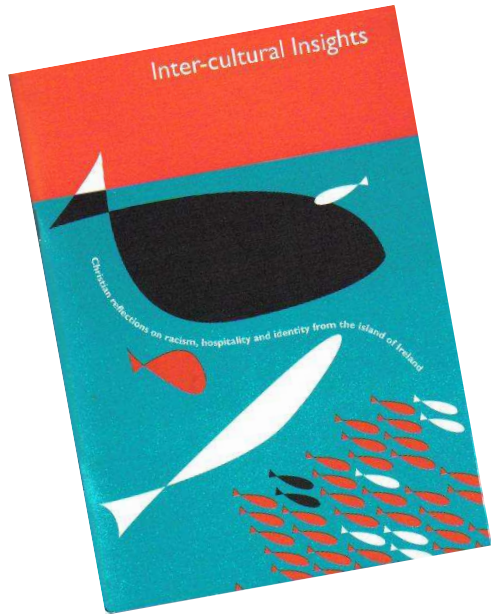


## **Publications 2008**



**Inter-Cultural Insights**  
Christian reflections on racism,  
hospitality and identity

Resource Booklet from the  
All-Ireland Churches' Consultative  
Meeting on Racism/Irish  
Inter-Church Meeting

Available online at  
[www.irishchurches.org](http://www.irishchurches.org)

**Directory of  
Migrant-Led  
Churches & Chaplaincies**

Resource Booklet from the  
All-Ireland Churches' Consultative  
Meeting on Racism

Available online at  
[www.irishchurches.org](http://www.irishchurches.org)



## **86th Annual Report**

**of the**

**Irish Council of Churches**

**For the year ending 2008**



**SUBMITTED TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
APRIL 2009**

## CONSTITUENT COMMUNIONS

at 31 January 2009

Church	[Dates of Joining ICC]	Website
Antiochian Orthodox Church	2005	<a href="http://www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk/belfast.htm">www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk/belfast.htm</a>
Church of Ireland	1923	<a href="http://www.ireland.anglican.org">www.ireland.anglican.org</a>
Greek Orthodox Church		
in Britain & Ireland	1997	<a href="http://www.nostos.com/church">www.nostos.com/church</a>
LifeLink Network of Churches	1998	<a href="http://www.cfc-net.rg/lifelink.htm">http://www.cfc-net.rg/lifelink.htm</a>
Lutheran Church in Ireland	1972	<a href="http://www.lutheran-ireland.org">www.lutheran-ireland.org</a>
Methodist Church in Ireland	1923	<a href="http://www.irishmethodist.org">www.irishmethodist.org</a>
Moravian Church, Irish District	1923	<a href="http://www.moravian.org.uk">www.moravian.org.uk</a>
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	1923	<a href="http://www.presbyterianireland.org">www.presbyterianireland.org</a>
Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church	1923	<a href="http://www.nspresbyterian.org">www.nspresbyterian.org</a>
Religious Society of Friends	1923	<a href="http://www.quakers-in-ireland.org">www.quakers-in-ireland.org</a>
Rock of Ages Cherubim & Seraphim	2001	No website at present
Romanian Orthodox Church	2004	No website at present
Russian Orthodox Church in Ireland	2003	<a href="http://www.stpeterstpaul.net">www.stpeterstpaul.net</a>
Salvation Army (Ireland Division)	1965	<a href="http://www.salvationarmy.org">www.salvationarmy.org</a>

## Officers of the Council at 31 January 2009

<b>President</b>	Rev Anthony Davidson (Presbyterian Church)
<b>Vice President</b>	Most Rev Richard Clarke (Church of Ireland)
<b>Honorary Treasurer</b>	Vacant since Sept. 2008
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	Ms Gillian Kingston (Methodist)
<b>General Secretary</b>	Michael Earle

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Belfast BT9 6AZ

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Employer No (Republic): 9582744F  
Charity no: XN 48617

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*'that they may all be one' ( John 17 V21)*

**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
IRISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

**Submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Council, April 2009**

**THE HISTORICAL MANDATE** The Irish Council of Churches is constituted by “Christian Communion in Ireland willing to join in united efforts to promote the spiritual, physical, moral and social welfare of the people and the extension of the rule of Christ among all nations and over every region of human life” (1966 constitution as amended in 1995).

This mandate was extracted word for word from the original constitution that established the United Council of Christian Churches and Religious Communities in Ireland in 1922 (John Barkley, 1983: *The Irish Council of Churches 1923-1983*). There were seven founding member churches at the Council’s first meeting in January 1923 (Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, Moravian Church, Congregational Union, and the Religious Society of Friends/Quakers).

**SIGNIFICANCE** This historical background is significant as it indicates that the Council’s ecumenical beginnings were shaped by the aftermath of World War 1 and the period when partition and the border had just been created on this island.

Few will appreciate that this Council was also one of the earliest pioneers of National Councils of Churches throughout the world and that six of its seven founding churches continue in its membership today. Membership of the Council has now more than doubled.

The original Council started in the context of momentous changes in Ireland. It served at the cutting edge for those churches wanting to express their Christian witness in working together for the benefit of all peoples, both locally and overseas. Its mandate covered the whole island and continues to reflect the All-Ireland focus of most of its member churches.

The question facing us today is how relevant is this mandate to our member churches in 2009? Is our work still at the cutting edge?



## GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND OTHER ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE COUNCIL'S WORK

ACTS	Action of Churches Together in Scotland
AICCMR	All-Ireland Churches Consultative Meeting on Racism
BOA	Board of Overseas Affairs (ICC)
C of I	Church of Ireland
CEC	Conference of European Churches
CTE	Churches Together in England
CTBI	Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
Cytûn	Churches Together in Wales
ECI	Eco-Congregation Ireland
ECLOF	Irish Ecumenical Church Loan Fund
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
ICC	Irish Council of Churches
ICCSI	Inter Church Committee on Social Issues (IICM)
IEC	Irish Episcopal/Bishops' Conference (RC)
IICC	Irish Inter-Church Committee
IICM	Irish Inter-Church Meeting
IEN	Irish Ecumenical News (ICC)
ISE	Irish School of Ecumenics
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
PCI	Presbyterian Church in Ireland
MCI	Methodist Church in Ireland
PIP	Parish-based Integration Project
RC	Roman Catholic Church in Ireland
ROI	Republic of Ireland
WCC	World Council of Churches
WMC	World Mission Committee (ICC/BOA)

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2008



I know it was only a comment. As an accountant addressed a group of mostly middle-aged clergy, he commented rather tetchily, "If you lived in the real world you would understand this." I usually accept that comment with the truth that it embraces. Accountants and other professionals operate within a specialised world where they have very different expertise and skills from a pastor.

However, on that day, I heard the comment differently. I thought of ministers standing beside a grave conducting a funeral, coping regularly with the reality of death. I thought of pastors sitting by a hospital bed finding words of comfort for someone coming to terms with the reality of a terminal illness. I thought of preachers pouring over Bible words with an eye askew for the newspaper, preparing a sermon that deals with the reality of what has happened in the world that week. I thought of church leaders working out how best to live, work and witness in their communities. I thought of young church people finding points of contact with other young people who are lonely, vulnerable and alienated from God.

It struck me that church people live at the intersection of heaven and earth, this present life and eternity. They patrol the thin places of this world where reality is strongest. They are the people who live closest to harsh yet hopeful reality. They are called to bring the reality of Heaven into the unreality of Earth. So church people need to have confidence in their calling to critique what is called "the real world." Our experience of reality is invaluable when we ponder questions of economics, the environment and social justice. Sadly, all too often, the church as an institution can allow the world's unreality to infiltrate its values and workings.

2008 will be remembered as the year that the credit crunch bit. It was the year that the unreality of unrestrained globalised capitalism was exposed. As news filtered through of the crisis that swept through the banking system in October, it appears that there is little corresponding reality between the wealth we might possess and the money markets. For churches to be real in future, we will need the theological resources of all the people of God to make God and his values real to the world around us.

