

Standing Committee – Report 2007

STANDING COMMITTEE

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS LAID BEFORE

THE GENERAL SYNOD AT ITS

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION 2007

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**THE GENERAL SYNOD
OF THE
CHURCH OF IRELAND**

HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

Very Rev RD Harman, The Deanery, St Werburgh Street, Dublin 8

Rev Canon Dr IM Ellis, St John's Rectory, King Street, Newcastle, Co Down BT33 0HD

Mr SR Harper, Cramer's Grove, Kilkenny, Co Kilkenny

Lady Sheil, Killinchy, Co Down BT23 6RL

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The Standing Committee submits to the General Synod the Report of its proceedings for the period from 4 April 2006 to 13 March 2007.

1. SUMMARY

Some significant matters dealt with by the Standing Committee during the year were:

- The Anglican Communion - Resolutions of ACC-13 (page 174)
- The Anglican Covenant (page 175)
- Review of Committees (page 185)
- Synodical Reform (page 186)

2. NAMES AND ATTENDANCES OF MEMBERS

During the period six ordinary meetings of the Standing Committee were held. The number of meetings attended by each member is placed before his/her name.

Ex-officio Members

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

6	Very Rev RD Harman
6	Rev Canon Dr IM Ellis
4	Mr SR Harper
6	Lady Sheil

Elected Members

Diocese of:

Armagh	5	Rev Canon JM Barton
	3	Rev TS Forster
	5	Mr LV Johnston
	5	Mrs J Leighton
Clogher	5	Rev Canon BJ Courtney
	5	Rev BT Kerr
	6	Mr H Stewart
		none available

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Derry	2	Very Rev WW Morton
	4	Rev MRK Ferry
	5	Mr JHD Livingston
	3	Captain N Barnes
Down	6	Rev Canon PF Patterson
	5	Rev Dr MJ Elliott
	5	Mr RJH Gallagher
	4	Mr HJE Ritchie
Connor	5	Very Rev JFA Bond
	4	Ven SR McBride
	5	Mr HRJ Totten
	4	Mr PJ Hamill
Kilmore	4	Very Rev A Williams
	6	Ven GTW Davison
	6	Mr D Gillespie
	2	Mr JH Shannon
Tuam	3	Very Rev SM Patterson
	2	Very Rev AJ Grimason
	5	Mr DJ Auchmuty
	1	Mr RS Walker
Dublin	5	Rev Canon JE McCullagh
	5	Rev GV Wharton
	5	Mr MJT Webb
	2	Mr LJW MacCann
Meath	3	Very Rev RW Jones
	3	Rev LEA Peilow
	5	Mrs JM Bruton
	5	Mr D Kenny
Cashel	3	Very Rev NN Lynas
	1	Rev PG Heak
	4	Mr C Wellwood
	5	Mr EGJ Driver
Cork	5	Ven REB White
	4	Rev AM Wilkinson
	6	Mr WF Baker
	3	Mr R Buttimer

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Limerick	5	Very Rev JMG Sirr
	4	Rev Canon SM Neill
	4	Mr A Hilliard
	5	Mr E Hardy

Co-opted Members

5	Rev Canon CA Empey	5	Mr AN McNeile
3	Rev Canon AF Abernethy	6	Rev Canon RB Rountree
4	Rev P Comerford	4	Ven PW Rooke
2	Mr MC Davey		

The Chief Officer and Secretary of the Representative Church Body is entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the Standing Committee. The Assistant Secretary of the General Synod is also entitled to speak at meetings.

