record its grateful thanks to the Rev Dr Ian Ellis for his work as Education Secretary NI over the last decade. The decision by Rev Dr Ellis to return to parochial ministry was greeted by the Board with a sense of sadness that it would be losing such a valued secretary and advisor. Rev Dr Ellis was highly regarded in the field of education in Northern Ireland where his patient yet focused approach to advancing change in the field of education was respected by both his colleagues in the other Churches and by the Education Partners in Northern Ireland. The General Synod Board of Education, the NI Board of Education and the RI Board of Education join together in wishing him and his family every happiness and blessing in his future parochial ministry, in his new incumbency in Rossorry, Co Fermanagh.

A. BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

AIMS

- Shall have power to represent the Board of Education of the General Synod in all educational matters applying solely to the Republic of Ireland;
- Will advise the General Synod of developments in educational policy in the Republic of Ireland and will represent the Church as an educational partner to the Department of Education and Skills (DE&S) and other educational bodies;
- Support, through the *Follow Me* programme, religious education in primary schools under Protestant management;

- Co-ordinate and encourage the participation in the Synod Examination in Religious Education;
- Provide training and advice to Bishops and boards of management;
- Provide training and an advisory service to Bishops, dioceses and parishes in the implementation of Safeguarding Trust;
- Facilitate Garda vetting of workers and volunteers in Church of Ireland primary schools and parishes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Personalia**
2. **Education Developments at a European Level:** Policy developments in education at European level are outlined.
3. **Educational Developments at National Level:** significant pieces of legislation in relation to education and schools are highlighted.
4. **Second Level:** recent events organised by the Board at second level are outlined.
5. **CICE:** the incorporation of CICE within DCU is progressing.
6. **Child Protection and Safeguarding Trust:** Report of the work of the Child Protection Officer RI.
7. **Religious Education (*Follow Me*):** work continues on the redevelopment of the Follow Me RE syllabus.
8. **Grants:** the Board awards a number of grants each year in support of various educational bodies.
9. **Secondary Education Committee:** The report of the SEC is attached as Appendix B.
10. **The Sunday School Society:** Report 2015 (Appendix C).

REPORT

1. Personalia

Ms Jan O’Sullivan, TD, was appointed Minister for Education and Skills in July 2014, in succession to Mr Ruiarí Quinn, TD. The Board wished the Minister well on her appointment.

The Board notes with regret the resignation of Rev Dr Ian Ellis as Education Secretary NI on his appointment to an incumbency in the Diocese of Clogher. However the Board wishes him every good wish for the future and wishes to join in the appreciation expressed above.

Mr Andrew Forrest, Principal of The High School, Dublin joined the Board as a co-opton from the General Synod Board of Education membership.

Ms Amy McCrea joined the Board as the representative of CIYD.

We welcome both Ms McCrea and Mr Forrest onto the Board.

2. Education Developments at a European Level

In addition to providing guidance to schools in relation to day to day matters, consulting and negotiating with the Department of Education and Skills and representing the Church in the field of education, the Board also keeps a watching brief on developments in education policy at a European level. This is achieved through the Board's involvement with relevant bodies such as the Inter-European Commission for Church and School (ICCS), the Co-ordinating Group for Religion in Education in Europe (Co-Gree) and also through the International Association for Christian Education (IV). The EU institutions, in the form of the Council of Europe, have an interest in the teaching of religion in schools throughout the EU. As recently as Autumn 2014 the Council of Europe published a working paper entitled: "Signposts - policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious worldviews in intercultural education." Such documents inform policy on this area at a National level. In the Irish context, the influence of the Council of Europe on RE policy can be seen in the work of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment on the development of a program for Education in Religion and Beliefs (ERB) and Ethics for primary schools. This program is likely to be introduced in Irish primary schools in the near future and may impact upon the content and delivery of RE which is currently taught in Church of Ireland schools. The Board will continue to keep a close eye on developments at a European level and, through the ICCS and IV, will seek to engage in the dialogue which is occurring on Religious Education at that level. Introspection at a policy level must be guarded against and in this regard, the opportunity to engage with Reformed Churches in Europe (and the Orthodox Church), through the ICCS and IV, facilitates a sharing of experiences and also information which is useful in discussions with education partners at a National level. The Secretary published an article in the Autumn 2014 edition of Search Journal which elaborates further on the work of the ICCS and European education matters.

"Reformation 500"

As highlighted in last year's Report, the 31 October 2017 is the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther nailing his 95 "theses" to the door of Wittenberg Cathedral, popularly regarded as the beginnings of the Reformation movement and plans are in place for the celebration of the 500th Anniversary. One of the major projects planned by the International Association for Christian Education (IV) is a worldwide online networking of Protestant primary and second level schools with the aim of facilitating schools to explore further the theological underpinnings of the ethos of their respective schools. A world youth gathering in Wittenberg is also planned for 2017. The Board continued to encourage schools to become involved in this project as an expression of the shared religious-cultural heritage between Protestant schools in Ireland and Europe. In this regard, the Board was delighted to have Dr Gerhard Schroder, General Secretary of IV attend and present at its second level schools conference held in Dublin in September 2014 (see below).

Further information can be found at: www.schools500reformation.net.

3. Educational Developments at a National Level

Draft General Scheme of an Education (Admissions to School) Bill 2013

The draft Heads of this Bill were published in 2013. The concerns of the Board in relation to a number of provisions of this draft Bill were highlighted in last year's report to Synod and formal submissions have been made to the DE&S and the Oireachtas. The intention to publish the text of the draft Bill was included on the legislation schedule published by the Office of An Taoiseach in January 2015. It is understood that the text of the draft Bill will be published for the Dáil session after Easter 2015.

Teaching Council (Amendment) Bill, 2015

The Teaching Council Amendment Bill, 2015 was published in January 2015 and is before the Oireachtas. The Bill has the following two aims; (1) to underpin the central role of the Teaching Council in the forthcoming statutory vetting arrangements for registered teachers and (2) to amend and strengthen the statutory provisions relating to the Teaching Council's Fitness to Teach function.

Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedures Review

The current term of office for Boards of Management at Primary level will end on 30 November 2015 and new Boards will be elected to take office on 1 December 2015. During 2014, the education partners commenced work on the revisions to the Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedures for 2015, the governance document for boards of management at primary level. The Secretary and the Education Advisor are members of the DE&S Steering Committee of the revisions of the Constitution and Rules of Procedures. Serious consideration was given to a number of proposals from various education partners with regards to the composition of Boards of Management and various other issues. Consultation took place with the primary school patrons in this regard. However, it is intended that the next edition of the Constitution will have only minor changes from the 2011 edition.

Implementation of the Ward Report

In September 2014, the report of the Expert Group on Fixed-Term and Part-Time Employment in Primary and Second Level Education in Ireland (the Ward Report), was published. The Expert Group was chaired by Mr Peter Ward SC. The report recommended a suite of measures which would lead to more job security and improve the position of fixed-term and part-time teachers. A number of these recommendations will be implemented for the 2015/2016 school year. These changes will reduce the eligibility criteria for obtaining a Contract of Indefinite Duration to two years and will allow fixed-term teachers to acquire permanent positions more easily and quickly, and will also enable part-time teachers to gain additional hours.

Primary Online Database

The DE&S introduced the Primary Online Database (POD) in 2014. The Board gave a guarded welcome to this initiative as it will undoubtedly ease the administrative burden on schools in the longer term. However, the Board formally put on record with the DE&S its objection to the State recording the religious denomination and the race/ethnicity of pupils. The Board is of the view that this constitutes an invasive act on the part of the State and contradicts the position already expressed by the State to the Board that the State should be blind to religion in the allocation of resources. Schools were advised that the completion of this part of the POD was voluntary and required specific parental permission.

Advocacy on Small Primary Schools

The Board continued to advocate on behalf of “small” primary schools in the past year. The Board highlighted this issue in its submission to Government in advance of Budget 2014. The matter was also formally raised by the Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough, the Most Rev Dr Jackson, at a meeting with Minister Jan O’Sullivan in September 2014. Close contact was maintained with the INTO on this issue with a view to reducing the schools appointment and retention thresholds. In February 2015 Minister Jan O’Sullivan announced alleviation in retention thresholds with a particular focus on smaller isolated schools. This announcement was welcomed by the Board and school Patrons.

The Minister also published the long-awaited “Value for Money” Review of Small Schools but, significantly, did not accept its recommendations.

Primary School Patrons noted the request from Minister O’Sullivan to enter into a dialogue regarding a voluntary protocol for school amalgamations. The key proposal in this regard is that any school with 25 pupils or less, within 8km of a school of the same patronage, would begin a conversation regarding the possibility of amalgamation. In turn the DE&S would discuss with both schools the resources required for such an amalgamation to occur. It is stressed that discussions between schools would be entirely voluntary and the protocol reiterates that the final decision on amalgamation would rest with the Patron.

Research on Small Schools

In January 2015 the Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough, the Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson, Professor Brian Nic Craith, President of Dublin City University (DCU), Dr Anne Lodge, Principal of the Church of Ireland College of Education (CICE), representatives of the Board, School Patrons and the Church of Ireland Primary Schools Association (CIPSMA) launched a collaborative research study into the communities, cultures, benefits and challenges of small primary schools in the Republic of Ireland.

The aim of this research is to provide specific insights into the culture of small schools from a range of perspectives, including those of principals, teachers, members of Boards of Management, patrons, children, parents and education policy-makers. It will examine both the challenges and benefits of teaching and learning in

a small school context. This will enable a comparison of the Irish experience of teaching and learning in small schools with research published in Finland and the UK where similar studies have been conducted.

The study will be based in the Church of Ireland College of Education and will be overseen by the College Principal and guided by an advisory board which will include experienced practitioners and teacher educators in addition to drawing on international expertise. The study is funded by the General Synod Board of Education (RI), CIPSMA, the Governors of the Church of Ireland College of Education and Dublin City University and it is intended that the findings of the research study will be published in Autumn 2015.

Data Protection for Schools

A new website to provide guidance to schools on Data Protection matters was launched in 2014. The website was developed by the Management Bodies for primary and second level schools and was funded by the DE&S. The website will be a helpful resource for schools in relation to data access requests, records retention, template policies, storage and security and for other specialist guidance relating to data protection.

Special Educational Needs: Proposed New Allocation Model

In June 2014, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) published its report on a proposed new model for allocating teachers for students with special educational needs in mainstream schools.

The report recommended the development of a new allocation model for schools based on two components:

1. A component which would take account of the school educational profile which would be based on:
 - (a) The number of students with complex special educational needs attending the school;
 - (b) The percentage of the students performing below a certain threshold of standardised test results;
 - (c) The social context of the school which would include gender, school location and educational disadvantage.
2. Schools would receive a baseline allocation which would be based on the number of school enrolments which would support schools in having whole school policies and practices in place to prevent and minimise the emergence of low achievement and learning difficulties. It was indicated that this baseline support would comprise 15% of the total allocation.

As part of an information gathering exercise in relation to the proposed new model, a questionnaire was circulated to all schools in September 2014 by the DE&S. The Board received significant feedback from school principals conveying their distress in relation to the information that was being sought, particularly in relation to the social or economic status of pupils. Concern was

expressed about future allocations to schools being based on the information supplied on the questionnaire.

The Board made a submission to the DE&S in relation to the proposed new model and, together with the other Education Partners, is involved in ongoing consultation in relation to the implementation of the proposed new model. The Secretary and Education Advisor attended such a consultation meeting with representatives of the DE&S in November 2014 and Mr Andrew Forrest, Mrs Joyce Perdue and the Secretary attended a further meeting with representatives of the DE&S and NCSE in January 2014. The Board has engaged in political lobbying on this matter also. It is anticipated that the new model will be introduced in the 2016/2017 school year.

Appearance at Oireachtas Committee

In October 2014, Mrs Joyce Perdue and the Secretary appeared at the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Social Protection on behalf of the Board. The topic under discussion at the Joint Committee was the process for dealing with parental complaints in schools. It was highlighted by members of the Joint Committee that there is no avenue outside of the Board of Management for dealing with parental complaints. Representatives of the DE&S indicated that the matter might be dealt with as part of the proposed “Parents Charter” which is being considered by the Minister for Education and Skills.

School Closure:

Timolin National School, Co Kildare closed in June 2014.

Mallow No 1 National School was closed in June 2014 to facilitate the opening of a new community national school under the patronage of Cork Education Training Board (ETB).

Newtownwhite National School, Ballina, Co Mayo was divested by the Bishop of Tuam, Rt Rev Patrick Rooke and opened under the patronage of Educate Together in September 2014.

Second Level:

Opening of the Academic Year Service in St Patricks Cathedral, Dublin.

With the aim of promoting and encouraging of the religious ethos of second level schools, the Board organised a Service for the opening of the 2014/15 academic year in St Patricks Cathedral Dublin on the 25 September 2014. The Service of Choral Evensong was attended by His Excellency, President Michael D Higgins and also by the newly appointed Minister for Education and Skills, Ms Jan O’Sullivan TD. The Service was attended by a representative number of students from Church of Ireland and Protestant secondary schools across the country with approximately four hundred students in attendance. The Board is grateful to the Primus of Scotland, the Rt Rev David Chillingworth, who was the preacher for the Service, the choir and organist of the Cathedral and also to Mr Greg Fromholz for providing an inspirational session with the students before the formal service.

The Board wishes to also express its thanks in particular to the Dean of St Patricks Cathedral, the Very Rev Victor Stacey, the Rev Canon Charles Mullen and all the staff at St Patricks Cathedral for all their support and goodwill in granting permission for and facilitating the Service. Feedback from schools and attendees indicated that the Service provided a great expression of the collective religious ethos of the secondary schools present in the Cathedral on the day.

School's Conference

Prior to the Service, a conference for all second level school governors, school principals and parents representatives took place at the Radisson Hotel, Golden Lane. The theme of the conference was “Faith and Partnership” and brought together key people involved in the provision of second level education for the Church of Ireland/Protestant community. The hope of the conference organisers was that the conference would initiate a collective consideration of how the group of Protestant second level schools might work together in various partnerships into the future. Delegates heard from various speakers and held a group “fish-bowl” discussion during the afternoon.

The conference concluded with an address from the Minister for Education and Skills, Ms Jan O’Sullivan TD, who took the opportunity to announce an increase in funding to the SEC (further details in appendix B).

4. CICE

Reflecting the growing partnership between CICE and DCU, an inter-institutional linkage agreement was signed in January 2015. This agreement means that DCU becomes the sole accrediting body for all CICE’s degree programmes. This agreement marks a key stage in the journey towards the incorporation of CICE within DCU, further information on which can be found at: www.dcuincorporation.ie

5. Child Protection and Safeguarding Trust

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) RI, Ms Renée English continues to provide advice and guidance to parishes and dioceses on a range of issues regarding the implementation of Safeguarding Trust.

She liaises with statutory authorities in relation to the referral and management of child protection cases.

There have been a small number of historical and current abuse referrals with some cases ongoing from previous years. The first priority in managing any such cases is to ensure the safety of the child. Statutory authorities are always notified and close contact maintained. Such cases also require careful fact checking and working cooperatively with Church authorities and external agencies.

The CPO continues her role as secretary of a child protection network for those holding safeguarding responsibilities in voluntary and community organisations. The network provides an opportunity for sharing of information and resources and acts as a lobby group to influence child protection policy development at national level.

Links with child protection colleagues in other Churches in the Republic and beyond have been maintained.

The annual clergy training day held in November 2014 included members of clergy recently ordained, in first incumbencies, new to the jurisdiction and others seeking to update their knowledge.

The CPO co-facilitated training for ordinands at the Theological Institute with Ms Margaret Yarr CPO NI in December 2014.

Training and triennial parish evaluations continue to be undertaken by the CPO and diocesan support team members. The parish evaluation template has been revised in consultation with diocesan team members.

A number of new diocesan support team members have replaced those who have moved on. The Board of Education greatly appreciates the valuable work of diocesan team members.

A diocesan support teams' day was held in November. The invited speaker was Ms Teresa Devlin, CEO of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church.

Ms Devlin outlined developments in child protection practice that have taken place in recent years to redress historical shortcomings in the Catholic Church. She stressed the need to focus on child welfare rather than protection of the institutions and the need for the child to have a voice.

The Catholic Church's Standards and Guidance document, first published in 2008, is currently undergoing a process of revision involving working groups and a widespread consultation process.

Training events attended by the CPOs during the year included a BASPCAN conference 'Safeguarding in Christian Churches' held in Sheffield in September 2014. The CPOs also attended the Church of England and Methodist Safeguarding Advisors' conference in County Durham in January 2015. The topic addressed was 'Promoting Resilience' in a variety of contexts, both in safeguarding work and for safeguarding advisors themselves.

Since the appointment of Ms Ruth Burleigh as an authorised signatory in 2014 she has taken major responsibility for the administration of the vetting service. The CPO remains as second authorised signatory and continues to provide vetting information and advice.

During the year an amended Garda vetting application form was distributed to parishes and online guidance notes provided for the completion of the form.

In September 2014 the CPO and Ms Burleigh attended training at the Garda Training College in Templemore, Co Tipperary in anticipation of commencement of the legislation and the introduction of the e vetting Garda pilot project.

General Synod members will recall that a summary of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 was included in last year's Report to General Synod. The commencement of this Act was expected in 2014 but a requirement for further amendment has delayed commencement until later in 2015.

A guidance leaflet for members of select vestries was published as an addition to the Safeguarding Trust suite of resources in January 2015. It may be downloaded from the Safeguarding Trust website or provided in hard copy on request.

6. Religious Education (*Follow Me*)

Certificate in *Follow Me*

The Board and CICE continue to engage in a partnership venture regarding the Certificate in Religious Education (*Follow Me*). This Certificate was initially confined to recent and former graduates of CICE. However it was agreed in 2013 that availability would be extended to all permanent teachers in Church of Ireland/Protestant schools. The awarding of the Certificate is based on the completion of course work and attendance at a summer school.

The Board continues to be grateful to CICE and in particular to its principal Dr Anne Lodge and Ms Jackqui Wilkinson, for nurturing and facilitating this endeavour.

Follow Me RE Curriculum

Following the passing of a motion at General Synod 2014 in relation to the inspection of RE at primary level, discussion were initiated with the Roman Catholic Episcopal Commission to ascertain the current practice with regard to the inspection of RE at primary level in Roman Catholic schools. The RC Episcopal Commission has been very helpful and encouraging in this regard. Considerations on the implementation of the inspection of RE are still ongoing. Consultation with Patrons, Diocesan Boards of Education, School principals, teachers and Boards of Management will be a necessary element of the implementation of this motion.

Discussions are ongoing with Veritas in regard to undertaking a Review of the *Follow Me* RE Curriculum. The Board wishes to express its thanks to Veritas who have agreed to share resources from the redevelopment of the *Alive O* RE curriculum into the “Grow in Love” curriculum and to assist in the redevelopment of the *Follow Me* RE curriculum. Consultations with Patrons, school staff and Boards of Management will also be a necessary element of this process.

Religious Education Co-ordinating Committee

The Board has re-appointed an RE sub-committee, to be chaired by the Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough, the Most Rev Dr Jackson to advance matters regarding RE. The sub-committee is comprised of representatives of primary level principals and teachers, RE and curricular specialists and representatives of the Reformed Christian Churches.

7. Grants awarded by the Board in 2014

The Board continues to support the following bodies through grant aid:

- The Past Students Association of the Church of Ireland College of Education;
- Search (A Church of Ireland Journal);
- The Children’s Ministry Network of the Church of Ireland.

B. BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND)

AIMS

The current aims of the Board of Education NI are to:

- Develop, in conjunction with other Churches, a clear and shared vision of education shaped by core values of the Christian faith;
- Advise the Synod of developments in educational policy in NI and to represent the Church as an educational partner to the Department of Education and other educational bodies;
- Liaise with other Churches within the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) to promote the interests and safeguard the rights of transferors in the future;
- Make submissions to relevant government consultations in particular regarding legislative changes to establish the new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) and the proposed Controlled Sector Body;
- Engage with Institutions of Higher Education regarding the future preparation of teachers for the Controlled sector;
- Seek, in conjunction with other Churches, continued curriculum support of the RE core syllabus in schools;
- Provide a training and advisory service to bishops, dioceses and parishes in the implementation of Safeguarding Trust. Prepare for requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups legislation;
- Contribute to training and support for children's ministry in parishes in particular as a member of the Church of Ireland Children's Ministry Network and a partner in the Building Blocks conferences.
- Engage with Institutions of Higher Education regarding the future preparation of teachers for the Controlled sector;
- Seek, in conjunction with other Churches, continued curriculum support of the RE core syllabus in schools;
- Provide a training and advisory service to bishops, dioceses and parishes in the implementation of Safeguarding Trust;
- Prepare for requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups legislation;
- Contribute to training and support for children's ministry in parishes in particular as a member of the Church of Ireland Children's Ministry Network and a partner in the Building Blocks conferences.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Education Bill 2014:** Transferor Churches welcome new Education Bill.
2. **Controlled Sector Support Body:** Functions of the forthcoming support Body are outlined.
3. **Shared Education:** Significant recent developments show increasing government commitment to shared education.

4. **DE Draft Budget 2015-2016:** Churches issue strong warnings of the negative effects of budget cuts to education.
5. **Religious Education (RE):** Concern expressed for the current low level of professional support for RE teachers.
6. **Review of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Northern Ireland:** Report of an international panel is evaluated.
7. **Consultations responded to:** Four important consultation responses.
8. **Safeguarding Trust:** Report of the work of the Child Protection Officer NI.
9. **Safeguarding Board NI:** a government agency proposal to develop an Inter-Faith Committee to enhance child protection recognises the important role of Churches with children and young people.
10. **Building Blocks - Children's Ministry Conferences:** Report of two annual conferences for children's ministry workers.
11. **Annual Theological Lectures at Queen's University Belfast (QUB):** 2015 lectures were well attended and widely appreciated.
12. **Membership.**

Report

1. Education Bill 2014

In September 2014 the NI Executive agreed to withdraw its commitment to establish an Education and Skills Authority (ESA) and instead agreed to replace the five existing Education and Library Boards (ELBs) with a single body based upon the model of an ELB. The Executive also agreed to establish a new body to support controlled schools. A draft Education Bill was brought to the Assembly with agreed accelerated passage and the final reading took place on 17 November 2014 with a view to being enacted as soon as possible following Royal Assent. The Board of the new Education Authority will consist of a chair appointed by the Minister and 20 members, comprising eight political members, and 12 non-political members. These 12 will comprise nominees representing: the Transferors, Catholic Trustees, Integrated schools, Voluntary Grammar schools, and Controlled Grammar schools.

