

STANDING COMMITTEE

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS LAID BEFORE

THE GENERAL SYNOD AT ITS

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD ORDINARY SESSION 2023

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

HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD



Rev Canon Gillian Wharton, The Rectory, Cross Avenue, Booterstown, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Mr Ken Gibson, 11 Magheralave Court, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, BT28 3BY

Ms Hazel Corrigan, Liscolman House, Tullow, Co Carlow

Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston, St Mark's Rectory, Portadown Road, Armagh, BT61 9EE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY - Mrs Janet Maxwell

SYNOD OFFICER - Dr Nicole Gallagher

SYNOD ADMINISTRATOR – Ms Aisling Sheridan

COMPLIANCE AND COMMITTEE SUPPORT – Mr Stuart Wilson

OFFICE

Church of Ireland House
Church Avenue
Rathmines
Dublin 6

Telephone no. +353 1 4978422

Email synod@rcbdub.org

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1. SUMMARY

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

- Approval of the Clergy Permanent Health Insurance Policy and Clergy Parental Sabbatical Policy for inclusion in the suite of policies supporting the Dignity in Church Life Charter;
- Approval to hold the next Church of Ireland census in 2024;
- A recommendation to establish a Select Committee to review clergy tenure;
- The establishment of a number of new groups including:
 - The working group to review the Dignity in Church Life Bullying and Harassment Policy;
 - The working group to review episcopal electoral provisions;
 - The working group to consider the future of curacies;
 - The working group to consider the future provision of third level chaplaincy on the island of Ireland;
 - The reference group concerning the interchangeability of ministry with the Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland.
- Approval of the terms of reference for the Pioneer Ministry Governing Council to support the Pioneer Ministry movement launched in February 2023.

2. NAMES AND ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS

During the period June 2022–March 2023 (inclusive), 5 meetings 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

4/5	Rev Canon Gillian Wharton
5/5	Mr Kenneth Gibson
5/5	Ms Hazel Corrigan
5/5	Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston

ELECTED MEMBERS

Armagh	4/5	Rev Henry Blair
	2/5	Rev Gary McMurray
	4/5	Mrs Mary Caldwell
	5/5	Mrs Caroline Nesbitt
Clogher	5/5	Rev Canon Ian Berry
	5/5	Rev Mark Gallagher
	3/5	Miss Irene Knox
	4/5	Mr Glenn Moore
Derry & Raphoe	4/4	Rev Canon Henry Gilmore*
	4/5	Rev Peter Ferguson
	3/5	Mr John Junkin
	0/5	Mr Robert Ellis
Down & Dromore	5/5	Ven Roderic West
	5/5	Rev Catherine Simpson
	5/5	Mr Andrew Brannigan
	2/5	Mrs Paula McIlwaine
Connor	5/5	Rev James Boyd
	3/5	Ven Barry Forde
	3/5	Mr Roy Totten
	2/5	Mr Andrew Scholes
Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh	1/2	Ven Patrick Bamber**
	4/5	Rev Canon Ruth West
	3/5	Mr Edward Lindsay
	3/5	Mr Alan Williamson
Tuam,	4/5	Very Rev Lynda Peilow

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Killala & Achonry	4/5 4/5 0/3	Rev Stephen McWhirter Mrs Ann Nethaway Mr Arthur Foster-Sweeney***
Dublin & Glendalough	5/5 1/5 4/5 4/5	Rev Dr William Olhausen Very Rev Stephen Farrell Mr Lyndon MacCann, S.C. Dr Lucy Michael
Meath & Kildare	5/5 5/5	Rev Canon Katharine Poulton VACANT Mrs Joan Bruton VACANT
Cashel, Ferns & Ossory	4/5 3/5 3/5 3/5	Rev Dr Christine O'Dowd-Smyth Rev Canon Nicola Halford Mr Richard Codd Ms Emma Purser
Cork, Cloyne & Ross	1/2 4/5 3/5 3/5	Ven Andrew Orr**** Rev Canon Paul Arbuthnot Mr Wilfred Baker Ms Hilda Connolly
Limerick & Killaloe	4/5 4/5 5/5 3/5	Rev Canon Jane Galbraith Very Rev Niall Sloane Mr Adrian Hilliard Mr Edward Hardy