COMMITTEES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

FINANCE AND ARRANGEMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr WF Baker
Rev TS Forster
The Honorary Secretaries

LEGAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

His Honour Judge JG Buchanan	Mr WD Prentice
The Hon Mr Justice DNO Budd	The Hon Mr Justice WB Stevens
His Honour Judge T Burgess	His Honour Judge RF Rodgers
Sir Anthony Campbell	Mr JW Wilson
Mr MC Davey	
The Hon Mrs Justice C McGuinness	The Honorary Secretaries

PRIORITIES FUND COMMITTEE

Capt N Barnes	Mrs J Leighton
Mrs JM Bruton	Ven SR McBride
Ven GWT Davidson	Mr HRJ Totten
Mr SR Harper	Rev AM Wilkinson

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BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE

WF Baker	Mr LV Johnston
Rev Canon Dr IM Ellis	Mr AN McNeile
Mr SR Harper	Mr HRJ Totten

WORLD DEVELOPMENT - BISHOPS' APPEAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Rt Rev MAJ Burrows	Rt Rev MHG Mayes
Rev OMR Donohoe	Rev JMD Pierce
Ms R Handy	Rev IP Poulton
Rev Canon PA Harvey	Mrs A Rooke
Mr W Kingston	Mr TA Smallwoods

LAY JUDGES OF THE COURT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

His Honour Judge JG Buchanan	Mr RAM Robins
The Honourable Mrs Justice C McGuinness	Mr JR Wilson
The Honourable Mr Justice D Budd	Sir Paul Girvan
Sir Donald Murray	Mr LJW MacCann
Sir Anthony Campbell	The Hon Mr Justice WB Stephens

3. THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

The Windsor Report Working Group requested the Standing Committee in April 2006 to consider conveying to the Episcopal Church of the USA, concern that any further actions similar to the election and consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson would have an effect on the Anglican Communion. The Archbishop of Armagh indicated that he would be in touch with the Presiding Bishop and would personally convey these concerns.

Resolutions 4(c) and 4(e) of ACC-13 were considered by the Standing Committee in June 2006, as member churches of the Anglican Communion were requested to approve these resolutions. Resolution 4(c) proposes that the members of the Primates' Standing Committee become *ex officio* members of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). Resolution 4(e) proposes that the Primates and Moderators of the Anglican Communion become *ex officio* members of the ACC.

The Standing Committee rejected both resolutions on the grounds that the proposals changed the basic nature and balance of the ACC and bring into question the issue of Provincial autonomy. The ACC was requested to undertake a study on the nature of primacy within the Churches of the Anglican Communion, with a view to delineating the

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nature of primacy and identifying similarities and differences in the degree of authority and relationship between Primates and their Churches.

4. THE ANGLICAN COVENANT

The Church of Ireland was invited to respond to the proposal for an Anglican Covenant, as detailed in the Windsor Report 2004 in sections 113 to 120 and Appendix Two. A Consultation Paper produced by the ACC Joint Standing Committee, entitled *Towards an Anglican Covenant* was considered. Comments on the proposed Covenant have been expressed in the Preliminary Response to the Windsor Report (*Book of Reports 2005*, page 189) and again in the report of the Windsor Report Working Group (*Book of Reports 2006*, page 259).

The Rev Canon KA Kearon, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, was invited to address the Standing Committee on the Anglican Covenant in November 2006, having been given prior notice of questions formulated in advance of the meeting. Canon Kearon explained that the Covenant is intended to maintain relationships and be a commitment to rebuild and maintain trust in difficult periods. He assured the Standing Committee that the ACC will not move away from its consultative role. Each Province will be invited to adopt the Covenant individually and it will not become part of the Constitution of the ACC.

The Standing Committee in March 2007 considered a report from the Anglican Communion Covenant Design Group, including a revised draft Covenant. The Provinces have been urged to submit an initial response by the end of 2007. A small group was appointed to bring a draft response to the Standing Committee in September 2007. Written inputs were invited for consideration by the group.

5. APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments were made by the Standing Committee during the year in chronological order:

Committee etc	Name
General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, Belfast, June 2006	Rev Canon PF Patterson Mr WD Johnston
Conference of the Methodist Church Belfast, June 2006	Very Rev JFA Bond Ms S Obe

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Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Dublin, April 2006	Rev S Gyles
Porvoo Mission Consultation: Fresh Expressions of Church, Canterbury, October 2006	Rev DP Hoey
British Provincial Synod of Moravian Church in Britain and Ireland, Swanwick, July 2006	Rev WKM Brew
Central Communications Board	Very Rev JFA Bond Very Rev RD Harman
PACT (Protestant Adoption Society)	Rev Canon T Haskins Mrs A Barrett
Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages	Dr KF Dunne Rev Canon VG Stacey
Irish Inter-Church Meeting, Swords, November 2006	Mr D Brown Ms L Craig Rev Canon DWT Crooks Rev S Gyles Rt Rev RCA Henderson Rev DR Nuzum Rev GV Wharton Mrs AJ Wills
Conference of European Churches, Romania, September 2007	Most Rev RL Clarke Rev Canon DWT Crooks Rt Rev RCA Henderson Dr K Milne Mrs AJ Wills
Anglican Consultative Council	Rev Dr MJ Elliott
United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, New York, February 2007	Rev Canon DTS Clements
International Anglican Women's Network, Provincial Link	Rev Canon DTS Clements
CTBI Global Mission Network	Rev DP Hoey

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Porvoo Lay Learning Consultation, Edinburgh, September 2007	Rev TW Gordon Rev Canon RB Rountree
Church of Ireland Press	Mrs S McCormick Mr D Kerr Mrs V Hamilton
Irish Council of Churches	Most Rev RL Clarke Mr SR Harper
Church of England General Synod, York, July 2007	Very Rev RD Harman
Porvoo Theological Conference, London, January 2008	Dr A Pierce
International Anglican Liturgical Consultation Palermo, July 2007	Rev Canon RB Rountree Rev AJ Ruffi Rev CM Woods
Four Nations Anglican Ecumenical Officers London, April 2007	Dr K Milne
Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, Trustee	Most Rev RL Clarke
Irish Council of Churches Executive Committee	Most Rev RL Clarke

6. AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS

The Standing Committee appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers to audit the accounts of the Representative Body.

7. BISHOPS' APPEAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A report from the World Development - Bishops' Appeal Advisory Committee, including accounts for the year ended 31 December 2006, is included as Appendix A on page 189.

8. BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

At the request of the Liturgical Advisory Committee, the Standing Committee in April 2006 approved the production of a large print edition of the Holy Communion pages with the Collects and Postcommunion Prayers of *The Book of Common Prayer* by Columba Press.

9. CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

A report from the Central Communications Board, which includes the work of the Broadcasting Committee, the Literature Committee and the Internet Committee, is included as Appendix B on page 197.

10. CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

The Connor Diocesan Synod of 2006 requested the Standing Committee to consider the implications of the Civil Partnerships Act 2004, which came into force in Northern Ireland in January 2006.

The Honorary Secretaries, in a paper to the Standing Committee, summarised how the matter was being addressed. They felt concern that there were implications for the institution of marriage. There was no exception for Churches included within the legislation. However, from the perspective of the Churches, an exemption in terms of genuine occupational requirement is included within section 7(a) of the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003, which if relied upon by the Churches would produce the same effect as exemption. The legislation was brought to the attention of the Representative Body and the Pensions Board. The House of Bishops was also asked for its views.

11. CONNOR ARCHDEACONRIES

Connor Diocesan Synod sought the consent of the Standing Committee for the establishment of three archdeaconries within the Diocese. In accordance with section 38(a) of Chapter II of the Constitution, the Standing Committee consented to the establishment of the following archdeaconries within the Diocese of Connor:

The Archdeaconry of Connor comprising the parishes contained within the Rural Deaneries of Antrim; Derriaghy and Lisburn;

The Archdeaconry of Dalriada comprising the parishes contained within the Rural Deaneries of Ballymena; Carrickfergus and Coleraine;

The Archdeaconry of Belfast comprising the parishes contained within the Rural Deaneries of North Belfast; Mid Belfast and South Belfast.

12. COPYRIGHT

Christian Copyright Licensing International presented proposals to the Standing Committee in April 2006 for a copyright policy for the Church of Ireland based on collection of licence fees by dioceses. Any parish or other body of the Church is obliged to be licensed or obtain approval for material being reproduced. However, the proposal

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to centralise the collection of licence fees raised many questions which required further investigation. A small group was appointed to enter into discussions with the diocesan secretaries and Christian Copyright Licensing International.

