

**The
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY
1982**

**17th - 21st May
COLSTON HALL,
Bristol**

**REPORTS
TO ASSEMBLY**

The United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom
86 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RT

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The United Reformed Church

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

and other papers submitted to the
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
BRISTOL, 17th – 21st MAY, 1982

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee met three times since last Assembly, in July, November and February, with the Moderator in the chair. The attendance of members was 52, 57 and 43, the last being on a day of railway closure.

2. **Members of the General Assembly – Ministers in Central Offices** The Assembly in 1981 referred to the Executive Committee the question, first raised by the Thames North Province, whether ministers of the URC employed at central office or employed full-time by other Christian organisations should be given representation at Assembly separate from District Council representation. The Committee examined the extent of the problem that had arisen and decided that there was no sufficient case of under-representation for the matter to be raised further.

3. **Continuation of Minister's Service at Retirement Age** The Executive Committee considered the Resolution of the 1981 General Assembly which asked whether the URC should adopt a procedure through which the service of a minister in pastoral charge is extended beyond retirement age, and appointed a group, chaired by the Revd Cyril Franks, to bring forward suggestions. The report of the Group, as approved by the Committee, provides a method which the Church could follow. The Committee stressed that all the local discussion of this matter must be concerned both with the pastorate and with the minister, bearing in mind the family situation, health factors and future housing; thus pastoral concern in every sense must guide the application of the following procedure. This procedure is to be followed when a minister in pastoral charge approaches normal pension age.

- (i) When the minister has reached the age of 64, the Provincial Moderator is required to ascertain whether the minister wishes to continue in that pastoral charge beyond normal ministerial pension age (i.e. 65).
- (ii) If the minister wishes to continue, the minister will apply to the District Council for permission to do so.
- (iii) On receipt of an application the District Council, through its appropriate committee, will consult with the minister, and, separately, with the Elders of the church/es and with the Provincial Moderator.
- (iv) The appropriate committee will place a recommendation before the church/es concerned;
 - a) that the ministry should be terminated at normal pension age,
 - or
 - or (b) that the ministry should be extended, in the first instance up to a maximum of three years, and the position reviewed in the final year.
- (v) In the light of comments from the church/es, the minister and the Provincial Moderator, the appropriate committee will place a resolution before the District Council.
- (vi) Any requests for further extension will be dealt with as above.

These provisions will apply to those approaching pension age after the adoption of the procedure by the Assembly.

4. Procedure for Provincial Moderator Review Groups Questions about the procedure had arisen in one instance from members of a Review Group, and the Executive Committee asked the General Secretary to prepare a paper which was discussed and referred to the Assembly Moderators' Advisory Committee. After further amendment at the November meeting of the Committee the paper was adopted as guidance to be made available in future Review Groups. The guidance recommends that, although both provincial and national representatives will have opportunities for discussion and consultation, there should be no resolution from either side to nominate a person until the group as a whole has met to review the whole context of moderatorial service. It also recommends that for a nomination to be made there should be majority support from both the provincial and the national representatives.

5. Public Expenditure Cuts This matter was referred to the Executive Committee by the 1981 General Assembly. The Committee agreed to the following resolution:

The URC Executive Committee affirms the Christian duty to speak and act upon social and economic affairs, especially insofar as policies and practices lead to adverse effects on the poor and the disadvantaged in society.

In the light of the General Assembly debate on public expenditure cuts (Record of General Assembly, p.24, resolutions 8 and 9), the Executive Committee urges Synods, District Councils and local churches to investigate the impact of current social and economic policies on community life in their regions and localities and to write to their Members of Parliament explaining the effects of those policies and pressing the case that government has a special duty to defend those least able to withstand the worst effects of the present economic situation.

The Executive Committee instructs the Church and Society Department to support such local action and to co-operate with other churches and through the BCC, so that the URC may have a more informed view of the economic position of the country and may speak and act for those both here and overseas who face the hardest struggle for economic survival. The Executive Committee commends to local churches, District Councils and Provincial Synods the information sheet giving details of some of the issues with which the Assembly was most concerned.

It was agreed that the General Secretary inform the Prime Minister of this concern in the URC, and that local churches should be provided with the resolution with suggestions from Church and Society Department about possible ways of response to it.

6. Scottish Ecumenical Bodies The Executive Committee agreed that, following the act of Unification in September 1981, the URC should apply for membership in the Scottish Churches' Council and the Multilateral Conversations in Scotland.

7. Membership in General Assembly — Serving Chaplains The Executive Committee agreed to a variation in the method by which one serving Chaplain to the Forces comes as a member to the Assembly. It was agreed that the Organising Secretary of the United Board, in consultation with the three Principal Chaplains, will each year nominate one serving URC Chaplain to be a member of the Assembly for that year.

8. Ministers' Spouses on Divorce or Separation The 1981 Assembly referred to the Provincial Moderators and the Executive Committee the matter raised by the Wessex Province on housing aid for the spouse of a minister on divorce or separation. The Committee accepted the advice of the Moderators that it would not be appropriate for the Church to hold a special fund for this purpose, and agreed that the matter should be dealt with through the Welfare and Emergencies Committee, which is reporting to the Assembly about it.

9. Long Range Policy Group The Executive Committee responded to a letter from the Chairman of the Group, and agreed that its period of work should be extended to the 1983 General Assembly.

10. Namibia Visit The Executive Committee encouraged the Revd John Johansen-Berg to accept the BCC invitation to visit Namibia, sent with him a letter of greeting to the Namibia Council of Churches, and on his return heard with great interest and concern of the life of the Church in a disturbed situation.

11. British Churches' Committee for Channel Four On the proposal of the Publications and Publicity Committee it was agreed that a grant of £1,000 on behalf of URC be made to this inter-church Committee in order that our approach to religious programmes might be made ecumenically. The Executive Committee was clear that this was a single grant without further commitment.

12. Yorkshire Moderator Review Group The Executive Committee received the report of the Review Group, recommending that the Revd Alasdair John Gillies Walker be re-appointed for a further term of service as Moderator of the Yorkshire Province.

13. Holiday Provisions for Ministers At the request of the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee the Executive Committee has considered whether a guide might be offered to the churches so that the URC may be assured that adequate holiday provision is made. After consultation with Provincial Moderators and the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, the following guidelines were approved by the Committee:

- (i) We recognise the need for adequate holiday, which is freedom from all pastoral and preaching duty, and we believe that every local church will seek to ensure this for its minister. Ministers are urged to take holiday as provided, for the sake of effective future ministry.
- (ii) We offer as guidance the provision that there should be 5 weeks such holiday in each calendar year; and that each minister should be enabled to take one further Sunday away from his/her pastorate without any claim upon him/her to arrange or pay for pulpit supply. On further occasions of Sunday absence from the pastorate the minister would be responsible for arranging and paying for pulpit supply.
- (iii) We consider that circumstances may arise when one week of holiday is carried forward to the following year.
- (iv) When a minister serves a part year in a local church on appointment or transfer or retirement, holiday provision should be pro rata, according to paragraph (ii) above, but we do not think that service of under three months in a calendar year should be a basis for such a calculation.
- (v) The above sections do not refer to sick leave.
- (vi) The above sections do not refer to in-service training courses or Sabbatical leave for study.

These guidelines are commended to local churches and to ministers.

14. Voting Procedure on Covenant The Executive Committee considered a paper from the Business Committee, which will make its own report to the Assembly. The Committee approved in principle the voting procedure outlined in that report of the Business Committee and agreed to the circulation of the report to Synod Clerks for information and action. It was the unanimous view of the Executive Committee that if Synod resolutions concerning special procedures on the covenant vote are passed by the Assembly, they ought to be subject to paragraph 9(5)(xi) of the Basis of Union and therefore would involve a two year delay in considering a 'definitive response' to the Covenant. The Committee expressed this view for the following reasons:

- a) It is right to affirm the adequacy and integrity of the procedures for change, agreed in the Basis of Union,

- b) That for the good of the church the Assembly needs to concentrate on the substance of the Covenant debate and not become involved in procedural uncertainties,
- c) It would be wise to ensure that subsequent to the Assembly there is no room for legal doubts about procedure.

The minute book of the Executive Committee will be available at the Assembly.

B.G. Thorogood, *Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS

- ✓ 1. The Assembly receives the Report of the Executive Committee.
- ✓ 2. The Assembly approves the procedure in paragraph 3 of the report regarding the continued service of ministers at retirement age, and refers it to Provincial Moderators and District Councils.
- ✓ 3. The Assembly appoints the Reverend Alasdair John Gillies Walker for a further term of five years as Moderator of the Yorkshire Province.
- 4. The Assembly approves the guidance in paragraph 13 of the report regarding holiday provision for ministers, and refers it to ministers and local churches.

REPORT OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

VOTING PROCEDURE IN THE "COVENANT DEBATE"

1. It has been suggested that special procedures should be devised to govern voting on the resolution to be proposed at the 1982 Assembly which will express the United Reformed Church's "definitive response" to the covenant proposals. Certain Synods, and others, have requested that the Business Committee should examine available possibilities and advise the Assembly.
2. Because a resolution giving a positive definitive response could be said to have implications which might necessarily involve changes in the Basis, Structure or polity of the United Reformed Church, the committee took the view that a simple majority vote by the Assembly would be inadequate.
3. It was suggested that paragraph 9(5)(xxi) might allow a special extra restriction, beyond that imposed by paragraph 9(5)(xi), in a special case. An opinion was sought from the Church's legal adviser who stated "I would not feel able to advise that in my view the Assembly could safely rely on the power given to it to exercise function xxi in order to set aside the procedures attaching to the exercise of the function defined in clause xi".
4. Since the voting procedure laid down in paragraph 9(5)(xi) of the Basis of Union is stated there to be sufficient even for "superseding" the basis, structure and polity of the U.R.C., it would appear to the Business Committee that any departure from it in regard to the proportion of votes needed to pass a resolution would be unwise and liable to a possible charge of inequity.
5. The committee will therefore propose to the Assembly that the 1982 vote on the definitive response to the covenant proposals shall take place on the conditions laid down in the Basis of Union paragraph 9(5)(xi), i.e. consultation with District Councils and Synods having taken place and the results of that consultation reported to the Assembly, the vote shall require a two-thirds majority to pass, followed by ratification by a simple majority in 1983, and further, that the 1982 vote shall be by paper ballot.
6. The committee considers that this is the correct and most equitable procedure in all the circumstances. This conclusion was communicated to the Executive Committee meeting on 4th February 1982 and was unanimously endorsed by those present. A resolution will be presented to the Assembly.

STANDING ORDERS

7. A number of small amendments have been made to the Standing Orders of the Assembly since 1972, and in the interests of clarity and coherence the Business Committee felt that the time had come for some more radical re-writing and re-arrangement. The Committee submit new Standing Orders, which are printed after those at present in use, at the end of this book of reports. The new draft omits some clauses which have fallen out of use and includes some provisions which have become customary. It is hoped that the re-arrangement and re-numbering will make reference easier. The only real areas of change lie in a small increase in the time allowed to proposers of motions (4a) and the reservation of the right of reply to the mover of an amendment (4d) on which there has been some uncertainty in the past. If the Assembly so agree, the new draft can take effect as soon as approved.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report.
2. The Assembly agrees that the vote on the substantive motion regarding the definitive response to the covenant proposals shall a) be governed by the conditions laid down in

carried

✓ the Basis of Union paragraph 9(5)(xi), i.e. consultation having already taken place with Synods and District Councils and the results of that consultation reported to the Assembly, the vote shall require a two-thirds majority to pass at the 1982 Assembly and require ratification by a simple majority at the 1983 Assembly, and b) be taken by paper ballot.

3. The Assembly approves the revised Standing Orders as printed and resolves to conduct its business in accordance therewith.

referred back.

APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Harold Springbett

Secretary: The Revd Bernard G. Thorogood

The Committee met three times during the year and reports as follows:

1. ADMISSIONS

By ordination to the stipendiary ministry following college courses: The Revds George Binde-man, William Auchinachie Burgess, Richard James Church, Ian Stephen Fosten, Christine Mary Fowler, Roy John Fowler, Ronald Harry William Gates, Robert Drummond Gillespie, Richard G. Helmn, Roger Jones, Sean Edward Larkin, Daphne Jean Lloyd, Thomas Dey McMeekin, Michael Mewis, Susan Margaret Nuttall, Stephen Mark Piper, Michael James Rigney, Paul Snell, David McKendrick Taylor, Sheila Elizabeth Thorpe, Peter Ll. Trow, Richard Johnson Wiggins, Brenda Willis, Richard Charles Wolff, Alice Laura Wright. *Denise Keith Fowler*

Christina from Wedder
By ordination to the stipendiary ministry following Assembly Resolution:

The Revds Roy Arthur James Eames, Thomas Cornelis John Holst, Wilfred Christian Jones.

By ordination to the auxiliary ministry: The Revds Susan Russell Daldorph, Alastair H.B. Logan.

By induction to the auxiliary ministry following unification with Churches of Christ:

The Revds E. Armstrong, W.E.H. Arnold, J. Baillie, G. Barr, G.M. Barr, L.B. Bodicoat, I. Bound, P. Bound, E. Brindley, J.H. Brooks, G. Buchanan, C. Burgess, W.P. Burgess, J. Clark, K.F. Cook, N.C. Crane, V. Crawford, J. Dennett, K.G. Diggle, I. Ferrier, D. Fidler, D. Firth, E. Forrest, J. Forster, J.W. Forster, M. Freeman, B.M.D. Gates, J. Gray, A. Greenslade, F. Hall, G. Hallows, R. Hendry, H. Highton, D. Howlett, K. Hudson, N. Hudson, G.B. Humphries, A. Hunt, C. Hunter, I. Hutchinson, P. Hutchinson, B. Irvine, B. Jones, K. Jones, (W.B. Jones), I. Kenna, R. Kidd, O. S. Kimberley, L. R. Kirkman, A. N. Kuypers, D. Linning, E. McDonald, N.W. Manning, E.H. Marley, R.F. Moore, G.M. Morgan, R. Murray, G. Nichols, R. Oakden, E. Palmer, R. Ruffett, R.W. Rutt, E. Short, J. Simpkin, M. Slessor, G. Smith, H. Stevenson, N. Stone, R.E. Tansley, F.A. Tarry, M.G. Tarry, D. Taylor, P.H. Taylor, W. Taylor, E.S. Thomas, E. Wain, E. Walton, G.B. Waterton, M.W. Waterton, A.B. Webster, G. Williams, W. Wishart, J.E.C. Wright, P. Wright.

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By transfer from other Churches:

Revd Clabon Allen	from C.W.M. missionary list
Revd Norman Cliff	Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa
Revd Gwynfor Evans	Presbyterian Church of Wales
Revd Derek Lindfield	United Congregational Church of Southern Africa
Revd Lionel Walker	United Church of Christ, U.S.A.

2. DELETIONS

By Transfer to other Churches:

Revd Richard Brueseke	United Church of Christ, U.S.A.
Revd T. A. Burkill	Congregational Federation
Revd Peter Dawes	Church of England
Revd P. A. Holland	United Church of Christ, U.S.A.
Revd Douglas MacAdam	Uniting Church of Australia
Revd William McGuigan	United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
Revd E. G. Miller	Uniting Church of Australia
Revd Robert Norris	United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
Revd P. Sindle	Uniting Church of Australia
Revd A. R. Wignall	Methodist Church

3. **CERTIFICATES OF ELIGIBILITY** Certificates of Eligibility were issued in accordance with the Assembly's revised rules to eight ministers, several of whom are in process of settlement.
4. **RECEPTION OF LOCAL CHURCHES** The Committee recommends to the Assembly that five local churches in the East Midlands Province, as listed in the resolution below, be received into the U.R.C.
5. **SECEDING CHURCHES** The Committee recommends that four churches, as listed in the resolution below, be permitted to secede, the requisite resolutions of District Councils and Synods having been received. These cases have been pending for some years until the passing of the 1981 URC Act.
6. **DEACONESS ORDINATION TO THE MINISTRY** On a request from the Thames North Province, the Committee examined the ruling of the 1979 General Assembly which agreed that deaconesses "presently serving in charge of local churches" could be ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacraments. This wording excluded a qualified deaconess, who was not in pastoral charge at the time of the 1979 Assembly but who was qualified in every other way. The Committee recommends to the Assembly that it enables this further ordination to take place.
7. **DISCIPLES ECUMENICAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL** Following the unification of September 1981, the Committee has considered the relationship of the URC to ministers who may apply for admission from churches with which the Churches of Christ were in close fellowship. The Committee recommends to Assembly that the provisions in force regarding ministers from member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches be extended to cover also ministers from member churches of the Disciples' Ecumenical Consultative Council.
8. The Committee has also undertaken much confidential work regarding individual cases, which cannot be publicly reported and which enables the Church to bring together a proper regard for the standards of the ministry, an understanding of those who apply and a concern for our witness to society.
9. The Committee expressed its thanks to its Chairman at the conclusion of nine years service during which he guided its discussions with wisdom and discretion.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives as local churches within the East Midlands Province:
- Leicestershire District — Beaumont Leys Ecumenical Parish
 - Lincoln District — Brent Road Church Centre, Lincoln
 - Church of the Reconciliation, Westcliff, Scunthorpe
 - The Ortons, Peterborough
 - Northants, N.Beds. & N.Bucks District — Church of Christ the Cornerstone, Milton Keynes.
2. The Assembly agrees that the local churches known as
- Eston (Northern Province)
 - Kirdford (Southern Province)
 - Walsham-le-Willows (Eastern Province)
 - The Quinta (West Midlands Province)

should be permitted to secede from the URC and that matters concerning the local church properties should, as far as the URC is concerned, be dealt with according to the URC Act 1981.

3. ✓ To further the intention of the 1979 Resolution the Assembly resolves that a District Council may ordain to the ministry of Word and Sacraments a member of the URC who is a qualified and ordained deaconess, if she is called to a pastorate, although she was not in active pastoral service at the time of the 1979 Assembly.
4. ✓ The Assembly agrees that ministers from member churches of the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council who apply for admission as ministers in the URC shall be treated in the same manner as those coming from churches in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

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DEPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd A. G. Burnham

Secretary: The Revd G.H. Roper

1. **Provincial Quotas** Leaving out of present calculations those pastorates consisting entirely of former Churches of Christ, we found whole-time ministers distributed in local church pastorates at the end of 1981 as follows:—

Province:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	Total
<u>Ministers:</u>	65	77	51½	55½	45½	68	58	54½	76¼	81½	104	41¼	<u>778</u>

(Fractions in the above totals represent whole-time ministers who are also engaged in special ministries).

Vacant pastorates were spread unequally across the country as will be seen by comparing the above figures with the total numbers of pastorates at the same date.

Province:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	Total
<u>Pastorates:</u>	73½	82½	57½	65½	58	77	64	60½	78¼	91½	116	51¼	<u>876</u>

(Fractions here represent ministries shared with other denominations and also with special ministries as above).

The total number of pastorates corresponds with that projected by the Committee, but the distribution differs from the Quotas allocated to each province for the end of 1981.

Province:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	Total
<u>1981 Quotas:</u>	71	84	58	69	60	77	66	62	77	88	108	56	<u>876</u>
<u>1983 Quotas:</u>	66	78	53	63	55	73	62	57	73	80	102	56	818

The 1983 Quotas (noted by the Assembly last year) require significant (and in some provinces quite severe) reductions in pastoral coverage. No one regrets the need for this more than the Committee's members but the continuing fall in the number of ministers makes it inevitable.

2. **The Future** Last year's Assembly resolved that the Deployment Committee should continue in its present form until 1983. This September we shall meet with provincial representatives to review progress and to share plans for the future, taking into account the latest available information. We are sometimes told that deployment policy is hampering mission or harming church life. In fact it is no more than an exercise in sharing throughout the country, according to criteria approved by Assembly, the scarce resource of whole-time stipendiary ministry. Existing patterns of church life or spearhead mission as they judge right. The only exception to this is the category of 'special ministries' where this Committee approves particular applications from provinces for ministry in new areas or in chaplaincies. This category has been limited to thirty full-time posts, each periodically reviewed; any more new initiatives in mission which create extra ministerial posts are likely further to reduce the number of ministers serving local church pastorates.

Assembly takes note

THE REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL MODERATORS 1982

1. Ten Years On

This year our Church reaches its tenth anniversary, and we believe there is much to celebrate. Of course anniversaries can be artificial. Like old fashioned milestones, they indicate distance but say nothing about the direction of travel. Looking back across the decade, however, we believe our Church may claim to have created its own style and identity. Most of the differences of origin have been left behind, and the initial feeling of strangeness has worn off. Some people have joined our churches just because they liked what they saw in the community life and worship of the URC, and appreciated its commitment to unity. That commitment has been honoured in the past year by the union with the Churches of Christ. Indeed, some problems were created for the organisers by members turning up in more enthusiastic numbers than was predicted for the Unifying Assembly in Birmingham. By this union, our Church has crossed the Scottish border, and gained new and notable companions for our journey, even if in some areas where there were few Churches of Christ little change may be detectable.

2. The Covenant Debate Dominates

Since the URC was formed in 1972, no single issue has so dominated the life of our councils as the Covenant "Towards Visible Unity". This is not surprising since, for some people, the Covenant proposals appear to raise questions of churchmanship which they believe to be at odds with our Reformed origins. But the Reformers called for a continual openness to reformation ("Reformata, semper reformanda"), and our Church is committed by the Basis of Union to a continuing search for Christian unity, so nobody should be surprised to find this so high on our Agenda so early in our life. We are, of course, sympathetic to those who find the issues disturbing, but less so to those who simply do not wish to be disturbed!

3. It is not the purpose of this Report to pronounce upon the Covenant nor to predict the outcome of the debate. Our concern as pastors to ministers and churches is less with differences of viewpoint and conscience than with the sharp division into almost political parties which the debate has caused. Our way as a Church is to seek the will of God and to obey it. It seems to us that division along party lines can make for a rigidity that would hinder the leading of the Holy Spirit, and this concerns us deeply. We also recognise a real danger that some on both sides may find it more difficult to live together after the dust of the Covenant has settled, one way or the other. This is something at which our Church will need to work with the precious gifts of love and humour.

4. What Kind of Church

No living thing remains entirely still, and we believe the first ten years reveal a process of evolution in the structure of our Church, especially in those relationships between councils and meetings that were left to some degree undefined by the Basis of Union. In most local churches pastoral care by the elders and their corporate leadership have become part of the riches of the Church, and the relationship between Elders Meeting and Church Meeting has matured into a complementary partnership. The place of District Councils has become more accepted, though there are still a few local churches who resist the visits by which the District Council expresses the care of the wider church. Synods have discovered their role as a forum for discussion of the wider concerns of the churches, while dealing with important but routine business more briefly through committee reports. There is probably still a need to learn how to delegate democratically without losing the feel of taking counsel together. Some of us find time and energy being wasted on "who decides what" disputes, but we are happy to report that this now happens comparatively rarely.

5. The staffing of Synods and District Councils continues to be a matter for some concern. There is a tendency for this to be left to those ministers and elders who are already the busiest, with consequent conflicting loyalties and priorities for the individual concerned. Of course, most of us like to feel needed, and often the busiest have an ability to act rapidly and decisively, but we feel that this is a matter of stewardship that needs watching. It will be more pro-

fitable to ensure a fair distribution of labour than to indulge in yet another re-examination of the basic structure of our Church.

6. God and Decision-Making

We feel some concern about the way in which church councils reach decisions. One of our number commented, "the only time you get a real Church Meeting is for the call of a minister". It is not just that for such an occasion there is a higher percentage of the membership present and voting than normal; it is a time when a church may be persuaded to look at itself, its work, its fellowship, its resources and its opportunity for the work of God's kingdom in that area. In seeking to call a minister, the church may become aware of that to which Christ is calling it also. Listening to other discussions in churches and councils, some of us believe that the discovery of what God wants for us is not often enough the prime motive in our decision-making. If God only gets a look-in during the opening prayer, our reformed churchmanship will have lost its very essence!

7. The Moderators' Meeting

Naturally, we have also thought about the experience of our own meeting, which takes place usually on the first Wednesday and Thursday of each month except for August, and in May when we fit round Assembly. In March or April we take longer for a residential meeting, and in 1982 we hope this will have taken the form of an "Ecumenical Study-Tour" led by Fred Kaan, to the World Council of Churches and other bodies in Geneva.

8. Movement, Labels and "Stickits"

At all our meetings most of our time and energy are given to our main task of "suggesting names of ministers to vacant pastorates", in the rather stark words by which the Basis of Union described a very personal process.

9. The need to describe ministers and church situations accurately so that our introductions may realise the highest potential in both, raises the danger of categorisation, not to say caricature. We often find it difficult to place those who choose to describe themselves by using labels such as "radical", "evangelical", "charismatic" or "liberal", not least since the labels themselves evidently mean different things to different people. Similarly, some of us find that local churches turn their backs too readily on those whom they label "old", disregarding the fact that the number of years is neither a good guide to a minister's vitality nor a sure measure of the likely effectiveness of a ministry. Ministers nearing retirement find it difficult to obtain a call for a limited period, though they may often have much to offer in wisdom and experience. The mounting cost of removals has increased the problems for ministers and churches alike.

10. While family commitments must have serious consideration, we believe ministers should beware of inhibiting the action of the Holy Spirit by the assumption that they can only be called within narrow geographical limits, or to certain types of community. Here too "labelling" is mistaken, as is the belief that successive moves should always be to progressively larger memberships.

11. We have spent some time discussing how to help the very few ministers who remain "stickit" (as the Scots say), in other words unmovable, against their own wish and after several introductions. It has been good to be able to involve the General Secretary in this and some other discussions, and we have been grateful to him for raising the concern with the appropriate departments. There is also the very difficult matter of how District Councils may bring to an end unsatisfactory ministries. For this the URC has no recognised procedure, and we ask Assembly whether it wishes to initiate consideration of the issues involved.

12. Our Agenda of Concerns

We have again enjoyed interviewing students in their final year at Theological Colleges, and have been delighted both by the numbers and the quality of those about to enter our ministry. We remain concerned that theological training still appears to be related to the traditional one-church

pattern which is no longer typical of our Church. In any given month the majority of vacancies are in Group pastorates involving two or more churches. One or more of these will be too small for the full pattern of URC church life, or may be complicated by ecumenical involvement. Only rarely is there a formal Group structure. We hope that the review of ministerial training has had these facts in mind.

13. The remainder of our Agenda has been an amalgam of concerns raised by ourselves and matters on which others have asked to consult us.

The General Assembly asked us to advise the Executive Committee on the housing of the spouses of divorced or separated ministers.

Departments have asked us about:—

Ministers In-Service Training, Sabbatical Leave and Refresher Courses;

The training (including costs) and placing of Auxiliary Ministers, with special regard to the Auxiliary Ministers and Elders of the Churches of Christ;

The review of ministerial training and the need to train a new generation of theologians;

The appropriate payment of ministers in full-time lay employment.

14. Among other concerns have been:—

The failure of some local churches to pay full heating and lighting costs and car expenses; The apportionment of Incorporated Trust Funds and the problems of shared church property; The situation in Ulster, informed by visits by the General Secretary and Michael Hubbard; The growing effects of division in British Society as illustrated by Toxteth and Brixton. We fear that the churches often seem satisfied for law and order to be preserved, without always wishing to probe the reasons why violence broke out in the first place.

15. **The Part We Play And The Way We Are**

The role of our meeting in the life of the URC is revealed by all this as being complex. While we are happy to be consulted by departments and others who may wish to use us as a trial ground for new seed-thoughts, we would be anxious if it took more time than now, and still more anxious if the habit of occasionally trying out a new idea were to develop into a belief that our advice were necessary. Whether or not the URC enters a Covenant, it would be against our ethos and against our individual wishes if the Moderators' Meeting were to become part of the decision-making processes of our Church. Part of the strength of our meeting is its informality; it is the "friendship that bursts out in laughter", as one of us put it, that provides much of the support we need for a job which, though demanding in time and effort, we count it a privilege and a joy to have been called to do.

16. **Personalia**

We have gladly welcomed Tony Burnham who, as Chairman of the Deployment Committee, has himself been "deployed" as Moderator of the North Western Province.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPLIES SECTION

(formerly Publications and Publicity and Tavistock Bookshop)

Chairman: The Revd Edmund Banyard

Secretary: Percy Bush

1. During the year Mrs. Janet Loveitt re-joined the Committee. Mrs. Loveitt had to end a former period of service because of ill-health.

The Revd Colin Richards completes his period of service on this Committee. Colin has been a valued adviser regarding equipment. Our sincere thanks for his service and collegueship.

Administrative Services to Central Office

2. These important back-up services have continued, some with anxiety because of ever rising cost of stationery, postage, etc. There has been a new arrangement of content of the Information Service and main mailings have been reduced to two per year. Representatives are urged to check the receipt and use of the Information Service which, with Reform, is a major communication link with local churches.

3. As part of the total reorganisation of the section to integrate the former Tavistock Bookshop and provide as co-ordinated service, the section has taken responsibility for the AVA equipment used by departmental secretaries for demonstration and training. The ancillary equipment is being overhauled and/or replaced. Any requirements regarding the major items of equipment will have to be related to budget considerations.

Ecumenical Services

4. AVA Magazine, of which the secretary is treasurer and manager, has now been registered as a limited company under the British Council of Churches. It remains financially self-supporting.

5. The religious Film and Filmstrip Reviewing Panel, which we service, has increased its member organisations to 33 church HQ and similar bodies.

Together these organisations facilitate and promote the imaginative and informed use of audio-visual material. The Viewing Panel and AVA Magazine have taken video into their areas of interest.

6. The Churches' Committee for Channel Four (television) has now been formally constituted. Programme outlines began to arrive in November. The URC is taking a responsible part in its work and has made an appropriate financial contribution. Also, the Secretary of the section accepted an invitation to join the Advisory Council of CTVC.

7. We have become subscribing members of the Churches' Teletext Project. This helps ensure the continuance of this developing outlet for historical and contemporary church-related information, and brief Christian comment, through the Ceefax and Oracle systems. It also provides opportunity for URC people to be involved and to contribute.

Printing and Publishing Services

8. Compared with 1980 the flow of in-house printing requirements rose by a further 12%. This is an aggregate increase of over 150% since union. The work is generated by the Church's response to local and national situations. However, at the sharp end, no extra staff provision has been made for five years, and the section's total manhours including the appointment in 1978 of a design and layout person, are only 14 hours per week more than there were in 1972 — an increase of 12.5%. No doubt better layout and design contributes to this steady increase in demand. Pending different arrangements all clerical staff are serving on a rota basis for collating, folding and stapling.

9. Reform has been a major vehicle for the Covenanting Debate during 1981/2, with, so far, only one complaint about being unjustly treated, which reflects the wise judgement of the Editor, Norman Hart. These major issues give extra impact to our magazine and communication in the URC would be more effective if more of our people took and read Reform. It remains an

evangelising and educational tool, which warrants more use. During 1981 it was again completely self-supporting.

10. Our voluntary Reform secretaries in the local churches are an essential link in the communication chain. Being able to supply readers through them helps keep down the cost of Reform. Comparable magazines cost 35p and above. Local churches should give magazine secretaries every support and ensure that competent people are appointed to do this important job.

11. Different, naturally, but equally important is the Year Book. There were many regrets that six of our recently welcomed former Churches of Christ never found their way into its pages. The channels of communication sometimes get blocked — or unused! Districts and Synods are urged to be as systematic as possible in providing information to the Editor, the Revd E.W.Todd.

12. The total cost for in-house printing charged to departments in 1981, amounted to £13,090. Other printing, excluding hymn books and the Book(s) of Service amounted to £86,731 (1980: £82,600). A high proportion of this expenditure comes back, sometimes with profit, from sales.

13. Departments are charged at a near cost rate for printing done on their behalf, but the 1983 Communication and Supplies Budget will cover all duplicating, minor printing operations and other related services on behalf of Central Office.

14. The major items produced during 1981 include; several reprints of *What Unity Again* (85,000 copies), the *URC Catalogue*, further reprints of *Seeking the Truth in Love*, URC 1982 Diary, *Tell Me About the URC* (revised), 1% Appeal Leaflets and Posters, *NCP Commentary*, *What's Your Handicap?*, two reprints of *Equipped to Teach* Courses, special Covenant-related inserts in Reform, *A Visit from Zambia and India*, *Word Today and Tomorrow*, 20x1,000 *On the Job* Leaflets, *The URC and Young People*, *Auxiliary Ministry Course* and *Going into Hospital*.

15. It has been suggested that the URC might publish one feature book by an invited author each year. A working party has considered the matter and favours a subject which could help spiritual development. Autumn 1983 is regarded as a possible target date.

Distribution Services

16. Lynette Field was appointed Distribution and Supplies Officer to replace Donald Finnan who was received into our ministry in September. She has applied her flair for organisation and planning, and while the early months of the reorganisation and integration of the former Tavistock Bookshop presented many problems, with her staff she now has the operation well organised. Contrary to persistent rumours, the shop is not closing, although some services may change. The first issue of a comprehensive URC Catalogue was warmly welcomed.

17. The reorganisation included taking in the distribution of material previously handled by departments. This involved 240 items. The departments calculated that 48 manhours per week were used in this operation. It is possible that the total workload will necessitate more staff, now numbering one full-time person less than in 1972. The new arrangement, of course, releases work time in the departments. An efficient trading operation should offset some of the cost of realistic staffing for the enlarged sale and distribution operations.

18. With the reorganisation of the former Publications and Publicity Section and Tavistock Bookshop to form the present Communication and Supplies Section, all retail income from URC publications is credited to the initiating department. This will affect the recorded gross income from the distributing operation when compared with the former Tavistock Bookshop.

Public Relations and Publicity

19. From the modest P.R. Budget we contributed one third of the cost of a tape-recorder for radio interviews and, as was seen at the last Assembly and, we hope, at this, considerably improved our display facilities. Only three Synods and Districts organised themselves quickly enough to take advantage of the Communications (Training) Day grants. Several booked ahead for 1982.

20. Several changes in senior staff in the departments delayed the planning of URC Overseas information and student resource material. An outline programme has been prepared and work on the material is going ahead.

21. Mrs. Mary Schofield (ably supported by her husband) serves as honorary press officer for the URC. Through her, press and radio releases have been issued on several important subjects. In co-operation with our Editor of Reform, Mary also sees that the media are briefed about subjects for Assembly and supervises the arrangements for their representatives while at Assembly.

22. With the Revd Charles Meachin, the Secretary for Communication and Supplies attended BCC/CFWM consultations on the Churches' use of Video. There was speedy agreement to commend VHS systems and that Video production facilities should be tackled ecumenically.

The Way Ahead

23. The reorganisation of the section has enabled us to clarify its role within the total framework of the denomination and the Central Office organisation. Subject to staff and resources those concerned will work to fulfil that role effectively and imaginatively.