ICC's Executive meeting in October was held in St Anne's Church, Dungannon. It is a church filled with personal memories as Christine and I were married there 26 years ago. I grew up in the neighbouring Presbyterian Church and in the 1970's was involved in youth work on the streets of Dungannon. It was therefore a joy to hear about how God was continuing to work in different projects organised by Christians in Dungannon.

That day we heard about Christians living and witnessing in the real world of the streets of Dungannon. *Morph* is a community-based drop in centre, which is saturated in prayer and highly relevant to the needs of young people right across the Dungannon area. They have

recently been involved in providing suicide awareness training after a cluster of suicides among young people in the town. It is a good example of a project that holds together a highly intensive prayer life, an energetic commitment to social justice, and a willingness to learn from and work with a very broad spectrum of Christian traditions.

In late April, the leaders of the four largest Irish churches visited Israel and Palestine. Their visits informed them of the reality of increasing tension in the area which spilled out into terrible violence in the last few days of 2008 in Gaza and southern Israel. Jesus has called us to be peace makers in a real world riddled with hatred, misunderstanding and aggression. In ICC, we encourage all who seek to make peace in that troubled part of the world.

Our AGM this year will bring us face to face with the economic and environmental reality in which we will witness in 2009. Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski (President, Dublin City University) has been invited to speak to the theme '*Living for Tomorrow's World – green? global? greedy?*' Rev Mark Gray, convenor of the Presbyterian Church's World Development Committee, will respond to his talk.

The Executive in 2009 will be thinking about the reality of the past in Northern Ireland. The 'Troubles' have had a profound influence on inter-church relations throughout the island. For some, they were a stimulus to show the world that the churches could witness together. For others, the Troubles were a deterrent as rival communities descended into a spiral of hate and violence and the churches found themselves exclusively pastoring to rival communities. We have to come to terms with the reality of what occurred in our churches as well as in the world, but through the lens of Christian hope.

In April, the Executive will also be listening and working with Dr Gladys Ganiel from the Irish School of Ecumenics as she shares with us the School's latest research project called "*Visioning 21st Century Ecumenism - Diversity, Dialogue and Reconciliation.*" In 2010, we will celebrate a century of modern ecumenism since the *World Missionary Conference* was held in Edinburgh. This is a good opportunity to evaluate the reality of inter-church relations in Ireland during that period and think again how we might have vision for the rest of the 21st century.

In October, the Irish Inter Church Meeting will be looking at the issue of Baptism. Churches have a remarkable consensus of theological agreement on Baptism. The Sacrament reminds us of our ultimate real identity in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, Baptism is being administered in a very different world than a generation ago. In all our traditions, we face the reality that people often connect with church only at rites of passage. It will be good to listen to each other's experiences of how we practice God's presence around these important times in the lives of our people.

<b>Embrace (NI):</b>	Denise Wright (Vice Chair, LifeLink) since 2004
<b>Kirchentag 2009</b> 20-24 May in Bremen	Rev Colin Campbell (Non Subscribing Presbyterian)
Douglas Anderson (Presbyterian)	
<b>NI Dept Health Regional Equality Liaison Panel (RELP):</b>	Rev Dr Wesley Blair (Methodist) 2005-9
<b>OFMDFM Race Equality Forum:</b>	Denise Wright (LifeLink) since 2006 (no meeting in 2008)
<b>PSNI Code of Ethics:</b>	Rev Harold Good (Methodist)
<b>Representing smaller ICC churches on IICC:</b>	
Major David Jackson (Salvation Army) 2008-2010	Fr Kieran McDermott (Catholic appointee)

### **ICC SECRETARIAT**

General Secretary	Michael Earle
Associate Secretary	Rob Fairmichael
Administrator	Jennifer Fernandez

**Churches International Students Network 2008-2011** Revd John Marchant (Church of Ireland)

**CTBI Middle East Forum** (closed 2008): Professor Cecil McCullough (Presbyterian)

**CTBI Editorial Group Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2009-2012**

Very Rev Kieran McDermott (Catholic appointee) Rev Dr Allen Sleith (Presbyterian)

**CTBI International Affairs Liaison Group** Rev Colin McClure (Presbyterian) 2007-2010

**Conference of European Churches' Church in Society Commission:** Robert Cochran (Methodist) 2006-2010

**Conference of European Churches 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly (July 2009):** Bishop Richard Clarke (Church of Ireland)

**Christian Aid Ireland Board:** Roberta McKelvey (Church of Ireland) nominated

**Churches Community Work Alliance Board** Rev Colin Campbell  
(Non-Subscribing Presbyterian) 2007-2010

**Churches Peace Education Programme Trust**  
(closed 2008):

Rt Rev Trevor Williams  
(Vice Chair, Church of Ireland) Rev Tony Davidson (Presbyterian)  
ICC Treasurer Vacant since October 2008

**Irish Ecumenical Church Loan Fund:**

Linda Hopley (Presbyterian) 2007-2010 Al Connolly (Catholic) 2006-2009

Eamonn Fleming (Catholic) 2008-2011 Irwin Pearson (resigned) 2007-2008

Michael Earle (ICC staff) 2008-2011

Rob Fairmichael (ICC staff) 2008-2011

Hazel McMillan (Treasurer) 2008-2011

## Appreciation

For the last three years, Hilton Henry served as Treasurer of the Irish Council of Churches. Hilton brought to the position his years of experience as Financial Secretary of Presbyterian Church in Ireland. He was also an enthusiastic member of ICC Executive and enjoyed meeting Christians from other traditions and sharing his good humour and friendship. The search for his replacement continues.

Thank you to all who have given up time to serve on various committees of ICC and the Irish Inter-Church Committee. People who serve on our committees are usually highly committed to their own denomination. So days spent with inter-church Committees denote extra time in their busy schedules. We acknowledge those hours of commitment and service.

I want to thank Michael for his devotion and commitment to ICC. We feel privileged to have his wisdom and international experience working with and amongst us. Thanks to Rob for continuing to bring his experience and expertise to ICC. We were sad to say goodbye to Karen Kelly in July. However, it is remarkable how quickly Jennifer has settled into the office. She has had additional responsibility as we have been without a Treasurer since September.

I would also like to thank Gillian Kingston (former President) and Richard Clarke (Vice-President of ICC) for being friends and colleagues with whom I can converse, discuss and share the real world of Irish ecumenism.

## Rev Tony Davidson

ICC President (2008-2010)



Co-chairs of IICC  
Rev Tony Davidson & Cardinal Sean Brady

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT**

This is the 86<sup>th</sup> annual report submitted to the AGM of the member churches of the Irish Council of Churches, which was formally reconstituted in 1966. This is my fifth report since being appointed to this position in July 2004.

**'Go mba aon iad i mo láimhse'**

**'I will join them together into one stick so that they may become one in my hand....then they shall be my people and I will be their God'**

(Ezekiel 37 v.19, 23)

**Text:** The theme of this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from Ezekiel inspired the promise of God's restoration and hope amongst a jaded people living in exile 2,600 years ago. It also speaks to our divided Christian churches and ecumenical bodies in our own jaded context on this island today. Growing secularism and cynicism tend to sideline the churches' contribution at such times. Yet other voices are asking what can the churches offer in terms of witnessing together faithfully and counter-culturally as signs of God's Light, Hope and Unity in the growing darkness and gloom of our Irish context? Newly installed US President Barack Obama recently encouraged Americans that 'we can do better' – so what prophetic '*Ezekiel moments*' of hope might the Irish churches be willing to articulate together at this time?

**Context:** It has been a year ending with a rush of negativity. Newspaper headlines have focused on the global credit crunch, the financial crisis with its toxic debts, the wake of the Celtic Tiger and an economic downturn forcing many businesses to close, unemployment to rise, homes to be repossessed and single economic migrants to move elsewhere. The bubble of wealth and prosperity has burst with devastating effects on the lives of so many in our communities throughout this island. Yet others never experienced this bubble and indicators of poverty and inequality continue to rise in both jurisdictions. Lack of trust and selfish materialistic attitudes that President McAleese has recently described as 'mé-feinism' have prevailed at the expense of building community life. Economic forecasters predict little change in 2009.