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

3/5	Very Rev Nigel Dunne	3/5	Very Rev Kenneth Hall
5/5	Rev Canon Dr Maurice Elliott	2/5	Ven David Huss
3/5	Rev Ruth Elmes	3/5	Rev David White
2/5	Very Rev Shane Forster		

* Rev Canon Henry Gilmore was elected to Standing Committee in September 2022 following the resignation of the Ven Robert Miller

** The Ven Patrick Bamber was elected to Standing Committee in January 2023 following the resignation of the Ven Craig McCauley

*** Mr Arthur Foster-Sweeney was elected to Standing Committee in November 2022 following the resignation of Ms Rebecca Morrow

**** The Ven Andrew Orr was elected to Standing Committee in January 2023 following a vacancy arising from the Consecration of Bishop Adrian Wilkinson

The Secretary General, and the Assistant Secretary of the General Synod are entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the Standing Committee.

COMMITTEES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
FINANCE AND ARRANGEMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr Wilfred Baker
The Honorary Secretaries

LEGAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

His Honour Judge Tom Burgess	Mr William Prentice
His Honour Judge Alastair Devlin	His Honour Judge Derek Rodgers
Mr Lyndon MacCann, S.C.	The Right Honourable Lord Justice Stephens
The Hon Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness	
Mr Oswyn Paulin	
The Honorary Secretaries	

PRIORITIES FUND COMMITTEE

Mrs Brigid Barrett	Mr Glenn Moore
Mrs Joan Bruton	Very Rev Lynda Peilow
Ms Hazel Corrigan	Mr Roy Totten
Rt Rev George Davison	Rt Rev Adrian Wilkinson
Rev Peter Ferguson	
Rt Rev Andrew Forster	

BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr Wilfred Baker
Rev Henry Blair
Ms Hazel Corrigan
Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston
Miss Irene Knox

WORLD DEVELOPMENT- BISHOPS' APPEAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Rev John Ardis
Rt Rev Dr Ferran Glenfield (Chair)
Ms Ruth Handy
Ms Claire Henderson
Mrs Claire Holmes
Rev Canon Jonathan Pierce
Very Rev Niall Sloane
Mrs Iris Suitor (Hon Sec)

LAY JUDGES OF THE COURT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

His Honour Judge Tom Burgess
His Honour Judge Alistair Devlin
Mr Charles Galloway
Mr Patrick Good KC
Mr Lyndon MacCann SC
The Hon Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness
Mr Ronald Robins
The Right Honourable Lord Justice Stephens

3. APPOINTMENTS/NOMINATIONS

During the period covered by this report, the Standing Committee made the following appointments/nominations:

- Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston was appointed as a representative to attend the Governing Body of the Church in Wales 2022;
- The Rt Rev Michael Burrows was appointed as a representative to attend the Provincial Synod of the Moravian Church in Great Britain & Ireland 2022;
- The appointment of the Rev Eugene Griffin to the Safeguarding Board following the resignation of the Rev Isaac Delamere;
- The following were appointed to the RB Clergy PHI Policy Implementation Oversight Committee: Mrs Judy Peters, Mr Mike Johnston, Mr Lyndon MacCann SC, Ms Hazel Corrigan;
- The Very Revd Paul Draper was nominated as a clerical Church of Ireland representative on the Christian Aid Board following the retirement of Bishop Patrick Rooke;
- Mrs Hilary McClay was nominated as a lay Church of Ireland Representative on the Christian Aid Board following the resignation of Ms Rita Day;
- Ms Hazel Corrigan, Ven Stephen McBride and Ms Judy Peters

were appointed to the Review of Dignity in Church Life Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy;

