

Minutes of the
GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
in the United Kingdom
1998

Saturday, 11 July 1.30pm

First Session

Constitution of Assembly

The Moderator, the Revd David Jenkins, constituted the Assembly with prayer, the place and time having been duly appointed, and the Chaplain, the Revd Stephen Thornton, led the Worship of the Assembly.

Induction of Moderator

On the motion of the Revd David Jenkins, Mrs Wilma Frew, Moderator-elect, was called to the Chair and inducted as Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church. The Moderator signed the Assembly Bible and was presented with an inscribed copy of the Bible by the Revd David Jenkins.

Thanks to the Retiring Moderator

The thanks of the Church were expressed by the Moderator to the Revd David Jenkins and Mrs Margie Jenkins.

The Moderator then addressed the Assembly.

The **Roll of Assembly** was placed on the table.

Roll of Assembly

Moderator:

Mrs Wilma Frew

Clerk:

Mrs Margaret Carrick Smith

General Secretary:

Revd Anthony G Burnham

Deputy General Secretary:

Revd John Waller

Provincial Moderators:

- I Revd David Jenkins
- II Revd C Keith Forecast
- III Revd Graham Cook
- IV Revd Arnold Harrison
- V Revd Malcolm G Hanson
- VI Revd Elizabeth Welch
- VII Revd Elizabeth Caswell
- VIII Revd Raymond Adams
- IX Revd Derek Wales
- X Revd Janet E Sowerbutts
- XI Revd David L Helyar
- XII Revd John L Humphreys

Conveners of General Assembly Standing Committees:

Doctrine Prayer and Worship:	Revd Dr Colin Thompson
Discipleship, Stewardship & Witness:	Revd Elizabeth Caswell
Church & Society:	Prof. Malcolm Johnson
Youth & Children's Work:	Revd Stephen Thornton
Ecumenical:	Revd Bob Andrews
Ministries:	Revd Graham Long
Training:	Revd John Sutcliffe
Finance:	Mr Graham Stacy
Communications & Editorial:	Mr Chris Wright
Nominations:	Revd Jessie Clare
Pastoral:	Revd John Johansen-Berg
Assembly Arrangements:	Revd Alasdair Pratt
Equal Opportunitites:	Mrs Susan Rand
Interfaith Relations:	Revd Bill Mahood

Synod Clerks:

I	Revd Peter Poulter	II	Revd Ruth Wollaston
III	Revd Angus W Duncan	IV	Mr Brian I Evans
V	Revd A Christopher White	VI	Mr Simon Rowntree
VII	Mr Ken Woods	VIII	Revd Sandra Lloydlangston
IX	Revd George Thomas	X	Revd Adrian Bulley
XI	Mrs Christine Meekison	XII	Mr John Trollope

Additional Synod Representatives:

I	Mr Peter Andrews, Revd James Breslin, Mrs Wilma Prentice
II	Revd Graham Robson, Revd Nigel Uden, Revd Linden De Bie
III	Revd Sandra Dears, Mr Rob Nixon, Mr John Yates
IV	Revd Alan Dunstone, Mrs Jean Francis, Mr Steve Wood
V	Mrs I Wren, Mrs J Strong, Revd C Wilton
VI	Mrs Melanie Frew, Mrs Icenette Reid, Miss Rachel Greening
VII	Mr Monty Helmn, Revd A Gordon Smith, Mr Philip A Wade
VIII	Revd J Tunningley, Mr DJ Puddy, Mr M Summers
IX	Revd Julian Macro, Mr David Butler, Mrs SC Brown
X	Mr Robert A Allen, Revd Rachel Poolman, Miss Naomi Powell
XI	Revd Robin Blount, Mr Ian Fletcher, Mrs Christine Robertson
XII	Mr Jonathan Price, Dr Jean Silvan-Evans, Mrs Delyth Rees

Synod Treasurers:

I	Mr M Holloway	II	Dr BJ Woodhall	III	Mr RD Holden
IV	Mr G Wood	V	Mr HK Johnson	VI	Mr D Hibbard
VII	Mr WB Grieve	VIII	MR G LUNT	IX	Mr G Gage
X	Miss V Ham	XI	Mr B West	XII	Mr R Lacey

Theological College Representatives:

Mansfield College; Oxford:	Revd Dr Catherine Middleton
	Mr Nick Adlem
Northern College; Manchester:	Revd Dr David R Peel
	Ms Carole Allison
Westminster College; Cambridge:	Revd Dr Janet Tollington
	Mrs Catherine Hare
Queen's College; Birmingham:	Revd Dr Neil Messer

Youth representatives:	Georgette Margrett, Jane Rowell
Council for World Mission:	Revd Prince Dibeela
Chaplain (URC) to HM Forces stationed in Britain:	Revd Michael Meachin

Past Presidents, Chairmen and Moderators:

Mr BJ Hartwell, Mrs Gwen Hall, Revd AS Cooper, Revd N Birnie, Revd AL Macarthur, Revd JE Young, Revd Dr RO Latham, Revd J Johansen-Berg, Revd Principal M Cressey, Mrs R Goodfellow, Revd D Black, Revd W Georgeson, Revd JE Francis, Revd WF Aiton, Revd J Gray, Revd KC Burdett, Revd R Murray, Revd W Clark, Revd GB Waterton, Revd AB Webster, Revd Dr PD Arthur, Revd G Sharpe, Dr DM Thompson, Revd AV Smith, Revd AJG Walker, Revd Dr P Morgan, Revd DH Dale, Mr RA Heritage, Revd CC Franks, Revd E Banyard, Revd CK Forecast, Revd GJ Cook, Revd MG Hanson, Mrs R Clarke, Revd D Hilton, Revd Dr RJ McKelvey, Revd J Reardon, Dr DM Thompson, Revd D Jenkins

District Representatives:

(Names appearing with an asterisk were appointed to fill District vacancies cf. Resolution 10 pg 21 Assembly Record 1978)

Province I

- A: Revd B Flood-Page, Revd I Fosten, Revd C Biggs, Miss D Kailofer, Miss S Fairbairn, Mr D Todd
- B: Revd SJ Brock, Revd DR Hannen, Revd DM McFarlane, Revd PC Moth, Revd TA Nicholson, Mr S Calvert, Mrs F Morrow, Miss L Myers, Mr M Porter
- C: Revd P Grey, Revd N Leveridge, Mrs A Blakelock, Mr I Watt
- D: Revd D Pickering, Revd V Towler, Mr G Warriner, Mr P Etwell
- E: Revd GA Davies, Revd K Forbes, Mrs J Gorden, Mrs R Wood
- F: Revd RJ Bade, Mrs C Bade

Province II

- A: Mrs P Baines, Mrs J Rawlins, Revd B Hutchinson, Revd A Tomlinson, Revd R Wilson
- B: Mrs H Hurst, Mrs E Fletcher, Mr D Fletcher, Revd N Vivian, Revd A Boon, Revd S Farrier
- C: Revd G Tolley, Revd S Thomas, Revd D Mather, Mrs E Tolley, Mr R Bradley, Mr D Estill
- D: Revd JA Hollyman, Revd D Megson, Revd G McCleave*, Miss B Galliers, Mr M Sherlock, Mr M Thomason
- E: Revd C Muir, Mr J Richards, Mrs P Richards, Mr NA Carter, Mr M Walsh
- F: Revd AR Cottam, Revd M Hodgson, Revd J Mitchell, Revd R Lewis*, Mr M Aspinall, Mr R Banwell, Mr N Jones, Mrs S Wilkinson, Mrs J Ashworth*
- G: Revd D Batchelor, Revd JD Westhead, Miss Nicola Daine, Miss S Salmon

Province III

- A: Revd J Kingsley, Revd N Stanyon, Revd K Jones, Revd B Holroyd, Mr R Clewes, Mrs M Leivesley, Mrs B Martin, Mrs E Blair
- B: Revd D Shakesby, Revd J Martin, Revd S Helme, Mr M Wands, Mrs M Blair, Dr D South
- C: Revd K Hulse, Revd J Scott, Revd L Thomas, Mr J McStravick, Mrs I Moore, Mrs J Worrall
- D: Revd B Acty, Revd G Evans, Revd G McGowan, Mr G Harrison, Mrs C Deeks, Miss E Pugh,

Province IV

- A: Revd S Swailes, Revd T Murray, Revd T Holborn, Mrs E Holborn, Mr J Sharp, Mrs Pauline Mewis
- B: Revd F Houston, Revd D Hull, Revd P Parkin, Mr P Morgan, Miss N Pugh, Miss M Bolton
- C: Revd R Becher, Revd KJ Argyle, Revd A Lee, Mr D Devaney, Mr D Wollacott, Mrs V Bean
- D: Miss MA Hunt, Mrs J Drake, Mr W Twigg, Revd L Elliott, Revd BE Sugden, Revd RD Jones
- E: Revd P Jordan, Revd D Hudston, Mrs D Hitch, Mr D Hall
- F: Revd P Hanson, Revd TJ Key, Revd PN Nicholas, Mrs C Feather, Mr AR Jones, Mr J Tusting

Province V

- A: Revd P Breeze, Revd DP Jack, Revd D Legge, Revd G Maskery, Mr J McGill, Ms J Manchester, Miss M Loydall, Ms R Raine-Ellkerker
- B: Revd J Hargis, Revd G Knights, Revd A Morton, Mr M Hargis, Mr J Kennedy, Mrs J North
- C: Revd D Tunbridge, Revd D Gardiner, Revd P Floe, Mr J Reid, Mrs A Gray, Mr D Coaker
- D: Revd M Westerman, Revd T Royds, Revd M Taylor, Mrs A Westerman, Ms L Cole, Mr J Sanders
- E: Mr D Daykin, Mr J Hayton, Mrs S Salmon, Revd D Watson, Revd D Wilson, Revd T Irvine
- F: Revd K Spence, Revd D Williams, Mrs T Davis, Mrs B Nield

Province VI

- A: Revd I Hayter, Revd D Cullum, Revd J Marsh, Revd M Hopley, Mrs L Hopley, Revd G Tate, Mr D Ibbs, Mr G Harrison
- B: Revd T Bayliss, Revd T Harwood, Revd J Steele, Mr T Lowe, Mrs R Lowe
- C: Revd J Brown, Revd R Mitchell, Revd R Woodhall, Mr N Jakobowitz, Mr S McQueen, Mrs A Sheldon
- D: Revd D Featonby, Revd L Jameson, Revd J Winterbottom, Miss P Brown Mr F Dale, Miss A O'Donoghue*
- E: Revd K Newborough, Revd P Whittle, Revd R Maxey, Revd I Bound, Dr I Frew, Mr D Gray, Mrs R Page, Miss H Smith
- F: Revd L Giller, Revd D Horsfield, Revd S Jackson, Miss V Kingston, Mrs M Marshall, Mrs K Paxton

Province VII

- A: Mrs M Nevill, Dr S Brisley, Ms G Hall, Revd H Mills, Revd JC Sutcliffe, Revd E Maple
- B: Revd D Atkinson, Revd D Dones, Revd C Knight, Revd K Martin, Mrs M Evans, Mr J Woodman, Mrs B Knights, Mr A Royal
- C: Revd R Church, Revd G Millington, Revd J Priest, Mr D Buscall, Mr G Clarke, Mrs L Hill
- D: Revd J Hickmore Revd MR Kitchener, Revd JR Roche, Mr CA Mead, Mr T Williams Mr RE Brett
- E: Revd KM Anderson, Revd A Jacob, Revd PH Quilter, Revd KG Riglin, Mrs C Bonner, Miss A Cooper, Mrs S McKenzie, Mrs RC Taylor
- F: Revd AR Smith, Miss E Doyle

Province VIII

- A: Revd R Cornish, Revd P Stokes, Mrs M Knight, Mr G Williams
- B: Revd J Du Bois, Revd R Richards, Mr W Dart, Mrs J Dart
- C: Mr G Curl, Mr A Lewin, Mr B Knight, Revd R Harrison, Revd B West, Revd W Baskett*
- D: Revd EA Kemp, Revd MK Whitfield, Mr D Churchyard, Mr RJ Butland
- E: Revd N Whitaker, Revd K Wilkinson, Revd M Pevy, Mrs J Gray
- F: Revd H Martell, Revd H Pencavel, Revd S Pickard, Revd J Salisbury, Mrs G Moss, Mr R Law, Mrs S Lincoln
- G: Revd M Bond, Mrs P Holland
- H: Revd TD MacMeekin, Mrs J MacMeekin
- J: Revd G Stoddern, Mr J Alpen

Province IX

- A: Revd C Bones, Revd J Weedon, Revd M Tilley, Revd M Ponsford, Revd C Marsh, Mr R Weedon, Mrs B McCarron, Mr P Gillham, Mrs A Gillham, Mr RJ Potts
- B: Revd M Allen, Revd T Grant, Revd J Waghorn, Revd S Wilkins, Dr D Hoadley, Mrs C Hardwick, Mr G Thatcher, Miss C Hardwick
- C: Revd DJ Williams, Revd BC Harley, Revd AS Caton, Mrs J Antcliffe, Mr M Compston, Mr D Turner
- D: Dr J Butler, Mrs D Spencer, Mrs H Kimber, Miss K Bell, Revd D Bedford, Revd G Bowerman, Revd D Netherwood, Revd V Skinner
- E: Revd M Atherton, Revd H Collinson, Revd D Nuttall, Revd B Stops, Revd R Wiggins, Mrs D Cochrane, Mrs E Jenkins, Mr K Perrett, Mrs M Telfer, Mrs J Wiggins

Province X

- A: Ms E Salinger, Mrs P Seaton, Mr C Buckwell, Ms S Rudofsky, Revd H Baker, Revd P Crawshaw, Revd M Hilborn, Revd J Templeton
B: Revd C Allen, Revd A Bosschaert, Revd N Nassar*, Miss M Crack, Mr D Ackling, Miss M Ramroop
C: Revd Dr J F Coleman, Revd Dr G Munro, Revd Dr S Roger, Mr B Marshall, Mr I Ritchie, Mrs J Yates
D: Mr N Muir, Mrs M Hardie, Mrs J Hardaker, Miss N Winder, Revd K Brown, Revd J Wade, Revd J Hardaker, Revd T Ruffell
E: Revd P Clamp, Revd P Colwell, Revd C Slusser, Miss S Berry, Mr E Saminez, Mr D Williams
F: Revd J Black, Revd M Coe, Revd R Maitland*, Mr M Hopkins, Mrs C Mulroney, Miss M Sheppard

