



The United Reformed Church
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Assembly Record

19 **99**

July 5th - 9th
Southport

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

For Consideration *

For Action X

Annual Reports Page	Assembly Record Page	Resolution Number		Local Churches	District Councils	Synods
55	15	31	Human Sexuality-Affirmations	*	*	*
55	15	32	Human Sexuality-Challenges	*	*	*
55	15	33	Human Sexuality-Diversity of Views	*	*	*
55	15	34	Human Sexuality-Statement	X	X	X
69	22	46	Racial Justice	*X	*	*
57	23	39	Human Sexuality-Working Groups	*	*	*
46	24	14	Growing Up	*	*	*
45	27	13A	Union with the CUS			X
45	28	13C	Union with the CUS			X
73	34	47	Communications Strategy	*	*	*
-	36	61	Opposition to Homophobia	*		
50	39	27	Ministerial Discipline			X
52	41	28	Changes to the Structure			X
-	53	63	Kosovo & Northern Ireland	*		

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Minutes of the
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
in the United Kingdom
1999

Monday, 5 July 1999

First Session

Assembly Service including Holy Communion

At 2.30 pm members of Assembly met at the Theatre and Floral Hall Complex, Southport where Holy Communion was celebrated. This was led by the Moderator, Mrs Wilma Frew, assisted by her Chaplains, the Revds Kenneth and Meriel Chippindale.

Commemoration of Ministers and Missionaries

The act of worship included the commemoration of the following ministers and missionaries of the United Reformed Church who had died since the last Assembly.

Ministers who have served at home, some also as missionaries overseas, who have died since Assembly 1998

Ian Page ALEXANDER
Eileen Dorothy ASHWORTH
William Lucas AULD
Robert Richard BANCE
Gerald Francis BARROW
Harry Ernest BROWN
Hubert BURNLEY
John Percy CARROLL
Reginald Thomas CHARLES
Henry William CHILD
Leslie CLEGG
Robert George COLE
Stanley Leon COOK
Albert Samuel COOPER
Ernest Charles CREWES
Walter DICKINSON
John William EASTWOOD
Edward Lloyd EVANS
Dennis Rowland FRIEND
Reginald John FROST
Annie Isabella GORDON
James GRAY
James Edward HARROP
James Vincent Cairns HENDERSON
Ernest Samuel HERBERT
Thomas Cornelius John HOLST
Thomas Leslie JONES
Margaret Eileen KNEE
David Rennie LEE

Robert Michael Douglas LITHGOW
Herbert Carter LLOYD
John Meirion LLOYD
James Edward Wilson MORRIS
Arthur Frederick NAGLE
Peter John NORCROSS
Joan Dorothy NORMAN
Joyce Rosa PAINTER
Robert Francis PITT
Norman Stanley ROGERS
William Edward ROYLE
Ronald Frederick Charles RUFFELL
Ronald William RUTT
Benjamin Howard SACKETT
Jean SEDDON
George Patrick SHELLEY
Euphemia SIMPSON
Douglas Andrew SMITH
Donald Erskin SUTHERLAND
Evan George THOMAS
James Thomas THOMPSON
Michael Drummond WHITEHORN
David James WILLIAMS
Geoffrey Tunstall WILLIAMS
Edwin James WILLIAMSON
John Howard WOOLLEY
Arthur Ernest YOUNG
John Edward YOUNG

Missionaries who have died since Assembly 1998

Marion ANDERSON
Elsie DRIVER
Phyllis Beatrice PHILLIPS

Former Chairman of CUEW

Benjamin James Hartwell

Monday, 5 July 1999

Second Session

Constitution of Assembly

The Moderator, Mrs Wilma Frew, constituted the Assembly with prayer, the place and time having been duly appointed, and the Chaplains, the Revds Kenneth and Meriel Chippindale, led the worship of the Assembly.

Induction of Moderator

The Revd Peter McIntosh, Moderator-elect, was 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 Mrs Wilma Frew.

Thanks to the Retiring Moderator

The thanks of the Church were expressed by the Moderator to Mrs Wilma Frew and Dr Iain Frew.

The Moderator then addressed the Assembly.

The **ROLL OF ASSEMBLY** was placed on the table.

Moderator:	Revd Peter McIntosh
Clerk:	Mrs Margaret Carrick Smith
General Secretary:	Revd Anthony Burnham
Deputy General Secretary:	Revd John Waller

Moderators of Synods: 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 Roberta Rominger
XI	Revd David Helyar
XII	Revd John L Humphreys

Conveners of General Assembly Standing Committees and Task Groups:

Assembly Arrangements:	Revd Alasdair Pratt
Church & Society:	Ms Gabrielle Cox
Communications & Editorial:	Mr Christopher Wright
Doctrine, Prayer & Worship:	Revd Dr Colin Thompson

Discipleship, Stewardship & Witness:	Revd Elizabeth Caswell
Ecumenical:	Revd Bob Andrews
Equal Opportunities:	Mrs Susan Rand
Finance:	Mr Graham Stacy
Inter-faith Relations:	Revd Bill Mahood
Ministries:	Revd Graham Long
Nominations:	Revd Glyn Jenkins
Pastoral:	Revd John Johansen-Berg
Training:	Revd Dr John Sutcliffe
Youth & Childrens Work:	Revd Derek Lindfield

Synod Clerks:

I	Dr Peter Clarke	VII	Mr Ken Woods
II	Mr Raymond Clarke	VIII	Revd Sandra Lloydlangston
III	Revd Angus W Duncan	IX	Mr Graham Rolfe
IV	Mr John Seager	X	Revd Adrian Bulley
V	Revd A Christopher White	XI	Mrs Christine Meekison
VI	Mr Simon Rowntree	XII	Mr Geoff Griffiths

Additional Synod Representatives:

I	Miss Catherine Smith, Revd Brian Bailey, Revd Rhona Jones
II	Mrs Margareta Batchelor, Mr Raymond Clarke, Revd M Perrott
III	Mr John Brown, Revd Sandra Dears, Revd B Exley
IV	Revd John Jenkinson, Revd Bob Jones, Mrs Val Morrison
V	Mrs Irene Wren, Mrs J Strong, Revd Clifford Wilton
VI	Ms Rachel Greening, Mr G Harrison, Mrs Margaret Marshall
VII	Revd J Clive Sutcliffe, Mrs Anthea Coates, Mr C Mead
VIII	Dr Roger Hunt, Revd Roy Lowes, Mr Adrian Nickolls
IX	Revd Julian Macro, Revd Bernie Collins, Mr David Hoadley
X	Revd John Danso, Revd Rachel Poolman, Mr Peter Hurter
XI	Revd Jose Finlayson, Revd Phillip Jones, Mr William Irving
XII	Revd Alison Davis, Mr Geoff Griffiths, Dr Jean S Evans

Synod Treasurers:

I	Mr M Holloway	V	Mr DH Buxton	IX	Mr G Gage
II	Dr B J Woodhall	VI	Mr D Hibbard	X	Miss V Ham
III	Mr R D Holden	VII	Mr J Woodman	XI	Mr B West
IV	Mr G Wood	VIII	Mr G Lunt	XII	Mr R Lacey

Theological College Representatives:

Mansfield College, Oxford:	Revd Dr Catherine Middleton, Mrs Patricia Davis
Northern College, Manchester:	Revd Jan Berry, Ms Dilys Corbin
Westminster College, Cambridge:	Revd John Proctor, Mr Jason Askew
Queens College, Birmingham:	Revd Dr Neil Messer, Mr Robert Ash

Youth representatives: Mr Neil Platt, Miss Clare Hardwick

Council for World Mission: Revd Andrew Prasad

Chaplain (URC) to HM Forces in Britain: Revd Steven Whiting

Missionaries on Furlough: Mr Martin and Mrs Ta'ara Vickerman

Past Presidents, Chairmen and Moderators:

Mrs Gwen Hall, Revd N Birnie, Revd A L Macarthur, Revd Dr R O Latham, Revd J Johansen-Berg, Revd M Cressey, Mrs R Goodfellow, Revd D Black, Revd W Georgeson, Revd J E Francis, Revd W F Aiton, Revd K C Burdett, Revd R Murray, Revd W Clark, Revd G B Waterton, Revd A B Webster, Revd Dr P D Arthur, Revd G Sharpe, Dr D M Thompson, Revd A V Smith, Revd A J G Walker, Revd Dr P Morgan, Revd D H Dale, Mr R A Heritage, Revd C C Franks, Revd E Banyard, Revd C K Forecast, Revd G J Cook, Revd M G Hanson, Mrs R Clarke, Revd D Hilton, Revd Dr R J McKelvey, Revd J Reardon, Dr D M Thompson, Revd D Jenkins, Mrs Wilma Frew

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

Synod I

- A: Revd P Rand, Revd R Forster, Revd P Ward, Mrs L Whiting, * Mrs E Bailey*, Mr P Andrews*
- B: Revd D A Brown, Revd A F Jackson, Revd R A Jones, Revd N Watson, Revd J C Young, Mrs L Nicholson, Mr M Porter, Mr A P Baker, Mr C Drew, Mrs M Stonehouse
- C: Revd Dr A P Haws, Revd T Ellison, Mr K J Dilley, Mrs J MacKey
- D: Revd J Parker, Revd N Johnson, Ms S Hayward, Mrs C Parker
- E: Revd K M Forbes, Revd F R Cochrane, Mrs P Cochrane, Mrs R Wood
- F: Revd D M Taylor, Mr A Ross

Synod II

- A: Revd P Killick, Revd B Willis, Mrs J Rawlins, Ms H Bolland
- B: Revd D Spence, Revd T Cole, Revd C Vivian, Revd N Uden, Mr E Wrennall, Mrs R Dillon
- C: Revd E Kirkman, Revd G Townsend, Revd W Bahadur, Mrs I Walmsley, Mr J Jarman, Mr R Bradley
- D: Revd J A Hollyman, Revd E P M Wollaston, Revd J E Thompson, Ms B Galliers, Mr M P Thomason, Mrs M Kirkman*
- E: Revd B Plenderleith, Revd A Stokes, Revd D Whitehead, Revd A Batterbee, Mrs B Robinson, Mr P Garside, Miss M Smith, Mr M Walsh
- F: Revd M Hodgson, Revd B O'Neill, Revd M Tait, Revd A Cottam, Mr R Newton, Mrs S Wilkinson, Mrs M Newton, Mr M Aspinall
- G: Revd S Armitage, Revd B E Harris, Dr A S Dunn, Mrs S Yates

Synod III

- A: Revd R Cole, Revd K Jones, Revd M Smith, Revd B Holroyd, Mrs S Davies, Mr D Welsh, Ms K Thorpe, Miss J Tait
- B: Revd J Gordon, Revd P Pells, Revd G Thomas, Mrs H Brown, Dr D South, Mr A Smith
- C: Revd D Greenwood, Revd A Hall, Revd K Bennett, Mrs J Taylor, Mr D Pratt, Mr R Pritchard*
- D: Revd J H Oldershaw, Revd G Evans, Revd G Wilkinson, Dr J Holliday, Mr G Harrison, Mr N Adkinson

Synod IV

- A: Revd S Swailes, Revd J Kissack, Revd T Williams, Mr J Murison, Mr M Bean, Dr V Bean
- B: Revd F Beattie, Revd J Lees, Revd F Houston, Mr J Dickson, Mrs E Aizlewood, Ms C Morrison
- C: Revd R Crofton, Revd A Hughes, Revd P Clarkson, Miss S Dodds, Mrs J Poulter, Ms A Robinson
- D: Revd A Blue, Revd C Ellefsen-Jones, Revd A Evans, Mr A Ellefsen-Jones, Mrs A Evans, Mr S Eteson
- E: Revd G Brown, Revd P Jordan, Miss R Norton, Mrs H Carter
- F: Revd G Courtney, Revd N Haslam, Revd N Thorogood, Mr K Mellor, Mrs C Feather, Mr A Jones

Synod V

- A: Revd P Breeze, Revd S Orchard, Revd S Willett, Revd M Bradley, Mr D Noon, Mrs B Turner, Ms F Hand
- B: Revd L McNeil, Revd I Smith, Revd A Sellwood, Revd J Phelps, Mrs I Moore, Mrs M Garrow

C: Revd R Rooke, Revd A Walker, Revd A Wells, Mrs P Hinks, Mr G Jackson, Mrs B Panter
D: Revd V Broomfield-Payne, Revd J Williams, Revd J Gavin, Mr J Williams, Mrs J Nicholls
E: Revd R Turnbull, Revd E Chadwick, Revd J Filsak, Mrs L Gee, Mrs S Salmon, Mr A Hudson
F: Revd L Watson, Revd P Barnes, Mrs B Nield, Mrs S Watson

Synod VI

A: Revd W Boyd, Revd J Marsh, Revd C Price, Revd D Fraser, Mrs F Herring, Mrs S Walker,
Mr P Cook, Mrs P Cook
B: Revd A Thomasson, Revd J Hancocks, Mrs J Hancocks, Miss R Simmons*
C: Revd R Landon, Revd R Mitchell, Revd J Brown, Mrs L Brown, Mr S McQueen, Miss B Pain-Tolin*
D: Revd D Goldie, Revd R Francis, Revd D Featonby, Mr F Dale, Mrs C Wallace, Miss B Potts*
E: Revd S Scott, Revd S Brown, Revd Dr J Campbell, Revd P Peirce, Mrs J Greening, Mrs R Page,
Dr I Frew, Ms H Smith
F: Revd B Alderson, Revd L Giller, Revd P Bedford, Revd G Spicer, Miss R Wright, Mrs M Marshall,
Mr W Hope, Miss S Thompson

Synod VII

A: Revd K Maltus Smith, Revd R Mortimer, Revd R Edwards, Mrs M Nevill, Mrs M Smith,
Mrs A Edwards
B: Revd A Dones, Revd J Pugh, Revd D Bunney, Revd M Dunford, Mrs R Scarff, Mrs D Woodward,
Prof M Kimmitt, Miss R Pugh
C: Revd G Millington, Revd M Powell, Revd M Rigney, Mrs B Copsey, Mr S Deacon, Mr W B Grieve
D: Revd W Graham, Revd R Canham, Revd A Coates, Mr P Mills, Mr S Farmer, Ms K Williams
E: Revd A J Knight, Revd K Knight, Revd A Howells, Revd D McVey, Dr P Cressey, Mr P Wade,
Miss E Burns, Mr M Ballard
F: Revd G Brotherton*, Miss E Doyle

Synod VIII

A: Revd R Cornish, Revd P Snell, Mrs J Stidson, Mrs P Lambe
B: Revd J Bolton, Mrs J Baker, Mrs R Westall, Revd R Pope
C: Revd H Bignall, Revd R Ellis, Revd C Searle, Mr R Babb, Mrs J Newman, Ms A Langmead
D: Revd J Tunningley, Revd K Taylor, Mrs M Whitman, Mr D J Puddy, Mr A Nickolls
E: Revd K Wilkinson, Revd P Henderson, Mrs J Trippier, Mrs H Thomas,
F: Revd S Newell, Revd S Henderson, Revd B Townsend, Revd K Thom, Mr A Jefferies, Mr I Joyner,
Mr R Turner, Mrs J Turner
G: Revd A Finch, Miss H Jackson
H: Revd R Williams, Mrs P Rodger
J: Revd R Fowler, Mrs D Watson*