The Standing Committee in March 2007 received proposals submitted by the group and requested that, if possible, a Bill be prepared and submitted to the General Synod 2007. The Bill would provide for the collection of licence fees from the dioceses.

13. CTBI FORUM ON EVANGELISM

A report on the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland Forum on Evangelism, held in Cardiff in November 2006, was submitted by the Rev DP Hoey. The report is included as Appendix C on page 205.

14. DISABILITY WORKING GROUP

A report from the Working Group on Disability is included as Appendix D on page 207.

15. THE MOST REVEREND RHA EAMES

As the November 2006 meeting of the Standing Committee was the last meeting at which the Most Rev RHA Eames was Chairman, the Archbishop of Dublin paid tribute to Archbishop Eames for his Chairmanship of the Standing Committee for the past twenty years.

Mr SR Harper read a letter from the Archbishop expressing his appreciation to members of the General Synod and the Representative Body for the presentations made at the thanksgiving service held in Armagh on 16 November. The Archbishop thanked the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishops, Honorary Secretaries and staff for their support and friendship during his time as Chairman of the Standing Committee.

16. ELECTION OF COMMITTEES

The following committees, which would normally be elected for a three-year period, were elected for one year only to 30 June 2007, to facilitate the review of committees being undertaken by the Standing Committee:

Finance and Arrangements Sub-Committee
Priorities Fund Committee
Budget Sub-Committee
Church in Society Committee
Broadcasting Committee

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Literature Committee
Internet Committee
Central Communications Board.
World Development – Bishops’ Appeal Advisory Committee.

17. ELECTRONIC CHURCH HYMNAL

The Standing Committee in April 2006 authorised the Liturgical Advisory Committee to explore further with Oxford University Press, the possibility of producing an electronic version of the Church Hymnal.

18. GENERAL SYNOD 2008

In accordance with the authority delegated to the Standing Committee by the General Synod in 1982, the meeting of the General Synod in 2008 has been arranged for 13, 14 and 15 May in the Radisson SAS Hotel, Galway.

19. GENERAL SYNOD - STANDING COMMITTEE BUDGETS

The Budget Sub-Committee considered budget submissions from the various bodies concerning their projected expenditure for the year 2006 and presented reports to the Standing Committee in September and November 2006. Following consideration of the reports, recommendations were submitted to the Representative Church Body Allocations Committee.

20. THE HARD GOSPEL

The terms of reference for a Diversity Audit, to be carried out by the Hard Gospel Committee in the Spring of 2007, was noted by the Standing Committee in March 2007. The Standing Committee was informed that the process is proceeding in accordance the Hard Gospel Committee’s original Aims and Objectives and the findings will be presented to the Standing Committee in November 2007.

A report from the Hard Gospel Committee is included as Appendix E on page 210.

21. HISTORIOGRAPHER’S REPORT

A report from the Church of Ireland Historiographer, Dr K Milne, is included as Appendix F on page 219.

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22. IRISH CHURCHES’ COUNCIL FOR TELEVISION AND RADIO AFFAIRS

A report from the Irish Churches’ Council for Television and Radio Affairs for the period 1 January to 31 December 2006 is included as Appendix G on page 221.

23. PARISH DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

A report from the Parish Development Working Group is included as Appendix H on page 223.

24. PORVOO COMMUNION

A report on the Porvoo Mission Consultation: Fresh Expressions of Church, held in Canterbury from 16 to 19 October 2006, was submitted by the Rev DP Hoey. The report is included as Appendix I on page 229.

A report on the Porvoo Consultation for Youth Representatives, held in Edinburgh from 22 to 24 September 2006, was submitted by Mr D Brown. The report is included as Appendix J on page 231.