Province XI

- A: Revd B Bowyer, Revd L Charlton, Revd A Mabbs, Revd W C McCrorie, Mrs N Owen, Mrs D Poulton, Mrs M Watson, Miss K Forbes
B: Revd S Brown, Revd P Jones, Revd D Lindfield, Revd D Topple, Miss J Campbell, Mr T Winstanley, Mr A Young, Miss S Moore
C: Revd C Charlton, Revd R Singh, Revd J Gould, Revd Sigrid Werner, Mrs M Bayley, Mr W Irving, Mrs S Powell, Miss G Smith
D: Revd S Fisher, Revd Dr R Mearkle, Revd A Wharton, Mr J Ellis, Mrs S Fender, Mr M Neads
E: Revd D Bond, Revd N Setchell, Revd P Southcombe, Mrs A Catherall, Mr J Ellis, Mr J Monkhouse
F: Revd SR Ellis, Revd R Macdonald, Revd EW Symmons, Dr G Campling, Mrs R Smith, Mr KG Stratford
G: Revd S Franklin, Revd G Haigh, Revd P Elliott, Mr D Curry, Miss K Ramirez, Mrs N Welch

Province XII

- A: Revd D Coleman, Revd S Walkling, Revd G Thompson, Mrs J Gray, Ms K Gray, Mr M Martin
B: Revd D Fox, Revd S Copley, Mr R Prosser, Mrs E Charlton*
C: Revd P Noble, Revd N Head, Revd P Scotland, Revd P Lewis*, Mr D Marshall-Jones, Mr K Jenkins, Mr A Grand, Mrs C George*
D: Revd K Fabricius, Revd K Price, Mr P Jones, Mr S Jones
E: Revd M Evans, Revd J Evans, Revd R Gordon, Mr GB Williams
F: Revd P Gaskell, Revd T Gerwyn-Jones, Revd K Ofstad*, Miss L Bessant, Mr T Studman, Mrs J Jones

VOTING MEMBERS REPRESENTING OTHER CHURCHES:

Baptist Union of Great Britain	Miss Jane Ruddick
The Church of Scotland	Revd Duncan McClements
The Congregational Federation	Pastor Graham Adams
Scottish Congregational Church	Dr James Merrilees
International Ministerial Council of Great Britain	Revd Florence Akuboah
The Methodist Church	Revd Peter Whittaker
The Moravian Church	Mr B Kessler
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Revd Gabrielle Ellis
Presbyterian Church of Wales	Revd Robert Bebb
Union of Welsh Independents	Revd Evan D Morgan
The United Free Church of Scotland	Revd JG McPhee
The Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales	Revd Bernard Longley
Church of England	Venerable David Goldie
The Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland	Revd John Reardon
Churches Together in England	Revd Bill Snelson

Reception of Guests

The Revd Malcolm Hanson, Moderator, East Midlands Province, introduced local visitors and those present were received by the Moderator:

Right Revd James McGuinness, Roman Catholic Church
Revd Peter Grange, Baptist Church
Revd James Stapleton, Full Gospel Church
Revd Chris White, Churches Together in Nottingham

Revd Geoffrey Clark, Methodist Church
Major John Hatcliffe, Salvation Army
Revd Hilary Smith, Moravian Church

The Revd Bob Andrews, Convener, Ecumenical Committee, introduced representatives from churches in the United Kingdom and Overseas. Those present were received by the Moderator.

Visitors and Assembly Members from other UK Churches:

Baptist Union of Great Britain
The Church of Scotland

The Congregational Federation
Scottish Congregational Church
International Ministerial Council of Great Britain
The Methodist Church
The Moravian Church
Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Presbyterian Church of Wales
Union of Welsh Independents
The United Free Church of Scotland
The Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales
Church of England
The Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland
Churches Together in England

Miss Jane Ruddick
Revd Duncan McClements
Rt Revd Prof Alan Main
Mrs Ann Main
Revd Donald Fraser
Mrs Nan Fraser
Revd Gillean Maclean
Mr James Maclean
Pastor Graham Adams
Dr James Merrilees
Revd Florence Akuboa
Revd Peter Whittaker
Mr B Kessler
Revd Gabrielle Ellis
Very Revd Dr Samuel Hutchinson
Mrs Margaret Hutchinson
Revd S A Matthews
Mrs Lesley Matthews
Revd Robert Bebb
Revd Evan D Morgan
Revd JG McPhee
Revd Bernard Longley
Venerable David Goldie
Revd John Reardon
Revd Bill Snelson

International Visitors:

Presbyterian Church of East Africa
Disciples of Christ USA

Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

Eglise Reformee de France
Leuenberg Church Fellowship
Council for World Mission
World Convention Churches of Christ

Revd Timothy Njoya
Revd James L. Powell
Mrs Powell
Revd Pavel Smetana
Mrs Smetana
Revd Bernard Anterion
Dr Willhelm Huffmeier
Revd Prince Dibeela
Mr Lyndsay Jacobs
Mrs Lorraine Jacobs

The Revd James Stapleton, the Rt Revd Prof Alan Main and the Revd James L Powell responded to the welcome on behalf of the guests.

The Moderator introduced the people on the platform and welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Assembly. She then especially welcomed those who were attending Assembly for the first time, encouraging them to play a full part in the business of the Assembly.

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, then introduced the Order of Business, noting that it was the intention to start each item of business not later than the time shown in the Order Paper. He noted that Resolutions 47 and 48, which would be debated during the afternoon session, were detailed on the Order Paper, together with Resolutions 50 and 51, the first of which would be taken at 7.00pm on Saturday evening.

Church and Society Committee

The Moderator asked Prof. Malcolm Johnson to present the report of the Church and Society Committee. In doing so Prof. Johnson spoke of Commitment for Life, noted the impact of the Jubilee 2000 campaign and the work done by the committee on the environment, welfare reform, freedom of information and multi-ethnic relationships. He thanked Val Morrison for her commitment to the committee and welcomed Gabrielle Cox to her new role of Convener.

The Moderator invited comments on the report. There being no questions or comments, she asked Prof. Johnson to introduce Resolution 26. In doing so, he noted that the third clause of the resolution had been added by Mission Council to ensure that the Church itself was not guilty of ageism. He then moved Resolution 26, having made two corrections to the wording with the consent of the Assembly.

RESOLUTION 26 Joint working group on ageing and work with elderly people

- a) Assembly welcomes and endorses the development by this joint working group of a strategy, outlined in the Book of Reports, which will:**
 - i) enable the Church to regard older people more appreciatively;**
 - ii) enable older people themselves, whether members of the church or not, to regard themselves more positively;**
 - iii) affirm the contributions made by older people.**

- b) Assembly therefore instructs the Church and Society and the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committees:**
 - i) to enable increased access to information on the circumstances and concerns of older people and, through ecumenical action and partnership with appropriate bodies, to encourage study, debate and action on the issues of old age and of an ageing society, with particular reference to the International Year of Older Persons designated for 1999;**
 - ii) to seek ways in which positive perceptions of old age and older people may be reflected in the life and worship of the church.**

- c) Assembly authorises the Equal Opportunities Committee to add appropriate references to discrimination on grounds of age (youth or old age) to its policy statements.**

The Moderator then explained that an amendment to the resolution, which had been proposed by Sheila Fairburn, had been ruled out of order as an amendment and also as a separate resolution as the subject matter was already included in a resolution to be presented by the Equal Opportunities Committee.

The Moderator invited comments from the members of Assembly. Following several contributions from the floor, she invited the Conveners to respond. The Revd Elizabeth Caswell, the Convener of the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee, and Prof. Johnson welcomed and responded to the comments made, noting in reply to a question that clause c) of Resolution 26 did not invalidate the decision of the Assembly in 1997 concerning the age of retirement from the ministry.

Resolution 26 was carried. The Moderator thanked the members of both Committees for their work.

Church Changes

The General Secretary was granted permission to make a minor correction to Resolutions 47 and 48. He then moved the Resolution:

RESOLUTION 47

New Churches

Assembly receives the churches and mission projects listed in the Book of Reports as local churches and a mission project of the United Reformed Church.

Dunston Park LEP Thatcham introduced by the Revd Derek Wales
Reps: Mrs Rita Pocock, Dr David Pocock & Revd Nina Mead

Immanuel with St. Mark LEP Basingstoke introduced by the Revd Derek Wales
Rep: Mrs Margaret Carrick Smith

Warndon, LEP Worcester introduced by the Revd Elizabeth Welch
Rep: Revd Kenneth Crawford

Tomkin, Staffordshire New Mission Project introduced by the Revd Elizabeth Welch

Resolution 47 was carried.

The General Secretary then introduced and moved Resolution 48.

RESOLUTION 48

Closure of Local Churches

Assembly receives notice of the closure of the local churches listed in the Book of Reports and gives thanks to God for their worship, witness and service throughout their history.

Haydon Bridge United Reformed Church, Newcastle
Brightmet United Reformed Church, Bolton
Cross Hill United Reformed Church, Lancaster
Sandbach United Reformed Church, Cheshire
Fairfield United Reformed Church, Liverpool
Providence United Reformed Church, Elland, Huddersfield
Riddings United Reformed Church, Derbyshire
Tomkin, Staffordshire
Long Ashton United Reformed Church, Bristol
Staple Hill United Reformed Church, Bristol
Moorland Road United Reformed Church, Weston-super-Mare
Berryarbor United Reformed church, Ilfracombe
Totnes URC/Baptist

Northern
North Western
North Western
Mersey
Mersey
Yorkshire
East Midlands
West Midlands
South Western
South Western
South Western
South Western
South Western

Resolution 48 was carried.

The Moderator received and greeted representatives of the new Churches and recorded the gratitude of the Assembly for the work and witness of those Churches which had closed.

The Moderator invited the Provincial Moderators to present the ministers who had been ordained since the last meeting of the Assembly. Each of those present was greeted in turn and Assembly welcomed them with applause.

Northern Province (Moderator: David Jenkins)

Raymond Angelsea Durham South West Cluster

North Western Province (Moderator: Keith Forecast)

Craig Muir Rochdale Central Pastorate

Mersey Province (Moderator: Graham Cook)

Keith Hulse Eshe Road Crosby & St. Paul's & Trinity Bootle

Yorkshire Province (Moderator: Arnold Harrison)

Bob Heathcote West Park & Bilton Grange, Harrogate
Angela Hughes The Church in Cottingley, LEP, Leeds
Nick Nicholas Halifax Group
Tjarda Murray Zion Cottingham & Newland Hull
Pauline Parkin Herringthorpe & Elsecar Rotherham
Ray Stanyon Knaresborough

East Midlands Province (Moderator: Malcolm Hanson)

Susan Litchfield Paulerspury, Potterspury & Yardley Gobion, MK District
Rosemary Smith Paulerspury, Potterspury & Yardley Gobion, Milton Keynes District & Woughton Ecumenical Parish

West Midlands Province (Moderator: Elizabeth Welch)

David Featonby Christchurch, Ross on Wye & Newent Gloucester
Marion Thomas Hampton Park LEP & Eignbrook

Eastern Province (Moderator: Elizabeth Caswell)

David Dones Clare, Hundon and Wickhambrook within the West Suffolk Group

South Western Province (Moderator: Ray Adams)

John Du Bois Furrough Cross and Marlton, Torbay District
Jeffrey Tunningley Bridgwater Westfield and Cannington, Taunton District
Michael Whitfield Taunton (Paul St. & Bishop's Hull), Taunton District

Wessex Province (Moderator: Derek Wales)

Marilyn Allen Chandler's Ford
Thomas Grant South Wiltshire
Brian Hesketh Dorset District
Kathleen Wilson St. Columba's Gosport

Thames North Province (Moderator: Janet Sowerbutts)

Gerald Munro Chalfont St Giles, Deanway
David Parkin Chiltern District & Burnham
Jane Wade Hemel Hempstead, St. George's & Berkhamsted

Southern Province (Moderator: David Helyar)

Delia Bond Hythe
Simon Franklin Portslade, Brighton Area Team
Richard Goldring Streatham
Geoffrey Haigh West Sussex Area

Wales Province (Moderator: John Humphreys)

Kathryn Price

Llanelli

Martyn Evans

Landsker & Pembroke District

The Moderator welcomed the new ministers, celebrated the rich variety of their backgrounds, ages and theology, encouraged them to use all the resources at their disposal and wished them every blessing in their public ministries and in their private lives.

The General Secretary then named those ministers who were celebrating ministerial jubilees during the year. The Moderator greeted those present who were Beryl Bennett, Stuart Jackman, John Parry, David Rees and Derek Stockwell and Assembly applauded them warmly.

Ordained in 1938

Ralph Leonard ACKROYD
James BADOCK
Thomas John HOPKINS
Geoffrey Fillingham NUTTALL
Douglas Andrew SMITH
Eifion THOMAS

Ordained in 1948

Daisy Beryl BENNETT
Leonard Charles Kenneth FRENCH
Dennis Rowland FRIEND
Frederick James HOLLEY
Stuart Brooke JACKMAN
Norman Stanley JENKINSON
Pearce JONES
John Edward PARRY
William PURVIS
David Glanville REES
Howard SHAPLAND
Derek Hugh STOCKWELL
Rachel STORR
Douglas Vincent YOUNG

The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer.

The Moderator asked the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee to suggest ways in which the spare time should be filled. He suggested that the General Secretary be asked to introduce some of the Mission Council Resolutions.

Mission Council

The General Secretary moved Resolution 10, noting a minor correction to the wording which was agreed by the Assembly.

RESOLUTION 10

Presidency at the Sacraments in an Emergency

Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 1997 to add the following words as a footnote to paragraph 24 of the Basis of Union:

'The provisions of paragraph 24 are intended to establish the principle that worship should be led by representative persons recognised by the wider church as well as by the local church. The provisions do not prevent the congregation assembled for a baptismal or communion service from themselves appointing, as a church meeting, a suitable person to preside at the celebration of the sacrament in a case of emergency, for example if the expected president is taken ill or held up in travel. The provisions do not require such an action rather than a postponement of the baptismal or communion service if that seems preferable.'

Resolution 10 was carried.

The General Secretary then moved Resolution 13.

RESOLUTION 13

Election of Assembly Officer

General Assembly, acting under paragraph 2(5) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church, elects the Treasurer, for the time being, of the United Reformed Church to be an officer of the Assembly.

Resolution 13 was carried.

The General Secretary asked the permission of the Assembly to propose an amended Resolution 14. This was agreed. The General Secretary then introduced the reworded Resolution.

RESOLUTION 14

Disciplinary Procedures

General Assembly agrees to amend paragraph 3.5 of Part 1 (Substantive Provisions) of the Process for dealing with cases of Ministerial Discipline (Section O Process) as follows:

Delete "twenty-five (25)" and replace with "a maximum of fifty (50)"

Resolution 14 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The General Secretary proposed that in accordance with para. 3(1) of the Basis and Structure Resolution 14 be referred to Provincial Synods with 15th March 1999 as the final date for responses as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.

This was agreed.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 17.

RESOLUTION 17

Visit to the Northern Province

Assembly agrees that in 2001 a visit to the Northern Province will be made on its behalf by a team of 3 people.

Resolution 17 was carried.

At the opening of the evening session Assembly joined in singing a hymn.

The Moderator called upon Mr John Ellis who introduced and moved Resolution 50.

Resolution 50 Suspension of Standing Order 3e(iv)

The General Assembly agrees to suspend Standing Order 3e(iv) at an appropriate stage of its 1998 meeting in order to reconsider issues arising from Resolution 19 of its 1997 meeting.

Dr Graham Campling seconded the resolution and the Moderator invited comments from the floor.

