

**The  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY  
1980**

**6th-9th May  
VICTORIA HALL,  
Sheffield**

**REPORTS  
TO ASSEMBLY**

The United Reformed Church in England & Wales  
86 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RT





## The United Reformed Church

---

### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES and other papers submitted to the GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHEFFIELD, 6th-9th MAY, 1980

#### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee met in accordance with the agreed pattern on the first Thursdays of July, November and February.
2. The Moderator gave interesting verbal reports on his visits to the Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Union of Welsh Independents.
3. **Future Assemblies** On the proposal of the Business Committee the following arrangements were made for future meetings of the General Assembly:
  - 1981 The Pavilion, Bournemouth: April 27th — May 1st.
  - 1982 The Colston Hall, Bristol: May 17th — 21st.
  - 1983 The Dome, Brighton: May 23rd — 27th.

The Committee endorsed the proposal that the meetings in 1981 be held over five days and it should be noted that all the dates provide for the meetings to extend from Monday to Friday. Thanks were expressed to the Provinces which by their invitations have made these arrangements possible.

4. **Pre-Assembly Business** On the initiative of Bishop Leslie Newbigin and the Revd J. Taylor the Committee adopted two proposals with regard to the way business to be discussed in Assembly could be given effective consideration in Provincial Synods in advance of the Assembly:

- (a) The Executive requests the Departmental Central Committees, when in communication with the Provinces about Pre-Assembly Business, to bear in mind the limited time available, and to indicate if there is a major matter in their field which they would like to see discussed widely before Assembly.
- (b) The Executive requests the Synods to continue to make time available for unhurried discussion of at least one or two of the major issues coming up to Assembly.

5. **Representation at Assembly** The Committee agreed that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should be invited to send three representatives to the Assembly rather than the two suggested in the paper on representation accepted by the Assembly.

6. **Communications Secretary** At the instance of the World Church and Mission Department the Executive appointed Mrs Helen Lidgett as Communications Secretary in succession to Mrs Janet Chesney. Mrs Lidgett was appointed to serve on a part-time basis from July 5th, 1979 to August 31st, 1982. Arrangements were authorised whereby help could be provided in some regions to make up for the part-time nature of Mrs Lidgett's appointment.

7. **Rural Consultant** The Executive received reports during the year of proposals to appoint a rural consultant and gave a general welcome to the proposal that this might be carried out in conjunction with a part-time pastorate in Llanidloes.

**8. Provincial Moderator** It was noted that the present term of service of the Revd Douglas G. Stewart as Moderator of the North-Western Province concludes one year before the date of his retirement and at the request of the North-Western Province the Executive agreed to the extension of his present term by one year terminating on August 31st, 1981.

**9. Pensions** On the recommendation of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee it was agreed that in respect of service given before 1971 by ex-Congregational ministers the rate of pension benefit payable from the C.M.P.F be raised from £6 per annum for each year of service with effect from January 1st, 1980 (and the corresponding widows' benefit from the C.M.P.F shall be raised from £4.50 per annum to £9 per annum).

Notice was given at the February meeting that proposals for the amalgamation of the two pension funds are now ready for implementation, subject to the agreement of the members who were being kept informed.

**10. Maintenance of the Ministry** The Assembly having asked for a revision of the figure below which churches become voluntary contributors to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund, it was agreed that this should apply in the case of churches which cannot be grouped and whose membership is less than fifty and whose assessment would be less than £1,000.

The Executive was kept in touch with the preparation of the new Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration, now to be submitted for the approval of the Assembly, and with its agreement to be implemented in 1981.

At the February meeting the Hon. Treasurer reported that the Fund had ended 1979 with a credit balance.

**11. Methodist/Ecumenical Hymnbook** In accordance with the resolution of the Assembly, the Doctrine and Worship Committee appointed four representatives to serve on the Committee set up by the Methodist Conference to prepare for the publication of a new Hymnbook. In the light of their report which was considered by the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee and which indicated a genuine openness on the part of the Methodist Church to make this an ecumenical venture, their continued involvement was encouraged, and Mr F.H. Brooman, the Hon. Treasurer, was asked to consult with the Methodist Committee dealing with the financial arrangements, and to advise the appropriate Committees as to the share the URC might take in the cost of publication.

**12. Appointments** A number of groups were established in accordance with the Assembly decisions to bring nominations for several appointments. On their report the following were agreed:

**Church Life Secretary** The Revd Michael Graham Dunford for seven years with effect from the Assembly of 1980, but for the first four months on a time basis mutually acceptable to Mr Dunford, his congregation and the Church Life Department.

**Deputy General Secretary** The Revd Boris Anderson with effect from Assembly 1980 until the expiry of his present term of service in 1983, but noting Mr Anderson's willingness that the matter be re-opened should future changes in the structure of the Office make this desirable.

**Youth Leadership Training Officers** The appointment was reported of Mr Roger Tolman and Mr R.J. Forster as Youth Leadership Training Officers in the East and West Midlands and the Northern and Yorkshire Provinces respectively.

**Directors** Directors were appointed on request from the Provinces and County Unions to serve on the Incorporated Unions of Sussex, Durham and Northumberland, Dorset, London, Lancashire, Cheshire, Shropshire, Somerset, South Wales, North Wales and Monmouthshire, and on the Dunn Trust.

Other appointments made to Committees will be included in the report of the Nominations Committee to the Assembly.

**13. Thanks to Hon. Treasurer** The Committee at its meeting in November expressed the thanks of the Church to Mr Leslie Palmer, CBE, for the distinguished service he had rendered

as Hon. Treasurer of the United Reformed Church since its inception and for the way in which the time, skill and experience which he had given in abundance had enabled the Finance Department to come through the times of adjustment and difficulty experienced since 1972.

**14. Churches of Christ** At its November meeting the Executive authorised the Liaison Committee with the Churches of Christ to proceed with the preparation of a revised scheme of unification with the Re-formed Association of the Churches of Christ then coming into being, and to arrange for the proposals to be sent to Districts and Synods as soon as they could be made available, thus enabling the Assembly to proceed with the necessary revisions of the Basis of Union in 1980 and 1981. In February it was reported that the documents were expected from the printers and would be distributed. The Executive approved the proposal that the opportunity provided by the required Act of Parliament be taken to make some detailed revisions to the 1972 Act.

**15. The Revd Philip Morgan** The Executive sent a message of congratulation and good wishes to the Revd Philip Morgan, the General Secretary of the Churches of Christ, on his nomination to be General Secretary of the British Council of Churches.

**16. BBC World Service** At the instance of the World Church and Mission Department, a letter was sent to the Prime Minister asking that proposed cuts in the World Service of the BBC should not be made and at the next meeting a letter was read indicating that the Government had revised its policy in this regard and the cuts would not now be made.

**17. BCC Report on South Africa** At the November meeting attention was drawn to the report to be put before the BCC Autumn Assembly giving detailed consideration to the situation in South Africa and urging a policy of progressive disengagement until the present apartheid system is abandoned. In February it was reported that these proposals had been adopted by the Council by a substantial majority.

The BCC report 'Our Response to Racism' was also drawn to the attention of the Executive.

**18. Seceding Churches** In response to a question concerning the case of Eston, the Chairman of the Applications Committee reported that since the Charity Commissioners take the view that they have no power to establish schemes, his Committee did not propose to bring any cases of churches wishing to secede to the 1980 Assembly, unless those legal difficulties raised by the Charity Commissioners have been resolved.

**19. Sickness Benefit** The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee wish to establish the principle that ministers are entitled to sick leave up to a period of six months, but that after three months every such case should be reviewed in consultation with the Provincial Moderator involved, in order to establish the position should the full period be exceeded.

**20. Trust Bodies** The Executive supported the plans of the Finance and Administration Department to bring the workings of the Presbyterian Church of England Trust and the Congregational Union of England and Wales Incorporated into close relationship by the adoption of new Articles and by moving towards a situation in which each Trust Committee would consist of the same members. In pursuit of this policy it appointed Messrs F.H. Brooman, G. Hearn, R.V. MacFadyen, T.W. MacDonald and A.J.M. Olsen to be Directors of CUEW Inc.

The Executive also took steps to encourage those Provinces setting up Provincial Trust Bodies to complete their proposals in time for the Assembly of 1980 in order that they may be included in an application for a Home Office Exempting Regulation.

The Minute Book of the Executive Committee will be available at the Assembly.

A.L. Macarthur, *Clerk*

**Thanks to the General Secretary — The Revd Arthur L. Macarthur, MA., M.Litt.**

The General Assembly records its thanks to the Revd Arthur Leitch Macarthur, MA., M.Litt., on the occasion of his retirement, for his distinguished service as General Secretary and Clerk of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church since its inception in 1972 and of the Presbyterian Church of England from 1960–72. Mr Macarthur's contribution to the URC has been outstanding. He shared creatively in the long process of negotiation which preceded

union and since union he has been one of its chief exponents and apologists. His work as General Secretary in this formative period has been marked by warm friendships, generous hospitality, clear guidance, firm convictions and overall a real concern for people.

He has represented the URC on the British Council of Churches and served as one of its Vice-Presidents. He is Moderator-elect of the Free Church Federal Council and he is recognised ecumenically as a wise and trusted Free Church Leader. The Assembly thanks God for his leadership and prays for continued blessings on him and his wife in their retirement ministry.

Robert O. Latham, *Moderator*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: APPENDIX 1.

### DEPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd A.G. Burnham

*Secretary:* The Revd G.H. Roper

1. **Quotas** When Assembly established the Deployment Committee in 1975 it charged the Committee with the determination of a fair quota for each province and made the provinces responsible for allocating their quotas to specific viable whole-time pastorates. The first set of quotas were to be achieved by 1979. By the end of 1979 the picture was as follows:

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	Total
Quota for 1979	77	87	62	74	61	80	64	64	77	93	111	56	906
Actual whole- Time Pastorates	74	87	63	68½	60	78½	66½	60	85	101½	117	53½	914½

*(halves in the above totals represent whole-time United Reformed ministers engaged partly in local church work and partly in special ministries, or else in ecumenical situations where the ministry is expected to be supplied alternately by the United Reformed Church and other denominations).*

There has been considerable progress towards the quotas set, but the failure of some provinces to reduce pastorates leaves an excessive number of vacancies, especially in the North, Midlands and Wales. If other denominations were not supplying an unduly large number of the shared situations, our vacancies would have been even more numerous.

2. **Special Ministries** These appointments recognised by the Committee are mainly based on congregations (although to begin with there may be no congregation at all, the first minister will seek to build one up). The 'special' status outside the deployment quotas can only be temporary. The Committee agrees dates and procedures for review with the provinces concerned, but will normally expect that after a reasonable period of years the province must include such ministry within its normal quota so as to allow the creation of further pioneering ministries elsewhere. The other type of special ministries, chaplaincies (whether in higher education, industry or other fields) are not necessarily temporary. The Committee will nonetheless review the 'special' status of each one periodically. We intend to limit chaplaincies to about one third of the total of thirty full-time Special Ministry appointments.

3. **Part-time ministries** The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee have shared with us their concern that since part-time ministries are created at the initiative of provinces and districts the expenditure on their stipends cannot be adequately forecast. We do not believe that the technique of allocation by deployment quota is applicable to part-time ministers, whose place of residence is determined by secular occupation or retirement home. Discussions are continuing in order to find an acceptable solution to this problem.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: APPENDIX 2

### FINAL REPORT OF PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES GROUP

1. The Group was set up by the Executive Committee at its meeting in February 1978. It was given the following terms of reference:

- i) To examine the actual and potential resources of the Church and to relate them to its major objectives. The group should, therefore, review past trends in income and expenditure and on the basis of best guesses do a projection of probabilities for the next and the subsequent five year period.

Where gaps between resources and tasks become apparent, the group should display the options, consider the pros and cons and make recommendations.

- ii) To consider the various points of control over resources, local, provincial and national, and indicate ways in which its proposals can be implemented.
- iii) To conduct this enquiry taking account of resources, human, financial and in property, and endeavour to see these in relation to each other and to the total mission of the Church.

2. An interim report was presented by the group to the 1979 Assembly under the title *Consider These Things*\* and remitted to churches, district councils and synods for consideration. From the responses received by the group it is clear that our interim report has been welcomed by all sections of the church. It has given rise to thorough discussion of the church's objectives and strategies as we enter a new decade. Many churches, district councils and synods have established their own planning groups and the work done on a national level and reported in *Consider These Things* is being followed through, as we hoped, at local and regional level. We have been encouraged by this response, have met now on 24 occasions mostly after office hours and once in a long session spread over two days.

3. In presenting this final report, we wish to thank the many individuals and groups in the United Reformed Church and outside, who have prepared papers for us, compiled statistics, answered questionnaires, 'vetted' our work and helped us with this comprehensive review of the URC in the '80s. *REFORM* gave our work a splendid boost in its September 1979 issue. Mr and Mrs Stephen Hood of St Andrew's Cheam spent much of their Christmas and New Year holidays annotating the replies received in response to our interim report, many in great detail and at length. The Revd A.L. Macarthur and Mr L.R. Palmer have attended many of our meetings and more recently The Revd B.G. Thorogood and Mr F.H. Brooman have shared in our discussions. The Provincial monitoring groups have kept a watchful but friendly eye on us throughout this exercise and we have greatly valued their partnership. The response to our requests for help, however wearisome has been speedy, generous and sympathetic. We have been fortunate indeed to work in such a congenial, forward-looking and hopeful company. In submitting this report, our prayer is that it will, under God, give rise to and set forward a great hope throughout the URC as it moves into the '80s.

### WHAT IS THE URC IN BUSINESS FOR IN THE 'EIGHTIES?

4. A year ago the Group proposed three objectives for the URC. After further thought we now offer them in this revised form:

- i) To continue and to develop the Christian worship and life within the fellowship of the church which grows out of the 'reformed tradition'.
- ii) To study and declare the Christian gospel, relating its teaching to contemporary society so that the power of God may change human life.
- iii) To maintain and develop relations with other Christian Churches throughout the world and to promote Christian unity.

\*Representatives to the Assembly are asked to consult *The Record of Assembly 1979* where *Consider These Things* will be found following page 42.



5. The relative importance of these objectives may vary from time to time and place to place. But all three should be constantly before the church. They should not be played off against one another. Together they form one task – the task of being God's people, engaged in God's service, in God's world today and tomorrow. A fuller, theological statement of the objectives of the URC is in the Basis (para 11 p.12). If in the next ten years every local church, district council and synod could more completely embody the insights, experience and convictions of this foundation text, the URC would be a much stronger and more serviceable instrument in God's hand.

#### **A note on the "reformed tradition"**

6. The use of this phrase in our interim report was questioned. Some felt it represented a static view of the church and tied it to the past. Others believed the phrase would have no meaning for our members in view of their mixed denominational antecedents. We have sought advice from those who know more about these things and have decided to retain the phrase because (i) it indicates our parentage in the Reformation and especially the Reformed element in it, and our continuing links with the Reformed family of churches. This has given us an understanding of the gospel and a churchmanship distinct from the Anglican, Roman or Orthodox traditions; (ii) it is a constant challenge to face the need for further reformation as expressed in the tag 'semper reformanda'; and (iii) because it connects with the name of our church as United REFORMED. The phrase, 'reformed tradition' reminds us of our debt to our past, our duty to the present and our contribution to the Great Church of the future.

#### **THE ENVIRONMENT**

7. It will become clear as this report proceeds, that the group lays very great stress on the need for the URC to understand the nature of the environment in which it lives and the society to which it must address its gospel and serve in the name of Jesus Christ. The Church cannot afford to work on the wrong assumptions.

8. Having decided what it is in business for, the next priority of the URC (to continue the commercial illustration) is to research the market. What sort of society are we a part of? What are its needs and how can the church meet those needs?

9. We attempted in *Consider These Things* to describe the kind of society in which the URC will have to work in the next ten years. Broadly we call it a secular society. That is not to say that the society is devoid of religious experience and needs. It means that these are no longer related as they once were to the Christian Church. Our society is pluriform. It has many faiths living within it and competing for acceptance. The common religion or philosophy which used to bind us together is no longer self-evident and has to compete with other religions and cultures. The society is politically volatile and subject to continuing change both of which features give rise to great pressures. Ours is an ageing society both in the sense that it has more old people than young people in it and that it is the result of a long historical development.

10. In such a society the Christian Church has to earn the right to be heard and must not be surprised if its faith and way of life are challenged. Still more the church must search its own life and pray and work to be a better servant of the Lord whose name it bears.

#### **RESOURCES**

11. A detailed review of resources with trends and projections for the next ten years was given in *"Consider These Things"*. Additional information for the past year is given where appropriate, and confirms the trend to which we drew attention. We have just two further comments to make on the resources of the URC.

#### **SPIRITUAL RESOURCES**

12. These are far and away the most important of the church's resources as it moves into the '80s. The range and power of these spiritual resources is discovered in worship, bible study and life together in the fellowship. The resources are appropriated as the undeserved grace of God, in prayer, witness and social action. Each of these activities needs to be regularly assessed and adjusted to ensure that it is the resources of the Spirit and the Gospel that control and direct the life of the church and not simply the spirit of our time. The quality of the Christian life can only be lifted by facing the challenges and promises of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit. The

Basis of Union (Manual pp.11–16) offers a very good exposition of our resources in God. It deserves careful study and discussion in all our congregations.

## PEOPLE

13. A year ago we reported a year book membership in January 1978 of 161,691 members, 77,423 children and 13,054 teachers. The corresponding figures for January 1979 are 157,380 members, 73,867 children and 12,770 teachers. The decline in membership for this twelve-month period (adjusted for proper comparison) is 3.2%, slightly below average for recent years (4%) but above our 'optimistic' projection of 2%. Further details of these trends are given graphically in Appendices 1 and 2.

14. More disturbing is the result of our national survey of membership conducted last autumn (see Appendices 3 and 7). It may reliably be stated that in every 100 members in the URC 34 are male and 66 are female. 44 are Old Age Pensioners and only 25 are below the age of 45. Out of every 100 members an average of 45 attends the morning service and 19 the evening. In addition another 18 per hundred adults who are not members are at service on Sunday morning and 6 in the evening. Similarly 32 children per hundred adults attend morning service. We must stress that these are average figures but the greater preponderance in the older age groups and the small proportion of children and young people who share in worship must be a matter for the most urgent concern for us all.

## PRIORITIES FOR THE URC IN THE EIGHTIES

15. What strategies must we as one part of the people of God pursue in the next ten years in order to achieve our objectives? From time to time these must change – out-dated strategies are no longer right for the 'Eighties. Also from time to time certain strategies assume a greater importance than others. We now set out the priorities for the URC in the 'Eighties, as we see them, relating them to the three objectives.

**First Objective: To continue and to develop the Christian worship and life within the fellowship of the church which grows out of the 'reformed tradition'.**

## WORSHIP

16. The worship of God in the Name of Jesus Christ is the unique task of the Christian Churches. We in the URC have our own inherited role in this service, but we share with others the responsibility to make our worship contemporary, vital and compelling. In fact the largest regular gatherings of the local congregation are for Sunday morning service, though it is regrettable that so many confirmed members are not present on most Sundays. Elders' and Church Meetings must go on wrestling with the question – WHY?

17. In the Church there is now a welcome diversity in styles of worship. We ought to exploit this diversity, as a matter of policy, to enrich the experience of worship throughout our membership by enabling as many as possible to share in all forms of worship. One way of doing this might be for a group of three or four churches to organise their life in one centre where each month there would be a major act of worship with sacraments and great music, well publicised. On the other Sundays there would be group meetings, dealing with aspects of the monthly theme, chiefly in members' houses. We wonder whether anything like this has been tried in the URC. District Councils should look actively for other opportunities for development in worship patterns that would be suitable for their particular local churches.

[Resolution 2]

18. Because Sunday morning is the time when the largest number of members and adherents is gathered, it is important to seize this time for the systematic upbuilding of the faith of the church. What are we sure about? About God and His action in Jesus Christ? About man and the meaning of his life? About the Creation and its destiny? And how do we express our sure faith in the language of our day and not in some "foreign" language?

19. We suggest that each congregation should set aside a lengthy period – possibly from Christmas to Easter, each year, when the main theme of worship and group activity will be "What We Believe". This will mean that the Bible; the classical creeds and statements of faith; contemporary challenges to the faith and intellectual difficulties will have to be faced with

honesty and openness to the Holy Spirit. During such a period it would be appropriate to give an invitation to commitment to Jesus Christ and his church. The 'resource person' for such a project will usually be the minister. The Church Life Department and Church Life Groups in Provinces and Districts will also be able to indicate resource materials and find help in setting up the project particularly where congregations have to rely upon a different person to lead worship week after week.

[Resolution 3]

## FELLOWSHIP

20. In *Consider These Things* two questions were asked about the membership of the church. The first sought an understanding of the meaning of membership and the place of adherents in the fellowship. The replies received defined membership along traditional lines in terms of baptism and confirmation. Adherents are also seen as having a place in the work of the church. It may be that the proportion of adherents to members is increasing but we have no means of checking this.

21. The other question in *Consider These Things* had to do with the size of the fellowship, with reference to its quality and witness, the cost of buildings, etc., and the cost of ministry. Most of the replies gave a figure between 150 and 300 members as the optimum size, but all were sure that the quality of the fellowship is independent of numbers.

Small churches can be narrow, self-centred, divided and unwelcoming while large churches can be out-going, friendly and true centres of healing and reconciliation. The reverse can also be the case. The quality of the church's life turns much more on the question, How are we changed? Because Christian faith is such a transforming power this is an important question. The church should be able to see this power at work within its fellowship. To do so involves costly personal care, frankness and readiness for God's grace.

22. Our churches are divided in their attitude to small groups. Some find them an essential constituent of the modern church. Others have either had bad experiences of them or are fearful that they will lead to cliquishness and division. There certainly are dangers but provided the groups are well integrated into the life of the church, they are a source of new vitality. More attention should be given to the organisation of small groups, leadership training, the many roles they can play, and evaluation of their influence.

[Resolution 4]

23. Whether the URC grows or declines numerically in the next ten years, we should seek to attain through Jesus Christ the highest quality of life possible. It is often claimed that the smaller congregations of our time are more real Christian fellowships than the crowded congregations of a century ago. This may well be true but we still have a long way to go!

**Second Objective: To study and declare the Christian gospel, relating its teaching to contemporary society so that the power of God may change human life.**

## CHURCH GROWTH

24. The first and second objectives of the church are not to be treated as alternatives or rivals. Evangelism and community action will be abortive unless they are sustained by worship and fellowship. But worship and fellowship will be dull and sterile unless they are stimulated and informed by genuine encounter with the contemporary society. The members of the church must know the gospel for the 20th century and be articulate about it. Equally they must know contemporary society as it really is and not try to make do with some out-of-date assumptions about it. How well do we know both the gospel and the contemporary society?

25. The church is a partner with God in his mission. We have to study and relate the gospel to the society in which we live. God alone has the power to change that society into a greater likeness to His Kingdom. The present decline in the Church's numerical strength and the malaise afflicting its spirit, challenge us to look to our side of the partnership — not to try to take over God's part by adopting some of the tricks and techniques which often masquerade as evangelism.

26. The practical options before the URC in 1980 are:

- (a) To go on as we are, shrinking steadily and surely (see Appendix 1) or
- (b) To set targets for growth.

27. Some research undertaken in August 1979 covering 85% of the returns of membership for 1978 from the churches showed the following facts.

Deaths :	3,710
First admissions :	3,283
Transfers in :	3,899
Transfers out :	3,079
Deletions :	4,816
Nett loss :	4,423 — i.e. 3.2% of 85% of the membership.

Having regard to the age structure of the URC we can expect nearly 5,000 deaths per year over the next decade.

28. To set a target for say the next five years of levelling out our membership at its present figure of around 150,000 means e.g. that, first admissions will have to be lifted by around 5,000 above last year's figure of 3,283. This could also be stated as a target of one extra admission on confession of faith for every thirty members in the church. The first obvious direction in which to look for these new members is among the adherents estimated to be about 30,000 adults throughout our churches; among the teenagers in our Junior Churches and Youth Clubs, Guides, Scouts, Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade etc. said to be about another 80,000 at present. In most congregations there will also be a further group of people with more tenuous links with the church.

29. Set in this context a target of 5,000 new members each year over and above those already being confirmed and received by transfer is not impossible of achievement, yet, bearing in mind how long the decline has gone on the task is indeed difficult and daunting. Church meetings should be asked whether they dare adopt a target along the lines of one for every thirty over and above current replacements. To do so, means on one hand, risking failure to reach the target with the consequent need to let God deal with it, and, on the other, risking the pride that always threatens success and finding grace to be truly humble.

[Resolution 5]

30. We have tried to discover whether there are any prescriptions for growth among those churches which are growing numerically. The answers given are so varied and so contradictory that no simple proposals can be drawn from them. What works in one place does not work in another. Among the reasons for growth which churches give are "Members invite others"; "Parents of children started to come"; "The neighbourhood expanded"; "New minister"; "Stewardship Campaign". Very few attribute growth to "Evangelistic Activity", while some blame this for decline. In some churches growth is said to have been sudden, in some gradual, in a few that it has been sustained and in others that it has levelled out or stopped. We must be willing to keep trying, keep studying the gospel and relating it to our own bit of contemporary society in the conviction that God will use our dedication in his own good time.

31. The URC enters the 'Eighties with an opportunity to share with other denominations and Christian groups in the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism and the Church Growth movement which the Bible Society sponsors. This doesn't mean that success is just around the corner and that we can shut our eyes to current trends and where they lead. Every sort of evangelistic effort is mounted against the same national situation, viz., that only a segment of the population is within church influence. "Secularism" is still making inroads into this "religious" segment. The real challenge to evangelism is to reverse this trend and make inroads into the very large secular segment of our society. Well may the heart faint before such an enterprise — yet let us be confident God still has power "day by day" to add to our numbers those whom he is saving\*.

32. The challenge to confront the secular aspects of modern life with the gospel of new life in Jesus Christ presents another option to the URC in the 'Eighties. It is said by some that we must concentrate our resources where there is the best chance of success, where there already is growth and enthusiasm say in about 500 of our churches. What then of the vast areas from

\*A set of six papers on "Evangelism" available from World Church and Mission Dept. give extra help and offer suggestions on this section.

which we would then withdraw? And what about the areas from which we have already withdrawn (in company with most other Christians) and those we have never seriously entered yet? Inner city areas, new housing areas, development areas and immigrant areas all present themselves to us as places where the church should be. We must grasp the fact that Britain is now a multi-faith country with large communities of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jews. We cannot be content simply to let these groups have our redundant buildings. A dialogue must be undertaken and a mission engaged in. The urban task is just as demanding. Ought not a church which means serious business in the new decade to be directing some of its resources to these areas of outreach?

Perhaps we ought in the manner of the 18th and early 19th century Home Missionary Societies mounted in London and directed to the North and the West, to make a special appeal for new resources for this area of mission. If such a mission is to be mounted in earnest those sent on it will need the kind of special training given to our overseas missionaries.

33. Already we have thirty 'special ministries' supported by our churches through the MOM Fund. Must we peg the number there? Unfortunately for some in the church these thirty special ministries represent a fringe interest and even a threat to the traditional pastoral ministry. For others they are a key element in the overall mission of the church in contemporary society. The URC has to choose between the options expressed in these two opposing attitudes. To help it to choose well each special ministry needs to be monitored carefully and its problems and successes shared frankly and sympathetically within Province and District.

34. Let us quote from a statement we received from a group of our ministerial students: "There is a positive vision among us, of the minister as both a pioneer and an enabler. Within the vision there are two distinct foci: some focus on the need for direct evangelism to gather a committed congregation who can then serve and influence the wider community; others focus on the need for the Christian group to permeate the life of the community and stimulate its creative development.

Those with the first focus want to explore such possibilities as setting apart some ministers as primary evangelists or beginning new congregations among groups of people who would not fit into the existing patterns of our local churches.

Those with the second focus want to explore possibilities of moving out from church buildings or changing their use rather than seeking to add to the numbers on church rolls. Some students want to combine the two approaches".

35. We recommend that a small representative working party should be set up to explore the concept of a 'new mission' and to bring plans for a pilot project to the Assembly. We do not regard such a project simply as a way of coping, e.g. with the problems of new housing areas or inner city areas, but as a spur to EVERY church to take up the challenge of the frontier on which it lives and hopefully to learn how better to meet the challenge.

[Resolution 6]

36. The most sensational collapse in the work of the churches in this century has been in the work among children and young people. Until the late Forties the Sunday School was the main agency for recruiting young members to the church. Never at its best did it bring more than 3% of its scholars into full membership of the churches. Today our "Family Church" approach probably has a better record but then the numbers we now deal with are infinitesimal by comparison with the last century. In 1900 what is now the URC had just on 700,000 in its Sunday Schools. Today our junior Churches have just over 70,000 – a decimation indeed! Something comparable to the Sunday School movement in its outreach towards children needs to be found for our own time. In part it exists in our youth work, play groups and creches. But what a pathetic show we make of it, judging by a carefully monitored random sample; here are the facts. Out of every 100 of our churches

- Only 15 had Youth Clubs
- Only 7 had Mothers & Toddlers groups
- Only 5 had Pilots
- Only 19 had Playgroups
- Only 55 had Uniformed Organisations

and there is an overlap in this because 31 had no mid-week activity or uniformed organisation of any kind for young people.

14 have no Junior Church enrolment and practically no children attending morning service – however, these were all small churches with 15 to 20 members. (Appendix 7).

37. Moreover, the extent of youth work is spread erratically. Some churches still have more young people than adults – which proves it can be done.

38. We propose that the challenge should go out to the Churches under guidance of District Council to consider where they stand in these efforts and to plan consciously, determinedly and with originality to increase their mission to young people – particularly in the teenagers – and to fill the yawning gap in our membership where it matters – at the young end.

[Resolution 7]

## CHURCH AND SOCIETY

39. God's power to change human life is never restricted to the personal experience of conversion and the inner life of the church. Individuals have not only to be changed in themselves they have to be reconciled to their brothers and sisters (Matt. 5.23–4). The demonic forces of this world have to be proved to have been overthrown by God in Christ. Each one is joined in that warfare at the moment of becoming a Christian. 'Christ is Lord over the nations in all the variety of their organised life'. (URC Basis).

40. Much dedicated and often hidden work is done by church members in society. Ought we to know more about it so that we can see its worth and give it wholehearted support? We repeat our call in *Consider These Things* for the church to make good use of its newly retired members in voluntary service and community action.

41. One of the strongest links between the church and the contemporary society is in the world of work. The 'Eighties are going to see a revolution in this field and we urge the church on every level to keep abreast of the developments, to look for and grasp the opportunities to relate the gospel to work, unemployment, redundancy, increased leisure and their related problems.

42. Other occasions for relating the gospel to contemporary society are always presenting themselves. Our hard-pressed Church and Society Department looks out for these and calls our attention to them, serving us well. Sometimes these occasions give rise to sharp division about the way to relate the gospel to them and commonly our sinful selfishness warps our judgement and rouses our passions. Nevertheless God has the power to change human life – ours included – and this inevitably means that we have to become agents of God's justice and reconciliation in our human societies. When we do so we stand firmly in the "Reformed Tradition" which has always had a national dimension to its Christian responsibility and now must also have an international dimension. Too often we prefer the soft option of 'charity' to the sterner discipline of attacking social evils at their source and seeking to remove them. Too often we go for the easier short-term solutions when we ought to face up to the more difficult long-term problems.

**Third Objective: To maintain and develop relations with other Christian Churches throughout the world and to promote Christian unity.**

## THE ECUMENICAL DIMENSION

43. Our third objective is being worked out through the Churches' Council for Covenanting; URC relationships with many churches at home and overseas and with ecumenical bodies; many local ecumenical sharings; through the life of many local Councils of Churches, and happily at the moment through the scheme for union with the Churches of Christ.

44. We recommend that the URC should commit itself to ecumenism in England even more firmly in the next 5–10 years. Worldwide and in this country our tradition has been a pioneer in the search for Christian unity. We are the only denomination in this country which has written into its constitution a commitment to unity. We already have a heavy commitment of resources at a local level. Of 325 places in England where a sharing of buildings, ministries or church life has been notified, the URC is involved in 173 (54%). This means that just under 10% of our local churches are already involved in some kind of ecumenical sharing, in a large number of cases with Methodist churches. No other denominations is committed as far as this.

45. The policy which we recommend can be worked out in a number of ways.

46. **At a local church level** Church Meetings and Elders' Meetings should consider the possibility of sharing buildings, ministers, or church life — not as a response to economic pressure but as a positive way of developing their mission in their locality. At an early stage they should seek the advice of the wider councils of the Church.

47. **At a District Council and Provincial level** there should be efforts made to build up relationships with other denominations in the field of forward planning; precise guidance and support should be given from the earliest possible stage to any local church considering ecumenical sharing; and regular monitoring of all sharing, however informal, should be carried out and the results shared widely. District Councils and Provinces must work out how these responsibilities are shared between them.

48. **At a national level** our representatives on the Churches' Council for Covenanting should be encouraged in their efforts to find an acceptable form of covenant. In the meantime, the relevant departments should continue to give guidance to all the councils of the URC about the possibilities and pitfalls of ecumenical sharing — and to this end should maintain regular conversation with the British Council of Churches and other denominations (particularly the Methodist Church) so that as far as possible similar guidance is being given to all the partners in ecumenical schemes.

49. We envisage a situation whereby by the end of the decade, at least 20% of our local churches share buildings, ministers, or full church life with at least one other denomination.

50. We believe that this will give rise to much frustration unless it is matched by a similar growing-together at the national level. Conversely, we believe that the signing of a Covenant, and the consequences that would flow from it, would accelerate growth at the local level.

51. We believe that this is a policy to be built on theological principle, not economic expediency. It is indeed a policy to be welcomed and accepted, not feared.

[Resolution 8]

## THE MINISTRY IN THE URC

52. In *Consider These Things* we asked: What use should the URC make of its ministers? The replies may be summarised in this way. "The Minister's job in the local church is to inspire, train, nurture and care for the church members, enabling them to go out and by their example to win people for Christ. The Minister should be a pastor, leader and spiritual adviser, and should spot and harness the talents of his congregation. Although he should organise and train members for outreach into the community, it is the laity who must primarily operate that outreach. Full use of all lay skills should be made in the structures of the church, and ministers should not be used as administrators".