25. PRIORITIES FUND

(a) The following allocations from the Priorities Fund were approved by the Standing Committee in March 2007:

ALLOCATION OF GRANTS FROM 2006 PRIORITIES FUND

Ministry	€
The Church of Ireland Council for Mission – Funding for the set-up costs involved in organising a joint Church of Ireland/Methodist Church Mission Conference, on Fresh Expressions of Church	2,978
The House of Bishops – To provide for continuing ministerial education within the dioceses	60,000
The Irish College of Preachers – Funding to enable the College to continue its undemonstrative but vital work in the outreach of the church	3,000
Sub-total	€65,978
Retirement	
C of I Clergy Pensions Fund – Additional income for most needy	3,812
C of I Clergy Pensions Fund – Retired Chaplain	690
Cathedral Property Management Committee, Armagh – To help with the refurbishment of properties in Vicar’s Hill, for use by retired clergy or clergy widows	17,870

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Sub-total	€22,372
Education	
Clogher Diocesan Council – Assistance with the costs involved in holding further events to commemorate the 1500 th Anniversary of St Macartan, patron of Clogher Diocese	2,978
The Mothers' Union, Ireland – Financial assistance for the costs involved in the setting up of a new post of Project Development Worker, covering five dioceses in the northern part of Ireland – [Stg£10,000 per year for 3 years] – Final year	14,892
The following applications all concern youth work and the grants allocated are based on the recommendations made by the Church of Ireland Youth Department	
C of I Youth Department – Funding towards the running costs involved in the establishment of a 'year out' mission and service opportunity for approximately eight young adults, beginning September 2007 – [Stg£30,000 – First year : Stg£25,000 – Second year : Stg£15,000 – Third year] – First year	44,676
3Rock Youth (Dublin & Glendalough) – To help financially with the production of the four remaining DVDs in the 6-part DVD confirmation resource package	20,502
Cornerstone – Kildress Parishes Youth Initiative (Armagh) – To assist financially with the provision of training and equipment to allow the 'Cornerstone' youth outreach project to develop further	4,765
Newtownbreda United Churches (Down) – To assist with funding for the continuation of a 'Connecting with Youth' outreach project, organised and run by volunteers from the Church of Ireland and other denominations, in partnership with the local council and the PSNI – [Stg£6,000 per year for 3 years] – First year	8,935
St Jude's Parish, Ballynafeigh (Down) – Financial support for a 3 year project, which will engage with Youth for Christ (NI) to make use of a Gap Year Team, to renew children's and young people's work in the parish – [Stg£4,000 – First year : Stg£3,000 – Second and Third year] – Second year	4,468
St Mary's Parish, Ballybeen (Down) – To help resource a puppet ministry in the parish, as part of a developing outreach strategy to children and their families in the local community	745
Summer Madness Ltd – Streetreach – Funding for the final culmination of this project, with 3,000 young people participating in a Community Outreach Programme on the streets of Belfast	14,892
Xpression Portadown (Armagh) – To assist with the ongoing development of a cross-community Christian outreach initiative, involving young people from a variety of local churches	1,489
Sub-total	€118,342

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Community

C of I Student Centre, Queen’s University, Belfast – Funding for the renovation and improvement of the public areas of the Student Centre, to meet legislative and ministry demands – [Stg£20,000 per year for 2 years] – Final year	29,784
Connor Diocese Mothers’ Union – Financial assistance for the publication of a cookbook, for first-year students in the three universities in the diocese, to foster good relations with the student population	1,489
Cosy Cats Project, Calry Parish (Elphin) – Financial assistance for the operation of this childcare facility for disadvantaged families, of all religions and cultures, in the crypts under the church – [€15,000 per year for 3 years] – Second year	15,000
Maghera Parish Caring Association (Derry) – Financial assistance for the FACE Project, to establish a meditative intervention for contentious parades in Maghera and the surrounding rural areas	4,468
Meath and Kildare Diocesan Council – Funding for the provision of a vital ministry of outreach to foreign nationals	2,500
RNN (Religious News Network), Dublin – To assist with the purchase of studio equipment, to enable this organisation continue and expand its service to local, community and hospital radio stations throughout Ireland	1,000
The Brabazon Trust, Dublin – Financial support towards the redevelopment and extension of the Nursing Unit facilities	30,000
The Mageough Home, Dublin – To assist with the cost of upgrading houses, for elderly ladies and elderly men	20,000
‘Wellsprings’, Kilmakee Parish (Connor) – Funding for a Christ Centred Community Addiction Therapy Programme, developed to address a need experienced by the parish	7,446
Willowfield Parish Community Association (Down) – Funding for a project called ‘Mind the Gap’, to reach out to those who usually fall in the gap between church and community e.g. ethnic minority communities etc – [Stg£7,000 – First year : Stg£6,500 – Second and Third year] – Second year	9,680
Sub-total	€121,367