Several different points of view were expressed, following which the Revd Phillip Jones proposed and the Revd Geoff Tolley seconded **that the Resolution be not put**. Mr Ellis, at the invitation of the Moderator, commented on the reasons given by Mr Jones.

The Revd David Bedford asked for clarification on whether the Officers of Assembly had suggested that a resolution in the form of Resolution 50 be put to Assembly. The General Secretary advised Assembly that, when he had written to the Southern, Wessex and South Western Provinces advising them that the Officers of Assembly had judged their proposed resolutions regarding Resolution 19 of the 1997 General Assembly to be out of order, he had also advised them that the only other way in which the matter could be debated at the 1998 Assembly was by moving the suspension of Standing Order 3e(iv).

The Moderator then put the motion to the Assembly. The show of cards was not clear, so the Moderator called for the Tellers.

The Moderator reported that there were 258 votes in favour of the motion and 202 votes against. **The motion that Resolution 50 be not put was therefore carried.**

The Moderator led the Assembly in a period of silent reflection.

Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee

The Moderator asked the Convener of the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee, the Revd Elizabeth Caswell, to introduce the Committee's Report. In doing so, Mrs Caswell expressed the thanks of the Assembly to the Revd Bill Wright for his ten years of commitment to the post of Advocacy Secretary. Assembly showed its gratitude by applauding.

The Moderator called for comments on the report. A number of issues were mentioned and the Moderator invited the Convener to respond to them. She, in turn, asked permission for the Revd Michael Cruchley, the Rural Consultant, to respond to the questions related to rural issues.

The Convener then invited Mrs Lindsey Cole and the Revd Bob Day to present a report on the work of SPIN. This they did in song, in spoken words and by showing a number of T-shirts which had been made by women who had been the victims of abuse in the Church.

The Convener then introduced the resolution, asking permission for two minor amendments to be made. This being agreed she moved Resolution 32.

RESOLUTION 32**The Community of Women and Men in the Church**

General Assembly (1) thanks God for the ten-year witness of Sharing People in Network (SPIN) as the United Reformed Church's response to the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women; (2) commits itself to ensuring that the issues that primarily diminish women are tackled effectively by the 'Community of Women and Men in the church'; (3) encourages this new network in the United Reformed Church as the continuing response to these issues, and requests the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee to facilitate this process, working with the Women in Ministries Network and the Women's Union of the Congregational Union of Scotland to achieve these tasks, and to review its work in consultation with Mission Council.

The Moderator then invited comments from the floor. The Revd James Breslin asked for clarification on the wording of clause (3) of the Resolution. The Convener confirmed that the "its" in clause (3) referred to the Community of Women and Men in the church. Mr Day and Mrs Cole then responded to the other comments.

Resolution 32 was carried.

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell introduced and moved Resolution 31.

RESOLUTION 31**Baptismal Records****General Assembly**

- a) charges all churches with keeping a Baptismal record and recommends using the United Reformed Church Baptismal record book**
- b) requests district councils to discover what provision each local church makes for recording Baptisms and recommends that, during pastoral oversight visits, visitors ensure that the Baptismal records are kept up to date.**

The Moderator invited comments on the resolution. Following comment the Convener responded and the resolution was put.

Resolution 31 was carried.

Synod resolutions

The Moderator then called the Revd Christopher White who moved Resolution 1 from the Yorkshire and East Midlands Synods.

RESOLUTION 1**Provincial Boundary Amendment**

General Assembly alters the provincial boundaries to transfer the Isle of Axholme from the Yorkshire Province to the East Midlands Province.

Mr Brian Evans seconded the resolution.

Resolution 1 was carried.

The Chaplains led the Assembly in the closing worship.

A service of Holy Communion was led by the Revd David Jenkins, Moderator 1997/98, assisted by his chaplain, the Revd Stephen Thornton.

The act of worship included the commemoration of the following ministers, missionaries and National Youth & Children's Work Trainer of the United Reformed Church who had died since the last Assembly

Ministers who have served at home and as missionaries overseas and have died since Assembly 1997

David William AGER
Albert Lawrence Rentoul BICKERSTAFF
Wilfred William BIGGS
Malcolm Cecil BLIGH
Donald Pickering COLLINS
Norman Clifford CRANE
Arthur Robert DOWN
Elsie FORREST
David GREENGRASS
Thomas Ernest Reginald LANGRIDGE
Douglas Edgar LEWIS
Arthur Frederick MARSH
Hubert Stanley MAYES
James Edward Lesslie NEWBIGIN
Charles Brian NUTTALL
Robert OGILVIE

Reginald PARMLEY
Ronald Edwin PARKER
Joan Turner PETERS
Gilbert PRESTON
David Holt ROBERTS
John Alexander ROSIE
Sheila Rowan SANDERSON
Cyril Joseph STELEY
Theodore Percy STRACHAN
Hugh Woodruffe THEOBALD
Thomas Gwilym Ogle THOMAS
Albert WATSON
John Seldon WHALE
Ernest WHITE
William Alfred WHITE

Missionaries who have died since Assembly 1997

Hedley Percival BUNTON
Reginald Thomas CRAFT
James Donald CULLINGFORD
Mary Gertrude LEGG
Nina Alice WHYTE
Joyce Mansfield WOOLLARD

National Youth & Children's Work Trainer

Wendy WALKER

The Moderator welcomed Assembly to the start of the day's business. She said that she realised that the layout of the hall meant that it wasn't easy for representatives to see everything that was happening on the platform, although the sound system seemed to be working very well. She requested that anyone who had any practical suggestions to ease the problems of visibility should speak to the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee. The Moderator also thanked Sylvia Reynolds of Basingstoke URC for making the new Lectern fall. Assembly expressed its appreciation by applauding.

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee introduced the day's business, noting that deferred items from Saturday would be included during the day if time permitted.

Doctrine, Prayer and Worship Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Doctrine, Prayer and Worship Committee, the Revd Dr Colin Thompson, to introduce the Report of the Committee. Dr Thompson noted a correction to the Report so that para 14.1 would read: "The Group was formed in 1997. Fiona Gow continues to be the Committee's representative on the group."

Dr Thompson reported that the Committee had started work on the new Service Book and that they would welcome input from the members of Assembly. To this end, a Comments and Suggestions sheet was available at the Doctrine, Prayer and Worship Committee's display.

The Moderator invited comments from the floor and following a number of these she invited the Convener to respond to them. He confirmed that during the preparation of the new Service Book the Committee would be considering a wide range of liturgies from other denominations. They would also consider the use of languages other than English, noting that it might be difficult to decide which other languages should be included and that the cost implications of doing so would need to be taken into account. It was also confirmed that the new Service Book would be available electronically as well as in print.

The Moderator invited the Convener to introduce Resolution 33. The Convener did so and then led Assembly in a prayer of thanksgiving for the life and work of Isaac Watts. The Moderator then asked for comments. Details of the celebrations planned by Avenue St. Andrews, Southampton were given and it was suggested and agreed that Assembly should join in singing one of Isaac Watt's hymns. In responding to the comments and questions, the Convener also clarified the rules of the hymn writing competition.

Assembly stood and sang the first and last verses of "When I survey the wondrous cross"

Dr Thompson moved Resolution 33.

RESOLUTION 33

Isaac Watts Anniversary

Assembly gives thanks to God for the contribution of Isaac Watts to the hymnody of the Church and encourages local churches to mark the 250th anniversary of his death and to make imaginative use of his hymns in worship and Bible study in the following year (25 November 1998 - 25 November 1999).

Resolution 33 was carried.

The Moderator introduced and welcomed Dr Wilhelm Huffmeier, the Executive Secretary of the Leuenberg Church Fellowship, explaining that 98 Protestant churches in Europe form the Fellowship which in March 1998 had celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the signing of the Leuenberg Church Agreement. In signing this Agreement Lutheran, Reformed, United and Hussite Churches in Europe had granted one another "pulpit-and-altar fellowship".

Dr Huffmeier brought the greetings of the Executive Committee to the Assembly. He spoke of the recent extension of the Agreement and reported that work was in progress to bring other churches into the fellowship. He also expressed gratitude to the United Reformed Church for its financial contribution to the Fellowship. Assembly thanked Dr Huffmeier by applauding.

Election of Moderator 1999 – 2000

The Moderator introduced the Election of Moderator for 1999 – 2000 by asking the Clerk to explain the procedure. The Moderator then led the Assembly in prayer before inviting members to cast their votes.

The Moderator asked Assembly's permission to extend the morning session to 12.45pm if it proved necessary. This was agreed.

Youth and Children's Work Committee

The Convener of the Youth and Children's Work Committee, the Revd Stephen Thornton, introduced the Committee's report, emphasising how important it was for district councils to monitor the implementation of the Good Practice guidelines. He spoke of the recent staffing difficulties in Youth and Children's Work, thanking all those who had ensured that the work continued. In particular he expressed gratitude to Heather Whyte who had worked as Acting Director at the Yardley Hastings Centre for the past year.

Mr Thornton introduced Mick Maskell, YCWT Yorkshire Province, the Revd Liz Byrne, the new Yardley Hastings Centre Minister and Ms Lesley Anne Di Marco, the new Secretary for Youth Work. The Moderator greeted them and explained that Liz Byrne would be inducted to her new post locally as she would also be minister of the local Yardley Hastings Church and that Lesley Ann Di Marco would be inducted at the September Mission Council.

The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer.

The Moderator noted with pleasure the hand-written New Testament, "The Never Ending Story" which had been presented during the Communion Service and presented to Mr Thornton two cheques, each of £1,500, one for Yardley Hastings and the other for Pilots which were their share of the money raised through sponsorship of the project. The total raised was £6,000; the remaining £3,000 had been donated to the Bible Society.

The Moderator invited comments on the Committee's Report.

In response to a question, the General Secretary confirmed that the Never Ending Story would be made available to the synods and the Moderator advised the Assembly that she had been asked to take it with her when she visited churches.

Mr Thornton confirmed that Partners in Learning would adopt the Revised Common Lectionary during 1998.

There being no further questions, the Moderator thanked the Committee for their work.

The Chaplain said grace and Assembly adjourned.

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee reminded Assembly that leaflets should not be distributed to members of Assembly without the prior permission of the General Secretary and the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee. He also asked that members of Assembly switch off mobile telephones during the Assembly sessions.

The Moderator thanked the Revd David Jenkins for leading the Service of Holy Communion and for his inspiring address. Assembly expressed its appreciation by applauding.

Ecumenical Committee

The Revd Bob Andrews asked the Moderator to greet two ecumenical visitors who had not been able to be present on Saturday afternoon. The Moderator welcomed the Revd Robert Bebb of the Presbyterian Church of Wales and the Revd Gabrielle Ellis of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Mr Andrews paid tribute to the Revd Murdoch McKenzie, the previous Convener of the Ecumenical Committee, for the enthusiastic legacy that he had left. He also congratulated the General Secretary on his appointment as the Moderator of the Free Churches' Council and the resulting appointment as one of the presidents of Churches Together in England.

In introducing the report from the Ecumenical Committee, Mr Andrews made reference to four key words: listening, identity, unity and partnership. He then invited the Moderator to welcome the Revd Prince Dibeela, from the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, who is working as a Mission Enabler in the East Midlands Province. The Moderator greeted him and his wife and family.

The Moderator invited comments on the Report.

In answer to a question, Mr Andrews affirmed the importance and significance of the letter from Dr Preman Niles, the General Secretary of the Council for World Mission, noting that the implications were not just financial, but affected how we see ourselves as a church and how we develop our mission.

He also clarified that the tri-lateral informal talks with the Church of England and the Methodist Church would feed into the formal talks and that the URC would hope to be involved in any process that followed the adoption of a joint statement by the two churches.

Mr Andrews asked the Revd Sheila Maxey to respond to a question about the Scottish Churches Initiative for Union (SCIFU). She confirmed that the response to the report produced by SCIFU would be made by the Northern Province and that the response would be communicated to Mission Council, so that issues of wider relevance could be addressed.

In response to another question, the Revd Philip Woods confirmed that the reports of the Revd Dr Chris Wigglesworth, the Principal of St Andrew's Hall, and the Revd Pat Nimmo, the Director for Educational Programme Development, would be taken into account fully when the future of St Andrew's Hall was considered.

The Convener of the Ecumenical Committee introduced and moved Resolution 34.

RESOLUTION 34

Methodist / United Reformed Church Relationships

The General Assembly agrees to release the General Secretary from the direction of the 1992 General Assembly to arrange an annual meeting between Methodist and United Reformed Church central staff and the President and Vice-President of Conference and the Moderator of General Assembly.

The Moderator invited comment on the resolution. Dr David Thompson noted that it was important that the President of the Methodist Conference and the Moderator of General Assembly should maintain contact with each other. In response to a question, Mr Andrews confirmed that at its recent meeting the Methodist Conference had agreed to release the Secretary of Conference from its 1992 direction.

Resolution 34 was carried.

The Convener introduced and moved Resolution 35.

RESOLUTION 35

Belonging to the World Church

This Assembly receives the Belonging to the World Church programme proposals and encourages the Ecumenical Committee to implement them.

The Moderator invited comments on the resolution. Many speakers spoke warmly of the privilege of belonging to the World Church and welcomed the resolution. The Convener expressed gratitude for the positive response to the resolution from members of Assembly. Responding to a concern expressed, he noted that a major report on mission at home would be presented to the October meeting of Mission Council. He asked the Revd Philip Woods to respond to the detailed questions that had been asked.

Mr Woods confirmed that it was envisioned that spouses would be involved in the life-changing experiences that would be offered to ordinands and acknowledged that the situations of those with children would need to be taken into account. He affirmed that it was hoped that the Belonging to the World Church programme would be a mutually supportive process and partnership and confirmed that Commitment for Life would be a fundamental part of it. He noted the hopes that had been expressed that the Belonging to the World Church programme would not be limited to CWM Partner Churches and that the introduction of this new programme would not restrict those international exchanges that were already in operation.

Resolution 35 was carried.

The Revd Bob Andrews introduced the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, the Revd Timothy Njoya. The Moderator welcomed Mr Njoya recalling the shock felt by the Assembly the previous year when it had heard reports of the brutal attack by Kenyan military forces. She expressed delight at his presence and invited him to address the Assembly. Mr Njoya thanked the Assembly for his message of support. His address was greeted with a prolonged standing ovation.

Assembly joined in singing a gloria.

Dr David Thompson took the chair.

Church and Society Committee

The Moderator invited the Revd Bob Andrews to move Resolution 25 on behalf of the Church and Society and Ecumenical Committees.

RESOLUTION 25 50th Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights

Assembly,

Noting that 1998 marks the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights,

- a) Gives thanks for the work and witness of the UN Human Rights Commission;**
- b) Calls upon Her Majesty's Government**
 - i) to ratify the first Optional Protocol to the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, allowing individuals access to the UN Committee on Human Rights;**
 - ii) to ratify the second Optional Protocol to the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, committing the UK to a complete and permanent ban on capital punishment;**
- c) Welcomes the move of Her Majesty's Government to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into UK legislation; and**
- d) Invites the Church and Society Committee to study the proposals by the InterAction Council for a Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities in the context of the debate on Human Rights and to make an appropriate submission to Her Majesty's Government.**

The Moderator invited comments on the resolution.