24. With this firmer base it appears to be possible to render a full service through the various media and by helping local churches and groups to improve their communication methods. Subject to the same limitations the Committee and staff will apply themselves to achieve this enlarged role.

25. However, while public relations and better communication involve some skills, techniques and disciplines, they also call for improved standards in every facet of the church's life, witness, recording and planning. Carelessness in presentation is the major detractor of Christian impact. We are all public relations persons in the affairs of Christ and His Church.

RESOLUTIONS

- ✓ 1. The Assembly receives the report of the Communication and Supplies Committee.
 - ✓ 2. The Assembly requests the Communication and Supplies Section to continue to represent the URC in discussions and planning for the new communication methods, and to bring any financial implications to the Budget Committee.
 - ✓ 3. The Assembly endorses the suggestion that there should be an annual feature publication by an invited author and requests the Finance Department to consider the financial requirements.
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CHURCH AND SOCIETY DEPARTMENT

Chairman: Mr. Raymond T. Clarke

Secretary: The Revd John P. Reardon

1. **Introduction** In an Executive Committee debate in July 1981 it was agreed that there is a Christian duty to engage in social and economic affairs. That duty is especially clear in relation to the poor and disadvantaged. In the past year the Department has been involved in many issues, but has always given priority for action to combat poverty and disadvantage in Britain and throughout the world. This report focuses on some of the main issues that have occupied the Department.

Faded leaflet
Recycled

2. **Disarmament** The 1981 Assembly supported and commended the World Disarmament Campaign. Later, information about the Campaign was circulated to every church and, in particular, attention was drawn to a simple pamphlet of the Methodist Church, "What's this World Disarmament Campaign?", available from the URC at 20p. The Department helped to finance the Prayer for Peace leaflets which were also sent to the churches. The main role of the Department has been to urge Christians to wrestle with the complexities of the debate about defence policies, nuclear disarmament and the search for peace, rather than to attempt to formulate specific views. The international climate has worsened during the past year and Christians must redouble their witness for peace in the face of the threats and confrontation. General calls for disarmament and protests against the arms race are not enough in themselves. As the nations prepare for the second UN Special Session on Disarmament, from 7th June to 9th July 1982, Christians should urge the Government, through their Members of Parliament, to take some positive initiatives by renouncing chemical weapons and pressing for a Chemical Warfare Convention; by reducing the export of arms and pressing for international reduction in the arms trade; by encouraging projects for conversion from arms manufacture to socially useful products; by sponsoring disarmament research and peace education; and by ending nuclear weapon research and development.

Mersey Synod

3. **Social Justice** Following the debate on public expenditure cuts at the 1981 Assembly, initiated by the Mersey Province, the July Executive Committee urged Synods, District Councils and local churches to find out about the impact of current social and economic policies on community life in their areas and to urge Members of Parliament to defend the weakest members of the community.

4. Within a few hours of that meeting Toxteth was the scene of street riots caused by years of inner city neglect and decay. Other areas of the country were similarly affected by violent demonstrations, with considerable personal injury and destruction of property. The General Secretary wrote to the Prime Minister and leaders of other political parties informing them of the Executive Committee debate.

5. Since then a few churches have written about the personal hardship and community despair in their areas as government policies and economic decline erode the social, educational and health services and as unemployment increases. The need to maintain law and order and the increasing frustration in the worst-hit communities create problems in policing and focus on the role of the police. Clearly in some areas there has been a break down of trust and many are worried that the police are not fully answerable to elected bodies. Certainly the troubles in Brixton and Toxteth involved serious mistrust of the police. Lord Scarman, in his report on the Brixton Disorders in April 1981 spoke of "the need for a concerted, better co-ordinated attack on the problems of the inner city", and observed "the need to involve not just black people, but all the community, both nationally and locally, in a better directed response to these problems",

6. While the Department has only received a few letters in response to the Executive Committee debate, as many were received protesting against the grant to the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee in Toxteth. The Liverpool 8 Defence Committee was formed by local people to "defend" the community there against what they regarded as threats to their freedom and

security. In the aftermath of the riots it arranged legal aid and proper representation for those who were arrested and charged. It gave assistance to those making claims for compensation for riot damage, it was involved in providing social activities particularly for young people, and it arranged transport for families and friends wishing to visit the remand centres and hospitals where many from Toxteth were taken during and after the disturbances. In offering a grant of £500 the BCC's Community and Race Relations Unit was making a gesture of support for those who have for years suffered from the effects of inner city neglect. In making the grant there was no implication of support for the violence which had erupted on the streets but rather a recognition that our whole society is implicated in neglecting some of its most disadvantaged citizens.

7. The events of 1981, with street disturbances in several inner city areas, challenge the churches in Britain to reassess their deployment policies and their use of resources. The Department welcomes the current discussion in the URC on new initiatives in mission and believes that high priority should be given to the urban poor.

8. It is now over a decade since the then Government identified the "indices of deprivation". Among those were: multi-occupation of houses; large families; low income; poor health; unemployment; ethnic mixture. Communities having these features were considered to need extra resources, through positive discrimination in their favour, if deprivation was to be overcome. Conflict and frustration in local communities has made the nation aware, almost too late, of the extent to which personal hardship, and the daily experience of disadvantage can lead to alienation, especially where chronic unemployment affects localities that already suffer from poor housing and inadequate amenities. At national and local level there is need for imaginative reshaping of policies to end disadvantage through redistributive approaches to taxation and welfare.

9. **Housing** Amounting shortage and deterioration of housing stock during the 1980's appears inevitable unless there is massive investment in housing. The present stock fails to meet household needs. The Department views with alarm the consequences of the severe cut-backs in housing expenditure by successive governments.

10. Entry to the owner-occupier market continues to be restricted to higher income groups, in spite of Government measures aimed at increasing owner occupation. The decline of the private rented sector continues, denying access to secure, habitable and appropriate housing to those who do not qualify for Local Authority housing. Single people, childless couples and those in substandard rented accommodation can become caught in a cycle of deprivation which exacerbates personal, psychological and physical difficulties. The fact that the population is ageing reinforces the problems.

11. Voluntary groups, often in partnership with organisations like the URC Housing Association Ltd., continue to make a valuable contribution by establishing and managing a wide range of small-scale, non-institutional and specialised housing schemes. Many also offer support to the most vulnerable sections of the community, enabling residents to establish social links and become successfully integrated into the community. The Department is beginning to make contact with organisations concerned with the housing problem and hopes to bring proposals for Christian action to next year's Assembly.

12. **Recognising Rural Deprivation** Preoccupation with urban areas must not mask the fact that problems of a similar nature, though not of the same intensity, are to be found in many rural areas. Although they are unlikely to lead to overt violence or public disruption, the effects of rural disadvantage can be devastating upon individuals and destructive of communities and the social groups within them.

13. The changing pattern of rural life is determined, primarily, by decisions which are generally taken at county, regional or even national level. Thus, investment policies or commercial diversification lead to new industrial groupings. New methods of farming call for different skills from those which have traditionally been available, or are simply designed to reduce the labour force. Some of the attempts to maintain or promote small-scale rural industries have not succeeded. Privately-owned shops and other businesses are closing down. To meet demands for in-

tegration, rationalisation and the "economy of scale", public services have steadily been reorganised to the detriment of rural communities; transport services have been reduced or withdrawn, schools closed and health and social services transferred to hospitals or sites in the towns. These changes are justified on economic grounds but the social consequences are unacceptable. A declining rural population that is ageing or unemployable finds it more and more difficult to avoid the inevitability of social decline and personal isolation. All of this is well-known and frequently stated, but because it is not seen as threatening to the majority of the population the general attitude is one of indifference.

14. As with the inner city, the churches have not adequately maintained their presence and ministry in the countryside. Any long-term strategy of the churches is likely to be ecumenical in character and while the URC still has a small but significant presence in many rural areas it is well-placed to play its part in such planning and in its own long-range strategy should give some priority to rural needs.

15. Social justice requires that people who live in the countryside should be able to attain the same rights of access to necessary public services as the remainder of the population. That will be expensive to achieve and the cost must not fall on those who are already deprived. In some limited ways the churches may be able to play a part in economic regeneration. New means must be found to identify and encourage the means of mutual support, community action and pastoral care. There are already some encouraging precedents in the pioneer work of the Hereford Diocese, in team ministries and ecumenical groups in rural areas, and in the study document "Alternative Rural Services" published by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations.

16. **The Abuse of Alcohol** In the past few years there has been considerable, world-wide increase in alcohol abuse. Studies undertaken in the UK, and by agencies such as the World Health Organisation, provide sombre evidence. The Department shares the growing unease about the accessibility of alcohol, leading to abuse. For some years the Departmental Secretary has served on the Churches' Council on Alcohol and Drugs. Within its limited finances (towards which the URC contributed £250 in 1981) CCOAD provides information and promotes education within and through the British Churches. It is also a constituent of the International Christian Federation for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Addiction. These organisations are an important resource available to us.

17. During the last year the Departmental Chairman has served as chairman of a working party on Alcohol Abuse set up by the British Council of Churches through its Division of Community Affairs and Conference for World Mission. The working party reviewed world-wide developments and urged the BCC Assembly, in November 1981, to take positive action on a number of fronts.

18. Using a simple definition of alcohol abuse — "The consumption of alcohol to an extent that is harmful to others or to oneself" — the working party concluded that alcohol abuse is extensive, primarily due to the rapid increase in the production, distribution and availability of alcoholic drinks. In most countries alcohol has become easier to acquire and, in the UK, much cheaper. The increased use of alcohol among women, young people and children (the under-13s) is most marked, certainly in the UK. Drinking alcohol is now regarded here as entirely acceptable by most people: 90% of the adult population in the UK consume alcohol at one time or another. There are already more than 700,000 who are medically diagnosed as alcoholic. In 1980 £10,000 million was spent on drink, in the UK, benefitting the Exchequer by more than £3,000 million, but the hidden cost to the nation from alcohol related problems, in medical care, industrial injury, job-loss and family stress must be set alongside that income.

19. Personal and family consequences of alcohol abuse are self-evident where they cause physical, mental or emotional problems. The effects extend far beyond relationship between the drinker and her or his family: accidents at home, at work or on the roads; decreased efficiency; lost industrial productivity of more than £1,000 million a year; a direct relationship between alcohol consumption and crimes of violence. So — how can people be helped to resist what is

seen as a 'normal', though high, level of consumption? Is there a special responsibility for individual Christians, and the churches, alongside the restraints which the state attempts or the services which the caring professionals offer?

20. Many Christians will wish, and be able, to play some part in helping people who realise that they are at risk. In many parts of the country there are specialised services, enabling people to work — often painfully, slowly and with many set-backs — towards inner change and personal redemption. Good counsel and effective therapy can be found, though on an inadequate scale. For the churches there is an imperative need to work with parliament, public bodies, the caring professions and other influential groups to review what kind of preventive work can be promoted and what kind of intervention be offered where alcohol abuse already exists. In the realm of prevention there is much to be achieved by way of public education (especially among children), by the restriction of the availability of alcohol (with pricing policies), by maintaining and strengthening existing laws on licensing and safety and by encouraging the provision of alternative drinks and environments for drinking. In the short-term the Churches should offer increased support for the work of the specialised helping agencies, and themselves develop the capacity for mutual care so as to reduce people's vulnerability to alcohol abuse.

21. The evidence from many parts of the world is that external circumstances are conducive to the risk of alcohol abuse. Yet there are persuasive voices which speak of the pleasurable qualities of alcohol and of the need to sustain individual freedom of choice and action. Governments must be persuaded of the need for stronger controls, especially in the face of powerful and exploitive commercial interests. Unfortunately, in the UK, the Department of Health and Social Security's attitude is lukewarm, despite incontrovertible evidence. For the individual Christian abstinence or carefully controlled drinking are essential.

22. **Family Life** In the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church there has been a growing recognition in recent years that in a time of rapid social change the institution of the family has also been changing. It is commonplace to speak of the pressures on family life but difficult to devise ways of helping people to face those pressures and use them creatively. The Department, therefore, welcomes the Anglican initiative in consulting the other Churches to establish a Family Life Education Ecumenical Project. For eighteen months the Departmental Secretary has cooperated in the Project and for the time being Ann Sutcliffe is acting as Project Coordinator while financial resources are sought for a full-time ecumenical post.

23. The Project organised a highly successful conference in September 1981 for some 80 participants to exchange information about family life education and various church initiatives in this field. During the conference, chaired by the Rt. Revd John Waller, Bishop of Stafford, there emerged an overwhelming desire for the Family Life Education Ecumenical Project to continue. The report of the conference (price 50p plus postage) is available from the Department.

24. The Department welcomes the establishment of Family Forum, a non-governmental initiative to focus on current issues impinging on families. Such initiatives only serve to highlight the Government's own inaction following the Home Office 1979 report "Marriage Matters" which made recommendations about marriage guidance.

25. **Childlessness** For those who are childless many questions keep recurring, but most people who face these questions also face insensitive and prejudiced pressures from relations, friends and from society as a whole. There is an urgent need for a Christian reappraisal of these pressures on couples to have children and of the increase in the number who choose to remain childless.

26. For two years a working party established by the Free Church Federal Council in co-operation with the BCC has studied childlessness and the various responses to it. The Depart-

mental Secretary acted as its secretary. The terms of reference of the study were:

To consider and assess:

1. Attitudes to procreation and childlessness;
2. Psychological, social, ethical and legal aspects of childlessness, voluntary and involuntary;
3. Means of overcoming childlessness —
(a) medical; (b) other than medical.

27. The report, "Choices in Childlessness", was published in March 1982 and first discussed at the Free Church Congress in Newcastle. The Department hopes that it will be widely studied because it explores basic perceptions and evaluations of parenting and childlessness. The report provides a useful background to some of the difficult ethical choices that are from time to time the subject of news reports. During the two years of work there were cases of surrogate motherhood and womb-leasing, baby sales, artificial insemination and "test-tube" babies brought to public notice, underlining the urgent need for a Christian contribution to society's discussion of these developments.

28. **Multi-Cultural Education** In the Government's 1977 Green Paper "Education in Schools: A Consultative Document" it was emphasised that the presence of minority ethnic groups in Britain has implications for the education of all children, and that all schools, whatever their ethnic composition, should give their pupils an understanding that Britain is made up of many ethnic groups with different cultural backgrounds. Such an understanding of British society would be an important contribution in helping pupils to appreciate Britain's place in an interdependent world. The Green Paper stated, "Our society is a multicultural, multiracial one and the curriculum should reflect a sympathetic understanding of the different cultures and races that now make up our society ... the curriculum of schools ... must reflect the needs of this new Britain".

29. The Department welcomes the widespread interest within the schools in helping children to appreciate the rich variety of British society but believes that the adults in Britain also need to appreciate that society is different from what it used to be. Churches could play an important role in helping their members and the community at large to understand the different cultures that are part of British society. Many churches are already learning how to recognise and respond to the opportunities that the new society offers.

30. As a contribution towards this end the Community and Race Relations Unit of the BCC has produced an excellent soundstrip, "The Enemy Within", to give opportunity for black Britons to speak about their perceptions of Britain and their place within it. The soundstrip is available for sale or for hire from the Department.

31. **One World Week** More and more churches are using One World Week, in October each year, to form links with other denominations and community groups to emphasise the threats to human survival and the need for action to promote peace, justice and development. One World Week is a programme of world development education but its success depends on local initiative and planning. After four encouraging years of these Weeks, celebrating the oneness of God's world and its peoples but also focusing on the scandal of poverty and underdevelopment, the Churches Committee of the World Development Movement, chaired by the Departmental Secretary, has decided to plan for at least five more years of the One World Week programme beyond 1982. The Department commends the observance of the Week each year and recognises the hard work which many Christians offer to make it worthwhile.

32. **World Development** Following the 1980 publication of the Brandt Report, "North-South: A Programme for Survival", the past year has seen an unprecedented interest in development issues, particularly in the churches. Thousands of Christians took part in the Mass Lobby of Parliament in May 1981 to influence the Government prior to the Summit of World

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Leaders in Cancun, Mexico in October. The statements of the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister at the time of the Summit gave some indication that the Government had shifted its ground since its first reactions to the Brandt Report a year earlier.

33. In spite of the apparent success of the public pressure prior to the Cancun meeting, the Government has not changed its hardline development policies. It has continued to cut overseas aid in spite of the worsening plight of the world's poorest nations. With other industrialised countries it showed in the recently concluded Multi-Fibre Arrangement, how increasingly protectionist trading policies are becoming and how difficult it is for textiles from developing countries to gain access to Western markets.

34. The Department continues to cooperate with the World Development Movement and the BCC in trying to influence government policies on behalf of the poorest nations and peoples. Local support for World Development Groups is an important factor in trying to influence the Government's stance and public opinion. The Department welcomes the work of the International Broadcasting Trust which will seek to provide adequate coverage of development issues on the Fourth TV Channel and will prepare supporting literature for groups to use to raise the level of public awareness.

35. **World Development 1% Appeal** A total of £151,000 was raised for the 1980/81 Appeal. 85% of the money was for overseas programmes of agricultural and rural development, health care and education. All the money for overseas development has been channelled through Christian Aid. 10% of the money supported the work of the World Development Movement and the remaining 5% was used for development education in the URC and more widely through other agencies. A report for the 1981/82 Appeal will be sent to all churches in July.

36. **Human Rights and Torture** Concern for the world's poor, so central in the Department's work, is but one aspect of the emphasis on human rights. Through the work of the Human Rights Forum and Division of International Affairs of the BCC, the Churches have protested about harsh and arbitrary treatment of prisoners in many countries. A new cause for Christian concern and action is the growing number of people who "disappear" in countries with unjust and oppressive regimes. This phenomenon is particularly serious in a number of countries in Central and South America but is common to several other countries.

37. A particularly offensive aspect of human rights violations is the use of torture. The following declaration was presented to the BCC Assembly in March 1981 and was unanimously adopted:

Declaration Against Torture

Torture is a world-wide practice, used increasingly by governments and those opposed to them, with three main objects:

- to gain information,
- to intimidate individuals,
- to create fear among groups or whole peoples.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states

"No-one shall be subjected to torture, or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". (Article 5)

All too often, however, public acceptance of these words by governments is in practice ignored.

Every man, woman and child bears the image of God the Creator. Jesus Christ, by his life and death, asserts the infinite worth of every person. He also requires us to recognise that it is He who suffers in the wracked body of every victim of torture. The use of torture dishonours God and is a denial of that love for neighbour which for the Christian must embrace friend and enemy, ally and oppressor alike. (cf. Matthew 25, 31-46).

Torture violates human dignity and degrades the victim. At the same time it defiles the

torturer, involving him or her in a denial of their own humanity. Torture poisons the society which makes use of it.

There are no circumstances which justify attempts to break the body, mind or spirit of a human being. With Saint Paul we must condemn any practice which requires us to 'Do evil that good may come of it'. (Romans 3.8).

In each of us there is potential for torture. Indeed, as Christians we have to acknowledge that we are not without blame.

Too often Christians have made use of torture or have countenanced its use by others. We have not lived in conformity with the example and teaching of Christ or demonstrated that restraint and respect for others which reverence for life requires.

Christians must not only denounce torture, they must work to bring to an end the international trade in military and security equipment which enhances the ability of repressive regimes to violate the human rights of their people, or, in some cases, to imprison, torture and kill them. The evidence available to us points to the conclusion that some of the technology – and even some of the techniques – used by the military and internal security forces of repressive governments to enhance their capacity to conduct torture and to violate human rights of their subjects have been developed in and exported from the United Kingdom.

38. Investments Two years ago the British Council of Churches called on the Churches to press companies and banks to adopt a policy of progressive disengagement from the economy of South Africa. This recommendation was further considered by a consultation on South Africa organised, during the Autumn of 1981, jointly with the World Church and Mission Department, although the URC has not yet adopted it as denominational policy. The Department, meanwhile, has continued to enter into correspondence with several companies with which the URC invests its money. Not only are company policies towards South Africa scrutinised but also their practices in developing countries and their involvement in arms production. The Department welcomes the decision by the Finance and Administration Department to make available, to those requesting it, the list of the companies in which shares are held by the URC.

39. Methods of Working The Department's Central Committee meets four times a year. It appoints, from time to time, working parties and advisory groups to study particular issues and to bring recommendations for action and further consideration. The day-to-day work is the responsibility of the Departmental Secretary, his Secretary and Personal Assistant, Mrs. Wendy Cooper, appointed in September 1981, and Mrs. Ann Sutcliffe, newly appointed as a part-time Assistant Secretary.

40. Currently there are four Advisory Groups, on which the Departmental Secretary serves, with the following members:

Industrial Affairs: Mr. A. Brown, Dr. K. Everard, Revd A. Goss, Mr. R. Graham, Revd E. Nash, Revd B. O'Neill, Mr. D. Sutton, Revd R. Taylor.

Education: Miss P. Beech, Mrs. R. Clarke, Dr. M. Ede, Mr. T. Ellison, Mr. A. Harding, Revd C. Johnson, Mr. J. Stocks, Revd J. Sutcliffe, Revd M. Taylor.

World Development: Revd P. Brain, Miss M. Kenyon, Mrs. M. Marsden, Revd V. Openshaw, Mrs. R. Tetlow, Revd B. Wren

Social Justice: Revd A. Addy, Revd R. Andrews, Mr. R. Blair, Mrs. S. Brain, Mrs. V. Burnham, Revd D. Miller, Revd B. O'Neill, Revd V. Openshaw, Revd J. Salisbury, Revd W. Snade.

41. Ecumenical Links The Department co-operates with other Churches through ecumenical councils and organisations. The Divisions of the BCC, in particular, provide an indispensable forum for discussion and decision about action on many of the major issues within the Department's brief.

42. The Departmental Chairman is a member of the Board of the Division of Community Affairs and the Departmental Secretary a member of the Board and Standing Committee of the

Division of International Affairs. Both are members of the Assembly of the BCC. In addition the Departmental Secretary is a member of the Social Responsibility Consultation, together with the Assistant Secretary, and represents the URC on the Churches Consortium on Industrial Mission. He is a member of Christian Aid's Development Education Committee, convener of the BCC's Joint World Development Advisory Committee and a member of the Executive Committee of the Free Church Federal Council and of its Education Committee. The Chairman and Secretary have also maintained relationships with the German Palatinate Church through the annual Teachers' Conferences, and the Secretary is co-moderator of the Joint Task Force on Development in Brussels and a member of the WCC's network of development educators.

43. The main issues on the Department's agenda usually derive from these wide links, from its own advisory groups and the Church and Society committees and correspondents in Provinces and Districts. Much staff time is spent in visiting local churches, District Councils and Province Synods, and in meeting their requests for information and action.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Alcohol Abuse

(a) The Assembly associates itself with the British Council of Churches in calling on Her Majesty's Government for urgent action to prevent alcohol abuse, and, as a first step, to introduce new measures to control alcohol consumption, including greater restriction of alcohol outlets through licensing powers, stricter control of alcohol advertising, the introduction of random breath-tests, more effective enforcement of existing licensing laws, and more stringent pricing policies.

(b) The Assembly urges local churches to study the literature available on alcohol abuse, and, in particular, the report "Alcohol Abuse" published by the British Council of Churches, and to consider its implications for their life and witness.

2. One World Week

The Assembly urges every local church to observe the annual One World Week as a focus world and its people. education and as an opportunity to celebrate the unity of God's

3. Torture

The Assembly in obedience to the biblical teaching on the dignity of human life, declares that the use of torture by any government, group or individual, in any place, at any time, for any reason, is to be condemned and, therefore, adopts the BCC Declaration Against Torture and calls upon her Majesty's Government to pursue and support the drafting and international adoption of the UN Convention Against Torture to be followed by measures to enable independent inspection of all centres of interrogation, detention and imprisonment.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Chairman: Mr F. H. Brooman

Secretary: Mr C. M. Frank

1. **Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1980** Appendix 1 gives a broad analysis of the receipts and payments for 1978, 1979 and 1980 of those Churches which completed forms MM1. Since the forms received do not cover the same Churches or the same proportion of the membership, the figures have been given in annual amounts per member so that comparisons can be made.
2. It will be seen that total giving increased by 16% from 1978 to 1979 and by 27% from 1979 to 1980. Both these figures are higher than the rates of inflation and members and local treasurers are to be congratulated on this encouraging result.
3. A breakdown of the 1980 figures Province by Province is given in Appendix 2. Similar figures for 1979 are to be found on page 64 of the Reports to Assembly 1981.
4. **Unified Appeal 1981** The Central Activities Budget for 1981 which was approved by Assembly 1980 provided for expenditure of £978,000 of which £898,000 was to be found through the Unified Appeal (pages 24 and 62 of the Record of Assembly 1980). In the event, the Provincial representatives felt able to accept targets amounting to only £883,000 and the amount actually raised was £875,650, £22,350 less than the budget required. The details are given in Appendix 3.
5. **Expenditure on Central Activities 1981** The cost of almost everything continues to increase, and so inevitably does the cost of the Church's central activities. The accounts for 1981 had not been finalised at the time of writing this report, but we expect the expenditure to be about £1,080,000. This is an increase of some £90,000 over 1980 but, as figures in Appendix 4 show, a further reduction in real terms.
6. **Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally** Information about the stipends and other conditions of service of ministers employed centrally is given in Appendix 5.
7. **Accounts for 1981** The accounts for 1981 will be published separately when the audit has been completed. They will be carried into the Record of Assembly in the usual way.

TREASURERSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr J. A. Cumming

Secretary: Mr C. M. Frank

8. The Committee has one matter to bring to Assembly this year and that concerns the allowance available to churches calling a minister, to help meet the costs of removal. The Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration includes the following:

"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".

For a number of years the grant has been £50, an amount bearing little relation to present day costs of removal. The MoM Committee has pointed out that their responsibility is the support of Ministers, not churches, and suggested that if the grants are to be continued they should not fall on MoM funds. The matter has been discussed by the Budget Committee and within the De-

partment and the proposal that has emerged is that the grant to be made to a church incurring such costs should be borne by the Central Activities account and should amount to half the amount by which the costs exceed £250. The church would bear the first £250 (Resolution 4).

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr D. C. McMurdie

Secretary: The Revd G. E. Hooper

9. The Committee was very sorry to learn of the resignation of its Chairman, Mr Noel Tinsley, in the middle of the year. Mr Tinsley has guided the Committee's work for 4½ years in a period of great change and no little difficulty. The whole Church is in his debt and, in expressing our thanks, we wish him well in the new post he has taken up in Brussels.

10. The Executive has appointed Mr D. C. McMurdie, a member of St. Andrew's Woking, to the chair of the Committee. He is the Secretary-General of the Chartered Insurance Institute, and brings a considerable range of knowledge and experience to this new task.

11. During the year the Committee also lost the services of the Revd Richard Gill, the first Manager of the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund. His service has been tireless and enthusiastic, and he took the Committee's good wishes as he left to undertake further training for the stipendiary ministry. We welcome his successor, the Revd Norman Cliff.

12. **Success of the Plan** Last year the Committee's report referred to the good start made by the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration. This start has been maintained and in most of the Provinces an efficient and effective method of procedure has been evolved. This is not to say that there are no problems! Church circumstances change and financial pressures arise, but the flexibility built into the Plan provides the means of resolving problems in a pastoral way.

13. **Progress of the Fund** 1981 has again been a healthy year for the Fund. We budgeted for an income of £4.48 million and in the event received £4.53 million. Much credit must be given for the seriousness with which local churches and Provinces have taken their commitment to the Fund.

14. Expenditure was £4.23 million compared with the budget of £4.38 million. This was because once again the Fund was called upon to pay fewer full-time ministers than expected, but this was partly offset by a growth in the number of part-time ministers. Any variation in money required for stipends also has an effect on National Insurance contributions and pension fund contributions. Pulpit Supply Fees and other costs also fell below budget.

15. As the result, there was a balance available at the end of 1981 which the Committee has dealt with as follows:—

- i) The addition of £65,000 to the Stipend Payment Reserve, to raise this to £425,000 in order to maintain it at the level of one month's expenditure.
- ii) the transfer of £20,000 into the General Reserve to raise this to £220,000 in order to maintain its true value in the time of inflation.
- iii) the transfer of £230,000 to the Pension Fund, in addition to the £306,000 already budgeted.

16. The size of these reserves may seem very large but they must be viewed in the context of the annual budget of the Fund, £5 million. The Committee also had in mind the fact that by strengthening the pension fund now, they will reduce the amount which will be required in the future.

17. **The Basic Stipend** The Committee has had many discussions on the adequacy of the basic

stipend. In 1981 it conducted a confidential survey on the income and expenditure of the families of 36 ministers on the basic stipend, where in general there was no other salary or wage coming into the home. We are very grateful to those who co-operated in the survey and we have been careful to preserve their anonymity, even within the Committee.

18. It was impossible to conclude whether or not the basic stipend is "adequate". The concept of "adequacy" is subjective rather than objective. All the families surveyed managed to meet their expenses, although in some cases this was due to income from personal savings or to gifts made by parents or others within the family. In many cases it was clearly impossible to set aside any money for the renewal of major items of furniture, or towards retirement housing. Some ministerial families stated that they did not expect or want as high a standard of living as others in the community or in their churches.

19. There was one fact revealed in the survey which the Committee wishes to draw to the attention of the Assembly, and through it to the whole Church. The basic stipend is part of a "package": other items include the payment of manse heating and lighting, and the reimbursement of all expenses including car expenses.

20. Nine of the 36 families surveyed were having to contribute towards the cost of heating and lighting their manses, and 15 of the families received an insufficient refund of car expenses — in 7 cases this involved a substantial amount of money.

21. This means that a significant proportion of those surveyed had to pay out of their stipend expenses that were the proper responsibility of their pastorates. The Committee does not believe that it is right that any minister should be put in this position.

22. It would be inappropriate to conduct a national survey of all ministers, or to take any action centrally to define or deal with this problem. Our sample was representative, both geographically and in the ages of the ministers surveyed. The action can most effectively be taken in local churches, with the guidance and support of their District Councils. There are two occasions on which the District Council can properly oversee the matter. The first is when it is asked to concur in a call to a minister. Are the financial arrangements adequate, or is a minister being asked to subsidise a pastorate? It may be that some local pastorates do not appreciate what they can and should provide. The District Council should advise and help at this point.

23. Secondly, the District Council should review this matter on each pastoral visitation. Are the financial details of a settlement still adequate? Some ministers are reluctant to raise these matters with their pastorates. Some pastorates are genuinely not aware of the need for regular review.

24. The Committee asks the Assembly to request every District Council to take action on this matter. (Resolution 5). It is of fundamental importance that all ministers receive proper allowances. The basic stipend is founded on the assumption that they do.

25. **Stipend Policy** The last report of the Committee gave the reasons why we are not happy to adopt any external linkage for determining the level of stipends. We also recognise that we cannot just pick a figure which we think to be reasonable. Churches and ministers must be informed of our reasons as well as our conclusions.

26. There are a number of factors which the Committee bears in mind in determining stipend policy. These include the level and likely trend in inflation and the Retail Price Index; the general level of wage and salary settlements; a comparison with stipends paid in other denominations; the effect of the recession and unemployment on local church finances; and the financial reports received from the Provincial representatives.

27. These factors do not always point in the same direction. The Committee has to weigh them up each year, bearing in mind an overall policy at least to maintain and where possible to improve the real value of the basic stipend. It was suggested a year ago that we ought to consult

ministers before deciding the policy in any particular year. We think this would not be practical unless a formal negotiating body was set up — and we doubt that this would be acceptable to most ministers. We derive great benefit from the blend of ministerial and lay outlooks and experience within the Committee. Its competence is theological, as well as financial and in the area of employment.

28. **Stipends from mid-1982** We are recommending to Assembly that a 10% increase in the basic stipend should be made on 1 July 1982 (Resolution 6), and we are confident that funds will be found to meet this increase and the resultant increased contribution to the Pension Fund. Some of the Committee would have liked to have gone beyond this figure, but consideration of the factors outlined in paragraph 26 led us clearly to our recommendations.

29. **Budget for 1983** We have to look ahead to mid-1983. This is very difficult because we leave the area of forecasting and enter the area of intelligent guesswork. Yet we must put a figure in our budget now so that Provincial negotiations on 1983 contributions by local churches can be concluded by the autumn. We have decided to allow in the budget for a 7½% increase in stipends in July 1983 (Resolution 7).

30. In our budgeting in the past two or three years we have always put down a minimum figure and then looked to review it when the rate of stipend has actually to be recommended to Assembly. We shall do so again, but it has to be said that at the moment the reports from Provincial representatives are very cautious about the amount of money they expect to be able to raise in 1983.

31. **Student Pastorates** Following consultation with the Provincial Moderators and the Church Life Department, the Committee is asking Assembly to approve that students for the URC ministry who undertake pastoral duties in vacant pastorates during vacation periods may be paid from the MoM Fund (Resolution 8).

32. **Pensions** A number of amendments to the Rules of the Pension Fund are submitted to Assembly (Resolution 9). These include an additional facility to extend the opportunity to pay additional voluntary contributions, following requests received.

33. Sufficient acceptances have been received from members of the Congregational Ministers' Friendly Society to enable the dissolution to become effective shortly.

34. Grants have continued to be made from the Pastors Superannuation Fund and the Pastors Widows Fund, the income limits having been again increased to £2,895 and £2,170 per annum respectively.

35. The annual rate of pension per year of service prior to 1971 for Congregational Ministers was increased from £12 to £14.40 in July 1981, and will continue to be increased in harmony with basic stipend.

36. **Partnership** In launching the new Plan in 1980 the key word was "partnership". We give thanks to God for the partnership of many people with us in maintaining the stipendiary ministry of the United Reformed Church.

CHURCH BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd M. J. Husselbee

Secretary: Mr D. Banwell

37. There seems to be a growing appreciation by member churches that funds are available from CBC to assist in a wide range of property problems including the purchase, improvement and repair of manses. The Committee is pleased about this trend and also about the increasing number of enquiries that are being received on a wide variety of property matters.

38. On the 1st January 1981 the balance of outstanding loans was £220,000 which by 31st December 1981 was £323,000 an increase of £103,000. During the same period repayments amounted to £51,000, giving a net outflow of £52,000. Full figures will be circulated to members of Assembly in the Church's accounts.

39. The Committee is greatly helped by the considerable improvement of the Provincial organisations for the control of church property and the advisory services which the Provinces are now providing. It will be appreciated that the CBC has no means of scrutinising in detail applications for financial assistance and must rely upon the information supplied. Questions of priority can only be determined by District and Synod, CBC must assume that the Synod, in supporting an application, has taken this and other relevant matters into consideration. In a few cases the CBC has been apprehensive about the amount of money that a church is seeking to borrow when measured against the membership and the Committee would ask that this aspect is always examined by District and Synod.