Synod IX

A: Revd D Vincent, Revd D Norwood, Revd B Russell, Revd C Fowler, Mrs G Chalmers, Mrs S Mann,
Mr P Mann, Miss S Young, Mr L E Caley, Mr A Wickens
B: Revd T Grant, Revd M Allen, Revd C Bembridge, Revd B Shirley, Mr G Thatcher, Mrs C Hardwick,
Mr J Fleming, Mrs B Fleming
C: Revd D J Williams, Revd A S Caton, Revd B Harley, Mrs J Bartlett, Mr D Turner, Mrs G Bennett
D: Revd D Netherwood, Revd P. Hall, Revd B Johnson, Revd C Macaulay, Mr C Hansford,
Miss K Bell, Mrs H Kimber, Mr A McDonald
E: Revd M Whiffen, Revd R Wiggins, Revd S Jones, Revd R Ball, Revd Dr S Durber, Revd B Stops,
Mr C Hucker, Mrs V Taylor, Mr C Ferguson, Mr M Hopkins

Synod X

A: Revd R A Barthram, Revd M Diffey, Revd R J White, Revd K Louch, Mrs S Abbott, Miss A S Thom,
Mr T Chilton, Mr R Evans
B: Revd A Cassingham, Revd E Davies, Revd Dr R Pagan, Mr M Eggleton, Mrs S Eggleton,
Mr Z Ahmadi

- C: Revd M Playdon, Revd Dr J Coleman, Revd M Shrubsole, Mr J Marshall, Ms J Hoar, Miss A Thomson
 D: Revd J Wade, Revd D Jones, Revd A Smith, Revd J Conway, Mr D Ilines, Mr N Muir, Mr H Sporle, Ms J Hardaker
 E: Revd C Slusser, Revd P Clamp, Revd D Bradburn, Mr D Williams, Ms J Layne, Mr A Groat*
 F: Revd R Vincent, Revd B Davison, Revd R Alford, Mr M Addo, Mrs H Clapp, Miss T Lewis

Synod XI

- A: Revd I Stewart, Revd B Eyles, Revd L Charlton, Revd B Bowyer, Miss M Short, Mrs M Watson, Mrs B Buabeng, Mrs R Bowyer
 B: Revd S Brown, Revd I Knowles, Revd D Toppie, Revd J West, Mr A Young, Mr P Baikie, Mr R Roberts, Miss S Moore
 C: Revd R Bushby, Revd G Finch, Revd J Horne, Revd S Taylor, Ms G Trew, Miss M Harper, Mrs M Bayley, Mr C Fosten
 D: Revd S Fisher, Revd J Titlow, Revd A Wharton, Mr J Ellis, Mrs H Warmington, Mr M Neads
 E: Revd D Bond, Revd S Marsh, Revd G Collins, Mr I Gow, Mr A Coyne, Miss C Monkhouse
 F: Revd R Macdonald, Revd K Trice, Revd T Lowe, Mrs C Robertson, Mr G Purdye, Mr G E G Campling
 G: Revd J Martin, Revd G Haigh, Revd P Burroughs, Mr D Curry, Mr A Macaulay, Mr J Colyer

Synod XII

- A: Revd D Wilkinson, Revd G Thompson, Revd K Jones, Mr B Norris, Ms K Gray, Mr M Martin
 B: Revd M Kennard, Revd S Copley, Revd N Douglas, Mr S Harvey, Miss D Newns, Mrs S Harvey
 C: Revd P Scotland, Revd P Noble, Revd S Pollard, Mr B Griffiths, Dr A Jones, Mrs J Jones
 D: Revd K Price, Revd M Rowlands, Mrs D Rees, Mr J Price
 E: Revd R Gordon, Revd N Lewis Head, Mrs K Apps, Mrs C Jones
 F: Revd D Coleman, Revd M Woodland, Revd C P Gaskell, Mrs E McIlveen, Ms M E Jones, Ms Z Walker

VOTING MEMBERS REPRESENTING OTHER CHURCHES:

Baptist Union of Great Britain	Revd Dr Nigel Wright
The Church of Scotland	Revd Duncan McClements
The Congregational Federation	Revd Michael Heaney
Scottish Congregational Church	Dr James Merrilees
International Ministerial Council of Great Britain	Revd Florence Akuaboah
The Methodist Church	Mrs Rosemary Wass
The Moravian Church	Mr Blair Kessler
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Revd Gabrielle Ellis-Sarquhar
Presbyterian Church of Wales	Revd Geoffrey Barrington
Union of Welsh Independents	Revd Allan Pickard
The United Free Church of Scotland	Revd Joseph McPhee
The Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales	Revd Bernard Longley
Church of England	Mrs Elizabeth Fisher

Reception of Guests

The Revd Graham Cook, Moderator, Mersey Synod, introduced local visitors and those present were received by the Moderator:

Rt. Revd M Langrish	Bishop of Birkenhead
Major G Parkin	Salvation Army
Rt. Revd B Noble	Bishop of Shrewsbury
Revd C Haig	General Secretary, North Western Baptist Association
Revd J Taylor	Methodist Church
Rt. Revd J Packer	Bishop of Warrington
Rt. Revd V Malone	Aux. Roman Catholic Bishop of Liverpool
Revd M Newman	Ecumenical Officer MARCEA

The Rt Revd Brian Noble responded to the welcome on behalf of the local visitors.

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
Free Churches Council
Churches Together in Wales

Revd Dr Nigel Wright
Revd Duncan McClements
Very Rev Dr Alexander McDonald
Mrs Helen McDonald
Revd Michael Heaney
Dr James Merrilees
Revd John Arthur
Mrs Jean Arthur
Revd John Dyce
Mrs Florence Akuamoah
Mrs Rosemary Wass
Mr Blair Kessler
Revd Gabrielle Ellis-Sarquhar
Very Revd Dr S John Dixon
Mrs Claire Dixon
Revd Geoffrey Barrington
Revd Allan Pickard
Revd Joseph McPhee
Revd Bernard Longley
Mrs Elizabeth Fisher
Revd Geoffrey Roper
Revd Gethin Abraham-Williams

International Visitors:

The United Church of Canada

Council for World Mission
Conference of European Churches
Reformed Church of Hungary
Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand
Presbyterian Church of Ghana
UCCSA Synod of Botswana
Church of South India

Revd Peter Wyatt
Revd Joan Wyatt
Revd Andrew Prasad
Revd Susan Helen Jones
Bishop Gustav Bolcskei
Revd Rob Yule
Revd Emmanuel Frimpong
Revd Prince Dibeela
Revd Dr John Ponnusamy

Revd Peter Wyatt and Revd Dr John Dixon responded on behalf of the guests.

The Chaplain, the Revd Peter Poulter, led opening worship.

The Moderator greeted the Assembly then welcomed the Worshipful the Mayor of Sefton, Councillor Robert Brennan, and invited him to address the Assembly.

The Moderator introduced the people on the platform and welcomed those who were attending the Assembly for the first time.

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, presented the Order of Business, drew attention to the list of errors in the Book of Reports which had been included on the Order Paper and also gave notice of additional resolutions and amendments.

The Moderator called upon the Clerk who introduced and moved Resolution 1:

Resolution 1	Standing Orders
The General Assembly under its function (xii) adopts the Standing Orders printed in the Book of Reports 1999.	

The Moderator invited questions and comments. There being none the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote and **Resolution 1 was carried.**

Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee

The Moderator invited the Revd Elizabeth Caswell to introduce the Report of the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee noting that it would be her last Assembly as Convener.

Mrs Caswell introduced the Revd John Steele, Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship & Witness, Ms Suzanne Adofo and Mr Stephen Summers who shared the post of Church Related Community Worker (CRCW) Development Worker.