The Revd Peter Brain responded to the comments made and the Moderator then invited Assembly to vote on the resolution.

Resolution 25 was carried.

Synod Resolutions

The Moderator invited Mrs Nancy Welch to present Resolution 7 on behalf of the Southern Synod.

RESOLUTION 7

The exploitation of children

General Assembly resolves to continue to bring pressure to bear upon Parliament to eradicate worldwide exploitation and sexual abuse of children, and to this end, encourages each synod, district council and local church to support the work of ECPAT(UK) (End child Prostitution, Pornography and the Trafficking of children for sexual purposes).

Mrs Nan Owen seconded the resolution and the Moderator invited comments from the members of Assembly. As there were no comments, the Moderator moved to the vote.

Resolution 7 was carried.

Mrs Wilma Frew resumed the chair.

The Moderator invited Mr Simon Rowntree to present Resolution 2 on behalf of the West Midlands Synod.

Resolution 2 Nomination Process for Assembly Moderator

General Assembly amends the Rules of Procedure in paragraph 3(3) by deleting the word 'not' in the first sentence.

The Revd Tom Bayliss seconded the Resolution and the Moderator invited comments from members of Assembly. Following a number of comments, the Moderator invited Mr. Rowntree to respond.

Resolution 2 was not carried.

The General Secretary advised the Assembly that the sermon preached by the Revd David Jenkins during the Communion Service would be published, together with three other sermons, shortly after Assembly and that orders could be placed with the Bookstall.

The Chaplain said Grace and the Assembly adjourned.

The Moderator asked the Clerk to present the Minutes of the first two sessions of the Assembly. The Clerk presented the Minutes and noted a number of corrections. She asked that the Minutes be accepted, noting that corrections to the Roll of Assembly would be included in the Record of Assembly.

Assembly approved the Minutes of the first two sessions of Saturday 11th July 1998.

Election of the Moderator 1999 – 2000

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Tellers to report the result of the election of the Moderator 1999 – 2000. The Revd Angus Duncan reported that 473 ballot papers had been received. He announced that the Revd Peter Ernest McIntosh had been duly elected to be the Moderator 1999 – 2000. Assembly welcomed this with applause and the Moderator invited Mr McIntosh to the platform where she greeted him and led the Assembly in prayer.

Mission Council

The Moderator invited the Revd David Jenkins to present the Mission Council Report. Mr Jenkins asked the Deputy General Secretary, the Revd John Waller, to report on the work being done in response to Resolution 40 of the 1997 General Assembly. Mr Waller reported that there had been a meeting of interested parties to discuss the use of Information Technology by the Church. This had resulted in the production of a Brief for an external consultant. He also reported that a new Database was being set up and that the United Reformed Church Web site had been recently redesigned and updated.

Mr Jenkins invited the Moderator to greet the Revd Roberta Rominger, the newly appointed Provincial Moderator of the Thames North Province.

The Moderator invited comments on the Mission Council Report.

The Revd Elizabeth Welch, Convener of the Core Group set up in response to Resolution 18 of the 1997 General Assembly, reported on the work of the Core Group and the four Working Groups, noting that the members of the Groups represented the wide variety of views held within the Church. She explained that the Working Groups would report to the Core Group in time for them to report to the meeting of Mission Council in March 1999. Mission Council would then present a major report to the 1999 General Assembly. She added that all the members of the Groups would appreciate the continued prayers of the members of Assembly.

In response to other questions, Mr Jenkins confirmed that the Working Group established in response to Resolution 41 of the 1997 General Assembly would continue in existence if there was a pastoral need.

The Clerk introduced Resolution 11. In doing so, she asked for Assembly's permission to make minor changes to the wording of parts a) and d) of the resolution. This was agreed.

The Clerk moved Resolution 11.

RESOLUTION 11

Changes to the Structure

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church (see the procedure for constitutional amendment set out in paragraph 3(1) of the Structure):

- a) **Amend the existing category at paragraph 2(3)(a) by adding the words: 'and Assembly appointed ministers who are members of a local church in that district.'**
- b) **Amend the existing category at Paragraph 2(4)(h) to read: 'All retired ministers not covered by clause 2.4.a or clause 2.4.g residing within the province or nation served by the synod, who shall be associate members of the synod having the right to speak but not to vote at meetings of the synod.'**
- c) **In the existing category at paragraph 2(5)(c) delete the words: 'departments and'.**
- d) **In the third sentence of the concluding section of Paragraph 2(5) delete the words: 'set up departments and'.**
- e) **In the fifth sentence of the concluding section of Paragraph 2(5) delete the words: 'department or'.**
- f) **In the existing category at Paragraph 2(5)(ii) delete the words 'departments and'.**
- g) **Amend the existing Paragraph 3(1)(f) to read: 'If by such date such notice has not been received, a motion to agree the proposed amendment shall come before the General Assembly at its next meeting. Such a motion shall require a simple majority of the members present and voting to pass.'**

The Clerk explained that as this was an amendment to the Structure it required a two thirds majority and would then be referred to the Synods for comment before being presented for ratification at next year's Assembly.

The Moderator invited comment; there being none she invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 11 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The General Secretary proposed that in accordance with para. 3(1) of the Structure Resolution 11 be referred to Provincial Synods with 15th March 1999 as the final date for responses as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to introduce Resolution 19.

RESOLUTION 19

Procedure for Union

The General Assembly agrees that the process of decision on the Proposals for Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland be according to paragraph 3(1) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom.

The Moderator invited comment; there being none, she invited Assembly to vote.

Resolution 19 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The Moderator invited the United Reformed Church Co-convenor of the Joint Negotiating Group, the Revd Dr Stephen Orchard, to introduce Resolution 20. He did so, noting a correction to page 9 of the Proposals for the Union of the Congregational Union of Scotland and the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom:

Clause F(ii) to read
"Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland –
it is proposed to seek twelve places."

Dr Orchard moved Resolution 20.

RESOLUTION 20

Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland

The General Assembly gives first approval to the Proposals for Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland (document dated March 1998) including the Amendments to the Basis and Structure of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom listed in Appendix C of the document, and refers these Proposals to synods and district councils.

The Moderator invited comments. The representative of the Church of Scotland, the Revd Duncan McClements, confirmed that both the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Churches Initiative for Union (SCIFU) welcomed the proposals for union and were especially grateful for the sensitive and thoughtful way in which they had been drafted so that they wouldn't hinder any future unions. The General Secretary of the Congregational Federation, Pastor Graham Adams, confirmed the Federation's support for the union. Many members spoke warmly in favour of the proposals. Some questions were asked.

The Convener responded to the comments and questions and the Moderator then invited Assembly to vote on the Resolution.

Resolution 20 was carried without dissent and with joyful applause.

The General Secretary introduced Resolution 21 and asked for permission to make two minor changes to the wording of the Resolution. Permission was granted.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 21

RESOLUTION 21

Consultation with other Councils

General Assembly (1) invites district councils and synods to discuss the Proposals for Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland and agrees that should any council or synod wish to pass a resolution 'that these Proposals be not proceeded with' such resolution must reach the General Secretary by 31 December 1998; and (2) authorises the United Reformed Church (UK) representatives on the Joint Negotiating Group to continue with this work.

Dr James Merrilees of the Scottish Congregational Church spoke of his gratitude that Assembly had passed Resolution 20 and for the way in which it was passed. He also expressed thanks for the wisdom, sensitivity and grace shown by the United Reformed Church during the negotiations.

The Moderator invited Assembly to vote on the resolution.

Resolution 21 was carried unanimously.

The Moderator spoke of her personal joy and informed Assembly that she would be representing the United Reformed Church at the Assembly of the Congregational Union of Scotland in September.

The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer.

The Moderator called upon the Clerk who introduced and moved Resolution 12. In so doing, the Clerk informed the Assembly that in the next edition of The Manual the Rules of Procedure would be found in a new order, which would make them clearer.

RESOLUTION 12

Changes to the Rules of Procedure

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Rules of Procedure for the Conduct of the United Reformed Church:

- a) **Amend the existing Paragraph 1(1) by inserting the following before the present final sentence:
'At the completion of the business of the Annual Meeting of the Assembly, the Assembly is adjourned. The members of Assembly at any time between Annual Meetings of the Assembly remain those who were included on the Roll of Assembly at the constitution of the immediately preceding Annual Meeting of the Assembly.'**
- b) **Amend the existing Paragraph 1(4) by replacing the word 'four' in the third sentence with 'two'.**
- c) **Number the existing unnumbered final paragraph of section 1 as 1(5).**

The Moderator invited comments from the floor and there being none she invited Assembly to vote.

Resolution 12 was carried.

Synod Resolution

The Moderator invited Mr Ken Woods to introduce and move Resolution 3 on behalf of the Eastern Synod. This he did, asking for permission to make minor changes to the wording of the Resolution. This was agreed.

RESOLUTION 3

Amendment of structure 2(3) and 2(4)

General Assembly resolves to amend a function of district council and to add categories to the membership of district council and synod as follows:

amend 2(3)(iv) by deleting the words: 'from among its members'.

Add 2(3)(j): An elder appointed by the district council as an interim moderator who shall be a full member of the district council for the period of the appointment.

Add 2(4)(k): An elder appointed by the district council as an interim moderator who shall be a full member of the synod for the period of the appointment.

The Revd Bill Mahood formally seconded the Resolution and reserved his right to make a speech. The Moderator invited comments from the floor and Mr. Mahood responded to these. Before the resolution was put to the Assembly, the Clerk noted that, although the resolution was concerned primarily with Elders, the deletion of the words "from among its members" from paragraph 2(3)(iv) of the Structure would apply also to the appointment of ministers as Interim Moderators.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote and **Resolution 3 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.**

The General Secretary proposed that in accordance with para 3(1) of the Structure Resolution 3 be referred to Provincial Synods with 15th March 1999 as the final date for responses as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.

In response to a question, the General Secretary confirmed that the Congregational Union of Scotland had been advised that minor changes to the Basis and Structure might be made during the Assembly.

The Moderator welcomed the Prof. Graham Stanton who led a period of Bible Study and the Chaplains led the closing worship.

The Assembly adjourned.

The Chaplains led opening worship and the Prof. Graham Stanton continued his Bible Study.

The Moderator greeted the Assembly and welcomed the Lord Mayor of Nottingham, Councillor Joyce Donn, the Lady Mayoress, Mrs Noreen Baker, and the Lord Mayor's Chaplain and invited the Lord Mayor to address the Assembly. The Lord Mayor brought greetings from the people of Nottingham, expressed her pleasure at being able to join in worship at the beginning of her day and welcomed the members of Assembly to the City of Nottingham, commending its many attractions to them.

The Moderator thanked the Lord Mayor for her welcome.

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee advised the Assembly that the order of business was as printed in the Programme, except that Resolution 9 would be taken before Resolution 8 and that Resolution 23 would be taken before Resolution 5. It was hoped that the resolutions from the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee could be taken during the evening session, which would end with a presentation from FURY.

Training Committee

The Moderator invited the Revd Dr John Sutcliffe to introduce the Report of the Training Committee. She then invited comments. In response to one question, Dr Sutcliffe asked permission for the Convener of the Training Finance Sub-Committee, the Revd Elizabeth Nash, to address the issue of housing costs. Permission was granted and Ms Nash explained that the Sub-Committee currently dealt with these issues on a case by case basis. However, in the light of an increased number of applications for assistance, the Sub-Committee would be carrying out a full review.

Dr Sutcliffe introduced Resolution 43 and asked permission to make a minor change to the wording of the Resolution. This was agreed.

Dr Sutcliffe moved Resolution 43.

RESOLUTION 43 The proposed model for Post-Ordination Education and Training

The General Assembly endorses the programme for Post-Ordination Education and Training of Ministers set out in the Book of Reports.

The Moderator invited comments on the resolution. There were numerous contributions from the floor. The Convener thanked those who had spoken in support of the resolution, noting that a culture of learning in our churches was vital to the spiritual health of our church. He also noted the suggestions for subjects to be included in the syllabus for residential weekends.

The Moderator invited Assembly to vote on the resolution.

Resolution 43 was carried.

Dr Sutcliffe moved Resolution 44.

Resolution 44 Continuing Ministerial Education

The General Assembly endorses the programme of Continuing Ministerial Education set out in the Book of Reports.

The Moderator invited comments and Dr Sutcliffe responded.

The Revd Dr James F Coleman proposed an amendment to Resolution 44:

Add: "and urges the new Continuing Ministerial Education sub-committee to investigate ways in which the gifts of those already within the URC may be utilised more effectively within the overall process of Continuing Ministerial Education"

The Amendment was seconded by the Revd Dr Gerald Munro. On behalf of the Training Committee, the Convener confirmed that the Committee accepted the amendment.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote on the substantive resolution.

RESOLUTION 44

Continuing Ministerial Education

The General Assembly endorses the programme of Continuing Ministerial Education set out in the Book of Reports and urges the new Continuing Ministerial Education sub-committee to investigate ways in which the gifts of those already within the URC may be utilised more effectively within the overall process of Continuing Ministerial Education.

Resolution 44 as amended was carried.

Dr Sutcliffe moved Resolution 45.

RESOLUTION 45

Staffing arrangements

Assembly, having approved a policy for Continuing Ministerial Education, asks Mission Council to consider the appropriate staffing arrangements.

The Moderator invited comments and then invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 45 was carried.

Mission Council

The Moderator called the General Secretary who presented and moved Resolution 18.

RESOLUTION 18

Use of Colleges

Assembly resolves to recommend the use of Northern, The Queen's and Westminster Colleges for initial ministerial training for the foreseeable future.

The Revd Derek Wales, Convener of the Review Group which had been set up by the Training Committee to consider and make recommendations concerning the number of colleges which the United Reformed Church should use in the foreseeable future, outlined the process by which the group had reached its recommendation.

Mrs Rosalind Goodfellow moved and Mr Nick Adlem seconded the following amendment:
add "Mansfield," before "Northern".

The Revd David Helyar suggested that the amendment should be ruled out of order because it negated the resolution. The Clerk advised that the amendment enlarged the resolution. The Moderator refused to rule the amendment out of order.

The Moderator invited contributions from the floor and after some debate suggested that Assembly decide that speeches be limited to three minutes. This was agreed.

The General Secretary said that if the amendment were rejected it would not mean a vote against Mansfield College, but would allow the review to be considered. As yet no decision had been taken by the Mission Council about its recommendation to the Assembly regarding the future use of Mansfield College.

The Revd Margaret Taylor gave notice that should this amendment be rejected, she would move the following amendment:

- i) change "recommend" to "confirm"
- ii) add "and defers to a later Assembly a decision about the use of Mansfield College" to the end of the Resolution.