The Secretaries of the Boards of Education of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Methodist Church in Ireland issued the following short statement supporting the new development:

‘The Transferor Churches welcome the agreement today by the Executive that legislation will be drafted to establish a single body to replace the five Education and Library Boards. It is good that a way forward has been found to place the future of educational administration on a secure footing and to remove the current uncertainty.’

The Transferors also warmly welcome the Executive's agreement that the proposed Bill will include an additional provision to fund a new body to support Controlled schools. At their annual meetings of General Synod, General Assembly and Conference earlier this year, the three Transferor Churches expressed deep concern at

the continued disadvantaged position of Controlled schools and called on the Minister to create a body to support and advocate for the Controlled sector. The Churches are pleased that he and his Executive colleagues have responded and acknowledge the support of those parties whose work over the years has enabled such a positive development. The establishment of this new body will correct a deficit in the education system which has existed for decades and will enable Controlled schools to feel they now have an advocate body to work alongside them to bring about continued improvement in educational outcomes for children and young people.’

2. Controlled Sector Support Body

Following the successful passage of the Education Bill through the Assembly in November 2014, the Minister agreed to restore funding to the Controlled Schools Sectoral Support Body Working Group. In addressing the Assembly on 14 October the Minister outlined the functions of the Support Body;

- Provide a representational and advocacy role for Controlled Schools, including advice and support in responding to consultation exercises in respect of education policies, initiatives and schemes, and in regard to relationships with the Department, the Education Authority and other Departments;
- work with Schools within the sector to develop and maintain the collective ethos of the sector including, where appropriate, a role in identifying, encouraging and nominating governors and in ensuring ethos is part of employment considerations;
- work with the Education Authority to raise educational standards;
- participate in the planning of the schools estate, assessing current and ongoing provision within the sector, participating in area-based planning co-ordinated by DE and the Education Authority (including membership of the Department’s Area Planning Steering Group) and engaging where appropriate in strategic planning processes, including community planning; and
- build co-operation and engage with other sectors in matters of mutual interest, including promotion of tolerance and understanding.

The Board of Education agrees with the TRC assessment that the renewed political agreement to establish a support body for controlled schools is excellent news and will ensure this sector has similar support and representation as other sectors. Transferors are represented on the Working Group which has been meeting regularly to produce a business case to ensure the Controlled Schools’ Support Body is established on a firm strategic and financial foundation. The aim of the Group is to ensure that the Body is operational at the earliest opportunity to provide effective support for the Controlled Sector and advice to the emerging Education Authority. The Board urges the Department to expedite the various administrative processes to approve the business case and allow the support body to come into existence as soon as possible.

3. Shared Education

There have been some significant developments in Shared Education in the past year. In October 2014 the NI Assembly Education Committee for Education began an Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education, and sought contributions from

stakeholders. The TRC made a written submission and was asked to bring oral evidence to the Committee on 18 February 2015. The TRC emphasised the commitment of the three transferor Churches to the development of shared education through a range of approaches appropriate to the context of local schools. In December 2014 the Minister announced funding of £25m over four years being made available to support shared education in schools, focussing on those already engaging in collaborative projects. In February 2015, six projects involving more than 20 schools were permitted to proceed to the feasibility and economic appraisal stage. In January 2015 the Minister launched a consultation on a proposed policy and an accompanying Shared Education Bill. The Bill proposes a definition and core principles of shared education, along with actions and interventions the Department will take to support its development. TRC has made a response to the consultation cautiously welcoming the development although expressing concerns that the wording of the draft definition could have a narrowing effect on the range of shared education proposals coming forward.

Jointly Managed Church Schools: During the past year transferors, representatives of the Catholic Trustees and DE have held a number of meetings regarding the framing of draft guidelines applicable to proposals for such schools. Discussions have been productive and are ongoing; the Department proposes to publish later in 2015 a circular of guidance for those schools considering this new form of sharing.

4. DE Draft Budget 2015-2016 consultation

TRC submitted a strongly worded response to proposed cuts to the Education Budget including the following comments:

‘Whilst acknowledging that in times of economic difficulties the Government must take measures to reduce spending by departments to balance the budget, it is deeply disappointing that the education of children could not have been given special exemption from the cut-backs. It is of grave concern that the budget for education is being required to endure the harsh reductions as proposed. Reductions of 8.4% in the Resource Budget and 19.7% in the Capital Budget will in our view seriously damage the future capability of the education system to deliver the high quality education children deserve’.

‘Transferors who serve on Controlled school boards of governors are reporting that implementation of the cut in the Aggregated Schools Budget of £78.7m at school level will necessitate many schools losing teaching staff and/or support staff. The necessary outworking will be increased class sizes and less dedicated time for supporting those children who need it most’.

‘We have a deep concern that implementing such severe budget cuts will bring an impossible burden to already stressed teachers and the present curriculum of active learning could become impossible to implement’. Following the consultation on the draft budget, the Finance minister announced in his revised budget that Education would receive an extra £63m. While this should bring some relief to the education system it is unclear at this stage what impact this will make at school level given that budget cuts will still be required.

5. Religious Education (RE)

The Board continues to be concerned at the current low level of professional support available to teachers of Religious Education. Due to the cuts in ELB budgets, the Curriculum and Advisory Support Service (CASS) to most subject teachers has been diminished to virtually zero. Due to retirements there is currently only one RE advisor across the five ELB areas and his work has been mostly reallocated to school improvement. The TRC has raised this issue at various levels: with MLAs, the ELBs and the Department itself. One possible way to address the current deficit is through a TRC proposal to include RE support for schools in the work of the Controlled Sector Support Body under the heading of developing school ethos. A key component of the religious aspect of the ethos of a Controlled school is its unique un-denominational approach to RE and collective worship.

6. Review of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in NI

A panel of international education experts, appointed by the Minister of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), has reviewed the system of initial teacher education in NI and made recommendations to the Minister.

The Review Group has examined the best international practice for ITE and how the present structure of teacher training in NI might be developed. The Group has proposed four options for consideration: (A) enhanced collaboration between the existing institutions; (B) a two-centre model, with one institution based in the North-West and the other in Belfast; (C) a Northern Ireland Teacher Education Federation, in which existing institutions continue but with some ceding of responsibilities to a supra-institutional federal body; and, finally, (D) a single Northern Ireland Institute of Education in which the distinctive missions of the current teacher education institutions would be retained.

The DEL Minister has published the report, circulated it to stakeholders and has stated that he would be seeking views. This Board has had an initial discussion of the various options and reflected on the merits of each. The TRC was invited to a meeting with the Minister in February 2015, and in line with its earlier oral submission to the Review Group gave support to the closer integration of the current ITE providers with their university settings to enable better synergies between educational research, teacher education and professional development. They stressed that this should be achieved in a way which fully respects and protects the ethos of each ITE institution. The TRC suggested that it would be desirable in the context of developing shared education, if colleges were to build upon existing collaboration and develop an increasingly shared approach to aspects of teacher education. Therefore in the view of the TRC, option (A) offered the most pragmatic way forward at this stage.

Realistically, progress in re-modelling ITE in NI will require political agreement and at present there is a polarisation of opinions. In January 2015 the DEL minister in response to a cut in his department's 2015/16 budget allocation, proposed to remove a 'premia' which is a supplementary funding stream worth £2m for St Mary's and Stranmillis. The knock-on effect of this cut could threaten the sustainability of both colleges in their current form. Following a public campaign of opposition to the cut

back, on the 12 March the NI Executive reversed the minister’s decision and restored the ‘premia’ to both colleges. This is a measure of the lack of political consensus on remodelling Teacher Education provision in NI.

7. Consultations responded to:

- Department of Education;
- Draft Budget 2015-2016;
- Review of Home to School Transport policy;
- Sharing Works: a Policy for Shared Education;
- NI Assembly Education Committee for Education: Enquiry into Shared / Integrated Education;
- Safeguarding Board NI: Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy and Framework.

8. Safeguarding Trust

The Child Protection Officer NI (CPONI) continues in her role of providing advice and guidance regarding the implementation of Safeguarding Trust to parishes, dioceses, mission agencies and related organisations throughout Northern Ireland. In this work, she liaises closely with the Police Service NI, Probation Board NI, Social Services and other statutory and voluntary agencies whenever issues relating to child protection arise within parishes and dioceses.

The annual Safeguarding Trust training event for newly ordained clergy and first incumbents was facilitated by both the CPONI and CPORI in February 2015. Some members of the clergy from the Republic of Ireland also attended. Training events for panel members were held during March and April 2015 and both CPOs will together facilitate training in Clogher diocese in the autumn. Both CPOs facilitated Safeguarding Trust training to first year students in CITI in December 2014. The CPO also provided training in a number of parishes throughout the year.

The CPONI attended a number of training courses in relation to child protection, including a BASPCAN (British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect) conference, ‘*Child Abuse in Christian Churches: What Progress Has Been Made?*’ in September 2014, and a Church of England and Methodist Church Joint Safeguarding Conference on the theme of resilience, in February 2015.

The CPONI continues to be a member of a faith-based, interdenominational child protection group in Belfast. The group provides support to the members and shares information on child protection and related issues.

The Diocesan Evaluation Teams met in September 2014 when the lists of parishes to be evaluated during the next twelve months were distributed. Several new evaluators joined the teams and were warmly welcomed on board. The Teams continue with their very valuable work in visiting (on a triennial basis) and supporting parishes. The Board of Education offers sincere thanks to the evaluators for their continuing diligence and expertise in carrying out these parish visits.

Mrs Claire Geoghegan (AccessNI Co-ordinator in the office of the Board of Education in Belfast) continues to process in excess of one hundred applications for

Enhanced Disclosure checks to AccessNI per month, providing an important service to parishes. Advice and guidance in relation to changes and updates of the checking process are regularly provided to parishes and users of the vetting service.

9. Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI)

The SBNI is a government agency established in 2012 as the key statutory mechanism for effective information sharing, collaboration and understanding between families, agencies and professionals working in child protection in NI. It has been recently recognised that faith organisations have a vital role in children's and youth provision across NI. Hence the SBNI is proposing the establishment of an Inter-Faith Safeguarding Committee for the purpose of information sharing, development of policies, procedures, training and safeguarding initiatives on a multi-agency basis. The Board welcomes this proposal which will give Churches representation on the Committee and enable them to be considered partners with statutory agencies in the safeguarding of children.

10. Building Blocks Children's Ministry Conferences

In November 2014, the tenth annual Building Blocks conference took place in Belfast and Dublin. The organising committees comprise representatives of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, Scripture Union and also some new churches from the Dublin area. The Belfast and Dublin events together drew approximately 200 delegates from a wide range of churches, with the Church of Ireland having significant representation at both venues. The key-note speaker was Ms Lucy Moore the founder of the *Messy Church* programme. These conferences which feature a variety of practical seminars have become established as important sources of inspiration and training for children's ministry leaders. Details of the conferences including seminar notes are available at: <http://www.buildingblocks.ie>

On the wider issue of this Board's role within Children's Ministry, the Secretary is a member of the Children's Ministry Network Group – a report on its work is found elsewhere within the Book of Reports.

11. Annual Theological Lectures at Queen's University Belfast (QUB)

The 2015 lectures were held on February 16 and took a different format from previous series with short contributions from leaders of the four main Churches in Ireland on the theme of "*Mission of the church in Northern Ireland in 2015: Obstacles and Opportunities*". These annual lectures which continue to be well attended and appreciated by a wide range of people are arranged by the Church of Ireland Chaplaincy at QUB and funded by this Board.

12. Membership

The Board has accepted the resignation of Mrs Paddy Wallace who served on this Board for many years. Members thank her most sincerely for her contributions and insights gained from her wide experience as a post-primary school teacher and her deep interest in the Church's ministry with children. The Board welcomed three new members: Professor Rosalind Pritchard, Dr Ivor Hickey and Mr Andrew Frame

Board of Education – Report 2015

(CIYD representative) and looks forward to their contribution to its discussions. The Board congratulates the Very Rev Bryan Kerr on his recent appointment as Rector and Dean of Dromore Cathedral.

The NI Board wishes to pay tribute to the work of Rev Dr Ian Ellis and the grateful thanks of the Board is expressed in the appreciation above.

APPENDIX A

THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION

The following are the members of the Board and its committees as on 31 March 2015.

THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

Mr Sam Harper

Mrs Ethne Harkness

Rev Gillian Wharton

Very Rev George Davison

Elected members

Armagh

Rev Elizabeth Stevenson

Mr Tom Flannagan

Clogher

Very Rev Bryan Kerr

Mrs Hope Kerr

Derry

Rev Canon Henry Gilmore

Mr Des West

Down

Rev Canon John Howard

Mr James Bunting

Connor

Ven Stephen Forde

Dr Ken Dunn

Kilmore

Very Rev Raymond Ferguson

Mrs Brigid Barrett

Tuam

Rev Canon Doris Clements

Professor Paul Johnston

Dublin

Rev Paul Olhausen

Ms Ruth Handy

Meath

Rev Canon John Clarke

Mr Adrian Oughton

Cashel Ferns and Ossory

Rev Canon Patrick Harvey

Mrs Avril Forrest

Cork

Very Rev Adrian Wilkinson

Mr Wilfred Baker

Limerick and Killaloe

Rev Canon Robert Warren

Ms Margaret Brickenden

Co-opted members

Mrs Rosemary Forde
Mrs Helen McClenaghan
Mr Roy McKinney
Mrs Patricia Wallace
Ms Amy McCrea (CIYD)
Rev Brian O'Rourke
Rev Niall Sloane (Sunday School Society)
Dr Anne Lodge (Third Level)
Mr Michael Hall (ISA)
Mr Alan Cox (ISA)
Mr Andrew Forrest (ISA)
Ms Rosemary Maxwell-Eager (ASTI)
Mrs Susie Hall (ASTI)
Ms Vicki Meredith (TUI)
Ms Joyce Perdue
Ms Rachel Fraser
Ms Sarah Richards

Observers:

Rev Trevor Gribben
(Presbyterian Church)
Ms Daphne Wood
(Methodist Church)

Secretary to the General Synod Board of Education:

Dr Ken Fennelly, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6.

Secretary to the Board of Education (NI) (in attendance)

Vacant

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015)**

Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke
Archbishop of Dublin, Most Rev Michael Jackson
Mrs Ethne Harkness
Rev Gillian Wharton
Rev Canon John McKegey
Mr James Bunting
Mr Thomas Flannagan
Rev Brian O'Rourke
Mr Michael Hall
Ms Adrian Oughton

BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Ex-officio members

Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke
Bishop of Clogher, Rt Rev John McDowell
Bishop of Down and Dromore, Rt Rev Harold Miller
Bishop of Kilmore, Rt Rev Ferran Glenfield
The Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev Alan Abernethy
The Bishop of Derry, Rt Rev Ken Good
Lay Hon Sec of General Synod, Mrs Ethne Harkness
Clerical Hon Sec of General Synod, Ven George Davison

Elected members

Armagh	Rev Elizabeth Stevenson Mr Thomas Flannagan
Clogher	Very Rev Bryan Kerr Mrs Hope Kerr
Derry	Rev Malcolm Ferry Mr Malcolm McSparron
Down	Rev Canon Robert Howard Mr James Bunting
Connor	Ven Stephen Forde Dr Kenneth Dunn

Co-opted members

Miss Francis Boyd
Mrs Rosemary Forde
Mrs Helen McClenaghan
Mr Andrew Frame
Dr Ian Hickey
Rev Canon John McKegney
Mr Roy McKinney
Prof Rosalind Pritchard
Rev Canon Wilfred Young

Observers

Rev Amanda Adams
Rev Canon Peter McDowell
Mr James Kerr

Honorary Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Mr James Bunting

Honorary Treasurer, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Mr Roy McKinney

Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Vacant

BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

Ex officio members:

The Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough, Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson (Chair)
Honorary Secretaries - Mr Sam Harper, Rev Gillian Wharton

Elected by House of Bishops:

Bishop of Tuam, Killlala and Achonry, Rt Rev Patrick Rooke
Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Rt Rev Dr Paul Colton

Diocesan Representatives: Mr Adrian Oughton, Vacant

Post primary representatives: Mr Michael Hall, Ms Rosemary Maxwell-Eager

Third level representatives: Professor Paul Johnston, Dr Anne Lodge

Primary representatives: Rev Brian O'Rourke, Ms Joyce Perdue

CIYD: Ms Amy McCrea

Sunday School Society: Rev Niall Sloane

Co-options GS BOE: Mr Andrew Forrest

Observers:

Rev Trevor Gribben
(Presbyterian Church)

Ms Daphne Wood
(Methodist Church)

Secretary, Board of Education (Republic of Ireland)

Dr Ken Fennelly, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6

APPENDIX B
SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE
REPORT 2015

Membership

Church of Ireland

Rt Rev Dr Paul Colton, Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross (Chair)
Mrs Joan Bruton
Mr Edward Lindsay
Mrs Patricia O'Malley
Rev Brian O'Rourke
Ms Elizabeth Oldham
Mr Adrian Oughton
Mr Geoffrey Perrin

The Presbyterian Church

Mrs Eleanor Petrie
Vacant

The Methodist Church

Rev Nigel Mackey
Dr John Harris

The Religious Society of Friends

Mr Alan Harrison
Mr Nigel Pim

Secretary to the Board and to the Company

Dr Ken Fennelly

Administrator (Grants Scheme)

Mr David Wynne

Secondary Education Committee

The Secondary Education Committee (SEC) is a corporate body comprising representatives from the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Religious Society of Friends.

The Committee derives its authority from a resolution passed by the sponsoring Churches in 1965.

The functions of the SEC are twofold. The distribution of a Block Grant provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) to ensure necessitous Protestant children may attend Protestant secondary schools and the representation of the interests of the member Churches in the post-primary education system.

The Committee operates as a limited company thus allowing both the corporate body and the liability of individual members to be appropriately insured, with members of the committee being simultaneously directors of the company.

The SEC meet five times annually (or as necessary). The SEC also has a Finance Sub-Committee which meets five times annually or more often as necessary. The Committee notes the retirement of the Rev Mary Hunter (Presbyterian nominee) and thanks Rev Hunter most sincerely for her commitment to the SEC over many years. The Committee wishes Rev Hunter well in her retirement. The retirement of Rev Hunter creates a vacancy for a nominee from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Committee awaits a nomination in that regard.

The Committee welcomes Mr Nigel Pim as the nominee to the Committee from the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker).

Block Grant Scheme

Enrolments in the twenty fee charging schools totalled 7,763 Day Pupils (7,773 in previous year); 2,101 Boarders (2,108); 9,881 in total (9,864). This figure does not include the five comprehensive schools. In the school year the audited accounts showed the total amount, received from the DES, was €6,500,000 (€6,500,000), the grant in aid of fees totalled €6,536,164 (€6,457,363). The net cost of administering the SEC scheme was €139,013 (€146,642). There is no grant to assist the running of the office.

The following numbers of grants were awarded in respect of the 2014/15 school year: 1,513 day grants (1,505), 860 boarding grants (821), in total 2,334 (2,326).

The Committee were forced to revise the grants for the school year 2014/15 on a scale for boarding from €957 to €7,629 (€1,095 - €7,767) day € 261 - €2,682 (€399 - €2,820). This represented a reduction of €138 per grant on the previous year.

The Administrator, Mr David Wynne and Ms Bridie McLaughlin, Administrative Assistant attended a number of open days at the request of schools and took the opportunity to discuss issues with individual parents. Mr Wynne also made contact with each school to discuss the functioning of the grant scheme.

Second Level Educational Developments

The Memorandum of Agreement between the SEC and the DES concluded in January 2015. Negotiations in regard to a renewal of the Memo were carried out in 2014 and concluded in September 2014. The negotiations coincided with a change of Minister for Education and Skills. As a result of the negotiations the newly appointed Minister for Education and Skills, Ms Jan O’Sullivan TD, was in a position to announce an increase in the total funding of the SEC by €250,000 annually for the forthcoming three years. The SEC wishes to record its grateful thanks to the Minister for authorising this increase to SEC funding. The Minister is aware also however that while this figure is substantial and greatly welcomed, it will only allow the SEC to remain on a “break even” basis since the level of need and demand for grant funding continues to rise and so it is no guarantee that grant levels will not decrease into the future.

Administration

The Committee appreciates the work of the Administrator, Mr Wynne and the Administrative Assistant Ms McLaughlin. A number of administrative support staff are engaged during the busy processing period. The office is under the management of the (company) secretary, Dr Ken Fennelly. The Committee is also grateful for the advice and assistance it receives throughout the year from its auditors Deloitte and in particular Mr. Tom Cassin, Partner, Deloitte.

APPENDIX C

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY FOR IRELAND REPORT 2015

The Sunday School Society (the “Society”) was founded in 1809 and, according to its Constitution, has the following aims:

- To promote Religious Education among children in a parochial context.
- To promote the establishment of clubs and facilitate the conducting of same throughout the Church of Ireland.
- To provide opportunities and courses for the training of club leaders.
- Provision of help and advice for clergy and leaders regarding the use of resources in clubs.
- To work where appropriate with the clergy and organisations which promote children’s ministry.

Trainings delivered through Sunday School Society 2014:

- Delivered Dublin & Glendalough Diocesan Training evening in Taney in May. The workshop explored the theme of Thankfulness in relation to Harvest, several Bible stories and different ideas for storytelling, crafts, creative prayer ideas, music and games.
- Delivered Dublin & Glendalough Diocesan Training evening in Castleknock in September. Sunday School Society trainers* were joined by CIYD trainer Ms Amy Mc Crea and together we explored ideas, programmes and resources suitable for Harvest & Advent for children under 5 right up to 12 years.
- Delivered Cashel, Ferns & Ossory Diocesan Children’s Ministry training evening in October. Again this explored resources, recommended programmes, useful websites, as well as examples of storytelling techniques, creative prayer ideas, crafts, music, memory verses and games in general, with specific mention of a ‘Thankfulness’ theme.
- Delivered a Children’s Ministry Training Workshop at Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh Diocesan Resource Day in October. It was a whirlwind exploration of top tips for Children’s Ministry.
- Building Blocks Dublin, November: Sunday School Society provided two of the workshops at the Dublin Building Blocks - Equipping New Leaders and Creative Prayer. Both workshops ran twice.
- Building Blocks Belfast, November –Sunday School Society facilitated a workshop on Preparing for the Liturgical Seasons.