53. This summary of congregational expectations is not materially different from those listed by URC ordinands. Nor is it at variance with the understanding of the role for which College Staffs seek to equip their students by their training. The URC Basis sets out the same role in slightly different language. Not all ministers are able to rise to these expectations and not all congregations are patient and supportive in face of frustration. Does this mean that more oversight should be given to our ministers and greater discipline required? The same questions occur in several aspects of the work in the ministry. We have referred to the need for evaluation in 'special ministries' and in a later paragraph we come to the need for in-service training. This whole area is a sensitive one and we tend to avoid it by laying the problems at the Provincial Moderator's door but what do we expect him to do?

54. Some of our ordinands have reservations about the position of the minister in Group Pastorates. Others in the Church are critical of this use of ministry. We quote from one submission made to our group:

"One of my sorrows with present church life is to watch the tendency for ministers to be given a pastorate which covers several small congregations over a considerable area. This development seems to me to be self-defeating, for it assumes that it is possible for ministry to be spread thin like the economical housewife using a good jam. In fact the nature of

ministry is so changed in this process that we lose what is most precious to gain what is dubious. We lose the intimate association of pastor and people. We lose the total involvement of the minister in the life of a community. We gain an ability to continue traditional worship at several places, and to provide ordained presidency at the Lord's Table. I suppose the logical conclusion of the process is to gain a health centre and lose the family G.P. Perhaps this has to come for both economic and ecumenical reasons, but I believe it should only come by conscious process of decision and not by the tyranny of numbers. I do not think the system is really workable unless we move to a Methodist appointment process. In other words, if we make the bond between minister and the 'Centre' stronger and the bond between minister and congregation weaker then we could have more flexibility. But I do not think our members or our ministers would be ready to pay that price".

55. The URC Basis commits us to provide ministry for every congregation (see Basis 8 (1) p.20 in the Manual). Attempts are being made to meet this commitment. We have under 830 full-time and about 100 part-time ministers now, whereas we have about 1950 churches. Moreover, as shown on the Graphs in Appendices 4 and 5 this aggregate is likely to decline, if present trends continue, by some 140 ministers in the next decade. We must therefore continue to live with Group Pastorates. Even if we had more ministers we should be bound to ask whether small pastorates provide the best use of their time and the other resources needed to support them.

56. We are persuaded that the best solution to the group problem, especially where it involves small churches, will be ecumenical. New initiatives in Auxiliary Ministry (which is on the Assembly Agenda as a separate item) could prove to be a valuable resource in this area of our work. Team Ministry making use of Lay Preachers and Elders is also an important resource. But it seems we are going to have to live with this problem for some years and a variety of answers will be found.

Admission to our ministry is very open-ended. Entry is by three routes.

- (i) Assessment Conference, Provincial decision and college training.
- (ii) By decision of the Applications Committee — e.g. ordained ministers from other denominations and countries or returning from work with CWM.
- (iii) By decision of a Provincial Moderator — e.g. when a URC minister wishes to return to the pastoral ministry from some other employment.

57. A matter of policy is involved here. Is the URC willing to accept everyone who can enter by one of these three routes regardless of the number doing so; whether there is a worthwhile ministry for everyone and whether all can be adequately remunerated? This is a question which must be faced and answered — the more so if there is any suggestion of a recruitment drive for more candidates to the ministry.

58. Since the URC is committed to a review of Ministerial Training in its relation with the Colleges in 1980 we have not examined this part of our work. Our discussions have from time to time, as already stated, brought to the fore the topic of 'in-service' training. Most professional bodies now make periodic in-service training compulsory for the continuation of professional recognition. The Church's ministry is every bit as demanding and worthwhile as other professions. Should not ministers also be required to receive further training in the light of experience gained and deficiencies exposed? Already ways of doing this are available through Westminster College, Provincial Schools and In-Service Training Schemes. Steps need to be taken however to improve these further and ensure that maximum use is made of what is available. We suggest that the Review Group to be appointed by the Ministerial Training Committee should examine this matter and bring a comprehensive scheme for in-service training to Assembly when it reports.

[Resolution 9]

## PROPERTY

59. Buildings are needed for worship and the community services which the church has to offer. They also act as a focus for the congregation and still, in ways not fully appreciated represent the church in the village, town or city where they are located. At present the URC has too many buildings and what we have are too often ill-suited to serve the church in its



mission. In too many places buildings have become a burden to the membership and a constraint on the ministry. Two obvious solutions are either to adapt or to sell and start again. Where the amount of money available in the URC for adaptation is inadequate, we must look to commercial re-development as a way of dealing with property requirements. Many church sites will not of course be suitable for this kind of development, but none should be sold without first taking expert advice about the possibilities of development.

60. With the continuing pressure of inflation and the movement towards local unions of churches (leaving aside trends in membership) the URC will have to deal with a large number of redundant buildings in the next ten years. If the present average of 30 a year continues this means a total of 300 in ten years. We must maximise the resultant resources and we welcome the suggestion that any Act of Parliament needed to facilitate union between the URC and the Churches of Christ should include a provision which would enable transfers of resources across provincial boundaries.

61. A very great responsibility in this matter is laid on Synods and we urge them to make full and imaginative use of this considerable resource, by prayer and by calling upon the expertise available. . . We understand that the Church Buildings Committee will be offering more detailed advice in a report now being completed.

#### **MONEY**

62. Inflation, declining and ageing membership, the loss of patronage and a tradition of low giving occurring together, are bound to produce something of a crisis in the church. It is not surprising therefore that money has a powerful grip on the life and policies of the church. Somehow its grip must be broken. How?

63. The latest money position is simply set out in the Table "Local Church Accounts" (Appendix 6). From this it will be seen that in 1978, direct giving increased well ahead of the increased cost of living; similarly the costs of Ministry had increased heavily, partly due to the increases in stipend voted at Assembly that year. Such information as is available for earlier years shows that the FULL cost of Ministry had been rising for several years from an extremely low level. The full effect of the 1978 Assembly resolutions will not be reflected in Church Accounts until 1979 and the cost of maintaining buildings is likely to become an increasing burden. There is consequently need for even further increase in direct giving. We believe, however, that the trends demonstrate that once the members know the need, there is the scope and ability for much more generous direct giving sufficient to fill the need and brimming over.

64. We suggest that the churches should be made aware of the need; asked to compare their accounts with the national average and their district average and they might arrange the equivalent of an "inter-firm comparison" with their neighbour.

65. A budget should be prepared each year taking account of the Church's longer term needs. (Help in doing this will be found in the recently published pamphlet "Inflation and the Churches"). Members should be challenged by the budget to re-assess their giving and to covenant any increase whenever possible. Most incomes and many pensions rise with inflation: generosity should rise proportionately.

66. What is a fair "base-rate" for giving to the church? The group has spent a lot of time on this and concludes that for a congregation to escape from economic pressure and reach a position where it is in control of its policy, its income must average at least 2% of the take-home pay\*, of all its members. This calculation takes account of giving by adherents but makes no provision for large capital schemes or for giving to charitable appeals like Christian Aid. Because some members cannot and some will not attempt a target of 2% others will have to set themselves something higher. Some will feel that this percentage is far too low; the point we make is that the standard of 2% as we propose it would free the whole URC from financial anxiety. The prize of freedom from financial anxiety in the church is such a great one and full of promise of spiritual release that it merits every effort to attain it. If the Body of Christ cannot be like the lilies and the birds which Jesus tells us to consider, how shall the world be led to faith? The gospel is nowhere more relevant and at stake than in this facet of URC policy.

[Resolution 10]

\*By take-home pay, we mean income from all sources less income tax, but with no other deductions.

## CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

67. Among responses received to our interim report are queries about our Central Staff. Is it not too large and costly, using the talents of too many ministers and ought it not to be looked at by business consultants?

68. The staff is slightly smaller than when the URC was formed. The following table shows that in real terms the cost has fallen over the past seven years.

## COST OF CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

The "Central Activities, Income and Expenditure" Accounts include expenditure on Overseas Missions, Theological Training and Provincial Moderators. They also include up to 1976 provision for supplementing the stipends and pensions of some Ministers; and from 1977 they take account of contributions from the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund. If all these elements are taken out, we are left with figures which approximate to the cost of the Central Administration.

	<i>Cost</i>	<i>At 1974 Prices</i>
1974	£174,000	£174,000
1975	215,000	180,000
1976	224,000	151,000
1977	270,000	157,000
1978	305,000	161,000
1979	338,000	163,000

69. The working of the Office has already been reviewed by consultants — though only some of their recommendations could be implemented. Ministers are best fitted for some work at the centre. Lay people are not easily recruited to work in London at modest salaries, but the work of the office is helped out by several volunteers. The dedication, industry and enthusiasm of our central staff is a valuable resource in the URC.

70. Since senior staff changes are taking place at present, it would be unfair to propose major alterations in central administration at this Assembly. We have, however, identified certain weaknesses in the structure and working of the central office, particularly in the area of co-ordination and unity of policy. We therefore suggest that the General Secretary together with the Departmental secretaries should consider possible changes in the course of 1981. We would ask them to examine the apparent conflicts between some departmental policies; the extent to which the departments determine the Assembly agenda and the role of the central office in relation to the other councils of the church. In the course of such a review they will also need to bear in mind the effects of ecumenical developments upon the administration.

## LONG RANGE POLICY GROUP

71. Since the formation of the URC we have had several review groups — on Assembly membership and related matters, on the Ministry, on the Office and Departments, on Structures and now on Priorities and Resources. We believe this points to the need for a permanent group charged to study long range policy and to pass proposals to the Executive Committee.

72. This Long Range Policy Group should be small and without executive powers, but with whatever right of access to persons and papers as may be required for the discharge of its task. Its membership should rotate so that fresh thinking is always fed into its considerations. None of its members need be officials and it may for two reasons be better that they are not. Officials naturally tend to accept and use the structures available and have normally to defend the past and present practices of those they represent. Officials get so involved that time for free reflection on goals and even on methods is seldom available to them. We suggest a group of four — two ministers and two laymen — together with one member to be appointed by the British Council of Churches from another of its member Churches. (Consent to such a proposal would have to be sought.) The membership should be fixed for the first two years and thereafter one member (other than the BCC representative) retire annually.

The Assembly or any Council, Committee or person shall be free to put questions or suggestions to the Group, but the discretion of the Group as to which matters to pursue and which to leave shall be absolute.

[Resolution 11]

## CONTROL OF RESOURCES

73. When the Priorities and Resources Group was set up it was instructed "to consider the various points of control over resources, local, provincial and national and to indicate ways in which its proposals can be implemented".

74. The greatest measure of control over the resources of the URC lies with the local churches through their elders' and church meetings. The local church has responsibility for all matters of membership, for the organisation of its fellowship and the pursuit of the objectives of the URC in its own locality. The care and maintenance of its property belongs to the local church and almost every £ of URC money comes from the local congregations.

75. Nationally the URC exerts influence on the local church in its control of resources through the General Assembly. The influence may be mandatory; but is usually in the area of policy and advice. The Central Assembly Staff also has some influence which is advisory and personal.

76. Between the local church and the Assembly is the partnership of the Synod and District Council. Together with the trustees they have some control with regard to property — its use and development and the use of proceeds from redundant premises and manses. Synods and District Councils mediate between the Local Church and the Assembly. Assembly relies on the advocacy and support of Synod and District Council to see that its decisions are implemented. Ideally this should be a two-way process with the District Councils and Synods taking a large and active part in shaping Assembly agendas and making national policy together. So far in the life of the URC this has not happened though the machinery is all there for Synods and District Councils to use.

77. We are persuaded that the District Council has an all-important role in the present URC structures. Some District Councils are strong, ably led and effective. Some are struggling and can barely cope with routine administration. The URC as a whole depends on the District Council to draw the churches of the District together and help them to work as a team pursuing the objectives of the URC in their area. Apart from emergencies, which usually have to do with property and ministry, the main way in which the District Council can influence its group of churches in the use of their resources will be through the District Visitation. We draw attention to the approach of the Priorities and Resources Working Party of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire District Council, which has divided that District into seven areas and then begun the process of sitting down with the churches in each area to look at their work and resources, and to help them plan a strategy for the next five years. It may not always be possible, or even desirable for District visits to go into this detail, but neither is it any use visitors ending up with nothing more than a series of superficial platitudes.

[Resolutions 12 and 13]

78. If this process of consultation is used as an occasion for a friendly and enthusiastic yet searching look at a particular pastorate, its opportunities, resources and difficulties, and if at the same time a viable five year plan can be devised for that pastorate, then the work of the church is likely to go ahead. In this sense the key to the future of the URC is with the District Councils. The visitation of churches is so important for future planning and for building up mutual trust throughout the whole URC that Synods will need to make sure that their District Councils are able to bear the responsibility placed upon them. This may mean re-organisation of district boundaries or bringing in strength from outside to particular Districts. This emphasis on District Councils means that considerable responsibility is put on their officers, and particularly District Secretaries and Secretaries of Pastoral Committees. There is a need for training and support, which should in the first instance come from the national Church Life Department and from the Synods.

79. The Provincial Moderator is involved in every level of the URC structure, but especially in the work of Synod and District Council. He has considerable personal influence. His leadership will be a major factor in implementing the policies and strategies of this report. The Moderators are under pressure all the time to move from one ad-hoc decision to another. Failures in co-operation from ministers, churches, other denominations and a succession of crises in the local churches add up to a heavy burden and demand unusual courage and spiritual powers to keep aiming at the best. Apart from what is confidential, this burden is shared by those near to the Moderator and in the Provincial Executive. In addition to this help we urge all Synods to establish small policy groups similar to that which we propose for the Assembly.

## NOTE ON URC STRUCTURES

80. The Priorities and Resources Group was set up while the Review of Structures was still before the churches. We have not therefore felt it necessary to go any further over that ground — to the disappointment of one or two churches. We believe the time has come for a moratorium on discussion of and major changes in our church structure of local church, District Council, Synod and Assembly. Organisation has to serve the purpose of the church in pursuit of its objectives and it is that pursuit which now claims our fullest dedication and effort.

## CONCLUSION

81. It is absolutely vital that the future strategic issues of the URC are identified and analysed correctly in an exercise of this kind. These issues are concerned with the primary purpose, operating target, nature, scope and size of our denomination and its overall corporate strategy.

82. The Priorities and Resources Group see these issues in the following way:

- (i) The primary purpose or *raison d'être* of the URC is embodied in the three "Objectives" appearing on page 7. The systematic consideration of our primary purpose for the future is seen as being central to this exercise since it provides clear guidelines for the development of future strategies and policies on which the URC must concentrate.
- (ii) Our operating target for the next five years should be the stabilisation of our present decline in membership of around 3% p.a. to a zero rate of decline. This will be an extremely arduous task and one which will require positive policies for promoting spiritual and numerical growth in all areas of the URC's life.
- (iii) There are too many factors involved for us to say what the nature, scope and size of the URC will be in the next ten years. We can only indicate the trends and ways in which they may be reversed. But there will need to be a constant review of the numbers of members, ministers, and churches so that these can be kept in reasonable balance.
- (iv) The URC's overall corporate strategy should be one which is geared to Renewal in both the spiritual and physical sense.

83. What we recommend in this Report should not be regarded as a formula which will automatically guarantee success in the decade ahead. Strategic or corporate planning is an ongoing process. It is a style of management rather than a ritualistic process for producing a blue print to be later slavishly followed. Contemporary thinking on strategic planning sees the flexible approach as being best suited to today's uncertain environment. Indeed a robust strategy for the future is one which is able to respond rapidly to sudden and unexpected changes which can be in the form of either threats or opportunities for the church.

84. If we are to survive the future, some attitudes and practices will undoubtedly need to change, although it is realised that for many in our membership this could be a traumatic experience. It also goes without saying that considerable prayer and sacrifice will be essential prerequisites for success. A new sense of commitment by every member of the church, particularly those in positions of responsibility will be necessary if the new strategies and policies are to be successfully implemented. Finally our progress will need to be continually monitored and tactics readjusted as we proceed.

85. Effective "strategic management" also requires a continuing appraisal of the environment in order to ensure that policies are appropriate for the prevailing national and local conditions.

86. The "Assessment of the Environment" which appeared in the Interim Report is not intended to be a prediction of what will happen precisely in the next ten years. It is an attempt to define the most relevant factors likely to affect our organisation. These factors and the environment itself will need to be kept under constant review so that they will serve as warning signals for our future policies as we manoeuvre our way through the eighties. A periodic review of our strategy will also be necessary.

87. In the last analysis, success can best be judged on the basis of whether or not we have been faithful in interpreting God's will for our church and seeing His purpose through. He

continually renews and reforms the church through the Holy Spirit. We submit our prayers and our plans for a stronger membership (both in terms of greater numbers and increased commitment) to God, in the assurance that *"in the Lord, our labour cannot be lost"*.

J.E. YOUNG  
P. CHAN  
N.K. FISHER  
E.R. NICHOLSON  
S.T. LUNT  
J.D. WALLER

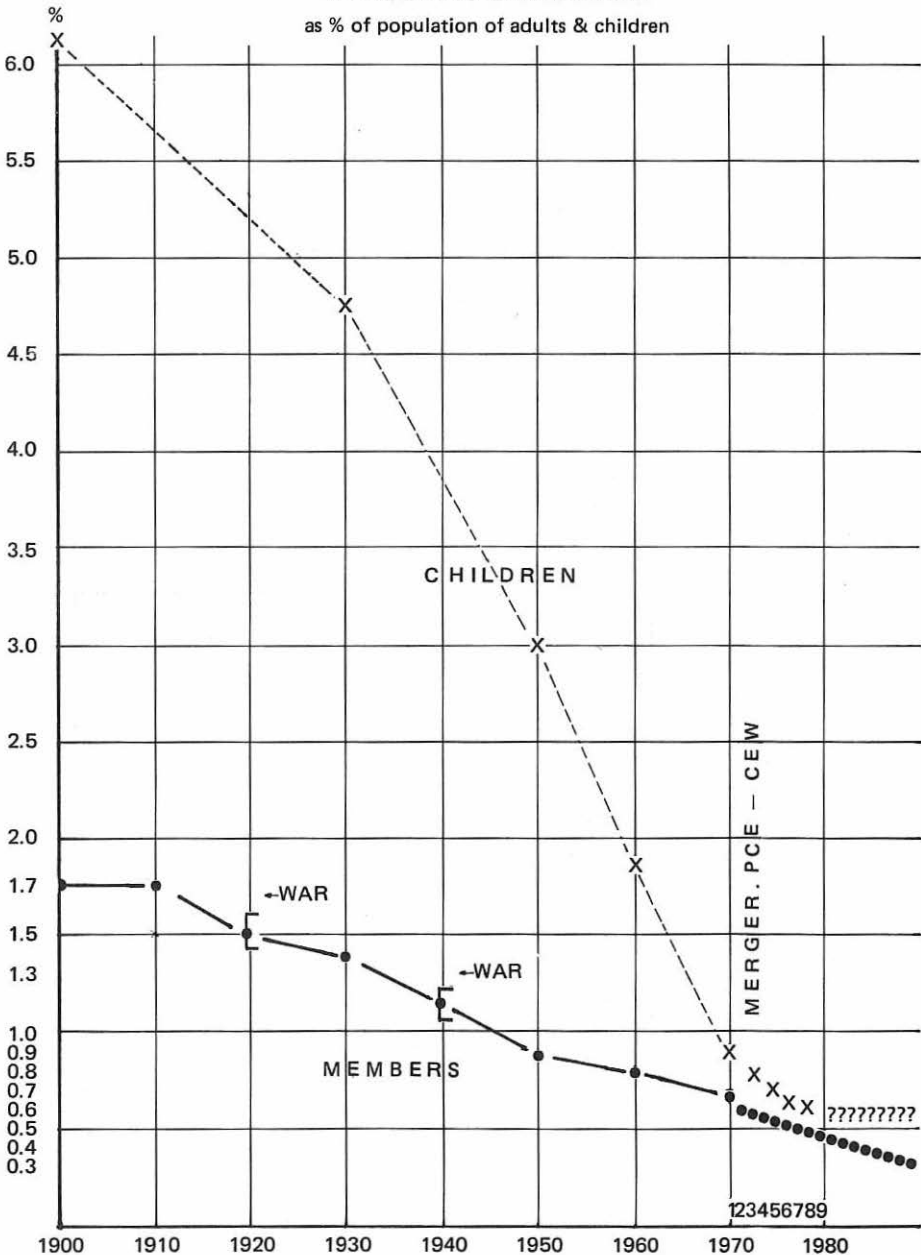
## RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the Report.
2. The Assembly urges District Councils and Synods to help their members to widen their experience of worship: to encourage small churches to come together in larger groups from time to time for worship, and to foster, initiate and make known experiments in newer styles of worship. (Para. 17)
3. The Assembly, acknowledging the need for members of the URC to be more sure of their faith in Jesus Christ, and better able to relate it to contemporary life and share it with others:  
asks the Christian Education Committee in consultation with the World Church and Mission and Church and Society Departments and the Stewardship Committee, to set up a small working party to suggest ways in which this need may be met, and to bring to Assembly in 1981 a 'learning programme' to make use of the period from Christmas to Easter for three to five successive years, designed to build up confidence in the Christian faith among our membership. (Para. 19)
4. The Assembly asks the Church Life Department to investigate the role of small groups in the work of the church and its outreach:  
to produce guidelines for their use, and in co-operation with District Councils and Synods to arrange training programmes for group leadership. (Para. 22)
5. The Assembly, as a proper response to the gospel and as a stimulus to its partnership with God in mission:  
calls on the whole URC to do its utmost to arrest the fall in numbers of church members and during the next five years to aim to achieve a stable membership. It asks each local church to set targets for an increase in the number of its members and frequently to review its policies for pastoral care and training in the meaning of membership. (Para. 29)
6. The Assembly requests the World Church and Mission Department, in consultation with the Deployment and Ministerial Training Committees, the Finance Department and the Provincial Moderators, to prepare a pilot project with a view to developing new mission outreach throughout the country and report back to Assembly. (Para. 35)
7. The Assembly calls on each local church to give urgent and continuing consideration to its work among children and young people, and to take steps to strengthen this work and endeavour to bring more young people to commitment to Jesus Christ and his Church. (Para. 38)
8. The Assembly welcomes the growth in the number of ecumenical unions of churches and ecumenical sharing of buildings, worship and ministry:  
re-affirms its commitment to 'pray and work for such visible unity of the church as Christ wills and in the way he wills'; and encourages local congregations, District Councils and Synods to keep this commitment in the forefront of their policy making and programmes. (Para. 51)
9. The Assembly asks the Review Group to be appointed by the Ministerial Training Committee to include 'In-service Training' in its terms of reference and to prepare a scheme for such training to be presented as part of its report. (Para. 58)

# PRIORITIES & RESOURCES: APPENDIX 1

## MEMBERS AND CHILDREN

as % of population of adults & children



† indicates that at least one element of the calculation is estimated

## PRIORITIES & RESOURCES: APPENDIX 2

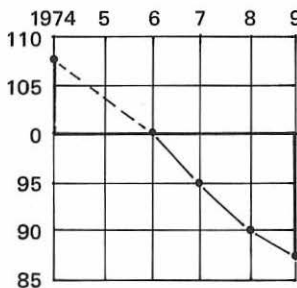
### DECLINE IN MEMBERSHIP

TREND OF DECLINE  
AS % OF 1976.

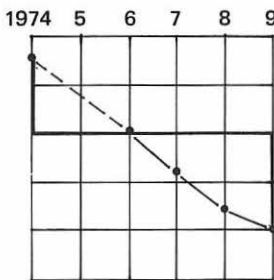
NOTE:—

1974 figures cannot now be examined for abnormalities. Hence the graph is based on 1976 & earlier trend indicated by dotted line.

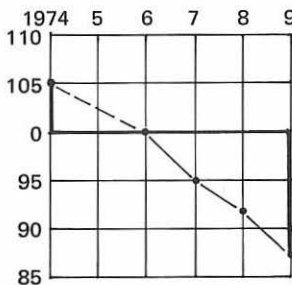
1. NORTHERN



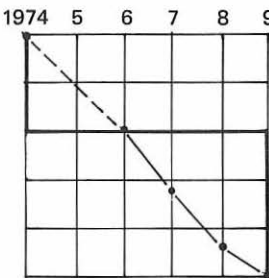
2. NORTH WESTERN



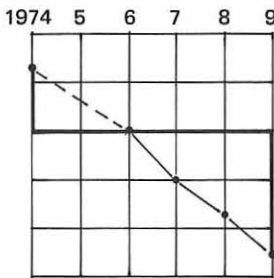
3. MERSEY



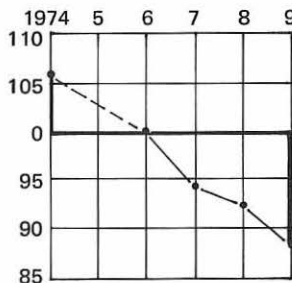
4. YORKSHIRE



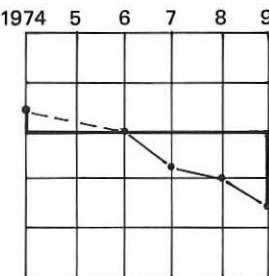
5. EAST MIDLAND



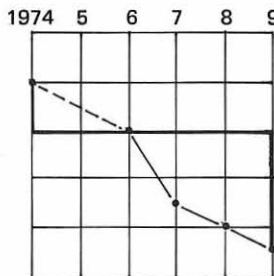
6. WEST MIDLANDS



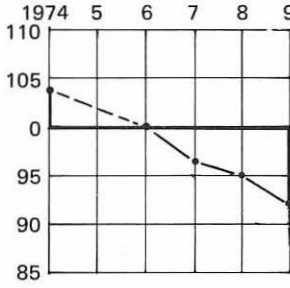
7. EASTERN



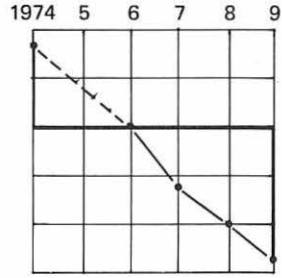
8. SOUTH WEST



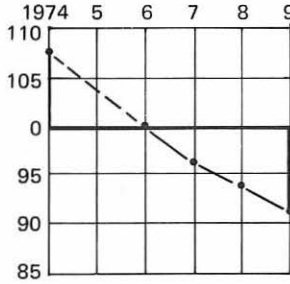
9. WESSEX



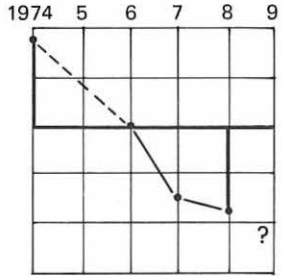
10. THAMES NORTH



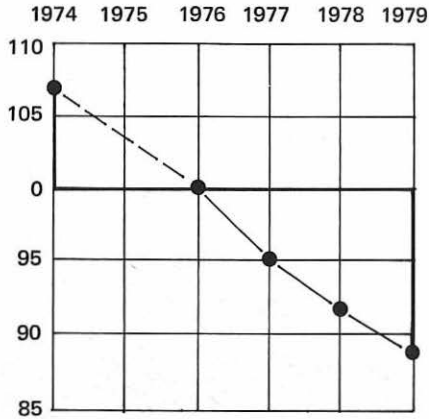
11. SOUTHERN



12. WALES

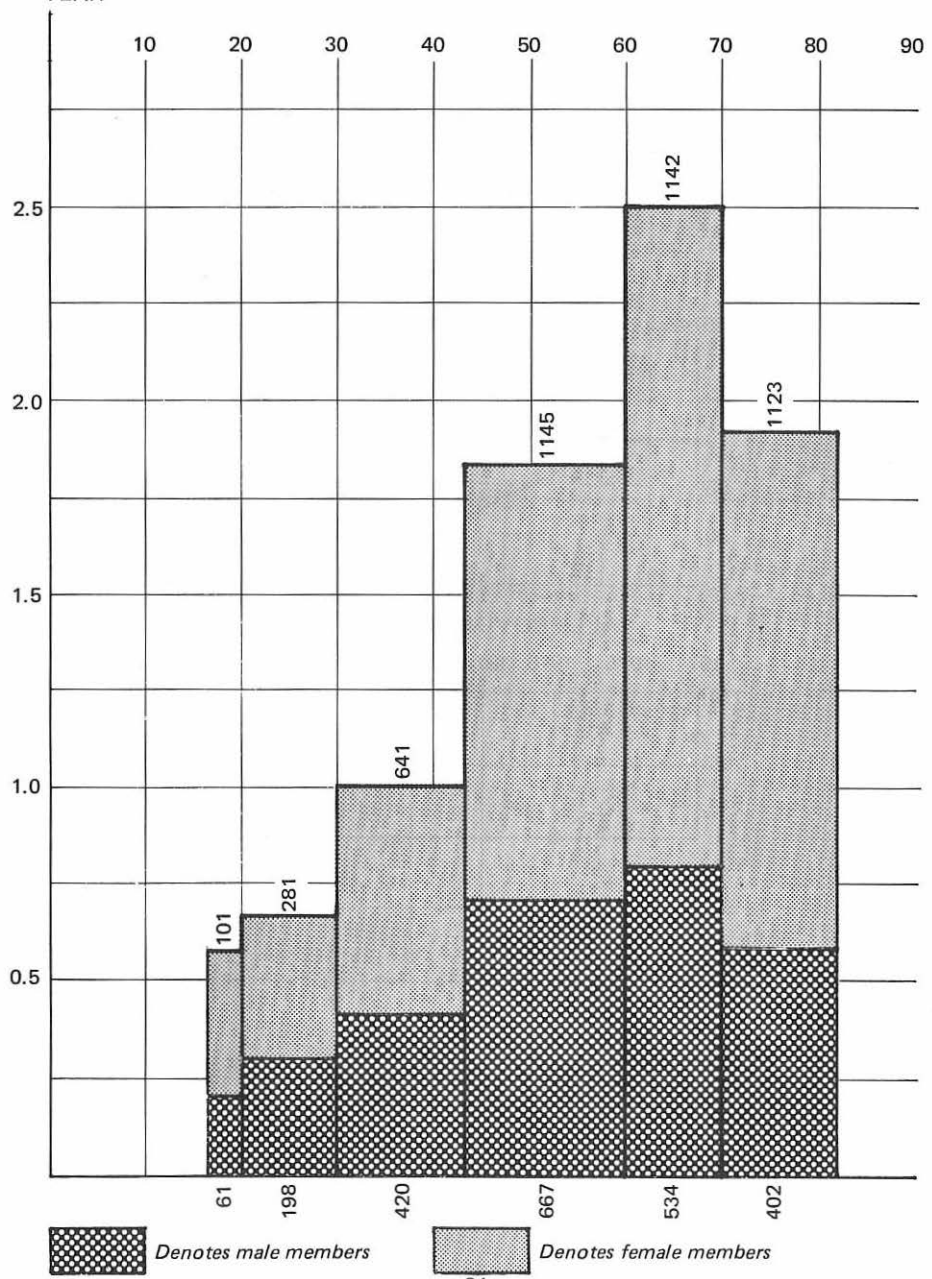


ALL PROVINCES

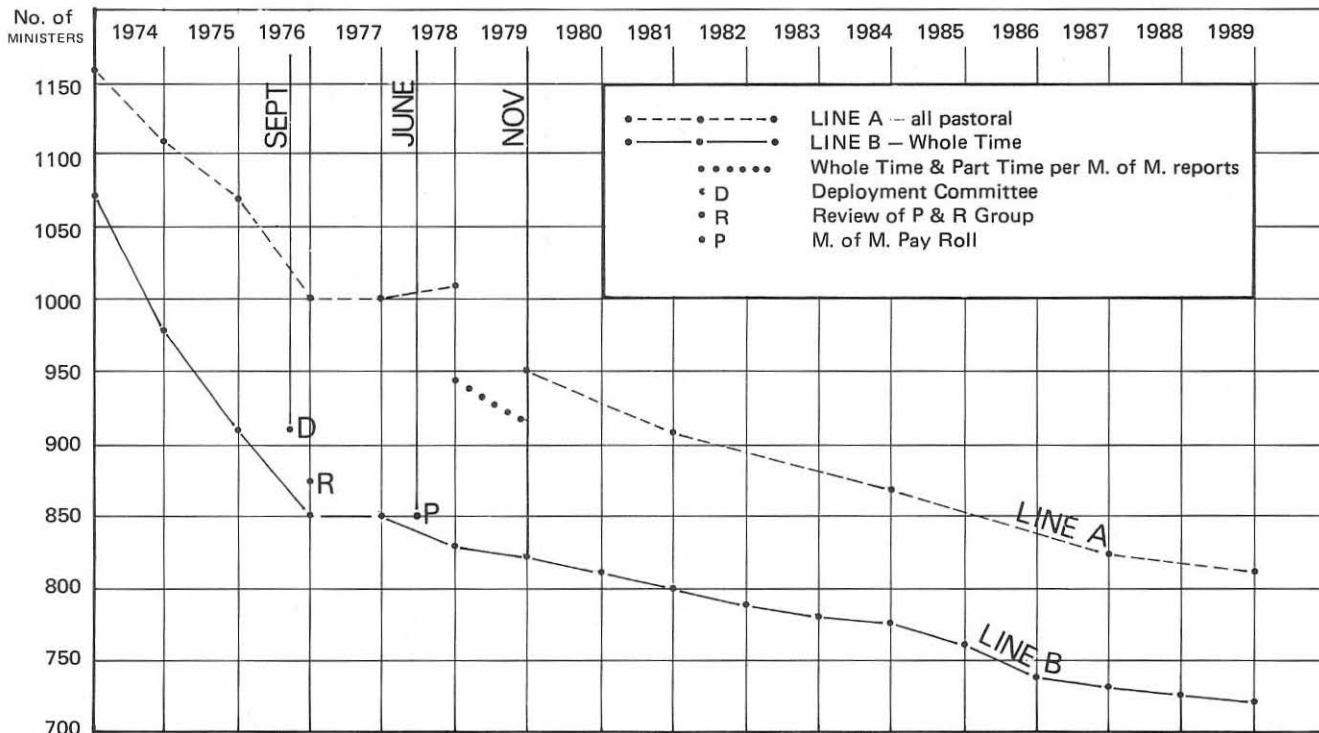




**PRIORITIES & RESOURCES: APPENDIX 3**  
**PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERS IN EACH YEAR OF AGE**  
 Derived from numbers of Members in Sample 73 Churches.