Mrs Caswell invited the Moderator and the Assembly to bid farewell to the Revd Michael Cruchley, soon to complete his service as Rural Consultant, thanking him for all his work. Thanks in his absence were also expressed to the Revd Bill Wright whose period of service first as Advocacy Secretary and subsequently as Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness was ending.

The Moderator invited comments and questions and Mrs Caswell in answer to a question confirmed that the passing of Resolution 28 would not imply that any decisions had yet been made concerning the position and status of local church leaders. The Committee would be doing further work on this.

The Moderator thanked Mrs Caswell and the committee once more for all their work.

Synod Resolution

The Moderator invited Dr Peter Clarke to introduce and move Resolution 2 on behalf of the Northern Synod. The Revd David Taylor formally seconded the resolution reserving his right to speak later.

Resolution 2	Violence against Women
General Assembly expresses its deep alarm at a continuing public perception that there are circumstances which permit male violence against women, and therefore publicly denounces violence of any sort against women.	

The Moderator invited comments on the resolution and there were a number of contributions. Mr Taylor thanked those who had spoken in support of the resolution. In response to a question Mr Taylor confirmed that ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland) had set up groups to support victims of violence, and encouraged those in other parts of the country to do the same.

Resolution 2 was carried.

Synod Moderators' Report

The Revd Ray Adams presented the report on behalf of the Moderators of Synod encouraging the Assembly to re-evaluate their calling.

The Moderator invited comments on the report and Mr Adams responded. The Moderator thanked all the Moderators for their ministry and for the report, and the Assembly applauded.

Assembly Arrangements Committee

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, introduced the Report of the Committee to the Assembly.

The Moderator invited comments to which Mr Pratt responded and Mr Pratt moved Resolution 41:

Resolution 41

General Assembly 2001

Assembly agrees that General Assembly in 2001 will be held from 16 - 19 July at the University of York.

Resolution 41 was carried.

Mr Pratt moved Resolution 42:

Resolution 42

Residential Assemblies

Assembly agrees that from 2002 annual meetings of the General Assembly will be held residentially, over a long weekend.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and in response to a question on the meaning of a 'long weekend', Mr Pratt indicated that this would normally be a four-day period.

Resolution 42 was carried.

Mr Pratt moved Resolution 43:

Resolution 43

Rules of Procedure

Assembly agrees to add the following sentence at the end of Rule 3(6) Rules of Procedure:

"If the process continues until only two names remain, the person who then has the larger number of votes shall be elected".

The Moderator invited comments. A request was made for more information to be available in order to help members of Assembly to better assess and evaluate the suitability of those who had accepted nomination. Mr Pratt said that the Committee had considered similar requests and, while understanding the feeling behind them, had concluded that it would not be appropriate to take any steps which might imply competition between rival candidates. It was important to remember that the objective of the process was to discern God's call.

Resolution 43 was carried.

Mrs Rosemary Johnston, Children's Advocate, presented the Moderator with a copy of 'Wholly Worship', commending it to the Assembly.

Pastoral Committee

The Convener of the Pastoral Committee, the Revd John Johansen-Berg, presented the Committee's report and in doing so thanked the Synod Moderators, the Secretary of the Welfare Sub-Committee and its Convener Mrs Shirley Paton who was especially thanked for her work at the conclusion of her period of service.

Mr Johansen-Berg moved Resolution 58:

Resolution 58

Terms of Reference

Assembly approves the revised terms of reference of the Pastoral Reference Committee as set out on page 122 of the Book of Reports.

Referring to section 4 of the report Mr Johansen-Berg asked Assembly to correct "One Provincial Moderator" so that it read "One Moderator of Synod", and to add: "The Convener of the Welfare Sub-Committee". He also pointed out that the Committee was to be known as the Pastoral Reference Committee. The Moderator invited comments and questions.

In reply to a question, Mr Johansen-Berg confirmed that Church Related Community Workers would fall within its remit.

Resolution 58 was carried.

The Moderator thanked Mr Johansen-Berg who was presenting his last report as Convener of the Committee and Assembly applauded.

Election of the Moderator of Assembly 2000 - 2001

The Moderator introduced the election of the Moderator for 2000 - 2001 reminding the Assembly of the seriousness of this task and then asked the Clerk to explain the procedure. The Moderator asked the Chaplain to lead the Assembly in prayer before inviting members to cast their votes.

The Moderator thanked those who had contributed to worship that morning recognising the richness and diversity of culture within the church.

The Assembly sang the verse: "Through our lives and by our prayers, your Kingdom come" and adjourned.

The Clerk asked that authorisation be given for any inappropriate references to “province(s)” or “provincial” to be corrected in the Record of Assembly. Assembly agreed.

Inter-Faith Relations Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener, the Revd Bill Mahood, to present the Report of the Inter-Faith Relations Committee. Before proceeding with the report, Mr Mahood introduced Rabbi Sydney Kaye, Mr Roger Wilkinson of the Bahá’i Community and Mrs Charanjit Ajit Singh and the Moderator greeted them.

The Moderator invited Mrs Charanjit Ajit Singh to address the Assembly. She particularly thanked the Assembly for its welcome and hospitality and the Revd John Parry for his vision and friendship. Mrs Charanjit Ajit Singh shared her experience of the WCC Assembly in Harare and presented the Moderator with a gift.

The Moderator thanked again the visiting representatives of other faiths.

Mr Mahood noted that the work of the Committee rested on building bridges, in recognition of our multi-faith and multi-cultural society. The emphasis was on meeting one another and talking intimately to rather than ignorantly at each other. Mr Mahood believed that in this, God was at work.

The Moderator invited comments on the report and Mr Mahood responded. He reiterated the importance of engaging in talks with people of other faiths.

The Moderator thanked the Revd Bill Mahood noting that this would be his last Assembly as Convener of the Inter-Faith Relations Committee.

Youth and Children’s Work Committee

The Convener of the Youth and Children’s Work Committee, the Revd Derek Lindfield, in presenting the report of the Committee, introduced Mrs Karen Bulley, the new Pilots Development Officer, to the Assembly.

The Moderator welcomed Mrs Bulley and thanked her for her input and work in the re-development of Pilots.

Mr Neil Platt, the FURY Chair, and Mr Huw Morrison, the FURY Chair Elect, presented The Review of FURY.

In 1996 a Review Group made up of members of the Youth & Children’s Work Committee, FURY Council, Mission Council and representatives of the wider church was appointed. The group sought to be future orientated rather than backward looking, and they stated that “The purpose of the FURY Review is to make recommendations that will aid the work of FURY and the local church to enrich and to be enriched, by God in young people”. The Review Group looked at existing information and also conducted a number of interviews.

Mr Platt and Mr Morrison spoke of the image of FURY, the vision for FURY and the means whereby vision might become reality.

The recommendations of the Review Group were being considered by the FURY Council. The Moderator thanked Mr Platt and Mr Morrison for their report.

Mr Lindfield reminded the Assembly of the work of the United Reformed Church’s Youth Resource Centre and commended the work of the Revd Liz Byrne.

The Moderator invited comments on the Report of the Committee. Mr Lindfield then thanked the Assembly for its encouragement and support. The Moderator thanked the Committee for its work.

Mr Lindfield supported by the Revd Peter Brain and Ms Gabrielle Cox of the Church and Society Committee introduced and moved Resolution 44 on behalf of both Committees:

Resolution 44

Children Are Unbeatable

Assembly, noting the statement of aims of the "Children are Unbeatable" Alliance, agrees that the United Reformed Church become a member of the Alliance.

The Moderator invited comments. There were many contributions from members of Assembly and during the course of the debate the Moderator limited the duration of speeches from five to three minutes.