*The two Sunday School Society trainers are Ms Lynn Storey and Ms Lydia Monds. The Society also brings in facilitators for specific trainings in a diverse range of topics depending on the needs of a diocese. Clergy are greatly encouraged to attend these events and to support the attendance of their Sunday Club leaders at these events also. The feedback from our training sessions continues to be extremely positive as people take away practical ideas for application in their own Sunday School or Club.

Building Blocks 2014:

- Sunday School Society disseminated information on Children’s Ministry in general and on the Building Blocks National Training Day in particular, through mail shots to parishes and through attendance at seven diocesan synods with a Children’s Ministry stand and flyers.
- The Society has two representatives on the working group that organises the Dublin Building Blocks Event and who liaised with the Belfast Building Blocks committee.
- Both National events were a massive success with key note speaker Ms Lucy Moore from Messy Church, a range of excellent workshops, great attendance at both days and multiple practical take home ideas for people to implement in their own Sunday Clubs.
- Sunday School Society is privileged to be a part of such a fine example of ecumenism, living out the message of the Gospel through a variety of denominations working together and learning from each other.

Resources 2014:

- The Society disseminated a children’s ministry leaflet at General Synod and in parishes in 2014 to reiterate the support framework provided by the Sunday School Society and the Children’s Ministry Network.
- The Society established a Church of Ireland Children’s Ministry website which continues to be updated with ideas, resources, training events and children’s programmes run by the Church in various dioceses: www.cm.ireland.anglican.org
- The Society facilitates the Church of Ireland Children’s Ministry Facebook page which is updated several times a week and reaches 300+ people. This network reach continues to grow. www.facebook.com/churchofirelandchildrensministry

Resources & Trainings marked for 2015:

- A recurring need emphasised by Children’s Ministry leaders is access to good programme materials for Under 5’s. The Society has researched different options and has supported the writing of an Under 5’s programme to be piloted between February and April, ready for dissemination to parishes in September 2015. The course content provides all the materials and guidance that a leader would need to run the programme and training will be offered for those wishing to implement it.
- In conjunction with the Children’s Ministry Network, the Society will be supporting the developing and dissemination of a training pamphlet that outlines the types of training available to dioceses.
- There had been an increased interest in diocesan trainings which will continue to be offered throughout the next year in conjunction with the Children’s Ministry Network.

Sunday School Society for Ireland Team

Rev Niall Sloane, Chairperson

Rev Adrienne Galligan, Education Advisor

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Rev Baden Stanley, Children's Ministry Network Rep for Dublin & Glendalough
Ms Lynn Storey (Practitioner, Trainer, CMN consultant and Building Blocks organiser)
Mrs Heather Wilkinson, Former Chairperson, Sunday Club Consultant
Dr Ken Fennelly, Secretary, General Synod Board of Education (RI)
Dr Ken Milne, Education Advisor
Ms Isobel Hawthorne Steele, Children's Ministry practitioner & advocate
Rev Eugene Griffin, Treasurer
Rev Sarah Marry, Secretary & CMN Cork
Ms Lydia Monds, Children's Ministry Development Officer for the Sunday School Society

For more information contact: sss@ireland.anglican.org

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

**CHURCH OF IRELAND YOUTH DEPARTMENT
REPORT 2015**

MEMBERSHIP

Executive

President	Most Rev Pat Storey
Chairman	Rev Paul Whittaker
Treasurer	Mr Edward Hardy
Secretary	Mrs Judith Peters

Rev Malcolm Kingston
Mr Andrew Brannigan
Mr Alan Williamson

Central Board

Mr Steven Brickenden	Rev Diane Matchett
Ms Joyce Clinghan	Rev Niall Sloane
Rev Nicola Halford	Rev Philip Heak
Mrs Zara Genoe	

Co-options

Ms Julie Currie
Ms Sarah Lowry
Mr Martin Montgomery
Mr Damian Shorten
Rev Lesley Robinson

Standing Committee

Ven George Davidson
Mrs Hazel Corrigan

Staff

Full-time Youth Ministry Development Officer (Northern Region)

Mr Andrew Frame

Full-time Youth Ministry Development Officer (Southern Region)

Ms Amy McCrea

Office Manager

Mrs Barbara Swann

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

Review of the year 2014

Summary:

2014 was the last full year of our strategic plan for 2012-15 and it was a year that saw the re-establishment and growth of youth ministry initiatives following previous years of staffing and funding changes. The Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) team now consist of a southern regional Development Officer, Ms Amy McCrea and a northern regional Development Officer, Mr Andrew Frame. They are both supported through administration and communications by our Office Manager, Mrs Barbara Swann.

Of note in 2014 were:

- The growth of the Anois camp for young people to also include a cross-border element.
- New programme activity with the development of a coffee shop and supporting leadership team for the ‘Catalyst’ event for 20’s and 30’s in Glenarm.
- A Southern Region mission trip to Zambia with youth leaders.
- The continuation of the ‘Connect’ venue for youth leaders at Summer Madness.
- The development of a new leadership team to run the youth ministry programme at the New Wine Conference in Sligo.
- 12 Connect events and numerous other training and advice meetings to support youth workers and volunteers across both regions.
- Various youth leadership training events and initiatives.
- The opening of a new office and resource centre based in Church of Ireland House, Belfast.

Strategic Review for 2014:

CIYD undertakes, for efficiency reasons, operational plans for two regions of Ireland, a southern and northern region. The northern region comprises of the northernmost 5 dioceses and the southern region the other 7 dioceses. These operational plans fulfil an all Ireland strategy but on a regional basis. They exist in parallel to each other and continue to operate under an all-Ireland structure and governance but may fulfil the strategic objectives differently according to their region’s context and needs. Both regions are supported by a national office based in Belfast (although there is a base for the southern officer in Church House, Dublin) and also collaborate on national programmes.

An outline of both the regional and national initiatives is contained within the ‘Programme review’ section of this report.

The strategic plan for 2012-15 had a number of performance indicators to help us identify how well we have progressed in meeting our objectives. It is pleasing to note that, despite several significant challenges over this period, most of these objectives were met. However, with the completion of this strategy it is important that we continue to meet the needs of the church in a changing environment and so we will be developing a new strategy in 2015 for the coming years.

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

Programme Review 2014:

The programme of work undertaken by CIYD at both a regional and national level in 2014 is outlined as follows:

Northern Region

- Youth worker support through our Connect programme and other individual meetings;
- Speaking and leading at various youth events and residential;
- Assisting dioceses in the planning and delivery of programmes and the development of strategy;
- Training initiatives with parishes and central training opportunities such as the ‘Essentials’ training day;
- ‘Inspire’ road show events to encourage volunteer leaders;
- Foundations character course for 18 young adults and bi-monthly event for around 90 young adults.

Southern Region

- Assisting dioceses in the development of youth ministry strategies and employment of workers;
- Training initiatives such as youth leadership weekends, resource days and individual sessions at both a central, diocesan and parish level;
- Youth worker support through our Connect programme and individual meetings;
- Mission trip with youth leaders to Zambia in August;
- Speaking at various youth events and weekends across the region;
- Deputation regarding youth ministry at diocesan events and national networks;
- Involvement at the National Ploughing Championships.

National Programmes:

- The continuation of the Anois residential on developing faith attended by around 100 young people and 30 leaders from across Ireland;
- A new partnership with ‘Catalyst’ to help plan a weekend residential for people in their 20’s and 30’s. Delivery of the main coffee and social area for this event;
- Partnership with Summer Madness to deliver the Connect leaders’ venue at the festival, which included a coffee shop-type area and seminars for leaders and young people. Attended by over 200 leaders;
- A new partnership with New Wine Ireland to deliver the youth programmes for around 120 young people at their summer week in Sligo;
- Youth workers retreat overnight in Donegal.

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

Update on CIYD networks and development across Ireland

Youth Link: NI

CIYD representatives on the Youth Link Board are as follows: Mrs Sharon Hamill (Youth Link Chairperson), Mr Andrew Brannigan, Mr Jonny Phenix and Rev Stephen McElhinney.

YouthNet

CIYD is represented by the Youth Development Officer (Northern Region).

National Youth Council of Ireland

CIYD represented by the Youth Development Officer (Southern Region).

Belfast Health Trust, Faith based Sexual Health committee

Mr Andrew Frame represents CIYD on this committee.

Board of Education NI and RoI

Mr Andrew Frame represents CIYD on the Board of Education (NI).

Ms Claire Bruton represents CIYD on the Board of Education (RoI).

Church of Ireland Mission Council

CIYD has nominated their Executive Chairman to this committee.

Children's Ministry Network

Ms Amy McCrea is in attendance at this network.

Catalyst

Mr Andrew Frame and Ms Amy McCrea represent CIYD on the core planning team.

DIOCESAN REVIEW

ARMAGH

- Four Sunday night events per year averaging 40-100;
- Easter dawn service attracts 400;
- Residential in November;
- Aspiration for Wells type project (as in Clogher diocese);
- One full time youth worker, 2 interns and 1 part time;
- Strong on uniformed organisations.

CASHEL, FERNS & OSSORY

We are entering into the third year of a diocesan strategic plan to support the development of new regional initiatives in youth ministry.

- Due to the large, predominantly rural nature of our diocese, parishes are encouraged to develop youth work at a more local level within parishes or amongst clusters of parishes working together;
- Care and management of financial grants within this diocese operate under the auspice of the Bishop and the diocesan finance committee;
- We are delighted that under this new initiative we have seen the development of new

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youth clubs within parishes and groups of parishes, the employment of a number of parish youth officers, a youth officer working specifically with Waterford Institute of Technology and an increase in adult youth leader training;

- On a larger level we have seen confirmation retreats involving seven different parishes, teenage leader training weekends involving five different parishes and a day trip to Oakwood in Wales which included young people from six parishes;
- It is hoped in 2015 to continue to develop these initiatives as well as develop a diocesan youth council, with the help of Ms Amy McCrea from CIYD.

CORK, CLOYNE & ROSS

- New appointments in Cork this year: Diocesan Youth Co-ordinator based in West Cork, Ms Hilda Connolly with responsibility for developing youth groups and organising events; a new joint post with Midleton College, Ms Kristin Hollowell as College Chaplain and Diocesan Youth development Officer for East Cork;
- Diocesan events run throughout the year ranging from weekends away, soccer, trip to Summer Madness, table quiz etc;
- Schools team continues to run retreat days, and training days on bullying, social networking, relationships and sexuality throughout the Diocese;
- Youth groups running throughout the Diocese with support from Kristin and Hilda;
- Devolved funding used to support youth groups, and to subsidise events;
- Highly successful youth leaders retreat in Kerry, with focus on the spiritual life of the youth leader;
- Youth Council active in management of events, finances and administration.

CONNOR

Since forming the youth council in January 2014, momentum in our diocesan youth work has been steadily building.

- The support of CIYD has been invaluable and we have particularly valued the input of Mr Andrew Frame, who has helped us develop a vision and strategy for youth work in our diocese;
- Events: Over the past year, we have had 3 diocesan youth evenings where scores of our young people have engaged with worship, teaching, prayer and activities.
- Connor Camp Out: Last year at Summer Madness, we had our first ever Connor sub-camp;
- Connor takes the castle: After the success of last year's diocesan youth weekend in Castlewellan, we are planning the next one;
- Inspire Nights: In partnership with CIYD, we have had 2 nights for youth leaders from across our diocese. We have considered these important events not only to connect our youth leaders, but also to thank them, and resource and inspire them in their valuable service;

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- Prayer: Along with many of the diocese across Ireland, Connor hosted 12 hours of prayer in Lisburn Cathedral;
- Streetreach: This year we are piloting "Street Reach" in Glencairn and Whiterock from the 30th June-3rd July 2015.

CLOGHER

- Consultation process across diocese completed, guiding the strategic planning of new diocesan-wide youth council formed with Executive officers and Rural Deanery representation;
- Series of new diocesan youth events hosted by Rural Deanery youth groups proving very successful, attended by 100 young people and leaders at each event. Youth leader training and events seeking to support and encourage our volunteer leaders;
- Group from the diocese attended Anois for the first time - very significant for young people involved;
- Planning for diocesan groups to attend Catalyst and Summer Madness in 2015;
- Working with approximately 350 young people and 80 leaders in 18 youth ministries;
- Streams project connecting young adults into wider parish life has begun, with encouraging initial interest.

DERRY & RAPHOE

Derry and Raphoe runs a broad and active programme for young people and leaders throughout the dioceses, aiming to run at least one event per month. Some of these have been highlighted below:

- DRY runs a traveling monthly worship event called 'Blaze' which aims to bring modern worship and Biblical teaching to young people throughout the diocese. To date this has been held in 10 parishes both in Derry and Raphoe dioceses;
- In collaboration with Youth Link, DRY ran an Open College Network (OCN) youth work certificate which resulted in 18 leaders from around the diocese achieving their Level 2 qualification;
- The diocese runs two youth weekends and two residential overnights per year, covering both dioceses, a Confirmation overnight and an Easter Celebration event;
- Alongside going to Summer Madness, DRY runs a community outreach event straight afterwards called 'On The Move' which brings Christian Service to life for those who attend;
- A team of ten young people and leaders went to the Czech Republic to run a holiday Bible camp for two orphanages with 70 children and young people. This experience was beneficial to both the children and the team, deepening spiritual and personal maturity;
- We sustain strong links with the Secondary School in Raphoe through the DYO teaching R.E. to 5th form;
- We offer advice and support to parishes running Confirmation classes or seeking to start

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

youth ministry provision.

DOWN & DROMORE

- The Down and Dromore Youth and Children’s Department has been expanded to include a families remit and now provides a wide variety of programmes, services and resources across a wide range of ages. This includes almost 50 youth fellowship groups and 90 Sunday Schools;
- Development of an ideas book ‘Inside Out’ for churches to help them with their outreach to people of all ages;
- Expansion of our summer camp to include junior and senior camps for young people. An additional camp for children in 2015 will bring our capacity to 120 campers over the summer;
- Continuation of the ‘New Life’ confirmation theme and a series of celebration confirmation services including goody bags, desserts, chocolate fountains and candy floss. Supported by a confirmation weekend for around 150 people;
- The development (with Derry & Raphoe Youth) of a free smart phone games app for youth and children’s leaders;
- The employment of our new Diocesan Youth Officer, Tim Burns.

DUBLIN & GLENDALOUGH

- In 2014 the Dublin & Glendalough Youth Council (DGYC) was established to work on shaping a vision for the future of Youth Ministry in the United Dioceses;
- With the support of the Diocesan Youth Officer the aim of the council will be to build up faith, discipleship and leadership in the young people of Dublin and Glendalough;
- The DGYC acknowledges that different parts of the dioceses have different Youth Ministry needs. While some areas with larger parishes have full time paid youth workers, others have no facilities for Youth Ministry at all; therefore their requirements will be vastly different;
- It is the aim of the DGYC that Youth Ministry will operate on a devolved basis with individual Rural Deaneries, or clusters of parishes (in Rural Deaneries or adjoining Rural Deaneries), deciding what will work best in their areas. They will be supported in their endeavours by the Diocesan Youth Officer. To assist with any projects the DGYC is offering grants to Rural Deaneries and clusters of Parishes to engage with Youth ministry in new and creative ways;
- The Council is in the process of appointing a Diocesan Youth Officer (DYO). An announcement is anticipated in April 2015.

KILMORE, ELPHIN & ARDAGH

- In May 2014 our confirmation weekend had 70 participants at the Share Centre in Lisnaskea;

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

- In June 2014 last year over 100 people from across the yKEA family travelled to Summer Madness in Glenarm, County Antrim. It was amazing to see young people on fire for God and eager to know more of his love and grace;
- As a result of the experiences of many young people there has been a 3 centred Alpha programme running in Cavan, Roscommon and Sligo to help to disciple young people in their own places;
- September saw the restarting and in some cases establishments of our youth groups across the diocese. We have been encouraged to see youth groups meeting regularly in 12 locations across the diocese;
- The yKEA leader weekend took place in Lissadell County Sligo in September. We had 30 young leaders keen to learn and to take part in the weekend. Ms Amy McCrea from CIYD facilitated much of the weekend;
- October brought the annual CIYD Anois event at Kilkenny College. A fair number travelled to the event and quite few leaders from across yKEA were involved in leadership team;
- Kilmore Cathedral in March saw yKEA take part in the CIYD day of prayer for young people.

LIMERICK & KILLALOE

- During 2014 the United Diocesan Youth Council planned and co-ordinated a good solid range day, weekend and week long programme and training events for young people throughout United Diocese;
- In March there were two weekends, "West Alive" with Tuam Diocesan Youth Council for 10-13 year olds in Athenry, Co Galway and "Spring Madness" with Cork Diocesan Youth Council in Bandon, Co Cork. Over bank holiday weekend in June there was a Diocesan Confirmation Weekend in Spanish Point, Co Clare;
- Over the summer in early July a group once again joined Summer Madness event at Glenarm Estate, Co Antrim. In late July a week long Junior Summer Camp took place at Ovoca Manor, Co Wicklow. A group of 18 young people from Ireland participated in an International Exchange trip to Germany. The summer concluded with week long Senior Summer Camp in Muckross in Killarney;
- A Multi Activity Day took place in late September for young people from National Schools throughout United Diocese. About 20 young people and leaders over October bank holiday weekend joined "Anois" event in Kilkenny College organised by Church of Ireland Youth Department. This was closely followed in early November with "Junior Weekend" in Durrow, Co Laois;
- After Christmas there were two day trips to Dublin with Senior Trip (13 plus years) having a group of 15 teenagers from Mullingar Youth Club joining in the day;
- Despite small numbers attending the Diocesan Fellowship group continued to meet on third Saturday of each month in Limerick. Mr Damian Shorten continued to lead these

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

meetings each month;

- A priority for the future will be the development of a strategy for Youth & Children's Ministry at parish level in a large number of parishes.

MEATH & KILDARE

- Full time job advertised of Diocesan Youth and Children's Officer and Chaplain at Wilson's School. This appointment will be seminal in carrying forward our vision and strategy for the Diocese;
- Schools' service with an award of the Bishop's Medal. All schools prepare a project and demonstrate great creativity and imagination;
- Confirmation Days and Workshops;
- Chaplaincy involvement with young people;
- National schools linking with Parishes - youth/family services;
- CIYD Connect days for youth volunteers;
- Diocesan Fun Days.

TUAM, KILLALA & ACHONRY

- Over the past three years we have worked with the Church Mission Society (CMS) on the Mabweni project in Kenya;
- Climbed Croagh Patrick on a beautiful sunny day and Bishop Patrick Rooke led a service in the community hall at the bottom;
- Dawn service on the beach brings a fresh outlook to God, a chance to sing out in the open together and share in the bread and wine. After the service we go up for a hearty breakfast in the hall;
- Family service in Holy Trinity Westport;
- West Alive weekend with Ms Amy McCrea from CIYD and the Dioceses' of Limerick.
- Our ice skating trip to Dublin each year brings everyone together for a fun time on the ice and a trip to the shops;
- Ministry of Healing led a quiet day in Tuam Cathedral, which focused on, compassion for others and listening. Diocesan Cycle from Westport to Newport and back and Bishop Patrick having to find a sponge for his bicycle!;
- Diocesan Fun Day in Cong. Everyone bought food for the barbeque which was shared with all. We then had the opportunity to walk through Cong woods or take a boat trip on the lake. And to end the day we had a service in Cong Church.

**EXTRACTS FROM THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND
YOUTH DEPARTMENT**

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

BOARD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board is responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with accepted accounting practice in Ireland including the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland.

Irish company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Department and of the surplus or deficit of the Department for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Board confirms that it has complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper books of account, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Department and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting standards. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Department and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

**CHURCH OF IRELAND YOUTH DEPARTMENT
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

Year ended 31 December

		2014	2013
		€	€
INCOME			
Grant Received	1	171,403	178,081
Funding provided by the RCB		186,735	174,657
Deposit Interest		796	1,228
Donations		8,538	10,418
Programme		24,478	9,244
Sundry Income		216	-
		<u>392,166</u>	<u>373,628</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Office & Administration Expenses	2	(53,517)	(43,278)
Staff Costs	3	(146,582)	(98,266)
Fees & Membership	4	(15,068)	(13,597)
Dilapidation Costs		(20,605)	-
		<u>(235,772)</u>	<u>(155,141)</u>
Operating Surplus for the Year		<u>156,394</u>	<u>218,487</u>
TRAINING & GRANT ALLOCATIONS			
Training & Grant Allocations	5	(180,411)	(159,497)
(Deficit)/Surplus after Training & Grant Allocations		<u>(24,017)</u>	<u>58,990</u>
Currency translation adjustment		4,697	1,340
Net (Deficit)/Surplus for the year		<u><u>(19,320)</u></u>	<u><u>60,330</u></u>

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

CHURCH OF IRELAND YOUTH DEPARTMENT

BALANCE SHEET

Year ended 31 December

		2014 €	2013 €
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	6	16,722	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash held on deposit by RCB	7	126,566	129,166
Cash at bank		4,256	10,021
Prepayments		2,612	2,390
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		133,434	141,577
		<hr/>	<hr/>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors		(68,284)	(40,385)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Assets		<u>81,872</u>	<u>101,192</u>
FUNDS EMPLOYED			
Balance at 1 January		101,192	40,862
(Deficit) /Surplus for the year		(19,320)	60,330
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance as at 31 December		<u>81,872</u>	<u>101,192</u>
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

Notes to the Financial Statements

	2014	2013
	€	€
1. Grant Received		
Grant from Department of Children & Youth Affairs (ROI)	171,403	178,081
	<u>171,403</u>	<u>178,081</u>
	2014	2013
2. Office & Administration Expenses	€	€
Insurance	1,550	1,645
Audit Fees	4,059	3,998
Professional Fees	3,220	-
Rent	18,670	15,931
Telephone, Postage & Internet	6,598	8,082
Office Expenses	14,509	9,817
Heat & Light	4,007	2,621
Depreciation	965	-
Resources	357	405
Sundry	-	1,204
Bank Interest & Charges	(418)	(425)
	<u>53,517</u>	<u>43,278</u>
	<u>53,517</u>	<u>43,278</u>

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

3. Staff Costs	2014 €	2013 €
Staff Salaries	116,992	69,303
Staff Expenses	17,344	16,023
Central Board & Executive	12,246	12,940
	<u>146,582</u>	<u>98,266</u>
	=====	=====
4. Fees & Membership	2014 €	2013 €
General Membership Fees	2,022	1,635
Youth Link NI	13,046	11,962
	<u>15,068</u>	<u>13,597</u>
	=====	=====
5. Training & Grant Allocations	2014 €	2013 €
Training Events	41,002	30,750
Programme Events	29,681	22,543
Devolved Funding Grants	109,728	106,204
	<u>180,411</u>	<u>159,497</u>
	=====	=====

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

6. Tangible Fixed Assets	2014	2013
	€	€
Cost		
At 1 January	84,890	84,890
Currency Adjustment	-	-
Additions	17,687	-
	<u>102,577</u>	<u>84,890</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 January	84,890	84,890
Currency Adjustment	-	-
Charge for the year	965	-
	<u>85,855</u>	<u>84,890</u>
Net Book Value		
At 1 January	-	-
	<u>16,722</u>	<u>-</u>
7. Cash on deposit held by the RCB	2014	2013
	€	€
Cash on deposit held by the RCB	126,566	129,166
	<u>126,566</u>	<u>129,166</u>
8. Creditors	2014	2013
	€	€
Accruals	68,284	40,385
	<u>68,284</u>	<u>40,385</u>

9. Foreign Currency transactions have been translated to Euro at the rate of exchange ruling at 31 December 2014, €1 = £0.7765 (2013: €1 = £0.8302).