A. Directly under oversight of U.R.C. per Summary in Y.B.  
 B. Whole time Pastoral as now defined by M. of M.

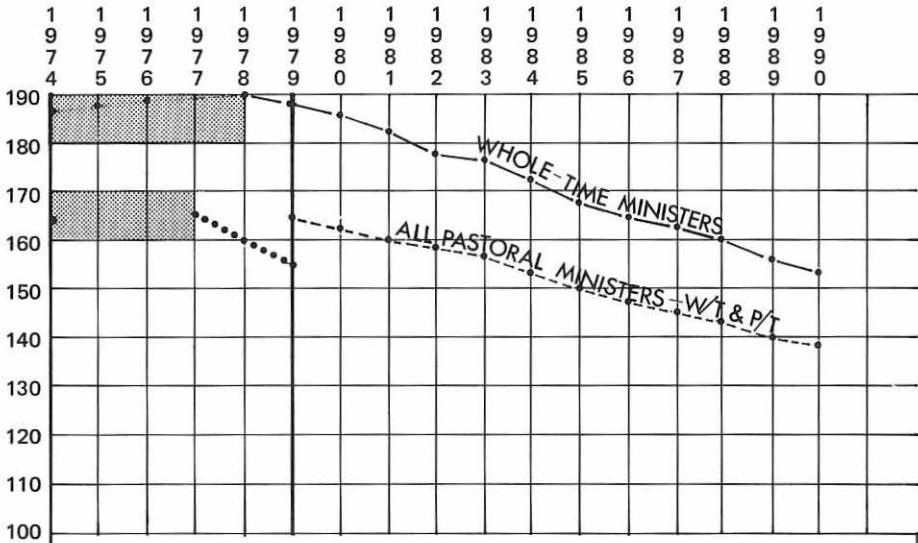


Basis. Up to 1977 -- Table 6 -- "Consider These Things"

Projection of LINE A. Table 9(a) "Consider These Things"

Projection of LINE B. M. of M. Report (May 1978) i.e., known & expected retirement with assumed net gain now altered to a middle estimate of 17 per year.

**PRIORITIES & RESOURCES: APPENDIX 5**  
**MEMBERS PER MINISTER**



**NUMBER OF MEMBERS PER MINISTER at 1st JANUARY**

- — ● — ● FROM M. of M. up to 1980. Projected from Retirement Dates and Best Estimates
- - - - ● - - - FROM M. of M. for 1980 do do do
- FROM YEAR BOOK SUMMARY — includes RETIRED. Estimates assume:—  
 Members decline 3% per annum  
 New Ministers 17 per annum net
- UNRELIABLE. FAIRLY STATIC

**PRIORITIES & RESOURCES: APPENDIX 6**

**LOCAL CHURCH ACCOUNTS**

based on accounts covering 148500 members in 1977

based on accounts covering 135000 members in 1978

		1977	1977 adjusted for R.P.I.	1978
<b>INCOME</b>		Pence per Member per week		
A.	<b>DIRECT FROM MEMBERS &amp; ADHERENTS</b>			
	Offerings, Covenants & Tax recovery	48	52	57
	Special Efforts, Donations, Legacies	25	27	31
		<u>73</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>88</u>
B.	<b>INTEREST, LETTING &amp; TRUST INCOME</b>	15	16	18
C.	<b>SUNDRIES</b>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>
	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
A.	<b>MINISTRY</b>			
	Stipends, Car, Manse	46	50	53
	Conduct of Worship	3	3	3
B.	<b>BUILDINGS</b>	34	37	38
C.	<b>UNIFIED APPEAL &amp; BENEVOLENCE</b>	11	12	13
D.	<b>SUNDRIES</b>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>113</b>

## PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES : APPENDIX 7

### REPORT ON INFORMATION FROM RANDOM SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE "QUALITY OF MEMBERSHIP"

#### Introduction

From just over 100 sent out to a random selection of churches, 76 questionnaires were returned. One large church was completely useless, while others could not be used in parts: two lacked names.

#### Membership Rolls

74 churches had 6,760 members — 2,296 male and 4,464 female with 2,955 enrolled children. This is 91 members per church compared with 82 national average.

This membership is a reduction of 137 on 1/1/79 (Y.B. figures) or nearly 2% and is typical as most churches gave their membership as at September/October 1979.

These churches show a decline in membership from 1/1/78 to 1/1/79 (per Y.B.) of 2.7% compared with the national average of 3.2% so that the random sample may have a rather better quality than the general average.

The 25 churches which failed to answer comprised 3 U. churches with smallish membership, 5 Wales (250m), 10 small (213m) and 7 medium (770). 3 large churches also failed to respond. Their average size was again a little over national average and their omission would not appear to invalidate the sample.

Of each 100 members there were 34 M and 66 F with 44 enrolled C.

The age-spread of the Rolls of 73 churches was:—

	<i>M</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>Both</i>	%	÷ by	<i>Each year of age %</i>
16/19	61	1	101	1	162	2	4	0.6
20/30	198	3	281	4	479	7	11	0.7
31/45	420	6	641	10	1,061	16	15	1.0
46/60	667	10	1,145	17	1,812	27	15	1.8
61/70	534	8	1,142	17	1,676	25	10	2.5
Over 70	405	6	1,123	17	1,528	23	E	1.9
	<u>2,285</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>4,433</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>6,718</u>	<u>100</u>		

E. Expectation of life at 70 is 9.3 years M and 12.3 years F.

Note that 44% of members are O.A.P. and 75% over 45 years old.

A chart has been prepared to illustrate these figures. (Appendix 3).

#### Attendance

Of 73 churches (6,738m) total attendances were:—

Per 100 members 58 a.m. and 21 p.m.

Per 100 members 45 children enrolled — adjusted 47

Per 100 members 30 children attended — adjusted 31

Per 100 enrolled children 65 attended.

But 10 churches (280m) reported no enrolled children: possibly a misunderstanding — the adjusted figures exclude them. 8 churches have 100 or more children attending per 100 members. Excluding these 8 churches, average attendance drops from 30 to 26% of adults. Attendance of children at the rest was often only 10 per 100 adult members. Of 53 churches which gave full analysis and had morning service:—

	<i>Total</i>		<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>		
Members	4,651		1,543 (33%)		3,108 (67%)		88 per church.
<i>Attendances</i>		<i>%</i>				<i>Male of Males</i>	<i>Female of Females.</i>
<i>Members –</i>							
Morning	2,076	(45)	665 (14)		1,411 (30)	43%	45%
Evening	898	(19)	311 ( 7)		587 (13)	17%	16%
<i>Others –</i>							
					<i>All adults</i>		
Morning	817	(18)			62%		
Evening	290	( 6)			25.5%		
<i>Children</i>	1,499	(32)					

Note that the average size of the sample church (88 members) is less than the total sample 91 – because larger churches are less able to distinguish “members” and “others”.

Of the churches that did not distinguish “others”:-

10 (1,941m) had attendances – 49% morning and 8% evening – significantly worse than the 62% – 25.5% above but their children’s average attendance was better than average.

10 remaining churches had no unusual features and serve no statistical purpose. No evening service was held at 15 of the 53 churches and 3 of the 10 and 2 of the remaining 10, i.e. 20 of the 73.

#### Size of Church

10 churches with over 200m (2,956m) has a.m. attendance of 49 per 100 members with only 14 children per 100 members, the worst figures coming from those (4) that did not distinguish non-members. The other 6 churches had attendances much as above except that only 16 children attended and only 11 others attended per 100 members.

#### Uniformed Organisations

41 churches reported uniformed organisations and 2 others associated. That is 60% of churches leaving aside Wales which reported none. Patchy distribution – few in West Midlands and Eastern. Total enrolment/attendance – 3,497. (Some reported only attendance).

Division (where reported) of enrolment/attendance – Guides and Brownies 824, Scouts and Cubs 408, B.B. 449, G.B. 344 – total 2,025. Distribution was patchy – 13 churches had larger U.O. than their Junior Church or their adult membership. Mersey particularly.

#### Church Meeting

13 churches reported no Church Meeting – some indicating special reasons, particularly 1 church with 145 members. The other 12 with 416 members largely in the North and Wales.

Attendances 1,510 – 571 M and 939 F  
i.e. 24% 27% 23%

#### Mid-Week Activities

12 churches reported no mid-week activities – some indicating special reasons.

Women’s 15 churches both afternoon and evening gatherings.  
3 churches both womens and young wives gatherings.  
44 churches had one womens activity.

In general attendance less than one third of female membership.

Mens activities mentioned at only 9 churches.

Mixed Fellowships/Guilds at 23 churches.

OAP/Retired Clubs at 4 churches, all relatively large.

"Handicapped", "alcoholics" and "deprived" – 3 churches all earnest

Youth Clubs. 11 reported

Mothers and Toddlers. 5 reported

Pilots. 4 reported

Play Groups. 14

} some overlap

50 churches reported no mid-week activities for the young, but 27 of these had Uniformed Organisations.

Bible Classes, Prayer Groups and similar were mentioned many times, but it is suspected that many more were in operation, although not reported under "mid-week activities".

---

*Continued from page 20*

10. The Assembly resolves to accept as a standard for personal giving throughout the URC, the figure of 2% of take-home pay, but realises that some may not be able to reach such a standard and therefore others, able to do so, must give more than 2%. (Para. 66)
11. The Assembly resolves to set up a Long Range Policy Group. (Para. 72)
12. The Assembly calls upon District Councils and Synods to take steps to make sure that the District Visitation to a church involves a thorough and wide ranging review of its life and witness and has as its main aim the production of an acceptable plan for the future of that church. (Para. 77)
13. Synods are requested to ensure that guidelines and training are available for District Visiting Teams. (Para. 77)
14. The Assembly discharges the Priorities and Resources Group and commends its Report to Churches, District Councils and Synods for continuing discussion and formation of policy.

## CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd John B. Simpson

*Secretary:* The Revd Charles K. Meachin

1. The 1980's have been designated by some Christians as a decade of evangelism, and encouraged by the *Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism*, many churches have turned their attention to exploring ways of growth, outreach and to the arrest of decline.

2. The diagnosis of The United Reformed Church situation has been provided by the Priorities and Resources Group, and some of the disclosures have confirmed a few of our worst fears and also given grounds for optimism and hope.

3. It is clear that other Churches look towards the URC as a denomination which has much that is distinctive that can be offered to the benefit of all. We are regarded as one of the major denominations, and because we are by comparison small in numbers, we do not have major material resources behind us. This fact alone often causes local embarrassment. As we face a crisis of commitment, we must offer material to our members to help them to evaluate their discipleship. This must be more than an analysis of our problems; it must be a presentation of our opportunities.

4. Christian Stewardship is now being explored enthusiastically in many churches, and the appraisal of what Church membership demands has led to renewal in many instances. Testimonies of the value of close examination of the **five themes** amongst local congregations continue to be received by the Secretary.

5. If a log-jam is to be perceived in British church life, then there are two possible ways of clearance – explosion, or by raising the level of the water. The latter, less dramatic, is slower but more effective. Christians at the local level need support as they ask serious questions about the nature of our society, about the Church's role, and about the appropriate meeting points between these concerns and the insights of the Gospel.

### 6. The Christian Stewardship Committee have during the past year:

1. Provided material for use in Christian Stewardship programmes – **Christian Stewardship Study/Action Pack, Film Strip and commentary – Poster/Discussion starters – Childrens material and short humorous dramatic sketches** introducing the stewardship themes. In consultation with the Christian Education Committee a Christian Education course and Festival Service is being produced. (*The leaflet 'Energy Conservation in Church Buildings' is available from the Church of Scotland*).
2. Taken a full part in the activities of the British Council of Churches Stewardship Committee particularly in the preparation of the paper '**Christian Stewardship in the 1980's**', presented to the BCC Assembly in March 1980. The Revd C.K. Meachin is Chairman of the BCC Stewardship Committee.
3. In consultation with the World Church & Mission Department arranged for the visit of Stewardship consultants from the United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America to visit the United Reformed Church in July 1980.
4. Encouraged all levels of the Church to consider the questions posed by the Priorities and Resources Group (Pages XXI – XXII Appendix 3 Record of Assembly 1979). The Committee has written a paper for the P & R Group setting down some **proposals for Christian Stewardship in the Structures of the URC** recommending that one person/group be enabled to ask all Departments of the Church to give account of their stewardship of people, plant and pounds.
5. At the request of the Deployment Committee produced a paper setting out some ideas for the **Stewardship of ministerial Resources**.
6. Shared in the 1979 Forum when the Christian Stewardship themes were introduced to a wide cross-section of our churches and members.
7. Continued, in consultation with the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home



Committee, to consider the important area of **Stewardship in Rural Churches**. The Committee feel that rural churches have a distinctive contribution to make in the total mission of the Church particularly in the areas of **commitment, personal relationships and community life**. The Committee suggests that a pilot consultation of representatives from rural churches in a given area should be arranged.

8. Supported the 'Together' programme of the Church Life Department and underline its aim to help local churches develop as a worshipping and learning community of all ages, interests and experiences.
9. Responded to an invitation from the Coimbatore Diocese of the Church of South India to help them in the area of Christian Stewardship. The Secretary of the Committee addressed the Diocesan Council on Christian Stewardship, Training of Lay Preachers, and the Ministry of Healing. He led a Christian Stewardship programme for Presbyters and church officers in the Diocese. The Diocese has set up a stewardship committee to promote the concept of Christian Stewardship as set out in the URC Study/Action Pack and is in the process of translating the material into the local language and idiom.

7. The Provincial training programme continues and the Committee sees the need for people who are willing and able to promote Christian Stewardship in Provinces and Districts. **740 churches** have purchased Study/Action Packs; this suggests that **37%** of our congregations have begun to consider the Christian Stewardship programme.

8. The Committee continues to advocate the Christian Stewardship programme with its five themes of **WORSHIP – PRAYER – INVOLVEMENT – GIVING – LEARNING** and re-emphasises its belief that Christian Stewardship is not a matter for a campaign once a decade or only for those occasions when church life is at a low ebb. **Christian Stewardship, properly exercised, is constantly on the agenda of the live congregation.**

---

## APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd Harold Springbett  
*Secretary:* The Revd Arthur L. Macarthur

The Committee met three times during the year and reports the following:

### 1. ADMISSIONS:

**By Ordination following normal courses:** The Revds David Bradburn, David Reed Brett, Jeanie Elizabeth Clarke, David George Cornick, Christine Craven, Peter Lesile Flint, Peter David Foster, Walter Ford, Hugh St. John Gray, Gillian Avril Jones, Ian Jones, Stella Gwendolin Jones, Gary Stuart McGowan, Richard Mortimer, Kathleen Mary Payne, David Andrew Pitkeathly, Eileen Mary Sambrooks, Norman Setchell, David Martin McLellan Skitt, David Tatem, Christopher Fredrick Warner, Elizabeth Cynthia Wyatt.

**By Ordination following the Assembly Resolution with regard to Local Pastors:** The Revds Joseph Bath, Eric Chambers, Herbert William Jones, Frederick George Lambern, Frank Arnold Richards.

**By Ordination following the Assembly Resolution with regard to Deaconesses:** The Revds Eileen Gooding, Joyce Audrey Langdown, Patricia Florence Parrish.

**By Transfer from other Churches:** The Revds Shoki Coe, James H. Couch, David Mather, Angus McQuoid McCormick, Ian James Stewart.

**By Re-instatement:** Francis Geoffrey Jay.

### 2. DELETIONS

**By Transfer to other Churches:** The Revds Philip Basil Cliff, Kenneth Chambers, David William Dutton, William James David Henry, Peter Watson Jenkins, Thomas A. Smail, Meirion Thomas.

**By Resignation from the Ministry:** The Revds John Michael William Graver, John Alan Marshall, Graham Whitehead, Dacre T. Wicks, Alfred Peter Williams.

**3. MINISTERIAL DEPLOYMENT** In relation to the enquiries of the Priorities and Resources Group and anxiety expressed by the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, consultation took place with the Deployment Committee as to whether there is need for a limit on the numbers of ministers to be admitted from other Churches. It will be noted that numbers admitted in this way last year were five, of whom two will not be on the payroll. The Committee reports seven cases of transfer to other ministries and five resignations. The Ministerial roll continues to diminish and there is no ground for the anxiety expressed. Three Deaconesses were ordained, but by express resolution of the Assembly.

**4. LOCAL PASTORS** During the year the advice of the Committee was sought in respect of two Local Pastors as to whether they fell within the authorisation given to District Councils to offer ordination to Local Pastors 'presently serving as Local Pastors in charge of Local churches' (Record 1978, p.18). Since neither of these two was serving at the time the resolution was passed the Committee felt bound to advise the Provinces concerned that that resolution did not make provision for their ordination.

Later the Committee was again consulted as to whether, should new Local Pastors be appointed they could be ordained under the terms of that resolution. The Committee again took the view that the authorisation given could not be taken to include the cases on which it had first advised, nor the larger number of such cases now brought forward. It must be for the Assembly itself to decide whether to extend the authorisation should a request for these further ordinations be brought for its consideration under clause 9(5)(xviii) of the Basis of Union.

**5. APPLICATIONS PROCEDURES** The Committee has worked in terms of the revised rules approved at last Assembly and so far can report that they are working satisfactorily.

**6. CERTIFICATES OF ELIGIBILITY** Certificates of Eligibility were issued during the year in accordance with the revised rules.

**7. MEDICAL REPORTS** In dealing with these matters the Committee took note of two difficulties. Entry into the ministry of the U.R.C. normally involves membership of the Pension Funds and can involve considerable long-term liabilities for those Funds. Since those entering the ministry under the Ministerial Training Committee are required to provide medical certificates, it is felt that similar certificates should be required in the case of ministers applying for admission on transfer from other Churches. A form of Medical Report is under consideration by the Committee in consultation with the Ministerial Training Committee. Some applications have been received from ordinands of other Churches and the Committee has been in consultation with some of those Churches to ensure that any future admissions of those in this category are made with the full understanding and support of the Churches under whose aegis they have trained.

**8. SECEDING CHURCHES** The Committee had before it five applications from churches seeking to leave the U.R.C. Provinces and Districts had not been able to reach clear recommendation in all of these cases, since in one opportunity for consultation had not been provided and in others the reason adduced for the application was based on financial rather than doctrinal grounds. The Committee would have brought appropriate recommendations to the Assembly but early this year the Charity Commissioners intimated that they had no power to establish new Trusts applicable to such churches.

Consultation with the Commissioners is proceeding, but the Committee after a special meeting took the view that no cases should be brought to the Assembly until this matter is clarified. The Provinces concerned have been informed of the position.

**9. MINISTERS LISTED 'D' IN THE YEAR BOOK** No reports have been received of action taken by Districts in respect of the resolution passed at last Assembly regarding ministers whose names are marked 'D' in the Year Book. Work now being done by the Editor of the Year Book is revealing some anomalies and inaccuracies in the Roll as printed and should these indicate any need for further revision of categories, this will be brought to the attention of the Committee.

## PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd Edmund Banyard

*Secretary:* Percy W. Bush

1. The committee reorganised its work after the General Assembly 1979. It disbanded three of its sub-committees, which has eliminated sub-committee reports and led to some saving of time, energy and money. More important however, it has enabled the wide range of the full committee's skills and insights to be brought to bear on the work of the whole section.

2. This report therefore deals with the committee's work under headings different from former reports. We hope this will give a clearer picture of the section's service to the Church. Several new members have been welcomed to the committee, some from former sub-committees.

### **Administrative Services to Central Offices**

3. These are unexciting but essential for the work of central offices. They include the purchase of all stationery supplies, the maintenance of records of ministers and churches, facilities for producing all committee papers, circular letters and reports, parcel-wrapping and mailing services through Bookshop staff and the packing and despatch of the Information Service. Considerable voluntary help for the latter is given by the ladies from the Greater London churches.

### **Printing and Publishing Services**

4. Reform, the Year Book and the URC Diary are prepared and published by the section on behalf of the URC. All three remain financially viable and have contributed substantially to Central Office resources. Of equal importance is their service value to the whole Church. We would urge local churches and individual members to subscribe to them both for what they can gain from them and the support they can give to them. The Revd E.W. Todd became Editor of the Year Book last year. Norman Hart continues to give Reform pertinence and punch.

5. Many other leaflets, booklets, kits etc. are designed and published on behalf of Departments and the Central Secretariat. As much as possible, subject to type and quality of work required and the total workload, is processed internally. Without extra staff, it becomes extremely difficult to keep up with requirements.

6. The committee believes that appropriate charges should be levied for all significant operations and materials so that budgets and control are realistic and both costs and returns where these apply are apportioned to initiating departments.

7. The total expenditure during 1979 for printing and related costs, including Reform publication and distribution, printing paid for direct by Departments, Year Book, Diaries and chargeable in-house printing amounted to approximately £68,500. This does not include printing of hymn books which is controlled by Tavistock Bookshop. About £12,500 of this sum relates to printing from which there can be no financial return and for resale publications by Departments, any income from which is credited to the Department concerned. The total income taken into P. & P.'s budget (again excluding hymn books for Tavistock Bookshop) was approximately £62,300. A further £1,700 approximately would have gone direct to Departments for supplies of resale publications.

8. The arrangement with Saint Andrew Press to publish New Church Praise on behalf of the URC has proved beneficial. Our 'advance' of £5,000 towards printing and publishing costs has been repaid, plus about £2,000 from publishing profits. We hope the outcome of the publication of the 'Book of Services' will be satisfactory.

9. The committee supports the participation of the URC in the selection of material for a proposed inter-denominational hymn book. Fuller involvement as co-publishers with the Methodist Church is desirable, but any recommendation must await fuller joint exploration re costs, potential market, etc.

### **Distribution Services**

10. Tavistock Bookshop is the main service agency in this regard. Income from sales amounted to £86,715 during 1979 (£5,000 less than for 1978). This needs to be increased substantially to keep pace with inflation. The recent increase in postal costs is an extra difficulty. Mr Donald Finnan (Manager) has won the confidence of customers and committee by his approach.

11. The long intended transfer of Bookshop accounts to Finance and Administration finally took place in early 1980. In making this arrangement this committee records its appreciation of the considerable work over many years done by Mr E. Hockley who has at different times filled the roles of full-time Accountant, part-time Accountant, and joint Accountant and Manager.

12. In addition to retailing the section maintains a small but growing wholesale operation for supplying retailers.

13. Over 1500 Reform secretaries in local churches regularly order and distribute our URC magazine. Their service is an important communication link within the URC. We hope that local churches, ministers and officers also recognise their contribution to the life of the Church and give every encouragement and all possible help.

### **Public Relations and Publicity**

14. The voluntary Publicity Group has continued its effective but necessarily limited operations under its chairman the Revd Philip Schofield.

15. The case for some financial or staffing provision by the URC for Public Relations has been vigorously presented and the group expressed their concern that despite much encouragement inadequate provision was made at last years General Assembly for the work to be done effectively.

16. There are many indications that URC members have involved themselves in local radio, some very effectively, and this is to be encouraged.

17. A successful week-end Conference on Communication was arranged in co-operation with a group of young people and it is hoped that FURY will begin to accept a greater role in this important field both inside and outside the Church. Improved communications and use of the media are tasks for us all. The group offers help and support for Communication Days sponsored by Provinces and Districts, and has noted with interest that the Conference for World Mission and the British Council of Churches are holding a special consultation on new methods of communicating the Faith.

### **Cost Control and Earnings**

18. With the transfer of Tavistock Bookshop accounts to Finance and Administration, the shop's accounts will be subject to the same oversight as the departments' and the rest of the section. Naturally the control will be related to a trading operation as distinct from a spending service.

19. Printing and publishing are already closely monitored within the section (see paras 4, 6 and 7 above) and net expenditure only is included in the URC budget, sometimes showing a substantial underspending because of income earned.

20. The total operation – Reform, printing and publishing and Tavistock Bookshop involve the turnover of a considerable sum of money, and with the serious financial difficulties which confront the Church, there could be advantage in grouping these together in a self-financing Publications Account, from which it may be possible to contribute to URC resources. Such an arrangement would increase the motivation to make more publications financially viable. Naturally non-earning service operations would need to be identified and funded from central resources.

*Continued on page 38*

## THE REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL MODERATORS 1980

### What we do

1. We are often asked, within the URC as well as by others, "What does a Provincial Moderator do?" The Scheme of Union laid down a number of functions but the detail and main thrust of the work have had to be established by practice, responding to the tasks that come our way. We think it may be useful if our report this year summarises the way we see our role.

### Collectively

2. We meet early in each month, except August, usually for two 4-hour sessions, dealing approximately half the time with vacancies and half with pastoral problems and matters referred by the General Secretary or the Departments. It is a demanding task trying to find suitable names to match the list of churches looking for ministers, but one that requires great care and patience because of its consequences for people. A lot of thought has been given to the best way of making introductions and keeping the process moving, and we try to be as flexible and sensitive as possible.

3. During the past year we have sent to ministers a quarterly list of vacant pastorates. This new move has been appreciated and we intend to continue the practice, believing it to be some help to both ministers and local churches, without any obvious drawbacks.

4. We have found it helpful to share in complete confidence some of the major pastoral problems which have arisen in our provinces, e.g. breakdown in relationships within the local church, or between a local church and the District Council, or within a manse. Careful examination of such situations takes a lot of time and there are few "answers" to such problems, yet the help we can give each other has already proved valuable and we hope helps those involved.

### Individually

5. The Scheme of Union stresses the pastoral nature of our work, both with ministers and churches. It is difficult to keep in touch with ministers and their wives and families because of the large area of each Province. This constitutes, nonetheless, our major responsibility, though much has to be done by telephone or at fraternal or after district meetings. We are among the first to interview candidates for the ministry and we have a continuing responsibility for them throughout training and settlement. Help at retirement is also often required, especially if retirement housing is needed, and retired ministers remain our concern.

6. We share in the District's task of "oversight", providing an individual and confidential approach that helps liaison in both directions. Some have likened our role to that of "troubleshooter" or "ombudsman". We are the only people with seats on all District Councils, able to view all the work of the Province as a unity, and it is the experience and knowledge drawn from this which gives us such "authority" as we have, which is largely exercised in association with the work of the Councils, viz: deployment and grouping, settlements and removals, major schemes of repair, reconstruction and planning, sorting out decisions for trustees, and such like.

7. The pressure of administration and attending meetings can easily seem to predominate and many people see us primarily in that context as "link people". We want to stress, however, that though separated from the responsibility of a local pastorate, we remain Ministers of Word and Sacraments and value as a primary part of our work the leading of worship. Most Sundays we are in some pulpit and during the week there are many special services. This helps keep us in touch with local churches in a way that is essential to our pastoral concern for them. The arrangement that all fees and expenses received do not augment our stipends but are credited towards the cost of our total travel expenses means that no church need feel too small or isolated to invite us.

8. As Moderator of Synod we are expected to represent the wider Church to the local church and the Province to the General Assembly. Of growing significance is the expectation that we will also represent the URC in ecumenical matters, promoting and sponsoring new projects, meeting constantly with other church leaders, informally as well as on public occasions, and in numerous committees. Although this ecumenical task takes a great deal of time, we believe it to be vital for the promotion of church unity as it gives the URC opportunities our previous denominations used not to have.

9. There are other aspects of our ministry which we are concerned to develop, e.g. building up a theological awareness, training our people for mission, stimulating growth and new direction through informal ad hoc groups, and encouraging full use of a Moderator's personal gifts to meet the needs of his (or her?) Province. We hope to be open to the Church's needs and guidance in developing the most helpful ways of doing our work; and re-examination of procedures will be all the more necessary as the cost of petrol rises and travel within the Province becomes more expensive.

#### **Meeting Ministers' Needs**

10. Four of the matters which concerned us this past year have been highlighted by special needs brought to our attention.

11. Some of our ministers, especially in their first pastorate, suffer from a sense of loneliness – and some pastorates are very isolated. We are seeking ways in which they can be befriended and supported. The local congregation has a primary responsibility in this and helpful initiatives are often taken by elders and others. District Councils find it difficult to identify or cope with such needs. They provide, however, the only meeting-place that some of our ministers can attend and we would encourage them to give thought to this problem. So easily "out of sight means out of mind". In some areas groups of local ministers and wives meet for mutual encouragement and this is often the best way. We would be glad to encourage such group support where it would be desired. We should also like to think that our ministers will take initiatives to get in touch with us, whenever need arises; or that elders will alert us to existing needs. None of us is a clairvoyant.

12. Another factor we have noticed is the increased pressure on the Manse household these days. Because of church demands on time, including evenings and weekends, if the minister's spouse also works full-time they seldom see each other. Demanding travel schedules in group pastorates add to the problem. Anxiety about whether a retirement house will be available still worries many and pressures develop for a second income and a chance to save. Sometimes this is because of older children facing unemployment, or because the cost of the car, now so essential in most pastorates, is often not adequately covered in expenses paid and requires the wife's income to keep it on the road. Cumulatively such things, small in themselves, can lead to growing stress and anxiety.

13. We are concerned that the spiritual life of ministers and laity alike needs deepening. Students at the end of their theological training sometimes seem to have developed no pattern that stands the test of the daily routine of a pastorate. All of us need constant refreshment and help in exploring the best ways of bible reading and prayer. We believe that "sabbatical leave" (very different from a holiday!) ought to be planned as a regular feature of our ministry, to renew a minister's purpose and dedication and setting of targets.

14. The fourth concern is how to help ministers respond to the growing opportunities of team and group ministries. Our training and ethos has largely been on a one minister/one church pattern. This needs to change as fewer of our ministers now find themselves in this situation. Churches are called to develop a new pattern of leadership through which they offer support to each other, and ministers need to cultivate skills in group techniques and learn the discipline of planning and working together.

#### **Deployment, Grouping and Manpower**

15. Four of our Provinces have had difficulty in reducing their number of pastorates to the figure allowed by their Deployment Quota for October 1979. Ministers cannot be shunted round just to suit blueprint grouping plans. Their age, acceptability, and own commitments and gifts have to be taken into account; and it would be absurd to force some live and important pastorates to remain without ministerial leadership just because some other church in that Province was waiting for its minister to retire. Every opportunity has to be taken, nonetheless, to press toward a fair spread of ministry throughout the country and therefore to meet the agreed quotas as soon as possible.

16. Another grouping problem concerns the assessment for Maintenance of the Ministry. Some smaller churches in the past have managed with the minimum of "oversight" from a neighbouring minister, towards which they paid a nominal sum. If they are now "grouped" in a proper scheme of shared ministry, they find themselves facing a high rise in assessment – capable of crippling most of them. What should be the answer? Giving the Provinces more

responsibility for allocating MoM contributions between Local Churches may help; but the problem remains — how to encourage such churches, used to living on a shoestring and with little leadership able to stimulate giving, to “pay their way” in the URC. The Auxiliary Ministry may be able to provide new leadership in such places, but hopefully will not be wasted where there are no prospects of growth. We think that the whole question of “appropriate technology” for ministry to a small church is an urgent priority and needs more careful examination.

### Signs of Hope

17. This past year there has been much to encourage us, in spite of the difficulties. We have seen churches rise to levels of giving they had never imagined possible, repeatedly surpassing the most optimistic forecasts of treasurers. We have welcomed an increasing number of new candidates for the ministry, found some eager to train for the Auxiliary Ministry, and we have introduced an unusually large number of ordinands (29) to churches eagerly awaiting their arrival. Churches are starting to think again of growth, and how to make it possible, and the efforts of GEAR, NIE and other Renewal groups at a local level are beginning to speak to this need. Joint schemes with the Methodists and others continue to spread. There are signs that our people are prepared to face the future with hope and imagination and to accept the cost willingly.

18. We have been glad to welcome John Slow as Moderator of the East Midlands Province.

---

*Continued from page 35*

### RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report of the Publications and Publicity Committee.
2. The Assembly welcomes the possibility of an interdenominational hymn book and urges the responsible committees to seek as full an involvement as possible.
3. The Assembly urges local churches, Districts and Synods to explore ways of utilising local press and radio, to set up training opportunities for those concerned, and to sponsor Communication (Training) Days to cover the many aspects of communicating to others.

# CHURCH LIFE DEPARTMENT

*Chairman:* The Revd Dr. Kenneth Slack  
*Secretary:* The Rt Revd Robert O. Latham

## INTRODUCTION

1. We present the eighth annual report of the Church Life Department. Every committee of the department has an expanding programme which reflects at least two pressures. One the increasing demand from the member churches for more assistance, for example in training for Church membership; in the national Youth activities programme; in the Lay Preachers' training courses; in aids for worship and clarification of the theological understanding of terms like 'Priesthood of all believers', 'Confirmation'.

2. The other pressure arises from the Assembly remits and the committees' own creative thinking. Examples of these pressures are Lay Presidency at the Sacraments, preparation for an Auxiliary Ministry, and the review of Ministerial Training to be undertaken this year; and from the committees themselves, the development in the Healing programme, the Togetherness concept for education and worship for the whole church, etc. It is an on-going process. It is cumulative.

3. The Department's Central Committee is concerned that too much is being attempted, creating too great a demand on the resources both in time and personnel. The answer may well lie in reducing the service offered, and we ask for your assistance in determining the priorities, that the Department may serve our churches and assist them as they seek to build up the faith of our people and enrich worship and witness.

4. This may be an appropriate time for fresh leadership, and as chairman and secretary of the Department, we thank the Assembly for the privilege of being enabled to serve, and commend to you the present staff and the new chairman and secretary of the Department. May they know your support in word, and deed, and prayer.

Kenneth Slack

Robert Latham

## PRESIDENCY AT THE LORD'S SUPPER – I

5. The 1979 Assembly asked the Church Life Department to examine the practice of the Church regarding the authorisation of presidency at sacramental services in the case of those who are not ordained ministers, and to report its findings to the 1980 Assembly.