Following further discussion, the Revd Alan Wharton moved and the Revd Stephen Fisher seconded that the amendment **be now put**. This was agreed by the necessary two thirds majority. The Moderator invited Mrs Goodfellow to respond to the comments made in the discussion.

The amendment was put to the Assembly and was not carried.

The Moderator asked the Assembly if it was willing to extend the morning session to enable it to complete the business before it. Assembly expressed its willingness to continue.

The Revd Margaret Taylor moved the amendment:

- i) change "recommend" to "confirm"
- ii) add "and defers to a later Assembly a decision about the use of Mansfield College" to the end of the Resolution.

The amendment was formally seconded by the Revd Dr John Sutcliffe. The Moderator invited comments on the amendment. The Moderator asked Assembly to vote on the amendment.

The amendment was lost.

Assembly again agreed to continue in session so that consideration of Resolution 18 could be completed.

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to reply to the debate.

The Revd Heather Pencavel moved and the Revd Richard Wiggins seconded that the resolution be not put.

Assembly voted against this.

The Moderator led the Assembly in a moment of silence and prayer and then invited the Assembly to vote on Resolution 18.

Resolution 18 was carried.

The Moderator thanked everyone for their contributions and asked the Chaplain to say grace.

The Assembly adjourned.

Finance Committee

The Moderator invited the Treasurer, Mr. Graham Stacy, to introduce the Finance Committee's Report. The Moderator invited comments from the floor and Mr Stacy responded. In response to a concern expressed, he acknowledged that it was important to ensure that all equipment, not just computer equipment, was Millennium compliant.

Mr Stacy presented and moved Resolution 37.

RESOLUTION 37

Accounts

Assembly adopts the accounts for the year ended 31st December 1997.

The Moderator invited comments from members of the Assembly. In response, Mr Stacy confirmed that the surplus £877,000 would be added to the Church's Reserves as currently it was not earmarked for any specific purpose. He stressed, however, that this surplus would continue to be available for specific projects.

Resolution 37 was carried.

Mr Stacy introduced Resolution 38, noting the significant sacrifice that was required of some churches to enable them to raise their contributions to Ministry & Mission Fund. With great pleasure he moved the resolution.

RESOLUTION 38

Ministry and Mission Fund

Assembly gratefully acknowledges the giving of the churches in 1997 to the Ministry & Mission Fund.

Resolution 38 was carried.

The Moderator invited the Revd Duncan Wilson, Convener of the Mission Council Resource Planning Advisory Group (RPAG), to introduce Resolution 22. He outlined the role of RPAG and explained the background to the production of the budget. He noted that the budget was not just a matter of figures, but rather was an assessment of the opportunities and needs set against the ability to provide resources.

Mr. Stacy proceeded to review the details of the Budget. He explained that in response to the letter from Dr Preman Niles, General Secretary of the Council for World Mission (CWM), it had been decided to reduce the value of the gift to CWM from £647,000 in 1997 to £100,000 in 1998. The Ministry & Mission Fund contributions for 1999 would be set at 1998 levels.

Mr Wilson moved Resolution 22.

RESOLUTION 22

Mission Council

Assembly adopts the budget for 1999 as set out on pages 156 and 157 of the Book of Reports.

The Moderator invited comments.

In response to the comments, the Convener of the Resource Planning Advisory Group confirmed that the group would welcome imaginative suggestions for the use of the financial resources that were available to the Church. Mr Stacy explained that CWM had not made a gift to the United Reformed Church, rather that they had suggested that it should reduce its contributions. He noted that some of the resulting surplus would be used for Ministerial and Lay Training and had resulted in the 1999 Ministry & Mission Fund contributions being held at 1998 levels.

The General Secretary explained that because the CWM initiative was so recent it was not yet possible to indicate fully how the resources which would be released might be used. It was important that the church acted responsibly. CWM had asked the United Reformed Church to prepare a mission strategy for the next few years. A major report covering a wide range of exciting initiatives would be presented to the next meeting of Mission Council.

In response to a question about the possible financial implications of any secessions, and/or resignations of ministers following Resolution 19 of 1997 the General Secretary confirmed that, in the light of Resolutions 17 and 18 of the 1997 General Assembly which committed all in the United Reformed Church to do everything possible to maintain the unity of the Church and to a period of further reflection and study, no contingency plans had been made because that process had not yet finished. The General Secretary reminded the Assembly of the pastoral group which was available to enable care of those who felt pain and distress in connection with Resolution 19 of 1997.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote on Resolution 22.

Resolution 22 was carried.

Communications and Editorial Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Communications and Editorial Committee to introduce the Committee's Report. Mr Christopher Wright explained that the Report would begin with a presentation on the work of the Churches Advertising Network (CAN) by the Revd Robert Ellis. Before beginning his presentation Mr Ellis conveyed to the Assembly the greetings of the Bishop of Lichfield.

Assembly greeted his presentation with extended applause and Mr Wright moved Resolution 27, having been given permission to make a minor change to the wording.

RESOLUTION 27

Churches Advertising Network (CAN)

Assembly commends the work of the Churches Advertising Network to local congregations, and asks the Communications and Editorial Committee Secretary to arrange for provision to be made in the Communications and Editorial Committee budget to make funds available for the future work of CAN.

The Moderator invited comments. The Convener thanked Assembly for the expressions of support and invited the Revd David Lawrence to give further details of the advertising campaigns.

Resolution 27 was carried.

Mr Wright thanked the Revd Robert Ellis for his presentation and then introduced the Report of the Communications and Editorial Committee. He encouraged everyone to read *Reform* and to visit the Assembly Bookstall.

The Moderator invited comments on the Report. Following a number of contributions, to which Mr Wright responded, the Moderator thanked the Committee for their work.

Mrs Ruth Clarke took the Chair.

Mission Council

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell was invited to present Resolution 9 on behalf of Mission Council. She welcomed and introduced the Revd Stephen Lynas, the Millennium Officer of Churches Together in England and Major Alan Dixon, a Salvation Army Officer seconded to the Millennium Group of Churches Together in England.

Mr Lynas made an exciting presentation on the Millennium and encouraged members of Assembly to become involved in ensuring that the link was made between the Millennium celebrations and Jesus Christ.

Mrs Caswell moved Resolution 9.

RESOLUTION 9

NewStart

Assembly welcomes ecumenical co-operation in preparations for the Millennium and recommends

- a) the idea of local Churches Together groups giving every home a millennium candle and encouraging the nation to share in the Millennium Resolution on 31st December 1999**
- b) the New Start theme of the Churches' Millennium Group, and encourages local churches to consider how they can advocate a New Start for the world's poor, a New Start at home, and a New Start with God in their own communities**
- c) the idea of churches following the same general themes during the period Advent 1999 to Epiphany 2000 and welcomes the proposed ecumenical publication of worship material.**

The Moderator invited comments. There were a number of questions and comments, and concerns were expressed regarding the proposed use of the Millennium candle.

Mrs Caswell asked permission for Mr Lynas, Major Dixon and the Revd Roger Whitehead to respond to the comments. This was granted. Mr Lynas explained that the concerns were well understood and were being addressed, and in particular noted that advice about the safety issues connected with the use of candles was being sought from the Home Office Fire Safety Unit.

The Moderator invited Assembly to vote.

Resolution 9 was carried.

The Moderator expressed gratitude on behalf of the Assembly for the contribution of the Revd Stephen Lynas and to the Church of England for enabling him to take on this responsibility.

Mrs Wilma Frew resumed the chair.

Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee

The Moderator invited the Revd Bill Wright to make a presentation on GEM (Gifts Enable Mission).

The Moderator thanked Mr Wright for his stimulating presentation.

Mission Council

The Moderator invited the Revd David Jenkins to introduce Resolution 15.

RESOLUTION 15

Disciplinary Process

Noting that Mission Council has resolved to conduct a review of the Ministerial Disciplinary Process in March 1999, Assembly authorises the General Secretary, the Clerk and the Convener of the Ministries Committee to oversee the Process on its behalf, at least until such review has been completed.

There being no comments, the Moderator invited Assembly to vote.

Resolution 15 was carried.

The General Secretary left the hall.

The Revd David Jenkins introduced Resolution 16 and, in doing so, paid tribute to the General Secretary. He warmly moved the resolution on behalf of a unanimous Mission Council.

RESOLUTION 16

General Secretary

Assembly re-appoints the Revd Anthony Gerald Burnham as General Secretary for a period of two years, ending on 31 July 2001.

The Moderator invited questions and comments. There was only one question, which asked whether lay people could be considered when Mr Burnham's successor was sought. The Clerk noted that the Rules of Procedure stated that the General Secretary "shall be a minister of the United Reformed Church".

Resolution 16 was carried. The General Secretary returned to applause.

The General Secretary accepted the re-appointment, trusting in the continuing grace of God and the strength and health that God provides. He expressed thanks to the Assembly staff, the United Reformed Church House staff and the Provincial Moderators. He said he was aware of support through the prayers of many people and that with God's help he would continue in this ministry.

Synod Resolution

The Moderator invited the Revd Gilbert Tate to propose Resolution 8 on behalf of the West Midlands Province. The Revd John Marsh formally seconded the resolution.

RESOLUTION 8

A Declaration of Hope, Faith and Love for all people

General Assembly agrees the principle of this Declaration of Hope, Faith and Love for all people and calls on the church to support it by prayer and appropriate action: whilst holding our differing beliefs about God and his way for all people, we commit ourselves to:

- **opening our hearts and minds to understand and respect each other's beliefs;**
- **being ready to learn from each other's tradition and experiences;**
- **working together in the pursuit of goodness and truth.**

To that end we further commit ourselves to work with other individuals and groups of all faiths and none, who are ready to share our commitment to the encouragement of:

- **dialogue and consultation rather than confrontation in politics;**
- **competition in excellence rather than in self-interest;**
- **co-operation in meeting human need and the conservation of the universe;**
- **the establishment of peace, freedom and justice throughout the world.**

The Moderator invited comments. Following a number of comments, the Moderator invited Mr Tate to respond and then invited Assembly to vote.

Resolution 8 was carried.

The Chaplain led the Assembly in singing the Doxology and the Assembly then adjourned.

The Moderator asked the Clerk to present the Minutes of earlier sessions of the Assembly. The Clerk did so, noting a number of corrections. With these changes the Minutes of the third session of Saturday and the first two sessions of Sunday were approved.

Equal Opportunities Committee

The Moderator invited the Equal Opportunities Committee to introduce Resolution 36. They did this by means of a sketch and a presentation.

The Convener of the Committee, Mrs. Susan Rand, noted that in the light of the passing of Resolution 26 the Committee would be amending the guidelines to include "age" in addition to "race, gender or disability" and moved the resolution.

RESOLUTION 36

Equal Opportunities Policy for Local Churches

Assembly welcomes the report 'Equal Opportunities Policy for Local Churches' and encourages local churches to study it and to ensure that appropriate policies are in place throughout their life.

The Moderator invited comments, following which the Convener responded. The Moderator invited Assembly to vote on the resolution.

Resolution 36 was carried.

The Convener presented the report of the Equal Opportunities Committee. The Moderator invited comments on the report and the Convener responded to the points made.

Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee, the Revd Elizabeth Caswell, to introduce Resolution 29. Mrs Caswell first expressed thanks to the Revds Peter McIntosh and Graham Robson for the time and commitment they had expended on producing the book *Refreshing the Elders' Meeting*.

She noted that a number of changes had been made to the Guidelines attached to Resolution 29 since the Book of Reports had been printed:

Introduction to the Guidelines to read "Local church leadership will be exercised:"

6. change "a title" to "titles"
7. change "in partnership with those exercising ordained ministry" to "in partnership with those exercising the ordained ministry of the Word and Sacraments"
8. change "rooted in the local eldership," to "rooted in and accountable to the local eldership,"

The Convener asked permission to invite the Revds Bill Wright and Peter McIntosh to present the resolution. The Moderator agreed. The Convener moved the resolution, and, with the agreement of the Assembly, made a minor change to the wording.

RESOLUTION 29

Local Church Leadership

Assembly encourages synods and district councils in consultation with local churches to identify forms of local church leadership and to explore ways in which these may be recognised, affirmed and developed using the Guidelines.

The Moderator invited comments. The Convener thanked the members of Assembly for their support and encouragement. She stressed that the key to Local Church Leadership was flexibility to ensure that the plan could be adapted to meet local needs.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 29 was carried.

The Moderator asked the Convener to introduce Resolution 30. This she did, by telling a story.

RESOLUTION 30

Evangelism after the Decade

Assembly encourages

- a) local churches to engage actively in evangelism and evangelisation, using those with appropriate gifts**
- b) district councils to hold Vision Workshops**
- c) the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee to explore ecumenically the possibility of establishing a College of Evangelists**
- d) the idea of a mission enabler/development worker being used in every Province, to help local churches engage in God's mission.**

The Moderator invited comments. After several comments the Revd Phil Hanson moved that the Resolution **be now put**. The motion was seconded by the Revd Bob West and was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The Convener responded to the debate and then the Moderator invited Assembly to vote on Resolution 30.

Resolution 30 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee for their work and Assembly expressed its gratitude by applauding.

The Moderator announced that FURY would make their presentation and then the Chaplains would lead the Assembly in worship.

FURY

FURY's dramatic presentation challenged Assembly to consider the plight of the workers in Haiti who are being exploited by the Disney Corporation. They encouraged the members of Assembly to do all they could to raise awareness of the issue, and the Assembly responded with applause.

The Chaplains led the Assembly in a time of quiet reflection and prayer and the singing of two hymns.

The Chaplains led the Assembly in worship and Prof. Graham Stanton concluded his series of Bible Studies. The Moderator, on behalf of Assembly, expressed appreciation for the way in which Prof. Stanton had led Assembly in Bible Study. Assembly applauded.

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee announced the order of the day's business and asked members of the Assembly to bear in mind the amount of business that had to be considered and the time available to do so.

Church and Society Committee

The Moderator invited the Church and Society Committee to present Resolution 24. Prof. Malcolm Johnson introduced a dramatic presentation and the Revd David Pickering, the Environmental issues Adviser to the Committee, presented the background to the resolution.

Prof. Johnson moved Resolution 24.

RESOLUTION 24

Roots and Branches

Assembly

- a) recognises with thanksgiving and repentance that the care and stewardship of God's creation is an essential part of Christian discipleship;**
- b) challenges every local church to address its own responsibilities over the next two years, using the pack 'Roots and Branches';**
- c) in particular, instructs Church and Society in conjunction with other committees, to develop a plan for energy audits of church premises;**
- d) invites District Councils to consider these matters in their regular visits to churches.**

The Moderator invited comments, suggesting that Assembly should agree that all speeches should be limited to 3 minutes throughout the day. The Revds Peter Brain and David Pickering responded to the comments. The Moderator invited Assembly to vote on the resolution.

Resolution 24 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Church and Society Committee and noted that this was Prof. Malcolm Johnson's last Assembly as Convener of the Committee. She thanked him for all his work with the Committee, and Assembly showed its appreciation by applauding.