Fachtna Murphy, the Garda Commissioner, recently described the **Republic of Ireland** as becoming a more violent country (Irish Times 12/1/2009) with increases in drug-related gangland violence and knife crime. In Arizona, President McAleese described Ireland as having been consumed by consumerism (Irish Times 16/12/2008). With reduced public expenditure and more claims from competing sectors, the Government is being challenged to protect the most vulnerable and new migrants amongst the 188 nationalities now living in the Republic. It remains vital that dialogue between faith leaders of the Christian, Muslim, Jewish and ethnic communities continues to build bridges of understanding between people living together in a more pluralist and global society.

**ALL IRELAND CHURCHES' CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON RACISM (AICCMR)****Chairperson:**

Dr Scott Boldt (since 2007)

Rev Donal Bennett

Rev Richard Kerr

Mr Philip McKinley

Sr Joan Roddy

Mr. Robert Cochran

Rev Alan Martin

Rev Katherine Meyer

Sr Brighde Vallely

**ICC Staff**

Rob Fairmichael

**COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES 2008**

**Church of Ireland General Synod 2008** Rev Colin Campbell  
(Non-Subscribing Presbyterian)

**Methodist Annual Conference 2008** Rev Raymond Fox (Church of Ireland)

**Presbyterian Church General Assembly 2008** Br. Derick Woods (Moravian)

**Redeemed Christian Church of God Assembly 2008**

Mother Agnes Aderanti  
(Rock of Ages Cherubim and Seraphim) Rev'd Daniel Nuzum (Church of Ireland)

**Society of Friends Yearly Meeting 2008** Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie (Presbyterian)

**CTBI Networks**

**Churches Inter-Religious Network 2008-2011** Norman Richardson (Presbyterian)

**Global Mission Network 2008-9** Canon Paul Hoey (Church of Ireland)

**Churches Racial Justice Network 2008-2011**

Sr Joan Roddie (Catholic appointee) Denise Wright (LifeLink Network of Churches)

## **INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES (ICCSI)**

### **Chairperson**

Mr Robert Cochran (Methodist) since 2002

### **Roman Catholic**

Rev Tim Bartlett

Very Rev James Carroll

Mr Patrick Durkan

Sr. Carina Muldoon

Sr. Joan Roddy

Ms Margaret Burns

Rev Eamon McDevitt

Mrs Margaret Harold

Ms Nicola Rooney

### **Church of Ireland**

Mr W Trevor Morrow

Mr Ian Slaine

### **Lutheran Church**

Pastor Corinna Diestelkamp

### **Methodist Church**

Rev David Clements

### **Presbyterian Church**

Mr Lindsay Conway, OBE

Rev Alan Russell

Mrs Pat Crossley

### **Religious Society of Friends**

Terry Gillespie

### **Salvation Army (Ireland Division)**

Major David Jackson

### **ICC Staff**

Adrian Cristea

Rob Fairmichael

(Parish-based Integration Project)

## **ADVISORY GROUP – PARISH BASED INTEGRATION PROJECT – PIP**

Robert Cochran (Methodist)

Rev Alan Martin (Presbyterian)

Philip McKinley (Church of Ireland)

Sr Joan Roddy (Catholic)

**Northern Ireland** remains a deeply divided and distrusting society with many believing it has become more segregated and polarised than it was ten years ago. There are still 88 security barriers in Belfast (N.Jarman 2008), dividing contentious interfaces that total some thirteen miles. Less visible walls divide living spaces in the leafy suburbs. The Office of First Minister/Deputy First Minister has estimated that the cost of division in the Province could be as high as £1.5 billion.

Most teenagers grew up after the ceasefires, yet in a recent survey, two thirds of young people aged between 16-25 years revealed that they had never had a meaningful conversation with someone from the other community. Young people know where the “Protestant bus stops” and the “Catholic bus stops” are located to get them safely home.

A recent standard index drew attention to growing income poverty, describing Northern Ireland as a 25/25/50 society – with about a quarter living in severe or some hardship, a quarter with a comfortable standard of living and over half with a good or very good standard of living (*Just News*, CAJ, November 2008)

The Troubles are over, but the conflict and distrust continue. Many of the 3,600 or so victims carry raw and deeply felt emotions in their search for Truth and Justice about their loved ones. Hard decisions over the devolution of policing and justice, the legacy of the past, education, housing and the Irish language have yet to be solved. The Executive has given priority to building economic prosperity, but made scant progress in addressing the underlying community divisions and the need to build a shared future (now redrafted as a Cohesion, Sharing and Integration strategy, but still to be agreed and funded). Low-level sectarian incidents continue, as do contested parades. Dissidents tried to exploit the political vacuum when the Executive did not meet for 22 weeks over the summer. Several Loyalist/Protestant paramilitary organisations remain unwilling to decommission their arms.

The former Police Ombudsman, Dame Nuala O’Loan, gave a chilling reminder that world-wide, the average peace deal lasts five years and the average conflict resumes after 15 years (University of Ulster 3/7/2008). Dr Duncan Morrow and Dr David Stevens argue that we are currently managing a peace based on truce, but have yet to take steps towards a peace built on transformed relationships that mark a reconciled society (Community Relations Council Annual Review 2007/8, p.3; *Presbyterian Herald* Dec 2008/Jan 2009, p.16)

Opportunities clearly exist for fresh ideas and new initiatives during these periods of massive change and upheaval in both jurisdictions. President McAleese’s willingness to make an official visit into an Orange Hall broke new ground, as did the recent military funeral in Co Mayo of an Irishman who had served as a Royal Marine (British Army). These are modest but hopeful signs of change.

Funding for many NGOs is fast drying up with government cutbacks and the ending of

many European Union and other foreign donor sources within the next five years. So the churches, as all-island bodies, are in a unique position to draw on their combined resources and continue to engage together in bringing God's love and hope to address the most urgent needs of the day. They are already building more inclusive communities where these are most needed through the work of Churches Community Work Alliance.

**Task:** The ecumenical task of building visible Christian unity is the Lord's work and prayer. Unity is a gift of 'being together', not something to strive for. Sharp doctrinal and ecclesiological differences remain between the member churches. Nevertheless our work is about being the hands, ears and mind of Christ in Kingdom building, working together where we can to build the common good.

The Council provides a useful forum for a wide fellowship of families from Protestant, Orthodox and Independent churches to meet together on their own, with the Irish Episcopal Conference (Catholic Church), and with ecumenical partners. It has no agenda apart from that of the member churches. In acting as their ecumenical instrument, the Council has a continuing role to create spaces for their representatives to meet, pray and act together; to create resources and animate local inter-church networks; and to take fresh initiatives in the context of this divided island.

Bishop Michael Jackson recently described much of the work of Irish ecumenism as being "local, personal, patient, low-key and unsung" (C of I Gazette 30/1/2009). Against a reality that denominationalism increasingly occupies the default position of 'doing church', ecumenical activities at every level are often seen as an extra task, rather than a mainstream activity. Yet those committed to this process of crossing denominational boundaries can witness to untold glimpses of Christian unity in action – the joy of being together in Christ and experiencing those precious moments of Kingdom building together for which we can only thank our Lord.

**Thanks:** For these extra demands of energy, I am so grateful to all those who have served on the Council's Boards, Committees, working parties or represented the Council during this past year – their names are listed at the end of this report; to members of the Executive, the officeholders and Tony Davidson as President, for their gift of time and exercising governance over the Council's activities; to those Council delegates who have taken a day's annual leave in order to attend this AGM; and finally to my hardworking colleagues (Jennifer Fernandez and Rob Fairmichael) in the Belfast office and Adrian Cristea in the Dublin office. It's a team effort.