Church of Ireland Youth Department – Report 2015

THE COVENANT COUNCIL

The Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland

REPORT OF THE COVENANT COUNCIL TO THE CHURCHES 2015

MEMBERSHIP

Church of Ireland

Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh (Co-Chair)

Ms Elva Byrne

Very Rev Nigel Dunne

Rev Dr Maurice Elliott

Rev Barry Forde (Secretary)

Mr Harold Giboney

Rev Canon Ginnie Kennerley

Rev Dr Peter Thompson

Methodist

Rev Winston Graham (Co-Chair)

Rev Donald Ker

Rev Andrew Dougherty

Rev Janet Unsworth

Rev Louise Donald

Ms Gillian Kingston

Dr Fergus O'Ferrall

Mr Nigel Beattie

Interchangeability of Ministry

2014 will be remembered as a pivotal year in the life of the Covenant between the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland. Council was delighted with the overwhelming support given to the Bill on Interchangeability by Synod, this being an affirmation of the continued support given by Synod to the Agreed Principles in 2010 and 2011. The presentation given by, and reception afforded to, the Methodist President, Rev Dr Heather Morris, was a moment of joy as the aspirations of the Covenant became ever more realised.

The subsequent participation by the Most Rev Richard Clarke, the Most Rev Michael Jackson, and the Right Rev Harold Miller at the installation and consecration of Rev Peter Murray as President and Episcopal Minister of the Methodist Church in Ireland, was the first step in bringing interchangeability into effect. This was followed by the participation of the current Methodist President, Rev Peter Murray, and former Presidents, Rev Donald Ker and Rev Winston Graham, as Episcopal Ministers in the consecration of Rt Rev Kenneth Kearon as Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe on January 24th 2015. This was the second step required and had the effect of bringing Interchangeability into full effect.

The Covenant Council – Report 2015

This is a monumental step in the life of our two Churches, and a model of ecumenism that is being both observed and admired in other jurisdictions. Council is keenly aware however that we must not view the passing into law of interchangeability as being the goal or the end of the matter. Rather, it is a mandate to deepen our relationships, mission and ministry. It needs to be acted upon, and not just admired. Covenant Council is pursuing protocols for participation in services of ordination, encouraging greater and more regular communication between our two Churches at episcopal level, and in the realm of theological education, as well as undertaking to develop greater unity in the arena of lay ministry training. Council aspires to host a conference focussed on the mission of our Churches, and will look to progress this in the next year.

Local Covenant Partnerships and Projects

As indicated there is much work that is ongoing and new work enabled by interchangeability. Council was delighted to see the development, under the Covenant of the relationship at Queen's University, Belfast. At the Methodist Conference in June 2014 the Church of Ireland Chaplain, Rev Barry Forde, was confirmed as the Methodist Chaplain, replacing Rev John Alderdice who took up a new position at Edgehill Theological College. The governance of the chaplaincy at Queen's continues to evolve to consolidate the unity already achieved. The Church on the Hill in Maghaberry continues to strengthen the bonds of unity, whilst new appointments in Movilla for both the Church of Ireland and Methodist Church offer up renewed hope for working together. Links continue to grow between the Church of Ireland Theological Institute and Edgehill College, and Council is grateful for the student observers from the Institute and the College who attend Council meetings.

The Covenant Council continues to encourage all dioceses and parishes to look for opportunities in which the Covenant might be of assistance for ministry and mission. Further, Council continues to encourage all Churches to consider celebrating the Covenant on or around the date of 24th May, this being John Wesley Day in the Church of England.

AMICUM and IASCUFO

The Covenant Council was delighted to welcome the attendance of, and updates by, the Right Rev Harold Miller and Dr Andrew Pierce. Bishop Miller provided insights into the current work of AMICUM, the Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity in Mission, together with its observances on interchangeability. Rev Dr Pierce spoke of the commendation by IASCUFO, the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity Faith and Order, of interchangeability, recognising the importance of local context and welcoming a visible realisation of ecumenical aspirations.

Membership

The Covenant Council was delighted to welcome and is thankful for the role of Rev Tony Davidson as Presbyterian Observer on the Council.

Website

The Covenant Council website, www.covenantcouncil.com has been revised, with a forum page for Covenant Facilitators, and worship resources and Covenant Council booklets available for download.

Motions to propose at General Synod

The Covenant Council also propose the following motions for the consideration of the General Synod this year:

That the following be elected as Church of Ireland representatives on the Covenant Council for the coming year:

Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh (Co-Chair)

Ms Elva Byrne

Very Rev Nigel Dunne

Rev Dr Maurice Elliott

Rev Barry Forde

Mr Harold Giboney

Rev Canon Ginnie Kennerley

Rev Dr Peter Thompson

That General Synod continues to encourage congregations to celebrate the Covenant relationship with neighbouring Methodist congregations on or around John Wesley Day, 24th May, each year.

The Covenant Council – Report 2015

COMMISSION FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY AND DIALOGUE

REPORT 2015

MEMBERSHIP

The Archbishops and Bishops (ex-officio)

Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher (Chair)

Rev Canon Patrick Comerford

Rev Canon David Crooks

Rev Canon Dr Ian Ellis

Mr Samuel Harper

Rev Darren McCallig (resigned November 2014)

Mrs Roberta McKelvey

Mr Philip McKinley (resigned November 2014)

Dr Kenneth Milne (Honorary Secretary)

Mr Trevor Morrow

Canon Daniel Nuzum

Rev Ása Björk Ólafsdóttir

Rev Niall Sloane (Honorary Records Secretary)

Ven Helene Tameberg Steed

Ms Catherine Turner

INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Church Unity and Dialogue (CCUD) is the Church of Ireland's principal organ for relating nationally and internationally both to other Christian traditions and to national ecumenical instruments.

The Commission continues to carry out its work through long term working groups, on Anglican, European and Inter-Faith matters, although the last named had a quieter than usual year as one of its most energetic members, the Rev Darren McCallig, has moved from Dublin to take up a post in Copenhagen. During his six years on the Commission Mr McCallig worked imaginatively to foster dialogue and understanding with other world faith traditions in Ireland.

The Commission is also fortunate to number among its members two representatives of international Anglican bodies engaged in theological dialogue with Orthodoxy. The Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin kindly keep the Commission informed about their engagement with the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, respectively. The Archbishop of Dublin has also an involvement with the Anglican body which liaises with the Chief Rabbi of Israel and has kindly involved members of the Commission in a visit by the Chief Rabbi to Ireland.

As you will see from their more extensive reports below the working-groups of the Commission have engaged in routine business and taken several new initiatives. The Anglicanism Working Group has taken a further step in the Church's engagement with the Moravian Church of Great Britain and Ireland, an episcopally ordered Church which, although small in Ireland, has always enjoyed strong *fraternal* links with the Church of Ireland. The Anglicanism Working Group also continues to provide a forum for the activity arising from our membership of the Porvoo Communion, and the Church of Ireland's Porvoo Contact Person, Archdeacon Helene Steed, has provided a summary of that work.

After the European Affairs Working Group has been reconstituted it will be ensuring that the space provided by the Lisbon Treaty for Church involvement in the official structures of the European Union is fruitfully used. This engagement has usually been channelled through the Conference of European Churches (CEC) which has itself undergone significant structural reform.

Closer to home a small delegation from the Commission met recently with the new Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and a number of his colleagues who are involved in ecumenical relations, and we hope to meet on an informal basis once a year to discuss matters of common concern.

Members of the Commission continue to play a very full role in the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) and the Irish Inter-Church Committee and in Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. The Bishop of Clogher has succeeded Dr Donald Watts as Vice-President of ICC.

ECUMENICAL INSTRUMENTS

Considerations of space allow for only limited coverage of the work of the ecumenical instruments to which the Church of Ireland belongs. Their respective websites (given below) should be consulted for detailed reports. Full particulars of Church of Ireland membership of ecumenical organisations and their remit may be found in the appropriate directory on the Church of Ireland website (www.ireland.anglican.org).

The Irish Council of Churches (ICC): www.churchesinireland.com

The annual meeting of the Council was held in Arklow, Co Wicklow, on Thursday 10 April 2014, the Rev Fr Godfrey O'Donnell presiding.

Officers 2014-2017

President: Rev Dr Donald Watts

Vice-President: Rt Rev John McDowell

Immediate Past President: Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI): www.ctbi.org.uk

The Annual Conference took place in Cardiff on 29-30 April and was attended by Dr Kenneth Milne. The theme of the conference was 'Christianity: Continuity, Presence and Conflict', and it was considered with special reference to the situation of Christians in the Middle East who are rapidly decreasing in number due to political instability and internal conflicts in places where Christianity has had a presence since New Testament times. The conference was led by Archbishop Emeritus Chacour of the Greek Melkite Catholic Archeparchy of Akko and Dr Clare Amos of WCC. A clear message to British and Irish Churches from those participants in the conference who are familiar with the Middle East was that we can give invaluable support to Christians there by showing interest in their situation and, where possible, making contact with them.

Bishop Angaelos of the Coptic Orthodox Church was elected Moderator of CTBI at the Annual General Meeting that followed the conference and Dr Milne served on the search committee that preceded the appointment. The Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of

Clogher and Chairman of the Church of Ireland Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue was appointed a Trustee of CTBI.

Prior to the referendum on Scottish independence, ACTS (the Scottish Churches), convened a meeting in Edinburgh of personnel from other Churches in Britain and Ireland and the ICC to discuss issues of particular Church concern. CTBI arranged for meetings in London for member Churches to consider these issues and Dr Kenneth Milne attended both the London and Edinburgh meetings.

Conference of European Churches (CEC): www.ceceurope.org

CEC is now operating according to its new Constitution that was launched at a ceremony in Brussels on 4 December that was attended by Dr Kenneth Milne. The Conference's structures have been greatly slimmed down and consequently their representative character is much reduced. Furthermore, the Church and Society Commission (CSC), on which the ICC had observer status, is being subsumed into CEC. The ICC is concerned at the prospect of this loss of contact, as is the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue, as the Church of Ireland took turn with other Irish Churches as their observer on the CSC, which has proved a most valuable means of maintaining a link with the institutions of the EU. This is particularly important at a time when, under the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, Churches have a guaranteed *right of access* to the European Commission on a regular basis.

World Council of Churches (WCC): www.wcc-coe.org

The Rt Rev Alan Abernethy, Bishop of Connor, has been appointed to the Central Committee of the WCC and reported on his attendance at its meeting in Busan in the Republic of Korea as follows:

Reflections on the WCC Assembly in Busan Oct 29th-Nov 8th 2013

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches took place in Busan, Republic of Korea, under the theme "God of life, lead us to justice and peace".

The opening prayer set the tone for what was to be an inspiring, disturbing and challenging Assembly. This opening worship celebrated diverse faith traditions from around the world. It included litanies and songs from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, North America and the Pacific. The morning worship every morning was a wonderful window into the worldwide Church. The key moment every morning was the Lord's Prayer spoken together but in each person's local language. The music and liturgy was reflective, creative and joyful, particularly when we were singing African or South American songs. The worship was also related to the theme of the day.

The bible study groups each morning developed the theme of the morning worship using the same biblical text that had been read in the worship. The notes we received stated the following, "The method of Bible study used here is broadly one of contextual Bible study. It is a community based, interactive way of studying the Bible that encourages advocacy for issues of concern within a given community." It was intriguing to witness the diverse cultural and social contexts in the group to which I belonged. There were experiences and voices from Syria, Lebanon, Jerusalem, South Africa, Sri Lanka, India,

Europe, North America, Africa, Caribbean and Korea. This constantly posed the question as to how much of our biblical interpretation is based on our culture rather than on the text? This led to some interesting discussions.

The main plenary every morning was one of the highlights every day as it brought greetings from many different groups and people. The Prime Minister of South Korea, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Pope Francis, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the one that fascinated me was a comment by a Jewish Rabbi when he said both our faith communities are waiting for the Messiah. The plenary each morning was moderated by different people and followed the theme of the day. The key ones were Asia, Mission, Unity, Justice and Peace. There were different styles and a range of contributors each day but they were fascinating and the content was stimulating and inspiring. One of the memorable and amusing quotes was in the peace plenary, when an American Brethren leader told us of the car sticker that said; *"When Jesus told us to love our enemies he probably meant don't kill them"*.

The afternoon was usually a combination of ecumenical conversations, workshops and business sessions. I found the ecumenical conversations and the workshops disappointing probably because they were so many people at each it was difficult to have much discussion and serious debate. They tended to have a large measure of input that made debate difficult. I attended the ecumenical conversation entitled "Developing effective leadership: contextual ecumenical formation and theological education". There was a fascinating global survey on theological education and there is still a very traditional model of theological education being practised across the globe. There were some interesting discussions around this and questions about whether this is still appropriate or is there need for more contextual training because of the needs of the 21st century Church. There were no answers but some very helpful reflections. I did not get to all of these conversations because as a delegate I attended some business sessions to discuss various documents and I also had a reception to attend hosted by the Anglican Archbishop of Korea and the Archbishop of Canterbury for all Anglicans present at the Assembly.

There was also an opportunity to meet as regional delegates and as confessional delegates. These were interesting and the Anglican gathering was fascinating as we met for a 4 course dinner in a hotel that was preceded by Eucharist at which, the Archbishop Justin Welby preached. This took place in a ballroom of a local hotel. This brought a new meaning to agape.

The business plenary sessions were a very interesting way to do the work of the Assembly. Committees met during the Assembly to discuss various reports and statements that were then brought to the business plenary sessions. The reports were presented and the Assembly then went into listening mode when comments could be heard on the reports or statements and delegates were told not to applaud but if they agreed with the speaker to raise an orange card and if they disagreed they raised a blue card. This gave the Moderator an opportunity to read the mind of the Assembly. I found this a terrific way of doing business and made for a more controlled and less divisive session. After the hearing or listening there would be votes on the documents or on any

amendments suggested. The voting again took place by the raising of the coloured cards. Perhaps something that could be useful for a General Synod.

The election to the Central Committee also took place in this context and by a similar method. Here were three different lists of possible names to be elected and it was the third one that was agreed after much intrigue and discussion. I was and am delighted to have been elected to represent the Church of Ireland and am elected for four years when there will be another election. The next assembly is to take place in eight years at a venue to be decided by the Central Committee. The first meeting of the Central Committee took place at the end of the Assembly and took nearly 3 hours to elect an executive committee, this was partly due to Church politics and also because of the complicated systems of quotas based on age, gender and regions.

The reports and statements can all be found on the WCC website and are well worth reading.

I have included the statement on unity and the message from Busan.

Conclusion

This was a fascinating experience that was inspiring, disturbing and challenging. Inspiring because to be with so many people of faith from so many different cultures and nations was a joy and a delight. To worship, study, debate and share friendship was such an encouragement. To be aware of the frustrations and difficulties of people living and praying in difficult places helped bring a perspective to our situation. We are blessed in what we have and it was good to be reminded of what we have and how we can be encouraged by others.

It was disturbing because it is obvious that there are deep divisions in the body of Christ that we need to take seriously. There were also disturbing details about the injustices particularly for the poor and marginalised and those who have no voice. One comment from a 19 year old girl, who is HIV/Aids positive, from Malawi was received by a standing ovation, "HIV/Aids is not a punishment from God it is a disease".

I was challenged to renew my commitment to work and pray for the unity that Christ prayed for and wishes for his body here on earth. This was something that the WCC is seeking to facilitate and I am delighted to be able to share something of that journey and I believe that as Anglicans we have something special to offer and this is particularly important in what I describe as the clash between the Eastern Orthodox and the democracy of the free Churches in the West.

ANGLICAN AFFAIRS WORKING GROUP

Membership

Rt Rev Michael Burrows, Bishop of Cashel Ferns and Ossory (chair)

Rt Rev Harold Miller, Bishop of Down and Dromore

Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher

Ven Helene Steed

Rev Canon Patrick Comerford

Rev Canon Ian Ellis

Rev Dr Maurice Elliott
Ms Catherine Turner
Mr Wilfred Baker

Dialogue with the Moravian Church

The main business of the working group this year has been to continue on behalf of the main Commission and the Standing Committee the theological conversations which were initiated some years ago with representatives of the Moravian Church in Britain and Ireland, aimed at deepening the experience of communion between us. A lengthy report, including recommendations for action, was produced by the working group and was endorsed by the full CCUD and by the house of bishops. It was subsequently received and approved by the Standing Committee and appears in the General Synod Book of Reports as an appendix to the report of that body.

Essentially no theological obstacle is seen to the establishment of interchangeability of ministry between the Church of Ireland and the Moravian Church. A motion to be presented to the General Synod this year, if passed, would accept this conclusion in principle and would request the preparation of legislation as soon as is practicable to make such a situation a reality. However, the motion also recognises that, as the Moravian Church operates as a single province in Britain and Ireland, such a step would have implications for the Church of England and would best be achieved in partnership with it. The Church of Ireland believes that it is currently making a substantial contribution to advancing further the cause of unity between Anglicans and Moravians throughout these islands, just as the Church of England did at an earlier stage of discussion through the crafting of the Fetter Lane Agreement of 1995 which acknowledged the special relationship between Anglicans and Moravians, and upon that agreement much of the present work has been built. The working group has also been much enlightened by the document *Finding our Delight in the Lord* which in more recent times has led to the establishment of a relationship of full communion between Anglicans and Moravians in the United States.

Meanwhile the Church of Ireland was represented in November at a Moravian ordination to the episcopate, that of Br Joachim Kreusel, in London, at which our presence was gratefully welcomed.

Porvoo Communion

Archdeacon Helene Steed, as the Porvoo contact person, continues to update the working group regularly on matters of interest and importance to the Church of Ireland on which she has reported as follows:

The Porvoo Communion of Churches, (with members from the Lutheran Churches in the Nordic and Baltic countries and the Anglican Churches in Britain and Ireland and Iberian Peninsula), continued its work of organising consultations, the annual meeting with the contact group, as well as providing a Prayer Diary for the year. As the Porvoo Communion has no paid staff, this was all organised by individuals from the member churches on a voluntary basis.

During 2014 both the Contact Group and the Church Leaders' Consultation met in York. During this meeting a work plan, consultations and event, were drafted for the next four years. At the York Consultation Archbishop Elmars Ernsts Rozitis and Bishop Martin Lind signed the Porvoo Declaration on behalf of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad and the Lutheran Church in Great Britain respectively. The two churches were welcomed as the newest members of the Porvoo Communion.

Church Leaders from the member Churches meet every four years and each Church is encouraged to send both senior lay and clerical representatives. The Church of Ireland was represented by:

Mr Adrian Clements, Chief Officer and Secretary of the Representative Church Body;
Ven Helene T. Steed, member of the Porvoo contact group;
Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson, Anglican Co-chair of the Porvoo contact group.

Both meetings were hosted by the Church of England.

Consultation on Ethics and Economics

In November 2014 the Porvoo consultation on Ethics and Economics was held in Bad Boll, Germany. The consultation was hosted by the Latvian Evangelical Church Abroad. The subtheme for the conference was: 'My Neighbour Near and Far: A Contemporary Framework for Christ Centered Witness for the Porvoo Communion of Churches'. The Church of Ireland was represented by the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Anglican Co-chair.

Looking ahead:

The Porvoo Communion is planning a youth pilgrimage in August 2015, walking the Santiago de Compostela. It is hoped that two young people from each member church will participate in the pilgrimage. The invitation has been sent to the Church of Ireland Youth Council.

In October 2015, the biannual Primates' meeting, as well as the Contact Group will meet in Edinburgh.

2016 will be a significant year in the life of the Porvoo Communion of Churches as it then will celebrate its twentieth anniversary. The theme for the celebratory consultation is: twinning and partnerships events.

The Porvoo Communion homepage can be found at: <http://www.porvoocommunion.org/>

Old Catholic Churches

The Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory as the current Anglican co-chair of the Anglican/Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) hosted the 2014 meeting of that body in Kilkenny during August. Members of the Working Group were invited to meet with the Council both liturgically and socially during an evening at Leighlin Cathedral. Earlier on the same day, Dr Kenneth Milne was involved in making a much appreciated presentation to the Council on the manner in which the Churches may engage with the institutions of the European Union in accordance with the terms of recent European treaties.