6. The relevant passages in the Basis of Union are to be found in the Manual: page 16, paragraph (25):

"(25) The worship of the local church is an expression of the worship of the whole people of God. In order that this may be clearly seen, the United Reformed Church shall (a) take steps to ensure that, so far as possible, ordained ministers of the Word and Sacraments are readily available to every local church; (b) provide for the training of suitable men and women, members of the United Reformed Church, to be accredited by District Councils as lay preachers; (c) make provision through District Councils, in full consultation with the local churches concerned, for the recognition of certain members of the United Reformed Church, normally deaconesses, elders or accredited lay preachers, who may be invited by local churches to preside at baptismal and communion services where pastoral necessity so requires. The pastoral needs of each situation shall be reviewed periodically by the District Council in consultation with the local church. Apart from ordained ministers of the United Reformed Church and of other Churches, only such recognised persons may be invited."

Manual: page 24, under the Functions of the District Council, paragraph (vi): "to accredit lay preachers, and, in consultation with the local churches concerned and the Moderator of the Synod, to give authority for appropriate lay persons to preside at the Sacraments;"



7. The Department sought the help of Synods and District Councils, asking them to comment on their own experience and practice, and appointed a group representative of the Ministerial Training, Supplementary Ministries, Doctrine & Worship Committees, and the World Church and Mission Department, which has considered the replies received from District councils and Synods together with other material which has been submitted, and now presents the following report:

## II

7.1. Out of 65 District Councils, 42 have replied, and while a few are unhappy with the present arrangements, and some feel deeply that the URC has not yet found a satisfactory answer to the questions often raised, it is quite clear that there is no great and widespread desire for a revision at the present time of the requirements of the Basis of Union. 10 Councils asked for a revision of procedures.

7.2. In most districts procedures based on para (25) are found to work satisfactorily. There was some uncertainty in the first two or three years of the URC but councils gave much attention to the matter and were greatly helped by Guidelines prepared by the Doctrine and Worship Committee and approved by the Assembly in 1974 (see para 14). Generally the churches have accepted that where lay presidency may be needed there should be full consultation with the District Council, recognising that the Basis of Union requires of the Councils, as part of their pastoral responsibility, that adequate arrangements should be made in all churches for the provision of the sacraments and that it is the duty of the District Council to decide who should preside.

7.3. There is some lay celebration without authorisation, though it is difficult to assess how widespread this may be. We urge those who have ignored the requirements of the Basis of Union in this matter to recognise the convictions of those to whom the neglect of what was agreed in the Basis of Union, after much heart-searching, is distressing.

7.4. Not many councils have an annual or regular review of the arrangements, though the letter sent from our Department has spurred some to say that they will be making a review. In several churches specific elders are appointed by the District Council (in full consultation with the local churches concerned), who have been authorised to preside in emergency. Most of our correspondence was concerned with Communion services; Baptism does not seem to present a problem, since special arrangements are usually made with ministers, and only in a few cases have District Councils been asked to authorise lay administration.

7.5. We noted that in the Functions of District Councils in the Basis of Union reference is made to consultation with the Moderator of Synod. (*cf.*, (9)(3)(vi) – *page 24 of The Manual – already quoted above*).

It is not anticipated that the Moderator need be approached on every occasion but that matters of principle should be discussed with him, and that as a member of District Council he should be aware of questions that arise.

Debate seems to be chiefly concerned with the following:

7.6. **Lay Preachers** Most of those authorised to preside are lay preachers; the Basis of Union expressly includes them as being appropriate members to be authorised. Some would prefer that all lay preachers should be able to preside at communion services without further authorisation in addition to their being recognised as accredited lay preachers. We believe that local churches will need to continue to ask District Councils to authorise named lay preachers, and that it is against the spirit of the Basis of Union to authorise all lay preachers in advance, or to accept that the local church be the agent of authorisation. When the URC was formed there were those who were convinced that in the United Church only ordained ministers should be permitted to preside at the sacraments, and there were others who were convinced that any church member, ordained or lay, should be able to preside at the invitation of the local church. Paragraph (25) was adopted in recognition of the diversity of conviction as the ground for the United Church's growth in common life and worship. It did not deny that a lay preacher might on occasion preside; it removed the authorisation from the local church to the District Council.

**7.7. Theological Students** There is some variation of practice in decisions concerning the presidency of theological students, although only 10 District Councils specially refer to it. These Councils have authorised theological students while accepting that they are not specifically included in paragraph (25) among those members who might "normally" be recognised for this purpose. Two districts say they would wish to authorise all theological students; 3 specify student pastors while in office, and most authorise for one particular Sunday at a named church. We are of the opinion that the present wording of the Basis of Union and of the Guidelines (paragraphs 6 and 5) cover the situation, and that theological students will be among those whom a local church might ask the District Council to authorise. It is against the spirit of the Basis of Union to authorise all theological students to preside in any given district or districts. At the same time it should be noted that some students feel that to preside at the sacraments while still students would be to anticipate their ordination. We should respect their views. These tensions are within the URC and we do not think that they will be resolved by ignoring the agreement reached at union which is expressed in the Basis of Union.

#### **7.8. Local Ecumenical Projects and Shared or Union Churches**

- (i) The opening sentence of paragraph (25) of the Basis states "the worship of the local church is an expression of the worship of the whole people of God." In decisions concerning presidency at the sacraments the URC must be sensitive to the convictions of the other Churches. This will be particularly important in Local Ecumenical Projects and other shared churches. Whilst arrangements will normally be made for an ordained minister to preside at communion services according to the practice of the URC in these situations, it will also be acknowledged that arrangements for lay presidency may have to be made in accordance with the United Reformed Church's understanding of pastoral necessity, and we think it would be wrong to seek any general authorisation of lay preachers in these situations.
- (ii) Questions are sometimes raised about the position of Methodist Local Preachers who serve United Reformed Churches. To invite them to preside at a URC communion service, except by prior arrangement and appropriate authorisation by the Methodist Church, would put them in a difficult situation. This is also the view taken by the Methodist/URC Liaison Committee. Similarly in the case of Local Ecumenical Projects advice should be sought from the appropriate authorities before any invitation be given to a Local Preacher to preside at Communion.

**7.9. The Auxiliary Ministry** Some councils give as a reason for not making any change in the Basis of Union with regard to Presidency of the sacraments the possible developments of an Auxiliary Ministry, which will mean that there will be more ordained ministers available and that therefore there will be less need to authorise lay presidents. We agree that this strengthens our recommendation that the Assembly should not now alter the provisions of the Basis of Union.

### III

**7.10. In our discussions** we identified three areas where misunderstanding often arises, and we draw attention to these. The first is the frequent reference to "fitness to preside." Several district councils and some lay preachers commented to the effect that a faithful lay preacher is as fit to preside as an ordained minister. This is not disputed. The presidency of the sacraments is not a matter of moral or spiritual worth. The normal arrangement is for the minister of the local church to preside. He has been set apart for the ministry of word and sacraments, having been trained and ordained. It is not a matter of worth but of good order. It does not mean that the person so ordained has any special power or sanctity above that of the other members. Ordination is an ordering.

**7.11. The second area of misunderstanding** is what is meant by "Pastoral Necessity". It is envisaged in the Basis of Union that normally the minister, or another ordained minister, will preside at sacramental services. This had originally been the common practice of the Churches that came into the Union. The fact that in some areas there were more churches than ministers meant that special arrangements had to be made from time to time. This situation remains, and therefore where it is difficult for a local church to arrange for a minister to preside, it is the responsibility of the District Council, *in consultation with the local church*, to appoint someone, so that a communion service may be held. We note that in some groups, the position is eased by churches changing the Sundays in the month when communion is celebrated; but

there will be occasions when it is difficult, if not impossible, to arrange for the minister or another ordained minister to preside. We emphasise again that in this event it is the responsibility of the District Council to make the necessary arrangements.

7.12. The third misunderstanding comes when it is maintained that belief in "the priesthood of all believers" means that laymen have as much right as ministers to preside at sacramental services. This is not a consequence of belief in the priesthood of all believers. It is a part of Reformed Church order that within the Church there are varying offices and callings. A *priest* is not needed to preside at a communion service. The priesthood of all believers consists in representing God to the world and the world to God. All members share in this in their common life, not in communion services alone. To see presidency at communion as the major expression of the priesthood of all believers is to miss the importance of our true priestly function in daily life.

7.13. As a result of our enquiry and reflection we do not bring any recommendations for change in the Basis of Union with regard to presidency at the sacraments. We recommend however that members of District Councils and all others concerned should familiarise themselves with the relevant clauses of the Basis of Union and with the Guidelines presented to the Assembly in 1974. We further recommend that material be made available, possibly by way of a leaflet, which will help councils, churches, lay preachers and other members of the churches to understand why it is that normally an ordained minister presides at sacramental services, as was the practice in early days of many Congregational churches, and up to the time of union of the Presbyterian Church.

#### IV

#### 7.14. GUIDELINES

"Presidency at the Lord's Supper" Guidelines presented to the Assembly 1974 by the Doctrine and Worship Committee.

1. The Scheme of Union (clause 7 (25) requires the United Reformed Church to take steps to ensure that so far as possible ordained ministers of the Word and Sacraments are readily available to every local church, so that the worship of the local church can be clearly seen to be an expression of the worship of the whole people of God.
2. Whoever else is to preside at the Lord's Supper should be a person authorised by the District Council.
3. The Scheme of Union provides (clause 7 (25c)), that besides ministers of the Word and Sacraments other members of the church, normally deaconesses, elders or accredited lay preachers, may be authorised by a District Council to preside at the Lord's Supper, where pastoral necessity so requires.
4. Our interpretation of this is that each District Council should keep a list of churches which for reasons of pastoral necessity it authorises, either for a limited period or indefinitely, to invite persons other than ministers of the Word and Sacraments to preside at baptismal and communion services. In full consultation with each church the District Council should decide which such persons (not necessarily resident within the District) may be invited for those purposes by the local church. We recommend that persons so appointed should preferably be in some pastoral relationship to the church concerned, and that all such arrangements be reviewed at least annually.
5. We do not interpret the Scheme as requiring that permission shall be obtained in respect of each individual occasion; nor on the other hand do we interpret it as permitting the District Council to give a general authorisation to all deaconesses, elders and lay preachers, or to theological students, within its bounds.
6. The Scheme of Union does not refer to theological students in this connection. Our view is that if a church needs to invite a student in training for the ministry of the United Reformed Church to preside at the Lord's Supper, it should seek authorisation for this from its own District Council.

7. We do not feel called upon to legislate for cases of extreme emergency, but in such circumstances rely on the churches to act in accordance with the spirit of the Scheme of Union.
8. We do not regard these interpretations as more than interim measures, but anticipate that developing circumstances, particularly in connection with our rethinking of the patterns of ministry, will lead to some easing of difficulties at present experienced.

#### Notes

- (a) It is in accordance with para 1 above that the Scheme of Union (clause 9 (3, iii)) requires an interim moderator, normally a minister of the Word and Sacrament, to be appointed to every vacant church.
- (b) Baptismal services are mentioned in para 4 because they are mentioned in the provision of the Scheme which that paragraph interprets. It does not follow that every authorisation to preside at the Lord's Supper should necessarily include an authorisation to administer baptism, since in the outlook of our Church immediate administration of baptism is not so important as regular participation in the Lord's Supper.
- (c) If authorisation is given to a person resident within another District, it would be courteous to inform the District Council concerned.

[Resolution 8]

### DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd Dr John Huxtable

*Secretary:* The Revd Donald McIlhagga

8. **Introduction** This year has seen a fifty per cent change of personnel in the membership of the Doctrine and Worship Committee. We welcome the new liveliness this has brought. Several new debates have been initiated on which we hope to report in due course, in particular two which arose separately 'Sexuality' and 'Church Discipline'. Doctrinal matters related to Church Unity discussions have been kept under review, in particular 'Episcopacy' in relation to The Churches Council for Covenanting and 'Initiation'. We understand that new proposals are being presented to the General Assembly by another committee concerning 'Baptism' in relation to The Churches of Christ.

9. **The Priesthood of all believers** The most relevant passages in the New Testament are Romans Chapter 12 verses 1 and 2, and 1 Peter, Chapter 2 v 9ff and these refer back to Exodus Chapter 19 verse 6, Deuteronomy Chapter 7 verses 6, Chapter 14 verses 2-21, and Chapter 26, verse 19.

10. The following consideration is offered of the Biblical material. According to St. Paul the Christian's response to justification is a priestly one: 'to present your bodies as a living sacrifice'. The recipients of grace are priests whose response to the gospel of forgiveness must take the form of a gift of all that they do. The activities thus envisaged include prayer, praise and thanksgiving, faith, the conversion of the Gentiles, almsgiving, works of brotherly love, kindness. The priesthood of all believers is not chiefly to be understood as a matter of individual access of privilege, but of the relationship of a community first of all to God and (in consequence) second to those who are not members of the believing community. This priesthood of all believers, therefore, should not be understood individualistically but in a churchly fashion; it should also be understood Christologically. The priestly offering by the believing community is made possible by the priestly offering of Jesus' body in death on the Cross. If there is a priesthood of all believers it is because there is first the eternal high priesthood of Jesus and second because there is a church, those who are 'in Christ' because of his passion and triumph. It is not through our belief that we are made priests, especially if that is thought of as an achievement but through that in which we believe, the salvation achieved by God in Christ on the Cross. Perhaps it is best understood as the 'priesthood of the believing community'. It is the function of this community to mediate to mankind the access to God won for them by the priesthood of Jesus.

11. **Book of Services** A Book of Services of the United Reformed Church will be published

this year, it is hoped by the time the Assembly meets. This book is the fruit of work begun in 1972 at the inception of The United Reformed Church. Many of the services have previously been published in pamphlet form and have been revised in the light of comments received. We have added our own revision of The Joint Liturgical Group Lectionary and also a selection of psalms related to it and references to the places they appear in our hymn books. We would express our thanks to the Revd David Gardner and the Revd Donald McIlhagga who have prepared the book for publication, and to The Saint Andrew Press for its co-operation in this matter.

[Resolution 1]

12. **Hymn Book** The General Assembly of 1979 urged the Doctrine and Worship Committee to co-operate with The Methodist Church if that Church should invite us to prepare a new joint hymn book. Co-operation has been speedy and full and the United Reformed Church is now a partner in this venture. Four members have been appointed to The Hymn Book Main Committee, namely Mr P.W. Cutts, MA, the Revd D.C.M. Gardner, STM, MA, the Revd T.C. Micklem, MA, and the Revd Donald McIlhagga, MA. Others will be appointed to the words and music panel.

13. It is hoped that full details of the book will be available for comment from September 1981, that the General Assembly of 1982 will approve the scheme of the book and that it is hoped it will be launched at Christmas 1983. Initial comments, suggestions and MSS are welcome and should be sent to the Revd T.C. Micklem, 7 Hawkswell Gardens, Oxford, OX2 7EX.

14. **Statement of the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church (Schedule 'D')**. The committee received a number of comments from Church Councils and individuals which it considered. However, a major proposal from the Mersey Province enabled us to take another look at the whole revision proposed to the General Assembly in 1979. In the light of this, despite any delay it may involve, we now wish to put before the Assembly a further version believing that it is so great an improvement on what we have submitted previously that the Assembly will wish to accept it as the contemporary language alternative to the version printed in the Basis of Union. We wish to express our gratitude to the Mersey Province for its work in this matter. We wish to submit: the following:

[Resolution 2]

**Proposed Alternative form of the statement of the Nature Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church (Schedule 'D') 1980**

With the whole Christian Church  
the United Reformed Church believes in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The life of faith to which we are called  
is the Spirit's gift  
continually received  
through the Word, the Sacraments  
and our Christian life together.

The highest authority  
for what we believe and do  
is God's Word in the Bible,  
alive for his people today  
through the help of the Spirit.

We give thanks to God  
for the witness to the Catholic faith  
in the Apostles' and Nicene creeds,  
and also for the declarations made in our own tradition  
by Congregationalists and Presbyterians (and the Churches of Christ)  
in which they stated their faith  
and sought to make its implications clear.

We conduct our life together  
according to the Basis of Union,  
in which we give expression to our faith  
in forms which we believe contain  
the essential elements of the Church's life,  
both Catholic and Reformed;  
but we affirm our right and readiness  
to change the Basis of Union  
and to make new statements of faith,  
if the need arises  
in ever new obedience to the Living Christ.

Held together by Christ  
in the freedom of the Spirit,  
we rejoice in diversity  
and uphold the rights of personal conviction.  
For the sake of faith and fellowship  
it shall be for the Church to decide  
when differences of conviction  
hurt our unity and peace.

We believe that  
Christ gives his Church a government  
distinct from the government of the state.  
In things that affect obedience to God  
the Church is not subordinate to the state  
but must serve the Lord Jesus Christ,  
its only king and head.  
Civil authorities are called  
to serve God's will of justice and peace for all humanity,  
and to respect the rights of conscience and belief.

We affirm our intention  
to go on praying and working,  
with all our fellow Christians,  
for the visible unity of the Church  
in the way Christ chooses,  
so that people and nations  
may be led to love and serve God  
and praise him more and more for ever.

15. **Chairman** The Revd Dr John Huxtable has served as Chairman of the Doctrine and Worship Committee from January 1975 and we wish to express to him our gratitude for his leadership and kindly guidance during this time.

[Resolution 3]

## YOUTH COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd J.E. Mather

*Secretary:* The Revd John Oldershaw

16. During the last year the Youth Committee has begun to review its work, assessing its achievements and redefining aims. The FURY Assembly played an important part in this process, and it was therefore disappointing that some Districts were not represented because delegates had not been appointed.

17. The Youth Committee remains convinced that the Youth Leadership Training Officer scheme should be expanded so that all Provinces are included. The reception given by the General Assembly in 1979 to the resolution from Southern Province, and the support of Department Central Committee, is encouraging. The committee hopes that it may be possible for the Budget Committee to include some financial support in 1982, for this area of work.

Applications have been made to several Trusts for funding and an application for a Development Grant has been made to the Department of Education and Science. There have been several changes in the Y.L.T.O. team. Brian Harris, after 10 years of service, resigned as YLTO for Northern and Yorkshire Provinces so that he could complete his training for the ordained ministry. Ron Forster has been appointed to take his place. In the Midland Region, Roger Tolman has been appointed to serve the East and West Midland Provinces. Francis Cattermole has resigned as YLTO for the Southern and Wessex Provinces to become the Director of the National Council of Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS).

18. The Activities programme has developed from three activities, at the beginning of the URC, to fifteen in 1980. A part-time Activities Officer, Mr Frank Symes (the costs for which are met entirely by a surcharge on the fees paid by the young people), has been appointed to cope with the additional work involved in the administration of the programme. The International programme has been a significant area of development, with visits to India, Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany, USSR and Ireland planned for 1980. The committee is encouraging specific provinces to become involved in the European exchanges and so far West Midlands is linked with Sweden, South West with Ireland and Thames North Youth Panel has expressed interest in the Anglo-German programme. The USSR visit is under constant review, and is being promoted ecumenically. The third world journeys have become a much valued feature of the Activities programme. The 1979 Zambia Journey was a great success, and the 1980 India Journey was fully booked within three months of the publicity being available. A National FURY weekend is being planned for October 31 – November 2nd. This will be in London and aims to gather 1,500 young people from all over England and Wales. It will focus on the Church in the 80's.

19. The statistical returns analysed in 1979 show that nationally there has been a growth in the number of youth fellowships, and older teenage work, which is very encouraging. One difficulty encountered with the returns is that not all churches return information. Some do not indicate that there are young people associated with the church when there is no organised youth group. Isolated young people do participate in FURY activities at District, Province and National levels, and it would be useful to have more detailed information of these figures. Statistics are particularly important when application is made to the Department of Education and Science and Local Authorities for grant aid.

20. **The Uniformed Organisations** continue to play an important role in the youth work of the URC. The URC Guide and Scout Fellowship and the Boys' Brigade Council of URC Companies provide support and resources for the leaders of Uniformed groups. The Uniformed Organisations provide an opportunity for outreach and for bringing young people into the church family. Within Scouts a document on Sponsorship is being referred to churches and other sponsoring bodies for comment. This stresses the importance of our close link between the Scout group and the church as the sponsoring body.

21. **"Time for God"** continues to develop. Grants from the Queen's Silver Jubilee Trust and the Home Office Trust have enabled the support of young people in projects which could not afford to pay for additional assistance. A URC minister, the Revd John Whitehorn has been appointed Administrator of the scheme, and the Free Church Federal Council has continued to provide office facilities.

22. The close co-operation with the Churches of Christ continues and it is expected that the Re-formed Association of the Churches of Christ will seek to work through a joint Youth Committee, as has the former Association.

23. Youth participation in decision making is a feature of URC Youth work which has gained much praise and is something of which we can be proud. The Youth Committee is confident that there are many signs of hope for the future and looks forward to new developments and growth.

## CHAPLAINS AND STUDENTS COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd Dr Leslie Green

*Secretary:* The Revd Peter Jupp

**24. Contemporary scene** The committee is concerned about the effect on tertiary education of continuing Government policies, which work in at least two ways. First, grants to tertiary education have been annually cut. Second, fees for overseas students are being increased. We are concerned not only for the effect that this will have on students from developing countries and on the narrowing of the educational experience of our own students, but also for the equally serious effect on the research output of British Universities upon which our society depends.

**25. Chaplains** 62 URC ministers have part-time responsibility as Chaplains in institutions of tertiary education. 9 URC ministers are full-time. (Two are overseas Chaplains, three are employed by Colleges, two by local churches and one by the Free Church Federal Council). During the year, the Revd David Lawrence was appointed Free Church Chaplain to Southampton Colleges and the Revd Peter Pierce Chaplain to Hatfield Polytechnic.

**26. The religious formation of students** All Chaplains are concerned for the religious formation of students. A first dilemma here has been articulated by the Revd Bernard Moss: "Many students seem to need religion as a safety net in the sense of wanting a watertight faith and powerful certainties which brook no challenge — or only challenges which can be readily answered. The Chaplain's dilemma is to recognise this for what it is, and to discover sensitive ways of enabling people to develop a faith which grows because it takes challenge in its stride, is open to uncertainty, and sees the challenge of the gospel as well as its promise. In the end perhaps that dilemma is as much a challenge of our own personal lifestyle and chaplaincy-style, i.e. what sort of religion do we commend in the sort of people we are, as well as the way we talk at meetings, preach, etc.?"

A second dilemma facing URC Chaplains comes from the limitations placed on a part-time role.

- (a) concerning Chaplaincy work and the local church, the committee's leaflet "What is Chaplaincy?" states, "a common misconception among local congregations is that their minister's role as chaplain will lead to extra worshippers, Junior Church teachers or church members. The benefits to the local church lie rather in the effect of the staff and students of the institution upon their minister, in the opportunity to be exposed to new patterns of worship, in the questioning of current practices and beliefs, and in the long-term contribution of students to the Church at large after they have graduated."
- (b) the effectiveness of our Chaplains depend very much on the effectiveness of their teamwork with other Chaplains, particularly those who are full-time.
- (c) part-time Chaplains have generally insufficient opportunity to be able to develop a responsibility to the institution as a whole, for example, in work with staff and on the issues which are important to staff.
- (d) a recent survey has indicated that as many as 92% of students had no religious commitment. Chaplains are much concerned with the exercise of their ministry to these.

**27. Aids to religious formation of students** A number of organisations here play a special role. (1) Christian Unions are widespread and vigorous and include a substantial number of URC students. (2) Our committee is pleased to see the revival of the recently reorganised Student Christian Movement. (3) Ecumenical societies often flourish, but partly because of the considerable decline in denominational allegiance by the young over the last decade. (4) URC denominational societies are generally weak, although it is not known whether this is a direct result of the decline in numbers of young people connected with URC churches.

28. The committee is also involved with five other organisations which assist this ministry:

- (i) The Chaplains to Higher Education Liaison Group (which consists of the secretaries for Chaplaincy in the five major denominations) meets regularly and has organised training weeks for Chaplains in June 1979 and again in September 1980. Together with other denominational representatives, this group is also planning the biennial Chaplains'



conference at Swanwick in September 1980, where the Rt. Revd Leslie Newbigin will be the main speaker.

- (ii) The second National Student Christian Congress is to take place at Coventry in April 1981 with the title "Alpha and Omega". It hopes to attract 500 students. Four URC representatives are on the planning committee.
  - (iii) The fifth National URC Students Conference was held this year at the City Temple, organised by Miss Bethan Davies of the committee with London students.
  - (iv) Dr Leslie Green is now the URC representative on the Churches Commission on Overseas Students.
  - (v) The Revd Tony Tucker is the URC representative on the National Ecumenical Agency in Further Education.
29. The committee expresses its thanks to the Revd Bruce Stuart for his five years of service on the committee, the last two as Secretary.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd Margaret T. Taylor

*Secretary:* The Revd C. Keith Forecast

## CHILDREN'S WORK COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd Glyn Jenkins

*Secretary:* The Revd C. Keith Forecast

30. These two committees continue to meet concurrently and to follow a common agenda for most of the time. They also continue to serve both the United Reformed Church and the Churches of Christ and include within their membership representatives from both denominations.

31. **Together** The major concern this year has been the initiation of this programme of advocacy authorised by the 1979 Assembly. For forty years the 'Family Church' vision has been before the churches. The measure of the response to that vision is to be seen in the overwhelming number of places where afternoon Sunday school has been discontinued and replaced by children's departments held at the same time as morning adult worship, usually with a short period of 'family worship' for all ages. This success, however, has sometimes masked a failure to pursue the implications of the vision any further. The aim of the 'Together' programme is to help churches face the implications of being a worshipping and learning community of all ages. An advocacy pack has been prepared. District councils have been asked to appoint at least one person to move from church to church systematically over the next two years, meeting elders, teachers and members, opening up the subject with them and inviting them to find their own way of responding to that vision. We believe that the urgency of this task is greater than ever.

32. **Sharing of experience** Meanwhile many local churches are experimenting in ways of worship and learning involving their adults and children together. Some, we understand, are developing their own courses of study. These developments are often both the prelude to and the sign of growth in the life of the congregation. Local churches are urged to send to the Christian Education Secretary news of any new development which might be of interest and help to others.

33. **Co-ordinated training** Our committees, and the department as a whole, sponsor many schemes of training: for teachers, lay preachers, elders, youth leaders, Pilot Captains, and candidates for church membership. The demand for such training shows no sign of abating.

There is also an increasing request for courses of study from members of the Church who are not training for specific work but wish to equip themselves for life and witness. With this in mind, the committees are investigating the possibility of publishing a co-ordinated training scheme, incorporating the best of the existing schemes and adding to them as necessary, to be presented as a series of units, various combinations of which people might study according to their need and desire.

34. Meanwhile demand for one of these schemes '**Equipped to Teach**', continues. We sponsor and administer this home-study course together with the Baptists and Congregational Federation. One hundred URC students undertook this course during 1979 and we express our congratulations to those who completed it and our thanks to tutors and assessors.

35. **Study Groups** The committees continue to concern themselves about the provision of material for house groups and other gatherings for study and learning. There appears to be a growing demand. This encourages us, for we believe such meetings have a vital place in a growing church. We have not yet felt the need, however, to produce denominationally based literature, other than that already available from the Church and Society and World Church and Mission Departments. Churches using 'Partners in learning' on Sundays are encouraged to use the adult and young people's notes for their study groups. The Churches of Christ 'Programmes for Study Groups' are commended. Advice about the other material is given in our leaflet 'For your study group' which is supplemented regularly by specific suggestions made in the Information Service.

36. **Adult Education** The Christian Association for Adult and Continuing Education has now completed the first year of its life. It seeks to provide an ecumenical meeting point for all Christians who are involved in the education of adults, both within and outside the Church, to support and provide resources for them. A number of members of the United Reformed Church are members, particularly those responsible for 'Lay Training' in the provinces, and receive the quarterly bulletin. We are represented on the steering committee and commend the Association to our Church.

37. **The British Lessons Council** For the greater part of the twentieth century, syllabuses and lesson notes for Christian Education in the Free Churches of this country have been prepared and published by the British Lessons Council. It is impossible to estimate the good effect of its work or its results in the lives of countless Christians. Many revered names are identified with its history. In 1966, however, the Council published a new kind of syllabus, 'Experience and Faith', and the Joint Publications Board was set up to publish 'Partners in Learning' annually, based upon it. This heralded change. In 1977, a successor to 'Experience and Faith' was produced — 'The Story of the People of God'. But already the Council was realising that its role had changed. Though it restructured itself to meet the new circumstances, its members have now concluded that its work can more effectively be done by other groups — the Joint Publications Board, and the BCC Consultative Group on Ministry among Children in particular — and accordingly the British Lessons Council, after full consultation with those it represents, has voted itself out of existence and wound up its affairs. On behalf of the United Reformed Church, we give thanks for the history of this great body and congratulate it for the bold decision to which it has come.

38. **Bicentenary of Robert Raikes** 1980 is the bicentenary of the birth of this great pioneer of the Sunday School movement. Though not its founder, he was instrumental in its development. Following quickly upon the International Year of the Child, the occasion affords an impetus to the churches to examine their work among children and to assess the new directions in which it should move in the future. The following events are planned:

- a) formal opening at Raikes' statue on Thames Embankment — April 30;
- b) Radio programmes on Radio 4, local Radio and TV during the year;
- c) Raikes exhibition in Gloucester from June 4; small exhibition in National Portrait Gallery in the summer;
- d) 'Sharing Faith in the Future' — a major conference at York, July 24–27, designed as a sharing of experience among those who are pioneering new ways of working among children and young people in church and community.

In addition, a project, a festival service and a Biography of Raikes by Frank Booth have been

been published by the National Christian Education Council. A series of twelve essays edited by John Ferguson will be published by SPCK, and there will be a commemorative postal cover in June.

**39. Publications** We draw attention to the following:

*Being a member of the United Reformed Church* The Revd Roger Tomes, at the behest of the committees, has prepared this handbook for those who are considering the implications of Church Membership, whether as enquirers or as committed members. The book may be used by individuals working alone or by groups with a leader. It does not supercede, but provides an alternative to 'Belonging to the Church', the kit which is still available and highly commended. It is designed as a companion to 'Being an Elder in the United Reformed Church' and costs 50p, post paid.

*Together* advocacy pack, containing slides, basic paper, discussion papers, and reprint of former papers 'Worshipping Together' and 'Children and Holy Communion'. Cost £2.50p.

*Talking about Church Membership* Reprint with revisions. Price 5p.

*Looking afresh at the Bible* Study group material. Reprint with revisions. 50p.

**40. Service to the churches** During the year the committees seek to be of service to the churches, assisting them in their educational work among children and adults. The majority of districts have Christian Education and Children's Work officers who give of their spare time to this work, some also have Teacher Training officers. We are more than grateful to them all. The committees' Secretary carries out a wide-ranging programme of visits to district and churches as well as offering guidance when approached personally. We encourage churches to avail themselves of these opportunities. In addition, the National Christian Education Council of which our departmental secretary was president during 1979 and whose general secretary is a minister of the United Reformed Church, is always prepared to give advice and resource; their headquarters at Redhill, in Surrey, are available for training events, and their publications are valuable tools for the educational task.

**41. The future** The committees feel that the time has come to try to look forward, to assess what the educational needs of our people are likely to be in the next few years, and to set themselves to meet those needs. With others, we believe the Church is entering a period of renewed growth and development. But growth requires cultivation and nurture. How can our committees, who see themselves to be involved as much as anyone, best help the Church and its members? What educational policies are required? What tools should be provided? The committees have already begun to address themselves to these and kindred questions and hope to report next year. At the same time they would welcome comments and suggestions from any member of the Church who has the same concern and is prepared to share in this important review.

## PILOTS' PANEL

*Chairman:* The Revd Gordon Thompson

*Secretary:* The Revd C. Keith Forecast

42. The children's movement of the United Reformed Church, the Churches of Christ and the Congregational Federation, continues to develop.

43. During the past year, 22 churches have formed companies, including 2 in churches of other denominations whom we add to our list of Associated Companies. There are now 135 companies in existence.

44. **Compass for Pilot Captains**, a completely revised edition of the basic handbook, was published in July. This incorporates the changes made in the style and organisation of the movement in recent years, explains how a company is established and organised, and sets out detailed guidance for company programme and activities.

45. Regional activities continue to grow. In 1979 there were five summer camps, catering for an average of 100 people each, in Yorkshire, Merseyside, Oxfordshire, Devon and West Glamorgan. This year six camps are planned.

46. The growth of Pilots is an indication of the possibilities for development in mid-week work with children in the 7-14 age group. Children enjoy belonging to clubs. Where such clubs have a sense of purpose and a structure they can be a means whereby churches can extend their ministry to children of church and neighbourhood. Pilots offers such a purpose and a structure, and is adaptable to the circumstances of widely differing local churches. The aim is to help children, through a mingling of worship, games, projects, and specialist work to develop their particular skills, to fulfil their Pilot's promise: 'I will learn, pray and serve all I can in the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ.'

## SUPPLEMENTARY MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* Dr. Richard J. Jurd

*Secretary:* The Revd Charles K. Meachin

47. The Supplementary Ministries Committee continues to care for lay preachers, together with those Local Pastors and Deaconesses who have not been ordained.

### LAY PREACHERS

48. 375 students are studying the course "Exploring the Faith", designed for lay preachers and others; 12 have now completed the course. In consultation with the Methodist Church, the course is in the process of revision in order to even out work-loads and standards throughout the course, and to meet criticisms raised by assessors, students and tutors in the past.

49. The committee arranged for a consultation of tutors and assessors for "Exploring the Faith" during October 1979; a useful interchange of ideas occurred, and a marking exercise stimulated lively discussion concerning assessment standards.

50. The committee has continued to issue information leaflets in the "Lay Preaching Matters" series. Leaflets on (a) Practicalities, (b) The Lay Preaching Commissioner, (c) Training Opportunities have already been published. In preparation are leaflets on Team Preparation for Worship, Accreditation, Choosing Hymns, Prayers in the Pulpit, Orders of Worship, Reading the Bible, and How to Receive Visiting Lay Preachers; etc.