Areas of Need

Clogher – Fivemiletown Parish – Funding towards the conversion of an old church building into a multi-purpose worship centre and social facility, which will support the current outreach and youth programme	11,169
Cloyne – Fermoy Union – To assist financially with the completion of the new parish hall, necessitated by changes in population and the needs of ministry	5,000

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Connor – Holy Trinity & St Silas with Immanuel Parishes, Belfast – Funding for the provision of Church initiated activities and programmes which will enhance personal development, life and social skills of vulnerable families, young people and adults in interface areas of the parish and to tackle the problems of children at risk, anti-social behaviour and sectarianism – [Stg£10,000 per year for 3 years] – Second year	14,892
Connor – St Paul and St Barnabas Parish, Belfast – To assist financially with the cost of a feasibility study, to investigate the options for the future use of the church halls in North Belfast, which are currently in a very poor state of disrepair	4,468
Down – Christ Church Primacy, Bangor – Financial assistance for the purchase of equipment, resources and training for a Youth and Community Outreach Worker, as part of the ‘Engage Project’ in the local community	6,255
Dromore – Magheralin Parish – To assist financially with the start-up costs involved in the community programmes planned in the new outreach facility in Dollingstown – [Stg£10,000 – First year : Stg£4,000 – Second and Third year] – Second year	5,957
Kildare – Portarlinton Union – Funding for the provision of a ‘space’ within the church building, for the development of children’s ministries and facilities for community outreach	10,000
Limerick – Abington Church, Murroe – To assist with the building of a Parish Room beside the church, primarily for Sunday School use, necessitated by changes in population	3,000
Sub-total	€60,741
Reconciliation and Outreach	
Knocknagoney Parish (Down) – Funding to enable the implementation of programmes of community outreach to parents, children and young people in the Aslan Centre – [Stg£10,000 per year for 3 years] – Final year	14,892
The Hard Gospel – Funding for The Hard Gospel Programme, a major initiative which has the potential to touch every part of the life of the Church of Ireland – [Stg£25,000 per year for 3 years] – Final year	37,230
Sub-total	€52,122
Outreach Initiatives	
Carrigrohane Union Toddler Group (Cork) – Funding to enhance outreach to families/single parents with small children, with the provision of facilities and equipment beside the church hall	7,000
Embrace (NI), Belfast – To secure ‘seed capital’, in order to attract other funding, to develop the project of providing pastoral care and practical support to immigrants	7,446
Holy Trinity Church, Woodburn (Connor) – To provide ‘seed funding’ for the development of community based educational programmes, in a safe, encouraging and stimulating environment, for all ages but young people in particular – [Stg£10,000 per year for 2 years] – First year	14,892