Methodist/URC Health and Healing Development Group

The Moderator invited the Secretary of the Methodist/URC Health and Healing Development Group, the Revd Jim Hollyman, to introduce the Group's Report. Mr Hollyman presented apologies on behalf of the Group's Convener, the Revd Ward Jones, who was unable to attend Assembly, and introduced the Report, acknowledging the work done by the Revd Robin Hine in preparing various Health and Healing resources.

The Moderator invited comments on the Report and the Convener responded to the one comment made.

The Secretary then introduced and moved Resolution 39.

Assembly

- **endorses the strategy of the Joint Health and Healing Development Group for its work until 2000AD as set out in Annex 1 of the Book of Reports;**
- **welcomes the publication by the Methodist Church and the Churches' Council for Health and Healing of 'Guidelines for Good Practice for those involved in the Christian healing ministry', including a code of conduct;**
- **welcomes the appointment and support of Health and Healing Advisers in some provinces and urges the other provinces to ensure that these matters are actively dealt with;**
- **welcomes the revision of In Hospital and the plan to revise and publish other booklets to aid the pastoral ministry;**
- **notes the resolutions on mental health passed overwhelmingly at FURY Assembly (as set out in Annex 2 in the Book of Reports) and encourages links between the Joint Group and FURY Council in raising awareness and understanding throughout the Church.**

The Moderator opened the matter for debate and invited the Secretary to respond to the comments made.

In response to one comment, the General Secretary assured Assembly that co-operation between the denominations was viewed as being extremely important. He said that the fact that this particular Group had the name "Methodist/URC" did not imply that other Groups and Committees of the Church did not work together with other denominations. He confirmed that all Staff Secretaries were committed to working ecumenically and regarded this as a priority.

Resolution 39 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Group for their work.

Ministries Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener, the Revd Graham Long, to present the Report of the Ministries Committee. In presenting the Report Mr Long noted with pleasure the appointment of the Revd Sandy Mailer as Lay Preaching Commissioner. Mr Long also said that a review of the ministry and role of Non-Stipendiary ministers had been initiated since the Report was written. The Committee was seeking to consult widely and would welcome comments which should be sent to Secretary for Ministries by October 30th 1998. It was hoped to present an interim report to the 1999 General Assembly.

The Moderator invited comments and questions and the Convener responded.

With the permission of the Assembly Mr Michael Harrison, Convener of the Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-Committee, introduced and then Mr Long moved Resolution 40.

Assembly amends paragraph 6.1.4 of the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration by replacing '50 years' with '55 years' in each of its first two sub-paragraphs.

There being no comments, the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 40 was carried.

Mr Harrison introduced Resolution 41, asking Assembly to accept the revised wording which had been printed on the Order Paper. Mr Long then moved Resolution 41.

RESOLUTION 41

URC Ministers' Pension Fund

Assembly amends paragraph 14 of the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers Pension Fund:

by the replacement of the word 'fifty' with the words 'fifty five' in paragraphs 14.1.1 and 14.1.2 of the Rules

by the re-numbering of paragraph 14.1.1 as 14.1.1.1 and the addition of paragraph 14.1.1.2 'Any minister under the age of fifty five years at the date of ordination or induction to stipendiary service remunerated under the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration who in the period 1 July 1992 to 30 June 1998 was not permitted membership of the Fund as the age of 50 had been exceeded may join the Fund at any date before 31 December 1998'.

There being no comments, the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 41 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Ministries Committee for their work.

The Moderator called the Revd Ruth Wollaston who moved Resolution 49.

RESOLUTION 49

Recruitment to Ministry

General Assembly resolves to make 1999 a Year of Recruitment to Ministry throughout the United Reformed Church. To achieve this it

- a) calls on Synods to collaborate with each other and the Ministries Committee, to increase the number of Enquirers' Conferences and to make them easily accessible to people from all the provinces;**
- b) asks the Ministries Committee, in consultation with the FURY Council, to find ways to encourage young people to candidate for Ministry; and**
- c) affirms the decision of the Ministries Committee to review the Overseas Recruitment Scheme and asks the Committee to explore ways of developing and extending it.**

The Revd Adrian J Bulley formally seconded the resolution.

The Moderator and Chaplain led the Assembly in a period of silence and prayer at 11am, the time of the funeral of the three young boys killed in Northern Ireland on the previous Saturday.

The Moderator invited comments on Resolution 49 and Mrs Wollaston responded to them.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote on the resolution.

Resolution 49 was carried.

Inter-Faith Relations Committee

The Convener, the Revd Bill Mahood, began the report of the Inter-Faith Relations Committee by inviting the Moderator to greet the Representatives of Other Faiths. She welcomed two Vice-Chairmen of the local Inter-Faith Committee, Mr Sorowsh Zahedi of the Baha'i Community and Mr Santokh Singh Nigran of the Sikh Community. She expressed, on behalf of the Assembly, pleasure and gratitude that they had been able to attend the Assembly.

Mr Mahood then introduced the Committee's Report, noting that members of other faiths understood and were very supportive of the desire amongst Christians to celebrate the Millennium. In turn, it was right that we should acknowledge that 1999 would be a year of major celebration for the Sikh community throughout the world. Mr Mahood also brought to the attention of the Assembly the Anti-Mission Bill before the Israeli Parliament which could lead to persecution of Christians.

The Moderator invited comments on the Report and Mr Mahood responded to the comments made. The Moderator thanked the Committee for their work and thanked again the visiting Representatives of Other Faiths.

The Revd John Reardon took the Chair to enable Mrs Wilma Frew to meet with the Ecumenical and Foreign Visitors.

Youth and Children's Work Committee

The Convener of the Youth and Children's Work Committee, the Revd Stephen Thornton, together with Mrs Jean Antcliffe, Gareth Curl, Keith Jenkins, Vicky Bean and Martyn Neads, introduced Resolution 46. Mr Thornton moved the resolution.

Resolution 46 Young people in the Councils of the Church

General Assembly believes that young people have a valuable contribution to make to the decision-making councils and committees of the church and expects all councils and committees of the church to make meetings more accessible to young people by

- a) using more weekends for meetings
- b) taking full account of travel constraints facing many young people
- c) setting up and publishing dates of meetings as far in advance as possible
- d) encouraging and urging young people to take advantage of the opportunities to participate in and contribute to the councils and committees of the church
- e) offering the *They've asked me to be ... a member of a committee* leaflet as a resource, to be used by young people and councils and committees of the church, to prepare people for the implications of fuller involvement.

The Moderator called Mrs Melanie Frew who moved the following amendment:

Amendment to Resolution 46

First line - delete "young" and insert "all"

Third line - delete "to young people"

- b) delete "facing many young people" and insert "faced by many"
- d) delete "young people" and insert "all people, especially the young"
- e) delete "young people and councils and committees of"

The Revd Simon Walking seconded the amendment. The Moderator invited comments on the amendment. In response to a question, the Revd Stephen Thornton stated that the Committee resisted the amendment as they wanted to focus on young people.

The Moderator invited Assembly to vote on the amendment.

The amendment was carried.

There was further debate on the substantive resolution and then Mr Thornton replied.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote on the substantive motion.

RESOLUTION 46

People attending Councils of the Church

General Assembly believes that all people have a valuable contribution to make to the decision-making councils and committees of the church and expects all councils and committees of the church to make meetings more accessible by

- a) using more weekends for meetings**
- b) taking full account of travel constraints faced by many**
- c) setting up and publishing dates of meetings as far in advance as possible**
- d) encouraging and urging all people, especially the young, to take advantage of the opportunities to participate in and contribute to the councils and committees of the church**
- e) offering the *They've asked me to be ... a member of a committee* leaflet as a resource, to be used by the church, to prepare people for the implications of fuller involvement.**

Resolution 46, as amended, was carried.

Provincial Moderators' Report

The Revd Keith Forecast presented the Report on behalf of the Provincial Moderators. Mr Forecast posed the question: "What's it all for?", and asserted that, essentially, the Church is here to bear witness to the Kingdom. The United Reformed Church was called to be a signpost to unity.

Many spoke in appreciation of the Report and of the way in which it had been presented, expressing gratitude that the Provincial Moderators, despite their heavy workload, had time for prophecy. The Report was commended for local use.

The Moderator invited contributions.

The Moderator noted that the Revd Janet Sowerbutts had finished her eight year term as Moderator of the Thames North Province. He thanked her and invited Assembly to show its appreciation which it did by applauding.

In thanking Mr Forecast for presenting the Report, the Moderator assured him of Assembly's love, concern and on-going prayers for him and his wife, Frances. Mr Forecast thanked Assembly and brought greetings from his wife.

Assembly Arrangements Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, to present the Committee's Report. This he did and there being no comments, at the invitation of the Moderator he moved Resolution 23.

RESOLUTION 23

General Assembly 2000

Assembly agrees that the General Assembly in 2000 will be held residentially, July 1st-4th at Queen Mary and Westfield Colleges of the University of London.

Resolution 23 was carried.

The Moderator invited the Chaplain to say grace and the Assembly adjourned.

Mrs Wilma Frew resumed the Chair.

On behalf of the Assembly the Moderator thanked The Revd Stephen Thornton for his work as Convener of the Youth and Children's Work Committee.

The Clerk presented the Minutes of the third Session of Sunday 12th July 1998 and the first and second Sessions of Monday 13th July 1998, noting a number of changes. She asked that the Minutes be approved and moved that, under Standing Order 11b, the remaining Minutes be inserted into the full Minutes of the Assembly after review and any necessary corrections by the officers of the Assembly. This was agreed.

Assembly and Appeals Commissions (Ministerial Discipline)

The General Secretary made the following report to Assembly:

An Assembly Commission met on 30 March 1998 to consider the case of the Revd Geoffrey Rodgers. The decision was to delete the name of the Revd Geoffrey Rodgers from the Roll of Ministers.

Mr Rodgers appealed against the decision and an Appeals Commission met on 4 June 1998. The decision was to affirm the finding of the Assembly Commission that Mr Rodgers had committed a serious breach of discipline but to allow the Appeal thus permitting the name of the minister to remain on the Roll of Ministers. In view of the gravity of the breach of discipline the Appeals Commission issued a written warning under Part I para. 10.2 of the Section O Process.

District Boundaries

The General Secretary drew the attention of the Assembly to the changes in District Boundaries which were noted in the relevant Synod Reports.

The Mersey Synod formally reports to the General Assembly, under paragraph 2(4)(ii) of the Basis and Structure, that, at its meeting of Synod on 1 November 1997, it was agreed that Huyton United Reformed Church move from West Lancashire District to the Liverpool District.

The East Midlands Synod formally reports to the General Assembly, under paragraph 2(4)(ii) of the Basis and Structure, that it was agreed that Brackley United Reformed Church and Buckingham LEP (URC/Methodist) move from Northamptonshire District to Milton Keynes District.

The Thames North Synod formally reports to the General Assembly, under paragraph 2(4)(ii) of the Basis and Structure, that, at its meeting of Synod on 11 October 1997, it was agreed that Queens Park United Reformed Church move from Central and North London District to West London District.

Synod Reports

FURY presented the Synod Reports.

The Moderator thanked them for their imaginative presentation, and invited comments on the Synod Reports; there being none she thanked those who had written the Reports and all those involved in the work behind the Reports.

Address to the Throne

The Moderator invited the Revd David Jenkins to present the Address to the Throne.

14 July 1998

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church now meeting in Nottingham sends greetings to your Majesty.

During the year we have shared the general shock and grief at the sudden death of Diana, Princess of Wales, which has so affected your Majesty and your family. Our churches and members joined in the extraordinary scenes of public mourning and we have marked with mixed feelings the various attempts to put in place appropriate memorials to her life and exemplary public service. In particular, we have been active in pressing your Ministers to ratify the ban on landmines which was a cause near to her heart.

This Assembly has agreed a scheme which will unite the United Reformed Church with the Congregational Union of Scotland. We have thus marked in our church life, as in the realm of political development, the moves towards a greater affirmation of the distinctive identity of the Scottish people. We shall pray for all involved in planning for the new Scottish Parliament and for the Welsh Assembly and we shall look to those bodies, as to the parliament at Westminster, for evidence of the exercise of power in decisions that make for peace in your realm and for a decent life for all your people.

Although the United Reformed Church is not present in Northern Ireland, we are in close contact with our fellow-Christians there and shared the sense of relief and renewed hope at the outcome of the all-party talks, the endorsement of the Good Friday Agreement by referendum and the prospects for a new Assembly at Stormont. To have reached this point, although there is so much yet to be done, remains a significant and worthy achievement on the part of your Ministers, many other politicians and civil leaders of every persuasion. Nevertheless as we meet in our Assembly we have been made aware of the fragile state of the peace process and of the further tragic loss of innocent children's lives. We continue to pray that people in this situation will learn to live by conversation rather than confrontation.

During the year, the United Reformed Church appointed a leading Jamaican minister to work as our guide on multi-racial and multi-cultural issues. We are dismayed at continuing evidence of racial hatred and discrimination in this country, symbolised by the disturbing Enquiry into the killing of Stephen Lawrence. We know that your Majesty values the personal and international links afforded by the Commonwealth very highly and will share our hopes and prayers for a Britain which rejoices in ethnic diversity as in other God-given differences, and seeks to move towards a truly integrated community.

We pray for the continued health and strength of your Majesty as you offer leadership and service to the United Kingdom and to the Commonwealth.

We are
Your faithful and loyal servants

The letter will be signed by the Moderator and the General Secretary.

The Assembly approved the Address.

The Moderator asked Mr Jenkins to take the greetings of the Assembly to the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Wales at which he would be representing the United Reformed Church.

Pastoral Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Pastoral Committee, the Revd John Johansen-Berg, to present the Committee's Report. This he did, paying tribute to the work of the Convener and Secretary of the Welfare Sub-Committee, Mrs Shirley Paton and Mrs Judy Stockings, and the Secretary of the Pastoral Committee, the Revd John Waller.

The Moderator invited comments on the Report; there being none, she thanked the Committee for their Report and for their work during the year.

Nominations Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Nominations Committee, the Revd Jessie Clare, to present the Committee's Report. Mrs Clare drew the attention of the Assembly to the list in the Book of Reports and to the two Supplementary Reports before the Assembly. The corrected Report was as follows:

1. CENTRAL STAFF APPOINTMENTS

1.1 The Review Group for the Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness has recommended that the appointment of Revd Bill Wright should be extended, with revised Terms of Reference, until 31st March 1999.

1.2 The Review Group for the Secretary for Ecumenical Relations has recommended that the appointment of Revd Sheila Maxey should be extended until 31st August 2003.

1.3 The following appointment and review groups have been convened:-

1.3.1 Northern - Provincial Moderator Review Group
Convened by Revd John Johansen-Berg

1.3.2 North Western - Provincial Moderator Review Group
Convened by Revd Angus Duncan

1.3.3 East Midlands - Provincial Moderator Review Group
Convened by Mrs Ruth Clarke

1.3.4 Southern - Provincial Moderator Review Group
Convened by Revd Sandra Lloydlangston

1.3.5 Secretary for Training - Review Group
Convened by - Revd David Helyar

1.3.6 Director of Windermere - Review Group
Convened by - Revd Dr Jack McKelvey

1.3.7 CRCW Development Officer - Appointment Group
Convened by - Revd Graham Cook

1.3.8 Pilots Development Officer - Appointment Group
Convened by - Revd Chris Baker

1.3.9 Director of Yardley Hastings - Appointment Group
Convened by - Mr Simon Rowntree

The appointment of **Revd Elizabeth Byrne** as **Centre Minister at Yardley Hastings** (75% scope) from 1 September for a period of five years **is Recommended**.