51. The Secretary of the committee has continued to circularise Lay Preaching Commissioners with broadsheets containing items of interest to lay preachers: these sheets have also been included in the Information Service packs sent to Church and District Secretaries. The committee is concerned that Commissioners and Secretaries communicate to lay preachers relevant information since the committee does not have the resource to write to all lay preachers individually.

52. The committee is in the preliminary stages of planning a national weekend conference for lay preachers at Swanwick, May 28-31, 1981.

53. The fifth Shergold Expository Sermon Competition was held during 1979. There were only 16 entrants and the winners were (1) Miss K.M. Nichol (Finchley), (2) Mrs E.M. Crabtree (Bradford), (3) Mr M.J. Oliver (Morpeth) and (4) Mr R.J. Gibling (Tiverton). The 1980 sermon will be based on the Bible Passage, Acts 17: 16-34. Lay Preachers are invited to submit a sermon by June 30th, 1980.

54. The following accredited lay preachers have completed the Pastoralia course during the year: Mr L. Brockett, Mrs S. Cooper, Mr E. Knowles, Mrs A. West, and Mrs M.H. Robertson.

55. The Secretary has received from District Councils names of lay preachers to be included on the Register of Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers. The committee urges those District Councils who have not yet submitted names for National Accreditation to do so as soon as possible.

56. The committee is concerned that the Church shall allow Supplementary Ministeries, and in particular lay preaching, adequate resources of manpower and money to carry out the training of lay preachers and the work of liaison and dissemination of information to a dispersed preaching force which conducts some 30% of the service in URC churches every Sunday.

## **DEACONESSES**

57. The following Deaconesses have been ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments: Revd Eileen Gooding (Harlow Group); Revd Audrey Langdown (Loftus, Teeside); Revd Pat Parrish (Openshaw, Manchester).

58. Miss Kay Salvage (Crossway Central Mission, London) has indicated that she wishes to remain a Deaconess, exercising her ministry under the care of the Supplementary Ministries Committee.

59. The Committee maintains contact with retired Deaconesses. It notes the deaths of Miss Bessie Barclay and Miss H.A. Douglas, the former in her 102nd year, and is thankful for their service to the Church.

## **LOCAL PASTORS**

60. During the year a further 5 local pastors in charge of local churches have been ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments.

## **CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORKERS**

61 Miss Gillian Robinson is in her second year of training at St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak, Birmingham, as a Church Related Community Worker.

62. The committee submits its proposals for the selection, training and appointment of Church Related Community Workers as follows:

### **THE SELECTION, TRAINING AND APPOINTMENT OF CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORKERS**

#### **Need and Opportunity**

63. Some parts of Britain are becoming increasingly subject to stress because of urban renewal, chronic unemployment, broken families, homelessness and the need for integration in those communities with a high immigrant population.

64. In such places there easily develops among disadvantaged groups a sense of injustice, helplessness and alienation; conflict between various sections of the community can exist. The Gospel of Reconciliation has much to contribute to those living in such conditions.

65. Unfortunately, it is often in these places that our churches are weakest in membership and see their role more in terms of survival than of mission. They need trained leadership to help them turn the problems into creative opportunities.

66. Through the centuries the Christian Church has provided many types of community service — in education, medicine, welfare, etc. The British Council of Churches 1976 report on 'Community Work in the Churches' has drawn attention to a new way in which the churches can make an important contribution to a growing need.

#### **Community Work**

67. Community work in this context is characterised by the principle "of work with people rather than for people — encouraging them to act collectively in order to identify their own community needs, and to make their contributions to the meeting of these needs."

68. The World Development Movement has laid stress on this distinction in policy, and in Britain for some years a number of approaches to achieve this aim have been followed, chiefly in secular contexts, through community development, community action, community organisation, community education, community relations and community care.

69. There are a number of our churches where there is a great need and opportunity for such an approach and the appointment of a trained community worker is desirable. Such Church Related Community Workers would help lead and strengthen the local church's mission to the community through the promotion of community development, in an area where an additional

lay member of a team would provide specialist help to meet unusual needs.

### **Selection**

70. The URC cannot guarantee that candidates accepted for training will be found appointments.

71. Candidates must be members of the United Reformed Church showing capabilities for leadership. They must be willing and able to undergo specific training in preparation for their service.

72. Candidates for the Church Related Community Workers scheme will be required to go through the following selection procedures:—

- i) to obtain the commendation of their own local church through Elders and Church Meetings;
- ii) to be commended by the District Council;
- iii) to be accepted by the Provincial Synod;
- iv) to be accepted for training by Westhill College and St. Andrew's Hall, or similar institutions.

### **Training**

73. Church Related Community Workers would be required to hold a Certificate in Community and Youth Work, or its equivalent (we recommend the 2 year course in the Community and Youth Studies Department of Westhill College, Birmingham, which also leads to the award of the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) for those students who are at least 20 years of age on entry to the course).

74. An additional year, either before or after completion of the CCYW course would be required to be spent at St. Andrew's Hall to study the theological insights and resources which provide a Christian basis for community work, or the one year Certificate course 'Training in Mission'.

### **Administration**

75. **National** The Supplementary Ministries Committee will be responsible for the training of Church Related Community Workers in consultation with the Principal of St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak, Birmingham.

76. **Provincial** Provincial Synods will be responsible for:—

- (a) the acceptance of candidates as CRCW as outlined above under Selection;
- (b) examining situations where the appointment of a CRCW is desirable and encouraging or promoting such an appointment;
- (c) the oversight of all candidates by annual report and interview.

77. **District Council** District Councils will be responsible for:—

- (a) taking initiatives in examining situations where the appointment of CRCW's are desirable and encouraging or promoting their appointment;
- (b) commending suitable candidates for training;
- (c) in consultation with the local church arranging the appointment, commissioning and oversight of CRCW for a stated term, which may be renewed.

78. **Local Church** The local church will be responsible for:—

- (a) the encouragement of suitable gifted members to offer to be trained as CRCW;
- (b) the invitation of a CRCW to serve in the local community and/or to work in a team with the minister/s of the church or group of churches.

## Finance

79. Church Related Community Workers will be financed through Local Authority grants, ecumenical schemes, trusts, etc. No provision is being made from the Central Funds for the maintenance of CRCW's.

80. Assembly 1979 agreed that 'any funds given for the Deaconess service, when no longer required, shall be available to the Supplementary Ministries Committee to help fund CRCW's (Record of Assembly 1979, page 17, resolution 8(ii)). The SMC have requested from the Finance and Administration Department a sum of up to £1,500 for 1980 for training grants.

81. In cases of need (where LEA grants are not available) churches/Districts/Synods may be able and willing to contribute to a candidate's costs during training.

[Resolution 4]

## MINISTRY OF HEALING COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd David H. Dale

*Secretary:* The Revd Charles K. Meachin

82. All who venture to speak about sickness and suffering are faced from time to time by the experience of tension, knowing how hard it is to speak about these things with balance and truth. There is a tension within ourselves and also in those to whom we speak; a kind of defensiveness. Some feel as though they must defend sickness as a kind of blessing. Others, of a different tradition, are inclined to question the faith of those who are unhealed, as though they felt it necessary to defend God's honour.

83. All must surely acknowledge that sickness and suffering are a mystery, part of the mystery of evil; a problem that has baffled the finest minds of Christendom in every age. Anything that offers a simple solution is therefore likely to be only partially true. Yet it is far easier to speak in a simplistic way and the ones who capture the eye and ear of the world and seem to make the running unashamedly do this.

84. It is the conviction of those on the Ministry of Healing Committee that there must be a way of speaking of God's promise and Christ's mission to heal which is courageous in faith but also corresponds to reality and has the ring of truth. Most of what we have been doing on the committee during this past year has been aimed at discovering how to do this.

85. The committee has produced a study/action pack *The Role of the Church in Community Health*. This is designed to complement the earlier one on *Healing* and to draw out the scientific, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions of health and healing.

86. The booklet *In Hospital*, designed for hospital chaplains and patients, has received a wide circulation and is being reprinted.

87. A series of leaflets is being planned in an attempt to answer fundamental questions. The first, "Why has this happened to me?", is available and suggests a response to the problem of suffering. Others in course of production relate to death, grief and mental illness.

88. A paper has been produced for use in study groups entitled *The Role of the congregation in the work of Healing*. The aim is to anchor our concern for healing in the local congregation and stimulate members of our churches to recognise their own potential contribution to the healing ministry. It challenges the assumption that we cannot be part of this ministry unless we possess some special gift or training and are ourselves fully healed.

89. Many ministers and churches are asking of the ministry of healing "How and where do we start?". Recognising that you may already be involved through the ongoing life of the church it may well be that you wish to consider these things more deeply. Some provinces are already arranging day conferences.

90. The committee is planning for a national consultation on "Healing" in 1981 in which we hope to assess what has been happening in our churches regarding this ministry and to consider possible developments.

91. The Churches' Council for Health and Healing held a consultation in Birmingham in October to consider the question of health in Britain in the light of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Health Service. The committee was represented by its chairman. Once again we were reminded that "Health" is 'a many-splendoured thing' and that various factors (e.g. Government economic policy) and people (politicians as well as professors of medicine) have a part to play, either to make or to destroy.

## MINISTERIAL TRAINING COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd Dr. Lesslie Newbigin

*Secretary:* The Revd Robert O. Latham

92. The committee has undertaken two major tasks. The first was the preparation for the introduction of the Auxiliary Ministry, following the Guide Lines accepted by the General Assembly 1979. A Board of Studies has been appointed which will direct all aspects of training, monitor standards, and issue qualifying certificates. The Church of England courses for the training of Auxiliary Ministers have been approached and have expressed their willingness to accept candidates from the United Reformed Church.

93. The Churches of Christ have been consulted and now that their approach to union with the URC has reached a decisive stage they are concerned that the original concept of Auxiliary Ministers, as formulated in the Joint Conversations, be re-emphasised. The committee therefore agreed to include the following statement in its report to Assembly:

1. The concept of Auxiliary Ministry shall include as one of its models a team of such ministers within a local church ordained to a ministry of Word and Sacrament. This model would develop from the present practice within the Churches of Christ and would be especially appropriate where the sacrament is celebrated weekly.
  2. The patterns of training for the Auxiliary Ministry would take account of the particular needs of those entering on this type of ministry.
  3. Since the scheme of unification is based on the premise that we accept each other as we are, those presently ordained to such a ministry in the Churches of Christ shall be invited to continue to exercise it in the enlarged Church as Auxiliary Ministers.
  4. Churches of Christ elders who do not choose to follow this course may continue as elders on the URC pattern.
  5. Elders of the Churches of Christ who agree to serve as Auxiliary Ministers shall be offered opportunities of further training.
  6. All new entrants into the Auxiliary Ministry shall be required to undertake the training appropriate to their circumstances and to the type of ministry to be exercised.
94. With this statement, and the 1979 Guide Lines as background the following procedure is recommended for the operation of the Auxiliary Ministry.

1. that Assembly be asked to ratify the amendment to the Scheme of Union para 7 (21) by adding the following words "others serve as Auxiliary Ministers continuing in other occupations and earning their livelihood within them" as resolved at the General Assembly 1979. Minute 6, page 16.
2. that the Assembly accepts the following modifications to the Working Guidelines approved at the 1979 Assembly:

### SECTION III para 4:

There will be a variety of situations in which Auxiliary Ministers might serve:

- (a) One or more Auxiliary Ministers may serve in a congregation as a team, (after the manner of those elders in the Churches of Christ who exercise a ministry of Word and Sacrament).



- (b) An auxiliary minister may exercise pastoral charge of a local congregation;
- (c) One or more Auxiliary Ministers may serve as part of a team of ministers caring for a group of churches, and sharing the functions according to their gifts and availability;
- (d) one or more Auxiliary Ministers could be set apart to be a focus for mission in their place of work, or leisure, where there is little or no Christian presence. These Auxiliary Ministers would be under the special care of the District Council, and would be members of one of the local churches.

SECTION III para 5:

The training of Auxiliary Ministers will therefore need to include both certain basic elements and a selection from a variety of subjects with reference to the person's availability, previous experience and training, and opportunities for and forms of ministry, (including the form practised by the Churches of Christ through Elders who minister the Word and Sacrament).

SECTION IV para 3: Selection Procedures:

- (i) to obtain the commendation of their own local church through elders and Church Meeting. They shall have been members of the URC for at least one year, normally of the local church which commends them;
- (ii) to be commended by the District Council, if it is satisfied that the candidate is called to a form of Auxiliary Ministry.

[Resolution 5]

## VISITATION

95. The second major activity was the visitation of Mansfield College, Oxford. This was undertaken by the same team which visited Westminster College in 1978. A summary of their report is as follows:—

96. The visitation took place at the invitation of the College, from 7-8 November 1979. The visitors were the guests of the College staff, who entertained them in their homes, and enabled them to share in many aspects of College life, including Chapel, Lecture room and seminars, as well as providing opportunity to meet with staff and students and representatives of the Finance and Administration Department.

97. The visitors sought to evaluate what was being done in the light of the statement of the Commission on the Ministry Report 1975:

“37. A course of theological training should aim at helping a student to grow in understanding of God, of himself, of other people, and of our developing society. It should aim to produce a continual learner open to receive and to profit from an enquiring study of the Bible and of life. Ministry in the future must enable the Church to be more open to the world and the forces at work within its structures and to offer a gospel that is relevant to the whole of Man's life.”

98. Mansfield College is a permanent Private Hall and not a full College of the University. It can matriculate its members, provide teaching for them for graduation. The College has 133 students 30 of whom are reading Theology, and of these 10 are candidates for the ministry of the URC plus 3 more on Course 3. These 13 alone are the responsibility of the Ministerial Training Committee, but their training in the broader context of their College life must be taken into consideration.

99. The College Staff for Ordination Training comprises:

Principal and Tutor in Early Christian Doctrine and Church History:

Dr Donald Sykes, MA., D.Phil.

Chaplain and Tutor in Pastoral Theology:

Revd Charles Brock, BSc., BD., BLitt.,

Lutheran World Federation Fellow and Tutor in Theology and Ethics:  
Revd Merlyn Satrom, BA, BD., Dr Theol.  
Temporary Lecturer in New Testament:  
Mr L. D. Hurst, BA., M.Div., Th M.  
Tutor in Old Testament and Hebrew (Regent's Park):  
Revd Rex Mason, BD., MA., DPhil.  
Librarian:  
Revd Gordon Trowell, MSc.  
Bursar:  
Mr. J. Whalley, MBE., MA.

100. The staff lecture and act as tutors not only for the theological students within Mansfield but also in the wider life of the University. The Principal has a full teaching programme as well as the considerable administrative and representative load.

101. The College co-operates with the other Theological Colleges, Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic, in the University Certificate of Theology, and the visitors met the secretary of the committee responsible for the Certificate, the Revd Dr J.B. Muddiman of St Stephen's House. The Certificate Course is held in high regard, academically and pastorally, and some of the most able students have elected to enter for it. It is ecumenically planned and lectures and seminars are given by staff from all the denominational institutions involved. The visitors felt that the high value of the course would be enhanced if students from the different traditions were to share tutorials, and if means could be found to accustom them to work in ecumenical teams.

102. The alternative course is the Oxford BA in Theology. The College directs students with especial academic bent toward this degree course, and the visitors were of the opinion that the URC would be well advised to maintain access to it for our students, especially those who may be expected to make an academic contribution later in their ministry.

103. **Pastoralia** Both Certificate and Degree course students share in the course organized by the Revd Charles Brock, who is College Chaplain and minister of the church at Wheatley. He runs a series of workshops on the writing of public prayers, counselling, pastoral skills, sermon construction, worship etc. Mrs Brock is College organist and trains students in the planning of music in worship. Sermon class is also a regular feature, and the help of local ministers and other members of staff including the Principal is valued.

104. The visitors were interested in the suggestion that a minister in pastoral charge should be invited to reside in the College for a week or two both for his own benefit and to assist in pastoral training.

105. The Library was visited, and the visitors were surprised to learn that the allocation for Theological books was only £400 p.a. This amount, despite the fact that students could use the Bodleian, has produced a library able to cover only a fraction of the students needs. The financial position of the College, which this allocation reflects is serious and the visitors met members of the College Finance Committee.

106. **Finance** The visitors were given details of the accounts for 1978/79 and of the budget for 1979/80. Whilst the College is not the financial responsibility of the URC in the way that Westminster College is, we believe that the Ministerial Training Committee will wish to be informed of its financial position. The Bursar informed us that Mansfield College handled about £500,000 p.a. and its endowments only produce about £27,000 p.a. The Balance has to be found from student fees, vacation lettings, etc. A deficit of £10,700 was incurred last year with a similar deficit in prospect for the current year. Accumulated reserves stand at £87,760. Costs can be expected to rise and thus the proportion of expenditure provided from endowments will fall.

107. The Finance Committee is in particular considering three areas of expenditure where deficits are likely to arise, viz: (a) general housekeeping; (b) tutorial expenses; (c) maintenance and furnishing of buildings.

108. The Chairman of the Finance Committee, Mr Emrys Evans has instigated a projection of costs in these fields over the next five years and the URC will wish to keep in touch with these investigations. Hitherto the financial link between the URC and the College has been

through student grants as follows:

1977	£ 9,122	in support of	5 students
1978	£12,708	in support of	6 students
1979	£21,631	in support of	10 students

109. The status of the College (a Permanent Private Hall) is an adverse financial factor for the College and is a constant concern of the Principal.

110. Consideration is being given in Mansfield College to the launching of a Centenary Appeal in the next few years to raise Endowment Capital or in some other way to put the Finances of the College on a sounder footing. It is to be expected that whatever steps are taken in this direction the URC is likely to be involved. The former Hon. Treasurer of the URC has been a member of the College Finance Committee, though not 'ex-officio'.

111. A specific way in which the URC could assist might be to make a financial contribution towards the maintenance and teaching of pastoralia within the College. But any substantial financial contribution from the URC to the College, other than through the payment of student fees for its ordinands, seems out of the question.

112. **Devotional life of the College** The Chaplain is responsible for morning worship, which is shared with others. Three mornings a week the students lead it. On Thursday mornings Lutheran Matins are sung, led by the Revd Merlyn Satrom, the Lutheran World Federation Fellow and Tutor in Theology and Ethics. Dr Satrom's total contribution to the life of the College is greatly appreciated. On Friday mornings the College Eucharist is celebrated, at which the chaplain presides, and at which other members of the College staff preach from time to time. Sunday mornings it is expected that students will worship in the city churches, and on Sunday evenings they use a liturgy in the Chapel based on one of the Taize Offices.

113. The visitors thought that the use of a lectionary in daily worship would be an advantage. In discussion with the students some claimed that the chapel played an important part in their college life, others did not. Shared worship with the other participating Colleges in the Certificate had not been attempted. The visitors were left with the feeling that whilst ordinands were well informed on liturgical matters, and many gained support from daily worship, they were not being trained to extend and develop their own private devotional life. The visitors ask whether some practical help could be gained from the Roman and Anglican colleagues.

114. **The corporate life of the College** As well as a Senior and Junior Common Room there is a Middle Common Room for graduate students. To this all the ordinands belong, although they also are members of the Junior Common Room. Since by virtue of University regulations all graduate ordinands are required to live out of College, the MCR serves a vital function in fostering their common life. The visitors noted an open and positive relationship in which they were able to offer mutual criticism without any sense of rejection or hostility. They paid tribute to the almost inexhaustible willingness of the Revd Charles Brock, and to the support he has from Mrs Brock, and also from the Revd Caryl Micklem, minister of St. Columba's in creating the rich Christian fellowship which the students enjoy. There is a need for additional help of an assistant chaplain, who could be a part-time minister in a nearby pastoral charge.

115. The open house of the Principal and Mrs Sykes is a major contribution to the corporate life of the College which the students appreciate. Dr Sykes and the staff also organized a North American Summer School, which while not directly affecting URC ordinands, has made Mansfield well-known in America, and provides a welcome financial contribution. The visitors left Mansfield, having experienced something of the warmth of fellowship, the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff, and of the stimulating atmosphere in which URC ordinands are being prepared for the ministry. They give thanks to God for all the work and witness of the College.

[Resolutions 6.1 to 6.7]

116. **Care of Students** The question of responsibility for ordinands was raised by the College Principals and guidance was requested on the procedures leading to suspension or termination of a student's candidature. The committee ruling is that "the final responsibility for ordinands lay with their Provinces, to whom the Colleges are required to make a full report each year. The distinction between responsibility for suspension and termination of a course is

that the College has the power to suspend a student for a term or a year, but the termination of candidature can only be determined by the Province."

**117. In Service Training** The Revd Professor Stephen Mayor carries responsibility for this in consultation with the secretary. Dr Mayor has circulated every minister with a list of courses which are available, and the committee wishes to encourage all ministers to avail themselves of what is on offer. In some cases financial assistance is obtainable from a Province or from the Ministerial Training Fund.

**118. Review Group on Ministerial Training** Following the Commission on the Ministry Report 1975 Assembly agreed to review the situation again in 1980. The resolution refers only to two Colleges: Manchester and Westminster. The Ministerial Training Committee asks that this be amended by Assembly to cover the whole spectrum of theological training in the URC, which would include Mansfield and the Welsh Colleges.

[Resolution 7]

**119. Recruitment** The committee does not seek to bring to this Assembly the proposal on Recruitment deferred from last year.

## COLLEGE REPORTS

### WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

**120 Staff** At the beginning of 1980 speakers often commented that a change of decade did not change a situation. The same is true, at any rate in the short term, of changes of Principals and Professors! Much of the College life rightly goes on as before, with Principal MacLeod's duties now taken up by Principal Cressey and Dr. Houston. Dr O'Neill is director of studies, Dr Knox is secretary of the Senatus; Dr Mayor has undertaken his usual full load of work in pastoral studies and also relieved the new Principal in respect of ethics teaching; and Dr Houston as well as beginning his Old Testament work has taken over as Librarian. A new system of sabbatical terms for Professors, made easier by the ready help of Federation staff and in this first case by Dr Cyril Blackman, has begun with a term's leave for Dr O'Neill to complete a book on the history of Biblical interpretation. Our honorary Bursar and Architect, Mr Kelly and Mr Hamilton, have given most helpfully of their time and advice.

**121. Membership 1979-80** A pleasingly numerous entry of students has brought twelve new candidates for the URC ministry (one formerly a minister with the Assemblies of God and one sponsored by CWM with a view to service in Zambia) and a woman candidate for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. Fourteen of our thirty-four URC candidates this year (including Course III) are women. One-term residents have included three URC ministers and one from Nigeria on sabbaticals, our first exchange student from the Church of the Palatinate and a student from Erlangen. One of the final year students has spent a term of practical training with the Palatinate Church, in a parish in Ludwigshafen and at the seminary in Landau. Senior Associates from the USA and New Zealand have continued a good succession of friendly encouragement and influence through their presence at Friday evening services, meals and talks.

**122. Visitors** The preachers and speakers on Friday evenings have ranged widely in their themes, from Joseph in Egypt through the ministry of healing to the search for an environmental ethnic. The James Reid Memorial Lecturer this year is Dr Jorge Lara-Braud, Mexican-born Executive Director of the Commission on Faith and Order in the USA, and an interpreter of liberation theology for the situations of Europe and North America.

**123. Federation** The new integrated timetable and examination/assessment system for the Federation of Cambridge Theological Colleges has been going very smoothly and successfully, thanks particularly to the excellent administration by the Tutor of Wesley House and by Dr O'Neill.

**124. Administration of the College** The College has benefitted from the hard work of Mrs Richardson and those who help in the office and do the kitchen and domestic work. The considerable support of the Cheshunt Foundation has continued. We look forward to the visit of a team to consider with the Federation its whole working and with Westminster College

its developing role.

**125. Commemoration** The 1980 Commemoration celebrations are to be held on June 4th. The preacher will be Principal Michael Skinner who is leaving Wesley House to return to a circuit and the lecturer Professor George Caird.

**126. Settlements** At the end of the 1978–79 session settlements were as follows: David Bradburn; Chadwell Heath and Heaton Way, Romford; David Brett: Rainford; Jeannie Clarke (first to complete Course III with us): Hornchurch; H. St. John Gray: Tenby Group; Ian Jones: Wombourne and Swindon; Stella Jones: Burslem and Silverdale; Norman Setchell: Lea Road, Wolverhampton and David Tatem: Trinity, St. Albans.

**127. URC Ordinands** One feature which has been more than usually obvious this year is the diversity of lengths of residence among the students. The list of URC students is therefore here arranged according to their year of anticipated entry into ministry.

<b>1980</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1982</b>	<b>1983+</b>
Jenny Austen, BSc.	Drummond Gillespie	Chris Baillie, BEd	Clive Thomson
Rose Barrett	Richard Helmn, BA	Lysbeth Carrol	
Revd E. Alec Cowan	Jean Jamieson	Jean Hall	<b>Course III</b>
E. Mary Davies, BSc.	Tom MacMeekin, BSc.	Lindsay Hassall, BA	Victor Ridgewell
Hazel Day	Sheila Thorpe	Rhona Jones, BA	David Jones
Malcolm Ford, BD	Peter Trow, BA	James Ryan	
Robin Hine, BA.			
Catherine McIlhagga, MA	<b>Course III</b>	<b>Course III</b>	
David Morgan, BSc.	Susan Daldorph	Kenneth Knight	
Margaret Nuttall, MA	Daphne Lloyd	Timothy Poh, BSc.	
John Paul, BA	Susan Nuttall		
David Williams, MSc.	Pat Wardle		
	Richard Wiggins		

## **THE CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE, MANCHESTER**

**128. General** The College shared in the various events marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Faculty of Theology in the University of Manchester. Co-operation with the other theological Colleges of Manchester continues to increase. Numerous improvements have been undertaken at the College, including an automatic fire detection system, the furnishing of a Seminar room, and exterior lighting. During the session the Review Group was set up. Under the Chairmanship of the Revd J.E. Young, its task is to undertake a radical review of ministerial training, taking into account possibilities for ecumenical training and contemporary developments in training. It is hoped that the Review Group will present its report to the Board of Governors early in 1981. Seventeen students undertook practical work in churches and hospital during the summer. Particular attention is being given to situation-based learning and training in the local congregations.

**129. Settlements** Christine Craven was ordained and inducted to the North West Coventry Group of Churches, Walter Ford to Grimshaw Street and Longridge Churches Preston; Gary S. McGowan to Riverton, Shotton, and Garden City; Richard J. Mortimer to Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Eileen M. Sambrooks to Christ Church and Ingrow, Keighley.

**130 Students** This session there are 40 theological students, of which 35 are from the URC, 4 from the Churches of Christ, and 1 from the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar. Nineteen of the students are married and living out of College. The recently introduced weekly communion service is one of the ways which serves to bring the community together. The following are due to complete their studies in June 1980:

Stephen Collinson BA  
Roger Cornish  
Harold L. Dixon  
Brian E. Harris  
John F. Hopkins  
David Greenwood

S. Mark Piper, BA  
Peter S. Rand, B.Sc.  
C. Vaughan Skinner  
D. Lindsay Smyth, BA  
John W. Steele  
Edith W. Young

*Third Year*

Christine Fowler  
Ron Fowler  
Roger Jones

Sean E. Larkin  
Paul C. Snell  
Christopher J. Weddle

*Second Year*

E. Jane Dawson  
Mark J. Fisher  
Ian S. Fosten

Brian S. Jolly  
Clive J. Studcliffe  
Norman A. Whittaker

*First Year*

David R. Bedford  
Nigel M. Goodfellow  
Harold G. H. Lanham  
Hilary J. Mansbridge  
Derek J. Morrill

Michael Mewis  
Peter C. Noble  
John de Rajaoanarivony  
Timothy R. Royds

**MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD**

**131** Of around 130 students at Mansfield, 30 are studying Theology. Of these, one is ordained and 17 are preparing for the ministry – 13 for the URC.

*Third Year:*

John Burgess, B.Sc.(Wales, B.A. (Oxon) – URC  
Brian Hunt, BA (Durham) – URC  
Graham White, BA MSc. (Oxon and M.I.T.) – URC  
Justine Wyatt, BA (York) – URC

*Second Year:*

Richard Church, BA (Birmingham) – URC  
Stillmann David, BA (Vermont), MA (Chicago)  
Stephen Reid, BA (Sydney) – Methodist  
Stephen Ng, BD (Chinese University of Hong Kong) – Lutheran  
Richard Wolff, BSc. (London) – URC

*First Year:*

David Fowles, BA (Wales) – URC  
Kim Fabricius, BA (Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut) – URC  
Kevin Watson, BA (Leeds) – URC  
David Medow, BA (Sussex) – Lutheran  
Ron Ewett, BA, (Oxon) – URC

*Course III:*

Alan Wise, MSc., D.Tech. (Manchester) – URC  
David Bending, Cert. Ed. – URC  
Geoffrey Bending, BA (London) – URC

132 **Staff** Dr W. R. Telford has left to become Lecturer in New Testament at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, after two years of very valuable service. The College is fortunate in that Mr L. D. Hurst is teaching New Testament for the present year and a permanent appointment will be made for October 1980. The Revd Dr Rex Mason has now been officially appointed Lecturer in Old Testament.

133 We record with gratitude as well as sorrow the death of a former Lutheran World Federation Fellow in Theology. The Revd Dr Warren Quanbeck was widely respected for his ecumenical work and he gave a great deal to Mansfield during his time there.

134 We much regret that the Revd Dr Normal Goodall has, for health reasons, retired from the office of Chairman of the Board of Education. His contribution to our life is immeasurable. Fortunately, the Revd Dr John Huxtable has agreed to succeed him.

135 The College has received a Visitation from members of the Ministerial Training Committee, finding the experience lively and beneficial.

136 Chapel preachers during the year include the Revds Peter Chesney, Kate Compston, Peter Cornwell, Paul Fiddes, John Johansen-Berg, Ronald Lewis and the Rt Hon Anthony Benn.

137 From Admissions 1980, Mansfield will be associated with the University Group I for candidates, men and women, who wish to come as under-graduates in English, Geography, History, Law, Mathematics, Philosophy, Politics and Economics, Theology.

#### **MEMORIAL COLLEGE, ABERYSTWYTH**

138 Since the beginning of October 1979 the Memorial College has been an integral member of the new Aberystwyth-Lampeter School of Theology, one of three Schools of Theology constituting the Faculty of Theology of the University of Wales.

139 Although the fine house occupied by the College for the last twenty years has now been sold, lecturing is continuing at Swansea for such students as are unable to complete their courses at Aberystwyth, but these students take some lectures at Aberystwyth and all members of the staff lecture there as well as at Swansea.

140 At Aberystwyth a suitable house has been acquired by the College only a few yards from the United Theological College of the Presbyterian Church of Wales and very near the administrative centre of the University College. The new address of our College is 38 Heol-y-Wig, Pier Street, Aberystwyth. Those of our students who are pursuing their courses at Aberystwyth share the residential facilities of the United Theological College.

141 **Students** 22 students are on the College roll, one of them, is under consideration as a candidate for the ministry of the United Reformed Church. Eleven others are ministerial candidates, 3 Baptists, 7 Welsh Independents and 1 Unitarian. 16 of our students are following the B.D. scheme, 3 the Diploma in Theology courses and 2 are doing preparatory work. One by special permission is doing post-graduate research work at St. Andrews. There are also four research students working under our supervision in the New Testament and Church History fields.

142 **Staff** Dr Pennar Davies has been invited to continue in his post as Principal in order to help pilot the College in its new relationships. Dewi Eirug Davies has been made Associate-Principal.

143 **Library** The bulk of our library, including the valuable collection of older books examined a few years ago by Dr Geoffrey Nuttall, has been entrusted to the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, as have also been certain manuscripts and our collection of portraits in oil.

## 144 STATISTICS

College	Total Nos. URC in training	New candidates for 79-80	Estimated Nos. for URC Ministry 80. 81. 82. 83.	Actual No. entered URC 1979	Total No. of places available.
Westminster	34	14	12 11 8 3	8	61
Manchester	35	9	14 6 6 9	5	106
Mansfield	13	7	4 2 7 —	3	36
Aberystwyth	1	—	1 — — —	—	—
Bala Bangor	—				
Queen's Birmingham	—			1	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31 19 21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>203</b>

## CHAPLAINS TO THE FORCES

145 There are five ministers of the URC serving as full time chaplains to the Forces. With the Royal Navy: the Revds F. N. Beattie and S. L. Williams; with the Army: the Revds Hamish MacLagan and Alan E. Finch; and with the Royal Air Force: the Revd C. G. Prenton. Remember them in your prayers.

146 There are three emphases to make:

- (i) There is a vacancy for a minister aged about 30 in the Army Chaplains department;
- (ii) There is a renewed request to all churches to send in the names of any of their young people who join the Services, so that the chaplains may make an early contact with them;
- (iii) Local churches are urged to encourage service personnel from local stations or camps to share in their weekly activities.

All communications about the Chaplaincy service should be addressed to the General Secretary.

### ROBERT LATHAM

147 The above report is the last which will bear Robert Latham's signature. The Central Committee of the Department — echoing, its members are sure, the mind of all who share in the work of the Department's constituent committees — would set on record its immense appreciation of the way in which the whole work of the Church Life Department has been conducted by its secretary since the inauguration of the new Church.

148 Building upon a rich experience in administration and educational work with the London Missionary Society, and then six years of central leadership in the Congregational Church in England and Wales, Robert Latham brought a rare expertise to the fashioning and welding together of the new Department. Across the whole range of its work he has proved a strong unifying influence, and to the work of ministerial training he has given a particular and fruitful care. To his colleagues alike in office and committees Robert has proved a stalwart and stimulating friend.

149 The Assembly has already marked in the clearest way in its power the Church's appreciation of his ministry by his election as Moderator. The Department would now invite the Assembly to record by resolution its particular sense of the invaluable service he has rendered to a major aspect of the Church's work in the formative years of its life.