The Moderator invited Mr Lindfield to reply to the debate. In response, Mr Lindfield noted the distinction between smacking as a means of discipline and smacking as a means of venting frustration. He noted that whilst it was important to discipline our children, this should be done in a loving and positive way. He said that a full list of the organisations which were members of the Alliance was available from the Church and Society Committee.

The Moderator asked members of Assembly to vote.

Resolution 44 was carried.

Mrs Ruth Clarke took the Chair.

Synod Resolution

The Moderator invited Mrs M Bayley to introduce and move Resolution 6 on behalf of the Southern Synod:

Resolution 6 Toddlers and Carers

General Assembly urges all churches to take care in the naming of "Toddler" groups/clubs, etc, noting that it is exclusive to talk of "Parent(s)/Toddlers: Mothers/Toddlers", and that it would be more appropriate to use the term "Toddlers' and Carers' Club/Group".

Mr W Irving formally seconded the resolution reserving his right to speak at a later stage.

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

The Moderator asked the tellers to count the vote.

There were 155 in favour and 194 against. The Moderator therefore declared that Resolution 6 was lost.

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 spoke of the preparation of a new service book promising that the resource produced would be adaptable to suit local and individual contexts. Dr Thompson reported that there had been 193 entries in the Isaac Watts Hymn Competition which had been announced at the 1998 Assembly. He expressed thanks to those who had submitted entries and to the judges. The winners were: first, Jane Bower of Cambridge; second, Moira Rose of Windermere and third, Duncan Wilson of Nottingham. The winners of the competition for those aged 9 to 13 and those aged under 9 were Hannah Louise Mathewson of Leeds and Hannah Lees Warwicker of Sheffield respectively.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and following a number of these she invited the Convener to respond to them.

Dr Thompson invited the Cantor to lead the Assembly in singing the winning hymn.

The Revd Peter McIntosh resumed the Chair.

Church Changes

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to introduce and move Resolution 7, which he did, noting a minor correction to the name of one of the churches:

Resolution 7	New Churches
Assembly receives the churches and mission projects listed below as local churches and mission projects of the United Reformed Church.	

New Churches

Caversham Park Church Local Ecumenical Partnership - Wessex
Walthamstow United Reformed Asian Christian Church - Thames North
Haven Christian Centre, Littleover, Derby - East Midlands

Mission Projects

Bloomsbury, Birmingham - West Midlands
Claydon Old Chapel, Suffolk - Eastern

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly following which the vote was taken.

Resolution 7 was carried.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 8 noting the additional church closure which had been included on the Order Paper:

Resolution 8	Closure of Local Churches
The Assembly receives notice of the closure of the local churches listed below and gives thanks to God for their worship, witness, and service throughout their history.	

Bootle
St. Andrew's, Wallsend, Newcastle
Witton, Blackburn
Lavister & Trevalyn, Wrexham
Bloomsbury, Birmingham
Combs, Suffolk
Great Finborough, Suffolk
Claydon Old Chapel, Suffolk
Christian Malford
West Byfleet
Stoke Abbot
East End
Tabernacle, Rosemarket, Pembrokeshire

Northern
Northern
North Western
Mersey
West Midlands
Eastern
Eastern
Eastern
South Western
Wessex
Wessex
Wessex
Wales

Resolution 8 was carried.

The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer.

Following the singing of the verse: "Through our lives and by our prayers, your Kingdom come" the Assembly adjourned.

Tuesday, 6th July 1999

Third Session

The Moderator asked the Clerk to present the minutes of the first two sessions of the Assembly. The Clerk did so 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 two sessions of Monday 5th July 1999.

Election of Moderator of Assembly 2000 - 2001

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Tellers to report the result of the election of the Moderator 2000 - 2001. The Revd Geoff Tolley reported that 460 ballot papers had been received. He announced that the Revd Bill Mahood had been duly elected to be the Moderator of Assembly 2000 - 2001. Assembly welcomed this with applause and the Moderator invited Mr Mahood to the platform where he greeted him.

Mission Council - Human Sexuality

The Moderator outlined the order in which the Human Sexuality Report 1999 and the resolutions arising from it would be considered.

The Convener of Assembly Arrangements Committee, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, proposed that the vote on Resolution 34 be taken by a paper ballot. The Assembly agreed.

The Moderator then invited the Revd Elizabeth Welch, Convener of the Core Group, to speak to Assembly and she led the Assembly in a short prayer before giving the background to the Report. Ms Welch then invited the Revd Robert Way, Convener of the Group on Biblical Authority, to address the Assembly.

Ms Welch invited the Revd Martin Cressey, Secretary of the Group on the Authority of General Assembly and other Councils, to present the report of the working group.

The Convener invited the Revd Stephen Brown, Convener of the Group on Ordination and Human Sexuality, to give his report of the working group.

The Convener invited Dr Peter Clarke, Convener of the Group on Reflection on Wider Issues of Sexuality, to give his report to Assembly.

Following these presentations Ms Welch introduced the report of the Core Group.

The Moderator invited comments from members of Assembly on the report of the Biblical Authority Group. There being no comments, the Moderator invited comments on the report of the Authority of General Assembly and other Councils Group. The Revd Martin Cressey responded.

The Moderator invited comments on the report of the Ordination and Human Sexuality Group. There was a commendation of the United Reformed Church for its boldness in addressing the Human Sexuality debate.

The Moderator invited the Assembly for its comments on the Reflection on Wider Issues of Sexuality. There was no comment.

The Moderator invited comments on the report of the Core Group. Following a number of comments, the Moderator invited Ms Welch to respond.

The Moderator called Ms Welch to move Resolution 31 which she did:

Resolution 31**Human Sexuality - Affirmations**

General Assembly commends to the church the affirmations set out in section 7 of the Human Sexuality Report 1999.

There were no comments and the vote was taken.

Resolution 31 was carried.

Ms Welch moved Resolution 32:

Resolution 32**Human Sexuality - Challenges**

General Assembly sets before the church the challenges set out in section 8.1 of the Human Sexuality Report 1999.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and, there being none, asked members of Assembly to vote.

Resolution 32 was carried.

Ms Welch moved Resolution 33:

Resolution 33**Human Sexuality - Diversity of Views**

General Assembly, taking into consideration the variety of views held within the United Reformed Church on the matter of human sexuality, urges all members, congregations and councils to continue in love together, respecting this diversity of views, supporting each other through the pain and tension of our divisions, seeking the mind of Christ and working together to fulfil the purposes of God in the world.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and asked Ms Welch to respond to a question. She confirmed that the Support Group which was set up by Resolution 41 of 1997 would continue as long as it was needed.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 33 was carried.

Ms Welch moved Resolution 34:

Resolution 34**Human Sexuality - Statement**

In order to test the mind of the church regarding homosexuality, General Assembly asks the councils of the church to consider the Human Sexuality Report 1999 and to come to a view on the following statement:

In the context of the affirmations commended to the church in Resolution 31, the United Reformed Church affirms and welcomes people of homosexual orientation within the life of the church and society, but does not believe that there is a sufficiently clear mind within the church at this time to affirm the acceptability of homosexual practice.

The Moderator noted that in due course several amendments would be taken. At that stage, however, there would be debate on the resolution as it stood. There were a number of questions and comments. In view of the time the Moderator adjourned the debate and Ms Welch replied to the specific questions which had been asked. The debate would continue in the first session of the following day with the presentation of the notified amendments.

The Chaplain led worship and the Assembly adjourned.

Wednesday, 7th July

First Session

The Chaplain led opening worship.

Mission Council - Human Sexuality (continued)

With the permission of the Moderator, Dr James Merrilees read a statement from the General Committee of the Scottish Congregational Church addressed to the United Reformed Church at the time of its discussion on Human Sexuality.