[Note: a call to the Yardley Hastings church (25%) has the approval of the District Council]

1.3.10 The Appointment Group for **The Secretary for Youth Work**, which was notified to last year's General Assembly, has now been able to **Recommend** that **Ms Lesley Anne Di Marco** be appointed for a period of five years from 1 September.

2. ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES and Sub-COMMITTEES

- Notes:
1. The Moderator, the Moderator-elect, the immediate past Moderator and the General Secretary are members *ex officio* of every Standing Committee.
 2. Officers and members appointed since Assembly 1997 are indicated by one asterisk (*), two asterisks (**) denotes those whom Assembly 1998 is invited to appoint for the first time.
 3. The date in brackets following the names indicates the date of retirement, assuming a full term.
 4. Many committees have cross-representation [e.g the Ecumenical Committee has representatives from Doctrine, Prayer & Worship, Church and Society, Youth and Children's Work etc.,] These are internal appointments and are not listed here.

2.1 ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

Convener: Revd Alasdair Pratt [2001]*

Secretary: Office & Personnel Manager

Provincial Representative for forthcoming Assembly

Provincial Representative for previous Assembly who is then replaced after 'review' meeting by Provincial Representative for Assembly two years hence.

Moderator, Moderator-elect, General Secretary, Clerk to Assembly

2.2 CHURCH and SOCIETY

Convener: Ms Gabrielle Cox [2002]**

Secretary: Secretary for Church and Society

Revd Michael Powell [1999]

Revd Hazel Barkham [1999]

Revd David Fraser [2000]

Mr George Morton [2001]

Dr Sue Brisley [2002]**

Mrs Susan Spurling [2002]**

2.3 COMMUNICATIONS and EDITORIAL

Convener: Mr Chris Wright [1999]

Secretary: Secretary for Communications

Mrs Pat Stannard [2000]

Revd David Coleman [2000]

Revd Paul Brewerton [2001]

Mr Richard Lathen [2001]

Ms Kirsty Thorpe [2001]

Revd Michael Forster [2001]

Mr John East [2001]

Revd Peter Moth [2001]

Revd Roger Hall [2001]

2.4 DISCIPLESHIP, STEWARDSHIP and WITNESS

Convener: Revd Elizabeth Caswell [1999]

Secretary: Secretary for Discipleship Stewardship and Witness

Revd David Tatem [1999]

Revd Bob Day [2000]

Miss Tina Arthur [2001]

Mr David Williams [2002]**

Revd Peter Ball [2002]**

2.4.1 DISCIPLESHIP STEWARDSHIP and WITNESS - STEWARDSHIP Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Julian Macro

Secretary: Secretary for Discipleship Stewardship and Witness

Miss Janet Turner [1999]

Mr Keith Webster [1999]

Revd David Netherwood [1999]

Mr Tom Hamilton [2000]

Mr Geoffrey Wood [2000]

Mrs Susan Wilkinson [2002]**

2.5 DOCTRINE, PRAYER and WORSHIP

Convener: Revd Dr Colin Thompson [2001]

Secretary: Revd Terry Hinks [2000]

Revd Fleur Houston [1999]

Revd Stephen Brown [1999]

Revd Donald Norwood [1999]

Revd Jean Black [2000]

Revd Dr Janet Tollington [2001]

Revd John Hall [2001]]

Ms Kirsty Thorpe [2002]**

Mr Colin Ferguson [2002]**

To be advised [2002]**

2.6 ECUMENICAL

Convener: Revd Bob Andrews [2001]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

Revd Peter Arthur [1999] Ms Bethan Galliers [2000] Mrs Jackie Marsh [2001]
Revd John Rees [2001] Revd Mary Buchanan [2002]** Revd Philip Jones [2002]**
Revd Elizabeth Nash [2002]** Revd Ivor Rees representing the Wales Province

2.6.1 ECUMENICAL - OVERSEAS EXCHANGE Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Barrie Scopes [1999]

Secretary: Secretary for International Church Relations

Revd Ken Graham [1999] Mrs Virginia Becher [2001] Mr Peter Bryant [2002]**
Revd Keith Forecast [2002]** Revd Keith Riglin [2002]**

2.7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Convener: Mrs Susan Rand [1999]

Secretary: Revd Simon Walkling [1999]

Mrs Lucille King [2000] Ms Georgette Margreet [2001] Revd Nannette Head [2001]
Revd Wilf Bahadur [2001] Miss Stella Salmon [2002]** Revd Derek Hopkins [2002]**

2.8 FINANCE

Convener: The Honorary Treasurer

Secretary: The Chief Accountant

Revd Richard Wiggins [1999] Mrs Edwina Rockey [1999] Mr Bill Grieve [2000]
Ms Catriona Waterson [2001] Mr Alan Duncan [2002]** Convener of the URC Trust

2.9 INTER-FAITH RELATIONS

Convener: Revd Bill Mahood [1999]

Secretary: Revd Brenda Willis [2000]

Mrs Linda Hopley Ms Sarah King Revd Jonathan Dean
Revd David M Taylor [2002]**

2.10 MINISTRIES

Convener: Revd Graham Long [2001]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Mr John Ellis [1999] Ms Geraldine Swaine [1999] Revd Sandra Lloydlangston [1999]
Revd Tony Ruffell [2000] Revd Graham Sweeney [2000] Revd Martha McInnes [2001]
Revd Brian Jolly [2001] Ms Sally Abbott [2002]**
Convener of National Assessment Board

2.10.1 MINISTRIES - ACCREDITATION Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Robert Way [2001]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Mr Bert Worrall [1999] Revd John Humphreys [1999] Mrs Julie McLaren [2001]
Revd Graham Robson [2001] Mrs Frances Caldwell [2002]**

2.10.2 MINISTRIES - CRCW Management Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Susan Flynn [2002]**

Secretary: Mr John Boddy

Mr Simon Loveitt Revd Peter Crutchley Jones [2002]** Revd Alison Hall [2002]**
Revd Clifford Wilton [2002]**

2.10.3 MINISTRIES - LAY PREACHING Sub Committee

Lay Preaching Commissioner: Revd Sandy Mailer [2002]**

And four members elected by the Lay Preacher Commissioners Consultation

2.10.4 MINISTRIES - MAINTENANCE OF MINISTRY Sub-Committee

Convener: Mr Michael Harrison [1999]

Secretary: Revd Peter Grimshaw [1999]

Revd Tony Wilkinson [2000] Mrs Barbara Martin [1999] Miss Margaret Atkinson [1999]
The Honorary Treasurer

2.10.5 MINISTRIES - RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING - Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Simon Swailes [2002]**

Secretary: Mr Clive Willis [1999]

Mrs Margaret Waller [2001] Mrs Sheila Woodcock[2001]

Revd John Pugh [2002]**

Revd Graham Cook [2002]** The Honorary Treasurer

Note: Properties are managed by a Company viz: **RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING SOCIETY LTD**

Details of the Members of the Board etc may be obtained from the Secretary: Mr Clive Willis at Church House

2.10.7 DISCIPLINARY PROCESS - Commission Panel

Convener: Revd Donald Hilton

Deputy Convener: Mrs Helen Brown

Secretary: Revd Alasdair Walker

Members:

Miss Ina Barker	Ms Kate Breeze	Mr Keith Brooks	Revd K Chippindale
Revd Alison Davis	Mr R Forsyth	Mrs Wilma Frew	Mr Alan Hart
Revd Brian Johanson	Revd R M Jones	Miss Elizabeth Lawson QC	Revd Julian Macro
Revd Ted Marley	Revd Denise Megson	Sir James Nursaw	Mrs Sheila Pratt
Mr Nicholas Pye	Mrs Sally Quilter	Revd Michael Rees	Revd John Slow
Revd Brenda Stevenson	Dr David Thompson	Miss Sheila Tweed	

2.11 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT BOARD

Convener: Mr Brian Evans [2001]

Retiring 1999 Mrs Shirley Moss, Revd Elizabeth Scopes, Revd Graham Cook

Retiring 2000 Mrs J Baraclough, Revd Ivor Rees, Mrs Darryl Sinclair, Mrs Flo Humes-Dixon
Revd Howard Starr

Retiring 2001 Revd Derek Wales, Revd Reginald Rooke

Retiring 2002 Mr Alan Small, Revd Denise Megson, Mrs Margaret Compton
Revd Alison Davis, Mrs Janine Lawley, Dr Christopher Whitehead

Retiring 2003 Mr David Coaker**, Ms Elaine Gentles**, Mr Monty Helmn**,
Revd Lythan Nevard**

2.11.1 PANEL FOR ASSESSMENT CONFERENCES - CRCW - Sub-Section

Mrs Daphne Beale

Revd Peter Lovett

Revd Kate McIlhagga

Revd Vaughan Jones

Mrs Ann Sutcliffe

2.12 PASTORAL COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd John Johansenberg

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary

Revd John Humphreys [1999] Revd Jean Forster [2000]

Mrs Joan Staples [2000]

Dr Anthea Kaan [2001] Convener of Welfare Sub-Committee

The Honorary Treasurer

2.12.1 PASTORAL WELFARE -Sub-Committee

Convener: Mrs Shirley Patton [1999]

Secretary: Mrs Judy Stockings

2.13 TRAINING

Convener: Revd John Sutcliffe [1999]

Secretary: The Secretary for Training

Dr Jean Butler [1999]

Revd Chris Warner [1999]

Revd Sandra Dears [2000]

Dr Iain Frew [2000]

Revd John Procter [2001]

Dr Tony Jeans [2001]

Revd Ruth Ball [2001]

Mrs Helen Brown [2002]**

Revd Roy Lowes [2002]**

Dr Andrew Dawson [2002]**

2.14 WINDERMERE - Policy and Planning

Convener: Revd David A L Jenkins [2001]

Secretary: The Director of Windermere

Revd Angela Hughes [2000] Revd Jean Mortimer[1999]

Revd Stephen Thornton [2001]

Convener of Windermere Management Committee

Convener of Discipleship Stewardship and Witness Committee Minister of Carver URC

2.15 YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

Convener: Revd Derek Lindfield [2002]**

Secretary: Mrs Jean Antcliffe [1999]

Miss Kathryn Swift [1999]

Mr Simon Loveitt [2000]

Revd Margaret Collins [2001]

FURY Chair

Revd Ron Forster [1999]

Revd Philip Nevard [2000]

Mrs Caroline Chettleburgh [2002]**

FURY Council Member

Revd Brenda Plenderleith [1999]

Mr Gareth Curl [2001]

3 MISSION COUNCIL

Mission Council acts on behalf of General Assembly. It consists of the Officers of Assembly, the Provincial Moderators and three representatives from each Province together with the Conveners of Assembly Committees.

Northern Province

North-Western Province

Mersey Province

Yorkshire Province

East Midlands Province

West Midlands Province

Eastern Province

South Western Province

Wessex Province

Thames North Province

Southern Province

Wales Province

Revd Peter Poulter, Dr Peter Clarke, Mrs Wilma Prentice

Revd Bob Day, Mrs Ann Sutcliffe, Mr Gordon Ollerenshaw

Mrs Barbara Martin, Dr Donald South, Revd Peter Roche

Revd John Jenkinson, Mr Steve Wood, Mr Brian Evans

Mrs Jill Strong, Revd Graham Maskery, Mrs Irene Wren

Mr Simon Rowntree, Mrs Erica Young, Revd Tom Bayliss

Revd Michal Burrell, Mr Ken Woods, Revd Clive Sutcliffe

Revd John Rees, Mrs Mary Eden, Mr Geoff Lunt

Revd Julian Macro, Revd David Williams, Mrs Sue Brown

Dr Jack Gow, Revd Rachel Poolman, Revd John Edwards

Mrs Christine Meekison, Revd Lesley Charlton, Dr Graham Campling

Dr Jean Sylvan Evans, Mr Denis Earp, Mr Peter Devaney

4 TRUST BODIES

4.1 UNITED REFORMED CHURCH TRUST

Convener: Mr Desmond Davies

Secretary: Mr Clem Frank

Revd Tony Burnham

Mr Ron Masser

Mrs Christine Meekison

Dr Brian Woodhall [2004]**

Mr David Marshall-Jones [2004]**

Mr Clem Frank

Mr William McVey

Mr Graham Stacy

Mr John Squires [2004]**

Mr Robert Hardie

Revd Richard Wiggins

Mr Clive Willis

Ms Valerie Ham [2004]**

4.2 THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH MINISTERS' PENSION TRUST LTD - BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman: Revd Dr Arthur Chadwick

Secretary: Revd John Martin

Members of the URC:

Ms Valerie Ham

Mr Tom Swan

Mrs Lindy Anderson [2002]**

Mr Desmond Davies

Mr Ray Chambers *[2001]

Members of the Fund:

Revd Pam Ward

Revd Dr Arthur Chadwick

Revd Jessie Clare [2002]**

Revd John Martin

Revd Alasdair Walker [2001]

[*ex officio* Mr Clem Frank, Mr Graham Stacy, Mr Victor Hughff, Mr Michael Harrison]

Note: Mr Desmond Davies and Revd Pam Ward will retire in September 1998

4.3 CONGREGATIONAL MEMORIAL HALL TRUST

Revd Dr Peter Jupp

Mr Robert Hardie

Revd David Hannen

Mrs Christine Meekison

Revd Geoffrey Satchell

Mr Hartley Oldham

Revd Maurice Husselbee

Mr Graham Stacy

Revd Peter Grimshaw

Mrs Mary Stacy

Mr Arthur Smith

Revd John Taylor

**5. Representatives of the UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
to Meetings of SISTER CHURCHES**

Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Revd David Jenkins, Mrs Rosemary Johnston
General Synod of Church of England	Revd Murdoch McKenzie
Methodist Conference	Revd Sheila Maxey
Church of Scotland	Revd David Jenkins, Revd Stephen Thornton
Scottish Congregational Church	Mrs Wilma Frew
Presbyterian Church of Wales	Revd David Jenkins
Union of Welsh Independents	Revd Ivor Rees
Congregational Federation	to be advised

**6. Representatives of the UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
on ECUMENICAL CHURCH BODIES**

The following have been nominated as URC representatives at the major gatherings of the Ecumenical Bodies listed.

Note: A list of other representatives to ecumenical bodies, commissions and committees, co-ordinating groups and agencies, who are appointed by the relevant committees, is available, on request, from the Secretary for Ecumenical Relations.