- Ven Barry Forde, Very Rev Lynda Peilow and the Rev Dr Christine O’Dowd-Smyth were appointed to serve on the on the Future Provision of Chaplaincy Services to Third Level Institutions working group;
- Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston, Very Rev Lynda Peilow and Ven Roderic West were appointed to the Future of Curacies: Deployment, Provision and Funding working group;
- Ms Georgina Coptly was appointed to the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue;
- Dr Bridget Nichols was nominated to the Irish Council of Churches Executive Committee to fill the vacancy that arose from the retirement of Bishop Patrick Rooke;
- The Very Rev Niall Sloane was appointed as a representative to attend the Conference of European Churches in June 2023 in Estonia;
- Rev Catherine Simpson was appointed to the Governing Council of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute;
- Ms Hilda Connolly, Mr Alan Williamson and Very Rev Stephen Farrell were nominated as Standing Committee representatives on the Pioneer Ministry Governing Council;
- The Rt Rev Michael Burrows, Rev Canon Helene Steed, Rev Dr Bob Cotter and Mr Roy Totten were appointed to serve on the Interchangeability of Ministry with the Moravian Church reference group.
- Ms Georgina Coptly, Rev Kevin O’Brien, Ms Rachael Murphy, Mr Scott Elliott and Mr Mike Buchanan were appointed as representatives to attend the Irish Inter-Church meeting.

4. ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE CHURCH OF IRELAND CENTRE, DCU

At the November meeting of the Standing Committee, a resolution was passed amending the terms of appointment for the membership of the Advisory Council to the Church of Ireland Centre, DCU, to alter the requirement that one of the two external academics on the Council should come from the Republic of Ireland to, in future, permit that one of the two should come from the island of Ireland. The report of the Advisory Council appears as Appendix B on page 192. A report from the Church of Ireland Centre, DCU is contained in the Board of Education Report.

5. AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS

In June 2022, the Standing Committee appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers as Auditors of the accounts of the Representative Church Body.

6. BILLS PROCESS

In March 2020, the Standing Committee passed a resolution allowing for the revision of the current bills procedure to be brought to General Synod that year. However, due to the circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 Pandemic resulting in General Synod being held online, it was decided not to bring this resolution to

General Synod until it was, once again, held in person. Therefore, a resolution proposing changes to the current terminology of the General Synod bills process is being brought to General Synod this year (See Appendix A).

7. CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMISSION

In September 2022, the Standing Committee approved a resolution that the CASC resolution on homelessness, passed by General Synod in 2022, be circulated to dioceses. The report of the Church and Society Commission can be found in Appendix F on page 217.

8. CHURCH OF IRELAND CENSUS

At the September 2022 meeting of the Standing Committee, it was agreed that the next Church of Ireland Census should be held in 2024.

9. CLERGY PENSIONS FUND – SOLVENCY LEVY

In September 2022, the Standing Committee adopted a resolution on the recommendation of the Representative Church Body that, in accordance with Section 36 of Chapter XIV of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland, and on the recommendation of the Representative Body and the Trustee, the rate of levy to be paid by each diocese towards the cost of securing the solvency of the Clergy Pensions Fund from 1 January 2023 be set at an unchanged percentage level of 13% of the Minimum Approved Stipend in force at 1 January 2023.

10. CLERGY TENURE REVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

At the September 2022 meeting of the Standing Committee, a resolution was adopted that Standing Committee would bring to General Synod in 2023 a proposal that the General Synod establish a Select Committee to review clergy tenure. The terms of reference for this proposed Select Committee were approved in January 2023 and a motion for the establishment of this committee can be found in Appendix A on page 179.

11. COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

In January 2023, the Standing Committee considered the 2022 Income and Expenditure report for the Complaints Committee as required under Chapter VIII 23 (e). This report is appended as Appendix H on page 220. The appointment of the Complaint administrator for the purposes of the relevant part of Chapter VIII was approved for another year.

12. CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON DISABILITY

The report of the Consultative Group on Disability can be found as Appendix J on page 223.

13. DIGNITY IN CHURCH LIFE POLICIES

In June 2022, the Standing Committee approved the Clergy Permanent Health Insurance Policy and Clergy Parental Sabbatical Policy for inclusion in the Dignity in Church Life Charter.

14. EPISCOPAL ELECTORAL REVIEW GROUP

The Working Group was appointed in November 2022 and has held two meetings to date.

At the first meeting, the Rt Rev George Davison was elected to the Chair, members shared something of their own experiences of electoral colleges and the meeting considered the Terms of Reference approved by the Standing Committee.