The statement expressed love and care to the United Reformed Church in a period of turmoil. The Committee received and welcomed the material on Human Sexuality and praised the on-going dialogue, though sadness was expressed that the debate had concentrated on homosexuality. The statement rejoiced that the church embraced diversity and focussed on spirituality.

The Moderator thanked Dr Merrilees and through him the Scottish Congregational Church.

The Revd Alison Davis asked for clarification of the consequence of Resolution 34 not being passed. The General Secretary confirmed that if Resolution 34 was not passed, the position would be as it was before the 1997 Assembly. He noted, however, that the experience since 1997 meant that the church would never be the same.

The Moderator reminded the Assembly that Resolution 34 did not constitute a decision but would provide a means of consulting the councils of the church.

The Moderator referred to the proposed amendments of which notice had been received and stated that, after careful consideration, he had decided to rule that they were all in order.

The Revd Brian O'Neill proposed an amendment to Resolution 34:

Delete "people of homosexual orientation" and add "homosexual people".

The amendment was formally seconded by the Revd Janet Lees who reserved her right to speak later.

The Moderator invited comments from Assembly and there were many contributions from members. The seconder of the amendment replied to the debate. The Moderator then invited Assembly to vote on the amendment.

The show of cards indicated a close vote, and the Moderator called for tellers. There were 223 votes for the amendment and 241 votes against and therefore the Moderator declared that the Amendment was not carried.

The Revd Ron Williams proposed the following amendment to Resolution 34:

Delete the words a) "affirms and"
 b) "at this time"

The amendment was seconded by Mrs Rita Page.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly on the amendment and in response to a question, the Moderator informed Assembly that although it was a single amendment, he would invite the Assembly to vote separately on parts a) and b)

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Part a) of the amendment was not carried.

Part b) of the amendment was not carried and the Moderator declared both parts of the amendment to be lost.

The Moderator called Mrs Ruth Clarke and the Revd Dr Colin Thompson to propose an amendment. The Moderator had received a request that a paper ballot should be taken on this amendment. The Convener of the Arrangements Committee advised the Assembly, and the Moderator invited members of Assembly to indicate their view. The Assembly voted against a paper ballot.

Mrs Ruth Clarke moved and the Revd Dr Colin Thompson seconded the following amendment:

after "time to affirm" add "or to deny"

after "homosexual practice" add "in a committed and loving relationship"

The Moderator invited contributions from the members of Assembly. After a number of speeches, the Moderator ruled that for the remainder of the debate on the amendment, speeches should be limited to three minutes.

Following further comments, the Revd Ken Jones moved and the Revd Alison Davis seconded that the amendment **be now put**. This was agreed. The Moderator invited Mrs Ruth Clarke to respond to the comments. In so doing Mrs Clarke thanked those who had spoken.

The Moderator asked Assembly to vote on the amendment. The show of cards was inconclusive, and the Moderator called for tellers.

222 votes were in favour of the amendment and 280 votes were against. The Moderator therefore declared the amendment to be lost.

The debate on Resolution 34 was adjourned at this point and, following the advice of the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, the Moderator proposed that it be resumed at the end of that afternoon's business. The Assembly agreed to do this and to continue in session until 6pm.

The Assembly sang the verse "Through our lives and by our prayers, your Kingdom come" and then adjourned.

Wednesday, 7th July 1999

Second Session

The General Secretary introduced and the Moderator received and greeted representatives of the new churches and mission projects:

Haven Christian Centre, Littleover, Derby introduced by the General Secretary (Represented by: Revd Christopher White & Revd Graham Maskery)

Bloomsbury, Birmingham, mission project introduced by the Revd Elizabeth Welch (Rep: Ms Diane Benson, CRCW)

Claydon Old Chapel, Suffolk, mission project introduced by the Revd Elizabeth Caswell (Rep: Revd John Pugh)

Caversham Park Church LEP introduced by the Revd Derek Wales (Reps: Revd Phil Abrey and Mr Roger Moore).

Walthamstow United Reformed Asian Christian Church introduced by the Revd Roberta Rominger (Rep: Revd Noble Samuel) The Moderator presented Mr Samuel with a copy of Rejoice and Sing on behalf of the fellowship at Nelson United Reformed Church. The Moderator invited members of the Walthamstow United Reformed Asian Christian Church to stand and the Assembly warmly applauded them. The Moderator spoke of his personal joy at their presence and wished them well.

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

Northern Synod (Moderator: Revd David Jenkins)

Tony Haws	Blackhill and Chester-le-Street
Nigel Watson	Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

North Western Synod (Moderator: Revd Keith Forecast)

Geoffrey Hewitt	Lytham and Kirkham
Mike Perrott	Salford West Pastorate
Rob Pickering	Accrington and Haslingden (unable to attend)

Mersey Synod (Moderator: Revd Graham Cook)

Barbara Exley	Highfield, Rock Ferry, within the East Wirral Team
Alan Poolton	Ecumenical Team at Runcorn
Glenys Wilkinson	Hamilton Memorial, Birkenhead

Yorkshire Synod (Moderator: Revd Arnold Harrison)

Peter Sharp	Spensborough Group
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East Midlands Synod (Moderator: Revd Malcolm Hanson)

Mair Bradley	West Derbyshire Group
Clare Downing	Braunstone & Evington Road, Leicester
Jacque Gavin	Daventry, Badby, Crick & Kilsby, Northants
John Hayton	Clifton, Nottingham
Jay Phelps	Westcotes, Leicester
Sallyann Phelps	Emmanuel, Leicester (unable to attend)
Elaine Anita Sutherland	Chaplain, North Warwickshire & Hinckley College (unable to attend)

West Midlands Synod (Moderator: Revd Elizabeth Welch)

Sam Ansa-Addo	Blackheath and Halesowen, Worcester and Hereford
Mary Burgess	Hobs Moat and St. Ninians, Solihull
Chris Parker	St. Andrew's, Sedgley, Staffordshire (unable to attend)

Eastern Synod (Moderator: Revd Elizabeth Caswell)

Georgina Brotherton	Christ Church, Harwich Road & Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Colchester Group
Jim Dalglish	Great Meeting Hadleigh with Monks Eleigh
Anthony Howells	Assistant Minister Bar Hill LEP
Karen Knight	Haverhill and Castle Camps
Deborah McVey	Emmanuel and Brooklands Medical Centre

South Western Synod (Moderator: Revd Ray Adams)

Richard Pope	Kingsteignton and Newton Abbot
Kathryn Taylor	South Somerset Group

Wessex Synod (Moderator: Revd Derek Wales)

Owiny Laber

Maidenhead

Thames North Synod (Moderator: Revd Roberta Rominger)

Janet Conway

Associate Minister at Berkhamsted

Steve Faber

Bush Hill Park, Enfield

Michael Shrubsole

High Wycombe

Southern Synod (Moderator: Revd David Helyar)

Philip Burroughs

Lewes Road, in the Brighton Group

Geoffrey Haigh

West Sussex Area Ministry - although listed in last year's record

Mr Haigh had been unable to be present at that time

Tim Lowe

St. Luke's, Silverhill

Wales Synod (Moderator: Revd John Humphreys)

Barbara Bennett

Porth and Treforest

The Moderator addressed the new ministers and led prayer.