**Appreciation:** We have much to thank our forebears for the legacy they have left in advancing the work of the Council over previous decades. During this year, Council farewelled three more people, each of whom had used their gifts and skills to make a vital contribution to the heartbeat and operation of our

### Co-opted

Rev Wesley Campbell  
Prof J Cecil McCullough

Rev Uel Marrs  
Mr Ian Smith

### Secretary

Rob Fairmichael

## IRISH INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE

### Office-bearers

Cardinal Seán Brady

*(Co-chair)*

Rev Professor Tom Norris

*(Joint Secretary)*

Mr Eamonn Fleming KCSG

*(Treasurer)*

Rev Anthony Davidson

*(Co-chair)*

Most Rev Richard Clarke

*(Joint Secretary)*

### Roman Catholic

Archbishop Dr Diarmuid Martin

Most Rev Dr Anthony Farquhar

Rev Professor Brendan Leahy

Most Rev Dr Gerard Clifford

Most Rev Dr John McAreavey

Very Rev Kieran Mc Dermott

### Church of Ireland

Rev'd Canon Ian Ellis

Most Rev Richard Clarke

### Methodist Church

Rev Donald Ker

Rev Elizabeth Hewitt

### Presbyterian Church

Rev Dr Donald Watts

Rev Gabrielle Farquhar

### Romanian Orthodox Church

*(Representing 4 Orthodox churches since Jan*

Rev Fr Godfrey O'Donnell

### Inter-Church Committee on Social Issues

Mr Robert Cochran *(Chair)*

### Executive Secretary

Michael Earle



## **JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Roman Catholic Church**

Very Rev Colm McGrady

Mr Eamonn Fleming KCSG  
(IICM Hon Treasurer)

### **Irish Council of Churches**

Rev Tony Davidson  
*ICC Hon Treasurer*

Most Rev Richard Clarke

### **Co-opted**

Rev Dr Donald Watts  
Secretary: Michael Earle (Gen Secretary)

Rev Donald Ker

## **BOARD OF OVERSEAS AFFAIRS (BOA)**

### **Moderator:**

Rev Jim Campbell (*Moderator 2003 – 2010*)

### **Church of Ireland**

Rev Stella Jones  
Dr Kenneth Milne

Rev'd Canon John Mayes

### **Coptic Orthodox Church**

Deacon Sherif Gayed

### **Lutheran Church**

Pastor Corinna Diestelkamp

### **Methodist Church**

Mr Tim Dunwoody/Rev Sonia Hicks

### **Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church**

Rev Colin Campbell

### **Presbyterian Church**

Rev Bob Cobain  
Ms Valerie Steele

Rev Colin McClure (Deputy Moderator)

work. We are indebted to Gillian Kingston (ICC President 2006-8), Hilton Henry (ICC Treasurer 2005-8) and Karen Kelly (ICC Administrator 2005-8) for their wisdom, enthusiasm and willingness to walk the extra mile in serving the member churches.

Working for the Council across two different jurisdictions on this island, making contributions to the ecumenical work of the four nations involved in Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and to the wider ecumenical work of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches, means that every day's work varies immensely. It continues to be a huge privilege to serve the Council at this time.

**2008:** An overview of the range of inter-church activities and involvements by different church and ecumenical groups over the past year can be viewed on pages 12-13. These include discussions with politicians, Irish and overseas church leaders, as well as the Council's participation in a diverse range of church-based/ ecumenical/civic and secular events, both within and beyond this island. The list excludes the many inter-church encounters regularly taking place at the local grassroots.

I am pleased to report that a higher priority has this year been given to

- (i) communicating the work of the Council and the Irish Inter Church Committee through the website and *Irish Ecumenical News* and
- (ii) developing the ecumenical and migrant work in the Republic.

However, the Council, as an instrument of the churches, has no public profile and few of these activities ever get reported in their church newsletters. What is important is that those serving on the Executive have the knowledge and ownership to share with their own constituencies. How they transmit that is an internal issue within denominations.

The Irish contribution to the four nations' work undertaken by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland is appreciated and affirmed. Further details can be found on their website [www.ctbi.org.uk](http://www.ctbi.org.uk). Council also continues to have close links with Christian Aid Ireland ([www.christianaid.ie](http://www.christianaid.ie)), Conference of European Churches ([www.cec-kek.org](http://www.cec-kek.org)) and World Council of Churches ([www.oikoumene.org](http://www.oikoumene.org)) though none of these are reported on this year.

Executive has made progress on the goals it presented in last year's Annual Report. The most significant are as follows:

- The Irish Inter Church Committee agreed to fund a part-time Ecumenical Officer for a three year period. This person will be appointed after Easter 2009 and will be based in Dublin. This new position will involve travel around the island with the aim of strengthening and developing local ecumenical relationships between churches in Ireland.
- The Inter-Church office at 48 Elmwood Avenue was placed on the market following the decision that was made at last year's AGM to sell and buy more disability-friendly

premises. It remains unsold, due to the effect of the recession and the slump in the housing market.

- The website [www.irishchurches.org](http://www.irishchurches.org) is now acting as a growing means of inter-church communication, sharing ecumenical news, resources and dates of ecumenical events. Its resources can all be downloaded and include an update on 'Ecumenical Relations in Ireland'.
- During the year, four editions of **Irish Ecumenical News** were distributed and can be sourced on the website.
- Funding to start a new initiative for the Churches Peace Education Programme was again unsuccessful, so the trustees reluctantly decided to wind up the Programme, which dates back to the 1970's. An account of its work was written up by Elaine Hall in 2005.
- A membership policy was finally agreed and can be found on pages 14-15. No new applications for membership under this policy have yet been received.
- A Communications Committee has now been established under the chairmanship of Rev Donald Ker; it is implementing Council's communications strategy (See Annual Report 2007).

#### AGM 2008:

The 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Council was held on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008 in the Methodist Church, Bray, Co Wicklow. Eighty four people attended, including the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, the President of the Methodist Conference, the Moderator of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and Very Rev Pádraig Murphy representing Cardinal Brady. Presentations were given by the outgoing President (Gillian Kingston) and by representatives from the local Bray Churches Together group and the Bray Town Council. David Quinn (Iona Institute) gave the keynote address on the theme '*Witnessing together in a changing Ireland*' with an analysis of 2006 census figures surrounding the area of marriage and family life in Ireland. Bishop Richard Clarke responded – copies of both talks can be found on the website.

Three workshops took place after lunch with a focus on '*Witnessing together*' in *Family life* (Cherry Sleeman), *Suicide* (Lindsay Conway and Rev Derek Sargent) and '*What it means to be church*' (Denise Wright and Rev Des Bain). As part of the formal business session, Rev Tony Davidson (Presbyterian) was installed as President for the term 2008-2010 and Bishop Richard Clarke was elected as Vice President for 2008-2010 and as President for 2010-2012. Thanks were expressed to the outgoing President Gillian Kingston and also to Very Rev Dr Sam Hutchinson for his contribution in representing ICC on the Bill of Rights Forum. The AGM approved the sale of 48 Elmwood Avenue and 'the purchase of a replacement property on the terms outlined.'

