

COUNCIL FOR MISSION IN IRELAND

REPORT 2002

MEMBERSHIP

Chairman Rt Reverend Harold Miller, Bishop of Down and Dromore

General Synod Venerable Kenneth Good
Rev Canon David Moynan
Rev Stephen Lowry
Mr William Frizell

Co-opted Rev David Catterall (Church's Ministry of Healing)
Miss Mavis Gibbons (CPAS)
Mrs Rosslyn Faull (Mothers' Union)
Mrs Roslynn Faull (September 2000) (Mothers' Union)
Captain Charles Harris (Church Army)

Diocesan representatives

Armagh	Rev Canon Dr William Neely
Clogher	Rev Derek Kerr
Derry and Raphoe	Rev Canon Brian Johnston
Down and Dromore	Rev David Brown
Connor	Rev Chris Pollock
Kilmore	Mrs Janet Catterall
Tuam	Mrs Jane Stark
Dublin and Glendalough	Mrs Felicity Blennerhassett
Meath and Kildare	Rev Michael Wooderson
Cashel and Ossory	Rev Canon Gary Dowd
Cork	Captain Keith Dyde CA
Limerick and Killaloe	Rev Wayne Carney

Honorary Secretary Rev Stephen Lowry, Dromore Cathedral Rectory,
28 Church Street, Dromore Co Down BT25 1AA

Honorary Treasurer Rev Canon David J Moynan, The Rectory, Kilternan, Co Dublin

SUMMARY

The Council for Mission in Ireland concentrated its efforts in 2001 on the following:

- discovering and identifying patterns of church life which encourage growth. Completing a study of an equal number of Church of Ireland parishes and other Churches encountering growth, the Council looked for identifiable characteristics in leadership, style, vision and methodology which promoted growth spiritually and numerically.

- The relationship with the Council for the Church Overseas was analysed and various proposals debated regarding the future of the two councils both structurally and practically. The debate has so far failed to reach agreement.
- A focus on effective patterns of church life which encourage growth in the life of smaller churches forms the basis of the programme for 2002/3.

MEMBERSHIP

The Council was saddened by the death of its long time Honorary Treasurer and Colleague the Rev William Bridcut.

New Diocesan representatives were nominated for Dublin (Mrs Felicity Blennerhassett), Kilmore (Mrs Janet Caterall) and Clogher (the Rev Derek Kerr). The Rev David Moynan was elected Honorary Treasurer.

MISSION AT THE HEART OF THE CHURCH

The Council for Mission in Ireland is conscious of its role to ensure that mission is recognised to be at the heart of the Church of Ireland. As a body reporting to Synod, and partially elected by Synod, we believe that every effort must be made under God to ensure that the Synod is aware of this. We seek to ensure that a vibrant, challenging and faithful presentation of the call of God on the lives of all people be seen and heard in every parish of the Church of Ireland. We feel it is our duty to investigate effective methods of doing this, and to study churches both within and alongside the Church of Ireland with a view to helping parishes grow in accordance with God's will for them.

The learning experience is unending, and so we have encouraged our members to read relevant material, visit places where growth is apparent, and discuss with others the ways in which God is working to promote his Church.

GROWING CHURCHES

Over the last 18 months Council members have visited or studied the following churches:

Dun Laoghaire Evangelical Church, Co Dublin
 Kill O' The Grange Parish, Co Dublin
 Trinity Methodist, Lisburn
 Church of the Resurrection QUB, Belfast
 St Brendan's Parish, Sydenham, Belfast
 Crossroads, Craigantlet Co Down
 St Nicholas Collegiate Church, Galway
 Galway Christian Fellowship
 Hillhall Church Plant, Lisburn
 Trinity Presbyterian, Ballymoney
 New Delhi Cathedral
 Greenisland Parish, Co Antrim

Members have also discussed their experiences of local Roman Catholic parishes though these have not been studied in as much detail.

In response to this we have identified certain factors in the life of churches which accompany (if not stimulate) growth:

STRUCTURES THAT ENCOURAGE GROWTH

Facilities

Most of the churches had expressed a commitment to growth by investing in new or renewed facilities. Adaptations of old buildings, reorganization of the use of plant, purchasing or sharing well positioned properties.

Fellowship

Good relationships were evident within the growing churches, with attempts to value every person, provide an unthreatening atmosphere, and develop an open door to those not yet involved in the church.