40. In an effort to give more help without depleting reserves the Committee decided at its meeting last June to increase the maximum grant from £5,000 to £7,000 whilst retaining the 10% proportion. It was also decided to extend the period for the repayment of the first instalment of a loan from three to twelve months. Grants and loans on the new basis have been made to a number of churches. It is intended to re-examine the matter at this year's June meeting to see if any further changes are desirable in the light of the experience over the previous year.

41. With regard to the report submitted at the General Assembly in 1981 on the subject of manses it appears that the purpose of the report has been misunderstood in some quarters. To clarify the position the CBC would like to repeat that it is hoping to receive comments from all Provinces in order that a full report can be submitted in 1983. From information from some areas we had been led to believe that inter alia there were problems about the cost to individual churches of the maintenance and improvement of existing manses, the provision of new manses, the upkeep of unoccupied houses and their management, but from the few comments received in response to our report it would seem that all is well and that there are no problems. The first priority therefore is to establish in an impartial way what is the truth of the matter. For this purpose the CBC must depend entirely upon the information supplied. It is also the case that in its report the Committee was asking those Provinces which consider that they have a problem to put forward their ideas for remedying the situation. As was stressed at the time the suggestions included in our own report in 1981 were intended to be discussion points. The help of the Provinces in this matter is essential if a worthwhile report is to be made.

42. Insurance of church buildings remains a serious problem. To this end a circular was prepared in consultation with our two insurance companies and sent out to all churches in July 1981. We have no means of knowing what practical steps have been taken by individual churches but the comments from the companies are far from encouraging. The purpose of the circular was to alert churches to a danger and CBC had no intention of sending out a text book on insurance; the very few comments that have been made unfortunately seem to assume that this was our intention. In the meanwhile the unpleasant fact remains that at the present time URC money is being wasted to make good expenditure that could with a little care have been covered by adequate insurance. It is also worth making the point that by consultation with its insurers a church may be able to provide better cover without additional cost.

RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr H. Greening

Secretary: Mr R. S. Carruthers

43. During the year the Society provided for the housing needs of retiring ministers and the widows of ministers by the purchase of 12 houses, bungalows or flats and the allocation of one

house bequeathed to the Society. In 1981 five properties, situated in areas where there was no demand for Society housing, were sold. At the year end one house was vacant awaiting occupation by a retired minister and three houses and one flat not required by ministers were unsold.

44. In endeavouring to increase the response to the Appeal for £500,000 made in 1980, a letter seeking the assistance of churches was sent to Church Secretaries in June and a second advertisement was inserted in the December issue of Reform. In 1981 contributions in response to the Appeal amounted to £50,000 making a total response of £119,000 with a further £35,000 expected from instalments and tax to be recovered under deed of covenant. At the beginning of 1982, there was a commitment to furnish housing for five Ministers due to retire during the year. The funds available within the Society to meet this commitment amount to £6,000.

45. The lack of adequate response to the Appeal forced the Society to resort once again to the practice of borrowing considerable sums from central funds to enable it to function without hardship being imposed on its applicants for housing. It has meant also that, although aware that its maximum limit of £20,000 per applicant is inadequate in many areas of the country, the Society has been unable to raise the limit.

46. The higher level of rent at £5 per week was introduced with effect from 1 February 1981, and following the General Assembly decision of approval for the introduction of a Scheme of Fair Rents work has been undertaken in preparation for the introduction of the Scheme.

47. The Committee wishes to record its warm appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. F. A. W. Lodde as Secretary in the six years to 31 December 1981 and cordially welcomes Mr. R. S. Carruthers as his successor.

WELFARE AND EMERGENCIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd D. A. Smith

Secretary: The Revd B. G. Thorogood

48. **Chairmanship** At the conclusion of the period of service of the Revd Douglas Smith, the Committee placed on record its thanks for wise chairmanship from 1976 to 1982. This piece of service followed a long career of pastoral ministry and administrative work since 1938, including ten years as a Provincial Moderator. All that experience gave him an unrivalled knowledge of ministers and their families. He has therefore been able to guide the Committee with great understanding of the personal problems of ministers. The Committee has welcomed its nominated Chairman, the Revd Michael Whitehorn.

49. **'Emergencies and Welfare'** more faithfully represent the sequence of contingencies urged upon your Committee. Ministers may not be heirs to misfortune more than others, but they certainly attract their share of vexations. Illness, the cost of education, 'things that go bump by day or night', 'Acts of God' and man, place strains on some, grievous to be borne. Your Committee reports another year of pressing activity, in response to such aggravations and need.

50. In the year we have dispensed £5,000 to help meet the urgent requirements of those commended to us. At Christmas, grants to retired ministers and wives, and to widows amounted to £21,000.

51. **Ministers' Spouses on Divorce or Separation—Housing Aid** The 1981 Assembly discussed this matter and passed it to the Executive Committee for consideration, seeking the advice of the Provincial Moderators. As a result of that discussion the Executive agreed that the Welfare and Emergencies Committee would be the appropriate agency of the church to meet this pastoral responsibility, and that no special fund should be created for dealing with these very occasional needs. The Committee has considered the resources available and recommends that the Assembly approve its acceptance of this responsibility as indicated in Resolution 10.

52. **Margaret and John Ross Travelling Fund** The Committee has been able to make grants from this fund to three ministers travelling overseas, and is able to consider a limited number of applications, particularly in respect of travel to the Holy Land.

53. The Church will wish to continue to assist our people; we commend those who have suffered distress and anxiety to your prayer and care.

RESOLUTIONS

- ✓ 1. Assembly receives the report of the Finance and Administration Department.
- ✓ 2. Assembly adopts the accounts for the year ended 31 December 1981.
- ✓ 3. Assembly notes the result of the Unified Appeal for 1981, thanks all those who have contributed and further commends the Appeal to the churches.
- ✓ 4. Assembly affirms that the church to which a minister is called is responsible for meeting the costs of removal, and with effect from 1 January 1983 —
 - i) deletes paragraph 6.2.1 of the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration and the reference to removal assistance to churches in Appendix B of the Plan.
 - ii) resolves that a grant from the Central Activities account may be available to assist the local church.
 - iii) resolves that the amount of the grant be determined from time to time by the Treasurership Committee and reported to the Assembly.
 - iv) agrees that initially the amount will be one half of the amount by which the cost of removal within the United Kingdom exceeds £250.
 - v) agrees that for a removal from outside the United Kingdom, the Treasurership Committee may give assistance at its discretion.
- ✓ 5. Assembly requests all District Councils to enquire into the adequacy of the financial arrangements made between ministers and pastorates in their care, and to consult with local pastorates where the arrangements are not adequate. It reminds District Councils of the need to keep this matter under review when they are asked to concur in a call and when a pastoral visitation is carried out.
- ✓ 6. Assembly resolves that from 1 July 1982 the whole-time ministerial basic stipend shall be £4,400 per annum.
- ✓ 7. Assembly gives approval to the Maintenance of the Ministry Budget for 1983, noting that it allows for an increase of 7½% in ministers' stipends payable from 1 July 1983.
8. a) Assembly approves the addition of the following wording to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration.

✓ 'Paragraph 3.9.1 Other persons to be included:

Students for the URC ministry giving ministry in vacation periods to URC pastorates which are in pastoral vacancy."

and that consequently paragraph 14 shall be amended to read:

"Student Pastorates

Students for the URC ministry who have already commenced their training and who are providing ministry to local pastorates that are in pastoral vacancy under arrangements approved by the District Council may be paid for this service from the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund to a limit approved by the Assembly from time to time and as shown in Appendix B. Housing and all out of pocket expenses must be met by

the local church. The Plan for Partnership in Ministerial remuneration is not responsible for the remuneration or pastoral expenses of other persons prior to ordination, except as specifically provided for under paragraph 3.9".

- b) Assembly approves the addition of the following to Appendix B.

"paragraph 14

Maximum weekly payments to students	£30
Maximum weeks for which payment made	10

9. Assembly makes the following amendments to the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund:

- i) Rule 12(f)

Delete all wording after "Churches of Christ" on line 2.

- ii) Rule 17

After "pension age" at the end of line 5 insert:

"With effect from 1 June 1982 any other contributing member may similarly pay an additional voluntary contribution until the normal pension age".

- iii) Rule 23(a)

In line 9 after "pounds" insert:

"or one quarter of the amount from time to time authorised under Rule 18(c)(i)".

- iv) Rule 28

Delete first three lines of Rule 28 and substitute:

"Transfer to other churches. Where a former member of the Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Pension Fund accepts a call before 1 June 1982 to a congregation in any church which prior to the amalgamation of the funds was regarded for pension purposes only as being on terms of mutual".

At the end of the Rule add a new paragraph:

"On and from 1 June 1982 the benefits of any contributing member accepting a call to a congregation of any other church will be dealt with at his option under Rule 29 or Rule 41, save that in the case of former members of the Presbyterian Fund a call or Rule 41, save that in the case of former members of the Presbyterian Fund a call accepted to a congregation of the Church of Scotland shall include the additional option to choose the benefits of the first paragraph of this Rule provided that such option is exercised in writing within 6 months of ceasing to be a contributing member".

- v) Rule 29

Line 3, delete "and is not covered by the provisions of Rule 28" and substitute:

"and his benefits are not dealt with under either Rule 28 or Rule 41".

10. Assembly agrees that if a Provincial Moderator presents a case for the URC to give assistance towards the housing costs of a minister's spouse at the time of divorce or separation, the Welfare and Emergencies Committee will consider making a contribution towards rent, mortgage payments or other housing costs for not more than 12 months, the amount being judged according to all the resources available.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 1

Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1980, expressed as £s per annum per member

Receipts

	1978 £ p	1979 £ p	1980 £ p	Increase %	
				1980 over 1979	1979 over 1978
Offerings & Covenants	29.82	34.45	43.42	26	16
Donations & Legacies	7.41	8.57	10.72	25	16
Special Efforts	8.35	9.73	12.75	31	17
Total giving	45.58	52.75	66.90	27	16
Letting Premises (net)	3.62	4.28	5.98		
Investments & Deposit Accounts	3.79	5.27	7.89		
Trusts	2.06	2.15	3.76		
Loans and Grants	1.34	2.49	6.29		
Sales of Property etc.	0.40	0.51	1.17		
Sundries	5.35	6.14	6.91		
	62.14	73.59	98.90	34	18
Payments					
Assessments and Pulpit Supply	19.41	23.97	32.67	36	23
Manse upkeep and heat	5.31	5.13	6.26	22	-3
Car upkeep etc.	2.75	3.35	3.98	19	22
Total for Ministry	27.47	32.45	42.91	32	18
Capital Projects	1.52	2.43	9.31		
Conduct of Worship	1.51	1.22	1.42		
Church & Halls, upkeep, heat etc.	18.36	20.88	27.21		
Sundries	3.26	5.41	6.64		
Unified Appeal & Benevolent Gifts	6.72	7.76	9.28		
Transfer to reserve	3.30	3.44	2.13		
	62.14	73.59	98.90	34	18

The above figures are taken from forms MM1 (the Annual Finance Information Sheet). The 1978 figures cover 135,000 members, those for 1979, 127,400 members and those for 1980, 117,000 members. The amounts per member enable comparisons to be made.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 2

Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1980, expressed as £s per annum per member

	PROVINCE NUMBER												
	NATIONAL TOTAL	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
Receipts													
Offerings & Covenants	43.42	35.59	40.26	42.07	44.58	43.46	43.18	45.59	43.73	45.89	48.92	46.96	36.78
Donations & Legacies	10.72	6.46	10.17	10.67	8.90	7.88	10.92	11.96	14.40	9.90	14.77	12.00	8.17
Special Efforts	12.76	10.07	16.12	14.48	16.55	12.07	11.15	13.69	14.56	13.59	13.97	9.16	10.64
Total giving	66.90	52.12	66.55	67.22	70.03	63.41	65.25	71.24	72.69	69.38	77.66	68.12	55.59
Letting Premises (net)	5.98	2.69	3.45	3.14	6.84	5.83	4.68	7.58	4.82	6.33	13.02	7.49	2.61
Investments & deposit a/cs	7.89	4.39	7.59	6.96	11.54	6.52	6.84	9.61	8.63	6.82	11.78	8.21	5.85
Trusts	3.76	0.90	3.17	2.43	4.05	3.06	1.57	3.36	3.00	1.77	5.85	6.93	9.18
Loans and Grants	6.29	2.03	7.62	5.45	4.66	5.81	3.24	9.67	8.73	5.52	5.23	9.93	6.16
Sales of Property etc.	1.17	0.62	0.08	7.02	4.31	0.80	0.46	0.20	0.12	0.99	1.06	0.20	0.43
Sundries	6.91	3.13	6.50	4.61	7.92	10.57	8.49	8.36	5.70	7.04	9.70	7.55	2.52
	98.90	65.88	94.96	96.83	109.35	96.00	90.53	110.02	103.69	97.85	124.30	108.43	82.34
Payments													
M. of M. & Pulpit Supply	32.67	29.16	30.05	30.99	35.62	32.50	32.39	34.43	33.87	32.74	38.31	32.00	29.87
Manse upkeep & heat	6.26	5.63	5.28	6.26	5.47	5.65	6.09	7.67	5.42	6.39	9.29	6.12	3.99
Car upkeep etc.	3.98	2.90	2.62	3.71	4.45	4.85	4.32	4.81	3.54	4.55	4.42	4.36	2.98
Ministry Total	42.91	37.69	37.95	40.96	45.54	43.00	42.80	46.91	42.83	43.68	52.02	42.48	36.84
Capital Projects	9.31	1.72	11.42	12.23	5.89	7.72	2.71	11.68	7.78	8.99	8.75	18.39	9.37
Conduct of Worship etc.	1.42	0.96	1.16	1.21	1.43	1.14	1.28	1.28	1.63	1.51	2.19	1.72	1.06
Church & Halls upkeep & heat	27.21	16.53	27.60	24.64	36.69	26.19	27.04	31.39	30.14	25.41	34.19	27.01	22.11
Sundries	6.64	3.79	8.96	5.79	8.15	5.96	7.03	6.13	5.73	6.85	9.55	6.52	4.32
Unified Appeal & Benevolent grants	9.28	5.58	6.46	8.06	9.20	9.38	9.72	10.70	9.98	9.71	12.62	10.81	7.79
Transfers to Reserves	2.13	(0.39)	1.41	3.94	2.45	2.61	(0.05)	1.93	5.60	1.70	4.98	1.50	0.85
1980 Total	98.90	65.88	94.96	96.83	109.35	96.00	90.53	110.02	103.69	97.85	124.30	108.43	82.34
1979 Total	73.59	58.17	65.75	62.98	80.58	73.89	72.69	80.40	78.89	71.32	100.14	77.92	53.04
Increase % 1980 over 1979	34	13	44	54	36	30	25	37	31	37	24	39	55
Increase % 1979 over 1978	18	37	15	21	22	20	9	10	18	11	25	19	19

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 3

		Unified Appeal 1981			
Province	1980		1981		
	£	% of target	£	% of target	
1	Northern	56,188	92	61,642	93
2	North West	68,433	94	79,000	99
3	Mersey	54,399	101	63,061	99
4	Yorkshire	64,206	105	72,919	104
5	E. Midlands	44,156	98	52,037	100
6	W. Midlands	58,593	96	68,555	97
7	Eastern	57,058	100	68,036	102
8	South West	48,955	102	56,166	99
9	Wessex	68,062	102	80,087	95
10	Thames North	96,705	105	104,884	100
11	Southern	115,991	103	138,378	102
12	Wales	<u>27,108</u>	71	<u>29,387</u>	95
		759,854	99	874,152	99
	Other receipts	<u>1,844</u>		<u>1,498</u>	
		<u>761,698</u>		<u>875,650</u>	
	Budget	770,000		898,000	
	Shortfall	<u>8,302</u>		<u>22,350</u>	

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 4

Expenditure on Central Activities

Up to 1976, the expenditure on central activities shown in the annual accounts and financed mainly by the United Appeal 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	825,000	355,000
1980	989,000	360,000
1981 (provisional)	1,080,000	346,000

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 5

Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally from July 1981

1. **Provincial Moderators** The stipend of Provincial Moderators is £5,328 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 £5,328 per annum for Assistant Secretaries to £7,920 for the General Secretary (plus any children's allowances). The other arrangements are similar to those for Provincial Moderators but fares between home and Tavistock Place are met by the Ministers.
3. **Academic Staff at Westminster College** Stipends range from £5,328 to £5,928 per annum (plus any children's allowances). The housing provisions are the same as those for Provincial Moderators.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 6

If the Resolutions proposed by the Finance Committee with regard to changes in the remuneration of ministers are adopted by the Assembly, Appendix "B" to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration will be as follows:—

Approved Rates applicable to the Plan

para.		as at July 1 1982
4.1.1	Basic Stipend, whole time	£4,400
	Maximum Stipend, part time	75% of whole time
para.		
4.1.2.	Children's allowances	
	From 1 January 1982, no new children's allowances are payable but existing allowances are continued for children receiving allowances in December 1981, at their existing rates for each child until his/her 19th birthday whilst continuing at school. The annual rates are:	
	for children born 1 January 1963 to 31 December 1971	£ 140
	children born 1 January 1972 to 31 December 1976	£ 100
	children born 1 January 1977 to 31 December 1981	£ 60
para.		
6.1.	Ordination Grant and Loan	
	Ordination Grant	£ 150
	Ordination Loan	£ 500
	Loan repayment period	5 years
para.		
6.2.1	Removal assistance to church — (to 31.12.82 only)	
	allowance available to churches on the mainland	£ 50
	allowance available for the Isle of Man and Channel Islands	(to be negotiated)
	from 1.1.83 removal assistance is payable from another source.	
para.		
6.2.2.	Disturbance allowance	£ 150

para. 6.3.	Retirement Removal Maximum allowed for removal cost	£ 200
para. 7.	Pulpit Supply Fees (maximum refund per service) per service:— where the Church contribution is up to £1,500 p.a. where the contribution is in the range £1,500—£3,000 p.a. where the contribution exceeds £3,000 p.a. * plus reasonable travelling expenses.	£ 4 * £ 8 * £ 12 *
para. 11.4. & 11.5	Administrative Charge per month	£ 3
para. 14.	Maximum weekly payments to students Maximum weeks for which payment made	£ 30 10

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT — APPENDIX 7

The United Reformed Church Housing Association Ltd

<i>Chairman:</i>	Mr D. C. F. Haggis
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	The Revd M. J. Davies
<i>General Manager:</i>	Mr D. Jones
<i>Secretary:</i>	Mr D. J. Rawson

- The main objective of the United Reformed Church Housing Association is to continue a mission of fair rent and sheltered housing, following the example of the original Presbyterian founders of 50 years ago. Since the last Assembly the Association has met with mixed fortunes.
- Firstly, the good news. The financial situation has necessitated taking full advantage of the latitude granted by the Housing Act, 1980 to increase rents. This has been readily accepted by the tenants, where applicable has been readily accepted and acknowledged by the relevant Social Security Officer who has helped his claimants who are our tenants and has enabled necessary repairs and decoration work to be undertaken in accordance with a proper programme. Even so a financial deficit was experienced but happily good relations with the Housing Corporation and the Department of the Environment have been cemented with the result that the deficit is relieved by an appropriate Housing Association Deficit Grant.
- In addition to the work concerning the existing housing stock, comprising 78 units, studies have continued with the help of Churches with surplus sites, to whom technical assistance has been given. Despite grant aid from the Thames North Province this cannot continue without charitable assistance. There was an early response to an appeal to Churches in a letter published in "Reform" to the extent that £11,000 has been loaned by individuals and Churches, interest free. Investment income from these loans will help to pay for the necessary planning towards increasing housing stock of which more below.
- Meanwhile on the 1st April 1982 the first Local Management Committee to be established and based on the Dulwich Grove U.R. Church, will on behalf of the Association, take over the management of St. James's Cloisters, a sheltered scheme for the elderly at East Dulwich. The Housing Corporation recently approved a grant of £8,500 to enable the Association to improve the heating system at this property.

5. Now the not so good news. Within the Church as a whole there has continued to be confusion between the activities of the Housing Association and the Retired Ministers' Housing Society. The first is a service to the community and its appeal is for financial loans. The second needs to buy property for Retired Ministers and its appeal is for financial gifts. From the Association's point of view it has even been necessary to query and return monies contributed because the tenor of the accompanying letter indicates that a Church meeting somewhere thought it was contributing to the other appeal. It is important to the Church to recognise the distinction between the two organisations.

6. Outside the Church the Housing Association is dependent on Government subsidy if it is going to create more housing and grow to a size which is economically viable. At the moment plans have been accepted in one or two areas but the appropriate Region of the Housing Corporation has had insufficient funding to enable it to give the necessary grant, so no increase in housing stock has yet been possible. However, the Government has slightly increased the Capital funding allocation to the Housing Corporation for 1982/83, which could be a hopeful sign for the future.

So much for reporting — now for the action.

7. The 1979 Assembly welcomed the Housing Association identifying itself with the URC and agreed that initially attention should concentrate on four South Eastern Provinces. It is on this basis that the Association's activities have been outlined to the Housing Corporation.

8. Meanwhile the URC has been joined by the Churches of Christ who have a Housing Association of their own with a presence in the Midlands, North West and Scotland, and there are increasing requests from individual UR Churches, outside the South East, seeking the Association's involvement, and who conclude that since the United Reformed Church is a national Church, the Association should operate similarly, as do the Housing Associations of other Christian denominations.

9. Although this Association and the Churches of Christ Housing Society Ltd. are two distinct bodies, we must not overlook the possibility of completing a formal union as a final outcome of the present working co-operation and so the Association will seek both within the Church and with the Government authorities to be permitted and recognised to operate nationally.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd R. O. Latham

Secretary: Mr. C. M. Frank

1. The newly-constituted Committee has met during the year and now presents the budget for 1983. Very rigid percentage increases have been applied to meet inflation on current expenditure. If inflation exceeds the percentage used in the budget, this must lead to a curtailment of departmental activity in 1983. However, it has been possible to provide within the budget for increased grants to the British Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies whose work is so valuable to the URC, and for the inclusion of £5,000 to pay grants to churches meeting costs of ministers' removals.
2. The Committee wishes to draw to the attention of the Assembly the provisions of £17,600 in the budget for 1983 for the support of the Youth Leadership Training Officers Programme. Until 1981 this programme had been supported entirely from sources outside the central funds of the Church but these sources are no longer adequate, and Church Life Department requests support to maintain this programme.
3. The Committee was disappointed that Provincial representatives on the Central Committee of the Finance Department felt unable to indicate that the United Appeal for 1983 should be greater than approximately 8% increase over that for 1982. They are mindful of the Resolution of Assembly in 1980: "The Assembly resolves to accept as a standard for personal giving through the URC the figure of 5% of take-home pay". That 5% of disposable income is a reasonable gift for all Church purposes. It would liberate us all to serve our Lord in his mission more effectively and efficiently at local, district, Provincial and national levels.
4. The Committee recommends the budget to the Assembly.

RESOLUTION

Assembly receives the report of the Budget Committee and approves the budget for 1983 which provides for an expenditure of £1,200,000.

WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. **The Ecumenical Task** The problem of the ecumenical movement is that it has so far not found the courage and strength to institutionalise seriously and committedly the trans-confessional solidarity which already exists in practice— Ernest Lange, "And Yet It Moves", p.24.
2. Unpacking that searching comment would provide an exposition of most of the work of the Department over the past year. A great deal has been achieved by the churches in partnership. Meetings of the CWM Council (hosted by the URC in Cambridge), of united churches (Colombo, Sri Lanka) and the WCC Faith and Order Commission (Lima, Peru) gave many evidences of the achievements. As the churches prepare together for the Assemblies of the WARC and WCC (Ottawa, 1982; Vancouver, 1983) the evidence will accumulate further.
3. Yet not even united churches are sure of their next steps, while theological convergence about baptism, eucharist and ministry in the Faith and Order movement has taken fifty years to nature, is still to be debated in the churches and has not yet been widely expressed in actions of mutual recognition.
4. Some people may find the word "institutionalise" threatening, but unless visible shape is given to Christian ideals they remain detached from God's involvement of Himself in our daily life. And how, while we remain separated, are we to speak together to people of other living faiths and ideologies, in terms of the Vancouver theme, about unity in Jesus Christ, the Life of the World?
5. It is vital to remember that the dividedness of the church is not only a matter of denominations. It would not fulfil the Lord's prayer for unity if a so-called united church retained hostile and oppressive relationships of race, class or gender. This point was strongly made at the WCC Consultation (Sheffield, July 1981) on "The Community of Women and Men in the Church". There is a common struggle of women and men against destructive forces; there is a continuing struggle by women to find liberation for themselves and for men by changes in male-dominated patterns of life. These struggles are part of the quest for unity of the church which can by God's grace contribute to the renewal of human community everywhere.
6. **Disciples' Ecumenical Consultative Council** Through the unification with the Churches of Christ the URC now has connections with Churches of Christ in other parts of the world. One international body is the Disciples' Ecumenical Consultative Council, through which the Churches of Christ in North America, Europe and some other areas have fellowship and discuss common issues. It is not yet clear whether it would be appropriate for the URC to become a full member of their Council, but the Department is convinced that, in whatever way seems most appropriate, the international links of the Churches of Christ should not be dropped but maintained and, if possible, related to our other international commitments. The Assembly is therefore invited to express readiness to enter into a relationship with DECC so that the Executive may act when all details are available.
7. **The Communication Group** seeks to convey an understanding of the Department's work in local congregations in a variety of ways. Its concern is to help church members set the life, witness and relationships of the church and of individual Christians in a world context. During 1981—82 this has often been done in co-operation with others: with the Church Life Department for children and young people in the production of the Pilot Voyage Passage to India and the Zambia-India Project Pack; with the Church and Society Department in a conference examining the URC's relationship with South Africa; and with the other European

member churches of CWM in (i) running the World Mission Conference at Swanwick in August and (ii) planning to produce church-based, community orientated programmes of education in mission.

Martin H. Cressey, *Chairman*

Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

Helen Lidgett, *Secretary for Communications*

RESOLUTION 1

The Assembly agrees to carry forward the international church relationships of the former Reformed Association of Churches of Christ.

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK ABROAD COMMITTEE

8. What should be the priorities of the Abroad Committee in the business of Inter-Church Relationships; should we put our energies increasingly into the contacts we have in Continental Europe with Churches close enough at hand for us to get to know; should our traditional and more intimate links with CWM Churches absorb us most; or should we be thinking about Churches with which at present we have little or no communication, some of them engaged in the frontiers of mission in Third World and other areas of development, some in conditions of political oppression? At present we try to retain a balance at least between Europe and CWM but the general question continues to exercise the mind of the Committee.

Europe

9. In Europe in the past year we have used many opportunities to strengthen our historic ties with the Pfalz (Palatinate) Church in **West Germany** and the Waldensian Church in **Italy** through group and individual visits, and exchanges which have included youth participation.

10. Bishop Karoly Toth of the Reformed Church of **Hungary** has met with officers of the URC in London and a number of projects are in hand which will develop our relationship with this Church.

11. Frau Christa Grengel, Ecumenical Officer of the East Synod of the Evangelical Church of the Union and of the Federation of Churches in the **German Democratic Republic** was able to meet the Committee during a recent three month visit to England. She brought us a closer knowledge of the Protestant Church scene in the GDR and we shall be looking to implement some suggestions she has made including exchanges of personnel and of information and material. Three delegates of the Evangelical Church of the Union visited the URC for 14 days, the third in a series of exchange visits. Their programme, in Manchester, Leeds, Cambridge and London, was arranged to give them as wide a view as possible of our Church in urban and rural areas.

12. The General Secretary was in **Czechoslovakia** with the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren for the 200th Anniversary of the Austro-Hungarian Edict of Toleration. This Church values its links with us and desires exchange visits. It also appreciates such help as we may be able to give in the provision of scholarships for young pastors to study in England, and books, especially on Christian Education and Youth Work.

13. A team of four URC representatives visited the Mission Covenant Church of **Sweden**, a church with which we have close historic links and new possibilities for closer relationships through various types of exchanges. The Revd David Batchelor, who retires from the Committee at this Assembly, has been our link person with the Mission Covenant Church and our thanks are due to him.

14. The URC is a member of the **Conference of European Churches**, a Conference which bridges the East-West Political and Confessional divide and includes minority Churches not el-

eligible for membership of the WCC. The latter Churches in particular value highly the ecumenical dimension which CEC membership affords. We continue to be represented in various ways in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and at World Council of Churches consultations.

Council for World Mission

15. The Council met in Cambridge during the year, when Mrs. Daisy Gopal Ratnam was succeeded in the Chair by the Revd John Thorne of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. Elia Ta'ase and Lee Ching Chee have returned from Livingstone House to Samoa and Hong Kong, being succeeded by Yvette Rabemila and Maitland Evans, from Madagascar and Jamaica.

16. Education in Mission is seen as the major concern to which member churches should give attention in the immediate future and the major thrust in CWM programmes. Before her return Ching Chee was able to meet the Committee. She saw CWM as a "channel of friendship" through which not only people and money flow but also love and understanding. The structures of the Council are designed to ensure that relationships between churches of widely differing cultures and wealth develop into true friendship, mutual love and respect. Her address has been adapted and published under the heading *To CWM with Love* and is available to District WCM officers.

17. Some of the main issues raised at the Cambridge Council was the need that member churches should seek more person to person contact through exchanges of personnel, individuals and groups. The Committee hopes that in the URC the three Special Ministries for CWM Workers, made possible with Maintenance of Ministry funding, will be taken up quickly, and welcomes the fact that incoming as well as outgoing missionaries are to be welcomed at Assembly.

18. Whilst with most CWM churches our relationships are channelled through CWM itself, we have more direct contacts with some, including the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, where the URC has been represented at its last two Assemblies, this year by the Moderator of Assembly. Since Dr. Kao's arrest in April 1980 the Church has been holding weekly prayer meetings and has embarked upon "an extended form of ministry" to the families of prisoners, not only those of the Church, Mrs. Kao being an active participant in it. We commend this Church, along with others in circumstances of oppression, to your prayers. Do read *Taiwanese Voice*, available at the Bookstall.

Chaplaincies

19. In London the Ghanaian and Chinese Chaplaincies continue to minister valuably to students and expatriates of these countries.

The Chinese Chaplaincy has been opening out in interesting ways and there is now a Chinese United Reformed Church in London and a fully organised programme of professional Community Work extending beyond the Christian community. This work has been welcomed and supported by the Committee.

Derek Cole, *Chairman*

Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION 1981-82

20. Although it has not been an objective of the Council for World Mission to increase its membership, two new member Churches joined CWM during the year — the Churches of Christ in Malawi and the Nauru Congregational Church. CWM now has 28 member Churches. It is written into CWM's foundation documents that a review of the work of the Council shall be carried out every six years. This review will be undertaken at the next Council meeting in July

1983. One concern for the review will be to look again at criteria for membership of CWM. Another will be to reconsider the number of representatives of each member Church. Documents to be prepared by a Review Group and the Executive will be circulated to member Churches in August 1982 and it is hoped that there will be extensive study and consideration of the issues raised.

21. During 1981 there was the first rent review after 21 years on the major property investment of CWM. This brought the rental income up to a realistic level again although inflation will rapidly reduce its real value. At its meeting in Cambridge in August 1981 the Council decided that the first priority for the use of additional resources should be education in mission. Member Churches are being made aware that unless contribution income increases at a rate faster than that of inflation these additional resources will soon be swallowed up by the rising costs of CWM's work.

22. Regarding South Africa the Council meeting decided it would disinvest as the employment practices of the companies in which it invests were not making any significant changes in the apartheid policy of the government of South Africa. The resultant sale by CWM of all its shares in companies with a trading base in South Africa has engendered helpful discussions with the companies and appreciative comments from those working for a peaceful transition in that unhappy land.

23. Through 1981 the Church of South India went through a comprehensive consultative process in order to identify its priorities in mission. The process culminated in a Synod-level Consultation last September involving representatives of all the 20 dioceses and representatives of overseas partner Churches and agencies. The CWM Executive meeting in Johannesburg in January 1982 felt that this attempt to identify priorities in the mission of the Church might provide a stimulus and example to other member Churches.

24. Revd Maitland Evans, CWM's new Secretary for Education in Mission, has prepared a significant paper outlining a programme for Education in Mission in six steps. This approach to the task was warmly received by the Executive Committee, and also by members of the European Region at their annual Consultation last December.

25. Most member Churches of CWM are finding they need fewer full-time and long-term missionaries. What forms of personal service by expatriates are going to be most helpful to member Churches in their mission in future? The new Personnel Secretary, Revd Yvette Rabemila, has been asked to assist member Churches in exploring the various forms of personnel exchange which can stimulate and forward world mission.

Barrie D. Scopes, *General Secretary*

MISSION AND OTHER FAITHS COMMITTEE

26. The objective of the Committee to stimulate local church interest in positive Christian encounter with people of other faiths in Britain has been advanced over the past twelve months in practical ways by the success of the PUB pack (No.3) on *Exploring Relationships with People of Other Faiths*, in addition to the Study Handbook, *With People of Other Faiths in Britain*, both of which continue to be widely used by members of the URC and other Churches. We are grateful to the BCC for its support in promoting both publications, and are encouraged by the many positive reactions of Christians who find them relevant to their pastoral concerns.

27. Responding to the anxieties expressed by many local churches about the influence of the so-called "new religious movements" (eg "Moonies", T M etc) particularly among young people, the Committee has prepared a simple pamphlet (c 2000 words) containing information and suggested guidance for adults and young people who come into contact with such groups. Available from Tavistock Place, we encourage the use of this pamphlet by local churches.

28. The Committee's task of sharpening theological reflection between URC members and people of other faiths has continued to focus on Christian-Jewish relations through the annual autumn conference involving a regular participation of Jews and Christians. Joint working-parties within this conference will shortly complete the text of a study document, *With Jews in Britain*, in similar style to the Study Handbook referred to above, to be available by the end of 1982. The conference is invaluable as an experience of interfaith dialogue, creating the reality of trust between participants which encourages all to express their faith in honesty and with openness to the insights of others.

29. Our ongoing Christian-Jewish dialogue exemplifies the four principles laid down in the 1981 BCC "working paper", *Relations with People of Other Faiths: Guidelines on Dialogue in Britain*:— (i) dialogue begins when people meet each other; (ii) dialogue depends upon mutual understanding and mutual trust; (iii) dialogue makes it possible to share in service to the community; (iv) dialogue becomes a medium of authentic witness. The BCC *Guidelines* pursue these principles through brief expositions of theological issues, pastoral matters, religious education, interfaith services, concluding with three Bible studies, prayers and information about further resources (the text including several excerpts from the Study Handbook issued by this Committee). Prepared and published by the BCC Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths, the Council "warmly commends the booklet and recognises that the work of the Committee and its Secretary, the Revd Kenneth Cracknell, is of increasing relevance to our growing multi-faith society". The *Guidelines* gained the support of the General Synod of the Church of England in November 1981 and are coming before other Church assemblies and conferences during 1982.