KENNETH SLACK



## RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly welcomes the publication of A Book of Services, thanks the Doctrine and Worship Committee for preparing it, and commends it for use to Ministers, Congregations and the Councils of the Church.
2. The Assembly agrees to withdraw the version of 'Schedule D' printed in the Record of The General Assembly 1979, and substitutes the new version on pages 12, 13 and 14.
3. The Assembly wishes to place on record its appreciation of the service rendered by the Revd Dr John Huxtable as Chairman of the Doctrine and Worship Committee for the past 5 years. His ecumenical experience and wide knowledge of the concerns of the Doctrine and Worship Committee have enabled it to move forward with confidence.
4. The Assembly instructs the Supplementary Ministries Committee to proceed with the selection and training of Church Related Community Workers in accordance with the scheme set out in the report.
5.
  - (i) the Assembly ratifies the amendment to the Scheme of Union para 7 (21) by adding the following words 'others serve as Auxiliary Ministers continuing in other occupations and earning their livelihood within them' as resolved at the General Assembly 1979. Minute 6, page 16.
  - (ii) The Assembly accepts the modifications to the Working Guidelines approved at the 1979 Assembly as set out on pages 32 and 33.
- 6.1. The Assembly continues to recognise Mansfield as a college within which ministers for the URC may be trained.
- 6.2. The Assembly records its thanks to the Principal and to the Teaching and Ancillary staff for the admirable training they provide for ministerial students.
- 6.3. The Assembly notes the close links of Mansfield with Oxford University and continues to encourage suitable students to study for the BA degree in theology, and determines to make available finance necessary for this purpose.
- 6.4. The Assembly records its thanks to Mansfield staff for giving generously of their time and skill in training Course III students, without cost to the Church.
- 6.5. The Assembly requests Provincial Moderators and District Councils to be mindful of the needs of Mansfield College for ancillary staff when considering appointments to vacant charges in the Oxford area.
- 6.6. The Assembly gives thanks to God for the work and witness of Mansfield College in past years, and commends the College to the prayer and interest of the Church.
- 6.7. The Assembly, mindful of the benefit gained by the Church from the Pastoralia course run by Mansfield College, requests the review Group on Ministerial Training to take seriously the recommendation that an annual grant of £2,000 be made to the College.
7. The Assembly
  - (i) accepts the amendment to the 1975 Resolution "that the Review Group shall examine and report on the total provision for Ministerial Training in the United Reformed Church;
  - (ii) The Assembly instructs the Nominations Committee to appoint a Review Group for this purpose.
8. The Assembly receives the report on the Presidency at the Lord's Supper and reaffirms the Guidelines (1975) for the guidance of District Councils and local churches concerning Presidency at the Lord's Supper.
9. The Assembly records its thanks to the Revd Dr Kenneth Slack for five years of outstanding service as chairman of the Department. Dr Slack has presented the wide-ranging

Departments reports to Assembly with characteristic clarity and conciseness. He has made Departmental meetings lively. He has represented the Department persuasively, and has been consistent and reliable in his support of the Departmental staff.

10. The Assembly records its deep gratitude to the Revd Robert Latham for his leadership and service in the secretaryship of the Church Life Department since the inauguration of the United Reformed Church.

11. The Assembly agrees

that this report be received.

---

## CHURCH AND SOCIETY DEPARTMENT

*Chairman:* Mr Raymond T. Clarke, OBE., JP., MA.

*Secretary:* The Revd John P. Reardon, BA.

1. **Your Kingdom Come** The 1980s have begun in a mood of national and international gloom. In Britain rising inflation, industrial tension and growing anxiety about unemployment are mirror images of international problems as the world moves into its worst recession for fifty years. The apparent move back to cold war conditions between the superpowers, the lack of progress on disarmament and the failure of the international community to meet the basic needs of millions of its poorest people are grim symptoms of a world divided and fragmenting in so many ways.

2. It is in such a world that the members of the World Council of Churches have chosen to focus this year in a conference at Melbourne on the theme "Your Kingdom Come", looking for signs of God's love. The Churches are called to be in the world as agents of that love, challenging injustice and inhumanity, encouraging all that is hopeful and creative and finding ways of ministering to those who are the victims of human neglect or cruelty.

3. The Department's work must be seen in the context of the ecumenical activity in which the Churches in Britain and throughout the world participate in and reflect upon the trends and changes which affect the lives of people.

4. **Ecumenical Cooperation** The officers and some members of the Department participate fully in the work of ecumenical bodies and the Department meetings offer an opportunity for a URC contribution to be made to ecumenical thought and action through the British Council of Churches, the Free Church Federal Council and the World Council of Churches. The Department sees this ecumenical dimension to all its work as of fundamental importance because, except on a few issues, separate denominations do not have distinctive views which would lead to action different from that of others. All the Churches are strengthened in their understanding of and participation in society by cooperation at all levels of church organisation. A major emphasis of the Department's work is the two-way process of participation in ecumenical activity on social and international issues and of communication to the churches and members of our own Church. To see the full extent, therefore, of the year's work is impossible without some knowledge of the work done by the main bodies with which we cooperate. To take some random examples of that wider context: the British Council of Churches sent a memorandum to every Member of Parliament just before the House of Commons vote on capital punishment to express the long-standing Christian abhorrence of the death penalty; Christian Aid was, and still is, active on behalf of us all in the international concern for the refugees in South East Asia; the Free Church Federal Council has appointed a working group to study the problem of childlessness and the responses to it; the British Council of Churches has responded to the Home Office's consultative document, "Marriage Matters", and has issued a folder on marriage preparation; and the World Council of Churches was represented at the Fifth Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development by five people, including the Departmental Secretary. In these and numerous other ways the Department shares in the search for a Christian influence in contemporary society.

5. **Racism** As part of a world-wide reappraisal of racism and the role of the churches in combatting it, the British Council of Churches organised two consultations in 1979 to prepare for international consultations this year. The first consultation, involving 30 church leaders, issued a document, "Our Response to Racism", and the second, larger consultation of about 130 people occasioned an intense exchange of opinion and experience.

6. There is no doubt that the British churches face a major challenge in a society that is becoming increasingly, and more openly, plural and showing many signs of racism. Racism is in blatant opposition to the Christian faith, for it denies our common humanity in creation, our belief that all people are made in God's image, and our conviction that through the reconciling love of Jesus Christ all human diversities lose their divisive significance. Racism is based on the false belief that we find our significance in terms of racial identity. It feeds on economic and political exploitation and employs false generalisations and distortions. Above all it assumes that one group of people is racially superior to another. In Britain racism tries to drive wedges between the white majority and the black minorities. It plays on fear and ignorance, refusing to accept that black and white belong together.

7. Cultural diversity can lead to serious conflict, but the Christian hope is that it will produce in Britain a new society, enriched by the contribution of many ethnic groups and strong in harmony and creative community action. A multi-racial society inevitably contains some extremist groups who are afraid of the developments taking place and who exploit the real fears present in the community for destructive and selfish ends. A worrying feature of our society is the number of younger people who are attracted by extremist propaganda. Experience of racial discrimination, chronic unemployment and grave uncertainty about future prospects have embittered many young people in the black British community. The continued insensitivity of the white British community to this sense of injustice among black youth reveals the deep polarisation of our society. Agencies and individuals engaged in the struggle to create a more just and worthy multi-racial society deserve all the support the churches can give, but their work and their pleas for help have all too often been ignored.

8. The next few years present us with a unique opportunity to contribute to the creation of a new society in which all people can find acceptance as members of one human family, and in which each person and each group can contribute to the diversity and overall unity of that family. The churches can assist in the creation of such a society not only by vigorous assertions of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with its emphasis on the unity of the whole human race, but also in many practical ways as they pursue the claims of love and justice.

9. At the local level of church life there are many ways to participate in the struggle for a more just and worthy multi-racial society. In some areas, particularly in the cities and large towns where people from many backgrounds are living, there are opportunities for involvement in programmes that seek to build bridges between different sections of the community and, in particular, seek to overcome injustices and discrimination. In such areas the churches can offer their people and their premises to support community ventures which help to break down barriers and make the richness of shared community life more available to all. The churches could also be more vocal and active in opposing those elements in society which exist to destroy racial and community harmony. While these destructive elements in British society focus attention on the multi-racial areas and often act provocatively within them, they often rely for their support on people far removed from such areas. Throughout Britain, therefore, there is a need for all our churches to be engaged in programmes of education to help people to understand the opportunities open to us as a multi-racial society. Every local church has the opportunity to share in exposing injustice, both in its own local area and in the nation as a whole.

10. The main ecumenical channel in Britain for participation in this aspect of society is the Community and Race Relations Unit of the British Council of Churches. CRRU issues excellent briefing papers, pamphlets and reports on many issues within the field of race relations which should be more widely used within the churches. It also gives financial support, from its project fund, to many groups working to overcome the ignorance, fear, discrimination and disadvantage that are present in British society. The Church of England has appealed to its local churches to give substantial support to this project fund as a demonstration of their concern, and we believe that similar support from the churches of our denomination would strengthen ecumenical action to improve our society.

11. In addition to this general approach through education and giving, there are local opportunities which more of our churches could explore. Where there are black-led churches, our churches can take the initiative in making contact with them and supporting them, no matter how different their traditions are from ours. In some places churches can recruit volunteer language teachers to help with English lessons for those who have language difficulties. In some parts of the country there is a need for support for black-led youth groups and other black-led community groups. For all of these local initiatives it is necessary for the churches to seek the advice of those who have already gained experience in working with minority groups. The difficulties encountered in becoming involved with this aspect of community building must not be underestimated, but many individuals and churches can testify to the enormous enrichment to their own lives and to the quality of community life when people of different backgrounds begin to share their experiences and their understanding of life.

12. The Department, believing the challenge of racism to be of fundamental importance, will try to help the churches as they work out forms of Christian education and action which will help to improve the life of their own communities and of the nation as a whole.

**13. Cuts in Public Expenditure** During the year the Department has considered the policy options open to the Government and the effects of widespread cuts in public expenditure, the increase in charges for services and changes in the tax structure, all of which seriously affect poor families. All the caring services of the welfare state are being cut back in real terms and the immediate effects are beginning to be felt. The arbitrary and ad hoc nature of some of the decisions by both central and local government have disturbed members of the Department and many in the churches. It is clear that some of the short-term savings will make longer-term spending of an even higher order inevitable, without any real benefit to the community as a whole. For example, at a time when the numbers of elderly people are increasing, the reductions in the home-help service and in some forms of mobile therapy will make costly residential care for more people an inevitable consequence.

14. The most serious feature of present policies is the effect that cuts will have on the most disadvantaged groups in society. They should be safeguarded against further disadvantage and local churches should be alert to the effects of local authority decisions on the lives of the poor, the weak and the handicapped. Where necessary the churches should be ready to challenge the priorities of central and local government to ensure that the main impact of present stringencies falls on those who are strong enough to be able to make the necessary adjustments. The welfare state grew from the Christian concern that those who enjoy good health and fortune should help to carry the burden of the sick, handicapped and disadvantaged. The churches should keep this clear vision when political and economic pressures seem to be overriding in the short-term.

15. It is also central to the development of a welfare state that the statutory services should be supportive of the voluntary and informal networks of caring service. The churches at this time could re-examine their own contribution to the services offered in their areas to ensure that the best and most effective care is available to those who need it most.

16. Other areas of public expenditure have given rise to serious concern. For example, an Education Bill was passing through Parliament during the year, proposing many changes of far-reaching significance at the same time as considerable cuts in educational spending were being pursued. Legislation for change is hardly likely to be constructive and imaginative when conceived at a time of restriction. Another cause for concern is the cutback in the work of the Manpower Services Commission without positive Government alternatives to stem the rise in unemployment. Similar cuts in medical and housing budgets are causing more hardship and distress.

**17. World of Work** The present period of unrest and change in the sphere of work presents creative opportunities for the churches to be involved in helping to shape the future of our society. Many workers face uncertainty at a time when industry is having to cut back the work force and when many factories and industrial complexes are closing for good. For many people unemployment is now a feature of part of their adult life and for young people in some parts of the country it is a destructive reality facing them for the foreseeable future. Technological change, and in particular the development of microprocessors, is causing uncertainty about future prospects for some people, although it is also opening up new possibilities for creating wealth and for improving the general standard of living. It is not surprising, therefore, that the tensions and changes of the present have led to some industrial unrest and have equally led to calls for trade union reform. We must expect further unrest and anxiety as the pace of change increases against the background of a serious international financial recession.

18. It is being forecast that the decade of the 80s will involve British industry in massive restructuring and reorganisation. In such circumstances it is important that the churches should play their part in helping to shape society. It would be a sad reflection on the churches if they were to remain mere passive observers of the implications for our national life and for the personal lives of many who may find themselves caught up in changes for which they are ill-prepared. In October 1979 the One World Week focussed on the theme of work and gave opportunity to many churches to make contact with local industrial life, often for the first time. It was, however, a common feature of the Week that churches began to realise just how remote their thinking is from the problems and preoccupations of those who are trying to influence the direction of work and working conditions. In some places the resources of Industrial Mission were used by the churches with good effect.

19. Recently several of the major denominations in Britain have published reports to help churches and individuals to consider some of the trends and possibilities in the sphere of work,

e.g. the Methodist Church's "Work and Witness", the Church of England's "Work and the Future", and the Society of Friends' special issue of their Social Responsibility and Education Journal focussing on microtechnology. Our churches could profitably use these reports to gain greater insight into what is happening. In any case, if churches are to play any creative part in the changes locally and nationally, they must make greater efforts to understand the major issues that will pave the way for a more effective church involvement in the discussions and decisions that lie before the people of this country.

20. The first emphasis must be on personal contacts with people in their working life. It would help local churches if small groups of people from various aspects of local industrial and commercial life could be formed to act as a resource to reflect upon and help to influence current trends and future possibilities and to consider the Christian implications of what is happening in working life. Wherever possible such groups should be formed ecumenically, and our churches could take initiatives through local Councils of Churches. In addition some ministers could become more aware of conditions in local work places by personal visits and by occasional attendance at industrial meetings like Works Councils, Trades Councils and Branch Committees. Such visits would have to be by invitation, but would be a sure way of linking the churches with industrial life. Ministers would find it valuable to elicit the help of a small group, or even one person from industry to deepen their understanding of the pressures and opportunities of working in situations far removed from the experience of so many in our churches.

21. Some local churches have found it valuable and rewarding to organise local festivals of work, not only to celebrate local working life, but also to reflect upon its significance for the whole community. In some places these festivals have also helped the local community to consider its relationship to the world community through its working capacity and potential. We encourage more churches to attempt such festivals as ways of demonstrating Christian affirmation of the importance and goodness of work.

22. Finally we draw attention to the resources available to the churches for further involvement in and understanding of working life. In particular we commend the ecumenical resources of Industrial Mission, and the Department is willing to help any church wishing to make contact with their nearest missionaries. We also commend ancillary courses of study about working life through such agencies as the William Temple Foundation, the Grubb Institute, Luton Industrial College and Hull University. Meanwhile, our Department's Industrial Affairs Advisory Group will continue to study the theme of work and would welcome information from churches engaged in relevant activity.

23. **Religious Education** Widespread concern has been expressed in recent years by the churches about the place of religious education in schools. At a time when resources in education are becoming scarcer there is a possibility that religious education may be edged out of the syllabus for many pupils, and there is already some indication that religious education is sometimes phased out of secondary schools beyond the third year, in contravention of the 1944 Education Act.

24. The Free Church Federal Council's document "Religious Education in County Schools" was published as a stimulus to local church involvement in discussions about the form and provision of religious education and we commend its use. Meanwhile, however, we believe that it is important that churches should express forcibly to Local Education Authorities the importance of maintaining and developing the place of religious education in the County Schools. Such maintenance and development imply: (a) provision of specialist R.E. staff in secondary schools and the option of R.E. as an 'O' level and 'A' level examination subject; (b) the appointment of staff at both primary and secondary levels who have received some training in R.E.; (c) adequate finance, resources and timetable provision for R.E.; (d) the appointment of Advisors with clear time commitments to the needs of R.E. in the County Schools; (e) the release of teachers for full or part-time in-service training in R.E.; and (f) the appointment of Standing Advisory Committees on Religious Education to oversee the development of agreed syllabuses.

25. **World Development** During 1980 there will be a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly to consider proposals for a Third Development Decade. The prospects for the poorest nations are bleak. Many of them are facing escalating costs for oil, food and other essential supplies at a time when the richer countries are cutting back their overseas aid and adopting more protectionist policies. There is no lack of proposals for international action to solve some of the problems, but what is lacking is the political will. Britain has cut its overseas aid budgets and has continued to play a cautious, even negative, role in international meetings concerned with the search for a new international economic order.

26. In Britain, as a Government commissioned report, "Survey of attitudes towards Overseas Development", published in 1978, demonstrated, the mood of public opinion has swung markedly against overseas development. Expenditure cuts in foreign aid are popular with a large section of the public. It is therefore all the more deplorable that the Government has wound up its own Development Education Fund, which supported local initiatives designed to help British people to take a more constructive view of their place in a world in which so many live below the poverty line. The Department joined with many other Churches and organisations in protesting against the ending of the Fund, believing such a decision to be short-sighted and counterproductive.

27. The Department continues to support the One World Week programme of development education and commends it to the churches. The theme for October 1980 is "Just Possible?", giving opportunity for exploration of the problems and possibilities facing the world during the 1980s.

28. **One Per Cent Appeal** The Department will publish a full report of the results of the 1979/80 Appeal and the allocations made from it in time for circulation in the June Information Service. All the indications in the early part of 1980 were that the Appeal has been taken up by a slightly larger number of churches and that a large number of them raised more than in previous years. The Appeal remains a sign of commitment to justice and compassion in a world where the poor are daily neglected both by their own governments and by the international community. The bulk of the money raised is sent overseas for development programmes concentrating on the poorest people, but 15% of the money is used in this country to support the World Development Movement's political and educational work on behalf of the poor, and to increase awareness of development issues among our own churches through conferences and the production of educational materials. The literature for the 1980/81 Appeal will be available from July onwards and order forms will be included in the June Information Service.

29. **Faith, Science and the Future** The URC was represented at the World Council of Churches Conference on Faith, Science and the Future held in Boston, Massachusetts in July 1979, by Professor Geoffrey Dimbleby. In addition the Revd Richard Taylor represented the British Council of Churches. We await the official report of the Conference and commend its study to local churches.

30. **Ecology** The Mersey Province is producing a limited number of copies of a study/action kit on Ecology, prepared by a working group. The Department is assisting with the production costs and commends the material for study and action by local churches, youth groups and house groups.

31. **British Nuclear Deterrent** In the Autumn of 1979 the British Council of Churches published a report, "The Future of the British Nuclear Deterrent", designed to contribute to a public discussion of British nuclear policy and its future shape once the existing Polaris missiles become obsolete in the 1990s. It was known then that the Government had to make decisions about the future at some time before the end of this year.

32. The document raises a number of questions which, it was hoped, would be considered in public debate, and in the November Assembly of the Council a resolution calling on the Government to end Britain's independent nuclear status was passed by a large majority. That decision was taken in the belief that a British initiative of the kind proposed would be a contribution towards nuclear disarmament as part of a general non-proliferation strategy. Unfortunately there has been little public debate and there has been no attempt by the Government to consult public opinion on this matter.

33. The Department commends the report, available from the Department at £1.00 inclusive of postage, for study and urges churches and individuals to make their views about the future of the British nuclear deterrent known to the Prime Minister.

34. **South Africa** At the same Assembly of the British Council of Churches a whole day was devoted to a discussion of the economic links between Britain and South Africa. As a preparation for that meeting the Department prepared background literature for discussion in the churches and raised the subject for discussion in the November meeting of the URC Executive Committee, without trying to reach a decision.

35. It was widely reported in the press that after a long debate in the British Council of

Churches based on the document "Political Change in South Africa: Britain's Responsibility", the Assembly by a large majority called on the British Churches to adopt a policy of progressive disengagement from the economy of South Africa until such time as all the people of that country have a share in making decisions about its future.

36. The policy of the URC has for some years been one of constructive engagement in the economy of South Africa. That has involved support for Christian Concern for Southern Africa and dialogue with companies about the conditions of their black work force within South Africa. That policy is difficult to pursue consistently and with vigour because it is time consuming and requires regular flows of information both about particular companies and about the general situation in the Republic. There are differing views about the effectiveness of such a policy. Some argue that the policy could be more effective if pursued with more persistence, while others argue that even if the policy were successful it would not alter the basic injustice in South Africa, which is apartheid on the grand scale.

37. In the ecumenical debate much consideration has been given to the widely heralded changes in South Africa itself. Some people argue that with the current willingness in South Africa to change the nature of apartheid, this is no time to put more pressure on companies, while others argue that even if petty apartheid disappears the black people in that society will still be living in unjust and oppressive conditions.

38. The URC, like many British churches, is now challenged by the British Council of Churches and by the present situation in South Africa to reappraise its own financial policies. The Department is currently engaged in discussions with the Finance and Administration Department about investment policy in general, and we hope that those general discussions may be a basis for more specific consideration of investment policies in relation to South Africa. Meanwhile we commend the British Council of Churches document and resolutions on this subject for study and discussion in our churches.

39. **International Year of Disabled People** The United Nations has designated 1981 as a year of action by, with, and for the disabled. The Department believes that there is much scope for local church participation in activities associated with the Year. For further information an explanatory leaflet is being prepared to stimulate church involvement.

40. **Conclusion** It is impossible to report fully on all the activities of the Department during the past year. It has had the benefit of advice from three specialist groups on Education, Industrial Affairs and World Development. The officers and members of the Department are always willing to visit churches, District Councils and Synods to help the churches to see the practical applications of the issues raised in the report and to suggest the aids which churches could use to deepen their awareness and stimulate their response to the opportunities facing them.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly urges all churches to study the question of racism, both locally and nationally, using the publications of the British Council of Churches' Community and Race Relations Unit, and commends to all churches the CRRU Project Fund as a practical way of contributing to the creation of a truly multi-racial society in Britain.
2. The Assembly urges local churches and, where possible, District Councils to express forcibly to Local Education Authorities the need to
  - (a) maintain specialist R.E. Staff in secondary schools and the option of R.E. as an 'O' level and 'A' level examination subject;
  - (b) ensure that both primary and secondary schools contain staff who have received some training in R.E.;
  - (c) make provision of adequate finance, resources and timetable periods for R.E. (with a minimum of 5% of the timetable in secondary schools);
  - (d) enable Advisors to make clear time commitments to the needs of R.E. in County Schools;
  - (e) release teachers for full and part-time in-service training in R.E. to make up for any current deficiencies;
  - (f) appoint Standing Advisory Committees on Religious Education to consider the development of agreed syllabuses and to provide for consultation with representatives of religious bodies within their areas.



# WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. Robert Burns longed for the gift of seeing ourselves "as others see us"; the British Council of Churches chose that phrase as the title of its booklet about the visit of a team of Christians from other countries to the North-East of England; now it is our turn to be scrutinised with friendly but perceptive eyes. The visit to the URC which the Assembly of 1979 invited the Council for World Mission to arrange takes place in April and will be reported on by the visitors themselves at this year's Assembly.

2. This external review, though based on a short visit necessarily limited to one area of the URC in the south-west, has a most important function complementary to that of our own Priorities and Resources Group. It brings home the fact that involvement in the world church and its mission opens us up to appraisal by our fellow-Christians. It reminds us that Britain is not the centre of the world but is "abroad" for most of the world's population!

3. This reflection puts in the right perspective our membership of world and regional bodies — the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Conference of European Churches. Reports from the CEC Assembly in Crete last autumn are under consideration and the Department has already begun to think ahead to the next General Council of the WARC (1982) and the next Assembly of the WCC (1983), both, as it happens, in Canada. There is also a European Area Council of the WARC in Romania next September. Our representatives on these occasions have full opportunity to contribute to the shared enterprises of the churches; but they receive from others more than can possibly be given from the life of any particular church. Criticism of the WCC or doubts about the value of confessional groupings like the WARC need to be put in the context of the inestimable value of hearing the message of the Church's Lord "with all the saints" (Eph. 3. 18).

4. In an appendix to the Department's report there are printed the guidelines for representation of other churches at the URC Assembly approved by the Executive Committee and subsequently confirmed with our partner churches. It is these new guidelines that make possible and desirable the ratification of the Assembly's decision last year to do away with the category of 'corresponding members', not to lessen our ties with churches in Britain but to put all these relationships, worldwide, on the same footing.

5. It is the task of the Central Committee of the Department to be the channel whereby 'input' from the world church is regularly received and also to be the co-ordinating group for the particular committees whose reports follow. The Department then has to communicate effectively with the URC as a whole and especially with its local churches; for this reason we specially welcome Mrs Helen Lidgett, the new Secretary for Communication, and the Communication Group with whom she works. Also new to our team is the Revd Derek Cole as Chairman of the MEW Abroad Committee.

6. To see ourselves as others see us is very important; but in the end this work and all the church's life comes before God. "It is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy . . . It is the Lord who judges" (1 Cor 4; 2,4).

Martin H. Cressey, *Chairman*

Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

## MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK AT HOME COMMITTEE

7. Only material from over 1,900 local churches could present anything like a true picture of the URC's involvement in ecumenical missionary work at home. The MEW at Home Committee sees its task as being to help and encourage churches in their own situation. For this reason much of our time, and we appreciate that of others too, has been spent on communication. Enquiries have been made of Moderators about the work of Sharing Agreements and URC involvement in the county level of NIE: and of District Secretaries concerning Sponsoring Bodies and significant instances of mission in local churches. New endeavours have been made to make the Information Pack more directly a conversation with every local church.

But the greatest investment by the Committee was the Consultation in Manchester in September 1979 with representatives appointed by each District and the URC members of the Council for Covenanting. From that Consultation the Committee sensed the resolve by the URC to persevere in the quest for a visible unity in the Church in Britain.

**8. The Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism** has already built bridges between Christians. Its research projects aim to help local churches understand their own context and resources as well as to discover ways of communicating with the un-churched. The September Assembly in Nottingham will bring together the local and national elements in the nationwide vision. We hope that the NIE will not solidify itself into a permanent structure, but that its envisaged projects, especially in Phases 3 and 4 of the strategy, will be taken up into the on-going christian structures which already exist. The URC has contributed £1,000 to NIE.

**9. Rural Work** Representation of the URC at consultations on Rural Mission has been ensured. The offer of the Province of Wales to make available a part-time appointment to make possible a Rural Consultant is being pursued through the Provincial Moderator.

**10. Council for World Mission in Britain** Requests for workers via CWM have been processed from both Orpington and Sheffield. The Committee has made suggestions about the form of the coming CWM visit in the light of the experience gained in the ecumenical visit made to the Church in the North-East in May 1979. The Committee would commend to the Church for the widest consideration the report of that visit "As Others see Us".

**11. Resource Material on Local Ecumenical Projects** Prepared by the Committee and now available from Church House are:

- i) Guide to URC's decisions about LEP's and their associated structure and
- ii) Brief Survey of and Guide to Literature available on Local Ecumenical Projects.

We commend these aids to any who are contemplating local ecumenical developments in their own area.

**12. Swindon Ecumenical Bishop** The URC definitive reply to the former CUC's Ten Propositions referred hopefully to the emergence of such experiments in regional oversight as the proposed Bishop of Swindon. When asked to comment on the proposals for this appointment the Committee tried to be as encouraging as realism would permit. The Committee indicated its concern for the pastoral support of the person to be chosen, its determination that he should be given standing in all the participating churches and its belief that in relation to the URC as a whole he would need to relate as do other Provincial Moderators.

**13. Methodist/URC Liaison Committee** Throughout the year major issues before the Committee have been matters to do with the assessment for Maintenance of the Ministry in URC/Methodist schemes. After long and detailed consultation it is hoped that an agreeable formula has now been achieved. Considerable work has been done upon redrafting the Letter of Advice concerning URC/Methodist schemes and it is hoped that this will soon be available to the churches.

**14. Churches of Christ** The Liaison Committee set up with the Churches of Christ has kept us in touch with developments within that body. In September we learnt that it had been decided to dissolve the present Association since it seemed impossible for it to follow its own constitutional purpose in the light of the inadequate majorities secured for the Proposals for Unification. We were given notice that a Re-formed Association was to be constituted made up of those churches resolved to seek union with the URC. This Association was formed in November and immediately approached us with a view to speedy progress. On the instructions of the Executive Committee a report has been prepared and issued to Districts and Synods setting out revisions to the previous proposals and a draft Bill for submission to Parliament. It is our intention to bring to Assembly a resolution seeking approval to the Proposals and the necessary amendments to the Basis of Union. This resolution will require to be ratified in 1981. A similar speed of action is possible in the case of the Churches of Christ. Provided the decisions in the 1980 Assembly and the Conference of the Re-formed Association are favourable, the Bill will be introduced into Parliament in the autumn of 1980 and the actual unification could then take place in 1981. We believe that this apparently urgent process is required by the history of these negotiations and that neither body now wishes for prolonged debate. It is disappointing that a proportion of the churches of the former

Association will not be included, but the steps envisaged will lead to a significant act in the development of ecumenical relations, particularly in the new approach to the hitherto divisive doctrine of Baptism.

**15. Churches' Council for Covenanting** The Committee has kept in close touch with the representatives of the URC on the Churches' Council for Covenanting. The Manchester consultation encouraged the Committee to do all in its power to advance the process towards a Covenant. Note was taken of the two major obstacles so far hindering progress. It is clear that if recognition is to be extended to our ministers, then that recognition must include our women ministers. On Episcopacy, proposals made by Lesslie Newbigin and worked out into a liturgical form by Bernard Thorogood, may resolve some of the difficulty in the original proposals, (from the point of view of the URC), but everything that eases the problem for one Church may make a new difficulty for another.

The detailed proposals are now in an advanced stage of preparation and may be in print by the time of the Assembly. There are difficulties about the timetable of decisions and it is likely to be 1985 before all the necessary steps can be taken. Since the proposals call for a radical reversal of the events of 1662 slow advance is not surprising.

It will be impossible to engage in any discussion this year except to recommend that the proposals be carefully studied as soon as they are available. This will be the only proposal before the Assembly, but it is put forward in the conviction that this enterprise is of major importance, that the Report represents some real progress and that the Covenant, if it is established, will be significant for the life and witness of all the Churches.

David E. Marsden, *Chairman*

Arthur L. Macarthur, *Secretary*

## MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK ABROAD COMMITTEE

16. "We belong to a world Church, a community of immense diversity in race, culture, history, language and development" (from "A Strategy of Sharing"). The Abroad Committee's agenda reflects this understanding of the Church and seeks to express it both within the URC and on the URC's behalf to other Churches across the world. Our relationships are wide indeed and the small compass of this report can only indicate some of the sharing of experience and resources in the last year.

**17. In Europe** Within our own continent of Europe this sharing of experience is done in two main ways.

First, through membership of ecumenical councils, from the Conference of European Churches at the widest, which includes Orthodox Churches and relates fairly closely to Roman Catholics, through the churches of the Leuenberg Agreement, Lutheran and Reformed, to the rather closer fellowship of the European Area Council of WARC. All these councils share news and reports and hold general or special conferences from time to time in which we join as we are able.

Second, we have particular bilateral relations with a number of continental churches such as the Palatinate (Pfalz) Protestant Church of S.W. Germany, the Waldesian Church of Italy, the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, and many others in varying degrees of closeness.

Last year the Pfalz Church was represented at the Swanwick World Mission Conference and also at the Forum, whilst some URC representatives were able to share in the 450th Anniversary in Speyer of the Speyer Protestation of 1529.

Some of these churches, and others including the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren and the East German Synod of the Evangelical Church of the Union were represented at the 1979 URC Assembly: others will be represented at this one. There have been visits to the Waldensian Church and the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. URC was also able to share in the 18th German Evangelical Kirchentag in Nuremberg, both through the attendance of an official delegate and through that of a party of URC members from Sydenham.

We value the opportunities of fellowship with the European continent, welcome the

participation of their representatives to Assembly and would wish to see Provinces, Districts and local churches participating more fully than they do, perhaps through town twinning arrangements, or by exchange visits, and even through business contacts now that many of our members regularly commute to EEC countries.

**18. Chaplaincies** Closer to home, the Committee gives support to the Chinese and Ghanaian chaplaincies in London where the chaplains, Revd Chong Kah Geh and Revd Ben Tettey, do valuable work among students and expatriates, not confined entirely to Chinese and Ghanaians. They seek the opportunities which local churches can afford for closer integration between expatriates and British congregations.

**19. Council for World Mission** The Committee maintains close contacts with CWM and thus with its 26 other member churches throughout the world. We rejoice in the continuing financial support given by local churches to CWM and also in the valuable contribution to our understanding of the CWM family made by the Communications Group whose papers and local church programmes we commend to the churches.

The Council met in Hong Kong during 1979. A report from its General Secretary on some of the main issues in world mission which CWM faces is given in Appendix I. CWM is making an official visit to the URC in April 1980 and whilst the time factor restricts the visit to one part of the country, we hope it will assist the whole Church to see more clearly the way to mission. Meanwhile it may be of interest that one of the most recent members of CWM, the Presbyterian Church of Burma, is conducting courses on what it means to be in CWM.

We support the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan in its assertion of human rights and in particular the right of people to participate fully in the government of their country. We are very concerned at the arrests in December and January of journalists, lawyers and parliamentary candidates critical of government policies and of Presbyterian ministers and other church workers, including the personal assistant to the church's General Secretary.

**20. North America** Our links with our associated churches in the USA are maintained through the American Group. Two meetings have taken place between members of this group and representatives of URC churches whose congregations include significant numbers of Americans, and of the American Church in London. A group of URC young people visited the USA last summer, there were several ministerial exchanges and visits are being made in the spring of 1980 by two URC ministers to undertake special studies.

**21. Our Priorities** These are perhaps best summarised in this extract from the Committee's Minutes:

"Priorities might be judged against the great problems facing humankind at this stage in its history, problems of racial tension and the corresponding need to produce in and outside the church a genuinely multi-racial society, the problems of political/economic confrontation and a way forward from the communist/capitalist dilemma to world peace". "(We) must relate to the human concern to bring people together in love and fellowship, to make churches, local and national, real places of meeting and understanding, and utilise the movement of people to work, study and pleasure by enabling each to contribute to the whole".

Derek Cole, *Chairman*

Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

**22. Going Overseas — To Work? to Settle?** This notice for church notice boards was distributed in the October Information Service. We hope it is being displayed. We are able to effect introduction to local churches for people whose work takes them overseas for long or short periods. They receive a welcome and support from the church, and can share in its work and witness. The old CWM Associates' Fellowship no longer exists, but the URC maintains a roll of members serving abroad.