Focus

While there was a range of emphases in the theologies advocated by growing churches, each growing church seemed to know what they were about, where their focus lay. They knew what was important in their theological outlook, and ‘where they were going’.

Freedom

In these churches there was very little evidence of an historical hierarchical structure, or preoccupation with the status of leaders. Rather members enjoyed the freedom to exercise their ministries in the body.

Front runners

Leadership in these churches was largely shared and visionary, recognized on the basis of ability and track record (rather than perceived status), being non-authoritarian, and concerned to engage all members in ministry. A ‘Jazz Band Leader’ style of leadership, playing a leading role but encouraging others to take leads as their ability and opportunity dictates, was identified. One role of the leader is to create reasonable expectations of what church life should be. This involves Enabling people to see a role for each member, Freeing people to accomplish much through these roles, Energizing people with a shared vision and purpose.

Family Concerns

The needs of the whole person were being addressed with educational and social as well as spiritual needs appearing in the church’s agenda. Facilities for children were being included.

EMPHASES THAT ENABLE GROWTH***Conversion Plus Process***

Discipling is seen as a process involving various stages, not all present in each church. Matthew 28.19 presents several aspects of this process, and simply being ‘in the pew’ is not the end of the process of discipleship.

Compassion for people in need

In growing churches there was a palpable sense of acceptance. New people who were broken and troubled felt the ability to open up and talk within the church. Members felt a responsibility and freedom to offer their help. Strict standards were identified as ideals but this was accompanied with a compassionate support for people who fell short of these standards.

Change

Ongoing change and development in the lives of individuals and church structures were seen as necessary by members, and so were accepted and welcomed as such. Churches, especially small ones, were particularly open to influence, both creative and destructive, from hidden leadership systems. One or two individuals in any congregation could have a weight beyond their numerical strength to curtail change and development, simply by a look! Council was invited to reflect on ways this sort of leadership could be turned to advantage, and to make particular reference to growth patterns in smaller churches.

Communion with the Holy Spirit

Underlying all the models studied and our analysis of them was the awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit in giving life to people, communities and church structures.

DISCOURAGEMENTS THAT STUNT GROWTH

Council identified the following factors which discouraged growth: isolation, unreasonable expectations and the ensuing disappointment, lack of resources, resistance to copy effective methods used elsewhere because of jealousy, difficulties experienced in bringing congregations ‘in’ on the process, lack of encouragement, seeking change for change’s sake.

We appreciate the time spent by members and the help given by those personally involved with these churches to our study.

We recognise that most parishes in the Church of Ireland are small in comparison to those we studied, and so the next stage of our work, currently being progressed, is to learn about methods of helping small churches maintain themselves spiritually. We acknowledge that there can be conflicting needs presented in a situation where there is a small population of church members; whether to maintain a building thereby putting stress on a small congregation, or to close a building and move the worshipping community to a larger centre of population. We believe there is a third way which we will investigate under the heading Cell Churches. This will form a part of our report to Synod next year.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL FOR THE CHURCH OVERSEAS

A meeting was held in May 2001 to help the two mission councils of the Church of Ireland explore their relationship. While no binding decision could be taken at this joint meeting, the two councils were encouraged by the overlap of their interests and a sense of mutual support. A meeting of the Joint Mission Working Group to further the relationship could not take place until early 2002 and proposals are being sent to the councils for consideration.

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES***ARMAGH***

A plan to hold an Armagh diocesan rally to end the Decade of Evangelism had been completed, but unfortunately had to be cancelled because of the onset of Foot and Mouth disease. It has been decided to hold a night of celebration on September 27th, 2002 in the cathedral. The exciting parish banners that had been prepared for the rally are to be presented at this service.

The course in Christian discipleship is to be continued. About 20 people from parishes in the diocese received their certificate and we hope to add to this number year by year. Those with certificates hold a conference twice a year with the archbishop.

DOWN & DROMORE

In the diocese we continue to develop our five year strategy under the banner of “Think Again”. Our vision is spiritual renewal of the our parishes with an emphasis on three specific aspects of mission: Reconciliation, Outreach and Young People.

The Diocesan Strategy Team have made themselves available to each parish as a resource for encouragement and support as we ‘think again’ in our Diocese about the Mission of the Church.

