

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND COUNCIL FOR MISSION – REPORT 2026

MEMBERSHIP (AS OF JANUARY 2026)

ATTENDANCE FIGURE FOR JUNE 2025 – JANUARY 2026

Rt Rev Ferran Glenfield (3)	House of Bishops / Kilmore
Rev Tim Wright (Hon Chair) (3)	Synod
Rev Colin McConaghie (Hon Secretary) (3)	Synod
Sarah Taylor (Hon. Treasurer) (2)	Kilmore and Elphin
Ms Emma Lynch (1)	AMS (stepped down September 2025)
Ms Jenny Smyth (2)	AMS (stepped down September 2025)
Rev Dr Paddy McGlinchey (2)	CITI
Rev Dr Laurence Graham (1)	Methodist Church
Ven Paul Mooney (2)	Cashel (stepped down November 2025)
Rev Kingsley Sutton (2)	Cork
Rev Jonathan McFarland (4)	Derry and Raphoe
Ven Andrew Orr (0)	Synod
Rev Isaac Hannah (2)	Synod
Mrs Jill Lester (3)	Connor
Mrs Hazel Speares (3)	Mothers' Union (stepped down January 2026)
David Frizelle (4)	Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe
Rev William Jeffrey (4)	Clogher
Rev Henry Blair (0)	AMS (stepped down June 2025)
Mrs Hilary McClay (3)	Bishops' Appeal
Kelley Bermingham (1)	Meath and Kildare
Mr Luke Hawkins (2)	CIYD
Rev Adam Pullen (3)	Synod
Rev Richard Balmer (2)	AMS (Joined September 2025)
Mr Alan Cousins (2)	AMS (Joined November 2025)

According to the constitution of the Council, each diocese is entitled to nominate a representative and an alternate. Alternates attend when the principal representative is unable to. Some members represent more than one possible constituency.

The Council for Mission met four times from June 2025 to January 2026.

These meetings were a combination of in person in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute and online via Zoom.

CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP SINCE GENERAL SYNOD 2025

There have been a number of changes to membership of the Council since General Synod 2025.

Very Rev Henry Blair

The CfM congratulates Henry on his appointment as Dean of Down and Incumbent of Down Cathedral and thanks him for his commitment to the work of the Council. Henry brought a wealth of missional experience especially through his leadership of Sharing of Ministry Overseas (SOMA)

Ven Paul Mooney

The CfM wants to thank Archdeacon Paul for his longstanding membership of the Council and we wish him God's blessings in his retirement. Paul brought to the Council a wealth of experience of the church in the Far East and broadened our understanding of the worldwide church and then 5 Marks of Mission

Ms Emma Lynch

Emma leaves the CfM but will continue her involvement with us through her role with TEAR Fund. She has served the Council faithfully and kept the needs of the poor and marginalised and the need to transform society as a key part of our thinking.

Ms Jenny Smyth

Jenny has retired from CMS Ireland and has left a big hole to fill. Consistently she has faithfully been international in advocating for mission that is both global and local. Her connections with church on this island as worldwide have kept the Council focussed on the task that is still unfinished.

Ms Hazel Speares

Hazel has represented the Mothers' Union on CfM since June 2022 giving us a valuable insight of the work of MU in Ireland and Worldwide. We thank Hazel for her time on CfM and look forward to having a new MU rep in place shortly.

Rev Richard Balmer

Richard has joined the Council as an AMS representative. As the Ireland Team leader with Crosslinks he will continue to help focus our thoughts on the church beyond these shores, church planting across the world, organising mission trips and the importance of high-quality Bible teaching, evangelism and mission.

Mr Alan Cousins

Alan joins the Council as an AMS representative. With experience in senior leadership and a passion for the Middle East and North Africa he brings energy and enthusiasm as well as his commitment to broadcasting with SAT-7.

Rev Colin McConaghie (Council Secretary)

Colin has intimated his desire to step down from his role as Council Secretary. He has been a faithful servant to the CfM bringing wisdom, enthusiasm and a servant heart. His hard work has enabled the Council to undertake several new initiatives, and he has been constant in his desire to see the church grow and engage with local culture and the worldwide church. During the last year he undertook a mission trip with Habitat for Humanity, was awarded this year's 'Voice for Shelter.'

We are grateful to all of the members who have contributed to the work of the Council for Mission over the years.

We continue to use the Anglican 5 marks of mission to focus our activities, which are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (Tell)
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers (Teach)
3. To respond to human need by loving service (Tend)
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation (Transform)
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth (Treasure)

(Bonds of Affection-1984 ACC-6 p49, Mission in a Broken World-1990 ACC-8 p101)

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:
COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

The aim of the CfM has always been to represent the wide breadth of the Church of Ireland with representation from each Diocese alongside members elected by General Synod and representatives of the Association of Missionary Societies.

We would encourage those Dioceses that aren't currently represented to prayerfully consider nominating someone to represent them on the Council.