**23. Medical Officer** Dr E.J. Welford resigned as Medical Officer during the year. We are grateful to her for her service, and remember that she served as Medical Officer to CWM for

sixteen years before CWM's reorganisation. The new Medical Officers are Dr J.S. Milledge and Dr (Mrs) D. Milledge, formerly CWM missionaries at Vellore.

**24. Missionary: URC as a Receiving Church** The booklet "Missionaries from Overseas serving within the URC through the CWM: Receiving Church Responsibilities and Regulations" is now in its final form. We look forward now to welcoming missionaries from partner churches in CWM to share with us in our missionary task here. Two vacancies in the URC are at present being advertised through CWM.

**25. Missionaries: URC as a Sending Church** The URC is sometimes asked by CWM to assume sending church responsibilities for members of other churches who receive a call to missionary service through CWM while resident in this country. In recent years we have appointed a Baptist from the Philippines and a Lutheran from Norway, both for service in Papua New Guinea. There is a particular challenge in providing appropriate home support for such missionaries. We gladly accept it as such appointments reflect the ecumenical nature of the Church's mission.

**26. Length of Missionary Service** Lifelong service overseas is now the exception rather than the rule. When a new language does not have to be learned a missionary can make an effective contribution to the church's mission in three or four years. Newly qualified young people and the recently retired may have particular contributions to make to the world mission of the church in this way.

**27. People** The following have been accepted as missionaries to serve overseas:

Miss Jean Hall (Zambia — pastoral work — subject to completion of ministerial training at Westminster College)

Revd Norman and Mrs Suzanne Healey (Kiribati — formally Gilbert Islands — pastoral work)

Mr Timothy and Mrs Janet Meachin (Zambia — education)

Miss Kristin Ofstad (Papua New Guinea — librarianship)

The following have completed their service:

Revd Tom and Mrs Kay Hawthorn from Kiribati to Holly Mount URC, Malvern

Revd Dr Frank and Mrs Ivy Balchin — remaining in Singapore till mid 1980

Miss Peggy Hawkings from South India to New Zealand

Mr Gaynor Rees from Botswana to teaching in South Wales

Mr Richard Pedley from Botswana to teaching in Hampshire

Miss Linda Elliott from Taiwan to community health work in Merseyside

Revd Albert and Mrs Florence Lock (Botswana)

Revd John and Mrs Eileen Campbell (Madagascar)

Miss Jose Robins (North India)

The following overseas students are sponsored by the URC:

Revd Charles Ahwiring of the Presbyterian Church in Ghana

Mrs Dong Keun Park of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea

Revd Kee Young Lee of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea

all at St. Andrew's Hall

Miss Paulina Dankwa of the Presbyterian Church in Ghana at Westminster College

Mr Edward Maliki of the Presbyterian Church in Ghana at Wolverhampton Polytechnic

A full list of URC missionaries appears in the Year Book.

Tony Coates, *Chairman*  
Iorwerth Thomas, *Secretary*

## MISSION AND OTHER FAITHS COMMITTEE

28. In accordance with the guidelines and priorities of the Mission and Other Faiths Committee, as agreed by the last two Assemblies, much of the Committee's time over the past twelve months has been devoted to the production of a new Handbook entitled **With People of Other Faiths in Britain: A Study Handbook for Christians**. This materialised as a more ambitious project than was originally conceived, and in its three parts — The Society Round our Doors; Personal Testimonies and Case Studies; and Theological Perspectives — contains relevant materials from ecumenical publications and the personal writings of members of the Committee, as well as views which have been generated within the Committee from members' contacts with local churches, Bible studies, and general discussion. There is not at the moment any comparable publication available to Christians in Britain, and therefore, with the encouragement of the BCC Secretary for Relations with People of Other Faiths, we anticipate that the Handbook will be of interest to Christians of other denominations as well.

29. While the Handbook deals with our relations with people of other faiths in general, the Committee has been able to give attention to our **relations with Jews** in particular. We organized a successful 2-day Conference for Christians and Jews in September with the objective of seeking advice on how best to use our resources of personnel, finance and literature in the field of Jewish relations. The Committee has since agreed to hold a second Jewish-Christian conference in 1980, to work on the subject of guidelines for Christian-Jewish relations, and to consider the creation of a theological working party to tackle the theological issues at a deeper level than is possible at a short conference. Consideration is also being given to ways of involving young people in this area of concern, possibly through the organization of a visit to Israel.

30. Following a meeting of an **ad hoc** consultation of advisers from several churches, the Committee has agreed that the issue of **ideologies** belongs properly to its concerns, but that much more attention needs to be given to questions of method and purpose in consultation with the Church and Society Department and the Doctrine and Worship Committee, and with the BCC. We hope to advance on this issue over the next year.

31. The Committee's co-operation with the BCC Committee on Relations with People of Other Faiths remains mutually beneficial. Through particularly the BCC Secretary's presence at Committee meetings we have been able to avoid duplicating work undertaken by the BCC and thus establish a model of how other denominational committees which may be created could operate.

David A. Kerr, *Chairman*  
Iorworth L. Thomas, *Secretary*

## COMMUNICATION

32. **Publicity** Through its Communication Section the Department is able to provide local churches with publicity material. New items during 1979–80 include the CWM Biennial Report 'Growing up Together in Christ', the CWM Prayer Leaflet 'Praying Together 1980', the Programme PUB 3 'Exploring Other Faiths' and a 'Review of Resource Material on Ecumenical Projects'.

33. **Communication Group** The members of the Group are drawn from the Department's Committees. They work to strengthen the links between the local churches and the Department and to help church members understand the world church and their part in it. They have prepared or are planning programme material to help churches learn about the work of CWM, relationships with those of Other Faiths, Christian service and ecumenical relationships. They provide ideas and hope to stimulate discussion on methods of communication.

Helen Lidgett, *Secretary for Communication*

## RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly commends the first report of the Churches Council for Covenanting to Synods, Districts and Local Churches for careful consideration, instructs the MEW at Home Committee to initiate discussion of it throughout the Church and to seek responses from the whole Church to help it in the preparation of a report and recommendations for presentation to the Assembly of 1981.
2. The Assembly approves the revised Proposals for Unification submitted on behalf of the Executive Committee of the URC and the Central Council of the Re-formed Association of the Churches of Christ and resolves to proceed in accordance with them.
3. The Assembly resolves to make the scheduled amendments defined in the revised Proposals for Unification as amendments to the Basis of Union and the Structure of the United Reformed Church, to become effective on the date of unification as defined in the revised Proposals for Unification, subject to the ratification of this resolution at the Assembly of 1981 and the completion of the other processes laid down in these Proposals.

## WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT: APPENDIX 1

### COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION 1979-80

1. 'Creative Tension' is not only a book title but a theme for church dynamics. We know that uncreative tensions exist when unity, peace and love are destroyed. But our life in CWM witnesses to creative movement as we face a series of practical decisions.
2. We are drawn towards the traditional style of missionary service, for it has proved its worth as a living link between churches, building understanding and supporting long-term church work. But we are also drawn to fresh attempts at personal sharing, like team visits, which utilize the modern facility of movement. Can we support both?
3. We are called towards mission as essentially local. CWM gives aid to many local efforts, like building new churches in India and Burma or helping a Christian newspaper in Papua New Guinea. At the same time we are drawn to recognise global struggles and to share in world enterprises like the Theological Education Fund of WCC. Can we give resources to both?
4. As an enabler CWM is called to recognise and aid the expressed priorities of the member churches. This often means strengthening existing church organisation. But as an agency for mission there is also a call to challenge and stimulate churches so that priorities may recognise those growth points of God's work on the edge of church life.
5. We are grateful to God that He has led us in the fellowship to consider such tensions as we trust each other. The process of discovery has continued in the past year and was symbolised at Hong Kong by our communion service when ministers from all six regions of the world concelebrated the great gift of God in Christ.

Bernard G. Thorogood, *General Secretary*

## WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT: APPENDIX 2

### REPRESENTATION OF OTHER CHURCHES AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

1. The Assembly of 1977 instructed the Business Committee to consider the question of Corresponding Members of the Assembly and the possibility of inviting observers from other major churches in England and Wales.
2. The Business Committee after preliminary discussion asked for the advice of the World Church and Mission Department.

3. The MEW Abroad Committee expressed concern that the visitors from overseas churches are treated differently from those from British Churches.

4. The MEW at Home Committee took note of the fact that the Church of Scotland has redefined the category of Corresponding Members to cover Church of Scotland missionaries on furlough and certain committee secretaries while representatives of other churches are all classed as delegates if appointed by their church authorities; the delegates of certain churches are still accorded particular privileges of addressing the Church of Scotland Assembly.

5. The Assembly of 1978, on the motion of the Structures Committee, instructed the Business Committee, in view of the changed status of the Council for World Mission, to consider the question of inviting corresponding members from sister churches within the Council for World Mission.

6. Representatives of other churches at the URC Assembly fall at present into five categories:

- i) Corresponding Members — from sister churches of the WARC in Great Britain and Ireland.
- ii) Distinguished visitors from the Assembly locale — usually the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops and the Chairman of the local Free Church Council.
- iii) Delegates from certain European churches, including in most years the Church of the Palatinate and the Waldensian Church and others by rota of invitation.
- iv) Delegates from fellow member churches of CWM outside Europe, often persons in this country for study or other purposes.
- v) Delegates from overseas churches otherwise related to the URC e.g., in Ghana, Korea, North America, Australasia.

Most of these are accredited to the Assembly by the authorities of their Church but some in (iv) and (v) are invited individually by the WCM Department or present letters of introduction.

The Assembly resolutions of 1977 and 1978 envisage adding to category (i) or creating a new category of observers.

7. One of the main problems in receiving representatives of other churches is that of providing suitable opportunities for the Assembly to hear some of them without overloading the Assembly timetable with speeches from all of them. This problem is eased by the provision of speaking opportunities at Assembly luncheons and receptions.

8. It has seemed best to propose a complete revision of the Assembly practice with regard to representation of other churches and in so doing to delete the somewhat problematic concept of "Corresponding Members". In secular usage this phrase is defined as meaning "members residing at a distance who correspond with a society by letters but have no deliberative voice in its affairs": but in Presbyterian parlance it has been used for "delegates from a body in correspondence with the relevant council of a church". The recent Church of Scotland change seems to have departed from both these antecedents. The argument for having this status has been that it did confer membership of the Assembly, but the convention has grown up that such members do not vote, though they may speak.

9. The basis of these new proposals is that there be three categories of persons from other churches officially attending the Assembly:—

- a) Delegates appointed by their church authorities, or those of an ecumenical body to which the URC belongs, on an invitation addressed to those authorities (or on approval for this purpose of an accreditation by them) in the name of the General Assembly by the Moderator of the Assembly and the General Secretary.
- b) Visitors, distinguished church leaders from the Assembly locale invited by the Business Committee or persons invited by a Department with the consent of the Business Committee to speak on a particular topic by leave of the Assembly.
- c) Observers invited by the World Church and Mission Department either on its own authority or on presentation of letters of introduction.



10. Those from other churches may address the Assembly as follows:—

- i) Delegates shall have the privilege of addressing the Assembly at the invitation of the Moderator either on occasions arranged by the Business Committee or at the Moderator's discretion on matters with which they are particularly conversant.
- ii) Visitors may be invited to address the Assembly on occasions arranged or approved by the Business Committee.
- iii) Observers may address the Assembly at the Moderator's discretion on matters of Assembly business which are of particular concern to their own church.

11. Delegates shall be invited according to the following schedule, which may be amended from time to time by the Assembly or its Executive Committee:—

- i) from within Great Britain and Ireland, every year, from sister churches of the WARC and CWM.
  - 1 from the Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland
  - 3 from the Church of Scotland
  - 1 from the Congregational Federation
  - 1 from the Congregational Union of Scotland
  - 3 from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
  - 1 from the Presbyterian Church of Wales
  - 1 from the Union of Welsh Independents
  - 1 from the United Free Church of Scotland.
- ii) from abroad, according to rotas of invitation supervised by the World Church and Mission Department in consultation with other Departments, the rotas taking account of particularly close past relationships:
  - a) from member churches of CWM
  - b) from member churches of the WARC in Europe
  - c) from churches participating in the Leuenberg Agreement
  - d) from other churches with which the URC has particular links
  - e) from ecumenical bodies of which the URC is a member.

The total number of those invited under (ii) shall not normally exceed twelve.

12. Among the observers the World Church and Mission Department shall regularly invite other Churches in England and Wales that have participated in the Welsh covenant for union or in the Churches Unity Commission or the Churches Council for Covenanting in England, to appoint ministers or lay members (usually persons resident in the Assembly locale) the churches included being — the

Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland  
the Church in Wales  
the Church of England  
the Methodist Church  
the Moravian Church  
the Roman Catholic Church

(Note 1: It is envisaged that initially one observer be invited from each of the above.

Note 2: The MEW at Home Committee had some preference for including the churches in paragraph 12 as a third group of the churches sending delegates, one from each church: this matter will be reviewed in the light of developments in the Churches Council for Covenanting in England and the Welsh Committee for Covenanting).

13. The Business Committee shall invite some from other churches to address the Assembly either at its opening session or when the Moderator receives delegates or otherwise under 10 (i) and (ii); these shall always include some from abroad. Otherwise delegates and observers shall speak only as provided in 10 above. Speeches by those from other churches shall normally be limited to seven minutes.

(Note: For example, the programme might be that on the opening evening of the Assembly two or three were heard, another two when the Moderator receives delegates on the first morning of Assembly, and two or three on other occasions, speaking on particular topics).

14. The World Church and Mission Department customarily invites some from other Churches to speak at its reception, usually from among those who do not address the Assembly. The Business Committee ought to be kept informed of such invitations and also of invitations to speak at Assembly luncheons.

15. Every effort shall be made to enable those from other churches to take an informed interest in the proceedings of the Assembly to become generally aware of current developments in the URC.

16. Consultation shall take place from time to time with the churches affected by these proposals to ensure that they effectively help inter-church relations.

17. The normal arrangements for financing visits to the Assembly shall be that delegates and visitors invited by the Business Committee have their expenses met as part of the Assembly costs; that visitors invited by a Department and invited observers have their expenses met from the appropriate Departmental budget; that observers received simply on the basis of letters of introduction meet their own expenses. Where expenses are met this shall be from the time of arrival at the Assembly (or for those coming from abroad at their British place of stay as arranged for the Assembly visit) until their departure therefrom.

(Note: It is anticipated that the expenses to be borne by the World Church and Mission Department for observers invited under paragraph 12 above will not be great since these will usually be residents in the Assembly locale).

18. The Executive Committee at its meetings in November 1978 and July 1979 accepted these proposals concerning representation of other churches at the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church and agreed that, subject to consultation with the churches affected, they be operated as soon as possible.

19. The Assembly of 1979 resolved, subject to ratification at the Assembly of 1980 "to delete paragraph 9 (5)(h) from the Basis of Union with effect that there shall no longer be a category of 'corresponding members' of the Assembly."

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

*Chairman:* Mr F.H. Brooman

*Secretary:* Mr C. M. Frank

1. **Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1978.** Last year, we used the information given by those Churches which had completed forms MM1 to provide a broad analysis of their receipts and payments for 1977. Similar figures for 1978 are given in Appendix 1. Since the figures for 1977 and 1978 do not cover precisely the same Churches or the same proportion of the membership, they cannot be compared directly, but comparison can be made on the basis of the annual amounts per member.

2. It will be seen that the total giving increased by almost 20% from 1977 to 1978 and that the unexpended income added to reserves increased also. It would be unwise to draw sweeping conclusions from these figures but they show that members increased their giving substantially to meet the increased expenditure resulting from inflation and I am sure that members and local treasurers are to be congratulated on this result.

3. A breakdown of the 1978 figures Province by Province is given in Appendix 2. Similar figures for 1977 are to be found on page 45 of the Record of Assembly 1979.

4. **Unified Appeal 1979.** The Unified Appeal target for 1979 was £700,000. Receipts amounted to £688,415 a shortfall of £11,585 or 1½%. It was a disappointment that we did not quite succeed in reaching the target but we should like to thank Provinces and Churches for the fine effort that was made, and especially to thank those Provinces which accepted an extra commitment when it appeared that others could be unable to reach their targets.

5. **Expenditure on Central Activities.** The Central Activities, Income and Expenditure Account, includes all the central receipts and payments not specifically allocated to other funds. Some 90% of the income comes from the Unified Appeal but there are substantial other receipts from the investment of unexpected income and from interest on short-term balances which may be held for a few days or even for a single day but are placed with the banks at the best rate of interest obtainable.

6. The expenditure covers a wide range of activities including Mission at home and overseas, Theological Training, Office costs and the expenses of Moderators and Committees. There are conflicting views about whether we attempt too much or too little, and even whether the Church can afford the present level of activity. Appendix 4 gives the figures for 1973 to 1979 and shows that the expenditure has been reduced in real terms by some 25% over these seven years. Assembly will wish to have this in mind when it considers the budget.

7. **Accounts for 1979.** The accounts for 1979 will be published separately when the audit has been completed. They will be carried to the Record of Assembly in the usual way.

8. **Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally.** The customary information about the stipends and other conditions of service of Ministers employed centrally is given in Appendix 5.

## THE MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* Mr R.C.N. Tinsley

*Secretary:* The Revd G.E. Hooper

9. **The New Plan.** General Assembly last year charged the Committee with an urgent review of the scheme of Ministerial Remuneration and this has been its most important priority during 1979. The re-organisation of its membership to include a representative of each Province has helped immensely in ensuring the different needs of Provinces were taken into account. It was an important factor also in deciding what could usefully be adopted from the many different ideas which came to the Committee for consideration in designing a new plan.

10. The really important feature of the 'Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration' which was published in January are:

- a) A major change in style away from the existing complex assessment system based on what some people regarded as taxation and reliefs, towards a much simpler one of joint fund raising. It is hoped that this will encourage churches towards raising as much money as they can towards Maintenance of the Ministry, rather than seeking reliefs which is the understandable response to a "taxation" system.
- b) Much greater freedom for Provinces to be able to decide how their share of the total funds should be raised by individual churches. Decisions on how to help churches in financial difficulties will therefore be made by those much closer to the problem and with as much flexibility as they want to exercise.
- c) Centralised payments of Ministers, with the security this provides, will continue. The Committee will continue to set the pattern for stipends and allowances throughout the URC and will continue to bring proposals for changes to Assembly for approval.

11. The New Plan will not produce any new sources of income, nor will it affect the total amount of money to be raised in order to pay ministers. In 1978 this was £2.5M; in 1979 £2.9M and in 1980 will be £3.6M. This annual increase is likely to go on as far ahead as we can see even allowing for the steadily falling number of ministers. The Plan however is intended to be a most important step in generating a new commitment in churches to greater Maintenance of the Ministry contributions, which is the only way real stipend increases can be achieved. The Plan is being submitted to Assembly for approval, carrying the strong recommendation of the whole of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee whose co-operative effort it is. If approved, implementation will be from 1 January 1981 although much preparatory work will be necessary this year.

12. **Progress of the Fund** In the first quarter of 1979 income was significantly less than estimated due to reliefs claimed being much greater than forecast. This resulted in an emergency package being put to Assembly and approved, which limited last year's stipend increase to 10%, imposed a surcharge on assessments of 10%, and reduced reliefs. This was proposed in the belief that churches would respond although the strain on some would be severe. It is gratifying to be able to report that this faith was justified. The money did come in on time and aided by the number of ministers during the year being less than forecast, the year ended with a small surplus.

13. The rates of assessment now current for 1980 represent an even higher demand on churches. It is too early at the time of writing to know if problems will develop but last year's performance gives a sound basis for confidence. Specific proposals for a stipend increase will be presented to Assembly, but at this stage the intention reported last year for a 15% increase from 1 July 1980 remains unchanged.

14. The 1980 budget provides for £250,000 to go into the Pension Funds towards reducing the deficit caused by stipend and pension increases. The Committee is resolved to ensure that in making stipend increases in 1980 and subsequent years the needs of the Pension Funds are adequately covered.

The Maintenance of the Ministry Fund at present has a reserve which is substantially less than the minimum safe level of one month's stipends. The Committee intends to budget for achieving this modest target in 1981. This does, however, illustrate how dependent the Fund is on a regular flow of money into it from churches and how quickly any major shortfall would affect the payment of stipends.

15. A key factor in budgeting for Maintenance of the Ministry expenditure is estimating the number of ministers, both full and part-time, to be paid. For safety these have in the past been over-estimated but it is intended that for 1981 the closest possible estimates for each half year should be used. An area of concern is the number of part-time ministries, since they can be created within Provinces without reference to the Fund. Discussions have been held with the Development Committee on how this can best be resolved. No acceptable solution has yet been developed but discussion is continuing.

Last year it was reported that a survey had shown that a limited number of churches do not meet their commitments to the Fund. This has now been thoroughly investigated and it is clear that 94% of the Fund's expected income from assessments is received. Provinces and Districts are continuing to look into the reasons why the remaining assessments are not being met.

16. **Conditions of Service** The Committee continuously reviews the various parts which make up the remuneration package for ministers. A proposal will be brought to Assembly establishing ministers entitlement to six months paid sick leave, and indicating how decisions about further help might then be taken.

17. **Communications** The work on developing a new Plan has highlighted the importance of consultation within Provinces and the need for newsletters to churches from time to time. It is intended that these will continue, together with Information Sheets from the Manager of the Fund, whenever appropriate.

18. **Pension Funds** Work on the Rules of the new URC Ministers' Pension Fund has been completed and a full draft is enclosed with Assembly papers. Assembly will be asked to agree to the appointment of the Presbyterian Church of England Trust as the trustees of the new fund, and to adopt the Rules.

The trustees of the Congregational Ministers' Pension Fund and the trustees of the Ministers' Widows and Orphans Pension Fund will then take the further necessary actions in accordance with the URC Act 1972, to transfer the appropriate assets and liabilities to the new fund, thus creating one pension fund in accordance with the expressed wish of Assembly. All members of both funds have received an explanatory letter together with a copy of a Draft Summary of the new rules.

19. Apart from bringing all rules up-to-date, particularly regarding contributions and benefits following the introduction of the State Scheme in April 1978, no basic change has been made in present entitlements or rights of members except as follows:

Under the existing rules of the Ministers Widows and Orphans Pension Fund any member whose pecuniary rights are adversely affected to an appreciable extent by a change in the rules may elect, to stay covered by the rules as they were before the change. This reserve right will continue, but under the new rules this will not apply if the change results from Inland Revenue requirements or from State Pension legislation.

20. In accordance with the plans outlined to Assembly last year the rate of pensions from the Congregational Ministers Pension Fund to ministers for each year of service in the Congregational Church prior to 1971, has been increased from £6 per annum to £12 per annum and the rate to widows from £4.50 per annum to £9 per annum with effect from January 1980. Increases have also been made, where possible, in grants made from the Pastors' Superannuation Fund and the Pastors' Widows' Fund also from January 1980. Steps have continued to be taken to wind up the Congregational Ministers' Friendly Society in accordance with the rules, and a verbal report on the position will be made at the Assembly.

## CHURCH BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd R.G. Walker

*Secretary:* Mr D Banwell

21. The simplicity and directness of the new title of this Committee may perhaps be matched by the simplicity and directness of the concern we bring to this Assembly.

22. It is that the URC take serious thought about what it is doing with its largest material resource, its property mainly in Church premises and Manses. Applications for assistance dealt with during the years since Union have provided evidence of a very uneven standard of stewardship of property, and this must give concern for the future.

23. The report that we present (the product of the work and experience of our Secretary Mr Derick Banwell) covers many matters which have given rise to such concern, and which we believe should be taken into account by all who deal with property at local church, district and provincial levels. We also consider that every Province should have a property Committee capable of advising in matters of maintenance, insurance, adaptation, development and disposal of property. The full report will be issued to members at Assembly.

## HOMES FOR RETIRED MINISTERS COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* Mr H. Greening

*Secretary:* Mr F. A. W. Lodde

24. During the year fifteen houses and flats were purchased for retired ministers and the widows of ministers. The Committee sold one house which was no longer suitable for the requirements of ministers. During the year the Committee received £96,000 in legacies and donations. The Committee expresses its grateful thanks and appreciation to all those who have contributed to it.

25. A good deal of time and effort has been spent on preparing the Appeal for funds for the URC Retired Ministers Housing Society. Some 12,000 leaflets and 9,000 letters have been distributed to Provinces for use by Districts and Churches throughout the United Reformed Church. It is very much hoped that Provinces and Districts will do all in their power to further the Appeal, and that there will be a very generous response on the part of all church members and friends.

## WELFARE AND EMERGENCIES COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd D. A. Smith

*Secretary:* The Revd A. L. Macarthur

26. The Welfare and Emergencies Committee is the recognised benevolent arm of the Church. Through this Committee the Church is actively involved in assisting ministers, their families, and widows in time of hardship and need.

The variety of Trusts administered also makes grants possible for particular purposes. For instance the Fowler Scholarship Fund is for the educational benefit of URC Ministers' children. Applications for assistance towards the cost of education and equipment are considered according to individual need. The Committee accepts its responsibility as a great pastoral opportunity, and seeks to dispense its trust with both care and affection. This is largely made possible by the cheerful generosity of our people expressed through the Unified Appeal and in direct gifts as well as by Trust Funds and for this we are continually grateful.

27. During the year £15,848 has been dispensed overall. Some fifty ministerial families have been assisted. The widows of ministers who have died during the year have each received £50 at the time of bereavement.

Many retired ministers and widows had Christmas gifts; and all received greetings from the General Secretary and Secretary of the Finance Department. It was again possible to help lay people in our churches from the St. Martin's Christmas Appeal Fund and from the Orchard Hill Fund.

28. The Committee has pleasure in reporting these activities; thanking the Church for another year of satisfying service.

## BUDGET COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* The Revd A. L. Macarthur

*Secretary:* Mr C. M. Frank

29. The report of the Budget Committee is included at this point for the convenience of members. Though this is not a Committee within the Finance and Administration Department the Budget will be presented by the Honorary Treasurer.

30. In preparing the Budget for 1981 several factors had to be borne in mind.
- The work of the church locally, the central expenditure and the cost of ministry are almost entirely dependent on the giving of our members. Endowment income is infinitesimal by comparison.
  - To maintain the present level of work centrally and through the Council for World Mission will require an increase of approximately 15% over the budget figure for 1980. This figure would have been higher had the asking of the CWM for 1981, helped by some unspent balances, not been limited to an increase of 7% over the budget for 1980.
  - In 1979 the Church failed by a margin of £12,000 (1¼%) to raise the amount hoped for through the Unified Appeal. This is the first shortfall for several years and is no doubt due to the increased effort made by the churches to support the ministry.
  - Additional work was proposed which would have involved the addition of £72,000 to the Budget and made the increase one in excess of 20%.
31. After careful consultation with the Departments of the Committee reached agreement and submits the Budget now set out. This excludes a figure of £15,000 for the inception of the Auxiliary Ministry in hope that this money can be supplied from Trusts. The Committee has again decided not to include a figure of £13,000 for the work of the Youth Leadership Training Officers on the ground that this should come from sources within the Provinces. Request for additional appointments to service Stewardship and Christian Education amounting in all to £27,000 were also regarded as too great but a small amount (£3,000) is included to give additional secretarial help. A sum of £1,000 has been included to enable the Publicity Section to explore ways of improving the public image of the Church. A request for additional help in the Church and Society Department where the Revd John Reardon is the only Executive Secretary has been met in part and a sum of £3,500 is included.
32. The Committee is aware that these proposals are regarded as restrictive but having given careful consideration to the needs indicated by these additional requests the Committee believes that the Budget as submitted will enable them to be met as fully as the resources of the Church will allow.
33. The budget will be circulated to members of Assembly with the accounts.

## RESOLUTIONS

- Assembly receives and adopts the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1979.
- Assembly notes that the Church did not quite succeed in reaching the target for the Unified Appeal for 1979 but records its thanks to all who contributed to the Appeal, particularly those Provinces which accepted an extra commitment.

### Maintenance of the Ministry Fund

- Assembly adopts the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration as its method of financing the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund with effect from 1st January 1981.

#### Note:

- Resolutions with regard to the adoption of the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund budget, the scale of ministerial stipends, and conditions of service, will be brought to Assembly.
- Assembly agrees that with effect from the 1st July 1980 deaconesses shall be paid on the same stipend scale as ministers.

### Pension Fund

- Assembly resolves that the United Reform Church do constitute a pension scheme and do execute an interim Trust Deed, and approve the draft rules (to be respectively in the form of the drafts produced to the Assembly and initialled by the Moderator), and that the trustees be authorised to make the same and take all steps incidental to carrying the same into effect.

### **Church Buildings Committee**

9. Assembly commends the Property Report to all those concerned with property matters in the URC.
10. Assembly recommends each Province to ensure that it has a committee able to advise local churches and districts in dealing with matters of maintenance, insurance, adaptation, development and disposal of property.

### **Budget**

11. Assembly approves the Budget for 1981 presented with the Accounts.
- 

## **MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY FUND**

### ***STOP PRESS***

1. At their meeting on March 13th the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, after a very careful review of the financial situation and bearing in mind that in 1979 the proposed stipend was cut by 5%, agreed to recommend to Assembly that Ministers' Basic Stipend should be increased by 20% with effect from July 1st 1980. This increase can be contained within the income which churches have already committed themselves to find in 1980. There will, therefore, be no extra unexpected demand on churches because of this change.
  2. The Budget for 1981 to be presented to Assembly assumes a stipend increase of 15% from July 1st 1981. If this Budget is adopted the asking of the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund for 1981 will be in the order of 20% higher than for 1980.
-



## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT APPENDIX 1

### Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1978

Receipts	Total		Per Member		Increase %
	1977	1978	1977	1978	
	£m	£m	£ p	£ p	
Offerings and Covenants	3.65	4.04	25.18	29.82	18
Donations and Legacies	0.86	1.00	5.91	7.41	25
Special efforts	1.00	1.13	6.91	8.35	21
<b>Total giving</b>	<b>5.51</b>	<b>6.17</b>	<b>38.00</b>	<b>45.58</b>	<b>20</b>
Letting premises (net)	0.45	0.49	3.11	3.62	16
Investments and Deposit Accounts	0.49	0.52	3.38	3.79	12
Trusts	0.23	0.28	1.61	2.06	28
Loans and grants	0.20	0.18	1.38	1.34	- 3
Sales of Property, etc.	0.16	0.05	1.12	0.40	-66
Sundries	0.85	0.73	5.76	5.35	- 7
	<b>7.89</b>	<b>8.42</b>	<b>54.36</b>	<b>62.14</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Payments</b>					
Assessment and Pulpit Supply	2.53	2.63	17.47	19.41	11
Manse upkeep and heat	0.70	0.72	4.83	5.31	10
Car upkeep etc.	0.30	0.37	2.04	2.75	35
<b>Total for Ministry</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>24.34</b>	<b>27.47</b>	<b>13</b>
Conduct of Worship	0.21	0.21	1.46	1.51	3
Church and halls upkeep, heat etc.	2.59	2.69	17.86	19.88	11
Sundries	0.42	0.44	2.86	3.26	14
Unified Appeal and benevolent gifts	0.85	0.91	5.87	6.72	14
Transfer to reserve	0.29	0.45	1.97	3.30	68
	<b>7.89</b>	<b>8.42</b>	<b>54.36</b>	<b>62.14</b>	<b>14</b>

The above figures are taken from forms MM1. The 1977 figures cover 145,000 members and those for 1978, 135,500 members. The amounts per member enable comparisons to be made between 1977 and 1978.