6.1 World Council of Churches

Assembly 1998 Revd Tony Burnham Mrs Wilma Frew

6.2 Council for World Mission

Revd Pat Nimmo ** Mrs Darnette Whitby-Reid ** Mr Edward Cox**
Secretary for International Relations

6.3 Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland - Assembly 1999

General Secretary Convener of the Ecumenical Committee.
Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Secretary for Church and Society, Revd Donald Norwood,
Mr John Bradbury, Mrs Ruth Clarke, Revd Elizabeth Welch, Mrs Jackie Yeomans, Mrs Kathleen Ziffo,
Revd Marjorie Lewis-Cooper, *plus 1 to be advised [under 30s]*

6.3.1 Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland - Church Representatives Meeting

General Secretary Mrs Ruth Clarke

6.4 Churches Together in England - Forum 1999

Convener Ecumenical Committee, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Revd Elizabeth Caswell together with the following nine representatives: Mrs Wilma Frew, Ms Tina Arthur, Ms Georgette Margrett, Mr Graham Ghaleb, Revd Donald Norwood, Revd Rudi Dixon, Mrs Val Morrison, Revd Peter Southcombe, Revd Alan Thomasson

6.4.1 Churches Together in England - Enabling Group

Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

6.5 Action of Churches Together in Scotland - Central Council

Revd David Taylor Mrs Kathleen Ziffo

6.6 CYTUN (Churches Together in Wales)

Assembly	The Provincial Moderator (Wales) Revd Simon Copley Revd David Wilkinson	Provincial Ecumenical Officer Revd John Joseph
Council	The Provincial Ecumenical Officer Mr John Rhys	Mrs Jackie Yeomans

6.7 FREE CHURCHES' COUNCIL

Council Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Mr Desmond Curry, Revd Janet Lees

Executive General Secretary

Women's Council Revd Janet Lees

7. URC Representatives at formal bi-lateral and multi-lateral committees.

7.1 SCOTTISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH / UNITED REFORMED CHURCH Negotiating Group

Co-Convenor: Revd Dr Stephen Orchard

Co-Secretary: Revd Tony Burnham

Revd James Breslin

Revd Mary Barr

Miss Felicity Harris

7.2 ENFYS (The Commission of Covenanted Churches in Wales)

Provincial Moderator (Wales)

Provincial Ecumenical Officer

Revd Susan Roberts

Revd Geoffrey Ward

Mrs Ann Shillaker

Revd Henry Gordon

7.3 Council for Wales Consultation on Forming a United Free Church in Wales

Provincial Moderator

Provincial Ecumenical Officer

Mr John Rhys

Revd James Breslin

Revd Mary Davies

7.4 SCOTTISH CHURCHES INITIATIVE FOR UNION [SCIFU]

Revd Peter Arthur

Revd James Breslin

Revd Sheila Maxey

Revd Fleur Houston *

7.5 METHODIST/URC Liason Committee

The Secretary for Ecumenical Relations together with: Revd Derek Wales, Miss Rachel Greening, Revd Alan Thomasson, Revd Joe Clemson, Revd Geoffrey Clarke and one vacancy.

7.5.1 Health and Healing Development Group - Joint Committee

Revd Jim Hollyman

Mrs Jackie Ballard

Dr Margaret Moore

Dr Ivan Cox.**

7.6 Anglican - Methodist formal talks

URC Ecumenical Participants: Dr David Thompson, Revd Sheila Maxey

7.6.1 Trilateral Informal talks [Anglican/Methodist/URC]

URC Representatives: Revd Bob Andrews, Revd John Waller, Revd Elizabeth Welch and the Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

8. URC Representatives on Governing Bodies of Theological Colleges etc.,

8.1 Mansfield College:

Ministerial and Educational Training Committee:

Revd Graham Robson**, Revd Dr David Peel, Revd Janet Sowerbutts

8.2 New College London

Foundation Trustees: Mr John Smethers, Mr Graham Stacy, Revd John Pugh

8.3 Northern College

Secretary for Training, Revd John Marsh, Mrs Helen Brown, Mr Jim Wilkinson

8.3.1. Council of the Partnership for Theological Education, Manchester

Secretary for Training

8.4 Westminster College: Board of Governors

Convener: Dr David Thompson

Clerk: Mr Andrew Armour *

Mr Don Taylor, Revd Dr Leslie Husselbee, Mrs Valerie Burnham, Revd Sandra Lloydlangston

8.4.1 Cheshunt Foundation

Mr Desmond Davies, Revd Michael Dunford

- 8.4.2 Cambridge Theological Federation** Convener Westminster College Governors
Secretary for Training
Joint Academic Committee Secretary for Training
- 8.5 Homerton College Trustees** Mr John Chaplin, Lady Sally Williams **,
Mrs Elisabeth Jupp, Dr David Thompson
- 8.6 Queen's College, Birmingham** Revd Elizabeth Welch, Revd Ken Chippendale,
Secretary for Training in attendance
- 8.7 St. Andrew's Hall Selly Oak** Mrs Mareke Arthur *, Mrs Haro Horsfield,
Revd Dr Leslie Husselbee, Revd Philip Woods*
- 8.8 Aberystwyth (Memorial College)** Revd Dr Glyndwr Harris, Mr Leslie Jones
- 8.9 Westhill College** Mrs Helen Brown
- 9. GOVERNORS of COLLEGES and SCHOOLS with which the URC is associated**
- 9.1 Caterham School** Revd David Helyar
- 9.2 Eltham College** Revd Clifford Charlton
Walthamstow Hall Miss Margaret Vokins
- 9.3 Milton Mount Foundation** Mrs Gwen Hall, Revd Peter Grimshaw,
Revd George Thomas, Revd Erica Beglin, Mr David Butler
- 9.4 Silcoates School** Dr Clyde Binfield, Mr Peter Clarke, Mr John Gilbey,
Mr Brian Herbert, Revd Brenda Hill and
Revd Donald Hilton
- 9.5 Taunton School** Revd Ray Adams
- 9.6 Wentworth Milton Mount** Revd George Thomas
- 9.7 Bishops Stortford College** Mr Hugh Joscelyne [until 2000]

10. Miscellaneous:

The United Reformed Church is represented on a variety of other national organisations and committees as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Aged and Infirm Ministers Fund | Mr Ken Meekison (Hon.Treasurer),
Revd Geoffrey Satchell,
Mr Laurence Macro |
| Christian Education Movement Council | Mrs Margie Jenkins ** |
| Churches Commission on Overseas Students | Revd Kevin Swain |
| Churches Consortium on Industrial Mission | Revd Michael Diffey |
| Churches Council for Health and Healing | Revd Robin Hine, Revd Jim Hollyman,
Mrs Connie Bunker |
| Churches' Group on Funeral Services at
Cemeteries and Crematoria | Revd Dr Peter Jupp, Revd Sally Thomas |
| Churches Main Committee | Mr Clem Frank, Mr Hartley Oldham,
Mr Tegid Peregrine |
| Congregational Fund Board | Revd Cyril Grant, Revd Dorothy Havergal-Shaw,
Revd Aubrey Lewis, Revd Eric Allen |
| Guides' Religious Advisory Panel | Mrs Susan Walker |
| International Bible Reading Association | vacant |
| Media Awareness Project | Mrs Carol Rogers |
| National Christian Education Council | Mrs Rosemary Johnston (1 vacancy) |
| National Council of Voluntary Organisations | Revd Peter Brain |
| National Ecumenical Agency for
Further Education | Secretary for Ministries, Revd Kevin Swain |

Scottish World Day of Prayer
Scouts' Religious Advisory Group
Society for the Ministry of Women in the Church
United Reformed Church History Society

URC Boy's Brigade Companies Council
Wharton Trust
Widows Fund of the Three Denominations

Women's World Day of Prayer

Mrs Molly Glen
Mr D Marshall-Jones
Revd Florence Frost-Mee
Mrs Mary Davies, Revd Peter Jupp,
Mrs Carol Rogers, Revd Eric Wollaston,
Dr David Thompson
Revd Michael Rees
Mr Norman Fabb
Mr Ken Meekison, Revd Geoffrey Satchell,
Mr Laurence Macro
Mrs Josie Pinner

Mrs Clare asked permission for the Revd Angus Duncan, Convener of the North Western Provincial Moderator Review Group, to report. The Moderator agreed.

Mr Duncan noted that the current 7 year appointment of the Revd Keith Forecast as Moderator of the North Western Province was due to end on 31st August 1999. He reported that, following full consultation, the Review Group unanimously brought the following resolution: **General Assembly extends the appointment of the Revd Keith Forecast as Moderator of the North Western Province for one year to 31st August 2000.** This was carried, with warm support and gratitude for Mr Forecast's work.

Mrs Clare noted that the Revd Elizabeth Byrne and Ms Lesley Anne Di Marco, who were referred to in paragraphs 1.3.9 and 1.3.10 of the Report respectively, had already been greeted by the Assembly. Mrs Clare paid tribute to Mr Desmond Curry, Secretary of the Committee, who had continued with the work despite his illness. She then moved Resolution 42.

RESOLUTION 42

Nominations

Assembly appoints Committees and representatives of the Church as set out on pages 108 to 115 of the Book of Reports subject to the additions and corrections contained in the Supplementary Report before Assembly.

Resolution 42 was carried.

The Moderator thanked Mrs Clare and the Committee for their work, with a special greeting to Mrs Clare at her last Assembly as Convener of the Nominations Committee.

Synod Resolutions

The Moderator called the Revd Simon Copley to present Resolution 4 on behalf of the Synod of Wales. The Clerk explained that, because the Assembly had already passed Resolution 11, part g) of which had amended, subject to ratification, paragraph 3(1)(f) of the Structure, Mr Copley would need to seek the permission of the Assembly to bring Resolution 4 in a changed form, since it, too, sought to amend paragraph 3(1)(f). That permission having been given, Mr Copley moved Resolution 4 in its revised form.

RESOLUTION 4

Amendment of Structure 3(1)

General Assembly amends the Structure in paragraph 3(1)(f) by adding the following words:

In its concern for mutual understanding within the life of the church, before voting upon such a motion the General assembly shall invite a representative of any synod from which the General Secretary has duly received notification under 3(1)(e) to present the main reasons for its objection.

The Revd David Fox seconded the resolution.

There were some comments to which Mr Copley responded, then the resolution was put to the vote.

Resolution 4 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The General Secretary proposed that in accordance with para. 3(1) of the Basis and Structure Resolution 4 be referred to Provincial Synods with 15th March 1999 as the final date for responses as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.

The Moderator called the Revd RJ Brown to present Resolution 5, noting that the resolution came from the West Midlands Synod, and not from East Midlands as shown in the Book of Reports. Mr Brown introduced and moved Resolution 5.

Resolution 5 Residential Assemblies
General Assembly requests the Assembly Arrangements Committee to plan future Annual Meetings of Assembly on the basis that each one is fully residential.

The resolution was seconded by the Revd John Steele.

The Revd Alasdair Pratt, on behalf of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, moved the following amendment:

after "to plan" delete "future Annual Meetings fully"
insert "for the annual meeting of Assembly in the years 2000-2002 to be"
then add "b) to consider the possible patterns of Assembly beyond that date, and to report"

Mr Brown expressed willingness to accept the amendment, and the Assembly agreed. There was some discussion and questions were asked. Mr Brown responded, and then the substantive resolution was put to the vote:

RESOLUTION 5	Residential Assemblies
General Assembly requests the Assembly Arrangements Committee:	
a)	to plan for the annual meeting of Assembly in the years 2000-2002 to be residential;
b)	to consider the possible patterns of Assembly beyond that date, and to report.

Resolution 5 as amended was carried.

The Moderator called Mr W Irving who presented and moved Resolution 6 on behalf of the Southern Synod.

Resolution 6 Small Churches

General Assembly recognises the value of work done by Churches which do not conform in all respects to the size, organisation or ministry implied by the Basis of Union and the Plan for Partnership and therefore requests Mission Council to set up a Task Group

- 1) to consider the opportunities, challenges and difficulties which such Churches face and
- 2) to draft a mechanism by which these can be tested.

General Assembly also directs synods and district councils to reflect on the unique situation of each of the churches in their area, when considering what special (financial, pastoral and other) support they need.

The Revd R Singh seconded the resolution.

The General Secretary moved the following amendment:

Before the word "Churches" in line 1, insert "small". Delete "which do not Partnership" and the word "therefore". Delete the number 1) and insert after the word "consider" the words "and report on". Insert a full-stop after the word "face", and delete the remainder of the resolution.

The amendment was seconded by the Revd Alasdair Pratt. After some discussion, the General Secretary, with the permission of the Assembly, altered the proposed amendment with the effect that the final paragraph of the original resolution would be reinstated. Mr Irving indicated willingness to accept the altered amendment, and there was further discussion during which the Revd Elizabeth Caswell indicated that the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee would be willing to be involved in the work of such a Task Group, were it to be established. The substantive Resolution 6 was put to the Assembly:

RESOLUTION 6

Small Churches

General Assembly recognises the value of work done by small Churches and requests Mission Council to set up a Task Group to consider and report on the opportunities, challenges and difficulties which such Churches face.

General Assembly also directs synods and district councils to reflect on the unique situation of each of the churches in their area, when considering what special (financial, pastoral and other) support they need.

Resolution 6 as amended was voted upon in two parts; both were carried.

Communications and Editorial Committee

On behalf of the Committee the Convener, Mr Chris Wright, moved Resolution 28.

RESOLUTION 28

Sharing of information

Recognising on the one hand the increasingly diverse ways in which information can be disseminated by electronic means, and on the other the need to protect the privacy of individuals, Assembly authorises those responsible for the gathering of personal information to allow, under the guidance of the Communications and Editorial Committee, other Christian organisations access to information on

- (i) the location of local churches**
- (ii) the details of a contact person for each local congregation who will normally be the minister in pastoral charge but may be an officer who has agreed to their name being so used**
- (iii) relevant contact information for Provincial and District Offices and furthermore instructs the Communications and Editorial Committee to discourage the commercial use of information contained within the Year Book of the United Reformed Church.**

There being no comment, the resolution was put to the vote.

Resolution 28 was carried.

The Moderator called upon the Revd Peter McIntosh, Moderator Elect, to address the Assembly, and promised the prayers of the Assembly as he prepared for office.

The Moderator called Mr John Yates who thanked the East Midlands Province for all done as host province for the Assembly mentioning especially the work of Mr Keith Brooks, Convener, and the members of the Local Arrangements Committee. Mr Yates expressed thanks to the University and Conference Centre staff, to the Assembly Officers, and the Minutes Secretary, Mrs Sally Brooks, and also noted the use of new technology to enhance the overhead display. He thanked those responsible for the displays and the bookstall, and all those who had played a part in the running of the meeting of the Assembly. Mr Yates invited the Assembly to Southport in 1999.

The Moderator thanked the members of Assembly for their patience, forbearance and good temper during the meeting of the Assembly, She expressed her personal thanks to the Chaplains for their help to her and for their leading of worship, and also to the choir, choir leaders and organists.

The General Secretary formally announced that the Assembly had completed its business, and would adjourn to meet as agreed at Southport on Monday, 5th July 1999.

The Chaplains led the closing worship.

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