The General Secretary then named those ministers who were celebrating ministerial jubilees during the year:

Ordained in 1929

Thomas Reginald DEAN

Ordained in 1939

Thomas BARRY

Gordon Paul BREEZE

Owen Harmsworth BUTLER

Hewlett Elliott COLTMAN

David Glyn EVANS

David Idris OWEN

Leslie Alfred STRINGER

Walter Laurie WOODING

Ordained in 1949

David Bruce ADAM

David Joseph AVIS

Gordon William Ernest BAKER

Edmund Arthur BANYARD

Kenneth Howett BELL

Ronald Arthur Hubert BOCKING

Peter John Humphrey BREWER

Charles Richard BRUFORD

John Gibson FORSYTH

Charles Cyril FRANKS

Peter Roland GOODCHILD

Cyril Handel GRANT

Bernard Hodgson JONES

David Murray MAIN

Stuart Hardy MARSH

Stanley John METCALF

Albert Edward MOLINEAUX

Tom MORRISON

William Ronald STOKES

Derek Harry SWANSBURY

Ronald William George TALMEY

John Horace TAYLOR

William UNSWORTH

Ronald Franklin WILLIAMS

The Moderator greeted those present who were Reginald Dean, Owen Butler, Edmund Banyard, Kenneth Bell, Stuart Marsh, Ronald Talmey, John Taylor and Ronald Williams. The Assembly applauded them warmly. The Moderator said that he would write with the greetings of the Assembly to those who were not present and led the Assembly in prayer.

Ministries Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener, the Revd Graham Long, to present the Report of the Ministries Committee. Mr Long reported the work which had been done by the Committee in connection with the designation of 1999 as a year of recruitment to the ministry. The Accreditation Sub-Committee was re-evaluating the Overseas Recruitment Scheme. Mr Long paid tribute to those who had generously contributed their time and care in the work of the Committee. The Convener also affirmed the appointment of Ms Suzanne Adofo and Mr Stephen Summers, the new CRCW Development Workers, and also that of Carol Dixon who had recently taken over from the Revd Sandy Mailer as the new Convener and National Lay Preaching Support Commissioner. Mr Mailer had had to relinquish the post because of ill-health.

The Moderator opened the report for debate and the Convener responded to questions.

The Moderator invited Mr Michael Harrison, Convener of the Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-Committee, to introduce the Report of the Sub-Committee and Resolution 52. In so doing Mr Harrison commended the work of Mr Howard Bridge who had chaired the group which had carried out a review of ministerial remuneration. He also paid tribute to all those who had worked with him during his period as the Convener of the Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-Committee. Mr Long formally moved Resolution 52:

Resolution 52

Maintenance of the Ministry

Assembly receives the report of the Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-Committee, set out on page 106 of the Book of Reports, and endorses the programme.

Mr Harrison responded to questions and comments and the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 52 was carried.

Mr Long moved Resolution 53 and invited Mr Harrison to present it to the Assembly:

Resolution 53 Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration

Assembly amends the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration by the addition of the following paragraph:

6.1.5 Children's allowances: Where a minister has one or more financially dependent children below the age of 24 years, an annual non-pensionable allowance of £800 in respect of the first dependent child and £400 in respect of each additional dependent child will be paid, provided that the minister certifies (on a form provided) that the total annual income of the family (excluding state children's benefits) is expected to be less than £2,000 in excess of the basic stipend;

6.1.5.1 Any casual earnings of, or educational grants for, dependent children, or housing or fixed car allowances paid by the Church, may be disregarded as family income;

6.1.5.2 The allowance will be paid in accordance with the circumstances pertaining at the date that the certificate is signed. Any subsequent change, e.g. when the family income changes, will be disregarded in the current year; pro-rata grants may be claimed in the year of the birth of a baby, and in the year in which a child ceases to be dependent, or attains the age of 24;

6.1.5.3 The first year in which this allowance will be paid is 2000. The sums of £800, £400 and £2,000 in para 6.1.5 will be reviewed by the MoM committee for each subsequent year;

6.1.5.4 It is envisaged that forms will be issued in February of each year, and grants will be paid through the first available payroll run after the form is received in the MoM office.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and Mr Harrison responded.

Resolution 53 was carried.

The Moderator extended a warm greeting to Mr Michael Harrison who had concluded a long period of service to the Church's Committees. The Assembly applauded and the Moderator thanked the Ministries Committee again for its work.

Synod Resolution

The Revd Bill Mahood introduced and moved Resolution 3:

Resolution 3

Westminster College Centenary

General Assembly in this centenary year of the move of Westminster College to Cambridge gratefully expresses its thanks to God for the great contribution made by the college staff and students to the churches of the area and to the wider church, and prays God's blessing on its future life.

Dr David Thompson seconded the resolution.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to indicate its affirmation of **the resolution** which **was carried** with applause. The Moderator greeted the Principal of Westminster College, the Revd Dr David Cornick.

The General Secretary introduced Barbara Martin, President of Northern College, who presented to the Moderator a copy of a new history of Northern College written by Elaine Kaye. The Moderator thanked her and the Assembly applauded.

The Revd David Jenkins took the Chair and the Moderator thanked him for his ministry as Moderator of the Northern Synod which was concluding.

Church and Society Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener, Ms Gabrielle Cox, to present the report of the Church and Society Committee.

In presenting the report Ms Cox expressed thanks and credit to those who had been instrumental in the preparation of the report. She acknowledged the diversity of the remit of the Committee and drew particular attention to the "Roots and Branches" pack, the "For a Rainy Day" video pack and Commitment for Life. She noted the important work of the Committee but advised the Assembly not to regard it as a substitute for local action. Ms Cox particularly thanked the members of the Committee and the Revd Peter Brain for their support and dedicated work.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to comment on the report. Speakers commended "For a Rainy Day" and Commitment for Life. A question was asked about the report on the Jubilee 2000 Coalition campaign which had been promised in paragraph 4.3 of the report. The Secretary, the Revd Peter Brain, said that, thanks to the campaign, there had been significant movement on the part of world leaders. More could be and needed to be achieved, and it was important to continue the campaign, including writing to Members of Parliament. Mr Brain thanked the local churches for their financial support for the work of the Coalition. Ms Cox replied to the other comments and questions, and the Moderator thanked them.

The Moderator invited the Convener to introduce and move Resolution 46 which she did:

Assembly, noting the findings of the Enquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence:

- a) urges every local congregation to mark Racial Justice Sunday (in 1999 September 12) as agreed by the Church Representatives' Meeting of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland and draws attention to the material for that Sunday published by the Churches Commission for Racial Justice;
- b) acknowledging that racism exists within the church, urges the officers of local churches, District Councils and Synods to give appropriate opportunity for discussion of these matters during 1999 / 2000;
- c) urges local churches to consider issues of racial justice arising in the communities in which they are situated and to offer support to those striving for racial justice in local situations.

The Moderator invited comments and questions. Following several contributions from the Assembly the Revd Martin Smith moved that the motion be now put. This was seconded by the Revd Tom Ellison. Because the Assembly had already indicated its wish to hear further speakers the Moderator ruled that moving such a motion would be unfair. After the further speeches the Convener replied.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 46 was carried.

Synod Resolution

The Moderator invited Dr R Hunt to introduce and move Resolution 4:

Resolution 4 Genetically engineered foods and crops

Assembly, believing that the commercialisation of genetically engineered foods and crops seems premature, urges the Government to impose a moratorium on such commercialisation whilst sufficient fundamental research is carried out into the full consequences of this technology.

The Revd K Wilkinson seconded the resolution and the Moderator invited the Assembly to comment. Following a number of speeches, the Revd Dr Neil Messer moved that the resolution **be not put**. This was seconded by the Revd Allan Smith. The Moderator invited Dr Hunt to comment on the reasons given by Dr Messer. This he did.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to cast their votes. The Moderator called for the tellers.

187 Votes were in favour and 149 votes were against. The Moderator therefore stated that the Assembly had decided that Resolution 4 **be not put**.

The Revd Peter McIntosh resumed the Chair and called the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee to suggest how the business should be taken.

Mr Pratt said that the presenters of the reports of the Health and Healing Development Group and the Finance Committee, the Revd Jim Hollyman and Mr Graham Stacy respectively, had agreed that their business could be taken on a later day. He thanked them for this.