At the second meeting members began their consideration of Chapter 6 of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland in the light of the six meetings of electoral colleges held under the new process and agreed the following objectives:

1. The Working Group will seek inputs from those who have participated in Episcopal Electoral Colleges under the new provisions bearing in mind the direction in the Terms of Reference to be cognisant of both the sensitivities and confidentiality of the Episcopal Electoral College process and of the impact on candidates, both who have been elected and those who were not.
2. There is provision in the Constitution for the Archbishops to agree Regulations to achieve consistency (insofar as these regulations do not conflict with the Constitution).
3. The Working Group agreed that draft Regulations should be produced to address identified inconsistencies in the process of various electoral colleges.
4. Once agreement is reached on the draft Regulations, a list of any legislative amendments required should be produced and draft legislation produced.
5. The Terms of Reference requested that any legislative proposals should be brought forward in 2023 or 2024 – the Working Group will be working towards the General Synod of 2024 as a realistic timeframe.

15. FUTURE OF CURACIES: DEPLOYMENT, PROVISION AND FUNDING

The report of this group can be found as Appendix I on page 221.

16. GENERAL SYNOD 2024

The General Synod of 2024 will be held from 10th-11th May 2024 in the Armagh City Hotel. The third day will be a remote session on the evening of Tuesday 14th May with a further session being held on the evening of Thursday the 16th May if required.

17. GENERAL SYNOD/STANDING COMMITTEE FINANCES

At the September 2022 meeting of the Standing Committee, the Budget Sub-Committee presented its report which was accepted by the Standing Committee.

18. GENERAL SYNOD ROYALTIES FUND

The balance at 31 December 2022 was €156,574.85 and £851.20. During the year, the following resolutions were passed for allocations to be made from the fund:

- A grant of €4,500 to support the work of SEARCH journal for 2022/23;

- An additional subvention of up to €5,000 towards the publication of *The Architectural History of the Church of Ireland* by Dr Michael O'Neill (subject to clarification of printing costs);
- A grant of €4,500 to support the work of SEARCH journal for 2023/24.
-

19. HISTORICAL CENTENARIES WORKING GROUP

The report of this working group can be found as Appendix K on page 225.

20. MINIMUM APPROVED STIPENDS

Under section 51 (1) of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland as revised by Chapter VI of 2011, the Standing Committee is required to consider recommendations from the Representative Church Body as to the rates of Minimum Approved Stipends to take effect from 1 January 2023.

At its meeting of 20th September 2022, the Standing Committee heard a submission by Mr Henry Algeo, Chairman of the Executive of the Representative Church Body, which detailed the RCB's recommendations.

The Standing Committee approved the recommendations of the Representative Church Body and approved the following resolution:

That, as recommended by the Representative Body in accordance with Section 51 (1) of Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland, the rates of Minimum Approved Stipends shall be as follows with effect from 1 January 2023:

- (a) no stipend shall be less than £33,900 per annum in Northern Ireland or €42,090 per annum in the Republic of Ireland in the case of an Incumbent or a member of the clergy appointed as Bishop's Curate under the provisions of Section 42 of Chapter IV or of a Diocesan Curate over the age of 30 years appointed under the provisions of Section 43 of Chapter IV.
- (b) the stipend for a Curate-Assistant shall be in accordance with the following scale:

First Year	75.0%	of minimum stipend for incumbent
Second Year	77.5%	"
Third Year	80.0%	"
Fourth Year	82.5%	"
Fifth and succeeding Years	85.0%	"

21. MORAVIAN INTERCHANGEABILITY OF MINISTRY

Following the approval in principle of interchangeability with the Moravian Church at General Synod 2022, in January 2023 the Standing Committee approved the appointment of the Rt Rev Michael Burrows, Rev Canon Helene Steed, Rev Dr Bob Cotter and Mr Roy Totten to the reference group concerning the interchangeability of ministry with the Moravian Church of Great Britain and Ireland.

22. PENSIONABLE STIPENDS

Under Section 2 of Chapter XIV of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland as revised by Chapter V of 2011, the Standing Committee is required to consider a recommendation from the Representative Church Body and the Church of Ireland Clergy Pensions Trustee Limited as to the rates of Pensionable Stipend to take effect from 1 January 2023.

At its meeting of 20th September 2022, the Standing Committee heard a presentation by Mr Henry Algeo, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Representative Church Body, which detailed the financial background to the recommendations of the RCB and the Church of Ireland Clergy Pensions Trustee Limited.