David Kerr, *Chairman*
Iorwerth Thomas, *Secretary*

RESOLUTION 2

The Assembly receives the BCC *Guidelines on Dialogue in Britain* and commends them to the study of Synods, Districts and Churches with a view to reaching policy decisions at the 1983 Assembly.

PERSONAL COMMITTEE

30. The Committee exists primarily to support and promote the work of missionaries, ie church workers serving abroad in churches other than their own. Of the need of such service, particularly in the URC, we are fully convinced, as it expresses in terms of people the world-wide nature of the Church's mission. We welcome particularly the first appointment under the scheme approved by Assembly in 1979, whereby a CWM missionary is supported by the M of M Fund in a special full-time ministry: the Rt. Revd Ananda Rao Samuel, of the Church of South India, is on the teaching staff of Westminster College from January to August this year.

31. The personal relationships between churches are by no means limited to the exchange of missionaries. In recent years such relationships have been diversified and expanded: youth visits to India, Zambia, Germany and Sweden; congregational twinnings; CWM visits to churches; ministerial exchanges with continental Europe, North America and India; exchanges of theological students; — such experiences result in a broadening of vision and a deeper sense of mission. The Committee has direct responsibility for the last two of these activities and acknowledges the value of them all.

32. Most URC missionaries serve through CWM, but occasionally URC members undertake such service under other auspices, and we wish to express our care for them. A paper "Care of members of the URC serving within churches overseas other than CWM member churches" is available from the Personnel Secretary.

33. Stanley Wilton has retired as Principal of St. Andrew's Hall after 13 years. We place on record our appreciation of his notable work in the training of people in mission. We were glad to learn that his successor is Dan Beeby, and we wish him well in his work.

34. The following have been accepted and commissioned to serve with other churches of CWM:

Mrs. Eleanor Stronge: Congregational Christian Church in Samoa: Education

The following have completed their service:

The Revd Clabon and Mrs. Margaret Allen : Hong Kong

Mr. David and Mrs. Joy King : Botswana

The Revd Derek and Mrs. Carole Lindfield : Botswana

Mr. Michael Pillora : Papua New Guinea

Miss Sheila Rudofsky : Papua New Guinea

Miss Mollie Smith : South India

The following missionaries from overseas are serving with the URC:

The Revd Chong Kah-Geh and Mrs. Shirley Chong : Presbyterian Church in Malaysia : London Chinese Chaplaincy and minister of the London Chinese URC

The Rt. Revd Ananda Rao Samuel : Church of South India : Theological Education

The Revd Faitala and Mrs. Tausala Talapusi : Congregational Christian Church in Samoa: Pastoral Ministry in Sheffield

The Revd Ben and Mrs. Margaret Tetey : Presbyterian Church of Ghana : London Ghanaian Chaplaincy

The following students from overseas are supported by the URC:

The Revd Charles and Mrs. Victoria Ahwireng (Ghana) St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak

Miss Paulina Dankwa (Ghana) Westminster College

The Revd Kim Duck Jae (Korea) St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak

The Revd Miss Lee Young Sook (Korea) St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak

Mr. Edward Maliki (Ghana) London Institute of Education

Miss Joyce Shih (Taiwan) St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak

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

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

35. Iorwerth Thomas retires on 31 August after 5 years as Personnel Secretary and 3 years before that as Personnel Secretary of CWM. His work has been marked by great sensitivity to people, a wide vision and administrative efficiency. He has guided the Committee since its establishment on the re-organisation of CWM, and has increased our awareness of how the movement of people can help us in our missionary task. The Committee invites the Assembly to place on record its indebtedness to him.

Tony Coates, *Chairman*

RESOLUTION 3

The Assembly places on record its indebtedness to the Revd I.L. Thomas for his work as Personnel Secretary, 1977-1982. In particular, he has enabled the Church to discharge faithfully its various obligations for the appointment, training and care of missionaries since the re-organisation of CWM, and many individuals owe much to him for his sensitive and practical care. The Assembly wishes him well in his future service at Sidcup.

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK AT HOME COMMITTEE

36. More than a decade of discussion, drafting and decision making resulted in the unification of the Reformed Association of the Churches of Christ with the URC on 26th September 1981.

37. By this union the URC has become a partner in mission and ecumenical relations in Scotland. The committee invites the Assembly to make a declaration of the intent of the URC in fulfilling its role in Scottish church relations, since some queries have been expressed in Scotland.

38. **Evangelism** has been a major concern of the Committee throughout the year. We have learned of the re-structuring of the N.I.E. to achieve greater simplicity and effectiveness. To help local UR churches in their own evangelistic task the Committee is discussing (a) a leaflet on 'Groups as Growing Points', (b) a paper on how to promote understanding of and commitment to outreach by regional conferences, and (c) a study leaflet for elders' meetings on the contemporary issues in evangelism. Meanwhile the committee continues with its own heart-searching to find a clearer appreciation of the churches evangelistic task and its fulfilment.

39. **Rural Mission** is now well served in our church by our new Rural Consultant, the Revd John Clarke, who is based at the Arthur Rank Centre at the National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire. John Clarke is a Methodist who was until a year ago minister of our joint church at Ormskirk. He is at the service of all our rural churches and of all concerned with rural mission. A successful consultation in the Central URC Bath on the work and mission of rural churches was held in partnership with the Stewardship Committee. Insights gained there are being followed up by further pilot projects to enable rural churches in their task.

40. **New Enterprise in Mission** Following the Priorities and Resources Report the Committee initiated an inter-departmental consultation on new national enterprise in mission. The group considering the current challenge, led by the Revd John Johansen-Berg, has reported to the same inter-departmental group, but its work has not been presented to the Departmental Committees. The group will present its material directly to the Assembly.

41. **The British Council of Churches** has this year faced a serious financial crisis and our committee has requested the Budget Committee to consider increasing the URC contribution 10 BCC above the rate of inflation. The URC is expected to take up 16 places at the BCC Spring Swanwick Conference.

42. **Methodist/URC Liaison Committee**

a. The reasons for bringing proposals for amendments to the structure of the URC to allow for the establishment of areas of ecumenical co-operation were set out in last year's report. In the light of the referral to Districts and Synods an amended resolution is now brought to the Assembly.

b. The Committee has agreed to press, with other denominations, for revision of the Sharing of Church Buildings Act to make it more possible for sums of money from one denomination to be used on buildings of another.

c. A paper on pastoral oversight visitations in joint churches for the guidance of District Councils has been shared with the Church Life Department for transmission.

d. In response to the resolution in 1981 Assembly on ministerial costs in joint churches, the Liaison Committee has minuted as follows:—

'The Committee has received the criticism of Appendix C paragraph 3.3 of the Letter of Advice, is ready to revisit the clause in the light of the criticism, and intends to do so within the context of a new edition of the letter to be prepared in 1982/3'.

David E. Marsden, *Chairman*
Bernard Thorogood, *Secretary*

RESOLUTION 4

Thanking God for the unification of September 1981, which for the first time brought the URC into Scotland, and aware of the rich pattern of inter-church relations already developed there, the URC General Assembly –

- A. Affirms that it will share with other churches in Scotland in the search for that unity which is God's will for all his people.
- B. Is grateful for the historical ties and close family relationships enjoyed with the Church of Scotland, the Congregational Union of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland, through which we express our community of faith, and facilitate the transfer of members and ministers.
- C. Intends to maintain and develop the inter-church relations of the former Churches of Christ in Scotland.

RESOLUTION 5

The Assembly resolves to make the following amendments to the Structure of the United Reformed Church –

Paragraph 8(2) (Manual p21 lines 1 and 2) After the words 'and Provinces into Districts' the addition of the words 'or Areas of Ecumenical Co-operation',

Paragraph 8(3) b (Manual p21 line 8) Add the words to the end of the sentence before the full stop 'and of each Area of Ecumenical Co-operation to be known as an Area Meeting'.

Paragraph 9(3) (Manual p23) The addition of the following sentence before the list of functions, 'The URC membership of the Area Meeting in each Area of Ecumenical Co-operation (hereinafter referred to as the United Reformed Church Committee) shall consist of the Provincial Moderator, all ministers and deaconesses engaged directly in the service of the URC within the Area, representatives of local churches within the Area, and such other persons as determined by the constitution of each Area Meeting as approved by resolution of the Provincial Synod'.

At the bottom of page 24 of the Manual, after the list of functions of District Councils, the following sentences be added:

'(i) to (ix) above describe also the functions of Area Meetings, always understanding that such functions as relate solely to the work of the URC may be discharged by the United Reformed Church Committee of each Area Meeting. In this statement of the Structure of the United Reformed Church wherever the words District Council occur they shall be read as meaning Area Meeting in respect of those places where an Area Meeting has been duly established'.

43. COVENANT FOR UNITY

This has been a year of Covenant debate following the resolution of the 1981 Assembly, inviting Synods, District Councils and Church Meetings to comment on the Proposals. Many expressed their views by voting and the Committee is grateful to all who have shared their thinking. There has been a lot to learn from each other. The Committee has sought to listen particularly to those who have so far found the Covenant difficult or impossible to accept. The following are the chief reasons given for opposing the Covenant Proposals.

- a. As a relatively small and young denomination we shall easily be both broken and swallowed up in closer association with the Church of England.
- b. An order of ministry which is episcopal has not been part of our tradition, and is not necessary for our church life or our missionary calling.
- c. There is an inequity about the Covenant since we would be committed to a radical change in order, which the two episcopal churches would not.
- d. There is a risk that the provision for conscientious reservation may be used by many Anglicans to maintain discrimination regarding women ministers.

- e. There has been insufficient consideration in the Proposals of the work of our Elders.
 - f. In the ordination services proposed there is a very inadequate role for the laity.
 - g. There is a danger of distancing the URC from Presbyterian and Congregational churches with which we should have the closest links.
 - h. The functions of church meetings might be reduced, and authority become more centralised.
44. Among broader expressions of disquiet we note the following:
- a. A small number of local Churches indicated that the URC should cease the search for unity and remain content with co-operation.
 - b. A small number of local churches stated that they could not support a Covenant which contained a vague statement on closer unity thereafter; that a precise definition of the ultimate aim is necessary.
 - c. A small number of local churches have asked for a longer period of discussion. Included here are some former Churches of Christ.
 - d. A considerable number of local churches have adopted the resolutions suggested by the Alternative Response Group and expressed their approval for a Covenant as a way toward unity, provided that the issues of church order and ministry are dealt with after the Covenant and not as part of the Covenant.
45. The chief reasons given by some local churches and District Councils in support of the Covenant are:
- a. Christian unity is a scriptural calling. We cannot turn away from this path of healing old divisions.
 - b. The URC was born out of the unity movement and is committed by its Basis to further it.
 - c. We should welcome a plan for inter-communion which does not involve re-ordination for our ministers.
 - d. Our many locally united congregations need national support and encouragement.
 - e. In many areas a full sharing of ministry is necessary if there is to be effective pastoral care and missionary outreach.
 - f. As the denominations in this country move towards unity we must ensure that Christians of the Reformed tradition are within the unity movement, not outside it.
 - g. The Covenant provides an opportunity for us to develop our own style of episcopacy, so that personal leadership grows within our synodical system.
 - h. The combination of wide variety in worship and theology, with full unity in ministry, membership and sacraments would itself witness to the Kingdom.
 - i. Denominationalism means less and less for many very mixed congregations and for many of our young people.
46. The statistical summary of responses is attached and will be variously interpreted. At the congregational level the voting figures showed a low proportion of members attending church meetings. The lowest figure was about one twelfth and few were higher than one third. Another feature of the local voting is that where a minister's view on the Covenant was widely known it was very rare for the congregation to differ from that view. In a few cases local churches expressed themselves vehemently against the Covenant (about 10 adding hints of secession) but most reported a balanced and restrained debate; one even said "It was the happiest church meeting for years". In the District Councils some had two debates and there was much careful presentation of the issues. We note that the Wales Province took a decision not to deal with this matter in District Councils. Analysis of the District Council votes reported indicates that the percentage of members present and voting for the Covenant was

between	20 and 30%	in 1 Council
"	31 and 40%	in 5 Councils
"	41 and 50%	in 9 Councils
"	51 and 60%	in 9 Councils
"	61 and 70%	in 15 Councils
"	71 and 80%	in 11 Councils
"	81 and 90%	in 4 Councils
"	91 and 100%	in 1 Council

The number of Councils in which the majority of members present and voting for the Covenant was 66% or over was 23. The total individual votes in Councils as reported was 1,134 For, 726 Against, 160 Abstain.

The Synods were unanimous in voting in favour, some by slender majorities, with the average majority of those present and voting being 64.5%. The Committee is clear that the voting in each of the councils of the church has to be regarded as a separate exercise. Thus District Councils were not dependent for their judgement on local church resolutions — nor Synods on Districts.

47. The Committee has to balance these views expressed and offer to the Assembly a way forward that is constructive, theologically well-based, and caring for the whole church. It believes that many of the difficulties expressed can, and should, be met. We therefore list the specific points at which we consider the URC should ask the Council for Covenanting for reconsideration of the text of its Report.

- a. Could not the prayer on page 29 be amended in order to recognise the pastoral care exercised by Elders?
- b. In the ordination of bishops could not the description of the work of a bishop on pages 18 and 60 be amended to become consistent with the list of characteristic functions on page 49?
- c. Could not the "proper service" of the laity at ordinations (promise on page 15) be made more evident both in the Covenant Service and in the Ordinal?
- d. Could not the word "ruler" on pages 5, 21 and 63 be amended?
- e. In order to give a more effective sign of the ministry of the whole church (5.2.1.2.) could not the Re-affirmation of Baptismal Promises (p. 29/30) be brought forward to page 17 so that ordinations follow the action which affirms the total ministry?
- f. In the second part of the Covenant Service could not the national representative ministers of the non-episcopal churches be associated with the presiding bishops in the ordinations?
- g. Could the Council for Covenanting consider preparing a theological statement which will place the Covenant in the context of the whole Christian community and its calling within the saving purpose of God?

48. The URC will look forward to receiving elucidations now being prepared by the Council for Covenanting on the reconciliation of ministers and the scope of conscientious reservations, especially regarding women ministers. Other matters about which we would welcome further report are the possible links with an association of Baptist churches, possible links with the Lutheran Federation in this country, and fuller discussion of future relations with other churches in Scotland and Wales. The Council for Covenanting is producing a brief report of its work during the last year. It is hoped to supply this to Assembly members but it is not available at the date of preparation of this report.

49. In order that the Assembly may see the ways in which the Committee is thinking of the changes that the Covenant would imply for the URC Basis and Structure, an Appendix (app.1.) is attached to this Report. If the Assembly agrees to go forward this Appendix material will be reviewed in the light of the Assembly discussion, submitted to the July 1982 Executive Comm-

itted and forwarded to District Council and Synods for consideration prior to 1983 Assembly.

50. The Committee believes that if major problems regarding the Proposals are faced in these various ways, it would be right for the URC to move forward. We can only ask for the further detailed work in the Council for Covenanting if we are ready to affirm our support for the main lines of the Proposals. The Assembly is invited to make a brief affirmation of the URC position on some key theological issues, in the light of which it would then approve the Proposals 'in principle'. This means that although variations in the text may be made, following suggestions made by other churches and within this report, those variations will not affect the fundamentals of the Proposals. The principles of mutual acceptance of churches, openness at the Lord's Table, ordering of the ministry including bishops and presbyters, agreement on ordinations in common, increased working together in local situations and commitment to further unity — these the Department regards as basic to the Proposals. If members of the Assembly dissent from this fundamental framework they should vote against the acceptance of the Proposals. The Assembly is invited to approve the Proposals 'in principle' in the knowledge that a further vote on the same resolution together with a first vote on consequent changes to the Basis of Union would then be required in 1983.

David E. Marsden *Chairman*
Bernard Thorogood, *Secretary*

RESOLUTION 6

6. The Assembly affirms

- 6.1. that there is one church of Jesus Christ, which we are called to make a visible reality, one body and one spirit, that the world may believe, be healed and reflect God's glory.
- 6.2. that the whole church is called to be the minister or servant of the Gospel, each member having gifts and insights to share with others.
- 6.3. that the succession of apostolic witness and authority is found both in the Bible itself, and in the community of faithful people, including those in varied orders of ministry.
- 6.4. that the faithfulness of the church is secured by the forgiving grace of God, the indwelling of the Spirit, and the consequent obedience of the people of God to the Word of God in Christ.
- 6.5. that the traditions of participatory churchmanship represented in the URC belong to the universal church and are valuable for its life.
- 6.6. that in the same spirit the URC recognises the gifts of others in the church's life and prays that it may be guided by the Spirit to find the right patterns for the church in the future.

RESOLUTION 7

7. In the light of these affirmations the Assembly accepts, in principle, the Proposals for a Covenant *Towards Visible Unity* published by the Churches Council for Covenanting.

RESOLUTION 8

8. The Assembly requests the Council for Covenanting to amend the Proposals along the lines indicated in paragraph 5 of this Report.

RESOLUTION 9

9. The Assembly instructs the World Church and Mission Department to bring forward to the 1983 Assembly any new expressions of opinion from within the URC, and any new material

from the Churches Council for Covenanting, so that these may receive consideration before the final vote for acceptance of the Proposals.

RESOLUTION 10

10. The Assembly instructs the World Church and Mission Department to review the Appendix to this Report in the light of the Assembly discussion, to receive the views of the Doctrine and Worship Committee, and to present it in revised form to the July 1982 Executive Committee for transmission to District Councils and Provincial Synods, so that it may come before the Assembly of 1983 for a first vote.

(NOTE: Resolutions 8, 9, and 10, will be put by the Department only if Resolution 7 is approved by the Assembly).

WORLD CHURCH & MISSION DEPARTMENT: APPENDIX 1 POSSIBLE CHANGES FOR URC IN THE LIGHT OF THE COVENANT

Part I – What Sort of Bishop?

1.1 The proposals for the Covenant implicitly envisage that the URC serving Provincial Moderators will be recognised as equivalent to bishops, and that the URC will present new Moderators or those re-appointed for a new term of service to be ordained bishop. While the URC may well pursue future development along rather different lines, the WCM Department encourages the church to accept this starting point.

1.2. The URC will need to affirm a reformed understanding of bishop so that while we are newly reconciled with those in the episcopal churches in this country we are also learning how to contribute our own experience to them. The reformed emphasis will be seen in the ways we relate bishops to the councils of the church, in the tasks we ask them to undertake, in the style of their ministry, and in making explicit in various ways the recognition that bishops, no less than all members, live under the judgement of the Word and are saved only by the forgiving grace of God. The URC will be free to use the term 'bishop' or another title, and no recommendation on this is made in this appendix.

1.3. In relation to the councils of the church bishops might be members of District Councils members of General Assembly, and while in oversight appointments, chairman of the Provincial Synod or comparable body. They would have no authority to over-rule a Synod's decisions. They would be able to place matters on its agenda. They would also be members in local churches where they reside, and in that context would be acting in all respects as any other members. Their authority within the councils of the church would thus arise from their wide experience and contacts, their biblical preaching, their pastoral function and their chairmanship, which sets the tone and spirit of a Synod, and not from any special voting or constitutional powers. They would be appointed by, and responsible to, the General Assembly.

1.4. Their functions and purpose relate to the unity and mission of the church within a specific area. They are pastors, with particular responsibility for the ministers and ordinands in their area. They are witnesses, helping the churches in their area to develop effective outreach. They are to share with bishops of other covenanting churches in the presidency at ordination services. They are to serve the whole church by contributing their wisdom to its councils. They are to further the unity of the whole church by relating to and working with the bishops of the other Covenanting Churches. They are to uphold the faith, as understood within the URC, in public and live it out in their personal lives. They are to help congregations, ministers and their families in any times of crisis or trouble.

1.5. As we have experienced in our Provincial Moderators, we expect that simplicity of life, openness, organising ability, understanding of others and insight into the word of God will be characteristics of a URC bishop. We do not expect that the URC will wish to move towards

special dress, special titles or terms of service very different from those of Moderators. The particular place of Moderator/Bishop in District Councils, Synods and General Assembly would obtain while oversight ministry is exercised. We expect that the appointment to an oversight ministry in an area will be for a specific term of years, and an initial seven years plus possible renewal for one period of five years would seem appropriate in a single place. In the selection process before appointment by the Assembly we expect to retain the principle that local and national representatives, in equal numbers, will form the nominating group, and it might well be accepted practice that a recommendation to the Assembly requires to have a majority of both the local and national representatives.

1.6. The possibility should be recognised that the Bishop appointed by another Covenanting Church might be appointed also by the URC. It could only happen if the local churches wished it, but the constitutional framework should be designed to permit it.

Part II – Church Organisation

2.1. While existing District and Provincial structure will be the starting point at covenanting, the whole process of drawing closer together with other churches is likely to affect URC considerably over the following years.

2.2. In order to co-operate effectively with the other Covenanting Churches there will be an increasing need to correlate boundaries. It will be hard for a Provincial Synod of the URC to develop intimate relations with five or six Anglican Diocesan Synods, and hard also (though perhaps not impossible) for a Provincial bishop of the URC to work closely with Methodist and Anglican partners who cover much smaller areas. The probability is, therefore, that URC consultation with the other churches will eventually be led towards a rather smaller unit than the present Province.

2.3. But should that happen it would place a serious question on the need for both Provincial and District units of administration and fellowship. Without rushing into any proposals for reform of structure, we may therefore note the possibility that the Covenant might encourage us to look towards one unit of our structure between local church and General Assembly rather than two as at present.

2.4. The key agency for missionary outreach is likely to be in the small district or the town or neighbourhood where the congregations of the Covenanting Churches gather in council together, and perhaps 6 or 8 congregations are the right number in most contexts for intimate co-operation.

2.5. The question will have to be faced, how such joint bodies in a locality or a larger area will relate to the URC. One principle which should be helpful is that work should not be duplicated. We have to reduce rather than increase the administrative structures of our churches. Therefore if the Covenanting Churches in an area wish to institute a joint body, with executive powers, it will be right to facilitate the transfer of some functions from URC agencies, and to recognise the joint body as part of the URC pattern of life.

2.6. It has been suggested that there would be national joint bodies, first to examine doctrinal matters raised by the life of the churches together and second to deal with any problems of conscientious objection that could not be dealt with by one of the churches. It is too soon to judge how such bodies would be constituted.

2.7. Further possibilities are that Local Ecumenical Projects would become more numerous, that we would need a more advanced Sharing of Church Buildings Act, and that within the URC General Assembly and its committees we would find increasing numbers of ministers who are serving our people, fully recognised by URC, but formally on the roll of another church.

Part III – Amendment to The Basis Of Union

3.1. If arrangements with the general character noted above are to be carried out, then the following draft amendments are offered:

The Manual

Page 15 Paragraph 20 Last lines to read

.....which solemn setting apart shall in the case of moderators/bishops ministers and elders be termed ordination.

Page 15 Paragraph 21 At end to add

Under the Covenant relationship the United Reformed Church receives and welcomes the ministry of those on the roll of other Covenanting Churches who serve URC congregations.

Page 15 Insert new Paragraph 22

Some ministers are called to be moderators/bishops. They are ordained to this oversight ministry following a selection process in which local and national representatives share. They are appointed by the General Assembly to a specific area for a specific period of service. Their primary task is to strengthen faithful witness to the Gospel through the URC congregations in their area or province, and to this end to ensure that ministry is effectively exercised and ministers prayerfully supported. They assist the congregations in the calling of a minister and those ministers seeking new opportunities. They chair meetings of the Provincial or Area Synod and act in consultation with its committees. They co-operate with bishops in other denominations to express and to develop the unity of Christians in witness and service.

Page 15 Paragraph 22 becomes 23 and so on.

Page 16 Paragraph 26 becomes 27 and is rewritten as –

All ordinations of ministers and moderators/bishops take place in joint services with other churches to which the URC is bound by the Covenant, and the bishops of the Covenanted Churches preside at these services together. The ministry of the URC is thus authorised and welcomed by the churches acting together. The order of worship for ordinations is as set down in the Covenant documents or in later revisions or alternatives which are approved by the Covenanted Churches.

Page 16 New Paragraph 28

In the URC all forms of ministry shall be open to both men and women.

Page 25 Moderators/Bishops and Synods

There shall be a moderator/bishop for each Provincial Synod or other representative area council approved by the General Assembly, selected by a nominating committee comprising equal membership from the national Executive Committee and the Province or Area. Moderators/bishops are appointed by the General Assembly. They shall be appointed for a term not exceeding seven years in the first instance and the General Assembly may terminate an appointment or renew it for a subsequent term of not more than five years. If appointed to another Province or Area the first term of service there will be not more than seven years. A moderator/bishop may be called by the church to undertake other work, such as a pastoral charge or a teaching post, but remains available to recommence oversight ministry as the church may require. The moderator/bishop is a member of all District Councils or such comparable bodies as may be approved by the General Assembly within that Province or area, and is a member of the General Assembly, these memberships ceasing if the moderator/bishop no longer serves in oversight ministry.

The General Assembly may accept the recommendation of a nominating committee that the bishop of another covenanted church be appointed as the URC bishop in that area. In such cases the person so appointed for a specific term of years shall be recognised and regarded in all constitutional ways, though not necessarily as to stipend, as a moderator/bishop of the URC.

The moderators/bishops of the URC shall meet together regularly for the better discharge of

their work. Within the councils of the URC they will have the same voting rights as all other members, and no power of veto.

The financial terms of service for bishops shall be decided annually by the Salaries sub-committee, and reported to the General Assembly. No moderator/bishop shall continue in active oversight ministry after the end of the calendar year in which the age of sixty-seven is attained.

Pages 24, 25, 26, 27.

The above notes leave open the question of the eventual designation, whether moderator or bishop. If the word bishop is chosen then minor changes will follow in the text of the URC Structure.

WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT: APPENDIX 2
STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY

PROVINCE	1 Number of members in Province	2 Number of churches reporting	3 % of all churches	4 Total membership of churches reporting	5 Number of churches voting for	6 Number of churches not voting but generally for	7 Total membership of churches 5 and 6	8 Number of churches voting against	9 Number of churches not voting but generally against	10 Total membership of churches 8 and 9	11 Number of churches indisive	12 Total number of districts	13 Number of districts reporting	14 Number of districts voting for	15 Number of districts voting against	16 Number of districts not voting or indisive	17 Synod, number of votes for	18 Synod, number of votes against	19 % vote in favour	20 Synod, persons abstaining
1 NORTHERN	14006	53	39	7822	22		3515	26	2	3921	3	6	5	3	1	1	67	42	61	3
2 NORTH WESTERN	15321	93	54	9745	26	3	3360	54	3	5747	7	7	7	5	1	1	101	57	64	7
3 MERSEY	10685	61	54	6812	24	2	3302	33	1	3458	1	4	2	1	1		71	29	71	28
4 YORKSHIRE	10251	69	46	6668	35		3455	31	1	2989	2	6	6	3	2	1	84	69	55	4
5 EAST MIDLAND	8846	53	36	5427	21		2067	27	1	3271	4	5	5	2	2	1	55	50	52	11
6 WEST MIDLAND	12067	77	46	8203	39	1	5146	31		2517	6	6	6	5		1	93	51	65	17
7 EASTERN	10474	82	48	7237	33	5	4134	34	2	2532	8	5	5	3	1	1	68	55	55	14
8 SOUTH WEST	9056	81	49	6427	45		4500	28	2	1702	6	6	5	3	2		84	26	76	10
9 WESSEX	13386	105	60	11225	49	1	5757	48	2	5143	5	5	5	4	1		105	69	60	2
10 THAMES NORTH	14357	82	51	9864	44	1	5937	31	2	3261	4	6	6	5		1	133	44	75	7
11 SOUTHERN	20232	133	62	16646	78	3	10376	40	7	5999	5	7	7	6	1		158	77	67	7
12 WALES	8656	19	11	1780	3		527	13	1	1333	2	5					51	20	72	1
	147,337	908	47	97,856	419	16	52,076	396	24	41,873	53	68	59	40	12	7	1070	589	64.5	111

NOTES: Columns 5 and 8: Churches which reported a vote on the suggested resolution or similar, with a majority of those present and voting for or against.

Columns 6 and 9: Churches which reported a discussion and the trend of it, but did not vote on the suggested resolution or similar.

Column 11: Churches where there was a tied vote, or which did not wish to express a view one way or another.

Columns 14 and 15: District Councils where a majority of members present and voting was for or against the suggested resolution.

Data included is all received at Church House by 8 January 1982.

PREPARING TODAY FOR TOMORROW'S MINISTRY

Review Group on Ministerial Training in The United Reformed Church

INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly of 1973 set up a commission "to estimate the number of full-time fully trained ministers required; to suggest the scope and content of the training desired; and in the light of this examination to recommend a policy for the whole Church concerning the use of the existing colleges and the available financial resources for ministerial training". This Commission reported to the Assembly of 1975 and on its recommendation the Assembly agreed that the existing arrangements for training at The Congregational College, Manchester and Westminster College, Cambridge should be continued, and that "save for some financial crisis this arrangement shall remain undisturbed for a period of five years but that in 1980 the Assembly shall arrange for a special review of its working and for a report to the Assembly of 1981."

2. In accordance with this decision, the present Review Group was appointed by the Assembly of 1980 which also resolved "that the Group to be appointed to carry out the Review of the colleges agreed in 1975 shall examine and report on the whole provision for ministerial training in the United Reformed Church". The same Assembly also instructed the Review Group "to take seriously the recommendation that an annual grant of £2,000 should be made to the (Mansfield) College for chaplaincy development", and "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".

3. The membership of the Review Group is given at the end of this Report. We have met as a full group for three residential sessions and for one full day session. Sub-groups were formed on various themes and have had numerous meetings. We have sought advice from, and have had meetings with, representatives of other departments of the Church, particularly with the Christian Education Committee. In response to a letter in REFORM we have received many helpful submissions from ministers and members, students in training, committees and officers of the Church, and from elders' and church meetings. We are grateful to all who have helped us in these and other ways. We have been able to make use of the Visitors' Reports on Westminster and Mansfield Colleges, and of the work of The Congregational College, Manchester Review Group. We have also drawn upon the wisdom and experience of the World Council of Churches' Programme for Theological Education through the reports of the Manila and Herrnhut conferences and the presence of Dr. Shoki Coe as a member of our Group. We have sought to build on the work done by the Commission of 1975. We have been impressed by their vision of the way the situation is changing and by the wisdom of the reforms they proposed. Six years later the changes are still more rapid, and many of the needed reforms have still to be implemented. We see our findings and recommendations as being in line with theirs, but going further at some points.

4. We are a large group with a wide diversity of views and experiences. Not everything in our Report is as everyone would have wished it, but the Report as a whole carries our general approval.

5. We recommend our Report and recommendations to the prayerful consideration of the General Assembly. (Resolution 1)

6. Selected Bibliography

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Chapter I – The Unchanging Call

1. Jesus came announcing the kingdom of God – the sovereign rule of the Father over all peoples and all creation. He was himself the presence of that rule – even though people did not recognise it. From the beginning, he called men and women to turn round, recognise, believe and follow. The Church is that company which he has called in this way, and which he has commissioned and enabled to go everywhere as the sign and instrument and forecast of God's reign. It is the whole company of those whom he has called and sent who are entrusted with this mission.

2. The whole Church is described in the New Testament as a 'holy priesthood' called to a double responsibility: 'to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ', and 'to proclaim the triumphs of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light' (1 Peter 2: 5 & 9). This holy priesthood, then, entrusted to the whole Church, is to be exercised by all its members in all their manifold tasks and duties. It is the total devotion of our lives in worship, prayer and action; and it is the showing forth by word and deed and common life of the glory of God's rule.

3. When Jesus called the first disciples to follow him, he also sent them to call others and to lead them in the way that he went – the way of the cross. 'Follow me' leads on to 'Feed my sheep'. The disciples are to be both fishermen and shepherds – catching men and women for Jesus and leading them in his way. He leads and they follow. They lead and others follow. Those others follow in order that they too may lead others. This pattern of leadership in the way of the cross has marked the Church from the beginning. The varieties of style have been immense, but the reality has always been present. Wherever Christ is preached, believed, confessed and followed, there will be the call to lead others also to believe, confess and follow. Some will be called to a special responsibility in leading others to believe, confess and follow, and this also has been so from the beginning. In some traditions these leaders are called priests, but their priesthood is to enable the whole fellowship to be truly a holy priesthood. In the Reformed tradition they are called ministers, but they are so described not in order to take ministry away from others, but to help the whole company of believers to share fully in Christ's ministry, pointing to his leadership.

4. In order that they may do this, they must first of all be themselves followers. Their task is so to follow Jesus that they help others to follow with him. As the *Commission on the Ministry* 1975 said: "We do not favour the idea that the minister looks after the Church while the lay people witness in the outside.....Rather the minister should share in leading the congregation in its corporate witness in society and experiment with his own role as a missionary in the community". On the other hand we cannot accept the idea that the mission of the congregation in the community is to be left to the minister. It is the whole congregation which is called to the ministry of the Gospel.

5. In this Report we are specially concerned with those called to the ordained ministry of word, sacraments and pastoral care. But it would be disastrous if this focussing of attention should lead anyone to forget that it is the whole Church which is called to ministry. All our thinking about the ordained ministry, its recruitment, training and service, must be governed by the fact that the ordained ministry is called to equip and enable the whole Church for ministry. Leadership is needed, but it must be leadership in the way that Jesus went – the way of the humble and faithful servant of all.

6. Leadership in ministry may be exercised in many different ways — both by those in the full-time paid service of the Church and by those who exercise the ministry in the context of employment in the secular work of the world. Many different styles are needed for the mission of the Church in a pluriform society. Whatever the style, no Church which is serious about its commitment to God's mission can be half-hearted about the call to ministerial leadership. The call is as urgent now as at any time in the Church's history.

7. In this report we are concerned about the training needed for those who have heard and accepted the call to be servants of the servant people.

Chapter II -- Ministry for Today and Tomorrow

8. God's unchanging call is addressed to us in a changing world. We are part of the changing scene. We are often bewildered, lose our bearings, and cannot clearly see what is happening around us and within us. Descriptions of 'the modern world', can be very unreliable, and very quickly out-of-date. But if we are to prepare for ministry we must try to understand the world in which we are to serve. Three things at least can safely be said about Britain today and tomorrow.

8.1. Our society retains emotional and institutional links with the Christian tradition. But if we are realistic we must acknowledge that the dominant beliefs and assumptions are very different from those of the Gospel. We live amidst the worship of false gods. We are in a mission field.