Lambeth Conference

Several members of the Working Group were present in October last when, as part of his series of visits to the primates of the Anglican Communion, the Archbishop of Canterbury preached in Armagh cathedral. It is a matter of interest that the Archbishop has decided not to call a Lambeth Conference in 2018. While the decision to call the Conference is his alone, he desires a measure of consensus from the Primates as to how to proceed. It will be interesting to see in what manner the Conference will be re-established once the ten year cycle has been broken, and what will be its format and method of funding.

Meanwhile the Working Group continues to monitor and affirm the involvement of members of the Church of Ireland in the various Anglican global networks (inter-faith, family, peace and justice, etc), most of which do the bulk of their continuing work electronically. The working group also places on record its appreciation of the very substantial contribution made to the Anglican Communion by Bishop Kenneth Kearon during his period as Secretary General. His tireless work and level of expertise have been a cause of real satisfaction for the Church of Ireland.

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS WORKING-GROUP

Membership

Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh

Miss Janet Barcroft

Mr Robert Cochran

Rev Canon Adrian Empey

Rev Canon David Hutton Bury

Ms Maxine Judge

Rev Canon Eithne Lynch

Rev Canon John Merrick

Dr Kenneth Milne

Mr Robert Roe

Rev Canon Terence Scott

Professor Ben Tonra

As reported in 2014, the ICC established a European Affairs Committee in that year. The Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue requested the European Affairs Working-Group to supply two names for nomination to the Standing committee of the General Synod for appointment to represent the Church of Ireland in the ICC committee. Canon Adrian Empey and Ms Maxine Judge, both members of this working-group were appointed.

The Working-Group is a member of the Institute of International and European Affairs in Dublin (www.iiea.com) which is a ‘think tank’ that engages in an ambitious programme of research, publishing and lectures related to European and international issues, with particular reference to the European Union. Membership of the Institute includes several state and semi-state bodies, many diplomatic missions, and many components of civil society such as the Irish Episcopal Conference.

LITURGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REPORT 2015

MEMBERSHIP

Rt Rev Harold Miller (Chair)
Very Rev Gerald Field (Hon. Secretary)
Rev Canon Michael Kennedy
Ven Ricky Rountree
Rev Adrian Dorrian
Rev Alan Rufli
Rev Dr Peter Thompson
Rev Robert Ferris
Rev Ken Rue
Rev Julie Bell
Mrs Alison Cadden
Mrs Jacqueline Mullen

Co-opted Members:

Very Rev Nigel Dunne
Rev Jason Kernohan

Consultants:

Rev Canon Edgar Turner
Mr Richard Ryan

Church of Ireland Theological Institute Observer:

Rev Canon Patrick Comerford

Church of Ireland Theological Institute Student Observer:

Mr Criostoir Macbruithin

Methodist Church Observer:

Rev Dr Richard Clutterbuck

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Committee continues to meet four times a year, of which one is a two day meeting giving members the opportunity for a more in-depth evaluation of the LAC's role in the light of any requests from General Synod and members of the Church of Ireland. Our primary aim remains to provide quality liturgical resources worthy of the Church of Ireland, and worthy of the glory of the God whom we serve.

The objectives for the coming year will be:

- to complete the provision of *Thanks & Praise*, the supplement to the hymnal, and related publications;
- to continue working with Historical Centenaries Working Group of the General Synod in the preparation of liturgical resources to meet their requirements;
- the completion of on-going projects in the area of formation, electronic liturgical resources;

- to represent the Church of Ireland at the Four Nations Liturgical Group (a conference of representatives from the Liturgical committees of the Anglican churches in Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales) and the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation.

REPORT:

The past year has, once again, been one of both consolidation of continuing projects and developing of new projects.

Our work in collaboration with the Church of Ireland Historical Centenaries Working Group in providing liturgies pertinent to the decade of celebrations, has been the focus of the work of the Resources sub-committee, and a more detailed report can be seen below.

The work on a supplement to the Church Hymnal has also continued during the past year. The Committee was pleased to see the publication of Bishop Harold Miller's resource for Holy week and Easter, *Week of all Weeks*. The double publication of a *Worship Guide* and *Prayer Book* provides a valuable resource for those wishing to bring a new dimension to the liturgy of this important week, tailored specifically for use in the Church of Ireland. The LAC was a reference point for Bishop Harold throughout the development of the project, and in supporting that work the Committee would encourage the use of *Week of all Weeks* by clergy and worship leaders in the observance of Holy Week and Easter.

Whilst the work of the Liturgical Advisory Committee relies to some extent upon the initiative of its members to implement the objectives set out by the General Synod, it is also very much dependent upon suggestions made to it by those within the church community who identify areas where liturgical resources may be lacking. We are grateful to all those who over the past year have identified ways in which we may support them in their ministry of worship.

LITURGICAL EDUCATION AND FORMATION:

A Consultation Day was held in April of this year drawing together those involved in different expressions of worship within the life of the Church and exploring how these different expressions, alongside the orders of service authorised for use in the BCP 2004, can help the Church of Ireland express itself in worship whilst retaining its recognisable Anglican identity. The areas covered were Contemporary Styles of Worship in Traditional Setting; Church Planting; Messy Church; New Monasticism; Cafe Church; Sizzle Service; Cathedral Worship Today; 24/7 Prayer.

This aspect of the Committee's work is ongoing, and further progress in the coming year is anticipated.

MUSIC:

The sub-committee appointed to work on material for a Hymnal Supplement has been progressing that project through consideration of further suggested hymns for inclusion.

It was hoped that *Thanks & Praise* would be ready for launch at the General Synod, but unforeseen delays in copyright and printing has meant that a date in early autumn is expected for publication, with a series of pre-publication launches being planned across the Church of Ireland. Alongside the Music and Words edition of *Thanks & Praise* there

will be related publications of *Sing to the Word* (a guide to the use of hymns related to the Lectionary) and a *Companion* giving background information to the hymns. A pre-publication discount of 15% on all related volumes will be available to those who place orders in advance of publication.

LITURGICAL RESOURCES:

This sub-committee is continuing its work in co-operation with the Historical Centenaries Working Group of the General Synod to resource orders of service for use during the various centenary celebrations through 2014 -2022. As reported last year the emphasis is on the provision of liturgical resources which could be used in a general commemoration context, and also for material applicable to each specific commemoration. Last year the focus was on resourcing liturgies commemorating events towards the start of the 1914-18 war in time for Remembrance Sunday. Since then preparatory work on 1916 commemorations has been a priority for the group.

Also noted in last year's report, the preparatory work on a liturgy for use across the Church of Ireland for the commissioning of diocesan lay ministers, including diocesan readers, was put on hold to allow time for the new training programme to be assessed and any liturgy to reflect the ethos of that training. It is proposed to recommence that work this year, as well as responding to requests for the provision of suitable prayers and liturgies for use in the circumstance of suicide and in the circumstance of miscarriage or stillbirth.

A series of *Orders of Service for the Commemoration of Celtic Saints* prepared by the Rev Dr Michael Kennedy (corresponding to the list on pages 22 and 23 of the Book of Common Prayer 2004) are now in the final stages of proofing and will be available online very soon.

ELECTRONIC LITURGY & WORSHIP WEB PAGE:

The number of visitors to the Worship webpage continues to give encouragement to those responsible for the maintenance of this on-line resource, in particular the use of the Daily Prayer service. Work continues in trying to improve the experience of those using the web. However, as noted in last year's report, the effectiveness of the web page continues to be hindered to some extent by the main Church of Ireland Website, as feedback from users suggests a level of frustration at the difficulty in navigating the website and finding material. We are also exploring the possibility of creating an 'app' which will enable people to access Daily Prayer from their mobile device. More should be available on this development in the coming months.

The work of maintaining and updating the liturgical resources on the Worship webpage is time consuming and is undertaken on a voluntary basis by people already committed in other areas of ministry. As such we are grateful to those kind enough to point out any errors that may occur, and for the patience of users of the site whilst corrections and improvements are made.

FUTURE PLANS:

Our future plans include:

- The completion of *Thanks & Praise* and related publications through to publication;
- Endeavouring to provide resources for the various centenary celebrations with assistance of other appropriate persons;
- Furthering development of the worship section of the website;
- Furthering the collaboration with Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise on Irish liturgical texts;
- The provision of suitable prayers and liturgies for use in the circumstance of suicide and in the circumstance of miscarriage or stillbirth;
- A continued representation of the Church of Ireland in the wider national and international liturgical fora, so that resources and ideas which might be of value in the celebration of our liturgy are available for use from the wider Church.

As noted previously in this report, the work of the Liturgical Advisory Committee is dependent to a large extent upon the needs of parishes and worship co-ordinators being identified and communicated to it. Once again we would encourage those involved in planning worship to advise the committee, through the Honorary Secretary (honsec.lac@gmail.com), of any resources they feel the Liturgical Advisory Committee may be able to help provide.

RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS:

It was with regret that the Committee accepted the resignation of the Rev Peter McDowell, and notes with gratitude the contribution made to the work of the LAC during his membership.

The Rev Rod Smyth as Church of Ireland Theological Institute Student Observer was replaced by the Rev Criostoir Macbruithin.

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THE CHURCH OF IRELAND COUNCIL FOR MISSION

Report to the General Synod 2015

MEMBERSHIP (JANUARY 2015)

Rt Rev Alan Abernethy	House of Bishops
Rev Ruth West	Synod
Rev Cliff Jeffers	Synod
Captain Colin Taylor	Synod
Rev Robert Jones	Synod
Ms Johanne Martin	Synod
Mrs Ruth Mercer	Mothers' Union
Vacant	CIYD
Vacant	CITI
Vacant	Bishops' Appeal
Rev Dr Laurence Graham	Methodist Church
Ms Emma Lynch	AMS
Vacant	AMS
Mr Jan C de Bruijn	AMS
Rev Colin Hall-Thompson	AMS
Ms Julie Currie	Down and Dromore
Rev Patrick Burke	Cashel
Rev Eileen Cremin	Cork
Rev Ian Jonas	Cork Alternate
Dr Trevor Buchanan	Down
Rev Simon Genoe	Connor
Very Rev Kenneth Hall	Clogher
Rev Andrew Quill	Kilmore
Vacant	Meath
Ven Wayne Carney	Limerick
Rev Adam Pullen	Tuam
Vacant	Derry
Rev Paul McAdam	Armagh
Mr Thomas Stevenson	Armagh Alternate
Mr Derek Neilson	Dublin

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.

Membership

During the year we welcomed Mr Jan C de Bruijn, Ms Emma Lynch, Ms Julie Curie, Ms Johanne Martin, Rev Colin Hall-Thompson and the Rev Simon Genoe as new members. We also welcomed Rev Laurence Graham as the new representative of the Methodist Church. This was to replace Mr Thomas G Wilson; we thank Mr Wilson for his many years of service.

SUMMARY OF BUSINESS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE COUNCIL

1. The Suffering Church

The Council continues in its efforts to highlight the worldwide problem of Christian persecution. It was active in helping to bring attention to the case of Ms Meriam Ibhram in the Sudan. The Council continues to note with alarm the relative indifference of the mainstream media to this issue. Huge attention was given to the recent events in Paris; whereas relatively little attention is given to terrorist activity in Nigeria, the victims of which are mainly Christian. This is in no way intended to minimise the horror of the events in Paris.

2. Synod Mission Event

The Rt Rev Justin Badi, Bishop of Maridi Diocese in South Sudan addressed the 2014 event on the issue of cooperative mission overseas. The title of his address was: *Through Thick and Thin* - Partnership that works. A significant number of bishops from the African Church accompanied him, facilitated by CMS as part of their bi-centenary year events. This year's Synod Mission Breakfast is as described in the flier distributed at Synod.

3. Commission on Episcopal Ministry and Structures

The Council approved a Joint Statement from the Council for Mission and the Commission on Ministry on the Commission on Episcopal Ministry and Structures which was printed at the top of the report to General Synod 2014.

4. 2014 General Synod Breakout Session

The Council organised a Mission Conference in Newry from 28 February to 1 March 2014 on the theme: “How do we articulate the mission of the Church of Ireland in a way that can be embraced and supported by all?” with the sub-theme of: “How can more traditional and newer forms of Church together enhance and strengthen the life of the Church”.

From this conference a document, *A Wider Us* was drafted and circulated to all who attended and to all members of General Synod. This document highlighted the 10 key findings from the mission conference. This document formed the starting point for discussion during a Breakout session at General Synod last year. When asked the following question: ‘What do you think the Spirit is saying to the Church of Ireland as

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regards to our mission and purpose’? The overwhelming response was that mission needs to be local, engaging with our communities, both within and outside the Church. 55% of those who responded said that we need to focus outwards towards the community in which we live through Social Action and Faith Sharing.

During their discussions, the groups were also asked to give feedback to the bishops on what they wanted from them. The key requests were: spiritual leadership at national, provincial and diocesan level; more freedom, release and permission giving to engage in mission in new, imaginative and fresh ways; and taking the role of being a catalyst for mission, setting the vision for the diocese and encouraging parishes to develop their own vision and strategies for their churches and communities.

Of the 31 groups who took part in the session, 15 gave feedback to the Mission Council, calling mainly for support in mission by way of examples, resources, and encouragement. They asked the Council to take a role in equipping and encouraging the Church in Mission; and sharing positive examples of best practice in local mission.

The Mission Council are planning or have begun the following action items as a result of the focus given through the Mission Conference and General Synod Breakout Groups: a Facebook group to share stories; a web-page for sharing examples and useful mission links; advice and reviews on discipleship resources that are available; run seminars on local and global mission; be a hub for sharing information about conferences, training and resources from the dioceses to the wider Church; and develop links with CITI so new initiatives and teaching in Mission are being shared in the Church.

A Council for Mission link will shortly be incorporated into the Church of Ireland website, linking to the report of the conference, the report on Breakout session, and other resources on mission and discipleship.

The Council is encouraged by the responses garnered at the Breakout session and have prepared a report based on what was learned at it. The report on the Breakout session has been included as part of this year's Book of Reports. Electronic copies can be obtained by emailing the Hon Secretary of the Council at patthros@eircom.net.

5. Statistics for Mission

The Council thanks the Synod Office for its work in gathering and analysing the figures on Church attendance throughout the Church of Ireland (while also wishing to thank all those in the parishes who engaged with the Office in the data-collection process and did a great deal of hard work gathering and collecting the figures at a local level). The Council notes with concern the low level of regular Sunday attendance in all dioceses. While this is not a phenomenon confined to the Church of Ireland, being an acknowledged trend in all denominations at this point in time, it nonetheless remains a serious issue for Anglicanism on this island and one warranting urgent attention at all

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levels of the Church.

6. Remit of the Council

One of the key functions of the Council is the opportunity it provides for the various dioceses and others groups engaged in mission throughout this island to come together and share and discuss what it is that they are doing in this area. The hope is that it will allow initiatives in one part of the Church of Ireland to be known in all parts and to be shared and used as appropriate.

However, the Council for Mission is meant to be more than a place for conversations; it also has a remit to inspire and resource mission within the Church of Ireland at local, national, and global levels. It engaged with the local aspect of its role in particular by the conference on local mission it organised in 2014; and it has been following up on key themes that emerged at that conference over the course of 2015. Next year, the Council plans to continue to offer to review the discipleship and mission resources used and/or recommended by members of the Council; we plan to promote the work of the Children's Ministry Network in particular, seeing that as an aspect of mission that has been somewhat neglected of late; and we intend to explore the possibilities of organising a conference on the theme of global mission.

7. Mission projects and initiatives

At each of its meetings the Council invites news of recent developments in mission for prayer and promotion. Among many others this year past the following were noted from the dioceses:

- **Cashel** - the initiative where the funding for the diocesan youth worker, once he had left his post, was channelled into a number of smaller projects, comprised of various groups of parishes working together on local youth activities. This is in its second year and is going well.
- **Armagh** - The diocese as a whole has had a strategic focus on mission and ministry under the title *Into the Future* encouraging parishes to set out a vision for local mission. Also had messy church experiments, some of which fed into regular services. Sister Valerie Tomm, Church Army, ran a *Zacheus* bus in the diocese, which engaged in mission to the Loyalist community by going to bands and parades with tea and coffee and chat, giving out Bibles when asked.
- **Clogher** Diocese – have established a regular *messy church* in Enniskillen Cathedral with 150 plus attending; the Pilgrim Course is taking off successfully; the second Sunday in February is deemed a Diocesan Mission Sunday; the Bishop of Swaziland visited Enniskillen Cathedral and preached on 25 January.
- **Down and Dromore** – completed a year of 24/7 prayer in 2014 in preparation for a

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year of mission in 2015. This involved each parish creating a prayer room for several days of round the clock prayer before handing on a prayer scroll to the next parish. The year of prayer finished with a New Year's Eve celebration event that also began our year of Mission 2015. Throughout this year parishes will be working to complete their mission plans focussing on three areas of Community, Church and Children.

- **Tuam** - have focused on Bishops Appeal and a project in Africa; a project looking at Harvest and New Wine combination is being considered.
- **Connor** - real movement towards mission with a local outreach team in Carrickfergus; *Streetreach* takes place in June and participants express a real desire to 'get out there.' Development of a five-year strategy is taking place, which is seeing fruit, especially in youth ministry, with many parishes taking up *messy church*. A centre for mission is being created in North Belfast in cooperation with Church Army.
- **Dublin** - assisted in the organising and participated in the very successful Ecumenical Bible Week. A *Prepare a Place* Advent Appeal was initiated with United Society (US) and Bishops' Appeal as a way of providing practical support to the Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza, which is run by the Diocese of Jerusalem.
- **Cork** - is looking at strategic plan for mission; and a follow up on Mr Mark Russell's visit –

The following was noted from the mission societies:

- **The National Bible Society of Ireland (BSNI)** has been coping since January 2014 with the serious illness of their CEO, Ms Judith Wilkinson; in Northern Ireland the Society has been able to distribute around 20,000 cards promoting the *YouVersion* Bible App that provides free downloads of Scripture on mobile devices in over 700 languages; BSNI has also been able to fund the printing of first Bibles in five languages in Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo; Ethiopia and Togo and will be hosting R T Kendall in Belfast in September 2015.
- **United Society (US)** – Difficulties continue in Swaziland due to a declining population from HIV/AIDs. US has developed close links with the first female bishop in the Church there and are trying to help the diocese become financially self-supporting. Vegetable farms have been affected by flooding and hailstorms which have washed away plants. US is encouraging diversity as far as possible with self-supporting as the objective. The celebrations of US's 300 years in Ireland also went well.
- **Association of Missionary Societies (AMS)** – The member agencies of AMS have

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seen a number of changes of personnel at CEO level, and are seeking to combine their efforts towards participating at diocesan mission events and creating a strong mission presence at General Synod.

Crosslinks - has appointed a new team leader Rev David Luckman at the beginning of 2015. Crosslinks have a mission conference planned for 26 – 28 February 2016 where the keynote speaker will be Pastor Kevin DeYoung.

(It should be stressed that the above makes no claim to present a totality of the mission efforts by the groups or dioceses mentioned above; it is merely a sample of what was reported at various meeting of the Council throughout the year.)

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MOTIONS

Motion 1:

That this Synod receives the report of the 2014 General Synod 'Break Out' session and calls on each diocese and body of the Church to consider and act on its key findings.

Motion 2:

That the General Synod expresses its solidarity with its brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the world who are persecuted for their faith; and commends them to their prayers, along with all agencies who work to alleviate their suffering and promote their basic human right as expressed in the Geneva Convention, to freedom of religion.



CHURCH OF IRELAND, GENERAL SYNOD 2014 - MISSION BREAKOUT GROUPS

SEPTEMBER 2014: PREPARED BY:

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL FOR MISSION.

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

In February 2014, there was a mission network conference for the Church of Ireland organized by the Church of Ireland Council for Mission, held in Newry, with a total of 60 delegates representing the 12 diocese in the Church of Ireland. The guest speakers were the Rt. Rev. Richard Charters, Bishop of London, and Rev. Heather Morris, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, along with 5 individual stories from around the island of where mission was being effective, both urban and rural, North and South.

From this conference a document, 'A wider us' was drafted and circulated to all

who attended and to all members of General Synod. This document highlighted the 10 key findings from the mission conference. This document formed the starting point for discussion at the General Synod Breakout Groups (2014).

There were 192 individuals who attended the breakout groups, of the 432 that were at Synod that day (45%).

Those who attended the breakout groups made an individual response, and also were involved in one of 31 discussion groups, who each made a collective response.

This report is the reflections of the Mission Council on their discussions and input.

KEY POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Expression of hunger for Spiritual Renewal.*
- *'Good to see money and mission coming together in the RCB report'*
- *Low level of awareness of the Bishop's Mission Statement.*
- *Bishops asked to give a positive lead to empower the church.*
- *Acknowledgement that engagement with Mission involves change.*
- *Discipleship resources needed in a variety of traditions and perspectives.*

WHAT IS MISSION? - INTERPRETATION FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUPS.

Every organization nowadays has a 'Mission Statement', whether it is a Health Care facility or McDonalds!

What does 'Mission' mean in the life of the Church of Ireland today? For many, it only refers to the overseas efforts we make to support those who work in Global

Mission to help those who are in developing countries - food, medical supplies, education and spreading the message of Jesus 'to the ends of the earth'.

The Mission Council Conference was specifically about Local Mission, in our parishes and communities. Mission in

the Local Church is essentially any activity of the Church which intentionally encourages people, parishioners and non-parishioners to discover Jesus Christ, deepen Christian faith and find their place in the Christian community.

BISHOPS NEED TO: 'GIVE A POSITIVE LEAD THAT ENCOURAGES AND EMPOWERS URGENT ACTION.'

BREAKOUT GROUPS - DISCUSSION

After filling out the individual responses, discussion followed in 31 groups of about 5-8 people. They were to choose three of the Focus areas from the Council for Mission document 'A wider us' which was the report from the Network Conference held in February 2014.

(A copy of this report was circulated at General Synod (2014), and a copy can be obtained from Council for Mission Secretary)

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES.



When asked the following question :

'What do you think the Spirit is saying to the Church of Ireland as regards to our mission and purpose?'

The overwhelming response was that mission needs to be local, engaging with our communities, both within and outside the church.

55% of those who responded said that we need to focus outwards towards the community in which we live through Social Action and Faith Sharing.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL AT LOCAL LEVEL - IDENTIFIED AS KEY TO THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

'WE CAN NOT GIVE AWAY WHAT WE DO NOT HAVE !'