#### AGM 2009

The next AGM will be held on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and hosted by the Moravian Church in their settlement at Gracehill Village, outside Ballymena, Co. Antrim. Professor Ferdinand von

#### Methodist Church in Ireland

Rev Donald Ker

Mr Robert Cochran

#### Moravian Church (Irish District)

Mr Derick Woods

#### Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church

Rev Colin Campbell

#### Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Rev John Brackenridge

Rev Dr Donald Watts

Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie

#### Religious Society of Friends

Dr David Poole

#### Rock of Ages Cherubim and Seraphim Church

Snr Evang Aderemi Ilori

#### Romanian Orthodox Church in Ireland

Rev Fr Godfrey O'Donnell

#### Russian Orthodox Church in Ireland

Rev Dr George Zavershinsky

#### Salvation Army (Irish Division)

Major David Jackson

#### Co-opted

Mrs Roberta McKelvey (Christian Aid)  
(Co-opted until AGM 2010)

Mrs Marian Woods (Women's Link)  
(Co-opted until AGM 2010)

#### Ex Officio

(Moderator of Board of Overseas Affairs/ BOA)

Rev Dr Jim Campbell (PCI)



**Romanian Orthodox Church in Ireland**

Rev Fr Godfrey O'Donnell

**Russian Orthodox Church in Ireland**

Rev Dr George Zavershinsky

**Salvation Army (Irish Division)**

Major Margaret Fozzard

Captain Marcus Mylechreest

Major David Jackson

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2008**

**President**

Rev Anthony Davidson

**Vice- President**

Most Rev Richard Clarke

**Hon Treasurer**

Vacant at Sept 08

**Executive Secretary**

Michael Earle

**Antiochian Orthodox Church**

Rev Fr Irenaeus du Plessis

**Church of Ireland**

Rev Raymond Fox

Rev Daniel Nuzum

Rt Rev Trevor Williams

**Coptic Orthodox Church in Ireland**

Rev Fr Athanasius Gawargayous

Deacon Sherif Gayed

**Greek Orthodox Church in Britain & Ireland**

Rev Fr Thomas Carroll

**LifeLink Network of Churches**

Mrs Denise Wright

**Lutheran Church in Ireland**

Pastor Corinna Diestelkamp

Prondzynski (President, Dublin City University) has been invited to speak to the theme '*Living for Tomorrow's World – green? global? greedy?*'

**Priorities for 2009:** In the year that has been designated by the UN as the International year of Reconciliation, Executive has agreed the following goals for the member churches to work on together during the coming 12 months:

- recruit, appoint and support the new ecumenical position in the Republic
- take forward any funded ecumenical initiative on peacemaking and reconciliation
- start a roundtable discussion with African Pentecostal churches
- continue the roundtable discussions with Orthodox churches
- engage with non-member churches on the island
- create space for churches to address issues about clergy stress and the demands of ministry today
- host an ecumenical lunch for PA's of key church leaders
- remain open to respond to events arising in the Irish context. These will hopefully include making joint responses to the Report of the Consultative Group on the Past (Eames/Bradley Commission) that has just been launched 'to find a way forward out of the shadows of the past' - [www.cgpmi.org](http://www.cgpmi.org)

**Comment**

As General Secretary, I see the task of the small staff team (2.5 FTE) as serving the Council in three ways:

- to be inspired by Ezekiel's willingness to hold the two sticks together in one hand and make the numerous Irish ecumenical structures work smoothly, remembering that they represent a network of some 3,250 local faith communities/congregations around this island
- to be the ecumenical instrument that creates spaces for these churches to work more closely together in areas they share common interests
- to animate and encourage ecumenical work around the island.

This report shares what the member churches have done together over the past 12 months. Their fruit offers small signs of hope, but remains modest and patchy in terms of making much impact with the available resources. The most significant initiatives at the cutting edge have been undertaken by more independent working groups of Christians acting together.

We all recognise that the churches could do so much more together if they acted more intentionally as one stick or one flock, whether in planning/sharing their own denominational priorities together, in working more at the cutting edge together, or in speaking out more together on the issues of our fast changing contexts outlined above. We also need to acknowledge that the smaller churches have different needs to work more closely together than larger churches which are better resourced.

The Council's three year strategy includes provision for "difficult conversations" that the churches could be raising with each other - yet these have largely been ignored due to other priorities. However, consideration might be given at some point in the future to ask:

- How might the member churches witness together in fresh ways as signs of God's Light and Hope in the growing darkness and economic gloom falling on our Irish context – with the risk of growing hate crime and xenophobia?
- Are there more sustainable and transforming lifestyle choices that the churches might be advocating together as an alternative to consuming our way out of this economic and ecological crisis?
- What new initiatives might the member churches be willing to take together as agents promoting a shared future (as opposed to a segregated future) amongst the divided communities in the North?
- How might the churches explore individually and together the practical dimensions of developing a spirituality of forgiveness that address our current community divisions and sectarianism?
- What steps might the member churches be willing to take together to relate to the migrant-led churches identified in the recent Directory?
- How might the member churches create more opportunities to inspire the next generation with Jesus' prayer for unity?
- How might the member churches work more intentionally together on inter-faith matters and deepening dialogues with other faith communities on this island?
- How might the Council be the instrument to facilitate a greater sharing of the agendas, concerns and issues of its member churches, given that few have ever been articulated at Council meetings in recent years?
- What new ways of working together might the churches develop that can release more freedom, energy and joy to serve as brothers and sisters in Christ?

The scope for greater ecumenical imagination, cooperation and action is endless, but eventually any combined response depends on the willingness, commitment, time and capacity to take those first small steps in faith together.

### **Conclusion**

This overview, the plans undertaken, the questions that might be explored, all need to be measured against the prayer:

- (i) to be the ecumenical instrument that serves and adds value to the member churches of ICC in their shared commitment to meet, pray and act together on this island
- (ii) to be Gospel signs of Light, Hope and Unity in all that we do together in our Irish context
- (iii) and most importantly, to remember whose we are and that Ezekiel's sticks remain 'joined together in God's hand' in our own context today just as they were for the prophet 2,600 years earlier.

### **Lutheran Church in Ireland**

Pastor Corinna Diestelkamp  
Yvonne Langebach

Jens Kuechenmeister

### **Methodist Church in Ireland**

Rev Andrew Dougherty  
Rev Geraldine Gracie  
Rev Elizabeth Hewitt  
Ms Gillian Kingston  
Rev Janet Unsworth

Mr. David English  
Mrs Laura Griffith  
Rev Donald P Ker  
Ms Frances Moffitt  
Mr Tom Wilson

### **Moravian Church Irish District**

Rev Jan Mullin  
Mrs Marian Woods

Mr Derick Woods

### **Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church in Ireland**

Rev John Herron  
Rev Paul Reid

Dr. Scott Peddie

### **Presbyterian Church in Ireland**

Rev Brian Boyd  
Rev Dr Jim Campbell  
Rev Kenneth Crowe  
Mr Graeme Fowles  
Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson  
Rev Cheryl Meban  
Rev William Sinclair  
Ms Valerie Steele  
Mrs Kathryn Viner  
Rev Dr Philip Wilson

Rev John Brackenridge  
Mr Lindsay Conway, OBE  
Rev Anthony Davidson  
Rev Chris Glover  
Rev Richard Kerr  
Mr James Patterson  
Rev Dr Allen Sleith  
Rev Anne Toland  
Rev Dr Donald Watts  
A N Other

### **Religious Society of Friends**

Susan H Pim  
Dr David Poole

Eleanor Gaw

### **Rock of Ages Cherubim & Seraphim Church**

Mother Agnes Aderanti

## MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

(As at January 2009)

### Ex-Officio Members of Council (Church Leaders)

Church of Ireland	Most Rev Dr Alan Harper
Presbyterian Church in Ireland (Moderator)	Rt Rev Dr Donald Patton
Methodist Church in Ireland (President)	Rev Aian Ferguson
Moravian Church (Irish District) (Chairman)	Mr Derick Woods
Non-Subscribing Church in Ireland (Moderator)	Rt Rev Robert McKee
Religious Society of Friends (Yearly Clerk)	Mr Alan Pim
Salvation Army (Ireland Division)	Major David Jackson

### Antiochian Orthodox Church

Rev Fr Irenaeus du Plessis	Rev Fr David Lonergan
Rev Dn Paul Totten	

### Church of Ireland

Rt Rev A F Abernethy	Mr Gareth Casey
Most Rev Richard Clarke	Rev'd Canon Dr Ian Ellis
Rev Raymond Fox	Ms Ruth Handy
Mr Sam Harper	Rev'd Canon E J Harris
Rev'd Canon Walter Lewis	Rev M W J Loney
Rev'd Canon John Mayes	Mr Jim McGaffin
Mrs Roberta McKelvey	Dr Kenneth Milne
Mr W Trevor Morrow	Rev D Nuzum
Rev TDB Pierce	Rev Obinna Ulogwara
Rt Rev Trevor Williams	A N Other

### Greek Orthodox Church in Britain and Ireland

Rev Fr Thomas Carroll

### LifeLink Network of Churches

Mr. Andrew Mc Court

Mrs Denise Wright

May our actions be faithful and obedient in deepening this common life together in Jesus Christ during 2009.