Parishes are updated each month with points for prayer. There is the sense of prayer becoming more focussed in our parishes as we move towards the year 2002 which will have a particular emphasis on Outreach.

Conferences and workshops covering this theme and each of the others have been held throughout the year. Of significant note was a special diocesan conference held in Bangor Co Down with over 600 parish representatives present. An observer from the Council was invited to the event. Greeting the conference were our mission partner bishops from Albany and Maridi and the archbishop of Southern Sudan.

CLOGHER

In March 2001 we had Charles Irwin visit us and we enjoyed a series of meetings in the various deaneries throughout the diocese. He brought to us the need for sharing our faith in Christ with others and how this must be done at home and abroad. During times of group discussion later we considered how we might get more people involved in our own

parishes on a regular basis in order to fulfil this God given task. The Clogher Diocesan Board of Missions continues to meet to pray for, encourage, and support financially those who wish to serve the Lord both at home and abroad.

DUBLIN & GLENDALOUGH

Mission initiatives 2001. The major initiative of Diocesan Councils was the holding of a Diocesan Forum to identify, discuss and progress issues effecting the Church of Ireland, its parishes and people, in the United Dioceses. Clergy and two lay members of each parish attended the Forum, held in All Hallow's College, Dublin, on Saturday 24th November 2001. The conclusions drawn from this Forum will give direction and impetus for the Church's mission for the years ahead.

The ongoing support of the Dublin and Glendalough Diocesan Council for Mission for the Church's mission and ministry included the event "Celebrating our Oneness in Christ". The evening of welcome and worship was held in Christ Church Cathedral Dublin on Friday 30th November 2001 to welcome, integrate, involve and learn from immigrant communities and churches in Ireland. It is hoped that out of this experience individuals and parishes throughout the Dioceses will be encouraged to reach out in Christ's name and love to all who, for whatever reasons, are sojourners in this land.

CORK, CLOYNE and ROSS

Alpha and other programmes are used in many churches as significant tools for outreach and renewal. We also note Outreach to Children. During 2001/2 the work amongst Children in the Church of Ireland Primary Schools flourishes. The "WHEELS" ministry toured with a travelling Road Show entitled "Easter Eggstravaganza", which proved to be very popular. Holiday Clubs also abounded throughout the Diocese. We enjoyed a visit from the MISSION RESOURCE PERSON. Charles Irwin was very well received on his visit to Cork, where he spoke in a challenging and thought provoking way to various groups throughout the Diocese. A BODY, MIND & SPIRIT FESTIVAL took place. Our Diocesan Missioner was involved at this Festival, where a Christian presence was established in conjunction with Christians of all backgrounds. There was good feedback, which has encouraged those involved to be there again in 2002. The ship LOGOS II visited Cork over the Christmas period. This is a ship which brings the Good News of Jesus Christ through Words and Actions, enabling churches to make use of the resources available onboard, including the largest floating Book Shop in the World.

MEATH & KILDARE

Our link with the diocese of St Andrew's Dunblane and Dunkeld in the Episcopal Church of Scotland has given us access to material commissioned by that church from the Alban Institute (USA) going under the title of Mission 21. It is a comprehensive programme for assisting the local church to transform attitudes and be revitalised for mission in the 21st century. The material is of the highest quality theologically and presentationally. The bishop sent three clergy to Scotland back in May 2000 to be trained as facilitators for the foundation phase entitled 'Making your church more inviting'. In January 2001 the parishes of Navan and Mountmellick undertook the 15 session programme with a facilitator and we are now in the process of revising the material for an Irish Context,

while the parishes are engaged in implementing the goals they identified for themselves. It is a long term programme that could and should be a valuable tool for mission.

CASHEL & OSSORY

In a break with tradition, the Diocesan Board of Mission and Unity decided to hold its Annual Missionary Day this year in the evening. The response to this new initiative was very positive and it was well supported by people from throughout the United Diocese. Our speaker was the Church of Ireland resource person, the Rev Charles Irwin who not only addressed that particular gathering, but also took the opportunity to visit a number of parishes and schools in the region over several days.

The Board continued its policy of offering financial support towards the work of mission at home, as well as overseas. This year it helped fund a refugee project in Waterford City.