- QUOTE FROM A DELEGATE AT THE MISSION NETWORK CONFERENCE DURING THE FEEDBACK SESSION, SPEAKING ABOUT SPIRITUAL RENEWAL.

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BREAKOUT GROUPS - PRIORITY GIVEN THE FOCUS AREAS FROM THE NETWORK CONFERENCE



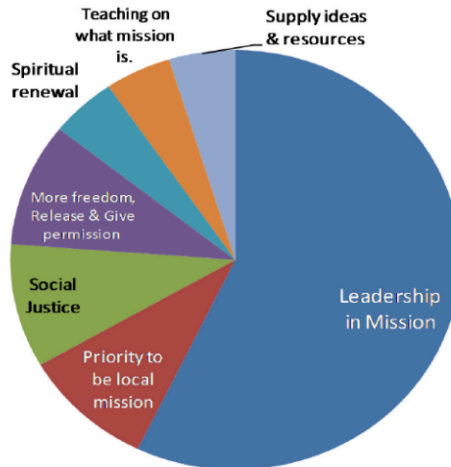
'Spiritual Renewal and Deeper engagement with Mission involves change' were identified as the main priorities selected from the groups in the breakout session. These key areas need to be central to any parochial or diocesan mission strategy.

FEEDBACK TO THE BISHOPS

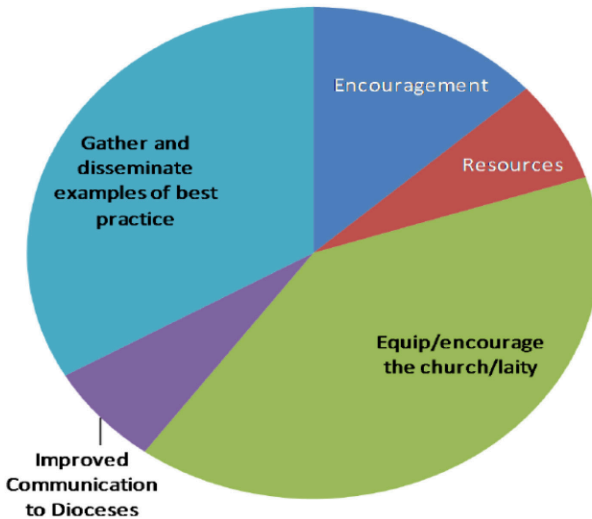
During their discussions, the groups were asked to give feedback to the bishops on what they wanted from them. 21 of the 31 groups gave a comment to feed back to the bishops.

The key requests were:

- Spiritual leadership at national, provincial and diocesan level.
- More freedom, release and permission giving to engage in mission in new, imaginative and fresh ways.
- Role of being a catalyst for mission, setting the vision for the diocese and encouraging parishes to develop their own vision and strategies for their churches and communities.



FEEDBACK TO THE MISSION COUNCIL



Of the 31 groups, 15 gave feedback to the Mission Council, calling mainly for support in mission by way of examples, resources and encouragement.

- Equipping and encouraging the church in Mission.
- Share positive examples of best practice in local mission.

EMPOWERING AND ENCOURAGING MISSION IN THE CHURCH OF IRELAND

The Mission Council are planning the following action items as a result of the focus given through the Network Conference and General Synod Breakout Groups.

- Facebook group to share stories.
 - Webpage for sharing, examples and useful mission links.
 - Advice and reviews on discipleship resources that are available.
 - Run Seminars on Local and Global Mission.
 - Be a hub for sharing information about conferences, training and resources from the dioceses to the wider church.
 - Develop links with CITI so new initiatives and teaching in Mission are being shared in the church.
-

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM BREAKOUT GROUPS.



COMMENTS / OBSERVATIONS OF USEFULNESS AND RUNNING OF BREAKOUT GROUPS AT GENERAL SYNOD

Firstly the Mission Council would like to thank the Hon. Secretaries of General Synod for the opportunity to have Breakout Groups this year.

From the comments of those involved they really appreciated to opportunity to discuss together in groups from around the church, regarding the mission of the church.

The organisation of the breakout groups was good, and the venues were nearby, making access easy.

Time was short, as previous Synod business over-ran, hence they did not start on time.

The facilities for discussion were not the most suitable, as it was awkward to have dis-

cussion groups in church pews.

It was somewhat disappointing that only 45% of those present attended the breakout groups.

Overall, a very positive experience, and has provided very valuable information and direction for The Council for Mission.

The Church of Ireland Council for Mission is made up of representatives from all 12 dioceses in the Church of Ireland, along with members elected from General Synod, representatives from the Association of Mission Societies (AMS) and others co-opted by the council.

Our role is to keep the mission of Christ at the heart of what the Church of Ireland is about, to **encourage** this through the sharing of faith building stories and to **equip** believers with the relevant resources needed to carry out the Great Commission.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

REPORT 2015

1. Membership

House of Bishops

Rt Rev Michael Burrows (Chair)

Standing Committee

Rev Brian Harper

General Synod - Clerical

Ven Terence Scott

Very Rev Katharine Poulton

Rev Anne Skuse

Pensions Board

Mrs Judith Peters

General Synod - Lay

Mr Trevor Douglas

Mr Denis Johnston

The Representative Church Body

Mrs Lorna Gleasure

Ven Leslie Stevenson

Honorary Secretaries

Rev Gillian Wharton

Director of Theological Institute

Rev Dr Maurice Elliott

Central Director of Ordinands

Rev Canon David Gillespie

Co-opted

Rev Ruth Jackson Noble

Mr Philip McKinley

2. Terms of Reference

The Commission on Ministry was established by the General Synod in 1996. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Commission makes recommendations concerning Christian Ministry, both lay and ordained. This includes the deployment of stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy appropriate to the requirements of the Church of Ireland in the future. Matters relating to ministry may be referred to the Commission by the archbishops and bishops, the Standing Committee and the Representative Church Body.

3. Summary

The Commission on Ministry concentrated on the following issues:

- Retirement planning for Clergy;
- Mid-Career Vocation Programme for Clergy;
- Pioneer Ministry;
- Self-Supporting Ministry;

- Engagement with Religious Life as lived in Community;
- Ministerial Development Review;
- Human Resources.

4. Purpose

To reflect on and propose changes to ministry training, deployment and support as will assist the Church to achieve its mission and sustain and nurture the clergy already in the Church's care throughout their lifetime.

5. Retirement Planning for Clergy

The Commission continues to run pre-retirement courses for clergy. A pre-retirement course took place on 21st and 22nd May 2014 in the Armagh City Hotel, with clergy from both jurisdictions invited. Topics included maintaining spiritual life in retirement.

6. Mid-career Vocation Programme for Clergy

No conference was held in 2014 and the working group met to discuss the structure of the next conference. A residential is organised in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI) from 2nd to 4th June 2015. The conference will have a retreat element to it rooted in the engagement the Commission itself has been having with those involved in religious/community life and the theme is "Sustaining Vocation". This course will be held every alternate year to the pre-retirement course for clergy.

7. Pioneering Ministry

In continuing response to the resolution passed by General Synod in 2013 and following recent discussions by the working group appointed at that time a number of possible training pathways have been identified. The value of possible cooperation in this matter with Edgehill Theological College was recognised. The Bishops of Connor and Tuam visited the home of Church Army in Sheffield to explore the possibility of Church Army providing training for Pioneer Ministry in the Church of Ireland. There are three strands to this course – reflection, experience and teaching.

Canon Phil Potter, appointed Archbishops' Missioner and Fresh Expressions Team Leader in the Church of England met with the House of Bishops in January 2015 to explore the opportunities for working more closely with The Fresh Expressions Team to identify how pioneer ministry and training for it fits together both with Fresh Expressions of Church, and with the missional needs of the Church of Ireland today. Representatives of the Working Group including members from the Commission on Ministry were invited to attend. At the time of the preparation of this report the matter is being taken forward by the bishops.

8. Ministry and the Religious Life

The Commission has identified the need for exploring ways of engagement with religious communities and their shared life of prayer with the purpose of investigating whether it would be conceivable to create an Anglican Community of retreat, hospitality and prayer which would be as a place of refreshment and sustenance especially for those involved in ministry. Members of the Commission attended two overnight retreats, staying at the Benedictine Retreat Centre in Rostrevor in February 2014 and at Glenstal Abbey in January 2015. In April 2014 Rev Jonathan Campbell-Smyth, curate of Jordanstown was invited to speak on his published research *New Monasticism – a Catalyst for the Church of Ireland to connect with Society?* Guest speakers at the September meeting were Rev Garth Bunting, the residential Priest Vicar at Christ Church Cathedral who spoke of his experience as a secular tertiary in the Third Order of the Society of St Francis. The Very Rev Paul Draper, Dean of Lismore spoke of his experience as an oblate in the Order of St Benedict. Canon David Jardine informed members of his experience as the only member of the First Order of the Society of St Francis in the Church of Ireland. The results of these conversations have informed the content of the mid-career conference and will be the subject of an aspirational resolution concerning the importance of these matters in the life of the Church at the 2015 General Synod.

9. Self-Supporting Ministry

Local Ministry

The Ven Leslie Stevenson attended the Local Ministry Network Conference **Holey, Wholly, Holy** which was held in Manchester on 13th to 15th November 2014 and has submitted a paper which is included as an Appendix on page *.

Self-Supporting Ministry

This discussion originated from the Commission's reflections on Rural Ministry. At General Synod 2014 a resolution was adopted that the Commission, in consultation with the House of Bishops and the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI) would continue the process of identifying means by which a diocesan based and local effective self-supporting ministry might be developed as a distinctive vocation. A sub-group was set up in November 2014. The group submitted a substantial and detailed proposal for a way forward to the Commission. This document, following modest emendation and clarification by the Commission itself will be laid before the House of Bishops for full consideration. Were there to be developments in this area advice would also be needed from the RCB and the Theological Institute given the implications in curricular and cost terms. The Commission would expect that work in this area will occupy a considerable part of its report to the 2016 Synod, and considers the matter of self-supporting ministry to be one of considerable urgency.

10. Ministerial Development Review

In November 2013 the Rev Jennifer McWhirter, CME Co-ordinator at CITI was invited to speak on her paper *Ministerial Development Review* at the meeting of the Commission and was asked to submit a further paper *on a Vision Articulated* which was presented to members in February 2014. It was agreed for Ms McWhirter to explore the possibility of piloting the questionnaire in two or three dioceses with the assistance of the bishops of those dioceses. The pilot review will run in the Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough, Cork, Cloyne & Ross and Connor and will be rolled out over an eighteen month period, with an evaluation submitted to the Commission on completion. This evaluation will form the basis of a fuller report to the General Synod.

11. Human Resources Policies in the Church of Ireland

A process has been set up within the Church of Ireland on best practice policies and procedures in the Church context, with reference to issues such as long term illness on the part of clergy and dignified and respectful conduct in all church meetings and relationships. The Commission has taken a substantial interest in this development which will be reported separately to the General Synod via the Representative Body. The Secretary General, Mr Adrian Clements and others involved in advancing this process had a number of detailed meetings with the Commission and were generously attentive to our proposals and suggestions.

Acknowledgements

The Commission wishes to record its appreciation to the Ven George Davison for his contribution to the work of the Commission and welcomes Rev Gillian Wharton as representative for the Honorary Secretaries, Mrs Judith Peters as Pensions Board representative, Rev Anne Skuse as clerical representative of the General Synod, Rev Canon David Gillespie as the Central Director of Ordinands and the Rev Ruth Jackson Noble and Mr Philip McKinley as co-opted members. The fact that it has been a year of such considerable change in our membership has contributed much to the refreshment and enrichment of our work and the focussing of our agenda for the coming year. The Commission also wishes to record its appreciation to Ms Sandra Massey who in the midst of her demanding role at Church House acts as our secretary with patience and care. Her attendance throughout two residential meetings in 2013 and 2014 was especially appreciated.

APPENDIX

Local Ministry Network Conference “Holey, Wholly, Holy” Manchester – 13 to 15 November 2014

Background:

Following the visit of Canon Andrew Bowden and his contribution to our debate on Ordained Local Ministry he initiated an invitation to the Conference, “Holey, Wholly, Holy”. The Local Ministry Network, whose conference it was, has no official standing in the Church of England (although its President is the Bishop of St. Albans) but is a “ginger” group that promotes local ministry whether ordained or lay.

Participants:

There was a mixture of people, lay and ordained, from the Church of England and the Church in Wales and me! Some were diocesan officers with roles to promote lay ministry or with responsibility for diocesan readers. A few were Ordained Local Ministers and others were lay people who practised some form of ministry in their parishes. From the Church of Ireland’s point of view the most interesting were those from Wales, where the Church is moving or as they would say “transitioning” from a parochial system to one of areas of ministry and mission. All the participants from Wales were deeply involved in this process.

Conference Notes

Both the Church of England and the Church in Wales have invested a lot of time and investment into research about the future of ministry both lay and ordained. Wales have had the Harries Report. Both Churches have put resources in place in the form of paid staff (part-time and full) and training programmes to effect development. It was interesting to note that the Diocese of Blackburn’s warden of readers is full time, and lay.

The conference followed its title, “Holey, Wholly and Holy.”

Holey

The key note speaker was Joanna Cox, the Church of England National Advisor in Adult Education and Lay Development. The **Holes** identified were the lack of ordained clergy, either stipendiary or self-supporting. The Diocese of Manchester has a project called 2025, which is a strategy to deal with what will be a severe shortage of clergy by that date. Another hole was the lack of available training for lay people to enable them to minister. From research done when lay people are enabled there is an increase in the culture of volunteerism, and where roles are rotated regularly at local level there is evidence of Church growth. As lay people become immersed in training programmes alongside readers and ordinands some eventually offer for ordination themselves.

Wholly

The Revd Canon Alan Billings has been a politician (deputy leader of Sheffield City Council), an academic as a Principal of a Theological College, and Head of Religion and Ethics at Lancaster University, as well as parish priest in the inner city and in the Lake District. He was one of the authors of “Faith in the City”. Now in retirement has been elected Police and Crime Commissioner for South Yorkshire. He brilliantly analysed the changing relationship in England between Church and State since the Second World War. Part of this analysis would apply to Ireland. For example, one issue he pointed to was political disenchantment with the consequence of not knowing what sort of government will be formed after the next General Election. People have lost interest in the big narratives put forward by political parties and indeed, religion. Membership of political parties and Churches have fallen as society has become more individualistic in outlook. Even aggressive Atheism that had itself become a grand narrative has gone! The church he argues has moved from the centre to the edge of society and he urges it get involved in that society and not become an inward looking group of people. In his second talk he took issue with Dr Grace Davie’s idea that there is “believing without belonging”. This posits the thought that people don’t go to church but still believe. He takes three categories to explore the issue, belonging, attending and believing to argue that it is all much more nuanced. There are still, for example, people who would say they belong to church without really going. Do we abandon them because of the temptation to be become more congregational? Do those who attend all believe the same? Or is belief a work in process and the Church should be offering help to people to work through their faith? In some ways the Church, he argues, is making it difficult for people to stay with us and so the Church is far from being **whole**. He covers this ground in his book, “Lost Church”.

Holy

The Rt Rev Chris Edmondson is the Bishop of Bolton. Before that he was warden of Lee Abbey and then previously held diocesan and parish posts. In his first talk he used the biblical metaphors of light and salt to argue that the Church and the people of God, lay and ordained, in an integrated way are to live out the distinctiveness of the Christian faith. The Church should support lay people in ministry. In his second talk he saw the Church as an hermeneutic of the Gospel. The Word became flesh and then became embodied in a community. He then examined what this community would look like. It would be one of prayer, praise and worship, belonging, healing, growth in **holiness**, compassionate and caring, where gifts are given and used, preaching and teaching, and of outreach and welcome.

Conclusion

The context of the conference was very much England but some of the issues raised would resonate with our experience. The emphasis was on lay rather than ordained ministry (although OLM’s were mentioned more than once). The reasoning here is that if lay ministry is resourced and people are trained then ordinands will flow. Somehow it jars with me that lay ministry has to be officially authorised and be trained for. It is

Commission on Ministry - 2015

clericalisation “in mini” and in Ireland ministry does take place every minute of the day although it is not labelled as such. People do call on the housebound and drive the neighbour to the hospital appointment! But it is interesting to note the resources in people and finance that the Church of England does spend on lay ministry. It was useful, especially the contributions of Canon Dr Alan Billings and the Rt Rev Chris Edmundson as well as contacts made. I was told the Scottish Church has recently revised its thinking on Ordained Local Ministry and maybe it would be worth a conversation. There is an international meeting of such bodies in the Anglican Communion to be held in the United States next February and we are cordially invited.

Leslie Stevenson 18 November 2014.

COMMISSION ON EPISCOPAL MINISTRY AND STRUCTURES

REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD 2015

MEMBERSHIP

1. In accordance with the statutes and resolutions passed by the General Synod in 2012 and 2014, the membership of the Commission is as follows:
 - Three members of the House of Bishops: Rt Rev Michael Burrows, Rt Rev Harold Miller and Rt Rev Patrick Rooke (following the retirement of Rt Rev Trevor Williams);
 - Two Honorary Secretaries of the General Synod: Mrs Ethne Harkness and Rev Gillian Wharton (following the retirement of Ven Robin Bantry White);
 - Mrs Brigid Barrett (following the resignation of Very Rev Sandra Pragnell);
 - Mrs June Butler;
 - Ven Andrew Forster;
 - Ven Gary Hastings;
 - Mrs Hilary McClay;
 - Mr Andrew McNeile;
 - Very Rev Victor Stacey;
 - Mr Roy Totten;
 - A representative of the Methodist Church in Ireland: Rev Donald Ker (non-voting member);
 - A representative of the Roman Catholic Church: Most Rev Donal Murray (non-voting member).
2. The Commission has not exercised its power to co-opt up to two additional members. The Commission has appointed two persons as consultants in specific aspects of its work:
 - Ven Robin Bantry White (constitutional provisions);
 - Rev Stephen Farrell (electoral procedures).
3. Mrs Ethne Harkness is Chairman of the Commission.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4. The Commission (CEMS) has been considering the wide range of issues within its remit since 2012 and is due to submit its final recommendations to the General Synod in 2016. With the mission of the Church as the focus of its work, CEMS recognizes current strengths but argues in this Report for significant visionary and principled change in some aspects of episcopal ministry and structures.

5. The Report describes work carried out, including as Appendix 2 details of interviews and consultation and some materials studied. In relation to the role of bishops and models of episcopacy, CEMS believes that core elements derived from the Ordinal should be promoted and protected. To achieve this, the Report lists a number of areas where there may be scope for reallocation of responsibilities currently borne by bishops and the relevant Church bodies will be asked to consider whether current practices have any adverse impact on episcopal ministry and structures and how this may be addressed. As regards the appointment of bishops, CEMS proposes an amended process, detailed in Appendix 3. The process will begin with the systematic preparation of a diocesan profile and statement of diocesan needs. It will involve the electoral college appointing a Discernment Committee to carry out tasks including detailed scrutiny of names put forward by members of the college, compilation of a shortlist and appropriate arrangements for introducing the candidates to the college.
6. Another major part of the work of CEMS in the past year has been consideration of diocesan structures, in particular the number of dioceses and their boundaries. The conclusion reached is that the present arrangements, taken overall, do not give the Church the best basis for mission in the 21st century, but it would be premature to bring forward recommendations at this stage. CEMS has developed foundational principles and working guidelines to operate as a context for further discussion on these issues, in order to avoid arbitrary, hasty, ineffective or unsustainable recommendations. A leaflet has been circulated to members of the General Synod, with maps showing some examples of how these principles and guidelines and the underlying statistical information could be used for possible reconfiguration of dioceses. CEMS will listen to the views of members of the General Synod first of all, and then plans to consult with diocesan councils on these ideas later in 2015 and bring recommendations in 2016. Ultimately decisions are for the General Synod, but CEMS stresses that arrangements for orderly and effective implementation of any changes in diocesan structures should be agreed.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

7. CEMS was established by statute of the General Synod in 2012. The immediate driver for reviewing episcopal ministry and structures was the special meeting of the General Synod in March 2011, about the proposal to delay the holding of an electoral college for the vacant united dioceses of Tuam, Killala and Achonry. While that proposal was defeated, the discussion revealed a widespread appreciation that the real question to be asked was not about the sustainability of Tuam, Killala and Achonry as a diocesan entity - matters such as its size as measured by the number of incumbencies and its ability to cope with the consequent pressures on people and funding - but the nature of episcopal ministry and structures throughout the Church. There was a groundswell of opinion that “something needs to be done”. Hence the

establishment of CEMS to review current arrangements with a view to proposing appropriate changes.

8. The task given to CEMS was to prepare proposals on the provision of episcopal ministry and structures adequate for the needs, and compatible with the resources, of the Church of Ireland. Within that remit, wide terms of reference were detailed. As regards the adoption of the scheme ultimately proposed, the powers and functions of Diocesan Synods under section 31 of Chapter 1 of the Constitution were vested in the General Synod. In 2014 the General Synod extended the timescale for completion of the work to 2016.
9. In its deliberations CEMS has kept to the forefront the key sentence in the 2012 statute: “The mission of the Church shall be the focus of its work.” As in its title, the ministry comes before the structures; the structures are there to serve ministry, not to constrain it. Identifying current opportunities for mission is an evolving conversation in the church and the work of CEMS is a part of that. For that reason, and in recognition of the cross-cutting nature of issues within our remit, the reports of the Commission on Ministry, the Council for Mission and CEMS to the General Synod in 2014 included a joint statement of our shared aspirations. In its Report on Mission Breakout Groups at General Synod 2014, the Council for Mission referred to requests for bishops to give spiritual leadership, promote engagement in mission and act as catalysts for mission; many of the comments in that Report showed the same concerns amongst church members as were raised in CEMS consultations.

TOWARDS MINISTRY AND STRUCTURES FIT FOR MISSION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

10. The General Synod set up CEMS to review episcopal ministry and structures with the clear expectation that there will be change. The environment around us has changed dramatically, culturally, economically and socially, and the Church must respond to and function in the new world. The future is very close, not just a theoretical possibility we have plenty of time to come to terms with. The present arrangements do not serve the current or future needs of the Church as well as they might; the status quo is not an acceptable option. The General Synod has recognised that reality and most responses to extensive CEMS consultations agree. The universal propelling force for change is effectiveness in mission.
11. In arguing for change, the strengths we have should be thankfully acknowledged. We can point to working administrative structures, good relationships within dioceses, active lay involvement, willingness to engage with new ways of “doing church”, strong ecumenical links and friendships, effective rural deanery systems. We recognise that one size does not fit all. And yet – can we say “it ain’t broke, so don’t fix it”? Have we already got the best way of enabling the bishops to lead the church in mission in the 21st century?