8.2. Our society is changing with increasing speed. Developing technologies make traditional patterns of behaviour obsolete. All authorities are questioned or viewed with scepticism. The political stability of the nation can no longer be assumed.

8.3. Our society is highly diversified. In most towns and cities there is a vast variety of ethical codes, styles of life, races, faiths and ideologies. People who live in the same street or attend the same school may inhabit different worlds.

9. Our thinking about ministry in this kind of society must begin from the fact that the Gospel is about the coming of God's reign over all people and all things. The Gospel is good news of that coming reign. The ministry of this Gospel would be misdirected if its central concern was with the 'success' of the Church. Its concern for the Church is that the Church may be a credible sign and foretaste of the Kingdom — of that kingly rule which is exercised from the cross.

10. What kind of ministerial leadership is appropriate for such a Church in such a society? We suggest seven fundamental qualifications.

(a) A total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a growing experience of shared life in the Spirit so that the worship and service of God becomes the minister's central and controlling passion. We need radical dissenters from the false worship of our society, whose dissent does not drive them (timidly or defiantly) into a ghetto, but out into the world.

(b) A growing familiarity with and understanding of the bible and the Christian tradition, especially — but not exclusively — in its Reformed development, constantly extended and enriched by wide reading and by a study which neither evades the critical questions nor allows them to silence the central message. We need men and women whose ears are accustomed to listening to the word of God in scripture and who know how to nourish others with that same word.

(c) An informed and passionate involvement in the issues of the contemporary world. Clearly this is not to ask for a pretended omniscience. It is to ask for men and women aware of the world they live in and committed to doing the will of God in its affairs.

(d) Because we live in a society which is mobile and pluriform, the Church must be as varied and as open as the human situations to which it must minister. We need, therefore, not one style

of ministry, but many, exercised by women and men, white and black, conservative and radical, working class and middle class, paid and unpaid. We need to look for and encourage very varied gifts, temperaments and abilities.

(e) It follows that one minister cannot fulfil all roles. Collaboration and team-work will be the marks of a relevant ministry, not omnicompetence. The gifts for animating and enabling groups and teams of colleagues and for evoking the skills of others and the readiness to take a subordinate place — these are the marks of a genuine leader and are more to be desired than the gifts which attract attention to an outstanding individual.

(f) The Church is a community of persons of very different ages and at different stages in their discipleship, seeking to share good news with others. The arts of interpersonal communication are fundamental to its life. We need ministers skilled in these arts, aware of the many different levels at which communication takes place, able to exercise and to help others to exercise the arts of preaching, of teaching adults and children, of listening and counselling, and having enough sensitivity to be able to encourage the use of music, drama, dance and visual symbol in worship and in the communication of the Gospel.

(g) We need ministers who know that they must be learners all through life, who recognise that their initial training can be only a small beginning, who remain to the end eager to reach out for fuller understanding, greater competence, deeper discipleship.

11. Because the whole Church is called to ministry, the work of the ordained minister must always be directed to the enabling of all for ministry, and must be done in collaboration with elders and other members as well as with ministerial colleagues. There will continue to be many ministers who serve alone in a single congregation, but we expect that ordained stipendiary ministers will also increasingly be needed for other kinds of work:

- for specialised ministries in industry, in the inner cities, in new housing areas and in ungroup of congregations;
- for the support and pastoral care of auxiliary ministers;
- for teaching in non-residential training programmes and post-ordination courses;
- for specialised ministries in industry, in the inner cities, in new housing areas and in unreached sectors of society;
- for work as scholars and theologians and for the training of the ministry of the future.

Chapter III — Essential Elements in Ministerial Training

12. Training for Christian ministry may begin at home, at school or college, or in the place of work long before a man or woman offers for ordination. It should continue right to the end of active ministry. Our main concern in this chapter is with that part of the training which is the responsibility of the Church through its Ministerial Training Committee, and which may be in a residential college, a non-residential course or a combination of both. In the present Report we refer to this as the 'Foundation Period'. Preparation for Christian ministry includes the training in that common Christian discipleship which the minister shares with all other Christians and in which he is called to be their helper; training in the understanding of the Christian faith which he is to share with them; and training in the skills of communication and leadership which are required if he is to do these things. We may speak of them as training in discipleship, training in understanding and training in skills. We shall discuss them in that order.

Training in Discipleship

13. If a minister is to lead others in discipleship it is first of all necessary to be a disciple, learning day by day to follow Jesus, to love and obey, to pray and to worship, to live the life of faith. This training in discipleship must be recognised as the first requirement in training and must be carefully planned. The candidate needs to be helped towards a growing knowledge of God, an acceptance of his will for daily life and a right relation with self and with others. This requires time, patience, perseverance and pastoral skill. We think that in our present courses of training there is insufficient encouragement, nurture and assessment of candidates' spiritual

development. We make the following proposals in the hope that candidates will in future receive such a measure of organised help and supervision as will enable them to establish habits of Christian discipleship on which they may build during the years of their ministry. In the words of a recent Anglican paper: "Positive use should be made of the opportunity to develop such disciplines of study, reflection and prayer, and such a sense of their indispensability, that when students move into another situation there will be a 'prayer-shaped hole in their hearts' and a 'study-shaped hole in their minds' which they will want to continue to fill, both for the sake of their ministry and for the sake of their own human happiness". The study of theology and the growth in personal devotion should go hand in hand. Students should learn "to pray to the God whom they think about and think about the God to whom they pray". (ibid).

14. The ways in which this learning takes place will be infinitely varied. Many people find the traditional patterns of devotion unsatisfactory and are seeking fresh ways of exploring the life of the spirit. Others are returning with new appreciation to older patterns. The training should include an introduction to the classics of Christian spirituality, as well as to contemporary teachers of the practice of prayer. It should help students both in the disciplines of personal devotion and the kind of bible study which leads to a real grappling with the contemporary word of God, and also in the intimate experience of group bible study which helps the participants to become both critics and disciples, both leaders and learners. We think that students should have the opportunity to find spiritual directors who can help them to grow, to deal with their doubts and to develop creative relationships with others.

15. This personal growth in discipleship will nourish and be in turn nourished by corporate worship in which students learn both as participants and as leaders. They need to learn how to order public worship so that all participants can give glory to God and be nourished in their turn. The need for thorough teaching about liturgy, and about the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper is very great if these are to be rightly understood and valued in our Church.

16. Christian discipleship is corporate and requires growth in sensitivity towards others and in the arts of interpersonal relations. Where the training is residential, candidates and to some extent their families are thrown together with those whose company they did not choose. Candidates may need help to understand their own actions and reactions. During periods of non-residential training candidates will face these problems at home, at work and in their local church. All ministers need to understand the changing perceptions of sexuality in our society, and to understand the different circumstances of married and single people in the ministry. These arts of self-awareness and sensitivity to others can be learned, and there are professional skills available of which more use could be made in our ministerial training. Short residential retreats or conferences should be arranged at suitable points in the course to provide space and time for this kind of learning.

17. Growth in discipleship should be growth into a fully human life and not into a narrowly religious one. It is essential that candidates should have time to give to their families, to sport and recreation and to ordinary secular interests. If these are crowded out, the subsequent ministry will be impoverished.

18. We have placed growth in discipleship first in our list of essentials. In our traditional (Reformed) pattern of training it has not been usual to assign this responsibility to any one person in the training staff. It can be argued that it is the concern of all. But it can also be argued that what is in theory everybody's business is in practice nobody's. In the requests we have received from ministers, members and candidates, nothing has been so insistent as the request for more effective pastoral care and supervision of students in training. We are convinced that urgent attention must be given to the more systematic, carefully planned encouragement, supervision and assessment of candidates' growth in discipleship, and we therefore propose to the Assembly accordingly. The Ministerial Training Committee should make appropriate financial assistance available to colleges for this purpose where necessary and possible, through the Ministerial Training Fund. (Resolution 2)

Training in Understanding

19. Christian faith is always faith seeking understanding. But this understanding will never

rest in a merely intellectual satisfaction — though joy in the vision of the truth will be part of its reward. The Gospel is God's active word of reconciliation directed to his whole creation, and therefore 'understanding' can never be divorced from a growing personal experience of God on the one hand, or from an active commitment to the communicating and the doing of his will in the world on the other. We are to do theology not just as an intellectual exercise for the satisfaction of ourselves and our fellow theologians, but for the equipping of the whole Church for its ministry of reconciliation in the world. The theological formation of ministers has to be "with all the saints" and for the doing of God's will in the world. This formation can only take place and this understanding can only grow in a context where the Gospel as we have understood it is challenged (a) by the experience of other Christians (b) by the claims of other faiths and ideologies and (c) by the contemporary human situations in which God's purpose of love is being contradicted. It follows (a) that theological formation should take place as far as possible in an ecumenical community, (b) that it should involve the student learning to understand other contemporary faiths and secular ideologies and (c) that students should, through suitable placements, be involved — as part of their theological formation — in grappling with those forces in society which deny God's rule. We stress the point that these placements are not intended simply as part of 'practical training', though this should be part of their usefulness; they are an essential element in theological formation, without which the student's understanding of the bible will be weakened or deformed.

20. All doing of theology is shaped by the culture in which it is done. There is a constant need to be aware of the ways in which our interpretation of the bible and the Christian faith is shaped by the axioms and assumptions of the past, and at the same time to sharpen our awareness of the contemporary context. We can be helped in these matters by the insights of Christians from other cultures. British society, as we have insisted, is changing with great rapidity and is highly diversified. Effective theological formation will take place where the 'text' — the bible and the Christian tradition — is studied in the immediate presence of the 'context' — the changing world in which God's will is to be done. The process of formation is not linear — from text to context; it is dialectical. It is not that one learns the text and then applies it to the context. This is impossible because the student and the teacher are part of the context and read the bible from the standpoint of their culture. Theological formation takes place when there is a mutual questioning between the text and the context and for this to happen the experience of other Christians, the claims of other beliefs and the pressures of the world are all needed.

21. We propose a model for training in which periods of mainly academic work are punctuated by placements designed to introduce students to issues of contemporary life. The first placement should be of a secular nature and the second one be in a church. They should combine observation and work, analysis and reflection. It will be essential to provide skilled supervision by persons with the necessary specialised training, and it will also be necessary that students work in groups so that they can share experiences. We shall need the help of experts to develop the students' understanding of the context and structures within which they operate and to relate theory and practice to theology, ministry and way of life. As this integration takes place, students will begin to see the implication of the gospel in particular situations and how the same integration of theology and practice can be achieved in other places and for other issues.

22. In the preceding paragraphs we have been thinking primarily of training in college. The training of Auxiliary Ministers and others whose training is non-residential is taking place while they are fully immersed in secular situations. For them also expert help is needed so that their theological formation does not take place in isolation from their secular experience but in continuous interaction with it. This is already planned for the training of Auxiliary Ministers.

23. At the heart of theological formation will be the study of the bible. The student needs to be introduced to the textual, historical and hermeneutical questions which have arisen from the critical study of the bible in the Western world in the period since the Enlightenment. In this respect the minister has an expertise which most church members lack. If the effect of this is to make the bible a book which cannot speak directly to the Christian congregation, the theological

formation has gone astray. This has in fact happened. It is a commonplace that the bible is no longer household reading for most Christian families in Britain, as it is in some other parts of the world. A new kind of clericalism — not of the priest but of the scholar — has taken it out of the hands of the lay members. But the contemporary Renewal movement is rediscovering the bible as a book for all. Small house groups for bible study are now a familiar part of the scene. The ministers' theological formation should lead through the critical questions (not by-passing them) to the place where they are so grasped by the word of God in Scripture that they both can and must preach it and listen to it in the company of others whose understanding of it owes more to active discipleship than to scholarly study.

24. It is with all the saints, and in the context of a world mission, that we grow in understanding of the Gospel. The study of Church History brings us into contact with the saints of the past and enables us to see the sweep of the missionary story from Pentecost to the present day. In the contemporary missionary situation of the Church in Britain it is important that the centre of attention should be less on the fragmentations of Christendom than on the way in which the Christian faith has developed through its successive encounters with the various cultures of humankind, and how it has shaped and been shaped by them. A large place should be given to modern Church history, so that students may understand better the reality of the world Church and the place of the Reformed tradition within it.

25. Understanding the faith and communicating it intelligibly to our society requires the effort to state its content as coherently as possible in the language of contemporary culture. This is the ever-new task of systematic theology, which must be done with an attentive ear both to the theologies of the past and to the questions and assumptions, the myths and symbols of the present.

26. Closely linked with this is the effort to understand the other faiths and ideologies which complete for allegiance in our society. Clearly no one minister can be an expert in all these fields, but equally clearly every minister must have some knowledge of them and some understanding of the elements of truth in them which continue to draw millions of adherents. Among contemporary secular ideologies the one which must at all costs receive attention is the ideology which has shaped western Europe since the 17th century, which goes by various names and has various aspects ("the modern scientific world-view", "the free world", etc.) and also the Marxist version of it.

27. Understanding is barren unless it affects behaviour. Christian Ethics investigates how the distinctive Christian understanding of what it is to be human governs behaviour in all areas of life — public as well as private. This is an area where — above all — the minister depends upon the help of others. Especially in the training of the stipendiary ministry there is need of the expert help of men and women involved in the making of daily decisions in the life of secular society. Such training will help the minister in future to recognise a dependence upon the insights of fellow-members, and that ministry belongs to them all.

Training in Skills

28. Throughout British society, technology and social organisations are subjecting jobs to forces that cannot easily be resisted: many jobs are being 'de-skilled', others are subdivided into ever-narrower specialisms. The demands being made of the Christian ministry are of a contrasted kind. Various representations and discussions made it clear to us that ministers are required to know and do more about more, as though they were Renaissance men and women born out of their time. This pressure is part of the appeal of the ministry to men and women who want to use their personal mixture of talents in their work, and also part of its difficulty, as a complex of skills to be taught and practiced. It is one reason why we have sought (in Chapter 4 following) to spread the periods of practical learning more evenly across the years of a minister's active life.

29. However, extension of the learning period on these lines cannot relieve all pressure on the crucial years before ordination. It is then that careful distinctions and choices have to be made between skills that are required of all ministers and those required of some; between skills that

must be acquired during the foundation period through study and in associated ecclesiastical and secular placements, and specialisms that can be learnt subsequently as the need arises; between disciplines and techniques that a minister may expect to use personally and ones that it is more important to know how to recognise in others, and enlist for the better proclamation of the gospel by the whole church.

30. Fundamental to all the work of a minister is skill in the handling of the bible so that contemporary men and women may hear in it the word of God addressed to themselves, calling them to faith and obedience humbling them and lifting them up, comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable. That skill can only grow out of the personal discipleship and growth in understanding of which we have spoken in the preceding sections. But with this skill there are others needed upon which many of our correspondents in the Church have laid stress. Ministers in pastoral charge, however profound their theological understanding, need to know how to speak in public and read aloud, how to relate to all age groups and identify these with special needs; how to recognise mental illness and empathise with people in sickness or under stress, how to work with colleagues who may share neither the minister's profession nor convictions, how to make contacts with the social services and voluntary agencies, how to use the media and — still above all — how to preach, teach and conduct public worship. Most of these skills except the last three sound simple enough, but for most of them it is hard to find good instructors at 'generalist' level, below the point of professional specialisation that turns out a paid youth or group worker, counsellor, broadcaster, or charity organiser.

31. The popular image of the minister is still that of a person directing the affairs of a single congregation — although in fact fewer than half of the ministers in the URC are now in that position. All ministry in the Reformed tradition ought to be collaborative. The minister works with elders, lay preachers, leaders in young people's organisations and in the junior church, and also with people and agencies in the wider community. Yet the 'clerical' image persists and it is necessary that training should emphasise the skills needed for team work and for 'enabling' styles of ministry. This calls for sensitivity and openness to the gifts and skills of others, honesty in dealing with ourselves and our colleagues, and commitment to bear the strains involved in sustained working relationships. In seeking to develop teamwork within the congregation the minister's position is complicated by both responsibility and expectations: the minister is expected to be 'in charge' and to know how to proceed, whereas many situations will be new to everybody. Where this is so, confidence comes from a measure of success and from a feeling of mutual support and accountability, and it is the minister's responsibility to secure these conditions for growth. This requires confidence, judgement about what is and what is not within the potential of the church community, and the ability to adopt a suitable leadership role. The minister is likely to have to be the most flexible of the community leaders, striking a balance between the roles of 'guide', 'worker' and 'confidence booster'.

32. The skills which a minister needs to acquire in this field have much in common with those which a successful manager has to learn: how to work in a team, planning short-term and long-term objectives, how to stimulate change and motivate people to work well without being 'led', how to devise a budget and a chair meeting. Ability in these fields will always depend heavily on temperament and personality, but the skills can also be taught, along with the self-analytical discipline that helps a minister to seek from other skills he or she does not possess. A minister need not feel a failure because someone else in the church is a better counsellor, preacher, or despatcher of committee business; on the contrary, it suggests that the church has a life of its own. At the same time, a minister who has learnt few practical skills is unprotected against situations — common enough in both churches and secular society — where he is deprived of the opportunity to do what he is best at, and forced to undertake tasks which he finds alien, because there is no one else to do them.

33. There is wide recognition of the need for our Church to be active in evangelism. Students for the ministry need to consider the implications of this and to explore and evaluate evangelistic methods and styles. They need to discover their own gifts and limitations in this respect. They must learn how to present the gospel's call to those outside the faith, how to help those who respond, and how to continue to invite and challenge those who do not.

34. Finally, it is inevitable that a minister, whether in pastoral or specialised charge, will be much concerned with verbal communication, above all in the Reformed tradition that spends substantial resources of time and money on committees and the printed word. For this reason it is the more important that attention be given to non-verbal forms of communication. These can be more eloquent than words in an age which (unlike earlier ages) does not look to the bible for explanations of events and motives, but remains alive to the mysterious and the 'given'. Training should take account of the proper role in worship of the forgotten elements — colour, sound, light and movement. Movements — gestures, postures for prayer, processions and others — have an important place in worship and need to be simple, clear and carefully thought out. For this training is needed. Drama is again being used in the teaching and evangelistic work of the Church, and this also should have a place in training.

35. A minister does not have to know how to mime a parable, design a set or a magazine, or even read music (useful though any of these skills may be in the job temporarily or permanently). But ministry will be impoverished if training does not equip him or her to tell the creative from the tawdry in church music and architecture, to be sensitive to the 'body language' of the liturgical drama, and to vivify through the imagination the Christian symbols and sacraments which communicates what cannot easily be expressed in words.

36. It may not be easy to find inspired teachers in these fields, but much can be learned informally through open eyes and ears. Students ought not to be so burdened with academic work that they cannot take advantage of the dramatic, musical and artistic activities which flourish in our cities and universities.

Chapter IV — A Lifelong Training

37. The principles stated in the previous chapter have to be translated into actual courses of training — whether in residential colleges or otherwise. Before we turn to the future role of our colleges, we wish to make some fundamental points which apply whether the training is residential or not. We want it to be recognised explicitly that ministerial training must continue throughout a minister's active life. If it was ever possible to think that three years in a theological college equipped a person for 40 years of service, it is certainly impossible now. The world is changing far too rapidly for that. In few professions is it acceptable today for a man or woman to expect to continue in service for a life-time without further periods of in-service training. In so far as this is not yet accepted as normal for the ministry (in spite of repeated Assembly resolutions) we must be judged to fall below the standards of our secular society. It is time to call the Church and its ministers to more resolute action, and — as instructed by the Assembly — we are bringing definite proposals for this purpose. On the basis of this conviction, we divide the course of training into three parts — the 'foundation period', whether residential or not, and the periods before and after.

The Pre-Foundation Period

38. We have found some feeling among theological students that their previous knowledge and experience have not been recognised and used in their ministerial training. It is obvious that students bring many and varied gifts, and their training should as far as possible use and build upon these. Many come with considerable experience in business and professional life — and this is especially true of those training for auxiliary ministry. Women students in particular bring much needed gifts, insights and experiences which have hitherto been largely ignored in the work of theological training. Because theology has been for too long male-dominated, special attention needs to be given in ministerial training to eliciting and developing the contributions of women students.

39. Staff are encouraged to enter a pastoral relationship with students at this early stage, so that they can come to appreciate the needs of each. There have been problems recently in this respect and we welcome initiatives already being taken to avoid unhappiness and stress. We see this as more important than academic preparation at this early stage.

40. Candidates are sometimes required to undertake preparatory studies or to gain additional experience before beginning their training, and care must be taken to deal with each person individually. We welcome the idea of a short induction course at the college before term begins, and would also commend for consideration the idea of a short residential retreat for students before the college work begins.

41. Personal choices in the building up of a course will, of necessity, be limited, but as many options as possible should be offered. The pattern and purpose of every course should be fully explained to avoid anxiety or misunderstanding.

42. We think that students should have a place on appropriate committees of the colleges, and that on the Ministerial Training Committee there should be one student training for the stipendiary ministry and one for the non-stipendiary. (Resolution 3)

The Foundation Period

43. We have indicated in the previous chapter our views about the necessary elements in the curriculum, which are in general agreement with those listed in the 1975 report (paragraph 38). At this point we wish to draw attention to four matters which — in our opinion — require special emphasis.

- (a) Because a pluriform society needs a ministry with various gifts and therefore ministers must expect to work with others in a team rather than alone, we lay stress on the need to develop collaborative skills.
- (b) Because the task of the ordained minister is to enable the whole Church to minister, we lay stress upon the need to develop skills in the leadership of groups.
- (c) Because it is 'with all the saints' that we have to grow in understanding, we stress the value of the ecumenical sharing in training which is already a feature of all our colleges.
- (d) Because the Gospel is good news of God's reign over all things and all peoples, we stress the need for learning in the context of secular struggles for justice and freedom, and therefore ask for an extended programme of placements. We would like to see a pooling of resources here between the colleges, so that opportunities and skills are economically used and students can meet and work together. All training in and out of the college must be geared to the two-fold purpose of enabling the student to think theologically and to develop the practical skills that enable him to share his faith and serve the congregation.

44. Ministerial training must take into account information and skills which can be contributed by the various departments of the Church. Regular visits by staff of these departments should form an integral part of the training. Students also need help to understand the work of District Council and Provincial Synods and their role in the life of the Church.

45. Recognition that training is a life-long enterprise will save us from the danger of trying to crowd too much into the foundation period. When there are opportunities during this period for links with a university these should be welcomed as a source of enrichment for future ministry.

46. At the present time the college course is normally three years for Course I for those who already have a degree or diploma, and four years for those who do not. We do not propose any change in this *résumé*, but we consider, that where appropriate, greater use might be made of a fourth year. Where necessary the guidance of the Ministerial Training Committee should be sought. The possibility of overseas study and exchange schemes should be fully explored. Links could, for example, be established with suitable colleges in Europe, the USA and Third World countries, to the benefit of all concerned.

The Post-Foundation Period

(i) Post-Ordination Training

47. The Review group sees great significance in the period immediately following ordination, and the arrival of a minister in a local pastorate. Experience has shown that this can be a time of

continuing growth, or a time of disappointment even heartbreak, and thus of a regression. There is need, therefore, to provide a period of planned study under the direction of the College and of District or Province. The purposes of this period of training are two-fold. First, to continue those habits of study begun in the foundation period so that the basis of life-long reading and thoughtful consideration is secure. Second, to assure the new minister of such a context of ministry that there is personal guidance, challenge, correction and encouragement during the most formative years.

48. In 1972 the General Assembly agreed "that each newly ordained minister be required to undertake a post-ordination course, arranged and supervised by the colleges in consultation with the Moderator of the Province". We regret that this has not happened. We therefore recommend that the following pattern of Post Ordination Training be accepted by the General Assembly for implementation from mid-1983.

48.1. The first pastorate following the successful completion of the foundation period should normally be to an assistantship type of ministry, probably in one of the following categories:—

- A. **The Colleague Assistantship** A strong church with a senior minister would be paired with a smaller church or even joint pastorate. The senior minister would be the minister of both/all the churches, but the assistant would be attached to him or her, with pastoral responsibility for the smaller church(es) and would live in its Manse. The assistant would be paid through the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund in the normal way, the smaller church providing the Manse and expenses, though both ministers would work together and share responsibility in both situations. Such appointments would be contained within "deployment" and would cost no more than having two ministers serving separate pastorates independently.
- B. **The Single Pastorate Assistantship** There are some large churches which could usefully employ the services of a full-time assistant minister who would share pastoral responsibility and worship with a senior minister. This would make demands upon the latter, but would also provide him or her with real help. The terms of service for such assistant ministers (as concerning Maintenance of the Ministry, housing and expenses) will be as for other ministers. Such ministries would not be counted for deployment quotas for two years from ordination.
- C. **The Team Assistantship** Teams with establishment for three or more ministers might well be able to accommodate one assistant minister, with some re-adjustment of duties, providing an excellent learning situation at no extra cost. Such appointments would be made within the deployment quota.
- D. **The Ecumenical Assistantship** There are certain ecumenical situations (e.g. Local Ecumenical Projects, union churches) recognised by the URC for deployment purposes, where it might be possible for an Assistant to serve under a senior minister of another denomination.

48.2. The procedure for calling, ordination and induction should continue as at present. The initial call would be for the assistantship period.

48.3. In each case a senior minister (Pastoral Counsellor) will have pastoral responsibility for the newly ordained minister and will plan the ministerial programme having in mind the study which has to be undertaken.

48.4. The study element will be supervised by a person (Local Supervisor), elected by the college or the Board of Studies who may or may not be the same as the Pastoral Counsellor referred to in the previous paragraph.

48.5. At the end of two years the new minister will attend a refresher course arranged by the URC.

48.6. On the satisfactory completion of two years of such training, the Provincial Moderator, the Pastoral Counsellor, the Local and College Supervisor and the appropriate officer of the District Council meeting together, shall, if satisfied, issue a Post-Ordination Report. If they are not satisfied, they may delay one further year.

48.7. At the end of this training period, the minister will be free to continue further in his or her initial appointment if so invited by the local church(es) and District Council, or to seek a call to any URC pastoral vacancy. Those responsible for commendation will keep in mind, among other factors, whether or not the Report is satisfactory, since in future this Report will form one element of the total training course. (Resolution 4)

(ii) In-Service Training

49. The purpose of this will be to refresh and up-date earlier learning, to help a minister to face new problems that have arisen in the course of service and to provide encouragement and collegiality. It may include training for new tasks, study of social changes and the opportunity to undertake research or to develop skills. We envisage among the many possibilities the renewal of the life or prayer through retreats, biblical and theological studies, specialised studies in industrial, hospital or student chaplaincy, ecumenical experience and fresh training in communication skills. We are aware of the administrative strain that our proposals may impose on the colleges. We are aware of the problems that might be temporarily experienced by the family of a minister, or by the life of the local church. But these problems will be far outweighed by the advantages to all concerned. We think that now is the time to press for action.

50. We recommend that the following shall apply to all stipendiary ministers in full-time service, and – as far as may be practicable in their circumstances – to all auxiliary ministers:—

- (a) all ministers are expected to undertake some kind of concentrated study during a period of at least seven days in each year, and be released for this purpose by their churches. Such study could take the form of attendance at a Summer School, Refresher Course, or retreat for private reading. Various opportunities are published regularly, and In-Service Training Officers have been appointed to offer guidance and help. This week is not to form part of an annual holiday.
- (b) the necessary financial provision for In-Service Training courses should be made as at present by the congregation concerned, District and/or Province, with appropriate support from the Ministerial Training Fund;
- (c) all ministers are encouraged to take a sabbatical term of not less than a month and not more than three months, approximately every ten years, in which they can undertake some specialised study programme, with the full support of their congregation and the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund. This might be particularly helpful in the year following a move to a fresh pastorate where new skills are required. Attention is drawn in this connection to the sabbatical terms provided at Westminster College and to the various arrangements for international pulpit exchange.
- (d) the Ministerial Training Committee is instructed to make the necessary arrangements for the implementation of this recommendation in consultation with congregations, Districts and Provinces, to enlist the help of Provincial In-Service Training Officers, to ensure co-ordination between the colleges in the matter and generally to provide the necessary administrative help to ensure that the intention of the Assembly is carried out.

51. In order to assist the implementation of these recommendations the Ministerial Training Committee should undertake exploration and advocacy throughout the Church in consultation with the colleges. It should also initiate discussions with Provincial In-Service Training Officers in order to develop agreed procedures for initiating the arrangement of sabbatical terms and for securing the necessary financial support. (Resolution 5)

Chapter V – Resources for Training

52. We recognise that among the resources available to the URC are the URC-related theological colleges and the non-residential and part residential courses which are used under the supervision of the Ministerial Training Committees. We consider first of all the Colleges.

The Colleges

53. The 1975 Commission took the view that the United Reformed Church could not continue indefinitely its commitment to all the theological colleges then training its ministry, but agreed that the existing arrangements should continue for five years and be reviewed at the end of that period. Since then New College has been closed. We continue to have relationships with the two Welsh colleges, with the Queen's College, Birmingham, and with St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak. The vast majority of our college-trained students however, continue to go to Cambridge, Manchester and Oxford. We have had to consider whether the Church still needs these three colleges, or whether there ought to be some concentration. Of the three, Westminster is the only one which the Church controls. Concentration might be achieved by sending all students to Westminster and severing our links with the other two, or by closing Westminster and sending students to one or both of the other two. The possible savings by such moves are problematical, both because there are doubts whether the buildings are marketable, and because it is not clear that the capital tied to the present buildings would be available to the URC. Moreover the current expenditure on student fees would not be reduced by sending all to one college. We believe that the URC should continue its present policy in respect of these three colleges for the following reasons.

53.1. We have argued above that one of the essentials for the ministry of today and tomorrow is a variety of styles matching the pluriformity of our society. Each of the colleges has particular merits which are capable of further development. Westminster College, Cambridge has become the national resource centre for In-Service Training, and it has a vital role to play in the development of the Cambridge Federation of Colleges. The Congregational College, Manchester is exploring very promising new possibilities for decentralisation and for more contextual training. Mansfield College, Oxford, while concentrating mainly on training for the pastoral ministry through the University Certificate in Theology, is making creative use of the degree course as a means of training future scholars for the Church. We want to ensure freedom for these specialised developments to continue. We consider that it would be against the best interests of the Church to reverse this movement and to entrust all our ministerial training to a single institution. Our Church may be small in numbers but it ought to have a largeness and a variety answering to the pluriformity of our culture. We have a responsibility to contribute to the distinctive Reformed witness in the Christian life of the United Kingdom as a whole. We do not wish to become a sect.

53.2. Each of the three colleges is deeply involved in ecumenical programmes of training in collaboration with their respective universities. To withdraw support from any one of these would mean removing the Reformed contribution from one of these important centres of theological learning. We hold a tradition of theology and of churchmanship, greatly strengthened by the unions of 1972 and 1981, in trust for the nation. We should not withdraw our contribution unless we are compelled to.

53.3. Ministerial training is being re-thought throughout the world, stimulated by the recently established Programme on Theological Education of the World Council of Churches. This is a time for maximising experiment, recognising that not all experiments will prove fruitful. A Church which puts its whole resources into one institution cannot afford risky experiments, and this is a time when risks must be taken.

54. We therefore recommend that the URC continue to send students to the three colleges in Cambridge, Manchester and Oxford, and that the Ministerial Training Committee maintain a close relation with them so that fruitful dialogue may continue. We hope that Westminster will further strengthen its involvement in the Federation and encourage the implementation of the recommendations made in the Report of the recent visitation by the three Churches. We are greatly encouraged by the report of the Congregational College, Manchester, Review Group, and note with particular interest their emphasis on contextual training, their encouragement of greater ecumenical co-operation and their exploration of the possibilities of decentralisation. We hope that Mansfield will continue to develop the possibilities of its current ordination programme, especially in relation to spiritual development, training in worship and ecumenical co-operation. We also recommend that continuing recognition be given to the Queen's College in

Birmingham and to the Colleges at Bangor and Aberystwyth, though it is not likely that many students will be sent to them in the near future. However, in making these recommendations we acknowledge the high cost of maintaining the buildings in Cambridge, Manchester and Oxford. Our report has stressed the growing role of non-residential training. This will increasingly supplement, and may in a measure replace, the residential programmes which involve such heavy expenditure on buildings. We therefore welcome the exploration by the Congregational College, Manchester of proposals for decentralised training which might substantially reduce the necessity for heavy expenditure on the present buildings. (Resolution 6)

55. The colleges should be encouraged to play a full part in the proposed Association of Centres of Adult Theological Education. They should also be encouraged to develop fully the present ecumenical relations in their several centres, with as much sharing of staff as may be possible.

56. There is need to review the staffing position to ensure that there are adequate resources for carrying through the programmes envisaged in this Report. The skills of encouraging theological reflection around particular contexts in the world need considerable enlargement. Group and project learning are likely to assume a much larger place in collegiate education and it is essential that some at least of the staff have the appropriate skills. New opportunities for drawing on part-time resources, for ecumenical sharing and for using the experience acquired through the field-work out-stations may also suggest new ways of developing the existing staff resources and of making new appointments as appropriate.

57. We are concerned that colleges develop their teaching expertise by using appropriate resources from outside their teaching staffs, and by the use of modern aids, such as overhead projectors and video tapes. We would like to see the colleges become resource and teaching centres for the whole Church, and for helping the ministry of the whole people of God, and we ask the Ministerial Training Committee to assist them to move in this direction. (Resolution 7)

58. We have stressed the need for life-long training in view of the rapidity with which society is changing. The same consideration leads us to propose that time limits should be fixed, and there should be ample opportunities for movement back and forth between the pastoral ministry and the work of theological teaching. This would be of advantage to the colleges, to the Church and to the persons concerned. The example of Provincial Moderators who are appointed for an initial period of seven years might be cited in this connection.

59. There is at present only one woman member of staff in the three Colleges and she holds a part-time appointment. For the building up of collegiate communities an appropriate balance of men and women in the student body should be reflected in the Senior Common Rooms as well. (Resolution 8)

60. We would also like to see more opportunities for conversation between the colleges and the wider Church. On the one hand, as we have said, the colleges can become resource centres for the churches in their neighbourhoods. On the other hand ministers recently trained should have regular opportunities to visit the colleges, share their findings about the training received with the colleges, and receive in turn helpful suggestions about their continuing training and their self-assessment.

61. We have been asked to consider the present practice whereby older candidates undertake either Course III or Course IV studies, with an emphasis on the external preparation before a year in college. This practice is still new and it is too early to assess its effectiveness, though it is clear that there have been problems for staff and students alike. We ask each college to revise its own application of the regulations where necessary, reporting regularly to the Ministerial Training Committee, in order that a final decision may be taken at the time of the next review. The arrival of Auxiliary Ministry will reduce the numbers of those coming within this category and this new development will enable us to assess all other courses later.