*'Ar scath a chéile a mhaireann na daoine'* ('people live in each other's shelter')

Michael Earle  
General Secretary, ICC  
Executive Secretary, IICM  
**31st January 2009**

### OVERVIEW OF 2008

#### January

Promoted Week of Prayer for Christian Unity services  
Compiled Annual Report and *Irish Ecumenical News* # 48  
Churches Together in Britain and Ireland: meetings of the Trustees and General Secretaries of the 4-Nations (Dublin)  
Workshop on the Middle East with an Irish participant on the WCC Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (Board of Overseas Affairs, Belfast)  
Attended North-South Ministerial Council reception for Cardinal Brady (Armagh)

#### February

Talk to Coleraine Borough Council Churches Forum  
Created space for an inter-church meeting with ICC representative on Bill of Rights Forum  
Informal meetings with representatives from Indian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox and Redeemed Christian Church of God  
Attended the Irish Government's reception for Cardinal Brady (Dublin)

#### March

*Irish Ecumenical News* #49  
Represented at Yearly Meeting of Quakers (Dublin)  
Irish Ecumenical Church Loan Fund AGM  
Attended a Government reception (Stormont)

#### April

Launch of new website [www.irishchurches.org](http://www.irishchurches.org)  
ICC Executive and ICC AGM (Bray)  
Women's Link Fellowship Day (Portadown)  
President attended a church leaders' meeting with the President of Burundi (Armagh)  
IICC and ICC Executive met with Dick Roche TD to discuss Lisbon Treaty referendum (Dundalk)  
Represented at Conference of European Churches' Commission on Church and Society (Prague)  
Leaders of the four largest Irish churches visit Middle East including Gaza

#### May

IICC reception and dinner with Bishop Huber and his delegation from the German Lutheran Church EKD (Belfast)

Attended launch of Christian Aid Week (Belfast)  
 CTBI Senior Representatives Forum, AGM, Trustees and General Secretaries (Edinburgh)  
 Represented at General Synod of Church of Ireland.  
 Inter-Church Centre placed on the market for sale

### June

Board of Overseas Affairs workshops with  
 (i) Palestinian leaders,  
 (ii) Irish Aid and  
 (iii) Irish Church Leaders after their visit to the Holy Land

Dublin Council of Churches AGM

Churches Peace Education Programme: Trustees' decision to wind up CPEP

CTBI Trustees (London)

Represented at annual meetings of General Assembly and Methodist Conference

Represented at CTBI Middle East Forum

### July

Created space for an inter-church meeting with Civic Forum (NI) Review team  
 Jennifer Fernandez appointed as ICC's Administrator; farewelled Karen Kelly  
 Represented at Redeemed Christian Church of God Assembly service (Co Meath)

### August

*Irish Ecumenical News* #50

ICC Executive and planning meeting (Dublin)

Communication Committee – first meeting

### September

Launched Edgehill/Mater Dei Certificate of Theology (Dromantine)

Attended launch of Brendan Leahy's book on *'Inter-Church Relations'* (Belfast and Dublin)

IICC meeting (Dundalk)

CTBI Trustees and General Secretaries meetings (London)

Attended Taoiseach's reception with leaders of faith communities (Dublin)

ICC Treasurer resigned

### October

Updated *'Ecumenical Relations in Ireland'* for website

4-Nations Women's Concerns conference (Birmingham)

### November

ICC Executive (Dungannon) and IICC (Dundalk)

Visit from Metropolitan John Yazigi (Antiochian Orthodox in Europe)

Irish School of Ecumenics Trust Council AGM (Dublin)

Attended Methodist/Roman Catholic International Commission seminar hosted by ISE (Dublin)

Represented at Christian Aid Britain and Ireland AGM (London)

*Irish Ecumenical News* #51

### December

CTBI Networks meeting (Swanwick): represented on Racial Justice, International Students, Global Mission Networks

Launch of AICCMR Directory on Migrant-led churches (Belfast and Dublin)

## THE YEAR IN PICTURES.....



Eamonn Fleming says farewell to Karen Kelly (ICC Administrator) and her husband Shane



Some members of the Ballymena Clergy fraternal



Some members of Clonard-Fitzroy Fellowship



Some members of the Dublin Council of Churches



General Secretaries from ACTS (Scotland), CTBI, CTE (England), ICC (Ireland) and CYTUN (Wales)



Joyce (former ICC Administrator) and Trevor Williams after his consecration as Bishop of Limerick



## THE YEAR IN PICTURES.....



Faith leaders at a reception with Taoiseach Bertie Ahern in Government Buildings, Dublin



Fr. Godfrey O'Donnell (Romanian Orthodox) with the Taoiseach.



Launch of the Directory of Migrant-led Churches in Belfast by AICCMR



Professor Brendan Leahy (Catholic) and Dr. Lindsey Hall (Methodist) speaking at the Greenhills Conference 2009



Jennifer Fernandez hosting an ecumenical lunch for Personal Assistants and Administrators of our member churches.



New ICC staff member Jennifer Fernandez with left, Rob Fairmichael and right, Michael Earle

Represented at Christian Aid Ireland AGM (Balbriggan)  
Talk to Newtonards Presbyterian Church

## Statistics

In the 12 months from January 2008, the three Council staff members

- serviced (administration and minutes) **54 ecumenical committee meetings** of the Council and various inter-church bodies (ICC Executive, ICC Officers' Group, ICC Board of Overseas Affairs, ICC Property sub-Committee; Irish Inter-Church Committee, Joint Management Group, Inter-Church Committee on Social Issues, Steering Group on Ecumenical position in the Republic, IICC Remit Group; All-Ireland Churches Consultative Meeting on Racism; Irish Ecumenical Church Loan Fund), cf. 53 in 2007
- served as member of Methodist Church Reconciliation Project Advisory Group and informal Churches Initiative Group
- provided an ecumenical presence at **63 conferences/seminars** and events around the island and overseas, cf. 60 in 2007

In addition, Council held **6 open/invited ecumenical events** (three organised by Board of Overseas Affairs) involving 133 people, cf. 6 events in 2007

**3 press statements** were released to the media (church and secular) cf. 7 in 2007

**ICC membership policy** as agreed by ICC Executive on 28/8/2008

- (1) The Irish Council of Churches (ICC) seeks to create spaces where Irish churches from all traditions may pray, dialogue and act together.
- (2) ICC invites written applications for membership from:
  - (a) churches, or recognised associations of churches within one Christian tradition, having a reasonable spread of congregations on the island of Ireland, and
  - (b) churches which, while only having a few worship centres on the island of Ireland, are part of much larger historic churches with significant membership in other places in the world and who
    - accept the constitution of ICC;
    - accept that membership of the ICC involves active participation with the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland in the Irish Inter-Church Meeting;

- have demonstrated evidence of inter-church engagement and commitment on this island;
- have their own church policies in place to protect children and the vulnerable using their facilities or service ministries (templates for which are available from the ICC office);
- are willing to test out their commitment and understanding about membership by journeying with the other member churches of ICC over a 12 month period with opportunity to participate in meetings of the ICC Executive with the freedom to speak but not vote;
- are committed to participate in the life of the Council's activities;
- pay an annual subscription and attend the Annual General Meeting;
- are broadly acceptable to the ICC member churches.