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Parish of Errigal (Derry) – Financial assistance for a ‘Music Workshops’ project, aimed towards outreach in the community, developing the love of music in people of all ages and developing music in the worship of all denominations in the community	2,234
Parish of Kilroot (Connor) – To secure funding for the establishment of a drop-in centre in Eden Village, to provide a safe and supportive environment for residents to meet and to re-establish a serving presence in the area – [Stg£3,000 per year for 3 years] – First year	4,468
Parishes of Maghera and Killelagh (Derry) – Financial assistance to build a new expression of church, that will engage the largely unchurched population of Upperlands and establish a self-sustaining congregation, including cell groups, in the village of Upperlands – [Stg£15,000 – First year : Stg£10,000 – Second and Third year] – First year	22,338
Solas After-school Project (Dublin) – Funding towards the establishment of a new after-school intervention, for children at risk of early school leaving, developed by CORE Church together with Mater Dei primary school in Basin Street, Dublin	12,326
Willowfield Parish (Down) – To obtain ‘seed funding’ for a project called ‘Men Matter’, which aims to provide support and practical help to men in East Belfast who struggle with unemployment, poor health, mental health issues, alcohol, drug addictions, loneliness and isolation – [Stg£10,000 per year for 3 years] – First year	14,892
Sub-total	€85,596
Total Allocated	€526,518

Sterling grants have been converted to Euro using the 2006 end of year rate of 0.6715.

- (b) Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2006 are included as Appendix K on page 233. Contributions to the Fund do not close until the end of February. The amount actually received by 28 February was €575,251.
- (c) Following a recommendation from the Priorities Fund Committee, the Standing Committee in March 2007 agreed that diocesan targets for contributions to the 2008 Fund are increased by 3%.

26. RESPONDING TO CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

There are occasions when the Church of Ireland is asked to respond to consultation documents, proposals for legislation and other issues, when there is insufficient time for the Standing Committee to approve an official response.

The Standing Committee has addressed this matter on previous occasions by authorising the Archbishops and Honorary Secretaries to issue responses on behalf of the Church of Ireland and to report to the Standing Committee at the next meeting.

The Standing Committee at its meeting in March 2007 agreed the following resolution:

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That the Standing Committee authorises the Archbishops and the Honorary Secretaries of the General Synod to act in issuing official responses to documents under the conditions detailed below and to advise the Standing Committee of any action taken at the next meeting:

1. A response may be submitted only when the Archbishops and Honorary Secretaries deem it to be imperative that an official response be issued from the Church of Ireland prior to the next meeting of the Standing Committee;
2. Appropriate persons, with expertise and experience in the particular area under consideration, should be consulted.

27. REVIEW OF COMMITTEES

The Honorary Secretaries were requested by the Standing Committee to carry out a thorough examination of the purpose and objectives of all committees of the General Synod and Standing Committee and to examine the effectiveness of the overall committee structure. The review is intended to result in a recommendation for a structure to support the Church efficiently for the next five to ten years. Each committee or board was requested to submit a statement of purpose and an outline of its objectives in the next two or three years.

A meeting with the House of Bishops is planned to identify the key areas of policy and vision for the next ten years which will need to be addressed by a new committee structure. It is acknowledged that this vision for the future may require a radically different structure than we have at present.

28. SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee approved a recommendation from the General Synod Board of Education whereby the annual report of the Secondary Education Committee be included as an appendix to the report of the Board of Education to the General Synod.

29. SINN FÉIN

A request from Sinn Féin, to meet with representatives of the Standing Committee, was considered by the Standing Committee in January 2007. The invitation was referred to the Church in Society Committee with a view to that Committee, as being representative of the Church of Ireland, meeting with Sinn Féin for discussion.

30. SYNODICAL REFORM

The Standing Committee in January 2007 agreed to submit a Bill to the General Synod of 2007 in response to a request from the Diocese of Down and Dromore. The Bill

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proposes to reform diocesan representation on the General Synod to reflect the demographic changes in Ireland since Disestablishment. The context for submitting the Bill at this time is fully explained in the Explanatory Memorandum in the Bill Pamphlet.

31. UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Church of Ireland was represented by Mrs JM Bruton at the 50th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York from 27 February to 10 March 2006. The Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations covered all expenses. A report is included as Appendix L, on page 235.

32. WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES – CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The Bishop of Clogher submitted a report on the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, held in Switzerland in August/September 2006. The Report is included as Appendix M on page 239.

33. OBITUARY

The following members have died since the last session:

Mr TA Casement

Diocese of Connor

Standing Committee – Report 2007