12. Rearranging and restructuring offer us the capacity to do old things better and do new things well. In that there may be the spark that ignites new possibilities for discipleship. Dioceses can thrive with more resources in terms of people, skills, finances, support, energy and grace. With increased security, confidence and resilience can grow and the emphasis will shift from maintenance to mission: from palliative care of a patient in decline to active nurturing of new life and hope. Bishops can explore sustainable and fulfilling episcopal roles with enriching opportunities for diversity of ministry. Crucially, they can be released from encroaching secondary functions to exercise the core episcopal ministry promised at their consecration. At a practical level, clergy and laity in numerically small dioceses will no longer be required to take on an unacceptably wide range of roles and responsibilities and serve on a multiplicity of diocesan committees, a more equitable balance of representation on central church bodies can be achieved and the gifts of all can be better used in serving the church. The excessive workloads imposed on the Archbishops can be addressed. There may be significant benefits in directing resources towards meeting the pastoral, liturgical and administrative needs of bishops, clergy and laity, and in avoiding disproportionate funding demands. There may be scope for certain functions to be carried out better elsewhere, inside the dioceses or centrally, with sharing expertise, common approaches and economies of time, money, administration and committee work.
13. Seen through the “mission lens”, remodelling episcopal ministry and structures involves more than changing geographical boundaries. Redrawing diocesan boundaries through amalgamations but maintaining more of the same within new units is not the answer – “bishopsing” would stay the same, only with bigger mileage. Instead, the proposed changes must be visionary and principled. For that reason, CEMS developed its statement of *Vision and Principles*, brought to the General Synod in 2014 and included as Appendix 1 in this Report.
14. The vision inspiring CEMS is to provide an episcopacy that will allow the Church of Ireland to fulfil its mission in the 21st century:
 - by enabling bishops to lead the Church – clergy and laity – in living the Christian life, furthering the mission of the Church and building up the Kingdom of God;
 - by learning from our history, the experience of other Churches and the expertise of leaders and directors in other roles and adapting those lessons to benefit episcopal ministry;
 - by providing episcopal structures that are authoritative, supportive and encouraging, and flexible enough to meet present needs and provide for evolution in our understanding of ministry and mission; and
 - by valuing the richness of our inheritance as a national and Anglican church and at the same time recognising current realities in our ecumenical, political, cultural, social and economic life.

REMIT AND METHODOLOGY

15. CEMS has instructions from the General Synod on what is to be done and how it is to be done. The statute refers to articulating a theology of episcopacy, examining the missiology of the Church of Ireland, reflecting on the scriptures, building upon our heritage and bringing fresh perspectives. We have referred to those aspects of our work in earlier reports and acknowledged in particular our debt to the Commission on Episcopal Needs which reported to the General Synod in 1998. We have also benefitted from the contributions of our members from the Methodist Church and the Roman Catholic Church who have brought their perspectives and challenges to our work. Our *Vision and Principles* paper grew out of our consideration of these foundational issues.
16. The 2012 statute listed practical and administrative matters for attention and CEMS has considered all of those. In doing so, the inter-connectedness of all aspects of our work has become apparent: the knock-on effects of proposals in one area on other areas, the impact on ordained ministry generally, relationships between clergy and laity, representation in central church bodies and the unavoidable structural and funding issues.
17. The statute expressly required a persuasive evidence base for CEMS recommendations and in order to provide that CEMS has conducted qualitative, quantitative and comparative research. Beginning with a thorough and fruitful review of previous reports to the General Synod, papers were commissioned and published materials studied. The church census conducted for the first time in 2013 gave a lot of information, although its limitations must be recognised. Other important sources of statistical data were the national censuses of 2011 in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. An extensive programme of interviews and consultations was carried out. In a spirit of genuine inquiry, the approach was not to ask questions in a vacuum, or to present interested parties with a ready-made set of proposals. At the heart of the consultation process was the development of the *Vision and Principles* paper and affirmation of it as the framework shaping eventual recommendations.
18. A summary of this research and study to date is provided as Appendix 2, with a bibliography and details of interviews and consultations. In 2014 a major element was visits to diocesan synods, with group discussions and questionnaires. A summary of responses was published on the Church of Ireland website at <http://ireland.anglican.org/news/5512> and each diocese was sent a separate report on responses received from its own synod members.

ROLE OF THE BISHOP AND MODELS OF EPISCOPACY

19. The approach of CEMS on core elements of the episcopal role and additional functions was presented to the General Synod in 2014, along with the *Principles* underlying our recommendations (paragraphs 15-25 of the 2014 Report). Core elements derived from the Ordinal are foundational to our

understanding of episcopal ministry in the Church of Ireland, but in carrying out those responsibilities, a bishop's own gifts, priorities and emphases are reflected in his or her ministry. So episcopate is expressed differently by each one, as the person God made, and that is welcomed. CEMS does not wish to straitjacket flair or individuality by tight and tidy definitions of a bishop's role; creativity and innovation are to be encouraged and supported. Accordingly, the focus of most of the proposals for change is not on imposing a uniform description and allocation of roles but on flexible arrangements enabling bishops to use their personal gifts, skills and characteristics. In this context, CEMS also welcomes the promotion of collaborative working by the Primate and the House of Bishops, as a sharing of episcopal roles and responsibilities and an enrichment of their collective episcopal ministry.

20. CEMS has considered the scope for other ecclesiastical appointments sitting alongside the episcopal role, for example as Dean or incumbent. We have not rejected such possibilities, although the scope for them may be less if, as a result of our proposals, episcopal responsibilities are more evenly distributed. We have not identified constitutional or theological objections to that option but any redrafting of the constitution should clarify that that course is open. Similarly, it has not been a frequent practice in the Church of Ireland for bishops to move from diocesan episcopal ministry to other roles within the church but CEMS sees no obstacle to that. To do otherwise is to refuse a calling a bishop may experience, and reject the contribution he or she may offer in a different field of ministry.
21. For their part, clergy and laity and church governance bodies must support episcopal ministry, through prayer and practical intervention. That applies to both core roles and additional workload. The provision of adequate resources, of people, facilities and finance, is essential for good episcopal ministry. As regards the many additional functions sitting alongside the core elements, CEMS has examined the scope for reallocation of tasks, passing some responsibilities to others and introducing new procedures. In revising expectations of the work bishops will do, it is recognised that passing work to others - whether Archdeacons, Executive Chaplains, Rural Deans or lay staff members - may mean they have to be paid for doing it, so there are resource implications. There was some support in our consultations for an Assistant or Suffragan bishop model as a way of relieving the workload but we are not persuaded that that fits with the Church of Ireland view of episcopal relationships.
22. It is not for CEMS to prescribe remedies for all the problems facing the church or provide answers to all the questions our examination of episcopal ministry and structures has raised. Others in the church are better equipped and mandated to consider many of these issues, so we do not make specific recommendations on these but we will strongly encourage such bodies to consider the impact of matters within their remit on episcopal ministry and

structures. Areas where CEMS has identified possible scope for reorganisation of procedures and reallocation of responsibilities include the following:

- Clerical discipline and clergy relationships - this was highlighted in interviews with serving and former bishops as a major area of difficulty. These concerns have a big impact on the workload of bishops and represent a growing problem for dioceses and parishes. There is work underway as part of the long-term church project and developments from that will be helpful. In addition, CEMS believes that a good ministerial review system will bring benefits to all.
 - Human resources and employment management - there is a case for central church involvement here or some shared outsourcing. Expertise required in handling contracts, disputes, recruitment, appointment and dismissal processes should be available across diocesan boundaries.
 - Parish and Vestry disputes - again, outcomes from the long-term church initiative will be relevant.
 - School patronage - this is an issue mainly for bishops with dioceses in the Republic of Ireland who are patrons of 176 schools. On the one hand, this role may be seen as a part of the mission focus of the church but there are valid questions about whether all aspects of discharging these responsibilities should fall on bishops. There may be scope for a central church specialist body, with local oversight and adaptations, for example, to assist with legal issues.
 - Legal and quasi-legal compliance - for example, in relation to discrimination and equality regulation or good practice in relation to voluntary organisations, there may be room for more sharing of best practice and central development of protocols adaptable for diocesan use.
 - Diocesan administration – expertise may be better used and unnecessary duplication of work may be lessened through merging or sharing administrative offices and staff, where this is convenient and practicable.
 - Responsibility for buildings – there are 1,090 churches and many other buildings, many with a special heritage status, many under-used, but all requiring care and attention.
 - Administration and committee chairing and membership - central church authorities, diocese and bishops should look at the scope for delegation.
 - Speaking into the public sphere - teaching and speaking to the church and for the church are part of the core role of a bishop, so opportunities to do this are valuable. At the same time, it is not only bishops who can speak or have a representative role, but it is hard to convince the media, the public or indeed members of the Church of Ireland that that is so.
23. For all these areas, CEMS will invite the relevant church bodies to consider whether present arrangements offer the best support to episcopal ministry and whether changes would be appropriate.

THE EPISCOPAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS

24. As was indicated at the General Synod in 2014, a lot of work has been done on this aspect of the CEMS remit. A position paper is presented in Appendix 3 for consideration, with legislation to follow in 2016.

TRAINING AND MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR BISHOPS

25. CEMS was pleased that its resolution respectfully requesting that the House of Bishops progress work towards the introduction of arrangements for a systematic programme of induction and in-post training, development and ministerial review for Archbishops and Bishops was passed by the General Synod in 2014. A supportive ministerial review process helps constructive reflection on the exercise of ministry, identifying opportunities and risks and easing the isolation and burdens of leadership for bishops and sometimes their families. The House of Bishops has engaged positively with these developments.

DIOCESES

26. The *Principles* adopted to guide CEMS recommendations in this area state that “Arrangements in relation to diocesan structures and geographical boundaries should:
- provide flexibility for future shapes of mission and ministry;
 - recognize that different structures may be appropriate for different places;
 - acknowledge that a range of gifts, skills, expertise and experience and significant commitment of time and energy are required to support the worshipping and functioning life of a diocese;
 - aim towards providing appropriate representation for each diocese in decision-making by central church bodies;
 - give due regard to historic diocesan identities and their ecumenical significance;
 - reflect established, cohesive communities and current centres of worship, mission and population;
 - address the implications of a multiplicity of cathedrals;
 - present an overall sustainable financial model, taking account of reasonable calls on parishioners, dioceses and central church funds;
 - offer the incumbent bishop a sustainable context for his or her episcopal ministry; and
 - examine and offer ways of resolving the consequences of any proposals for change.”

27. As with other aspects of our remit, CEMS has examined the current arrangements in light of these *Principles* and concluded that they do not offer a satisfactory basis for the mission of the church in the 21st century. That is borne out by responses to our consultations. We want arrangements that allow for a meaningful and effective episcopal ministry for all our bishops. Our dioceses want more capacity to engage in mission rather than expending most effort on sustaining and maintaining their position. They want their clergy to devote more energy to parochial ministry and mission, not carry a disproportionate load of diocesan or central church administration. They need to have available a range of gifts, expertise and experience in their clergy and laity to support the life of the diocese without drawing too heavily on a few people or forcing them into roles they do not find rewarding or congenial. That is not the case now when we have dioceses with a very small number of cures – five of them under 30 cures.
28. The issue of size and number of dioceses has generated debate throughout the church, as was the case in all previous attempts to address it. CEMS has listened to that debate and will continue to do so, before making final recommendations. One important element in the discussion is that the context now includes information from the church census conducted in November 2013. That material has to be handled with care; it does not provide all the data we would like to have and it is a snapshot not an indication of trends. With those caveats, however, it helps inform decision-making, particularly when supplemented by data from the two state censuses in 2011.
29. After much discussion and analysis of previous reports, CEMS has adopted working guidelines in relation to numbers of population, worshippers and cures required to enhance diocesan capacity and meet CEMS *Principles*. These guidelines – not inflexible rules or targets but reasonable assessments of appropriate levels – are intended to give the church cohesive and sustainable dioceses, with the capacity for effective episcopal, clerical and lay ministry. For that to be achieved, we think that a diocese should have as a minimum approximately 15,000 Church of Ireland members in its area. With the 2013 church census showing an average attendance rate of 15.5% of membership, that would mean almost 2,500 worshippers. Taking a model of 30 cures in a diocese as a minimum, that would mean at least 80 people worshipping in each cure on a typical Sunday.
30. While the implications of the figures cannot be ignored, CEMS recognises that decisions on diocesan structures and boundaries, especially with a mission imperative, should not be founded on statistics alone. On a broader view, recommendations must comply with the CEMS *Principles*; for example, people in the Church of Ireland identify strongly with traditional ecclesiastical areas and those boundaries speak of ecumenical heritage and continuity not to be disturbed lightly.

31. CEMS is not ready to recommend realignment of diocesan boundaries at this stage. We are sure, however, that our recommendations to the General Synod in 2016 will involve substantial change. For now, we set out a series of examples of how boundaries could be changed, along with analysis of how these meet or miss the stated criteria. These examples - we stress they are no more than that - are starting points for discussion and consultation in church groups and dioceses. The examples are contained in a booklet circulated to members of the General Synod. They will also be available on the website. The next step for CEMS will be to listen to the views of members of the General Synod and consult with diocesan councils on these examples and other possibilities later this year.
32. Whatever the General Synod may decide in due course, implementation of any changes in structures and boundaries will inevitably bring problems. Among the matters to be dealt with are administration, staffing, synods, see houses and the multiplicity of cathedrals – 29 cathedrals in total, with a few sharing Chapters. Under the 1976 scheme, the process of reconfiguring dioceses began upon the retirement or resignation of one of the two bishops involved, and it took some thirty years to complete. That is not an acceptable prospect for bishops, clergy or people. If changes are agreed, then the General Synod should approve and facilitate how it is to be carried through. CEMS has set up an implementation planning group, including members of the House of Bishops, to explore creative ways of bringing the proposals into operation and that will be part of the CEMS report in 2016.

FUNDING AND RESOURCING OF THE EPISCOPACY

33. Funding of episcopal ministry and structures is still under consideration, including conversations with the Representative Body. Although conscious of current pressures, the work of CEMS is not driven by the need to make financial savings and indeed some of our recommendations may lead to additional costs, at least in the short term. Overall, our expectation would be that savings from some recommendations should be rerouted into support for episcopal ministry. Benefit will be seen in reformed and more effective episcopal ministry and delivery of ancillary functions.

ROLES OF THE ARCHBISHOPS OF ARMAGH AND DUBLIN, PROVINCIAL STRUCTURES AND COLLEGIAL STRUCTURES

34. The CEMS *Vision and Principles* document provides that “Arrangements in relation to these areas should:
 - complement and enhance whichever model of episcopal ministry and structures may be adopted;
 - recognize the particular demands made of the Archbishops and the need for appropriate resources;
 - facilitate engagement with civic and public affairs in our two jurisdictions;

- enable the Church of Ireland to participate appropriately in international affairs;
 - foster the role of the House of Bishops as a House of General Synod;
 - support the collegial, collective ministry and leadership of the Archbishops and Bishops.”
35. Most people acknowledge that the church has asked too much of its Archbishops without adequately resourcing the roles. In Armagh, assistance has now been provided with the appointment of an Executive Chaplain. More collegiate working among bishops helps too. At this point in our deliberations, CEMS has no recommendations for structural change in the roles of Archbishops. As things stand, CEMS sees value in maintaining two provinces for the Church of Ireland. There are advantages in this in terms of pastoral oversight, and it facilitates engagement with civic and public affairs in our two jurisdictions, with different political and social cultures. The issue may be revisited when proposals on diocesan boundaries are clearer.
36. It is generally recognised that the Church of Ireland, through its Archbishops and Bishops and others, participates appropriately in international affairs, including Anglican Communion meetings. This involvement enriches ministry both here and in the wider church. It should be noted, however, that our consultations have shown some concern that it can take bishops away from their dioceses too often.
37. An important aim of the recommendations eventually brought to the General Synod will be to affirm the position of our bishops as bishops of the whole church and to enhance this we have stressed the value of episcopal ministry and leadership. As a House of General Synod, bishops are visible on the platform or floor of Synod, leading worship, chairing proceedings in rotation, speaking from the rostrum, voting, communicating to Synod collectively and individually and in social contact with members.

Concluding comments

38. In presenting his vision for a long-term church to the General Synod in 2014, the Primate challenged us all to lift our eyes beyond the present, to plan strategies unselfishly for the future, to work in a spirit of collaboration rather than competitiveness and of true hope rather than passive cynicism. The work of CEMS is a strand in that project. In presenting this report to the General Synod, members of CEMS invite everyone in the Church of Ireland to believe with us that we are here for the long-term so we need to think in the long-term.

APPENDIX I

COMMISSION ON EPISCOPAL MINISTRY AND STRUCTURES

VISION AND PRINCIPLES FOR EPISCOPAL MINISTRY AND STRUCTURES

VISION

To provide an episcopacy that will allow the Church of Ireland to fulfil its mission in the 21st century:-

- by enabling bishops to lead the Church – clergy and laity – in living the Christian life, furthering the mission of the Church and building the Kingdom of God;
- by learning from our history, the experience of other Churches and the expertise of leaders and directors in other roles and adapting those lessons to benefit episcopal ministry;
- by providing episcopal structures that are authoritative, accountable, supportive and encouraging, and flexible enough to meet present needs and provide for evolution in our understanding of ministry and mission; and
- by valuing the richness of our inheritance as a national and Anglican church and at the same time recognizing current realities in our ecumenical, political, cultural, social and economic life.

PRINCIPLES: ROLE OF THE BISHOP AND MODELS OF EPISCOPACY

Bishops, clergy and laity may expect an articulation of the role of the bishop:-

- where the core elements are agreed and reflect clearly the words of the Ordinal and other foundational Anglican documents;
- where there may be additional responsibilities to be discharged by the bishop personally or under his or her direction;
- where the full range of gifts, skills and characteristics found in those called to ordained ministry are welcomed and used in episcopal ministry for the mission of the Church;
- where opportunities for collaborative ministry are promoted;
- where there is flexibility to adopt arrangements that combine episcopal ministry with other ecclesiastical roles or envisage movement from full-time episcopal ministry to other roles in the church; and
- where it is recognised that significant resources (people, finance and facilities) are required to support episcopal ministry, especially if bishops are to be released from some administrative and management functions.

PRINCIPLES: THE EPISCOPAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The process for appointment or election of bishops should have the following features:-

- it is a process of discernment, grounded in prayer and led by the Holy Spirit;
- it achieves an agreed balance between the voice of the diocese and the voice of the wider church in the composition of electoral colleges;
- it facilitates the election of the best person for the role;
- it uses a common framework for objective and clear identification of the needs of the vacant diocese and the wider church;
- it allows proper consideration and scrutiny of the gifts, skills, experiences, qualities and character of the persons involved, in the context of those identified needs;
- it respects the dignity of those being considered; and
- it meets modern, accepted standards of good practice.

PRINCIPLES: TRAINING AND MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR BISHOPS

In order to equip bishops for their ministry, arrangements for induction and in-post training and development should:-

- assist persons appointed as bishops in their transition into the role and the requirements of episcopal ministry, tailored to the specific context of the relevant diocese;
- enable bishops to embrace and model the Continuous Life Long Learning approach that is at the heart of the Diaconal and Presbyteral model;
- encourage approaches to accountability and leadership that can be modeled and deployed to clergy for the enrichment of ministry and mission; and
- facilitate participation in the variety, depth and professionalism of episcopal equipping resources available in the Anglican Communion and elsewhere.

PRINCIPLES: DIOCESES

Arrangements in relation to diocesan structures and geographical boundaries should:-

- provide flexibility for future shapes of mission and ministry;
- recognize that different structures may be appropriate for different places;
- acknowledge that a range of gifts, skills, expertise and experience and significant commitment of time and energy are required to support the worshipping and functioning life of a diocese;
- aim towards providing appropriate representation for each diocese in decision-making by central church bodies;
- give due regard to historic diocesan identities and their ecumenical significance;
- reflect established, cohesive communities and current centres of worship, mission and population;

- address the implications of a multiplicity of cathedrals;
- present an overall sustainable financial model, taking account of reasonable calls on parishioners, dioceses and central church funds;
- offer the incumbent bishop a sustainable context for his or her episcopal ministry; and
- examine and offer ways of resolving the consequences of any proposals for change.

PRINCIPLES: FUNDING AND RESOURCING OF THE EPISCOPACY

Mindful of the direction from General Synod that episcopal ministry and structures should be adequate for the needs and compatible with the resources, of the Church of Ireland, arrangements in relation to funding and resourcing should:-

- have a sustainable basis;
- have due regard to opportunities, demands and constraints in parishes, dioceses and the Representative Church Body;
- be transparent and equitable and comply with standards of good governance;
- provide appropriate resources to support the episcopal role, such as professional staff, finance, equipment, facilities and premises;
- free bishops from certain administrative and management tasks, for example by enhancing the role of other ordained or lay persons qualified and willing to take on additional responsibilities; and
- recognize that reallocation of functions from bishops to others often means those persons must be paid to do the transferred tasks.

PRINCIPLES: ROLES OF THE ARCHBISHOPS OF ARMAGH AND DUBLIN, PROVINCIAL STRUCTURES AND COLLEGIAL STRUCTURES

Arrangements in relation to these areas should:-

- complement and enhance whichever model of episcopal ministry and structures may be adopted;
- recognize the particular demands made of the Archbishops and the need for appropriate resources;
- facilitate engagement with civic and public affairs in our two jurisdictions;
- enable the Church of Ireland to participate appropriately in international affairs;
- foster the role of the House of Bishops as a House of General Synod; and
- support the collegial, collective ministry and leadership of the Archbishops and Bishops.

APPENDIX II

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Meeting with Kate Williams, Head of Finance, RCB

Meeting with Director and Staff of Church of Ireland Theological Institute

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Liaison with Council for Mission and Commission on Ministry

Comments received through post or email address insert address?