Non-residential Courses

62. All students for the full-time stipendiary ministry in the URC are members of one of the

colleges, although those engaged in Course 3 or Course 4 are pursuing their studies externally for most of their course. Course 3 students are required to become internal students for one year. In considering 'non-residential courses' it is also necessary to mention that many internal students in the colleges are not resident on the campus, and that this number may increase.

63. Clearly there are many benefits to be derived from studies undertaken externally especially if these are complemented by internal periods. The interaction between academic work and day-to-day life at work and in the community can provide a stimulating basis for theological learning. Particular skills are required in the tutors of external students if these positive benefits are to be exploited at the points where the experience of the community and the contents of the curriculum react upon each other.

64. Those training for auxiliary ministry are all trained in non-residential courses, including both the URC course and the many Anglican and ecumenical courses now available. As the number of men and women so trained increases, and as experience is gained from these courses, the lessons learned should be applied to other types of training. The Ministerial Training Committee should keep this under review and bring recommendations to the General Assembly at an appropriate time.

Placement and Resource Centres

65. We have stressed the fact that growth in understanding of the Gospel happens through exposure both to the biblical message and to the situations where the will of God is to be done in the life of the world. It follows that those whose training takes place in a residential college should have in the course of their training, adequate opportunity to experience the actual situations where the Gospel has to be communicated and the signs of the Kingdom perceived. This is done through placements both in secular and in church situations. We are recommending that there should be a placement in a secular context, normally in the earlier part of the course, and a church placement later. Each college will be making arrangements for the two kinds of placements (Church and community). There is already in all the colleges a considerable body of experience of fieldwork to be drawn upon.

66. Church placements will depend on the opportunities for learning in local churches. This will in turn depend on ministers and elders being committed to this aspect of training and also knowing how students learn most effectively.

67. Hitherto most community placements have been for short periods of observation in hospitals, factories and on courses arranged by urban or industrial mission teams. Each college needs to develop close links with a variety of mission teams, in order to introduce students to particular aspects of secular community life around which there is a developed programme of action and reflection. Urban or industrial mission teams have resources for enabling students to develop their own projects and to share their findings with team members. These teams are invariably ecumenical in outlook, if not yet in staffing, and it may be helpful for the URC to raise the matter of developing urban mission placements with the Churches' Consortium on Industrial Mission.

68. The previous experience of the student will be an important factor in assessing what would be the most helpful kind of placement. It cannot be stressed too strongly that the object of the community placement is not to gain some 'industrial experience' or 'hospital experience', but to learn to practice theological skills in specific contexts which require some understanding and awareness before communication can take place.

69. A strong bias in the placements should be in favour of working with relatively weak or poor people in the community, through such agencies as voluntary groups, tenants and neighbourhood projects, ethnic minorities, and unemployed claimants' groups, as well as observing how trade union branches work and the various statutory and local government agencies. The URC Industrial Affairs Advisory Group should be consulted in view of its interest in increasing an awareness amongst church leaders of the important role of trade unions. (Resolution 9)

Equipping the Field Supervisors

70. Those who will supervise the fieldwork placements need both training and support. The field supervisors will require some initial training to enable them to develop helpful learning relationships with the students, to give them the appropriate initiatives and to ensure that they regularly report their findings to others who have the time and interest to reflect on what is being said. They will especially need help in learning how to help students to reflect theologically on the experiences they are going through and to assess their own achievements. This is an area to which the Ministerial Training Committee will have to give much thought in order to discover or develop appropriate forms of training for field supervisors.

71. The field supervisors will also need support from the colleges. The college would monitor the supervisor and there would be joint assessment of each student placement. It is most important that from the outset high professional standards of competence are expected from the field-work supervisors. As with the internal college staffs, a benefit to the whole Church can accrue from this role. Some fieldwork supervisors might see a period of service in college posts as a helpful personal development and the same principle might apply equally in the other direction.

Equipping the Teachers

72. Should the Church provide some kind of training for the specialised work of theological educators? Traditionally it has been regarded as sufficient that the person appointed to teach in the theological college should be academically competent and should have (if possible) some pastoral experience. In respect of academic competence it is possible for theological teachers to keep abreast of developments through reading and participation in the relevant learned societies (Societies for Old and New Testament Studies, for Theology and for Church History). It is very difficult to find any comparable means of updating their skills of pastoral and evangelistic leadership. Moreover there are specifically pedagogic skills which are needed if theological training is to achieve its goals. The newly-created Standing Committee of the British Council of Churches on Theological Education is now providing for the first time a forum where all aspects of ministerial formation can be discussed and the Ministerial Training Committee should take advantage of this in order to explore the possibilities of initial training and periodic refresher courses for those engaged in the training of our ministry.

Chapter VI — Recruitment, Assessment and Selection

Recruitment

73. The Review Group believes that our Church should engage in an active programme of recruitment for the ministry, both stipendiary and auxiliary, and is glad to note that General Assembly in 1981 endorsed this view by instructing the Church Life Department to prepare such a programme. Although there have recently been some signs of an increase in the number of candidates, positive steps need to be taken to ensure that this trend is maintained if the number and quality of ministers is to be improved and the Church is to avoid a spiral of retreat and decline. We therefore suggest that every opportunity be taken to place the challenge of the Ministry before possible candidates, particularly students and FURY groups, in sermons, through conferences, Provincial Days and events, and Enquirers' Conferences. There should be effective distribution and use of leaflets and literature making clear that the Ministry is both a rewarding and a very demanding vocation, requiring candidates of the highest dedication and calibre.

Assessment and Selection

74. The present procedures for assessment and selection work reasonably well but there is room for improvement. There are some differences from province to province, but the normal procedure is as follows. After informal discussions with the Minister and Moderator (and perhaps attendance at an Enquirers' Conference), candidates need the commendation of their local

Church Meeting and District Council. They then attend an Assessment Conference arranged at a national level, which sends a confidential report and recommendation, including the suggestion of an appropriate course, to their Provincial Moderator. Finally, the appropriate Provincial Committee interviews them and decides whether to accept them in the light of the interview, the Assessment Conference report, references and other evidence being available.

75. Although concern has been expressed about the length and complexity of the process, particularly if, at every level, the procedure is taken seriously, the general view is that selection must be undertaken thoroughly and no stage should be omitted. The Review Group does, however, recommend that:

- (i) Assessment Conference procedures should be reviewed to ensure that maximum use is made of the time available.
- (ii) Although doubts have been expressed about the Provincial Committee having the final say in the selection process, rather than the Assessment Conference, we recommend that this principle remain. However, Provinces should review their own assessment procedures regularly to ensure that each candidate is thoroughly interviewed and all factors are taken into account. It is further recommended that, where the Provincial view of a candidate differs from that of the Assessment Conference, consultation should take place with the Ministerial Training Committee before the final decision is made and the candidate informed. In general, liaison between national Assessors and Provincial Committees should be improved.
- (iii) There is evidence that pastoral care and oversight of students by their Provinces needs to be improved. An individual or even a small support group (representing local Church, District and Provincial Committee) should be appointed to keep in regular touch with each candidate from acceptance until ordination. (Resolution 10)

Chapter VII – Finance

76. In our deliberations, we have been mindful of the present cost of ministerial training and of the additional cost of what we propose, but we have not thought cost to be the main determinant. Our prime concern was with the ministry as we felt it was called to be and we believe that the financial consequences should be met.

77. In recent years, the cost to the URC of training its ministers has been broadly related to the cost of maintaining students in the theological colleges. The Congregational College, Manchester and Mansfield College, Oxford, are independent foundations with funds of their own but their running costs are met from tuition and boarding fees, from income from investments and from donations. The URC is directly responsible for Westminster College, Cambridge but it too has its own endowments and it receives substantial support from the Cheshunt Foundation. It charges tuition and boarding fees as do the other colleges.

78. Thus all three colleges depend for a substantial part of their running costs on tuition and boarding fees paid by the students. A married student may also have to support a spouse and children. There are three main sources from which the money may be found:

- (i) the student's own funds and spouse's earnings
- (ii) a grant from the Local Education Authority (LEA)
- (iii) a grant from the bursary fund of the College which may be supplemented by the URC to LEA levels.

79. A student who has financial resources is asked to contribute to the tuition and boarding fees. Few have substantial capital resources or have income which continues whilst they are at college, but the spouse of a married student may work and maintain him or herself and possibly the children.

80. Some students may be able to claim a mandatory grant from the LEA but many qualify only for a discretionary grant. Those in the discretionary category include some who have already had a grant for a first degree and others who lack the academic qualifications generally required for tertiary education. An initial refusal of a discretionary grant should not generally be accepted. The LEA may not have fully understood the student's circumstances or the standing of the college and the proposed course of studies, and persistent questioning of the reasons for refusal may lead to a change of view and to the favourable exercise of the LEA's discretion.

81. To the extent that the student's needs for tuition and boarding fees and for family support are not met from his/her own resources or from an LEA grant, they fall upon the college bursary funds. The colleges take as their guide in assessing grants the level of support that would be provided by a basic LEA grant. The college bursary funds, which previously met all or most of the cost of training, now cover only a small portion so that the colleges depend to an increasing degree on the Ministerial Training Fund for a large part of their requirements. The Ministerial Training Fund has some capital and accumulated income and has received grants from the Memorial Hall Trust and income from the New College Trust but it also needs an annual grant from the United Appeal. It is here that the members of the URC as a body contribute to Ministerial Training and they may be said to provide the balance when other resources, and they are considerable, have been exhausted.

82. We think it important that students should know that the whole Church is involved in supporting them during their training and we recommend:

- (i) that a clear reference to finance be made at the Enquirers' and Assessment Conference, and
- (ii) that when the time comes to determine the level of support, a standard form be sent out by the Ministerial Training Committee on behalf of the URC which would then be filled in by the student under the guidance of the college. (Resolution 11)

83. For the current academic year, the tutorial fees paid by students at the colleges average £1,300 and the fees for board and lodgings for a single student are £1,535. LEA grants, bursaries, etc., reduced the charge to the Ministerial Training Fund to £104,500, an average of only £1,260 per student. Nevertheless, the expenditures of the Ministerial Training Fund has increased from £56,000 in 1978 to £134,000 in 1981 and is expected to reach above £180,000 in 1983. The Unified Appeal is currently providing only about one third of the cost and the Fund is heavily dependent on the income from the New College Trust. Even with this New College money, expenditure is likely to exceed income from 1983 and would exhaust the fund in two or three more years. These forecasts are made on the basis of the present arrangements for training and the present numbers of students, before any new commitments are accepted as a result of this report.

84. It is not easy to estimate the additional cost of the recommendations in this report, but if all are implemented and the opportunities offered are taken up a further annual sum of more than £70,000 might be required.

85. So more money will have to be found if Ministerial training is to continue in its present pattern, and much more still will be required if the Church is to do what we recommended. It will be for the Ministerial Training Committee and the Church Life Department to determine the priorities and present the case to the Budget Committee. The extent to which the Budget Committee can respond will depend on the money available through the Unified Appeal. We call upon the whole Church to support the Unified Appeal accordingly, so that the ministers who will serve the URC into the next century may be still better equipped. (Resolution 12)

RESOLUTIONS

1. The General Assembly accepts in general the proposals in the report of the Review Group on Ministerial Training in the URC and instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to

✓ take them as guide-lines for policy until the Assembly determines otherwise. *and*

2. ✓ The General Assembly commends numerous and imaginative attempts that the colleges have made to deepen the spiritual life and self-awareness of their students. It expects that this non-examinable aspect of training will continue to be given a high priority and its organisation be entrusted to a particular person who will act as chaplain: either a designated member of staff or someone from outside the college. (Paragraphs 13 to 18).
3. ✓ The General Assembly instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to arrange for students to have representation on appropriate committees which are concerned with their training. (Paragraphs 38 to 42).
4. ✓ The General Assembly resolves to adopt the programme of Post-Ordination Training as set out in this report, and instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to implement it, from the summer 1983 ¹⁹⁸³ subject to any modifications agreed by the Assembly in ~~that~~ year. (Paragraph 48). *retained*
5. ✓ The General Assembly resolves to adopt the scheme of In-Service Training for full time and Auxiliary Ministers as contained in this report and instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to make the necessary arrangements for the implementation of this resolution from the summer of 1983, subject to any modifications agreed by the Assembly in that year. (Paragraphs 50 and 51).
6. ✓ The General Assembly agrees to continue to recognise the colleges at Cambridge, Manchester and Oxford, together with the Memorial College, Aberystwyth, Bala Bangor College, and Queen's College, Birmingham, as centres of training for the full-time ministry. It instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to keep under review the appropriateness of the training offered and to advise the Assembly accordingly. (Paragraphs 53 and 54).
7. ✓ The General Assembly recommends that those appointed to teach in the colleges should, as far as possible, avail themselves of the induction courses provided in the universities for the imparting of appropriate teaching skills. (Paragraph 57).
8. ✓ The General Assembly requests that in the appointment of teaching staff to the colleges an effort be made to maintain a balance between men and women and between long-term or life appointments and appointments for shorter periods of teachers who come from and return to the pastoral ministry (Paragraphs 58 and 59).
9. ✓ The General Assembly commends the steps already taken by the colleges to relate ministerial training to the context in which ministry is to be exercised, through extended secular and church placements. It accepts the recommendations of the Review Group in this regard, and asks the colleges and the Ministerial Training Committee to ensure that its wishes are carried out. (Paragraphs 65 to 69).
10. ✓ The General Assembly instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to review the Assessment Conference procedures for both full time stipendiary and Auxiliary Ministry as recommended in this report. (Paragraphs 74 and 75).
11. ✓ The General Assembly instructs the Ministerial Training Committee to ensure that, in its regular procedures, the whole Church is seen to be concerned with the financial support of all those whom it approves for training for the ministry. (Paragraph 82).
12. ✓ The General Assembly notes both the steeply rising cost of Ministerial Training and the substantial extra costs that will arise from the implementation of the recommendations of this report. It calls upon the whole Church for support through the Unified Appeal and instructs the Church Life Department to consider the priorities and present its case to the Budget Committee for due consideration. (Paragraphs 83 to 85).
13. ✓ The General Assembly agrees

that this report be received.

Membership of the Group

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Lesslie Newbiggin

Secretary: The Revd Michael G. Dunford

Mr. C. Baillie (Westminster College)
Dr. C. Binfield
Mrs. J. Boulind

Mr. F. H. Brooman
Revd A. G. Burnham
Revd Dr. S. Coe
Mr. R. Church (Mansfield College)
Rt. Revd Principal M. H. Cressey
Revd M. J. Davies
Revd Dr. Principal W. T. P. Davies
Mr. C. Driver

Mrs. R. Goodfellow (ex-officio)
Revd P. C. Jupp
Mr. H. G. Lanham (Congregational
College, Manchester)
Revd Dr. Principal R. J. McKelvey
Mr. R. S. Martin
Revd Dr. J. I. Morgans
Mr. V. Ridgewell (Course 3 — Westminster)
Revd Janet Sowerbutts
Principal, Dr. D. A. Sykes
Revd R. F. Taylor
Revd B. G. Thorogood

CHURCH LIFE DEPARTMENT

Chairman: The Revd Richard F. Taylor

Secretary: The Revd Michael G. Dunford

INTRODUCTION

1. 'There's a Spirit in the air
calling people everywhere.....'
The sense of the Church Life Committee is that we are witnessing the early days of a new Springtime of the Church. In all sorts of ways fresh growth is breaking out of old branches. People are sharing their ministry. People are praying for healing. There is renewed confidence in the Name of Jesus Christ. In the depths of economic recession there seems to be a spiritual re-viving of care for the suffering and the poor. England, Wales and Scotland may not be in the time of the harvest of the Spirit's fruits, but the seed is growing. Meanwhile all over the world people are in the peace movement, and the women's movement, and the black people's movement, for the Name of Jesus Christ.
2. If the United Reformed Church is to be fertile ground for the seeds of new life, positive steps have to be taken now. There may be a long lead time between preparation and harvest. Some of the Church Life committees are working to strengthen the variety of ministries needed to tend the soil — church related community workers, college teachers, lay preachers, ministers in pastoral charge, student chaplains, youth leadership training officers. Some of the committees are in the throes of working out new patterns for growth, such as the auxiliary non-stipendiary ministry and comprehensive youth leadership training. Other committees are shaping the tools of training courses and stewardship materials. All are working to transform the spiritual climate of the churches through the education of the whole membership.
3. The General Assembly last year accepted the aim of the Church Life Department: to serve the URC by discovering and releasing resources particularly for use in local churches so that people of all ages may worship God, engage in God's mission in the world and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Each of the committees has worked out its own aim as a part of the Department. Already this process is bearing fruit in making it easier to establish priorities.
4. The organisation of Church Life concerns in the Provinces and Districts is not very clear, and the Church Life Central Committee has given attention to the varying methods in the Provinces. After ten years of the URC the time may be approaching when the departmental organisation of the committees requires modification and the needs of Provinces and Districts would have to be given great weight. During this year, the Church Life Department has been very pleased indeed to welcome the Christian Stewardship Committee into the family.

Richard F. Taylor.

SMALL GROUPS

5. The Department set up a working party on small groups in response to an Assembly resolution in 1980, and it has now completed its task. There are already varieties of small groups active within the Church, and aspects in the use and leadership of these in many of our training courses and educational projects. It is hoped that an appropriate unit might be included in the projected Co-ordinated Training Programme being considered by the Christian Education Committee.
6. The Church Life Department does not have the resources to carry out a thorough research into the role of small groups in the life of the church, nor to make a thorough survey and

assessment of the training material already available. Such thorough research and assessment would require the services of a competent sociologist/theologian for at least one year. However, a paper has been prepared entitled *The Role of Small Groups in the Work and Outreach of the Church*, and this will be available from the Assembly Bookstall or from the Supplies Section at Church House. We hope to circulate this to all those involved in training situations in the URC, and those in Districts and Provinces with responsibilities which give them opportunities to influence people to develop greater skill in working in small groups. (Resolution 1)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Stephen Orchard

Secretary: The Revd Margaret T. Taylor

CHILDREN'S WORK COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Glyn Jenkins

Secretary: The Revd Margaret T. Taylor

Whatever name we give it, whatever committee has special responsibility for parts of it, Christian education is the concern of the whole church. All of us, young and old, local churches, and Assembly Committees, have our part to play. All that we report from the Christian Education and Children's Work Committees should be read in this context.

Particular concerns of the Christian Education Committee

7. **Motivation** In response to concern expressed by a number of people, and to our own awareness of the high proportion of church members who find themselves ill-equipped for Christian living, the committee regards it as of the highest priority that we should find out what motivates people to engage in further Christian Education. Our task is to play our part to the full in providing that motivation.

8. **Resources** Motivation without the resources to meet the desire for education would be self-defeating. We are therefore concerned that appropriate resources should be available and easily accessible. To this end, the Secretary, helped by a committee member, will seek to catalogue materials.

9. In 1981 the General Assembly urged the Christian Education Committee, among others, to give careful consideration to the recommendations in the report *Towards Renewed Confidence*. Among those recommendations was one urging the Assembly Christian Education Committee to review the material available to see whether it is really meeting the needs of church members today. We willingly accepted that recommendation, believing it to be a task both necessary and possible. We have found however that we are not able to allocate the resources of time and skill, to carry out a comprehensive survey, in addition to our other work. Nevertheless the committee continually reviews and assesses material as part of its on-going task. It is committed to bearing in mind, in this review, the question of the adequacy and appropriateness of the material for the building up of confidence in the faith and for the development of the ability to relate that faith to contemporary life and communicate it to others.

10. **Specific material** The committee commends the *Adult Study Programmes*, which are sets of notes for a monthly study with suggestions for worship. They are prepared for use in Women's Groups and other mid-week groups, are simple although not shallow and can be obtained from Dr. Donald Firth at 106, Fog Lane, Didsbury, Manchester M20 0SB.

11. A working party is preparing a course for new members. This is a development from the Churches of Christ practice of sending monthly letters to each newly baptised member, for the first twelve months of membership. The purpose of the course is to encourage new members, of whatever age, to continue their Christian development and also to feel that the church is taking note of their membership. We hope the material will be ready early in 1983.

12. **Elders Training Project** The Committee is giving its support to Jim Gould, a student for ministry at Mansfield, in his project surveying the needs and resources for Elders' Training, and we hope that local churches will co-operate.

13. **Co-operation with other committees** We continue to seek co-operation with others involved in the field of Christian Education and, to this end, are consulting in particular with the Christian Stewardship Committee.

14. **Aim and Priorities** In common with other committees in the Church Life Department, we have been seeking to define our aim and suggest the following.

The aim of the (Adult) Christian Education Committee is to motivate adults to see the need for continuing Christian Education and for the development of skills needed in the Church's tasks; to provide courses and materials for that education and development; to train leaders in the necessary educational skills; and to co-operate with other committees and departments concerned with education in order to ensure unified, though varied, rather than fragmentary Christian Education in the local church.

The task of Christian Education is both important and extensive and the committee is concerned to choose the right priorities. The committee believes that, at the present time, the first priority is to continue working out the themes in *Towards Renewed Confidence*, and in particular to give time and effort to the course for new members, the co-ordinated training programme and training for worship. The second priority is to continue the general work of assessing new ideas and materials and promoting what is considered suitable.

Particular concerns of the Children's Work Committee

15. **Training** A major concern of the Children's Work Committee is the training of those who work with children. We are encouraged by the number taking the *Equipped to Teach* course, over 100, but would like to see an improvement in the standard of presentation of some of the work. A group is looking at other training courses and programmes, and recommends most highly the Methodist *Tapes for Training*, as an additional resource for both new and more experienced teachers.

16. **Mid-week Work with 7s-13s** The committee is also aware of the need for training and help for those who work mid-week with children. Up-dated kits have been produced with specimens of resource material and these are available from the Children's Work Secretary or from the Youth Leadership Training Officers. We are also involved, through Bernard Grimsey, in the preparation of a course of training leaflets for those working mid-week with the 7s-13s. This is being produced by the Consultative Group on Ministry Among Children of the British Council of Churches, and should be ready by 1983.

17. **Children and Worship Project** Miss Lesley Beale has completed the research for her project and submitted a first draft of her report to the committee. The committee will be giving consideration to the implications of the report and hopes to present these to the Assembly in 1983. We would express our gratitude to all the local churches and individuals who participated, and especially to all the children who entered the competition.

18. **Aims and Priorities** The aim of the Children's Work Committee is to assess, stimulate and service the work among the children of the United Reformed Church in the following areas:

- (a) Christian nurture and education
- (b) The worship of the local church
- (c) The encouragement and training of all adults who work with children;

- (d) The establishing of new areas of contact with children;
- (e) Increasing the church's awareness of children and their needs.

In the light of this aim, the committee accepted the following priorities:

- (1) The completion of the Children and Worship project;
- (2) The continuation of the review of teacher training programmes;
- (3) The use of the *Tapes for Training* in a pilot project involving teachers, parents and children in a group of local churches in a holiday club situation;
- (4) The education of parents;

Joint concerns of the Christian Education and Children's Work Committees

19. **Together** This Assembly sees the completion of the 3 years of the *Together* programme. Success or failure of such a project is hard to judge, especially immediately after its completion. Nevertheless, the signs are that many local churches and church members have become more aware of the concepts and concerns which the programme sought to emphasise. Although the programme is complete, the ideas and concerns continue, and will, we hope, be further implemented in other ways. Certainly, future material produced by the committees will continue to reflect an understanding of the church as a community where young and old, men and women, and members of various groups belong, worship, learn and serve together. We are grateful to those who gave time and effort to promote the programme around the churches.

20. **Material for handicapped people** We have become aware of a disturbing gap in the provision of material we make for education. We have nothing designed or adapted for use by handicapped people and we have no educational material to help handicapped people, the parents of handicapped children, or church members, to reflect on handicap in the light of their faith. We hope to co-operate with the Ministry of Healing Committee in producing some material to meet these particular needs.

21. **Talking about your Child and the Church** After much consultation with the Doctrine and Worship Committee, we have now produced a leaflet *Talking about your Child and the Church*. Written in response to a specific request, it is intended for use by ministers and others when non-member parents ask for their baby to be baptised. It is not intended as a substitute for counselling, but as an aid which can be handed to the parents to remind them of what is said. Copies are available from the Assembly bookstall or from the Supplies Section at Church House.

22. **Understanding Christian Nurture** In 1976 the British Council of Churches Consultative Group on Ministry among Children published the report *The Child in the Church*. Since then a working party has been exploring in greater depth some of the underlying theological and doctrinal assumptions of that report. The conclusions of the working party have now been published in the report *Understanding Christian Nurture*. A number of regional consultations have been held to introduce the report to people particularly concerned with Christian Education, and the committees and some of the District Christian Education and Children's Work Secretaries have had some preliminary discussions. A working party has been set up to consider the United Reformed Church's reaction to the report and its possible implications for our work.

23. **Co-operation with the Youth Committee** When we consider the number of concerns which we share with the Youth Committee, and some of the implications of the *Together* programme, it seems good to explore the possibility of further co-operation. The committees will meet to discuss this in the near future.

24. **Education Sunday** In 1982 this was celebrated on February 7th with material on the theme of *Jesus — Centre of Community*. We would remind Assembly that Education Sunday is a real opportunity for local churches to support Christian teachers, to show our concern for the standards of education generally, and to witness to the implications of the gospel for the education system.

25. Two other issues for which the Christian Education Committee has been given respon-

sibility by the Department are Co-ordinated Training and the Community of Women and Men in the United Reformed Church.

26. **Co-ordinated Training Programme** After a number of delays, it now seems possible for us to work towards a co-ordinated Training Programme, incorporating under one broad scope, elements of most of the major training programmes which we produce, and including other new material which will meet needs not met by present courses. The purpose of this will be to make courses and parts of courses more easily accessible to those interested, to simplify administration and tutoring, and to make much more economical use of our resources. The co-ordination of all that we produce is a complex task and will take some time. However, we hope to produce a draft scheme shortly. Most of the committees of the Church Life Department are co-operating in the working party which will produce the draft scheme for commendation to a future General Assembly.

27. **Community of Women and Men in the United Reformed Church** At its inception in 1972, the United Reformed Church was concerned to see that both women and men were free to play their full part in all aspects of the life of the church. Some of the special provisions then made have not been adhered to. In spite of the very real freedom which many women do have in our church, there may still be barriers. In the light of the concern in the World Council of Churches and the British Council of Churches, and in response to the frustration experienced by some of our church members and by fellow Christians in other denominations, it seemed right that a group should look at this issue within the United Reformed Church. That group is now working and will make its report to the next Assembly. Meantime the group would value information and comment from members of Assembly and others. Such comments should be sent to the Secretary for Christian Education.

28. Most of the work of the Christian Education and Children's Work Committees this year has been with on-going concerns, with some projects starting, some drawing to a close, and others in the middle stages of progress. We therefore have no specific recommendations to bring to the General Assembly this year, but we nevertheless hope that the Church will not be unaware of the importance of all that is done in the field of Christian Education.

PILOTS PANEL

Chairman: Mrs. Alma Kendall

Secretary and Master Pilot: The Revd Margaret T. Taylor

29. Pilots seem to be flourishing, with many people taking an increased interest and much activity at regional level and in camps and other meetings. 16 new companies were formed in 1981 and 5 more are in the course of formation. 6 have closed, unfortunately including one of the new ones which only lasted a few months. Statistics indicate 2,230 Pilots, 290 Officers in 137 churches (URC - 111, Congregational Federation - 12, Others - 14). Advocacy seems to be working, but the Panel and Officers want to encourage more people to understand the aims and methods of Pilots and hopefully form more companies.

30. Publications during the year have included *Guidelines for Camp Leaders*, and an information leaflet on *Pilots at 13+*. The latter arose from a concern expressed by Pilot Officers. Another concern, coming from some officers, was what we should do with those under the age of 7. The advice of the Panel was that Pilots was aimed for the 7s-13s and officers should try not to be involved in provision for younger children, but should try to encourage others to provide for the needs they had recognised.

31. The Panel is concerned to offer adequate training for officers, and plan to use the material which the Consultative Group for Ministry among Children is preparing, with an additional leaflet about Pilots.

32. The Panel would like to record with gratitude the service given to Pilots by the Revd Gordon Thompson, Chairman of the Panel from May 1979, who died suddenly in November 1981.

URC FORUM

Director: Revd Michael G. Dunford

Secretary: Mrs. Betty Taylor

33. Forum is an activity of the whole Church and continues to attract large numbers of people of all ages to the Swanwick Conference Centre in Derbyshire every August. The programme, developed over the years, provides an opportunity for a holiday in lovely surroundings combined with an experience of Christian worship, fellowship and learning.

34. In 1981 the theme was *The Church Expectant* led by the Revd Bernard Thorogood, and a full house appreciated the workshops in which ideas were explored in various imaginative ways. Evening activities both serious and lighthearted were enjoyed by all who came.

35. Applications for 1982 indicate the response is a continuing one, and we look forward to the visit of the Revd Dr. John Huxtable as leader, and Revd Donald Hilton who guides our worship. Our theme is *Believing Today* and the cost will be £55, with reductions for children as usual.

SUPPLEMENTARY MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: Dr. Richard D. Judd

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

36. Aims The Supplementary Ministries Committee has the task of serving and caring for Lay Preachers, Local Pastors, Church Related Community Workers and Deaconesses.

LAY PREACHERS

37. The committee is grateful to District Councils which have all now prepared lists of Lay Preachers for inclusion in the Register of Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers. 1,126 names are on this Register.

38. The Revision of the qualifying course for the URC Lay Preachers' Certificate *Exploring the Faith* has been printed, a Student Record Book introduced and the revised course is proving a worthwhile and stimulating experience for the 350 students working through the units. The course fee has been increased to a realistic figure of £25. The committee hopes that local churches and District Councils will give financial help to students when required. During the year 12 students completed the course. (Resolution 2)

39. The committee has anxieties about tutoring arrangements for *Exploring the Faith*. It is increasingly difficult to recruit tutors: the committee requests District Councils to review their tutoring arrangements for *Exploring the Faith*, perhaps in the context of tutoring arrangements for other courses (e.g. *Equipped to Teach*, Auxiliary Ministry, Youth Leaders), and in consultation with other denominations. The committee hopes that the introduction of a Church Life Department co-ordinated training programme will help resolve some of the problems of tutor-supply. (Resolution 3)

40. Some lay preachers have requested help with further training and the committee is, in consultation with other denominations, theological colleges, St. Andrew's Hall and the Open University, compiling a list of courses available at national level. The committee has requested Provinces to list local courses at colleges of further education, etc., and make them known to lay preachers.

41. In response to a 1981 Assembly resolution, the committee has, in consultation with the Local Preachers Studies Board of the Methodist Church, initiated the preparation of an Introductory Course to the *Exploring the Faith Course*. This should be available in autumn 1983.

42. A Lay Preachers lapel badge for Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers is available (£1 including postage).

43. The seventh Shergold Expository Sermon Competition was held in 1981. There were 24 entrants and the prize-winners were:

1. Dr. J. Alun Jones (Rhiwbina, Cardiff)
2. Miss Margaret Beard (Penistone, Sheffield)
3. Mrs. E. M. Crabtree (Cullingworth, West Yorkshire)

The 1982 competition will be based on the Bible passage II Corinthians 8; vv. 1-9 (text verse 9) "The poverty and the riches of Christ". Lay Preachers are invited to submit a sermon by June 30th.

44. New leaflets in the series *Lay Preaching Matters* were produced during the year:

How to Receive a visiting Lay Preacher (for Church Secretaries), *Preparing a Sermon, Leading Prayers*.

Further leaflets, in preparation, will be distributed through the Information Service.

45. The committee has received several requests for clarification about the role of Lay Preachers, and the practice of Lay Celebration of the Sacraments, should the proposed Covenant between the URC, the Church of England, the Moravian Church and the Methodist Church take place. The committee has sought the advice of the General Secretary of the United Reformed Church and communicated this to enquirers.

LOCAL PASTORS

46. The committee recommended that after Assembly 1983, those whose names appear on the List of those eligible to be placed on the Register of Local Pastors (but who are not in pastoral charge) should remain on that List. Any persons on the List wishing to take pastoral positions after 1983 should apply to become Auxiliary Ministers, but their qualifications, training and experience should be taken into account when assessing the extra training required.

(Resolution 4)

47. The committee recommend that after 1983 those Local Pastors still on the Register of Local Pastors remain so until they resign or retire.

(Resolution 5)

DEACONESES

48. The committee agreed to the request of the Bromley District Council that Miss Kay Salvage (our one serving deaconess) be given the same opportunity which ministers have, to say how she sees her work at Crossway Central Mission, London, developing and when she feels she is called to move elsewhere.

49. The committee maintains contact with 4 retired deaconesses and has had the pleasure of making them a small gift at Christmas.

50. The committee were informed of the death, on August 8th, 1981, of Mrs. Ivy Ramsay, a Church Sister in the Resbyterian Church of England from 1957 to 1963.

CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORKERS

51. Miss Gillian Robinson was commissioned by the Bradford District Council and inducted as a member of the ministerial team of the Central Bradford Baptist Fellowship with special responsibility for work among the Asian Community in Bradford.

52. Miss Gillian Cressey and Miss Mary Williams continue their training as Church Related Community Workers. The committee welcomes the considerable interest shown by many churches about the possibility of CRCW's for a variety of situations; the committee has also been pleased to receive several enquiries from potential candidates for training as CRCW's. However, the URC cannot at present supply the needs of all the churches for these workers; it may be possible for other, suitably trained, personnel to fill some of the vacancies for CRCW's, but the development of the CRCW programme depends upon the interest and goodwill of the Church, the availability of suitably motivated candidates, and the continued availability of funds to assist with the costs of training.

CHAPLAINS AND STUDENTS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Leslie Green

Secretary: The Revd Peter C. Jupp

53. **The Contemporary Situation** The last year has seen tragic evidence of a loss of direction and purpose in higher education, profoundly disturbing to staff and students and with incalculable social and economic costs. No one can pretend that Higher Education does not carry responsibility for attitudes which have made it difficult to respond to a unique situation and the experience of all involved; how to maintain values and priorities in a period of unplanned cut-back. This has made intense demands upon Christians involved. For, as in other human enterprises, the weak and the powerless suffer most. To articulate a deep care for Higher Education and a commitment to the Gospel cannot be easy, when the search for truth is subservient to mere utilitarian objectives and when Christian speech and action seek to grapple with the serious and essential issues.