**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 2**

**Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1978. Expressed as £s per annum per member**

RECEIPTS	NATIONAL TOTAL		PROVINCE NUMBER											
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	£	p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Offerings & Covenants	29.82	23.54	27.97	28.48	29.32	28.49	30.00	30.64	30.64	32.15	34.21	34.09	23.83	
Donations & Legacies	7.41	4.99	6.26	5.27	5.50	6.11	8.32	12.09	9.37	8.06	8.74	8.51	4.44	
Special Efforts	8.35	6.49	9.15	8.61	11.51	8.67	8.48	11.06	9.88	7.89	8.38	6.63	5.16	
<b>Total giving</b>	<b>45.58</b>	<b>35.02</b>	<b>43.38</b>	<b>42.36</b>	<b>46.33</b>	<b>43.27</b>	<b>46.80</b>	<b>53.79</b>	<b>49.89</b>	<b>48.10</b>	<b>51.33</b>	<b>49.23</b>	<b>33.43</b>	
Letting Premises (net)	3.62	1.20	2.28	1.94	3.29	4.06	3.26	4.80	2.67	4.05	7.96	4.58	1.47	
Investments & deposit a/cs	3.79	2.20	3.64	2.30	4.48	3.99	4.38	4.51	4.54	3.25	5.20	4.00	3.00	
Trusts	2.06	0.66	1.89	1.05	2.02	3.25	1.16	1.70	3.31	1.35	5.55	1.05	2.60	
Loans and Grants	1.34	0.93	0.77	0.32	2.97	0.35	2.16	2.24	1.99	0.55	2.11	1.27	0.34	
Sales of Property etc.	0.40	0.29	0.05	0.13	1.47	1.15	0.50	0.21	0.15	0.54	0.40	0.05	0.55	
Sundries	5.35	2.26	5.17	3.74	5.44	5.56	8.25	5.85	4.31	6.53	7.56	5.51	3.22	
	<b>62.14</b>	<b>42.56</b>	<b>57.18</b>	<b>51.84</b>	<b>66.00</b>	<b>61.63</b>	<b>66.51</b>	<b>73.10</b>	<b>66.86</b>	<b>64.37</b>	<b>80.11</b>	<b>65.69</b>	<b>44.61</b>	
<b>PAYMENTS</b>														
Assessment & Pulpit Supply	19.41	16.22	19.16	19.08	19.07	19.85	19.16	19.73	19.27	19.16	24.33	19.52	17.25	
Manse upkeep & heat	5.31	4.15	4.17	5.59	5.17	5.57	5.57	5.95	6.23	6.22	6.56	5.06	3.68	
Car upkeep etc.	2.75	2.43	2.59	2.38	2.75	2.83	2.73	3.07	2.72	3.32	2.95	2.97	1.82	
<b>Total for Ministry</b>	<b>27.47</b>	<b>22.80</b>	<b>25.92</b>	<b>27.05</b>	<b>26.99</b>	<b>28.25</b>	<b>27.46</b>	<b>28.75</b>	<b>28.22</b>	<b>28.70</b>	<b>33.84</b>	<b>27.55</b>	<b>22.75</b>	
Conduct of Worship etc.	1.51	0.89	1.42	1.31	1.35	1.42	1.84	1.43	1.68	1.65	1.97	1.82	1.01	
Church & Halls upkeep, & heat	19.88	12.97	18.91	16.03	22.68	19.51	24.00	22.81	20.37	17.88	27.87	20.97	11.64	
Sundries	3.26	1.66	2.52	2.91	2.88	3.21	3.20	3.94	3.39	3.83	5.17	3.54	2.41	
Unified Appeal & Benevolent grants	6.72	3.76	5.05	5.99	5.76	6.30	6.87	8.29	7.27	6.85	9.52	8.99	3.83	
Transfers to Reserves	3.30	0.48	3.36	(1.45)	6.34	2.94	3.14	7.88	5.93	5.46	1.74	2.82	2.97	
<b>1978 Totals</b>	<b>62.14</b>	<b>42.56</b>	<b>57.18</b>	<b>51.84</b>	<b>66.00</b>	<b>61.63</b>	<b>66.51</b>	<b>73.10</b>	<b>66.86</b>	<b>64.37</b>	<b>80.11</b>	<b>65.69</b>	<b>44.61</b>	
<b>1977 Totals</b>	<b>54.36</b>	<b>38.78</b>	<b>53.58</b>	<b>44.22</b>	<b>59.03</b>	<b>52.66</b>	<b>55.00</b>	<b>63.15</b>	<b>54.53</b>	<b>56.47</b>	<b>70.34</b>	<b>60.92</b>	<b>39.44</b>	
<b>Increase %</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 3

### Unified Appeal 1979

Province	1978		1979	
	£	% of target	£	% of target
1	48,230	107	42,917	80
2	52,622	99	60,199	96
3	48,443	99	51,096	100
4	47,581	95	55,362	100
5	35,011	100	36,072	90
6	50,779	102	53,786	98
7	52,902	103	53,623	103
8	42,288	101	45,038	101
9	58,771	100	60,664	100
10	86,249	103	90,044	103
11	109,719	102	114,014	108
12	22,967	82	24,006	75
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	655,562	100	686,821	98
Other receipts	2,559		1,594	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	£658,121	101	£688,415	98

The percentages shown for 1979 relate to the targets agreed in June 1978. Some Provinces said that, despite all their efforts, they were unlikely to achieve their targets. Other Provinces accepted additional commitments to secure the total.

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 4

### Expenditure on Central Activities

Up to 1976, the expenditure on Central Activities shown in the annual accounts included an element for supplementing the stipends and pensions of former Congregational Ministers. From 1977, a contribution from the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund has been deducted from the expenditure. If both the provision and the contribution are taken out, the figures for expenditure are broadly comparable year by year. They are set out below and in the right hand column, we have shown them in terms of 1973 £s, i.e., adjusted for inflation by reference to the Retail Price Index.

	Expenditure	At 1973 prices
1973	£482,000	£482,000
1974	508,000	452,000
1975	537,000	398,000
1976	583,000	351,000
1977	732,000	378,000
1978	773,000	363,000
1979	818,000	355,000

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 5

### Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally from July 1979

1. **Provincial Moderators** The stipend of Provincial Moderators is £3,768 per annum (plus any children's allowances). They are provided either with a house free of maintenance costs, rates, heating and lighting, or with a house allowance in lieu. Travelling expenses, telephone costs etc., in connection with church business are refunded. A car is provided, maintenance and running costs being met by the Church subject to an adjustment for private use. The Moderator may provide his own car and claim mileage allowances.
2. **Ministers at Tavistock Place** Stipends range from £5,500 per annum for the General Secretary to £3,564 per annum for Assistant Secretaries (plus any children's allowances). The other arrangements are as for Provincial Moderators but fares between home and Tavistock Place are met by the Ministers.
3. **Academic Staff at Westminster College** Stipends range from £3,707 to £3,429 per annum (plus any children's allowances). The housing provisions are the same as those for Provincial Moderators.

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION : APPENDIX 6

### **A Summary of the Principles and Processes involved in the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration.**

#### **A. Principles of the Plan**

1. The whole ministry of the United Reformed Church is to be made available to the whole of the Church, and the financial responsibility for this ministry is to be shared throughout the whole of the Church. It is recognised that the extent and type of ministry will vary in different situations.
2. The payments of ministers will be made from a central fund, into which the local churches will pay their contributions.
3. The total requirement of the central fund shall be placed before Provinces, a Provincial contribution accepted, and each Province will then be free to determine in its own way the contributions required from each of its local churches in order that the provincial total shall be guaranteed. In using the word "guaranteed" it is meant that each Province will do everything within its power to meet the agreed financial contribution. In this context it should be noted that the church "guarantees" the stipends of ministers, and must therefore have assurances that the funds are available. It has always been a policy of the United Reformed Church that the provision of stipends shall be the first charge upon the finance of the local church.
4. Central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee will make available guidelines and figures to show how the total requirement could be apportioned amongst the Provinces.
5. The contribution of each local church, as agreed between the local church and its Province shall be remitted direct to the central fund by regular monthly payments by a due date.
6. Over the next five years, the working capital of the central fund should be built up to the equivalent of three months' expenditure from the fund.

#### **B. Process of Regular Consultation for Operating the Plan**

7. Possibly by July and certainly by September in each year, the MoM Committee would consider the first draft of the budget for the year after next (e.g. in July/September 1979 for the year 1981).
8. The total requirement of the central fund would then be placed before the Provinces.
9. The Provinces would be asked for their preliminary response and then further discussions would take place during the autumn.
10. By March/April, on the basis of the guaranteed contributions from the Provinces, the budget for the next year would be completed and the General Assembly asked to approve it.
11. It would be understood that the Provincial total for each year would be freely renegotiable rather than, say, having to accept a percentage increase on the previous year.

## THE PLAN FOR PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTERIAL REMUNERATION

### 1. Objects of the Plan

To establish a unified scheme for the remuneration of ministers in the service of the Kingdom of God within the United Reformed Church in England and Wales, and to ensure the provision of the necessary resources.

### 2. Administration

The Plan will be administered by a partnership between a central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee appointed by and responsible to the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church and local Committees appointed by each Province of the Church. The central committee will recommend to the General Assembly any changes in the working of the Plan, and act in an advisory capacity should there be any disagreement between local churches and their Provincial Committee.

### 3. Scope of the Plan

Churches to be included:—

- 3.1 Each local church of the United Reformed Church.
- 3.2 Each ecumenical situation involving the United Reformed Church.

Ministers to be included:—

- 3.3 Recognised Ministers of the United Reformed Church both whole time and part time serving a single church pastorate or a joint or a group pastorate, or holding a special appointment with a Province.
- 3.4 Recognised ministers of the United Reformed Church holding full time chaplaincies (to such number as shall be determined from time to time by the General Assembly) in the appointment of whom the United Reformed Church has agreed and whose remuneration is derived in whole or in part from the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund of the United Reformed Church.
- 3.5 Recognised ministers of the United Reformed Church serving as Provincial Moderators or holding stipendiary appointments in the central offices of the Church; and those ministers inducted to teaching posts at Westminster College.
- 3.6 Recognised ministers of the United Reformed Church holding appointments in ecumenical situations approved by the Committee.
- 3.7 Such ministers of other denominations working in ecumenical situations or otherwise serving the United Reformed Church, as the General Assembly shall, from time to time, determine.
- 3.8 Ministers who were previously Local Pastors and who were ordained under the terms of the resolutions of the General Assembly in 1978 and 1979, and who were remunerated locally prior to ordination.
- 3.9 Local Pastors who were locally remunerated at the date of the introduction of this Plan for Ministerial Remuneration, with the concurrence of the District Council, but who have not been ordained.

Ministers excluded from remuneration:—

- 3.10 Local Pastors ordained under the terms of the resolution of the General Assembly in 1978 and 1979 who have not sought or obtained the approval of the Ministerial Training Committee to transfer to a stipendiary charge.
- 3.11 Ministers ordained under the terms of service for Auxiliary Ministry.

### 4. Remuneration

Remuneration will consist of a basic stipend together with other entitlements and allowances

as set out below:—

#### **4.1 Paid from, and at the Expense of, Central Funds**

- 4.1.1 Basic Stipend:** The basic stipend will be fixed from time to time by the General Assembly having before it the recommendation of the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee. In the case of “part time” pastorates the proportion of the basic stipend which is appropriate, having regard to the work involved, shall be determined by the central MoM Committee on the recommendation of the District Council forwarded through the Provincial MoM Committee (see para. 8.6)
- 4.1.2 Childrens Allowances:** Shall be paid to whole time ministers according to the scales laid down by the General Assembly.
- 4.1.3 Payment during sickness:** Remuneration will be paid during periods of sickness for such periods and in such sums as determined from time to time by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church. Ministers shall encash the sickness benefit cheques received from the Department of Health and Social Security, and shall notify the Manager of the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund of the amount of the benefit each time it is received. The next available stipend payment shall be reduced by the amount of the total benefits notified (benefits being non taxable). Treasurers of local churches shall pay the fees and expenses of pulpit supplies during the minister's certified illness and reclaim the total cost from central Maintenance of the Ministry funds at suitable intervals, following the same administrative procedures as in a pastoral vacancy (see para. 7). Where the weekly sickness benefit from DHSS by a part time minister exceeds the amount of his remuneration under the Plan, the amount of the deduction from stipend shall not exceed the amount of remuneration, on a weekly basis.

#### **4.2 Paid Centrally, at the Expense of the Local Church**

##### **Stipend Supplement, Housing Allowances and other taxable Remuneration.**

- 4.2.1** The decision of the Church Meeting/Elders Meeting in the matters of remuneration above the basic stipend shall be respected by the Plan, and payments of the higher sum will be made through the central payroll system, the costs (including, for example, additional employers national insurance contributions etc.) being an expense of the local church.
- 4.2.2** Where an allowance is paid in lieu of housing as defined in para. 4.3.1 the allowance should be calculated on a basis determined from time to time by the Central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, and paid in the style and manner of paragraph 4.2.1.

#### **4.3 Financial Responsibilities of the Local Church(es)**

- 4.3.1 House, free of rent, rates, etc:** For the purposes of this Plan a house or manse means a home for the minister provided and maintained in good repair and decoration, free of rent, ground rent, and all rates. In the case of “part time” pastorates the provision of housing shall be taken into consideration in fixing levels of remuneration, in accordance with guidelines issued by the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee.
- 4.3.2 Heating and Lighting:** The cost of heating and lighting the manse (including all normal domestic fuel consumption) will be borne by the local church or other appropriate body. In the case of “part time” ministries the responsibilities of the church or other appropriate body shall be proportionate to the basic stipend rec-

eived. The heating and lighting payments are intended to cover the normal needs of the minister and his immediate family. In cases where special expenditure is needed the estimated additional costs shall be dealt with by agreement between the local church and the minister.

- 4.3.3 **Travel:** It is recognised that in most cases a car is essential and the provision and expenses of a car shall be the responsibility of the local church, or other appropriate body. The cost of private motoring shall be borne by the minister under locally agreed arrangements. Where the minister has his own car financial arrangements in regard thereto, satisfactory to the minister and the local church or other appropriate body, shall be agreed with the Provincial MoM Committee. The cost of essential travel by public transport shall be reimbursed by the local church.
- 4.3.4 **Expenses:** Each minister will be reimbursed in regard to sums expended in respect of postage, telephone and stationery incurred on official business, either by the local church or the appropriate body, depending on the nature of the appointment. The reimbursement of expenses will be on the basis of actual cost incurred, and not by a predetermined lump sum.

## 5. Additional Paid Work

Stipends and other allowances to whole time ministers shall normally be paid on the basis that these represent the main earned remuneration. It is recognised that a Minister will from time to time accept other paid work (e.g. Hospital chaplaincies or teaching). Where this work, in the view of the District Council and Provincial Moderator, can be performed without detriment to the pastoral care of the church, congregation, and area of local church witness, the additional remuneration shall be retained by the minister involved, provided the work does not exceed the equivalent of one working day per week. Where more than one day per week is involved, the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee may reduce the stipend by an appropriate amount after consultation with the appropriate Provincial Moderator and the Minister's District Council.

## 6. Miscellaneous Allowances to Ministers and Churches

The Plan provides for a number of other financial entitlements as follows:

### 6.1 Ordination Grant and Loan

An initial grant on ordination and induction to a first charge is available to ministers at a rate determined by the General Assembly. In addition an interest free loan, as a help toward the furnishing of a manse, is available to ordinands, in such sums and under such repayment conditions as may be laid down by the General Assembly.

### 6.2 Ministers changing Pastorates

6.2.1 **The Church** to which a Minister is called is responsible for meeting the costs of the removal. A grant is available to the church toward this expense, on the recommendation of the Provincial Moderator, at a rate set by the General Assembly.

6.2.2 **The Minister** shall be entitled to a grant on moving to a new pastorate within the United Reformed Church, to help meet the cost of new furnishings. The amount of the grant shall be determined by the General Assembly. Grants under this section are not available as an addition to the provisions of para. 6.1.

### 6.3 Ministers retiring

The full cost of removal shall be paid once only to a minister (on final retirement from a pastoral charge) up to a limit set by the General Assembly, provided that at least two tenders have been obtained and normally the lowest figure claimed.

## 7. Pastoral Vacancies

Where a church is in pastoral vacancy, the actual cost of pulpit supply fees and associated trav-



el expenses may be recovered from the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee upon approval of the claim by the Provincial Committee. The maximum limits of amounts claimed per service will be approved by the General Assembly. Claims will not normally be approved by the Provincial Committee where that Committee has already reduced the Contribution to recognise a long standing pastoral vacancy.

## **8. Contributions: Concept and Administration**

**8.1** In order to ensure the necessary funds for the proper remuneration and pensions of ministers within the scope of the Plan, each local church within the United Reformed Church shall bear a share of the cost.

**8.2** The share of the cost required as a contribution from a local church shall be calculated so as to identify separately the local pastoral ministries from national pastoral responsibilities (later described in paragraph 10.4 as "wider ministries"). All churches shall be required to contribute toward national costs, but a province may excuse a church in whole or in part from contributing towards the costs of "local ministry".

**8.3** The central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, appointed by the General Assembly, shall be responsible for determining the national budget, and, through Provincial Representatives on that Committee shall agree a reasonable proportion of that budget for each Province within the denomination (see para. 9 below).

**8.4** The central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee shall, within a reasonable period after the General Assembly, notify the Provincial Committee of their financial responsibilities for the forthcoming year. Once agreed and set, the Province is responsible to the central Committee for raising that sum.

**8.5** To ensure a reasonable distribution of the national budget (para. 8.3 above) every church in the denomination shall provide an annual return of membership and financial standing. The style and content of this return shall be determined by the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee.

**8.6** Each Province shall have a Committee responsible for Maintenance of Ministry affairs, referred to in this document as "The Provincial Maintenance of the Ministry Committee". This committee should include the Provincial representative on the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, along with representation of each District in the Province.

**8.7** The Provincial Maintenance of the Ministry Committee shall decide, in consultation with each local church, the contribution to be made to meet the costs of "local pastoral ministry" as determined in paragraph 10 below, and this contribution along with that for "wider ministries" shall be the first charge on the finance of the local church.

**8.8** The Provincial Maintenance of the Ministry Committee shall, no later than the last day of October in each year, furnish the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee with a Schedule, showing the church names and numbers, and the agreed contributions for the succeeding year linked to Local and Wider Ministries as defined in para 10 below.

## **9. Provincial Contribution Calculation**

**9.1** In distributing their budget the central MoM Committee shall ensure that its proposals for agreement are based upon the last known membership and income position of the churches within each Province, averaged over three years in each case, so as to avoid fluctuations through particular local circumstances.

**9.2** The central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee shall also provide annually the average cost of a minister to the central fund (referred to elsewhere in this Plan as "true cost of ministry").

**9.3** The distribution proposed under paragraph 9.1 above shall be adjusted to represent under or over deployment of ministers. For whole time ministries the adjustment shall be based upon the "true cost of ministry" determined by the central Maintenance

of the Ministry Committee, and for part time ministries on the fluctuation of actual cost year by year.

9.4 The distribution proposed under 9.1 above may be further adjusted by such other factors as may seem right to the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, from time to time.

9.5 The central MoM Committee shall divide the Provincial proportion of the national budget, as determined under para. 9.1 above, among the churches within a Province, as a "guide contribution figure", to assist the Provincial MoM Committee in determining how much each local church should be required to contribute (see para. 10.2 below).

## 10. Local Church Contributions

10.1 The Provincial Maintenance of the Ministry Committee shall be responsible for the distribution of their share of the national budget over the churches in their own area.

10.2 The method by which this distribution is achieved is for the Provincial Maintenance of the Ministry Committee to determine, and shall be subject to the concurrence of the Provincial Synod. If the Provincial Synod so decides, it may recommend the setting up of District MoM Committees.

10.3 It is recognised that the provisions of para 10.2 above will mean that churches in different parts of the country may be asked to contribute on a varied basis if Provincial Committees are to be allowed freedom from nationally determined rules, and properly to represent the needs of the churches in their care. Some suggested guidelines for Provincial Committees are, however, set out at Appendix "A" to this Plan.

10.4 Contributions from local churches will cover the two main forms of Ministry, for which the Central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee is financially responsible:

10.4.1 **Local Pastoral Ministries:** These include all forms of ministry provided to local churches or communities. The Provincial Maintenance of the Ministry Committee will decide, in consultation with each local church, that church's contribution. In an ecumenical situation these will need to be calculated taking into consideration any agreed national formula approved between the denominations involved. The central MoM Committee will hold details of any such agreements to assist Provincial officers.

10.4.2 **Wider Ministries:** These include Provincial Moderators, Ministers called to the central staff, Chaplaincies, and special ministries agreed within the Deployment Plan. Also certain grants toward particular ventures approved by the central MoM Committee and financial contingencies approved by the General Assembly will be charged. Local church contributions will be calculated by the central MoM Committee on a membership (per capita) basis.

The contribution of a local church will be the total of the two preceding sub paragraphs.

## 11. Payment of Stipends and Contributions

11.1 The payment of the basic stipend, together with any children's allowance and supplementary payments under para. 4.2 shall be made monthly on the 26th day of each month by the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee.

11.2 The Officers of the central Maintenance of the Ministry Committee shall be responsible for keeping proper records for the purpose of making statutory deductions from stipend and making returns to the Inland Revenue and Department of Health and Social Security as required by law.

11.3 The Church contributions shall be paid at the rate of one-twelfth of the annual sum on the 20th day of each month by means of the "Direct Debit" System of the

Central Clearing Banks. Payment is collected to the central account of the United Reformed Church.

**11.4** Churches may make remittances by monthly Standing Order in lieu of Direct Debit, provided the money is received in the central funds no later than the 20th day of each month. Payment methods other than Direct Debit or Standing Order can only be permitted by the central MoM Committee upon receipt of concurrence to such action by the Provincial Committee, following District enquiry into the necessity of such action.

**11.5** In recognition of the additional administrative costs of Standing Orders and other alternative methods under para. 11.4 above, General Assembly shall approve a monthly charge, payable in addition to the agreed contribution.

**11.6** In protection of the essential interests of the local church, the General Assembly instructs the central MoM Committee to ensure that Direct Debits are operated strictly in accord with the requirements of the Central Clearing Banks.

## **12. Pension Funds**

Since part of the annual contribution to the Ministers Pension Fund is paid from central funds of the Church, this portion shall be charged to the central Maintenance of the Ministry budget.

## **13. Moderator of General Assembly**

When the Moderator of the General Assembly in any year is in pastoral charge, the cost of Pulpit Supply and travelling expenses incurred in the supply of the pulpit during his year of office shall be borne by the central budget of the Plan.

## **14. Student Pastorates**

The Plan for Ministerial Remuneration is not responsible for the remuneration or pastoral expenses of persons prior to ordination, except as specifically provided for under para. 3.9.

## **15. The Scheme of Ministerial Remuneration**

The Scheme is withdrawn with effect from the date of implementation of the Plan, and all Notes of Guidance related to the Scheme are rescinded from the same date.

---

### **APPENDIX A TO THE PLAN FOR PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTERIAL REMUNERATION**

#### **Guidelines to Provincial MoM Committees in the Allocation of Contribution Responsibilities to Local Churches**

- 1.** The Provincial Committee is free to make such decisions as its Provincial Synod agree to (para. 10.2)
- 2. Long Term Vacancies:** The Provincial Committee has available to it an automatic adjustment of the Provincial Contribution to effect variances with the national Deployment Plan. If so desired this adjustment could be used in whole or in part to give relief in the longer term pastoral vacancy.  
Where this relief is utilised the central Committee would not expect the Provincial Committee to give concurrence to refund of Pulpit Supply Fees in the same vacancy (see para. 7 to the Plan).
- 3. True Cost of Ministry:** Some Provinces may wish to recognise the cost of ministry in a given pastorate when calculating the final contribution due from a pastorate. The cost, in group situations, may vary and be dependent upon the time a minister actually spends in each church. In collaboration with Provinces, the central calculation of guide contributions from churches (see below) will also contain a "Cost of Ministry" figure.
- 4. Guide Contributions:** The central MoM Committee is required (under para. 9.4 to the Plan) not only to calculate the Provincial responsibility, but also to break it down over churches. This is a guide figure only to make a "base" from which Provincial Committees may wish to commence their own calculations.

**APPENDIX B TO THE PLAN FOR PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTERIAL REMUNERATION**

**Approved Rates Applicable to the Plan**

**As at July 1 1980**

para.		
4.1.1	<b>Basic Stipend</b>	
	in the first ten years following ordination	£ 3,074 6
	during the next ten years	£ 3,137 6
	all years thereafter	£ 3,200 6
	and the maximum rate for part time ministries	£ 2,214 6
para.		
4.1.2	<b>Childrens Allowances</b>	
	for each child up to and including the age of 4 years	£ 60 pa
	for each child of 5 to 9 years of age inclusive	£ 100 pa
	for each child of 10 to 16 years of age inclusive	£ 140 pa
	for each child of 17 years and over until the 19th birthday, whilst continuing at school	£ 140 pa
para.		
6.1	<b>Ordination Grant and Loan</b>	
	Ordination Grant	£ 100
	Ordination Loan	£ 500
	Loan repayment period	5 years
para.		
6.2.1	<b>Removal assistance to church</b>	
	allowance available to churches on the mainland	£ 50
	allowance available for the Isle of Man and Channel Islands	(to be negotiated)
para.		
6.2.2	<b>Disturbance allowance</b>	
	allowance available	£ 100
para.		
6.3	<b>Retirement Removal</b>	
	Maximum allowed removal cost	£ 150
para.		
7	<b>Pulpit Supply Fees (Maximum refund per service)</b>	
	per service	
	where the Church contribution is up to £1000 pa	£ 2.50*
	where the Contribution is in the range £1000 - £2000 pa	£ 5.00*
	where the Contribution exceeds £2000 pa	£ 7.50*
	* plus reasonable travelling expenses	
para.		
11.4	<b>Administrative Charge</b>	
&		
11.5	per month	£ 3.00

6 These rates are provisional, and subject to the final reports of the MoM Committee, and General Assembly decision.

## THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY

### ANNUAL REPORT 1979

1. The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in Sheffield Polytechnic at 1 p.m. on Tuesday 6th May 1980, followed at 1.30 p.m. by the Annual Lecture entitled 'Herbert Asquith, the formation of a Prime Minister', to be given by one of the Society's editors, Dr J.C.G. Binfield, a Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Sheffield.

2. The Library at 86 Tavistock Place continues to be open to callers on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10.30 a.m. and written enquiries may be addressed there. The steady flow of enquiries in person or by letter continues, and Mr Esslemont and Mr Keay have been kept so busy that little time was left for the proper attention to archives and library acquisitions which should be given, not to mention their personal research. There is still a need for an honorary librarian and archivist or someone willing to assist generally and a small sum is available to meet their expenses.

3. At the end of the year there were 591 members of the Society, and a further 60 copies of the Journal were sold to libraries or exchanged with other societies. The cost of printing the Journal continues to rise. The increase in subscription for 1979 was not sufficient to meet the increased costs. However, many members added a voluntary donation to their subscription and for this we are most grateful.

4. Our thanks are due to Mrs George who finished her term as Membership Secretary at the Annual Meeting in 1979. We were glad when Mr John Wagner took up the office and saddened at his sudden death at the end of the year. Ill health had prevented him serving us as Librarian in 1976 and he was pleased to offer us this alternative help. The post remains to be filled.

5. Church closures continue. May we urge District Councils or others supervising such closures to remove church records, to secure storage in another church, or to deposit them in a local public collection. While we have no storage space for church records we are anxious to have a report when deposits are made so that we may refer future enquirers to the right place.

## STANDING ORDERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

### Questions

1. (i) A member may:
  - (a) if two clear days' notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary ask the Moderator or the Chairman of any Committee any question on any matter relating to the business of the Assembly to which no reference is made in any report before the Assembly; and
  - (b) with the permission of the Moderator put to him or to the Chairman of any Committee any questions relating to urgent business of which such notice has not been given, but a copy of any such question shall, if possible, be handed to the General Secretary at the beginning of the morning session of the Assembly at which the question is to be asked.
- (ii) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

### Notices of Motion

#### 2A. By Provincial Synods:

- (i) A Provincial Synod may deliver to the General Secretary not less than six weeks before the commencement of the annual meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion for consideration at the Assembly. If the motion introduces new business to the Assembly, the Synod may, subject to the agreement of the Clerk of the Assembly and the Chairman of the Business Committee and at its own expense, circulate a statement in support.
- (ii) Any accepted notice shall first be considered by the appropriate Committee which shall report to the Assembly thereon. The report of the Committee shall appear on the Agenda of the Assembly with the notice of motion.
- (iii) If the report of a Committee cannot be brought before the Assembly immediately following the receipt of the notice, then the notice and report shall be placed on the agenda for the next following Assembly unless the subject matter is otherwise to be considered by the Assembly but if the Provincial Synod giving the notice considers that the notice raises a question which merits urgent consideration then the notice shall stand referred to the Business Committee.
- (iv) If a church or a District Council wishes to put forward a motion for consideration by the General Assembly then they shall submit the motion to the Provincial Synod for consideration, and if thought fit for transmission to the General Assembly at such time as will enable the Synod to comply with paragraph 2A (i) above. In the case of a church the motion must be submitted through the District Council.

#### 2B. By Members of Assembly.

- (i) A member of the Assembly may deliver to the General Secretary not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion to appear on the statement of the business to be transacted by the Assembly in accordance with Rule of Procedure 2.1
- (ii) If the subject matter of the notice of motion appears to the General Secretary to be an infringement of the rights of a Synod or District Council through which the matter could properly have been raised, the General Secretary shall inform the member accordingly and bring the matter before the Business Committee who shall be required to advise the Assembly as to the procedure to be followed.

#### 2C. General

- (i) No such notice as is referred to in paragraph A (i) and B (i) above shall be accepted if the question raised is the subject of any report to the same Assembly, or is capable of being raised as an amendment to any report before the Assembly, or has been the subject of any decision given to the Assembly within the preceding two years.

### Reports

3. (i) Every Report shall be delivered to the General Secretary in time for inclusion in the

statement of the business to be transacted to be sent to members of the Assembly under Rule of Procedure 2.1.

- (ii) If a report is for information only and makes no proposal for action, the motion on the report shall be 'The the Assembly takes note of this Report'.
- (iii) If any report makes any proposal for action by the Assembly, then the motion on the report shall be 'That this report be received'. On this being passed, and before the consequent recommendations are proposed, any member may raise a matter arising from the report which is not the subject of a motion.
- (iv) It shall not be in order to move an amendment or a reference back motion to either of the motions set out in paragraphs (ii) and (iii) above.
- (v) If either of the motions included in paragraphs (ii) and (iii) above is carried, it shall not be deemed to commit the Assembly to the acceptance of any matter contained in the report.
- (vi) If the motion 'That the Assembly takes note of the Report' be carried, any member may move a further motion for expressing views on the whole or any part of the report or otherwise within the scope of the subject matter of the report.
- (vii) When the recommendations of a report have been disposed of, any member having given due notice, may move a further motion for expressing views on the whole, or any part of the report or otherwise within the scope of the subject matter of the report.
- (viii) Any motion (or amendment) moved under the provisions of this Standing Order shall be submitted in writing to the General Secretary in sufficient time for circulation to all members of the Assembly before debate.
- (ix) This Standing Order shall not apply to the Executive, Business, Applications, or Nominations Committees, or to any other Committee in respect of which the Assembly so decide.

#### Speeches

- 4. Speeches made in presentation of the report and motions of any Department and its committees shall not in aggregate exceed 30 minutes, save by the prior agreement of the Assembly on the recommendation of the Business Committee. The proposers of any other motion shall be allotted 10 minutes or such longer period as may be recommended by the Business Committee or determined by the Moderator. Each subsequent speaker shall be allowed five minutes unless the Moderator shall otherwise determine.
- 5. When a speech is made on behalf of a committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by stating his name and his accreditation to the Assembly.
- 6. Secretaries of Standing Committees and full-time officers of Departments who are not members of Assembly may speak on the report of the Department when requested by the Chairman concerned. They may speak on other reports with the consent of the Moderator.
- 7. In each debate, whether on a motion or on an amendment, no one shall address the Assembly more than once, except that at the close of each debate the proposer of the motion shall have the right of reply, but must strictly confine himself to answering previous speakers and not introduce new matter. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or that amendment as the case may be.
- 8. The foregoing Standing Order shall not prevent the asking or answering of a question which directly arises from the matter before the Assembly or from a speech made in the debate upon it.

#### Seconding

- 9. No motion or amendment shall be debated or put to the Assembly unless it has been seconded, except that resolutions presented on behalf of a Department or Standing Committee, of which printed notice has been given, do not need to be seconded. A seconder may, if he then declares his intention of doing so, reserve his speech until a later period in the debate.

#### Amendments

10. An amendment shall be either to omit words or to insert words or to do both, but no amendment shall be in order which has the effect of introducing an irrelevant proposal or of negating the motion.
11. No amendment shall be moved unless a written notice of its terms has been (a) submitted to the General Secretary before the Assembly opens, or (b) handed to the General Secretary during the Assembly, unless the Moderator otherwise decides.
12. If the Moderator considers that an amendment is of such a character that it cannot adequately be debated without previous distribution of copies, he may so decide and discussion of the amendment shall be adjourned until copies are available.
13. No motion or amendment which necessitates expenditure additional to that which has been provided for in the estimates for the current or ensuing year shall be put to the meeting unless and until the cost involved and the possibility of providing the additional amount has been considered by the Central Committee of the Finance Department or in case of emergency by the Assembly Business Committee.
14. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved. If an amendment is rejected a further amendment not to the like effect may be moved.
15. An amendment which has been moved and seconded shall be disposed of before any further amendment may be moved. Notice may be given of intention to move a further amendment should the one before the Assembly be rejected.

#### Alterations of motion or amendment

16. A member may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly, alter a motion or amendment he has proposed.

#### Withdrawal of motion or amendment

17. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly. Any such consent shall be signified without discussion. It shall not be competent for any member to speak upon it after the proposer has asked permission for its withdrawal unless such permission shall have been refused.

#### Closure of debate

18. In the course of the business any member may move that the question under consideration be not put. This resolution takes precedence of every motion before the Assembly, and as soon as the member has explained his reasons for proposing it, and it has been seconded, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that such motion is an unfair use of the rules of the Assembly. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately end.
19. In the course of any discussion, it is competent for any member to move that the question be now put. Unless it appears to the Moderator that this motion is an abuse of the rules of the Assembly, the vote shall be taken upon it immediately. When an amendment is under discussion, the motion shall apply only to that amendment. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. The mover of the original motion retains his right of reply before the question is put.

#### Voting

- 20 (i) Every question shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members present and voting as indicated by a show of hands unless the Assembly rules that there shall be a ballot.
- (ii) To provide for voting under this Standing Order Tellers for each Assembly shall be appointed by the Nominations Committee.

#### Dissent

21. The right to record in the Minutes a dissent from any decision of the Assembly shall only



be granted by the Moderator if the reason stated, either verbally or later in writing, appears to him to fall within the provisions of paragraph 7 (10) of the Basis of Union. The decision of the Moderator shall not be open to discussion.

#### Points of Order

22. A member may rise to a point of order or in personal explanation, but a personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him at the same meeting which may have been misunderstood. A member so rising shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.
23. The ruling of the Moderator on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be open to discussion.
24. A member may raise a point of order, offer a personal explanation or ask a question by standing in his place, in which event his words shall be repeated from the platform. Otherwise, no one shall address the Assembly except from a place indicated by the Moderator.

#### Suspension of Standing Orders

25. Any one or more of the Standing Orders, in any case of urgency or upon motion made on a notice duly given, may be suspended at any meeting so far as regards any business at such a meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of the Assembly present and voting shall so decide.

#### Admission of public and press

26. Members of the public and representatives of the press shall be admitted to the Assembly unless the Assembly otherwise decides and they shall occupy such places as are assigned to them.

#### Minutes

27. The minutes of each day's proceedings shall be circulated on the following morning and, after any necessary correction, sustained at the opening of the afternoon session. The minutes of the closing day of the Assembly shall be submitted at the close of the business and, after any necessary correction, sustained.

The substance of the minutes shall thereafter be published, at the expense of the Church, in the first available issue of the official magazine and a copy of the minutes shall be sent to each Synod, District Council and local church.

#### Record of attendance

28. A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such manner as the Executive Committee may determine.

#### Circulation of Documents

29. Only documents authorised by the Clerk of Assembly in consultation with the Chairman of the Business Committee may be distributed within the meeting place of the Assembly.