APPENDIX III

ELECTION OF BISHOPS – POSITION PAPER

Description of current process

1. At present, bishops are appointed in accordance with the process set out in Chapter VI of Constitution and conventions that have evolved over the years. An Episcopal Electoral College is convened comprising a President (normally the Metropolitan), three other Bishops and clergy and laity from the vacant diocese and other dioceses in the relevant province¹. Aside from the four Episcopal members, the full college comprises 48 persons², half of whom are clergy and half are laity. Again with the exception of the Episcopal members, half of the members of the College are from the vacant diocese and half are from the other dioceses in the province³.
2. While there is no Constitutional provision for it, it is common practice for members of the Electoral College from the vacant diocese to meet informally prior to the meeting of the college. This is an opportunity for prayer and discussion on issues such as the needs of the diocese, what the diocese will be seeking in a new Bishop and the names of potential candidates. As such meetings are extra-constitutional and informal, the content, structure, usefulness and outcomes of the discussions at these meetings are likely to vary greatly from diocese to diocese and from election to election.
3. The formal meeting of the Electoral College begins with Holy Communion. After informal discussions, names are proposed and speeches made in support of the candidates. Voting is by orders and a candidate requires the support of two-thirds of clergy and laity present and voting to be deemed elected. The person elected is contacted and, if they are willing to take up the post, their name is submitted to the House of Bishops who, if satisfied with the person's fitness, take the necessary steps to give effect to the election. The name of the person elected is released publicly following the conclusion of the Electoral College.
4. The Constitution allows for the Electoral College to be adjourned and re-convened. In practice this is rare and if the College has been unable to elect on the first day, the approach has been to refer the issue to the House of Bishops.
5. Outside this procedure, the Archbishop of Armagh is elected by the House of Bishops alone, from its members, by simple majority.

¹ Additional clergy and laity from Armagh are appointed to the College where the vacancy arises from the elevation of the former bishop to the Primacy.

² 60 persons in the case of a vacancy arising from the elevation of the former bishop to the Primacy.

³ Except where a vacancy arises from the elevation of the former bishop to the Primacy.

Vision and Principles

6. The *Principles* adopted to guide CEMS recommendations in this area are:

“The process for the appointment or election of bishops should have the following features:

- it is a process of discernment, grounded in prayer and led by the Holy Spirit;
- it achieves an agreed balance between the voice of the diocese and the voice of the wider church in the composition of electoral colleges;
- it facilitates the election of the best person for the role;
- it uses a common framework for objective and clear identification of the needs of the vacant diocese and the wider church;
- it allows proper consideration and scrutiny of the gifts, skills, experiences, qualities and character of the persons involved in the context of those identified needs;
- it respects the dignity of those being considered; and
- it meets modern, accepted standards of good practice.”

Strengths and weaknesses of current process

7. The selection of bishops of the church is not a mechanical recruitment exercise but a solemn process of discernment conducted in a prayerful atmosphere seeking guidance of the Holy Spirit. Within that context, this process provides the episcopal leadership of the church and it has to be demonstrably focused on and fit for that purpose. The fact that the General Synod in 2012 asked the Commission to give early attention to the episcopal appointment process suggested that it was an area of concern and this was confirmed in the wider discussions in 2013 and 2014. Among issues raised were the size and composition of electoral colleges, the balance between hearing the voice of the diocese on one hand and satisfying the interests of the wider church on the other, specifying and finding the experience and skills sought in potential bishops, ensuring that properly informed decisions were made, breaches of confidentiality and the timing of announcements. There was also concern that, especially in the Province of Armagh, elections have frequently been passed to the House of Bishops, so making the “fall-back position” the usual process. The selection of bishops has also generated some adverse publicity outside the church and it has on occasion been hurtful for persons directly involved. There is a broad consensus that change is necessary, both in the constitutional provisions and in the operation of the process.

8. CEMS has evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the current procedures in the light of consultation responses and with the CEMS statement of *Vision and Principles* as the touchstone. The conclusions are reflected in the following recommendations for reform of the process. In summary, the proposal is for a two-stage approach involving an Electoral College and a Discernment Committee, with clearer arrangements for identification of the respective needs of the diocese and the church and for consideration and scrutiny of the qualities of the candidates for

appointment. It is proposed that the names of persons under consideration should remain confidential but updates on the stage which the process is at should be made public and prayers encouraged for the relevant individuals involved.

Election of bishops: proposed procedure

Notice period and preparatory steps

9. Under the Constitution, bishops give 2 to 4 months' notice of their intention to retire or resign. In the case of a translation, a similar period usually elapses between the election of the new bishop and their enthronement in the new diocese. It is proposed that the new procedure will begin shortly after the announcement of intention to retire or election of a bishop to another diocese. In the case of an unexpected vacancy (for example arising out of a death in service or a sudden resignation), the procedure would begin not less than one month and not more than two months after the vacancy arises. As the first step, the President of the College will nominate a facilitator to work with episcopal electors from the vacant diocese in producing a draft diocesan profile and statement of needs. At present, this task is often carried out through an informal assessment of diocesan needs but a more structured analysis is warranted. The facilitator need not be a member of the college or indeed come from the vacant see – he or she will be chosen by reference to their skills. The facilitator's role is to help the local electors in the production of comprehensive, objective and realistic documents, and to promote the involvement of all the local perspectives. The local electors will be entitled to consult with others in the diocese, for example, the Diocesan Council. In order to provide a clear focus for the diocesan profile and statement of needs, those participating should be asked to consider what they think the priorities should be for the new bishop in the diocese for the next ten years.
10. Also at this early stage, the President of the College will set dates for two meetings of the Episcopal Electoral College, the first to take place shortly after the diocese becomes vacant (say within 2 weeks of the retirement or resignation taking effect or within four months of the vacancy in the event of an unexpected vacancy), and the second to take place within 3 months of the first meeting. Once the draft diocesan profile and statement of needs are developed by the local electors, they will be sent to the President of the Electoral College for circulation to the members of the Electoral College at least one week in advance of the first meeting of the College.

First meeting of the Electoral College

11. When the Electoral College meets for the first time, the following procedure is proposed:
 - Holy Communion.
 - The draft diocesan profile and statement of needs is presented. The Electoral College discusses it and makes amendments if it so wishes. The purpose of this consideration is to allow the document to be reflective of the needs of the Church as a whole, whilst the local electors have primary ownership of it.

- Next, the Discernment Committee is appointed by the clergy and laity on the College: clergy from the vacant diocese elect 2 clerical members and laity elect 2 lay members from their number and those from outside (that is, those from the other dioceses represented on the College) similarly elect 2 clerical and 2 lay members from their number – with the proviso in this case that the 2 elected must not be from the same diocese. In both cases, supplementlists are chosen too. That is particularly important in the case of clerical members because if a clerical member of the Discernment Committee is to be considered for election, he or she must withdraw from the Discernment Committee and, if shortlisted, from the Electoral College. That results in a Discernment Committee of 8 persons, all of them members of the Electoral College.
- The Electoral College members are entitled to suggest names to the Discernment Committee and the Discernment Committee is required to consider any such persons but not required to shortlist them.

Role of Discernment Committee after first meeting of College

12. The Discernment Committee elects its own Chairman and has flexibility in how to go about its work but it has a number of responsibilities to undertake in a 3 month period between the first and second meetings of the Electoral College. These are as follows:
 - To suggest names for consideration themselves and invite those eligible “to make suggestions to assist the Discernment Committee in its work, including names of potential candidates”, with a closing date specified.
 - To decide at their own discretion how they will appraise themselves of the qualities and experience of those being considered: they may choose to delegate part of this task to a sub-committee.
 - To seek biographical details and CVs and meet with all nominated persons.
 - To liaise with and take soundings from the House of Bishops (principally through the Chairman and the President of the College) towards the end of its work as to the names being considered. At this stage the Bishops would not exercise a “pre-veto” but it is intended that this would represent an opportunity for concerns of Bishops to be raised.
 - To prepare a shortlist for the College with at least 3 and not more than 5 names to be considered at the second meeting of the College.
 - To attest at their final meeting that they have had due regard to and been sufficiently guided by the diocesan profile and statement of needs in preparing their shortlist.
 - To plan the first part of the second meeting of the Electoral College, where the persons shortlisted may be introduced to electors in a manner decided by the Discernment Committee.
13. Members of CEMS spent some time discussing how names should be put forward for consideration - for example, whether there should be advertisements, requests for expressions of interests or invitations to make proposals or nominate. The consensus

reached was to use a nomination process, with only members of the Electoral College eligible to make nominations. There was a concern raised that some clergy persons may not aspire to become bishops but if called by a College they accept that call and serve with distinction. We considered whether the proposed arrangements would make it less likely that such persons would become bishops. We appreciate the “specialness” of the call from a College having elected someone under guidance of the Holy Spirit, and we must not lose the mystery of that encounter, but we believe that will remain the case in a new nomination and discernment process.

Second meeting of the Electoral College

14. At the second meeting, the following procedure is envisaged:

- The meeting begins with Holy Communion.
- At this stage, no further nominations may be made.
- The College receives the report of the Discernment Committee. This includes a summary of the gifts, skills, experiences, qualities and character of each person shortlisted.
- The College may meet the candidates. This part of the meeting proceeds as planned by the Discernment Committee.
- The College considers the persons shortlisted for election, with speeches from members.
- Voting is by Orders, the bishops present voting as members of the clergy.
- A two thirds majority of those present and voting in each Order is needed for election.
- If a person receives a simple majority in both Orders, his or her name may, with the agreement of the majority of the College, be put to the College alone, to determine whether it reaches the requisite two thirds majority in each Order.
- After each round of voting, the lowest ranked candidate may, with the agreement of the majority of the College, be removed from later voting.
- If no candidate is elected, the College may choose, by simple majority, to ask the President of the College to summon a third meeting of the College within one month and ask the Discernment Committee to bring forward additional names for consideration at that date, or alternatively to pass the selection to the House of Bishops.
- Where the selection is passed to the House of Bishops, they must consider the names originally submitted by the Discernment Committee but are not restricted to those persons.
- Where the Discernment Committee is asked to bring forward additional names, the names originally shortlisted remain eligible for election.

Third meeting of the Electoral College

15. Before the third meeting of the Electoral College, the Discernment Committee will meet and add up to three further names to the shortlist. The Discernment Committee will plan the first part of the third meeting, where the candidates will be introduced to electors.
16. The third meeting will follow the same procedure as the second meeting, except that at this stage if the College fails to elect, the College may, by simple majority, pass the election to the House of Bishops but it does not have the option of asking for a further meeting of the College.

Size and composition of Electoral Colleges

17. There are conflicting views on finding the right balance between the voice of the diocese and the voice of the wider church in the selection of a bishop of the church who is of course a diocesan bishop too. The consensus among CEMS members was to opt for equal numbers of electors from the vacant see and the other dioceses in the Province, with the President and the episcopal members of the College seen as “neutral” in that sense. It was decided also that Electoral Colleges should be elected by diocesan synods, as at present, not drawn for a General Synod panel. Numbers of members should be smaller than at present, but not dramatically so; at present, there are 52 members, with an additional 12 from Armagh in the case of a vacancy caused by a move of the former bishop to the Primacy. Although it is likely that frank exchange of opinions is inhibited in such large gatherings, the vacant diocese needs to know that its views are adequately represented in their diversity, and it may be that, to achieve that, electoral colleges have to be bigger than one would otherwise prefer. Reservations about the age and gender profiles of electors have been expressed at General Synod meetings on a number of occasions, and diocesan synods have been encouraged to address such imbalances, but with limited success. CEMS asks those with influence and votes to be mindful of their responsibilities to take these issues into account in selecting episcopal electors.
18. CEMS members reached the following conclusions on size and composition of electoral colleges:
 - Colleges will continue to operate along Provincial lines.
 - The Metropolitan for the vacant see would be President of the College (with the same provisions as currently for Dublin and other contingencies)
 - There will be one other bishop from each Province.
 - There will be equal numbers of clergy and laity. 50% of these will be drawn from the vacant diocese and 50% from other dioceses in the Province. They will be elected by Diocesan Synods.

While the Commission recommends that the Electoral College should be composed along the lines above, the exact size of the College must await a determination as to the number of the dioceses and the composition of the Provinces.

Role of the House of Bishops

19. The proposed procedure gives the House of Bishops involvement in the selection of bishops in that there is liaison with the Discernment Committee (via the President of the College and the Chairman of the Discernment Committee) before the shortlist is finalised, so giving an opportunity for just impediments to be raised and assessed. It is intended to replicate the provision in section 14 of Chapter VI of the Constitution, by which the name selected by the Electoral College is transmitted to the House of Bishops which, if satisfied of that person's fitness, takes the necessary steps to give effect to such election. The current procedure for election by the House of Bishops where the Episcopal Electoral College does not elect itself and passes the appointment to the House of Bishops (section 18 of Chapter VI of the Constitution) will also be mirrored in the new procedure, subject to the new requirement that the bishops will consider the names originally shortlisted by the Discernment Committee, but not be confined to those names.

Appointment of the Archbishop of Armagh

20. At present the Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of All Ireland, is elected by majority vote of the House of Bishops from among their members. There is no involvement of other clergy or laity. The consequent disenfranchisement of Armagh clergy and laity is compensated for through participation of its episcopal electors in the appointment of a bishop for the diocese from which the new Primate moves. This is a contrived response to the "Armagh anomaly", justified on pragmatic rather than principled grounds.
21. Issues to be addressed in relation to the appointment of the Primate include:
 - Compliance with CEMS *Principles*;
 - Involvement of Armagh electors in appointment of their diocesan bishop;
 - Involvement of bishops, clergy and laity from both Provinces in appointment;
 - Incorporating a statement of needs and diocesan profile for Armagh diocese;
 - Whether only serving bishops of the Church of Ireland should be eligible for appointment;
 - Openness and transparency;
 - Potential for stress on interpersonal relationships as an election looms;
 - Difficulty of ensuring objective assessment of candidates within a small group.
22. Having considered the matter at length, the Commission suggests a modified version of the current procedure. Firstly, a diocesan profile and statement of needs should be drawn up in Armagh in a similar manner to that proposed by other dioceses. This should be presented to the House of Bishops, who would then elect the new Archbishop. The Bishops should not be confined to electing a Bishop from among their number to the post. It should be open to them to elect a Bishop from another province of the Anglican Communion (though the Commission is of the view that the person elected should already be a bishop).

23. The Commission considered the question of the mechanism whereby members of the Armagh Electoral College participate in the election of a successor to the vacancy created by the translation to the Primacy. This mechanism is a ‘compensation’ for the fact that unlike other dioceses, the clergy and laity of the diocese of Armagh do not have a role in electing their bishop. Without having reached a conclusion on this issue, the Commission decided that this would be an appropriate matter to raise with Diocesan Councils (in particular of course, the Armagh Diocesan Council) as part of the intended consultation with Diocesan Councils later in 2015.

Concluding Comments

24. The view of CEMS is that the processes described above have all the features set out in the *Principles* and will help achieve the *Vision* “To provide an episcopacy that will allow the Church of Ireland to fulfil its mission in the 21st century”.

CHURCH OF IRELAND MARRIAGE COUNCIL

REPORT 2015

MEMBERSHIP

Appointed by the House of Bishops

Member from the House of Bishops (vacant since 2010)

Elected by General Synod

Rev John Ardis

Very Rev Arthur Barrett

Mrs Sarah Bevan

Rev Stephen Farrell

Mrs Lynn Heber

Rev Canon Lynda Peilow

Rev David Somerville

Mrs Deirdre Whitley

Mrs June Wilkinson (resigned March 2015)

Ms Rosalind Willoughby

In attendance

Mrs Sandra Massey

MARRIAGE PREPARATION & COUNSELLING

The demand for Counselling has increased in the past year. People are finding the economic recovery patchy and ultimately this is putting pressure on relationships and families. In terms of marriage preparation the demand there has similarly increased as couples seek to begin their marriage in a stable and structured footing. Unfortunately The Family Support Agency (FSA), now renamed Túsla, have decreased the grants they make available for this purpose.

THE PASTORAL CARE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE TO-DAY

– AN OPPORTUNITY TO UP-SKILL

Marriage Council continues its work with the *Contemporary Couples* course for clergy. The scheme has been upgraded and renamed –*The Pastoral care of Marriage and family life today- An opportunity to Up-skill*. This took the form of a 2-Day Course held in Taney Parish, Dublin on 23rd and 30th September 2014 where it was facilitated by Ms Glynis Good & Ms Dianne Morris. A very encouraging attendance saw twenty clergy from a wide geographical area and several dioceses attending. The course content was both broad and useful and included - Modern stressors & Life changes within families, Attachment Theory, Communication & Conflict, Family Separation & Divorce, Importance of Pre-Marriage, Domestic Abuse, Step-Families, Genograms and Navigating Boundaries & Self-Care. Feedback from those who attended was positive. One rector wrote on an anonymous feedback form that the course – “...reinforced much of what I already knew but introduced some new ideas and gave me time for reflection”.

The Council felt that the same course should be offered to incumbents in the North West in 2015 and an application has been made to the Priorities Fund to facilitate that. The Council should know if the application has been successful in March 2015.

CLERGY COUPLES RETREATS

Clergy Couples retreats remain a very useful support mechanism for those who are able to take them up. Unfortunately take up is not straightforward for serving clergy. A target clergy couple will typically have practical issues with child care and other matters and find it *very* difficult to disentangle themselves from the parish. Despite this almost all will say that a well-run retreat would have real practical benefits *if they were able to attend*. Council are planning the next one in the North West during May 2015.

SUPPORT GROUPS FOR SEPARATED AND DIVORCED COUPLES

A recent initiative from the Council has seen the start-up of Support Groups for Separated and Divorced Couples. Initial meetings have been held in the Limerick Dioceses. They have chosen to meet on the last Saturday of each month, from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. The sessions have been run by Mrs Lesley Sandes with the help of her husband, Rev Denis Sandes. Publicity has been mostly by word of mouth and other avenues have been explored. There can be no doubt that this is an area of ministry which is ripe for development. Sadly marriage breakdown is all too common and a confidential support group can do much to help divided couples and their families. Plans are underway for start-up groups in the Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough and in the Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne & Ross.

ARTICLES ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY RELATED ISSUES

The Council has commissioned articles on marriage and family related issues for use in diocesan websites and magazines and also in parish newsletters. This is an ongoing initiative which has been in place in 2013 and 2014. Recent articles include items on *A simple Christmas* and *A divided Christmas* and were emailed to all serving clergy North and South. Contact was also made with Diocesan Editors and a link has been set up on the Church of Ireland Facebook page. Clergy and parish editors seem to like this accessibility and the quality of the articles. Articles and information can be sources on the Marriage Council website www.towardsmarriage.com or contact Mrs Sandra Massey at 4125626.

Select Committee on Human Sexuality in the Context of Christian Belief

**REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SEXUALITY IN THE
CONTEXT OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF**

Members:

Rev Canon Patrick Bamber	Mr Trevor Johnston
Mr David Bird	Very Rev John Mann (Chair)
Mrs Thea Boyle (Resigned July 2014)	Rev Darren McCallig (Resigned January 2015)
Mrs Joan Bruton (Appointed January 2015)	Mrs Hilary McClay
Rev Alison Calvin	Mrs Helen McClenaghan (Vice-Chair)
Ven George Davison	Rev Brian O'Rourke (Appointed January 2015)
Mr Greg Fromholz	Very Rev Sandra Pragnell
Rt Rev Ken Good	Mr Damian Shorten (Appointed January 2015)
Mrs Phyllis Grothier	Most Rev Patricia Storey

Advisory Panel:

Rt Rev Trevor Williams	Dr Andrew Pierce
Rev Dr William Olhausen	Ms Pam Tilson

The Select Committee has met 6 times since General Synod 2014; in September, February and March and with residential meetings in February, June and January. A working group of members also met in November due to the cancellation of an October meeting. While work has progressed significantly on phases one and two of the plan outlined to General Synod in 2014, the Committee will require more time than was identified by General Synod in 2013 (a two-year term), and the Committee is seeking an additional two year period.

Phase one, *A Guide to the Conversation on Human Sexuality in the Context of Christian Belief* is in the final stages of production and will be available by the end of 2015. Phase two which included the Select Committee Listening Process where those who wished to give a submission to the committee were invited to come forward and speak to members, has also been taking place alongside phase one. It was felt by the committee that these phases needed to work concurrently rather than one after another. The Committee would like to thank all of those who came forward for their contributions to the process.

Specialist presenters and groups have also been invited to speak to the committee. The Committee heard from Rev Canon Phil Groves, Rev Sam Allberry, Changing Attitudes Ireland, Reform Ireland and Prof Patrick Morrison and would like to express thanks to everyone who presented.

An Advisory Panel has been formed to assist with expert input. The current panel are Rev William Olhausen, Dr Andrew Pierce, Rt Rev Trevor Williams and Ms Pam Tilson. Membership of the panel may be revised by committee members.

Select Committee on Human Sexuality in the Context of Christian Belief

The work of the Select Committee going forward:

- (i) complete production on a Guide for the assistance of the Church;
- (ii) produce a Study Guide with modules and suggested questions for use in diocesan or parish groups.

For the final stages of production for both the Guide and the Study Guide the Select Committee may need to seek help to develop these materials. It is important that these materials are professionally produced in order to encourage engagement. The Committee also seeks facilitation and assistance from Bishops and Dioceses to roll out the Guide and to enable groups to positively engage in dialogue.

The Committee would like to express sincere thanks to Ms Thea Boyle (resigned July 2014), to Rev Darren McCallig (resigned January 2015) and Mr David Bird who will be leaving following General Synod 2015. The Rt Rev Trevor Williams also retired but continues to assist on the Advisory Panel and Most Rev Patricia Storey has changed seats to an episcopal position. The Committee has also welcomed Dr Fergus O’Ferrall, the Convenor of the Methodist Church in Ireland’s Faith & Order Working Party on Human Sexuality as an observer. The Very Rev John Mann sits on the Methodist group.

Following the resignation of Ms Thea Boyle and Rev Darren McCallig and the retirement of the Rt Rev Trevor Williams, Standing Committee elected Rev Brian O’Rourke, Mrs Joan Bruton and Mr Damian Shorten to the Select Committee in January 2015.