- (3) Although the Irish Council of Churches was from its inception (1922) based on a *cooperative* rather than a *credal* model for ecumenical endeavour, it would nevertheless understand itself as basing its fellowship around an affirmation of Christian faith which – in company with other ecumenical bodies – proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour according to the Holy Scriptures and seeks to fulfil a common calling to the glory of the One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (4) Internal procedures: An application for membership needs to address the criteria above and be submitted to the General Secretary, who will bring it to the attention of the ICC office bearers. The officer bearers will meet with those making the application, consult with others as needed, process the membership application further and then bring a recommendation to the next ICC Executive meeting. The Executive will then, if appropriate, invite the church to nominate a representative to journey with and build relationships with the Executive for a probationary period of 12 months on the terms outlined above. The ICC office bearers will undertake to support, monitor and at the end of this period, bring a recommendation to the ICC Executive to consider. The Executive will subsequently bring an appropriate resolution with rationale to the attention of Members of the Council to consider at the following AGM.
- (5) In considering an application for membership, the Council will take account of
- the beliefs, practices and history of the applicant church
  - its relationships with other churches including the membership of the Irish Inter Church Meeting
  - any other relevant information provided by any member church.

Following the twelve month probationary period, a final decision will be taken at an AGM, requiring the support of 75% of the member churches of ICC.

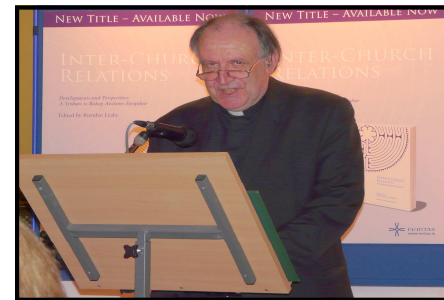
## THE YEAR IN PICTURES.....



Rev Jim Campbell (Moderator Board of Overseas Affairs) with Archbishop Alan Harper talking about the visit made by the four Irish Church Leaders to the Middle East.



Launching the new Certificate in Theology (Mater Dei and Edgehill College) at Dromantine



Bishop Tony Farquhar at the launch of a new book on Inter-Church Relations to honour his 25 years as a Bishop



Local clergy and lay staff active in the Dungannon area at an ICC Executive meeting



Methodist church leaders welcoming Metropolitan John Yazigi (2nd left) & Fr. Irenaeus from the Antiochian



Antiochian Orthodox Church hosting local church leaders to the opening of their Icon exhibition in North Belfast



## THE YEAR IN PICTURES.....



Some members of ICC Executive 2008



Some members of IICC Executive 2008



General Secretary meeting with Metropolitan Yakob Mar Irenaios &amp; Fr Koshy Vaidyan (Indian Orthodox)



ICC Co-chairs welcoming Hon Dick Roche TD to an IICC Meeting in April 2008



Bishop Donal McKeown &amp; Rev Donald Ker co-hosting an IICC reception in Belfast for Bishop Wolfgang Huber (EKD) in May



David Quinn addressing the ICC AGM in April

Terms of reference(a) **Joint Management Group** (28 November 2007)

This was originally set up by ICC Executive planning retreat (August 2006) to progress priorities of ICC Exec in 2007 with membership comprising ICC officeholders, IICC Treasurer and General Secretaries of the PCI and MCI churches. In November 2007, it was agreed to continue the existing membership, but to restructure and rename this group, incorporating all the functions and membership of the Joint Finance Committee of IICC. The following Terms of Reference were agreed:

The Joint Management group is accountable to IICC and ICC Executive for the following:

- (i) to approve and monitor all human resources and issues related to the appointment and employment of staff by IICC and ICC, including job descriptions, contracts, terms and conditions, pensions, holidays, staff performance and appraisals, short-term projects to consider and make recommendations on all property and finance issues
- (ii) to be a resource to the Executive Secretary (IICC)/ General Secretary (ICC) in managing work priorities of ICC and IICC, personnel and other related issues

(b) **Communications Committee** (1<sup>st</sup> April 2008)

- (i) to implement the communications strategy agreed by ICC Executive in August 2007
- (ii) to report progress, plans and any issues to each Executive meeting
- (iii) to action any other communications request from the ICC Executive or office holders
- (iv) to submit annual budget needs to Joint Management Committee by Dec 31<sup>st</sup> each year
- (v) Rev Donald Ker (General Secretary, Methodist Church in Ireland) has been appointed by ICC Executive to chair this Committee and the General Secretariat will provide administrative support

(c) **IICC Steering Group for Ecumenical Officer based in Dublin (18/9/2008)**

The Steering group was asked to steer and monitor the project - with power to co-opt - and report progress to each meeting of the Irish Inter Church Committee

**ICC BOARD OF OVERSEAS AFFAIRS****Rev Dr Jim Campbell** (Moderator 2003—2010 Presbyterian)

The past year has been partly one of introspection and evaluation. The ICC having asked the IICC that the Board of Overseas Affairs be moved to the IICM structure, the year was spent in drawing up possible new terms of reference and structures for the Board. Papers were presented to the IICC and discussions undertaken. It was hoped that the Board could evolve into the Forum on International Affairs of the IICM. However, at the IICC meeting in November it became clear that there was still no consensus with regard to the role of a future Forum on International Affairs and so, for the present, the BOA will continue as the sole remaining board of the ICC.

The other structural issue concerning the Board has been its future links with Churches Together in Britain & Ireland in the light of the reorganisation of that organisation. It is planned to continue to be represented at the Global Mission Networks but there is uncertainty about the future of the International Affairs Liaison Group and the Middle East Forum of CTBI has been outside CTBI structures.

The Board held four committee meetings during 2008. It continued to monitor the situation in Sudan, Sri Lanka, the Middle East and Zimbabwe. During the year it wrote to the relevant authorities about the Cluster Bomb Treaty and sent a message of support to the Christians of Orissa when they were being persecuted during August and September 2008. It continued to receive reports from Christian Aid and the Relief and Development organisations of the member churches.

The Board organised a very successful meeting for Protestant church representatives and others, to meet with Irish Aid regarding possible funding from that source for church work. Israel and Palestine were the focus of three other meetings. It organised a meeting with a returned accompanier from the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), Ryan Moore; the Board continues to encourage support for the work of EAPPI. It also held a feedback session for the churches with two of the four leaders of the largest churches speaking about their visit to Palestine and Israel, and a meeting with a Palestinian Christian and a Palestinian Muslim, George Rishmawi and Eyad Burnat, speaking about the situation there.

During **2009** it is hoped to organise a conference on Christian Zionism and the Board will host, as usual, the 2009 visit to Northern Ireland of Irish Aid. In addition three public meetings will be held during the year to provide a platform for international Christian leaders visiting Ireland. The main piece of advance planning during 2009 will be for the 2010 celebrations in Ireland of the Centenary of Edinburgh 1910.

The Board remains committed to promoting interest in International Affairs throughout the Churches in Ireland and to stimulate interest in development issues, world mission and evangelism.

### Member Churches Contributions to ICC at 31 December 2008 compared with 31 December 2007

	General	General
	Fund	Fund
	2008	2007
	£	£
The Church of Ireland	17,398	16,892
The Presbyterian Church in Ireland	17,398	16,892
The Methodist Church in Ireland	5,305	5,150
The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland	685	665
The Religious Society of Friends	685	665
The LifeLink Network of Churches	318	309
The Salvation Army (Ireland Division)	244	237
The Lutheran Church in Ireland	197	191
The Greek Orthodox Church in Britain & Ireland	197	191
The Moravian Church Irish District	197	197
The Romanian Orthodox Church in Ireland	197	191
The Russian Orthodox Church in Ireland	103	100
The Rock of Ages Cherubim & Seraphim Church	103	100
The Antiochian Orthodox Church in Ireland	103	100
	43,130	41,880



## FINANCIAL REPORT

to AGM 2009

The audited Accounts for 2008 will be presented at AGM in Gracehill on the 2nd of April 2009 by a representative from our auditors Price Waterhouse Cooper.

Currently the post of ICC Honorary Treasurer remains vacant.