54. **Chaplains** In this context, fifty-seven URC Ministers and two lay preachers work as part-time Chaplains. Eight URC Ministers have full-time appointments and there are two overseas Chaplains. A number of Methodist and Baptist Ministers also exercise pastoral care on behalf of the URC. It is difficult to estimate the value of co-operation with personnel of other denominations for in many colleges this enhances the effectiveness of the energies our Chaplains are able to devote. Some Chaplains are exploring the possibilities for fuller-time Free Church Chaplaincy but funding is a major problem. This year plans have been evolving for Free Church Chaplaincies at Aston and Bristol Universities and for ecumenical Chaplaincy at the Polytechnic of Wales, Treforest.

55. This year the Revds David Cornick, David Flynn, Kenneth Hibberd, Roy Hughes, Robert Norris and David Sparks left Chaplaincy work for other duties. The Revd Ronald Speirs has moved after twenty years at Cambridge and Alwyn Davies has retired after twenty-eight years at Aberystwyth. We thank each of these for the dedication to Chaplaincy work that they have shown. We have welcomed the Revds Michael Arguila (Chelmsford CHE), Miss Christine Flashman (City University, London), Ian Fosten (University of East Anglia), David Fowles (Aston University), Hugh St. John Gray (Aberystwyth), Sean Larkin (Durham University), and Paul Pells (Liverpool University).

56. We would draw attention to two recent appointments, that of Miss Barbara How, as Free Church Chaplain, part-time, to Westfield College, London, a former University Hostel Warden and our only lady Chaplain; and that of the Revd Alastair Logan to Exeter University, an Auxiliary Minister who is a member of the Theological Faculty there.

57. **The Committee** has met three times this year, at Oxford, London and Sheffield. We say farewell to David Bedford, Anne Jones, Jane Kendall, Dudley Paterson and to Peter Jupp who has been Secretary since 1978.

58. The Committee's role is to foster the work of individual Chaplains and Chaplaincies in

the religious formation of both Students and Staff and in their Christian contribution to the Institutions in which they work.

59. The Religious Formation of Students A priority with many of our Chaplains is the pastoral care of URC students. A survey in 1980-81 revealed that for every two names sent direct to Chaplains from local churches in our Link-Up, the Chaplains discovered another five by other means, sometimes where the Chaplains are able to use the colleges mailing to first year students. Encouraged by Assembly discussion in 1981 we returned to the centralised Link-Up system. 355 students have been commended. We must stress again that the best time for a Chaplain to make contact with a student is during the first week of term. Many Chaplains like to write individually to a student before term starts. Increasing numbers of colleges will not supply Chaplains and other non-staff with student's addresses. We would emphasise the enormous help to Chaplains if local churches can send names and addresses before term begins.

60. It is our policy to encourage the formation and growth of URC student Societies and of those ecumenical societies in which URC students may be involved. Events for students are also arranged on a wider basis. During the year, a day for Northern URC students was arranged at Leeds by Robin Hine. The 1982 National URC Students Conference entitled *Mission Impossible?* was held at Manchester and run by David Bedford, Jane Kendall and Simon Oxley. The next national Student Christian Congress (NSCC) is planned for 1983 and the Management Committee includes Bethan Davies and David Lawrence. Jim Neary is organising a student visit in Geneva in July.

61. Support of Chaplains There have been five mailings to Chaplains during this year including three editions of our Newsletter. The 'Higher Education lunch' is now a feature of the Assembly programme. The biennial URC Chaplains Conference was attended by 20 of our Chaplains. The Conference was held at Oxford simultaneously with the Baptist Chaplains and the Revd Caryl Micklem arranged accommodation with members of his congregation at St. Columbas. Our guests were Dr. Oliver Barclay of the UCCF (Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship), Dr. Jim Murray of CCOS (Churches Commission on Overseas Students) and the Revd Kennedy Thom, Secretary for Anglican Chaplains.

62. We are grateful to Provincial Link-men who are particularly concerned with vacancies in Chaplaincy situations at local level. The committee Officers are in touch with individual Chaplains in a number of cases.

63. Aids to Chaplaincy to Higher Education Our Chaplains value the help of a number of organisations designed to aid campus ministry. The Denominational Secretaries for Chaplaincy meet quarterly to review Chaplaincy situations and they organise an annual training course for new appointees. The Church Life Department has expressed its concern for the National Ecumenical Agency for Further Education (NEAFE) by making a grant of £150. The World Church and Mission Department gives an annual grant (£250 this year) to the Churches Commission on Overseas Students. Increasingly CCOS has become the focal point for the British Churches to express their concern for overseas students. The Government's implementation of its proposal to charge overseas students for NHS treatment has been delayed due to pressure brought to bear by organisations including CCOS. The Government has also been pressured from many quarters to reconsider its full fees policy for overseas students, especially for those coming from Developing and Commonwealth Nations. As a result there has been some amelioration of this policy.

64. A number of our Chaplains and students are actively involved in Christian Unions (UCCF) which is the largest and most active organisation at work among students in the country at the present time. Meanwhile there is encouraging news of the continuing revival of the Student Christian Movement (SCM). A discussion paper entitled *A URC contribution to the future of SCM* was circulated in January.

65. The Student Christian Movement Since the depressing situation of the early 1970's there has been a steady growth in SCM. The National Student Christian Congress was founded in 1975 as a joint venture by Chaplains and the Movement. Community student houses provided

growth points in six University towns. The number of SCM groups began to grow. The major denominations, including the URC, successively restored the grants they had previously withheld. There are now 19 SCM groups, with 21 associated groups, and the SCM is strongest in Scotland.

66. In this encouraging atmosphere, SCM set up a Review Group whose three major recommendations were accepted by the AGM in September 1981. First, the office of General Secretary is to be restored, to succeed the present central staff. Second, the financial situation is to be tackled by a tough policy of economies. Third, student participation is to be increased: an elected General Council is to replace the General Assembly as the main decision-making body. On a wider front, study and prayer continue to be promoted. The International Day of Prayer for Students has been restored, on Education Sunday in February. The theme of *Prophecy* has been adopted for study over the next two years.

67. The committee sees the renewal of the SCM tradition as a valuable vehicle for the Churches' contribution to Higher Education. It believes that this is the time for vigorous encouragement of and commitment to the Movement. The committee seeks help for SCM in two ways: with money and with active goodwill. The Church Life Department has raised its grant to £330 for 1982. Former SCM members in our churches are invited to take out subscriptions as Senior Friends. At the same time, local ministers, Chaplains and URC members of staff are invited to become Senior Friends to local SCM branches. The establishment and growth of more local SCM branches is vital. (Resolution 6)

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Duncan Wilson

Secretary: The Revd Paul Quilter

68. 1981 has been an interesting year for the Youth Committee, various sub-committees, the Activities Committee, and for all personnel involved in the youth work of the Church. At the beginning of November the Revd John Oldershaw was succeeded by the Revd Paul Quilter as Youth Secretary.

69. **Structure** We begin by looking at the Youth Committee and its sub-committees. During the past year a good proportion of energy has been given to critical self-examination, checking out aims and objectives. Where these were rather woolly, a firming up process has taken place. Sub-committees have been examined and redefined and in the case of the International Affairs Committee, axed. The overall exercise has proved to have been very worthwhile. We have rediscovered the value of small groups and are moving away from formal committees wherever appropriate.

70. **The Youth Office** With the arrival of the new Youth Secretary a review of what we expect that person to do has been set in motion. Coupled with this, attention is being given to the questions of how best we might administer the affairs of the Youth Committee; how the Committee's finances are managed and how fund-raising for the YLTos might be organised. We hope at the end of all of this to be able to support the work of the Church more effectively.

71. **Youth Leadership Training Officers** Our major concern must be that of the Youth Leadership Training Officers programme. Ron Forster, Bernard Grimsey and Roger Tolman have been doing excellent work throughout the year and we are delighted that the team has been strengthened with the arrival of Ivan Andrews serving the Southern and Wessex Province. He commenced his duties at the beginning of 1982.

72. By the end of this year the YLTO programme may well be running into deficit and we have to face the reality that the long-term future of the programme must be in serious doubt unless the Church as a whole takes the need for training, and people with the skills to give that training, far more seriously than it does at present.

73. In some areas of our Church life work amongst the young people is nil. The Youth Committee is very anxious about this situation and is keen to establish creative youth work at local levels and district and provincial level. There is little doubt that in some areas the situation is critical. The Youth Committee believes that urgent action must be taken and therefore some firm decisions on the YLTO programme must also be considered. The Church must answer the question "What place do teenagers have in our Church and what resources are we prepared to find to enable them to take up that place?" The Youth Committee is deeply encouraged by the way the Church takes seriously its young people and tries to ensure that they take an active part in the Church of today. We would want to stress, however, that our young people are also very much the Church of the future. They will be providing the leadership and the ministry that the Church requires. The General Assembly is to be asked to make decisions that will enable the Youth Committee to give more support to those areas where the need is greatest. (Resolution 7)

74. **Zambia/India Project** We would like to draw attention to the Zambia/India Project. Last year's report contained a full account and this year will see the fruits of labour. Plans are well in hand. In the summer 12 young people from each of these two countries are to experience life in Britain and the life of the United Reformed Church.

75. **Human Spirituality** There is a growing movement of interest sweeping the country. This has manifested itself in many quarters, not all from the Church. Young people are asking penetrating questions about the spiritual dimension of their lives and how that spirituality is expressed. Our Uniformed Organisations have been drawn into this debate and the Scouts have produced a written report and so too have the National Council for Voluntary Youth, to name but two.

76. Spirituality and the Christian faith is a prominent interest amongst our young people and this has been a matter of growing interest within the Youth Committee. A resolution came from the FURY Assembly 1981 requesting that we should turn our attention to this matter and so the idea of a Worship Project has developed. The simple aim is that every major service in our churches, hopefully on Sunday 27th February 1983, should be conducted by young people. The build up to this event will be an extensive training programme giving ample opportunity to explore the nature of worship and how we express ourselves spiritually.

77. The Youth Committee would like the General Assembly to adopt this project and in doing so to recognise that it is not just the young people's project. It cannot work unless the whole Church is involved and it depends on the involvement of ministers, lay preachers, elders and church members in the preparation of each act of worship. (Resolution 8)

78. **Activities** There is an expansion in nationally organised projects. 1981 saw two Adventure Camps and two Camp Project Wales in order to accommodate more people. New projects are developing. Hopefully some of our young people will have attended an event immediately prior to the General Assembly enabling them to look at the issues the Church is to give its attention to during Assembly week. The *Time for God* volunteer scheme continues to grow rapidly.

79. **District and Provincial Secretaries support** The most important aspect of the Youth Committee's work is that of giving support to District and Provincial Youth Secretaries and to those working within local situations. We believe this priority to be the right one and it has led to a FURY Assembly decision that in 1982 Regional meetings are to be arranged for District Youth Secretaries and Provincial Youth Secretaries. In 1983 a national event for Secretaries is to be organised and in 1984 an invitation will be given for them to attend FURY Assembly.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd John B. Simpson

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

80. **Conclusion** It is important to emphasise how lucky we are in the United Reformed Church. The young people we have are deeply concerned about God's world and their place in it. They care about the United Reformed Church and other denominations. Things they say are worthy of our attention.

81. It is twelve years since Alvin Toffler published *Future Shock*, a devastating critique of a stage in mankind's history which he called, 'a study of man's bewilderment in the face of accelerating change.' The future he claimed was arriving too fast, and we were unprepared for its arrival. Change was accelerating, people were resigned to live with the future, and Toffler was downright pessimistic about the chances of sane survival. It would not be difficult to see that analysis and that response mirrored in church life.

82. This is the time when Christians are bound to rediscover and to assert afresh their belief in the God of history, and therefore their hope for the future.

83. Christians worship a Creator who never ceases to create; from that belief in the unceasing activity of God Christianity distinguishes itself from other religions.

84. We know that the history of the Church is like that of the ebb and flow of the tide; it may be that another wave is already breaking upon the shore — **that** is not the time to bury our heads in the sand.

85. Christian Stewardship prepares a church for its future, for it examines under Christ, the resources it has and therefore the means of renewal.

86. By decision of the 1981 General Assembly, the Christian Stewardship Committee was established as an Assembly Committee within the Church Life Department. The committee considered its own aim, bearing in mind the aim of the Department and agreed that the 'aim of the Christian Stewardship Committee is to continue to challenge each person, each local church, each district, each Province, each committee and each Department of the United Reformed Church to assess the maximum potential of all resources available to the whole people of God for doing the work of Christ'.

87. During the year the committee has sought to implement its aim in the following ways:

- i) by encouraging local churches to embark upon stewardship programmes;
- ii) by helping 'service' such programmes with material and secretarial time;
- iii) preparing and producing material for use in stewardship programmes.

88. The Christian Stewardship Committee have during the past year:

1. **Stewardship in Rural Churches** In co-operation with the MEW at Home Committee arranged a most successful consultation with the following aims:

- to put rural churches on the URC's agenda;
- to listen to hopes, frustrations, problems, potentials;
- to share ideas;
- to consider local groups;
- to assess potential of lay leadership;
- for mutual support and encouragement;
- to ask 'What is the purpose of the local rural church?'
- to consider ways in which the proposed Covenant can help the Christian Church in rural areas.

20 people from the Wessex Province and 8 people from the South Western Province attended along with members of the MEW at Home and Stewardship Committees.

89. During the course of the consultation, some of the urgent needs were expressed as follows:—

- (a) Remembering that there are 850 URC rural churches, there is **need** for some method of communication of ideas between them.
- (b) **Need** for assessment and evaluation of 'groups' of churches now operating in rural areas (Group pastorates etc.)
- (c) **Need** to draw out and use the 'talent' already in rural churches. Each congregation is a team. There is **need** to identify a person or a group of people in each rural church, encourage and train them to exercise leadership roles.
- (d) **Need** to consider the training and use of auxiliary ministers in rural situations.
- (e) **Need** to develop a whole range of courses to give people the skills they want and need for leadership in rural churches.
- (f) **Need** to offer training to stipendiary ministers for work in rural churches.

90. Concern was expressed about the following:

- i) 'Little' churches in rural areas feel they are not understood by the wider church.
- ii) It is harder to 'minister' in a group situation.
- iii) It is more expensive to 'minister' in a group situation (travel etc.)
- iv) The URC District organisation has not yet discovered the answers to many questions about rural churches (e.g. Can five members still be the church?).

91. This Pilot Consultation expressed the hope that more opportunities will be provided through District and Provincial structures to enable representatives from rural churches to meet together and share mutual concerns and opportunities. In the first instance it is recommended that both the Wessex and South Western Provinces arrange further consultations.

92. **2. Christian Education Committee** The Committee met with representatives of the Christian Education Committee to consider our relationship within the Church Life Department. It is hoped to continue conversations seeking ways of co-operation until a more suitable committee structure is devised to carry through the necessary areas of work involved.

93. **3. Requests from the General Assembly 1981** Following the report of the Christian Stewardship Committee to Assembly two questions were raised by members of Assembly:

'Can the Christian Stewardship Committee give guidance on:

- (a) How to be a Christian in the world?
- (b) The stewardship of Spiritual Gifts?

The committee considered the questions and consulted widely among our own and other denominations. The Committee discussed the replies received and felt there was an abundance of resource material provided by the United Reformed Church, other denominations, and the British Council of Churches on many of the issues involved in (a) above. Kits, pamphlets, papers, resolutions etc. were produced by churches to help members 'live Christianly in the world'. A problem seems to be that local churches are not providing opportunities for groups of Christians to meet together to help each other bring their Christian insights on the issues of the day. With regard to (b) above the stimulating paper written by the Revd Roger Whitehead will be produced as an 'occasional paper' and distributed through the INFORMATION SERVICE.

94. **4. Video** In response to the request of the Church Life Department to

- (a) explain the potential of video tapes; and
- (b) suggest the way forward in the development of the production and use of video tapes;

the committee considered a paper prepared by the Secretary and the responses from various people and other Departments of the URC, and plan to convene a working party to consider how the URC should approach 'video', remembering the need to co-operate with other interested people.

95. The BCC Conference for World Mission are considering the developing of video in education and recommend that any equipment purchased should be of the VHS type; and the setting up of an ecumenical video unit at a cost of £35,000 for equipment and £25,000 per year for salaries.

96. **5. URC Training Centre** During the year the committee has considered the need for a residential lay training centre (possibly on the St. Ninian's Crieff model) and it is recognised that a properly equipped and staffed establishment would be costly. It is felt in the Department that the idea ought to be further explored, and comments would be welcomed from individuals, churches and districts. That response might indicate that a feasibility study should be undertaken.

97. **6. Co-ordinated Training Programme** The committee is sharing in the working party setting up a co-ordinated scheme of training to serve most of the training needs of the Church. The scheme will be flexible enough to cope with different demands.

98. **7. British Council of Churches Stewardship Committee** The committee shares fully in the work of the BCC Christian Stewardship Committee who continue to encourage member Churches at each level to review their present stewardship policies and practices in the light of the wider context presented in the report *Christian Stewardship in the 1980's*. The BCC committee is at present collating Christian Stewardship material produced by member Churches and is pursuing its consideration of the interaction between the study of major social/theological issues and the practice of Christian Stewardship.

99. **8. Christian Stewardship programmes** The committee continues to receive encouraging reports from churches engaged in Christian Stewardship programmes with its five themes of WORSHIP — PRAYER — INVOLVEMENT — GIVING — LEARNING. Members of the committee will gladly help local churches embark upon Christian Stewardship programmes.

DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Brian O. Johanson

Secretary: The Revd Dr. Colin P. Thompson

100. During the past year the committee has completed several pieces of work. The Order of Worship for the Commissioning of a Church-Related Community Worker has been published, and offprints of the Communion, Baptism/Confirmation, Infant Blessing and Wedding Services are now available, together with a leather-bound edition of the Book of Services. Certificates have been prepared for Infant Blessing and for Baptism and Confession of Faith/Confirmation.

101. The first of the projected *Guideline* booklets is now ready for press: it deals with the vexed question of Church Discipline, and has been written by the Revd Dr. Alan Sell. It is hoped that at least every Elders' Meeting will buy one. These booklets are intended to deal with a variety of important issues in church life: those on the Lord's Supper and Baptism are being drafted, and two more, on the devotional life and on ways of reading the Bible, are proposed. The committee has also been asked to produce the *Scripture Readings* lectionary, formerly used in the Churches of Christ, and it believes this will provide a valuable resource for the Church. It

is based on the lectionary of the Joint Liturgical Group, the occasional publications of which the committee would like to be more widely known and used in the URC; and it will also include the Partners in Learning readings.

102. The committee has spent much time on the Covenant, though without coming to any particular conclusions, since it had not been asked to. It has also examined the Welsh Covenant.

103. But undoubtedly the major and most searching issue of the year has been **baptism**. Each attempt to solve a particular problem has been fraught with difficulties arising from contemporary confusion about the theology of baptism in general, and the existence of two distinctive traditions within the URC, as well as a wide range of attitudes. Particular attention needs to be paid to Reformed thinking in other parts of the world, and to the large number of recent studies of the subject at an ecumenical level. The problems centre on the question of infant blessing and baptism for committed Christian parents and for non-members; whether baptism itself is church membership, and its relation to confession of faith/confirmation and to membership of the local congregation as we have understood it, for those baptised as infants or adults. Although the committee has before it draft guidelines on the baptism of non-members' children and had hoped to bring them to the 1982 Assembly, it has judged it right to leave these until further work has been done on the areas of difficulty, since these are fundamental and will determine the nature of the guidance given.

104. **Human sexuality** has continued to feature in the committee's discussions. It commends the British Council of Churches' report *God's Yes to Sexuality* (ed. Rachel Moss, Collins, Fount Paperbacks, 1981) to church members for individual study, for its open treatment of different issues and attitudes. It is hoped that a working party from the Church Life and Church and Society Departments will produce a revised and expanded study pack on sexuality, with a more positive concentration on people rather than problems, and with new material, for example on the rapidly changing place of women in society. The committee is itself acutely aware of its almost exclusively male membership, and is most anxious to remedy the imbalance.

105. **The theology of art** continues to be discussed, and although the committee cannot yet say in what form any conclusions might be presented to the Church, it is clear that this has uncovered an important and neglected part of our discipleship. All our worship, however plain, is 'art', and over the last 200 years this has become more explicit, to the distress of a few and to the enrichment of others. Our doctrine of creation and human creativity has been unsatisfactory, and transcendence has won out over immanence. We need to enter into the more symbolic modes of worship of other traditions and listen to those (even among us) who find music or painting, for example, more conducive to communion with God than our worship. The committee would like to encourage local congregations to make closer contact with and wider use of those practicing the arts in their locality, since churches often have good facilities and creative artists often have a religious dimension to their work.

106. **The Hymnody Group** has resumed the monitoring of new hymns submitted to it, and a commentary on New Church Praise has been published. Given the number of joint URC-Methodist congregations, we are glad to learn that, in spite of the breakdown over the new Methodist hymnbook, URC membership of the Hymn Book Committee will continue on a personal basis.

107. **The URC Guild of Organists and Choirmasters** now in its tenth year, reports continuing support for its regional meetings, with a well-attended AGM and a visit to St. Paul's, where Christopher Dearnley played some of the Royal Wedding music. The Guild Review appears three times a year. Following a very stimulating one-day school led by the Director of the Royal School of Church Music, the Guild is intending to set up a series of day schools with R.S.C.M. experts on hymn accompaniment, recognising its central part in our worship, and it is planning to establish an advisory panel to help churches which have problems with their instruments.

108. Apart from work remitted to it, the committee receives a good number of direct enquiries from local churches each year, and it would like to encourage them to do this when they feel it appropriate.

MINISTRY OF HEALING COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd David Dale

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

109. **Introduction** During the past year the committee has been urged to consider how far its work relates to the agreed aims of the Church Life Department in terms of enabling our people of all ages 'to worship God, to engage in God's mission in the world and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ'. Recognising that worship is the most distinctive and characteristic function of the Christian Church, we have maintained that our concern for health and healing should be reflected in the total liturgy of the Church. Where this has happened we believe worship has been heightened and it has had noticeable effects in the life of the worshippers.

110. **Health, a goal to be achieved collectively** If our churches are to make a productive impact upon the communities in which they are set, our primary concern must be with how to achieve health and not only how to cure disease. This leads us to work together with others who are concerned for the greater well-being of society, to think new thoughts and to respect the personhood and skills of others. It involves us in responsibility for social change and a re-thinking of community medicine. This broad approach puts us on our guard when we see attempts to nibble away at the resources of the National Health Service. It also makes us ask questions about the development of high-technology medicine where this seems to diminish the personal approach to individuals or detract from the possibility of encouraging people to discover health resources within, and for, themselves. It rouses our concern for the casualties of an unhealthy economy, urges us to consider the effects joblessness has upon the jobless and the social, psychological and spiritual results of a life destitute of meaning.

111. All this makes the individual Christian consider carefully what his faith means if he is not to become content with a purely individualistic salvation and with simplistic answers to complex problems. This is often disconcerting but it is the only way in which both the individual and the church can achieve 'the fullness of Him who fills all in all'.

112. **Critics of the broad approach** Members of the committee are aware that this broad approach to health and healing can lead to criticism from at least two sources: firstly, those who suggest that this line of approach enables us to evade the hard questions, such as why some are healed and some are not; secondly, those who feel threatened because the committee may be assuming a right to dabble in spheres which are already the concern of others. (There are those also who complain that we have not dealt with some aspect of healing that is of vital importance to them). To the first we have to declare that we often have no final answer to the hard questions. With others we can only travel the humble path of faith. To the second we simply ask for patience and understanding. The search for what constitutes health and healing in human beings is inevitably broad and complex. We believe that the concern with these matters is essential to the life of our churches and that there is probably no more important task facing both our churches and society in the modern world than this search for true health and healing. Moreover it is a task which both Christians and non-Christians must face together.

113. **National Conference on Health and Healing** All this was part of our concern at the first URC National Conference on the Healing Ministry held at Swanwick from 18th-20th September last year. It was partly to assess the variety of experiences of healing ministry developing in our churches and partly to consider future developments and how we could encourage and support one another in this work. John Richards reminded us of Tom Smailes' words that it is difficult to be 'afire' and 'mature' and suggested that a conference of this kind was designed to help us overcome this particular difficulty. This address, far ranging in its scope and helpful in its presentation, proved extremely popular and copies have been made available from Tavistock Place. Peter McIntosh gave a lively and humorous address, one characterised by considerable insight, on the healing ministry in the local church.

114. 180 people, of whom 24 were ministers, joined together in seminars and sessions to con-

sider such issues as counselling and medicine, grief and loss, health and handicap, as well as studying the two study packs produced by the committee. The Conference indicated that at grass roots level there is a widespread concern that the church should be better informed about, and more involved in, an effective healing ministry.

115. Churches' Council for Health and Healing Conference In July of last year the CCHH held a very successful conference 'Health for the Eighties'. This was remarkable for the diversity and range of representation and also for the professionalism and expertise, of its impressive line-up of speakers. The drawing together of 300 people from so many strands of health and healing had never been attempted before in this country. That it was possible to do so in such a successful manner served to underline the widespread concern today for a deeper base for health care in our country.

116. 'Health and Healing' — a new magazine One of the results of that conference is that a new magazine, sponsored by the Churches' Council for Health and Healing, will be published twice a year at a cost of 50p a copy, postage included. It will aim to speak to the person in the pew about the Church's role in health and healing. Enquiries about the magazine should be directed to the Editor, the Revd David Goodacre, St. Mary's Vicarage, Ovingham, Prudhoe, Northumberland.

117. Publications Five years ago we produced our first Study Kit *Health and Healing*. Since then, 2,000 copies have been sold and the demand for it, from both within and outside our own denomination, continues. It has been agreed that before reprinting, the material should be considerably revised and enlarged. The various leaflets: *Why has this happened to me?*, *Death and the Christian*, *Response to grief and loss*, *Going into Hospital*, *The Role of the congregation in the work of healing*, *The URC and the Ministry of Healing*, and the booklet *In Hospital*, all continue to be in demand. The *Church and Community Health* study action pack is being used as a second stage after a group has worked through the first study kit.

118. A discussion paper, *The National Health Service*, has been produced to encourage local churches, District Councils and Synods to give consideration to the way in which local congregations and individual church members can help maintain, improve, and possibly broaden, the range of the National Health Service.

119. Filmstrip Healing in the Local Church To enable our churches to see how the ministry of healing can be worked out at the local level, a filmstrip, *Healing in the Local Church*, has been produced. This filmstrip, which can be made up into slide format, is accompanied by a script and paper on how to use the material. This is now available and copies can be purchased from Tavistock Place.

120. Hospital Chaplains Whilst we emphasise that Christ's commission to heal was intended for everyone and not just those professionally engaged in this ministry, we do not forget the tremendous contribution made by our hospital chaplains. We recognise that there must be times when, in spite of much talk about 'the caring team', they feel isolated and apart and with little obvious encouragement from the local churches. It is our hope that they will let the committee know of ways in which we can support them in their immensely important work.

121. Co-operation with others The attention being given to health and healing in all denominations is now visibly increasing. It is our hope that ecumenical co-operation can be achieved in this developing field, partly to avoid duplication of effort but also to encourage a co-ordinated approach. Two of our committee members represent the URC on the Churches' Council for Health and Healing and we have arranged for cross representation on the Methodist and Baptist Healing Committees.

122. Human Sexuality The committee welcomes the opportunity of working together with representatives of the Doctrine and Worship Committee and Church and Society Department in looking again at questions of human sexuality. We believe that there are theological and sociological considerations relating to sexuality which need to be discussed more openly, and in a more informed way, amongst our people.

123. **Ministerial Training** The committee is anxious to have some assurance from those who have responsibility for these matters that those training for our ministry should have some adequate training in counselling as part of their preparation for the ministry. We are also concerned to hear reports from theological students of all denominations that they have only minimal teaching and training about the Church's Ministry of Healing. It is our experience that few people reject the healing ministry of the Church when they know what it really is. But there are many misunderstandings to be cleared away and much to be done both in our theological colleges and our churches if the Church is to meet the needs thrown up by a society which has never been more concerned about health and the wide range of therapies which are becoming available outside the Health Service.

124. **The National Health Service and Alternative Medicine** With rapidly rising costs of the National Health Service, increasing pressure upon hospital and general practitioner services, and the disillusionment of many with high technology medicine, there is an understandable trend today towards alternative forms of therapy. More and more people are consulting osteopaths, healers, homeopaths, acupuncturists and other practitioners of alternative medicine. There are an estimated 7,800 full and part-time professional therapists in Britain today (equivalent to 28% of the number of G.P's) and the number is increasing at the rate of 11½% a year. Many are attracted by the claim that these forms of therapy treat the whole person. Others by the fact that the practitioners seem to be able to give time to the individual which practitioners in the Health Service just do not have. The question arises as to just what recognition should be given to such alternative forms of therapy and how far they should be available on a National Health Service. In Holland and Australia, government commissions have been set up to examine these questions and some forms of alternative medicine are now being registered under boards set up by individual state governments. Is there a model here for Britain to consider? Do we need government funding for research and information about such forms of therapy and then a possible opening up of the National Health Service for properly qualified and recognised practitioners?

(Resolution 9)

125. **Healing and the Gospel** A television series, *The Medicine Man*, examined the claims and practices of eight of the leading therapies of natural medicine. The book of the series ends with a cartoon showing an anxious looking medico entering the portals of the Royal College of Physicians and saying to the official on the door, 'Terrible news! An infallible cure for everything has been discovered!' We know all too well that there is no such thing as an infallible cure for everything. We know that there are no infallible healers. We also know Jesus healed and taught his disciples to preach the Gospel and heal the sick. We know that you cannot separate body, mind and spirit; you cannot separate the individual from the community in which he is set or the sickness of that community. We also know that 'health' for the Christian is always secondary to a true faith in, and a living relationship with God.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Leslie Newbigin

Secretary: The Revd Michael G. Dunford

126. **Introduction** Throughout the year we have carried out our responsibilities by organising Enquirers' and Assessment Conferences, giving oversight to students in training and attending to their grants, sharing in the appropriate committees of the colleges, giving advice in specific training situations, and by advancing the development of the Auxiliary Ministry. All this is in pursuit of our declared aims as a committee:

"to ensure that the United Reformed Church is served by an ordained ministry adequate in numbers and qualifications; to that end to make provision for recruitment and training (both initially and during the course of the ministry), and for the monitoring and maintenance of standards and procedures for selection, and to maintain contact with Ministerial Training courses of other churches."

AUXILIARY MINISTRY

127. With the arrival of the new Auxiliary Ministers who were formerly elders of the Reformed Association of the Churches of Christ, we reminded the Assembly last year of our intention to clarify the Working Guidelines for an Auxiliary Ministry. We need to take properly into account that model of ministry which is limited in its nature and scope. In so doing we can remind the Church of the varieties of ministry now available to us, within a controlled framework, so that each candidate is appropriately trained, and will be then subject to the authority of, and under the guidance of a District Council. (Resolution 10)

128. The number of students in training for the Auxiliary Ministry now stands at 65, and we are using a number of external training programmes as well as our own course. This will enable us to be flexible in our approach and make full use of the expertise gained over many years in other denominations as well as our own. Finance is always a problem these days, but we are seeking to make responsible use of all the resources available to the church both locally and then nationally, and we are seeing to it that no candidate has to suffer hardships. A sum of £15,000 p.a. has been set aside for these purposes by the Budget Committee.

129. Throughout the year the Board of Studies has worked very hard in setting up the administration and in providing materials so that this valuable and new ministry in the URC can develop, and we record our appreciation of their efforts. The initial work is now completed, and a new and smaller group will have the oversight of all our students in training.

MINISTERIAL RECRUITMENT POLICY

130. In 1979 the Church Life Department submitted a resolution which was not put to Assembly due to a general uncertainty about the ministry and finance. The text was as follows:

The Assembly resolves that in consultation with the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee and the Deployment Committee, the United Reformed Church should seek candidates for the full-time ministry at a recruitment level of 20% above replacement needs.

131. The following year the department considered it wise once more to respond to the mood of the Assembly and the matter was allowed to rest, but in 1981 a resolution submitted by the Thames North Synod was carried in the following terms:—

“The Assembly expresses its deep concern at the projected decrease in the number of ministers available to serve the churches and instructs the Church Life Department to prepare proposals for an effective programme for recruitment to the full-time and auxiliary ministries for consideration by the 1982 Assembly.”

132. As instructed therefore the Ministerial Training Committee has further considered the matter, taking into account changes in the situation since the original proposition for a campaign was undertaken, and now submits a report and recommendation.

133. The Ministerial Training Committee re-affirms that God Himself initiates vocations for the ministry of His Church. The function of recruitment therefore is to enable men and women to hear and respond to the call that He is already making.

134. The numbers entering the full time ministry of the URC have shown a slight improvement over the last 5 years, but this gives few grounds for satisfaction as the number was twice as high in the period 1955 – 1972. Currently the full time strength of all ministry in normal pastoral charge, and approved special ministries, and including former ministers of the Churches of Christ, numbers just over 800. The Deployment statistics indicate that the average loss each year through retirements, deaths and resignations amounts to 30. Meanwhile other records show an average entry into our ministry of 22 each year following normal training courses, but not all of these ministers work full time. There is therefore a need of at least 8 more new full time ministers a year solely to maintain our present levels of work.

135. Such an increase would still take no account of the desire for an extension of work in our denomination. Our Moderators were asked to assess their Provinces' current need for more full time ministry. Their informal response broadly bears in mind the churches' ability to fund each ministry but it indicates that an annual entry of 40 full time ministers are currently needed.

136. A significant new factor is Auxiliary Ministry, and that gives us cause for a greater optimism. Currently we have about 100 Auxiliary Ministers (most of whom were former elders of the Churches of Christ, and now continue to offer a limited local ministry), and there are over 60 in training who will eventually be released either for work in new spheres of ministry or for work in traditional pastoral situations. Our present experience indicates that there is no pressing need to commend this form of ministry, because it has already been done. There is no suggestion that this is a stop gap ministry in our current situation; this is a whole new pattern of service, in which we rejoice.

137. A worrying element in any such exercise is finance. We have to underwrite the costs of training all ministers; training costs are rising; and we are responsible for maintaining at a reasonable standard of living those serving in full-time pastorates. Whatever is recommended must take realistically into account both the anticipated costs of any numbers we propose, and the expected financial response from the churches.

138. We propose a Ministerial Recruitment Programme, that will enable us to advocate the challenge of and the call to the ministry, and to achieve a target figure of an average of 30 full time candidates per annum from all sources, thus maintaining our present work. We would hope that the majority of these would be young enough to offer to the Church the benefit of a full working life. In addition, we seek to increase the number of our ministers according to the response and need of the church, up to 10% on that figure, that is 3 more new ministers per year. This would start to meet the Provinces' need.

139. We would wish to draw attention to the report of the Review Group on Ministerial Training in the URC, and in particular its stress on the need for candidates of the highest dedication and calibre.