The Standing Committee approved the recommendations of the Representative Church Body by adopting the following resolution:

That, as recommended by the Representative Body and the Trustee, in accordance with Section 1 of Chapter XIV of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland, Pensionable Stipend shall be as follows with effect from 1 January 2023, remaining unchanged from 2022:

- (a) Pensionable Stipend shall be £25,498 per annum in Northern Ireland and €36,219 per annum in the Republic of Ireland in the case of an Incumbent or a member of the clergy appointed as Bishop's Curate under the provisions of Section 42 of Chapter IV or of a Diocesan Curate over the age of 30 years appointed under the provisions of Section 43 of Chapter IV.
- (b) Pensionable Stipend for a Curate-Assistant shall be in accordance with the following scale:

First Year	75.0%	of Pensionable Stipend for incumbent
Second Year	77.5%	"
Third Year	80.0%	"
Fourth Year	82.5%	"
Fifth and succeeding Years	85.0%	"

23. PIONEER MINISTRY

In January 2023, the Standing Committee approved the terms of reference document for the Pioneer Ministry Governing Council as well as the nomination of the following names to sit on the Council as Standing Committee representatives: Ms Hilda Connolly, Mr Alan Williamson and Very Rev Stephen Farrell.

PIONEER MINISTRY WORKING GROUP

This is the final report of the Pioneer Ministry Working Group before the establishment of the Pioneer Ministry Council as a body of General Synod from May 2023. Our report to Synod 2022 provided a detailed overview of the journey of Pioneer Ministry in the Church of Ireland along with proposals and

recommendations for how Pioneer Ministry might evolve over the years to come. In this past year we have begun to see those proposals implemented, with the establishment of a Leadership Team for Pioneer Ministry, a formal launch in St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin on 5th February 2023, the creation of a new Pioneer Ministry Council, and a partnership with Church Army as a key training partner for Pioneer Ministry. The Working Group would encourage all members of Synod to stay informed on Pioneer Ministry at www.pioneerministry.org , and to engage with the Leadership Team as they connect with diocesan synods and form new hubs for pioneer ministry in every diocese.

We wish to express our gratitude to Standing Committee for its support over the past decade, to the Representative Body for releasing funding and supporting the strategy for pioneer ministry, to the House of Bishops for their lead in seeking to grow new pioneers and new ministries within the Church of Ireland. We are thankful to all who have served on the Working Group over the last decade, notably Bishop Patrick Rooke, Bishop Alan Abernethy, Archbishop Michael Jackson, Mr Trevor Douglas, and Dean Alistair Grimason, whose passing was a source of deep regret and whose championing for new ways to walk old paths was an inspiration to us all.

24. PRIORITIES FUND

The accounts of the Priorities Fund and the grants, approved by Standing Committee in March 2023, are contained as Appendix L on page 230.

25. CHURCH OF IRELAND SAFEGUARDING BOARD

The report of the Safeguarding Board appears as Appendix N on page 242.

26. SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

In March 2023, the Standing Committee (re)nominated Mr Wilfred Baker, Ms Hazel Corrigan, Mr Roy Crowe, Ms Elizabeth Hassell, Ms Joyce Ryder, Mr Gavan Woods and the Rev Canon Paul Arbuthnot.

27. STANDING COMMITTEE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND GENERAL PURPOSES FUND ACCOUNTS 2022

The accounts are contained as Appendix O on page 247.

28. SUB-GROUP TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBLE FUTURE USE OF VIDEOCONFERENCING FOR MEETINGS

In June 2022, the Standing Committee approved a report from the sub-committee which suggested that :

- a. At least two in person Standing Committee meetings will be held annually in March and September.
- b. Up to four remote meetings will be planned, with the proviso that a particularly weighty agenda or contentious issue would justify reverting to an in-person meeting.
- c. The remote meetings of Standing Committee would move to the evenings to facilitate wider participation.

- d. The Honorary Secretaries will engage with Church House to have a cost-benefit analysis of the facilities, with a view to establishing the cost and feasibility of equipping the boardrooms to hold hybrid meetings.

29. THIRD LEVEL CHAPLAINCIES

The report of the working group concerning the future provision of third-level chaplaincies on the island of Ireland can be found as Appendix M on page 240.