### Property

The motion to sell the property at 48 Elmwood Avenue was ratified by the AGM in 2008, since that time there has been a dramatic 'cooling down' in the Belfast property market and property values have plummeted. The property sub-committee will continue to monitor the situation. There have been a number of 'viewings' and feedback has been positive but to date no offers have been received.

### Staff Salaries and Pensions

The ICC Executive is considering a proposal for cost of living adjustment from 1 April 2009. In 2008, staff pensions were re-assessed by industry specialists Kerr Henderson, who began administering the scheme in April 2008.

### Member church subscriptions

Membership subscriptions rose by 3% in 2008 and by a further 3% in 2009. The increase in membership subscriptions has helped us to defray increases in the cost of Secretariat materials and services during 2008.

### Accounts

The format for presenting the accounts for 2008 will be consistent with previous years. The deficit for the year is £8,557, a 42% decrease from 2007 (-£15,447). There were a number of extraordinary expenses during the year

- New pension scheme set up - £2,547.
- Expenses relating to putting the property at 48 Elmwood Avenue on the market - £2,897
- Investment in IT and accounting software - £1,302
- Writing off brought forward float balances - £1,407

A detailed Income & Expenditure Statement for 2008, together with approved Budget forecasts for the period 2009 - 2012 will be available from the Administration office at 48 Elmwood Avenue after the 2nd of April 2009.

## INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

**Robert Cochran** (Chairperson since 2002)



A key goal for ICCSI is to foster the setting up, and then to act as the oversight committee for, ecumenical projects which address specific social issues. Plans were submitted to the Inter-Church Committee at the end of the year with a view to further strengthen that focus as we move forward into 2009 and beyond. This is predicated on ICCSI's belief in the importance and value of maximising Churches working together on social issues as much as possible.

Several of the existing projects operating under the umbrella of ICCSI have continued to make good progress during 2008.

Eco-Congregation Ireland (with its own website at [www.ecocongregationireland.org](http://www.ecocongregationireland.org)) is managed by a group of key people with relevant responsibility within the participating churches (at present Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, Religious Society of Friends). ECI is working with the churches at both national and local level to deepen the awareness of a theology of creation as well as practical attention to environmental issues with church life. A growing number of local churches have become involved, either formally or informally, with the scheme. With the receipt of some external funding, ECI has taken on a part-time communications officer during 2008 to further promote the work and message of ECI within the churches and beyond. This has allowed a level of activity not possible by the voluntary ECI committee alone. If funding permits, it is hoped to continue this role on an on-going basis, and also develop a range of resource and promotional material for local churches.

Also operating under the auspices of ICCSI is the **Parish-based Integration Project**, financially supported by the Office of the Minister for Integration in Dublin. This project, which is for three years up to the end of 2009, continues to enhance its web site with a large amount of relevant resource material (see [www.iccsi.ie](http://www.iccsi.ie)). The Guidelines for local parish integration activities produced last year have now been expanded into a resource booklet, with case studies etc., available in both print form and on-line from the website. As well as the continuing work directly with local congregations, increasingly the aims of the project are being achieved by links to relevant bodies (e.g. diocesan groups) with the churches, or assisting other bodies (e.g. Dublin City Council) to work effectively with churches in promoting integration activities. The project was also instrumental in facilitating a new migrant support centre in Balbriggan, where for the first time a partnership of CMS, VRC and HSE came together to respond to practical needs of migrants as well as exploring similar situations in other parts of the country. This reinforces the point already made about the importance and value of churches working together and, where appropriate, pooling resources for key issues, such as arises in relation to migration. In addition to this work, AICCMR (the All Ireland Churches Consultative Meeting on Racism) produced during the year a Directory of Migrant-led Churches and immigrant chaplaincies throughout Ireland.

ICCSI continues to examine the area of socially responsible investment. It is one of the sponsoring bodies for the ECCR (Ecumenical Council on Corporate Responsibility) meeting in Dublin in March 2009.

**ALL-IRELAND CHURCHES' CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON RACISM (AICCMR)****Dr. Scott Boldt (Chair)**

In 2008, the AICCMR, working under the auspices of ICCSI, has pursued its role within the inter-church structures of providing a voice and a challenge to churches to address racism, to respond positively in 'welcoming the stranger' and to embrace the emerging inter-church and demographic realities of newcomers to Ireland.

The revised and enhanced resource booklet for churches, *Inter-cultural Insights: Christian reflections on racism, hospitality and identity from the island of Ireland*, was published and disseminated in May; it is available in full on [www.irishchurches.org](http://www.irishchurches.org) as well as on other church links.

Preliminary work by members of the group led to the commissioning of research on migrant-led churches and chaplaincies in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. This resulted in the publication of a directory which provides not only a valuable resource and comprehensive snap-shot of the situation, but also challenges the 'established' churches to recognise and respond to this reality. The twin launches (Fr. Irenaeus du Plessis in Belfast and Minister for Integration, Conor Lenihan in Dublin) attracted a wide cross-section of people and significant media interest (BBC, RTE and local radio, the Irish Times, Newsletter, Irish Catholic, Church of Ireland Gazette, Presbyterian Herald, the Universe and regional papers). The Directory is available on-line ([www.irishchurches.org](http://www.irishchurches.org)) and there is a facility for updating and adding to it.

Final work is being done on the revision, updating and resource development of *What the Bible says about the Stranger*. This is due for publication and re-release in spring 2009. As in previous years, selected members have served on the advisory group for the Parish-based Integration Project (PIP) of ICCSI.

In the light of evolving structural considerations of the IICM, the group has been examining its aims and objectives and discerning its role. The group is of the view that its work remains relevant and important. It continues both to operate on an extremely modest budget and to attract outside funding for its initiatives and activities. It looks forward to continuing its work and developments in 2009.

**WOMEN'S LINK REPORT TO I.C.C. 2008****Joyce Bond (Hon. Secretary)**

Mrs. Winnie Moffett  
President

Fellowship Day 2008 was held at the Moyallon Centre near Portadown in April. Rosemary Calvert, Society of Friends, spoke of the vision and history of the centre. Delegates were afforded the opportunity to visit the Meeting House.

Our Fellowship Day theme was '*Who is my Neighbour*'. The Keynote speaker was Rev Canon Katharine Poulton, rector of a downtown Dublin parish. She exercises ministry in her parish with elderly and young people, with those who are in hospitals, in prisons, and with immigrants. She explained the difficulties immigrants face in society and told of the vulnerability of people who become caught up with drugs and find themselves in prison. She said that in welcoming people into our communities and churches the Church has much to say and give to outsiders. Sue said that the Church has to stand for justice and the help of non-judgmental volunteers is so important. The Discovery Choir in Dublin with its music and fellowship has meant so much to black and white people.

Delegates discussed the challenge to help people from outside our communities feel welcome in our churches. Captain Miriam Irwin, (Salvation Army), gave an excellent Epilogue. Mrs Winnie Moffett (President, Women's Link) thanked Mrs Roberta Thompson (outgoing President) for her valued work and guidance during her three-year term of office.

Our committee is composed of representatives from women's Church organisations and meets in both Belfast and Dublin. We would like to extend an invitation to women's representatives from all denominations who are members of ICC to join our forum for discussion and exchange of ideas on issues that impact on our lives, as we work together on matters concerning the teaching of Christ, relative to life in the home, the Church, the community and the world.

The **2009 Fellowship Day** will be held at Edenderry Methodist Church, Portadown, on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March and the theme will be '*The Challenge of Change*'.

The 4 Nations meeting hosted by Churches Together in England was held in Birmingham in October, its theme was '*The Rainbow of Promise*'. Representatives met to discuss women's issues, to exchange ideas and concerns in each of the four nations and to elect 4 administrators for the Pauline Webb Fund. Lucy Berry (CHASTE) spoke about Sex Trafficking and there was a visit to a Church centre in Birmingham where assistance is given to immigrants who fall outside the help of government agencies.

Women's Link greatly appreciates the help of Mr Michael Earle and the support received from ICC.