As the result of a contribution made at this year's Diocesan Synod, the Board is presently considering ways in which it may be able to address more effectively the diverse areas of mission, renewal, Christian Unity and social justice. This could mean some sort of reorganisation, sub division or expansion of the present committee.

OTHER REPORTS

CHURCH ARMY

Notable events

We were delighted to share with Sister Irene Lockett at her 50th Commissioning anniversary remembered in a service of thanksgiving at Willowfield Parish Church in September. Captain Colin Taylor and Captain Charles Harris both celebrated their 25th Commissioning anniversaries in December 2002. Our Congratulations to Captain Philip Johanson, Chief Secretary, on his being awarded the OBE in the New Years Honours list, for his work with Church Army. Mr Roy Totten has accepted the invitation to become Chairman of the Church Army Board. This is a voluntary post, with the main reward being hard work! We are delighted that he has agreed, Roy will have much to contribute and it will be good to have a Church of Ireland voice on the board. He will initially be Chairman designate.

Staff developments in Ireland

Captain Alan Barr began working in Drumcree Parish in January, as Evangelist amongst the young and young families. He comes originally from Dromore and has worked in the Portadown area before. His wife Elizabeth is also a Church Army Evangelist, but currently taking a break to look after their two young daughters.

Captain John O'Neill was appointed as Church Army Itinerant Evangelist from February and is available to conduct parish Missions and youth/children's events in NI. If you wish to make use of him please contact the Church Army office in Lisburn.

Captain Martin Garner and his family have moved from Hillhall Church Plant, Lisburn to work in Sheffield alongside Rev Bob Hopkins and the "Anglican Church Planting

Initiatives”. Lisburn Cathedral Parish has appointed Captain Philip Haines to replace Captain Garner. The work has broadened to include other parts of the parish in Co Down as well as the Hillhall estate. Captain Philip Haines & Sister Ros Haines were previously based at St Macartin’s Cathedral, Enniskillen.

Current initiatives

We have received a number of applications for selection to join Church Army. We are pleased with the increased interest and hope that some of the applicants will be selected to begin training later this year. We currently have “First Contact” year out volunteer teams based in Carrigrohane Union, Cork and St Paul’s, Lisburn. A number of Parish Missions and Mission weekends have been conducted across Ireland. A full list of CA Evangelists working in Ireland can be found in the Church of Ireland Directory listed under “Association of Missionary Societies”.

Finance and Management

We have a growing need for additional finance to develop the work. Information Technology has brought a number of changes in our administration. The London Office moved from Blackheath to Sidcup in January, to smaller and more functional accommodation. 3rd Floor, Marlowe House, 109, Station Road, Sidcup, DA15 7AD. Many of its management functions have been regionalised therefore it will no longer be described as Headquarters. Its marketing and finance functions remain.

Other information is available on the Internet. Web: <http://www.churcharmy.org.uk>. Or CONTACT: Church Army Office: 4 Thornleigh Place, Lisburn, Co Antrim, BT28 2FD (028 92 663295).

CPAS

May 2001 saw the appointment of the Rev Robert Key as the new General Director of the Church Pastoral Aid Society and under his leadership we have reaffirmed our commitment to the aim of the founders “to take the good new of Christ to everyone’s door” with the three-part slogan:

“enabling evangelism; encouraging leaders; equipping churches”

This last year Keith has spent time with a number of churches helping them think through their strategy for children’s work and many are now using the new interactive Biblical material “Under Construction” and finding it has transformed their children’s ministry and their leaders! Mavis has been working alongside Select Vestries and leadership teams as they seek to move from “maintenance to mission” and in 2002 will be involved with staff evangelist Roger Murphy in four parish missions, in three Dioceses. CPAS continues to resource the church with strategic materials, including the new baptism video “First Steps” and packs relating to working in urban areas, rural areas, and understanding cell church. Keith and Mavis welcome opportunities to work alongside churches in this way.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2001**CURRENT ACCOUNT**

	2001
INCOME	€
Opening balance	538
Simmonds Bequest & Black Trust	149
General Synod Mission Breakfast	337
Interest on investment	5
War Stock	4
	<hr/> 1,033
EXPENDITURE	
Flowers	19
Cardiff conference expenses	667
Bank fees	6
Closing balance	341
	<hr/> 1,033

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

Opening balance	1,397
Interest	41
Closing balance	<hr/> 1,438