PODCASTS

The Council has published 5 high quality podcasts through the year and they are available on all podcast platforms as Mission Matters, the Church of Ireland Council for Mission podcast. At the start of this year the Council moved to a different hosting platform, but existing podcast can be found easily, and last year's editions are still available.

The Council seeks to hold conversations that are of interest to the church at home in both jurisdictions as well as overseas mission stories. This year the topics covered were a discussion with Mr Chris Wright of Langham Partnership about the five marks of mission, Mr Luke Hawkins of CIYD explored the faith of young people at Summer Madness, Bishop Wilson of South Sudan on his peace mission and Bishop Hassan on Sudan on proclaiming the gospel through suffering shared mission their contexts, and the Quiet Revival with the Bible Society helped understand something of what seems to be happening across these island and beyond.

GLOBAL MISSION PARTNER

In 2024 CfM started a further new initiative with our first Global Mission Partner as we welcomed Rev Arsène Mafurebe Pastor of St Marc's Parish, Nyabutusti, Gitega Diocese, Burundi.

Given the success of the project CfM decided to continue to promote global partnerships through both receiving and sending mission partners who would both bring and share ideas and experiences as well as learning from their hosts in the ever-changing world of global mission. the partnerships enable CfM to foster global church relationships across the Anglican Communion, which helps to advocate the equality and complementary nature of mission at home and throughout the world

In partnership with AMS the Council invited Rev Frank Bernardi, Rector of St George's Anglican Church in Tunis and an associate mission partner with one of its members, the Intercontinental Church Society to come to Ireland as our 2025 project partner. Unfortunately, due to personal circumstance the project was postponed until February of this year.

Rev Bernardi shepherds both an English-speaking expatriate community and a local Arab-speaking congregation, from a Muslim background. His ministry is driven by a twin passion to foster contextualised and culturally authentic expressions of worship, and to develop indigenous leaders. Before moving overseas, Frank served in urban ministry and church planting in the inner city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

He and his wife, Anne, are married with four children and have committed their lives to sharing the Gospel in North Africa. Anne leads an economic empowerment initiative, addressing one of the region most pressing needs - access to employment and job training.

CfM will present a report of Frank's time in Ireland at General Synod. The Council is grateful to AMS for their support in organising this visit, Mr Alan Cousins of SAT-7 for undertaking much of the practical arrangements and to CMSI for sharing their expertise and practical experience

2026 will see the first of our sending projects as we offer the opportunity for a recently ordained clergyperson to travel overseas to meet with and share ideas with fellow Christian communities. As we prepare this report plans are being made to send Rev Mike Buchanan, Curate Assistant Rathfarnham Parish, Dublin to Cairo in Egypt in partnership with CMS Ireland in summer of this year.

Egypt is geographically placed as a key area through which displaced people flee to Europe or Asia. It is also a safe haven for people fleeing from war in surrounding nations, presently significantly from Sudan. Christians in Cairo have, over the past three decades, been responding to newcomers in very large numbers coming to make their home in Cairo or stay there for short periods before moving on. The Anglican Church in Cairo therefore has significant experience of reaching out to and compassionately caring for refugees and migrant populations.

We believe that a Sabbatical in Cairo offers a fresh and encouraging insight into how the church can respond to the opportunities and challenges of immigration. Such a placement would include time serving with the team at Refuge Egypt, hearing the stories of the varied groups of people who benefit from the skills building programmes and food bank there. You would also visit the medical outreach units specifically designed by the Diocese to serve migrant populations, take part in the church services for different language groups, offer encouragement at the refugee schools developed by the Diocese and have the opportunity to learn from those who are responsible for the strategic development of this outreach to refugees.

The Sabbatical could also include teaching at the Nuba Mountain Bible Institute which supports clergy from Sudan, contributions to the academic life of students at the Alexandria School of Theology and learning time with the Centre for Christian Muslim Understanding.

We look forward to Rev Mike Buchanan reporting back from this project at General Synod 2027 as well as sharing his experience with the CfM and others.

GENERAL SYNOD MISSION LUNCH

After a break of a few years the Council invites everyone at Synod to the Mission Lunch during the lunch break in business of on Friday 8 May in the hotel. Mrs Hilary McClay of Bishop's Appeal as well as the Council Chair are, at the time of submission finalising the invitation to a speaker who it is hoped will engage the heart and mind as well as providing food for the stomach.

BURSARIES

The CfM continues to offer a bursary grant to support ordinands from the Theological Institute who chose to go overseas as part of their placements. In 2025 CfM took the decision to widen this bursary to include those in training for Pioneer Ministry.

In 2025 we awarded a bursary to Rev Ross Barrett, the licensed Pioneer Minister in Cashel, Ferns & Ossory. Ross is ministering in the Lismore Union of Parishes, Co. Waterford and is based in St. Anne's, Cappoquin. He is actively building new relationships, reaching out, and serving people in the local area, with the long-term hope of gathering a new worshipping community. This renewed expression of church, one that offers sustained support, nurtures faith and hope, and helps build resilience in the community. The bursary will support Ross in overseas mission in the Philippines and other places which forms a part of his training programme.