140. Recruitment policy should have both limited and long term objectives. Firstly it will be necessary to promote full time ministry in the current situation through a special programme lasting three years beginning in October 1982.

141. The front line of advocacy will be our ministers. Experience has indicated that in many cases it is ministers themselves who have made the initial challenge and asked the crucial question of those who eventually respond to God's call. We ask all ministers to consider what image of ministry they project and how best they can identify leadership and pastoral potential. We recommend advocacy in Provinces and Synods through the appropriate committees and at special events by FURY and the Youth Committee, in the universities through our Chaplains and through our theological students. We propose the use of appropriate literature, including an updated version of the booklet *More about the Ministry*.

142. We also recommend the setting up of a small task force to give help in recruiting and to be available to commend the needs of ministry locally; in vocational conferences, at URC gatherings in Swanwick, and Gear events, and at three special regional Vocational Conferences to be set up in Bristol, Nottingham and Newcastle, in addition to the normal Enquirers' Conferences.

143. We hope that this 3 year effort will have a substantial effect, and that thereafter continuing efforts will be made along similar lines as part of the normal programme of the Church.

144. Throughout there is a need to portray the Ministry as a really worthwhile vocation. We commend these recommendations with an earnestness borne out of a passionate concern for the adequate provision of leadership and pastoral care in our Church in the coming years, and in the belief that God will raise up those who can serve Him in this special work. (Resolution 11)

STUDENT GRANTS

145. The question of student grants has been given careful consideration, because practice has differed amongst the colleges, causing some confusion and also because we are having to operate in a climate of financial stringency both in the church and in the local authorities. Following consultations with staffs and student bodies, we have begun to revise our arrangements in what we hope to be a satisfactory way and taking due account of the need to respond to any recommendations contained in the report of the Review Group on Ministerial Training in the URC. We wish to provide grants from central funds that are determined on a realistic and equitable basis, and reflect the proper desire of the whole Church to care for students, and their dependents, during the training period.

COLLEGE REPORTS

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

146. **Membership 1981 – 82** The new URC intake consists of two men for the four-year course II, one for Course I, one for the 'Over 55' course IV, one man and one woman for the partly external course III and one man for a special programme of one year comprising a doctorate in New Testament studies and one year of pastoral training. The total number of students has remained steady but their distribution over the years is uneven. Women, as last year, form one third of the student number at Westminster College. Candidates for service as a deaconess and parish workers in the Church of England are to be at Ridley Hall and Westcott House on a regular basis. A woman ordained from the regional church of Oldenburg is with us for a year and a minister of the Uniting Church in Australia holds a Knight Scholarship from the Tasmanian Synod of that church. One of our own students is spending a year of her training as an exchange student at Columbia Seminary, Georgia (Presbyterian Church, U.S.).

147. **The Federation of Cambridge Theological Colleges** A Federation Council has been formed with staff and student representatives. Westcott House has a new Principal, Canon Rupert Hoare, with earlier experience at the ecumenical Queen's College, Birmingham. The new staff member at Ridley Hall, Dr. Douglas de Lacey, comes from New Testament teaching at the London Bible College. Help from the Federation staff and the ready co-operation of the Westminster staff team, academic and domestic, has made it possible for the Principal to fulfill his duties as Moderator of the General Assembly without anxiety about the college. In the series of sabbatical terms the Principal has been granted leave for the Easter Term, 1982, and will be going to New Zealand to deliver the Thomas Burns Memorial Lectures at the invitation of the University of Otago, home of the theological hall of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

148. **Commemoration** The 1982 Commemoration celebrations are to be held on 9th June with the Revd Professor Rheinalt Williams, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, as the preacher, and the lecture given by Principal Donald Sykes of Mansfield College on 'Christ and Culture : an Early Church Problem'.

149. **Pastoral Care and Spirituality** The College has been giving attention to improving the ways of providing pastoral care for students and the right means for developing a relevant spirituality. Bishop Samuel of the Church of South India is to spend two terms in Cambridge with a particular remit in this field.

150. **Settlements** Settlements during 1981 were as follows: Richard Helms, Llanidloes; Peter Trow, Ogmores Vale; Daphne Lloyd, South Croydon; Drummond Gillespie, Aveley and South Ockendon; Sheila Thorpe, Haydon Wick, Swindon; Richard Wiggins, South Somerset Group; Susan Daldorff, auxiliary minister in the Colchester group; Susan Nuttall, St. Columbia's and Keresley, Coventry. Tom MacMeekin, North Bolton group.

151. **URC Ordinands** (arranged according to their year of anticipated entry into ministry).

1982

Chris Baillie, B.Ed
 Irene Bligh MA
 Robert Brown
 Lysbeth Carrrol
 Jean Hall
 Lindsay Hassall, BA
 Kenneth Knight
 James Ryan
 (and external)
 Pat Wardle (ROM)

1983

Martin Ambler
 Stephen Brown, BA
 Derek Gardiner
 Frank Hall
 Rhona Jones, BA
 Ruth Mealand, BA
 Alan Pickles, BA
 Victor Ridgewell
 Timothy Roffe, BA
 Eileen Springbett
 Edward Symmons
 Clive Thomson
 Chris Wood
 (and external)
 Ann Cole

1984 +

David Hamblin
 Glyn Millington BA
 Graham Sweeney
 (and external)
 Jeffrey Armitstead
 David Jones
 Jennifer Millington, BA
 Timothy Poh, B.Sc.

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE, MANCHESTER

152. An increasing amount of training is now being done in the summer vacation. Eight students undertook industrial mission courses, five hospital Chaplaincy courses, six the Probation and After-Care Service, fourteen student pastorates. The new two-week preparatory studies course was introduced in September for new students, by which time the second group of students had begun their internship training.

153. **Internship Training** The evaluation of the internship programme undertaken at the end of the first year of training, in which students, staff, ministers and pastoral groups in churches participated, was very useful and learnings have been incorporated into this session's training. It was the opinion of all concerned that this new development in ministerial training is proceeding on the right lines. The College is grateful for the goodwill and support of all concerned, not least the ministers and their congregations who have become a vital extension of the College's training.

154. **Christian Leadership Course** The College and the Northern Baptist College are playing an important part in this new course. It is run under the aegis of the Manchester Christian Institute and provides a University-accredited course of training not only for Auxiliary candidates of the URC and Baptist churches, and Course 3 students of the URC, but also for lay persons. The Congregational Federation and the Moravian Church are also becoming involved. The course provides for six residential weekends a year, and has regional tutorial support groups. Auxiliary candidates do three years and Course 3 candidates do an extra residential year.

155. **College Review Group** Two ecumenical groups are following up the recommendations of the Report of the College Review Group. The one is exploring ways of extending the principle of contextual training, begun with internship training, into the secular world. The other group, comprising representatives of the four theological Colleges in Manchester and the Northern Ordination Course (Anglican), is considering the possibility of closer co-operation in ministerial training.

156. **Robert Reynolds Turner** We are sad to report the death earlier this year of Robert Turner, Principal Emeritus of our College in Manchester, formerly Tutor and acting Principal of Paton College, Nottingham, whom many will remember with great affection and profound respect.

157. **Settlements** W. A. Burgess, Holderness Road URC & East Hull URC; Ian S. Fosten, Ipswich Road URC & Lakenham URC Norwich; Christine Fowler and Roy Fowler, The Barnstaple Group with Great Torrington URC; Ronald Gates, Crescent Road, Churches of Christ & Marlowe Road URC Wallasey; Roger Jones, Pembroke Group URC; Sean Larkin, Claypath URC Durham; Michael Mewis, Dewsbury Road, Shipley URC; Mark Piper, St. Columba's with All

Saints URC, North Shields; Paul C. Snell, Cowbridge URC, Hertford; David Mc K. Taylor, Greenmount, Stubbins & Dundes URC, Bury; Christopher Weddle, Accrington, Haslingden & Great Harwood URC; Brenda Willis, Heaton URC, Bradford.

158. **Students in Training** Arranged according to the year of their expected entry into the ordained ministry:

1982	1983	1984	1985
E. Jane Dawson	David R. Bedford	Robert Barthram	Hazel Addy
Mark J. Fisher BA	Nigel M. Goodfellow	Robert J. Bushby	Beryl Chatfield
Brian S. Jolly	Richard J. Gill (Revd)	Christopher Ford	Martin Ross
Harry G. Lanham BA	Hilary Mansbridge	Richard Goddard	Darren Wimbleton
Beryl Lyde	Derek J. Morrill, BSc, Ph.D.	John A. Hardaker	
Clive J. Sutcliffe	Peter C. Noble	Martin Hazell	
Norman A. Whitaker	Timothy W. Royds	David Herbert BSc	
		Alex J. Jacob	
		David C. Phillips	
		John J. Roche	
		Robert Shallcross	
		Geoffrey Sharp BA	
		Nigel P. Uden	
		Philip Woods	

MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

159. **Students Out** of 30 people working in Theology, 20 are URC ordinands.

<i>Final year:</i>	Geoffrey Bending, BA	George Gibson, BD
	Ronald Ewart, BA	Kevin Watson, BA
	Kim Fabricius, BA	Alan Wise, MSc., D.Tech
<i>Second Year:</i>	Lesley Beale, BSc., MSc.	Molly Kenyon, BA
	David Fox, BSc	Sheila Maxey, MA (Joint course with King's College, London)
	James Gould	Patrick Taylor, MA
<i>First Year:</i>	Lesley Hughes, BA	Catherine Middleton, BA, Ph.D.
	Paul Dean, BA	
	Hazel Martell, B.Ed	
<i>Final Year: BA Theology:</i>	Susan Pierce	
<i>Course III:</i>	David Bending, Cert. Ed	Marie Roe, BA
	Patrice Sessions	

160. **Staff** There have been no changes in the year, though Dr. Merlyn Satrom is due to leave at the end. He has been an admirable Lutheran Fellow, much involved in the University and with the British Council of Churches, as well as whole-heartedly serving the College and the Lutheran Council of Great Britain.

161. **Settlements** Richard Church to Ewell; David Fowles to Birmingham Chaplaincy; Richard Wolff to Edmonton and Ponders End.

162. The Commemoration preacher was the Revd Kathryn M. Compston. Preachers at other services included the Revds Fergus Kerr, R. T. Brooks, R. W. Wilson, M. G. Dunford, Donald McIlhagga, Gordon Harris, Colin Evans and the Rt. Revd Patrick Rodger, Bishop of Oxford, together with six College tutors.

163. A new Pastoralia course has been added to the regular class to encourage ordinands to reflect upon their job experience and its relation to future ministry. The topics included probation, education, social work, sales practices and technology.

164. Mansfield continues its close relations with the other theological colleges in Oxford, training as they do about 300 students for ordination. The links with the Theology Faculty also remain firm.

165. The College continues to be grateful to local ministers who help in ordination training, the Revds Michael Jackson, Caryl Micklem, Donald Norwood, Alan Porter, John Robinson and Tom Stiff.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM

166. We continue to maintain links with the College. We are represented on their Board of Governors, and will be taking part in the Quinquennial Inspection in November this year. One student Andrew Francis is from the URC and he is in the final year of his training there.

167. STATISTICS

College	Total Nos. URC in training	New candidates for 1981-82	Entry into the URC Ministry 82.83.84.85	Actual number entered URC 1981	Total number of places available
Westminster Cambridge	30	9	9 14 3 4	9	61
Congregational Manchester	32	4	6 5 14 7	13	100
Mansfield Oxford	20	4	6 7 5 2	3	24
Queen's Birmingham	1		1		
TOTALS	83	17	21 27 22 13	25	185

168. VISIT TO THE COLLEGES IN WALES

In November a team consisting of the Revd Dr. J. I. Morgans, Revd Robert Way, Revd Michael G. Dunford and Mr. John Rhys, visited the two Welsh Colleges affiliated to the URC — Memorial College, Aberystwyth, and Bala Bangor College. They received a warm welcome everywhere and were given every opportunity to meet with staff and students and discuss the kind of training now being offered. A report is being prepared, and in consultation with the Welsh Province, so that together we can bring appropriate resolutions to the next General Assembly. We hope indicate practical ways in which our relationships with both colleges might be extended and enriched. We wish Revd Dr. Pennar Davies well in his retirement and acknowledge his practical involvement in the concerns of our Ministerial Training Committee since the inception of the URC.

CHAPLAINS TO THE FORCES

169. At present the following URC ministers serve as Chaplains to the Forces:

Revd Frank Beattie	Plymouth	Royal Navy
Revd Alan Finch	Cyprus	Army
Revd Hamish MacLagan	Catterick	Army
Revd Clifford Prenton	Cyprus	Royal Air Force
Revd Norman Setchell	Germany	Army
Revd Sam Williams	Portsmouth	Royal Navy

These ministers serve in a missionary situation, and are in regular contact with very many young people who have no religious commitment. There is a major pastoral task also with service families. It is a demanding ministry which calls for careful theological thinking on the issues of

disarmament, and understanding of men and women in tough situations. The Chaplains therefore need the prayerful support of the whole church.

170. There is a vacancy for a URC Chaplain in the Royal Air Force. Candidates should be under 35 and have served for at least 3 years in pastoral ministry, and should look forward to a considerable period of service. It is a matter of urgency to fill this post. Any enquiries should be made to the General Secretary.

171. The United Board (Baptist and URC) seeks to commend church members entering the services to the appropriate chaplain. Advice should be sent promptly to the Revd George Mann, 5, Gresham Close, Eastbourne, E.Sussex BN21.1VW. This year the Revd Dr. David Russell concludes his service as Chairman of the United Board and is succeeded by the Revd Bernard Thorogood, who is available to the Chaplains as a link with the URC. In February 1982 the United Board held its annual meeting residentially with the serving chaplains at Bagshot Park, so the news of the denominational life could be shared and future policy discussed.

172. The Chaplains Branch in each of the Services is grateful for the ministry of Officiating Chaplains, ministers who serve part-time at stations where there is no resident chaplain. There is also a place for ministers as chaplains to the Territorial Army and new applicants are welcome.

APPRECIATION

173. We have been conscious of the distinguished leadership exercised by the **Revd Dr. Lesslie Newbigin** in our Ministerial Training Committee, and express our thanks for his wise counsel and energetic involvement in this work during the past 7 years. (Resolution 12)

174. **The Revd Peter Jupp** has resigned as Secretary to the Chaplains and Students Committee following his move from the University of London to a pastorate, and we thank him for helping this particular committee to develop so effectively, and we acknowledge the debt we owe to others who now retire from committees of the Department (Resolution 12)

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly commends the working paper entitled *The Role of Small Groups in the work and outreach of the Church* to Provinces, Districts and local congregations.
2. The Assembly requests local churches and district councils to give help with their course fees in cases of hardship to students undertaking the *Exploring the Faith* course.
3. The Assembly requests Ministers and others who are suitably qualified to offer themselves as tutors for *Exploring the Faith*.
4. The Assembly resolves that after Assembly 1983, those whose names appear on the List of those eligible to be placed on the Register of Local Pastors (but who are not in pastoral charge) should remain on that List. Such persons who wish to take up pastoral positions after 1983 should apply to become Auxiliary Ministers, their qualifications, training and experience being taken into account when assessment for extra training is made.
5. The Assembly resolves that after Assembly 1983, those Local Pastors still on the Register of Local Pastors remain on the Register and that no new names be admitted.
6. The Assembly learns with pleasure of the renewal of the SCM tradition in Higher Education and encourages members of the URC to take local initiatives in its support where appropriate and asks the Chaplains and Students Committee to monitor these developments.
7. The Assembly, recognising the value of the work of the Youth Leadership Training Officers, approves the appointment of six regional full time Youth Leadership Training

✓ Officers, (or their part time equivalents) by the end of 1984 and authorises the Budget Committee to consider the necessary financial resources annually in the Unified Appeal Budget which, in addition to income from grant-aid, charities, local churches and provinces, would fund these appointments.

✓ 8. The Assembly, applauding the desire of the members of FURY to explore the matter of Christian Spirituality through the Worship Project, recommends that the major service in each United Reformed Church on 27th February 1983 be conducted by young people, but stresses that this project ought to involve the whole membership of the church.

not pub
9. The Assembly commends the discussion paper prepared by the Ministry of Healing Committee on *The National Health Service* and urges local churches, District Councils and Synods to give consideration to the way in which local congregations and individual church members can help maintain, improve and possibly broaden, the National Health Service.

✓ 10. The Assembly amends the *Working Guidelines for an Auxiliary Ministry* as approved in 1980, by adding the following sentence to Section V(3) —

"In the case of those whose future ministry is to be that referred to in Section III 4 (a), a shorter course will be provided. Should the Minister later move to another form of ministry, additional study will be required."

✓ 11. The Assembly calls for a Ministerial Recruitment policy as set out in paragraphs 130 to 143 of this report, to enable the URC to maintain an annual recruitment figure of not less than 30 new full-time ministers, and instructs the Ministerial Training Committee, in consultation with the Budget Committee, to act accordingly and to keep the matter under constant review.

✓ 12. The General Assembly records its sincere thanks for the service rendered to the Church by the Revd Dr. Leslie Newbigin on the Ministerial Training Committee, and the Revd Peter Jupp on the Chaplains and Students Committee.

✓ 13. The Assembly agrees

that this report be received.

✓ ✓ Assembly further urges ministers, elders and members of local churches to encourage & foster vocations to the ministry.

~~to be~~ ✓ Assembly also takes pleasure in the active involvement of a number of chaplains & students in URC and also support wherever possible

LONG RANGE POLICY GROUP

1. The Group was formally commissioned by Assembly at its meeting in May 1980 and established in the early months of 1981. Its first meeting was held in the succeeding May. The five members — Revd Graham Cook (Leeds), Derek Rawson (Sutton Coldfield), Revd John Richardson (Methodist, representing BCC) and Revd John Young (formerly Bath) and myself as Chairman — were charged with the task of:

“ensuring that the URC at all levels and in all its departments, is able to plan realistically, radically and hopefully for future developments”.

2. In coming to terms with this very broad remit, the Group chose to identify what it thought were the twelve most important topics for the denomination in looking to the future. The list was consciously restricted both to keep the exercise manageable and to create a sense of priority. After considerable thought a dozen items were distilled from the many which presented themselves. It was also agreed at this stage that structural matters to do with the way the denomination organises itself should be left until a later stage, when the implications of what needs to be done have been worked through.

3. Aware of the magnitude of their task and the uncommon way in which it had been approached, the Group wished to enter into wide consultation before taking its own agenda of topics as final. Moreover, there was a strong feeling that early discussion was likely to pay dividends in putting ideas into circulation in advance of any final report. As a consequence a Consultative Document *Agenda for a Church in the World* was prepared. Twenty four local churches were invited to give their responses to particular topics, whilst the groups which had formed for the Priorities and Resources Group were asked if they would give their reactions to the whole paper. In seeking a denomination wide involvement, an article was published in *Reform* (February issue) which invited all interested persons to receive and comment on the paper.

4. Whilst the public debate about our first thoughts continues, a stage of intelligence gathering has been initiated. With so few members (and even with the valuable help of Bernard Thoroughgood) it was clear that assistance would be needed from many others. Provincial Moderators were approached for help and most were willing to provide lists of individuals who had relevant experience or knowledge and who were likely to respond favourably to an invitation to aid the Group in its task.

5. Our wider consultations should be concluded soon after Easter whilst the intelligence gathering should be completed by late summer. If this schedule can be maintained the Group would hope to be in a position to interpret the accumulated material during the final months of this year. No firm decision has yet been reached about the form of the final report(s), but the product of our work will be available for discussion at the General Assembly in 1983.

Assembly takes note of report
Malcolm L. Johnson, *Chairman*

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 1981

1. The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the New Room, John Wesley's Chapel, 36 The Horsefair, Bristol at 1 p.m. on Monday 17 May 1982, followed at 1.30 p.m. by the Annual Lecture entitled "18th Century Welsh Hymn Writers" to be given by Dr. Pennar Davies, Formerly Principal of Memorial College, Swansea.
2. Mr. Kaay has continued his excellent service to enquirers by attending the Library once or twice weekly. This year we have been considerably aided by the voluntary service of Mrs. Jean Smith and Misses Winnier and Phyllis Cary. They have been checking the stock and generally getting the library in good working order. We are grateful to them, and to the Finance and Administration Department for increasing our grant in order to meet their expenses.
3. The Society held a Study Day in London on 17 October, when papers were read and churches visited. We were very grateful to the Revd Peter Jupp who organised the event, Dr. Williams's Library where we were entertained to lunch and Islington/Claremont URC who gave us tea. This was a popular and enjoyable event as well as a great stimulus to our studies.
4. Many local churches are subscribers to the Society and we are always glad for others to join. We are particularly pleased that churches have not only met our increased subscription but continued to send us locally produced church histories which add greatly to the usefulness of the Library.
5. The Council learned with interest of proposals to house the Memorial Hall Library at Dr. Williams's. We believe this will make for greater convenience in the study of Congregational history and look forward to increasing our friendly links with Dr. Williams's Library. A large painting of "The Reformers" and some portraits of former secretaries of the Congregational Union are being moved from Memorial Hall to the URC office in Tavistock Place.

THREE SCHOOLS AND THE U.R.C.

Caterham, Silcoates and Wentworth Milton Mount

1. The Schools' Report to the 1981 General Assembly was the first for a number of years and accordingly gave some general information. This Report deals with the past year.
2. Pupil numbers have increased in all three schools due to the demand for more places. The numbers of Ministers' children in the three schools in September, 1981 were
Caterham 19, Silcoates 19, Wentworth Milton Mount 20
3. Members of the U.R.C. may know that the Milton Mount Foundation which has generously helped in the education of daughters and sons of the denomination, and particularly of ministers, has had to curtail this help for the time being. However, the three Schools continue to welcome applications from ministers and lay members of the denomination and continue to provide the necessary bursaries for the daughters and sons of ministers.

CATERHAM

4. The past year has seen some important changes through death and retirement. Mr. Arthur Davies-Jones died at the age of 81 after a lifetime's connection with the School. The son of a Shropshire minister, he was a boy at Caterham, who then returned to teach at the School for 43 years, 21 of them as second master. The Mr. Chips of Caterham, he lived on retirement next to the School, and as editor of the Old Boys' magazine was the focal point for those returning.

5. Mr. J.H.R. Churchill retired in July, 1981 after 15 years of excellent service as Headmaster of the Preparatory School. He and Mrs. Churchill developed a happy family atmosphere and saw a substantial growth and changes in their time. They have been succeeded by Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Hawkins, both Methodists, who came from Eagle House Preparatory School.

6. After 170 years as a boys' school the arrival of 11 day girls into the Lower Sixth in September heralded a new era in the life of Caterham. The girls greatly appreciated their new building and the involvement of all of them in the Christmas Revue helped them to settle in easily in their new environment.

7. The Sixth Form is now 160 strong out of 430 in the Main School. The Preparatory School numbers 240 boys. The G.C.E. results were pleasing with the top ten boys at O-level gaining grade A in all 10 subjects. Our A-level Religious Studies pupils combined this year with the local girls' school and are taught by our Chaplain and Mrs. Mavis Richmond, their Head of Department.

8. Mendlesohn's "Elijah" was sung by a choir of over 100 in the City Temple, under the direction of their organist, Dr. Kenneth Abbot, an Old Caterhamian.

9. The School was pleased to receive a bequest on the passing of Mrs. Madeline Thiman, of a bronze bust of the late Dr. Eric Thiman, another Old Caterhamian who was the organist at the City Temple, together with his presentation copy of Congregational Praise, of which he was musical editor.

10. The Pilots held their annual Camp in the School and their nautical knowledge was put to the test when the South East experienced exceptional thunderstorms in August. The School has been pleased to welcome onto the Board of Governors, the Moderator of the Southern Province, the Revd C. C. Franks.

SILCOATES

11. The School has this year reached 500 pupils for the first time in its history. It has a Sixth Form of 85 this year, and for the first time this includes girl boarders. There are 138 boarders, the highest number for seven years. There are no further plans to expand the size of the School between the ages of 7 and 18, but the Governors are actively planning a pre-preparatory school for children from 4 to 7, to be opened in 1982.

12. Recent additions to the Board of Governors have strengthened the links between the School and the U.R.C. The Moderators of the North West Province (Revd Anthony Burnham, an Old Silcoatian) and of the Mersey Province (Revd J.W.P. Williamson) have joined the Board, as has Dr. P.H. Clarke, representing the Northern Province. Other new Governors with strong connections with the U.R.C. are Dr. J.W. Derry of the University of Newcastle, and Mr. John Roper, M.P.

13. The School has now completed its Development Programme. A new Laboratory Block was opened in May, a Sports Centre in September, and a Music School in December. Study bedrooms and Common Rooms for Sixth Formers have also been completed. The Silcoates Sports Club has been formed to enable parents, boys and girls, and Old Silcoatians to use the extensive range of sporting facilities throughout the year, including the holidays.

14. The School was very pleased to welcome the Yorkshire Provincial Synod in October, and is making preparations for the Provincial Family Day which is to be held at the School in June 1982.

WENTWORTH MILTON MOUNT

15. The numbers in the school continue to be at their maximum of 350 girls, and during the year two further important additions have been made. The new Art School was opened in October 1981 by the Mayor of Bournemouth, a former parent, with an exhibition of the varied art work executed by the girls, and the new and extended Library was opened, with a Literary

Lunch, in January 1982 by Sir Jack Longland. The Library has been named The Lambourne Library after the most generous gift of Mrs. Joan Lambourne, a former pupil.

16. The school joined in the welcome to the Revd John MacKelvie as Minister of Richmond Hill United Reformed Church, and the Headmistress's Prefect read the lesson at his Induction in February 1981. Already Revd J. MacKelvie has become a familiar and friendly figure about the school, showing a keen interest in all school activities and especially giving new life to the Bible Classes on Friday evenings.

17. This last academic year, with the school's largest ever Sixth Form, reached its climax with the long awaited visit of Peter Ndichu, the Kenyan boy whom the school adopted eight years ago. The present Upper Sixth, who have worked to collect money for him throughout their school lives, were joined by many former pupils who had also helped, making the visit very memorable for many different reasons. The school has been entirely responsible for Peter's education at the Stahere Boys' Centre in Nairobi and at Mombasa Polytechnic, and it seemed fitting for him to celebrate his 21st birthday in this country as the school's guest. Peter also spent some time at Caterham School. As Peter's visit coincided with the annual Speech Day, this took on an international flavour as former pupils who have worked, or are working abroad, joined with Peter in showing just how wide the influence of a school and the ideals it teaches can be. In turn each explained something of their work, seriously and humorously, and what they owed to the school, culminating with Peter's sincerely moving thank you to the ocean of 1,200 people sitting before him.

18. Whilst Peter was at the school, he was also able to observe both behind the scenes and in the front row of the audience the school's annual Shakespearean production, which this year was *The Tempest*. The production in the Milton Mount Hall, seen by upwards of 1,000 people, was marked by particularly fine performances for Caliban, Ariel and Prospero, and by the delightful ensemble backing the poetry with specially prepared music.

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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

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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 60 minutes, and speeches made in support of the report and motions of any other non-departmental committee, having direct access to the Assembly, shall not in aggregate exceed thirty minutes, save by the prior agreement 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.

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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

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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.

N.B Standing Order No. 4 has been amended since 1980.

PROPOSED

STANDING ORDERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

1. **The Agenda of the Assembly**

At its meetings the Assembly shall consider reports and draft resolutions prepared by its Departments and Committees, resolutions submitted by Provincial Synods, and resolutions and amendments of which due notice has been given submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

The Business Committee shall prepare, before each meeting of the Assembly, a Draft Order of Business, and submit it to the Assembly as early as convenient in the programme.

The resolutions arising from any report or section thereof shall be taken in the following order:

- (i) resolutions of the Department or Committee of which due notice has been given,
- (ii) any relevant Synod resolutions,
- (iii) duly seconded resolutions submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

If notice has been given of two or more resolutions on the same subject, or two or more amendments to the same resolution, these shall be taken in the order decided by the Moderator on the advice of the Assembly Clerk.

2. **Presentation of Business**

2a. All reports of Departments and Committees, together with the draft resolutions arising therefrom, shall be delivered to the General Secretary by a date to be annually determined, so that they may be printed and circulated to members in time for consideration before the date of the Assembly meeting.

2b. 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. This notice should include the names of those appointed to propose and second the motion 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.

2c. A local church or District Council wishing to put forward a motion for consideration by the General Assembly shall submit the motion to its Provincial Synod for consideration and, if thought fit, transmission to the Assembly, at such time as will enable the Synod to comply with Standing Order 2b, above. In the case of a local church the motion must be submitted to the Synod through the District Council.

2d. 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 (which notice must include the name of a seconder) to be included in the Assembly agenda. If the subject matter of such a 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.

2e. Notice (including the names of proposer and seconder) shall be given, in sufficient time for circulation to members of Assembly, of all additional resolutions and substantial amendments to any proposed resolution on the report of a Department or Committee, and every additional resolution and amendment shall be read before it is moved.

3. **Resolutions**

3a. If a report is for information only and makes no proposal for action, the motion

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on the report shall be "That the Assembly takes note of this Report".

- 3b. If a 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.
- 3c. It shall not be in order to move an amendment or a reference back motion to either of the motions set out in paragraphs 3a, and 3b, above. If either of these motions is carried, it shall not be deemed to commit the Assembly to the acceptance of any matter contained in the report. If the motion "That the Assembly takes note of the Report" be carried, any member may move a further motion for expressing views or suggesting action on the whole or any part of the report or otherwise within the scope of the subject matter of the report.
- 3d. The provisions of paragraphs 3a, 3b, and 3c, of 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.
- 3e. No motion or amendment shall be spoken to by its proposer, 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.
- 3f. A seconder may, if he then declares his intention of doing so, reserve his speech until a later period in the debate.
- 3g. It shall not be in order to move a resolution or amendment which, in the opinion of the Moderator might i. contravene any part of the Basis of Union, or ii. involve the Church in expenditure without prior consideration by the appropriate committees, or iii. pre-empt discussion of a matter to be considered later in the agenda, or iv. infringe a decision reached by the Assembly within the preceding two years.
- 3h. 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.
- 3i. 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.
- 3j. An amendment which has been moved and seconded shall be disposed of before any further amendment may be moved, but notice may be given of intention to move a further amendment should the one before the Assembly be rejected.
- 3k. The mover may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly, alter a motion or amendment he has proposed.
- 3l. 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 to withdraw unless such permission shall have been refused.

4.

Speeches

- 4a. Speeches made in presentation of the report and resolutions of any Department and its committees shall not in aggregate exceed 60 minutes, and speeches made in support of the report and resolutions of any other non-departmental committee having direct access to the Assembly shall not in aggregate exceed 30 minutes, save by the prior agreement of the Business Committee. The proposer of any other motion of which due notice has been given shall be allowed a maximum of

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10 minutes, unless a longer period be recommended by the Business Committee or determined by the Moderator. Each subsequent speaker in the debate shall be allowed 5 minutes unless the Moderator shall determine otherwise.

- 4b. When a speech is made on behalf of a Department or Committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by stating his name and accreditation to the Assembly.
- 4c. Secretaries of Standing Committees and full-time officers of Departments who are not members of the 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.
- 4d. 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 (or that amendment, as the case may be, shall have the right of reply, but must strictly confine himself to answering previous speakers and must not introduce new matter. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or that amendment.
- 4e. The foregoing Standing Order (4d) shall not prevent the asking or answering of a question which arises from the matter before the Assembly or from a speech made in the debate upon it.

5.

Closure of Debate

- 5a. In the course of the business any member may move that the question under consideration be not put. Sometimes described as "the previous question" or "next business", 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 a motion is an unfair use of the rules of the Assembly. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately end and the Assembly proceed to the next business.
- 5b. In the course of any discussion, it is competent for any member to move that the question be now put. This is sometimes described as the closure motion. 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 it has been seconded. When an amendment is under discussion, this 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 or amendment retains his right of reply before the question is put.
- 5c. The resolutions described in Standing Orders 5a. and 5b. above are exceptions to Standing Order 3e. in that they may be moved and spoken to without the proposer having first obtained and announced the consent of a seconder. They must, however, be seconded before being put to the vote.

6.

Voting

- 6a. Voting on any resolution whose effect is to alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, the Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the United Reformed Church, is governed by paragraph 9(5)(xi) of the Basis of Union (cf. The Manual p.28).
- 6b. Unless the Assembly decides that there shall be a ballot, every other question shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members of the Assembly present and voting as indicated by a show of hands.
- 6c. To provide for voting in the case of a paper ballot, and to assist in taking a count of votes when the Moderator decides that is necessary, the Nominations Committee shall appoint Tellers for each Assembly.

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7.

Questions

- 7a. A member may, if two clear days notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary, ask the Moderator or the Chairman of any Department or 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.
- 7b. A member may, when given opportunity by the Moderator, ask the presenter of any report before the Assembly a question seeking additional information or explanation relating to matters contained within the report.
- 7c. Questions asked under Standing Orders 7a. and 7b. shall be put and answered without discussion.

8.

Points of Order, Personal Explanations, Dissent

- 8a. A member shall have the right to rise in his place and call attention to a point of order, and immediately on his doing so any other member addressing the Assembly shall cease speaking until the Moderator has determined the question of order. The decision on any point of order rests entirely with the Moderator. Any member calling to order unnecessarily is liable to the censure of the Assembly.
- 8b. A member feeling that some material part of a former speech by him at the same meeting has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may rise in his place and request the Moderator's permission to make a personal explanation. If the Moderator so permits, a member so rising shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.
- 8c. The right to record in the minutes a dissent from any decision of the Assembly shall only be granted to a member by the Moderator if the reason stated, either verbally at the time or later in writing, appears to him to fall within the provisions of paragraph 7(10) of the Basis of Union.
- 8d. The decision of the Moderator on a point of order, or on the admissibility of a personal explanation, or on the right to have a dissent recorded, shall not be open to discussion.

9.

Admission of Public and Press

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.

10.

Records of The Assembly

- 10a. A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such manner as the Executive Committee may determine.
- 10b. The minutes of each day's proceedings, in duplicated form, 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.
- 10c. A signed copy of the minutes shall be preserved in the custody of the General Secretary as the official record of the Assembly's proceedings.
- 10d. As soon as possible after the Assembly meeting ends, the substance of the minutes together with any other relevant papers shall be published as a "Record of Assembly" and a copy sent to every member of the Assembly, each Synod, District Council and local church.

11.

Suspension and Amendment of Standing Orders

- 11a. In any case of urgency or upon motion made on a notice duly given, any one or

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more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting so far as regards any business at such a meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of Assembly present and voting shall so decide.

- 11b. Resolutions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Business Committee for report before being voted on by the Assembly (or in case of urgency, by the Executive Committee). The Business Committee may itself from time to time suggest amendments to the Standing Orders, which shall be subject to decision by the Assembly.
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