Mission Council - Human Sexuality (continued)

The Moderator re-opened the adjourned debate on Resolution 34. During the course of the further debate and in accordance with Standing Order 4b, the Moderator limited the duration of speeches to three minutes. The Moderator invited the Revd Elizabeth Welch to reply and this she did.

The Moderator invited the Clerk to explain the procedure for the paper ballot. The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer before the Moderator invited members to cast their votes.

While the tellers were counting the votes the Moderator asked the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee to address the Assembly in consideration of the limitation of time. Mr Pratt asked the Assembly's permission to extend the session further and this was given.

Ms Welch introduced and moved Resolution 39:

Resolution 39

Human Sexuality - Working Groups

General Assembly:

- (i) commends to the church the report of the Working Group on the Nature of Biblical Authority for the life of the Church, and encourages local churches to deepen their studies of the Scriptures in an atmosphere of open listening in order for the study of Scripture to come more alive throughout the church;
- (ii) requests the Mission Council to consider the recommendations of the Working Group on the Authority of the General Assembly and Other Councils and to report to a future Assembly;
- (iii) commends to the church the report of the Working Group on Ordination and Human Sexuality as an aid to study in the continuing discussions;
- (iv) offers to the church the report of the Working Group on Wider Issues of Human Sexuality to assist in further reflection.

The Moderator ruled that for the remainder of the current session speakers in the debates should limit the duration of their speech to three minutes. There were comments and questions to which Ms Welch responded.

The Moderator invited Assembly to vote.

Resolution 39 was carried.

The Moderator announced the result of the vote on Resolution 34; there were 326 votes in favour of the resolution and 189 votes against. The Moderator therefore declared that **Resolution 34 was carried**. The Revd A.R. Cottam registered his dissent from Resolution 34 under the terms of Standing Order 8c.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

The Revd Ken Jones asked whether, should the Assembly in 2000 accept the statement contained in Resolution 34, there would be any legal implications in connection with equal opportunities. Dr David Thompson said that he understood that the wording of the statement did not contravene current legislation.

The Moderator called Ms Welch who presented and moved Resolution 35:

Resolution 35

Human Sexuality - Refers to Council

General Assembly:

- (i) invites local churches, district councils and synods to discuss the statement contained in Resolution 34;
- (ii) agrees that if any local church, district council or synod passes a resolution that the statement be not accepted by a majority of members present and voting at a duly convened meeting of such a body, notice of such a resolution must reach the General Secretary by 14th March 2000;
- (iii) agrees that if by 14th March 2000 such notice has been received from more than one third of local churches or more than one third of district councils or more than one third of synods, then the Assembly in its concern for the unity of the church shall not proceed to accept the statement;
- (iv) agrees that if by 14th March 2000 such notice has not been received, a motion to accept the statement shall be put to the Annual Meeting of the Assembly in 2000, such motion requiring a simple majority of the members present and voting to pass.

The Revd Pauline Barnes moved the following amendment:

Alter “2000” to “2001” wherever that date appears.

Mr Alistair Ellefsen-Jones formally seconded the amendment reserving his right to speak at a later time.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and following several contributions, the Revd Peter Peirce moved and the Revd Alison Davis seconded that the amendment **be now put**. This was carried.

Mr Alistair Ellefsen-Jones replied to the debate.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote on the amendment. The amendment was lost.

There were further speeches on Resolution 35.

On behalf of the Core Group Dr David Thompson replied.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote on the resolution.

Resolution 35 was carried.

The Moderator invited the Chaplain to lead closing worship. The Assembly adjourned.

Thursday, 8th July 1999

First Session

The Chaplain led opening worship.

The Moderator asked the Clerk to present the minutes of Tuesday 6 July. The Clerk did so and noted a correction. The Assembly accepted the minutes.

The Convener of Assembly Arrangements thanked the time keepers for their work and Assembly applauded. He then proposed that the Report of Finance Committee be taken later in that session and that the afternoon session be extended until 5.30pm. This was agreed.

Mission Council - Growing Up

The Moderator called the General Secretary to present “Growing Up”. The Moderator took the opportunity to thank the General Secretary warmly for his ministry, which the Assembly endorsed with acclamation. The General Secretary then introduced the report and moved Resolution 14:

Mrs Rosalind Goodfellow took the Chair.

Resolution 14

Growing Up

General Assembly accepts the mission programme outlined in the report “Growing Up” and strongly commends it to local churches, district councils and synods.

The Moderator invited the Revd Prince Dibeela to introduce himself and to speak about his Botswana experience and what he had learned about the United Reformed Church. Mr Dibeela welcomed the report, commended it for creating a mood of excitement and expectancy and encouraged members to be enthused by it. He urged the Assembly to find ways in which to help ordinary members to articulate their faith more effectively and encouraged the Assembly to be proactive in addressing social and spiritual issues.

Many members spoke and warm commendation of the report “Growing Up” was expressed. During the course of the debate the Moderator ruled that future speeches should be limited to three minutes.

The Revd Peter McIntosh resumed the Chair.

The Revd Wilf Bahadur proposed and Revd Ruth Crofton seconded that the motion **be now put**. The Moderator put this to the vote and the Assembly agreed.

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to respond to the questions and comments, which Mr Burnham did, expressing his gratitude for the way in which the report had been received.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 14 was carried.

It was requested that the text of Mr Burnham's presentation be made available. This would be done.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 15:

Resolution 15	Growing Up
General Assembly instructs the Mission Council to oversee the planning of the mission programme.	

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and invited the General Secretary to respond.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 15 was carried.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 16:

Resolution 16	Growing Up
General Assembly submits the mission programme of the United Reformed Church to the Council for World Mission.	

The Moderator invited comments and there being none, the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 16 was carried.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 17:

Resolution 17	Growing Up
General Assembly enlarges the remit, adjusts the structure and changes the name of the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee, as set out in Annex D of the report "Growing Up".	

The Moderator invited comments and there being none, the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 17 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the General Secretary again for this considerable piece of work, and the Assembly applauded.

Finance Committee

The Moderator invited the Treasurer, Mr Graham Stacy, to present the Finance Committee's Report. The Moderator asked the permission of the Assembly for the time limit of speeches to three minutes to still apply. The Assembly gave its consent.

The Moderator invited comments and questions and Mr Stacy responded.

Mr Stacy presented and moved Resolution 50:

Resolution 50	Accounts
Assembly adopts the accounts for the year ended 31st December 1998.	

The Moderator invited comments and there being none, invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 50 was carried.

Mr Stacy introduced and moved Resolution 51:

Resolution 51	Ministry and Mission Fund
Assembly gratefully acknowledges the giving of the churches in 1998 to the Ministry & Mission Fund.	

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and there being none, invited members to vote.

Resolution 51 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Finance Committee for their work and Assembly applauded.

The Convener of the Finance Committee, Mr Graham Stacy, asked permission for the Revd Duncan Wilson, the Convener of the Resource Planning Advisory Group of the Mission Council, who was not a member of Assembly to present Resolution 30. This was granted and Mr Wilson spoke to the Resolution. In view of the complex nature of the material Mr Wilson informed the Assembly that his presentation was available for members of the Assembly to use when reporting the debate.

Mr Stacy formally moved Resolution 30:

Resolution 30	Budget for the year 2000
Assembly accepts the budget for the year 2000 set out in Appendix 2 to the Book of Reports.	

The Moderator invited comments and questions from the Assembly. Mr Wilson and Mr Stacy replied.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 30 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Resource Planning Advisory Group to the Mission Council for their work.

Health & Healing Development Group

The Moderator invited the Revd Jim Hollyman, the Secretary of the Group, to present the report. This he did and the Moderator invited comments from the Assembly.

The Moderator thanked Mr Hollyman for his period of service which would end with this Assembly. The Assembly applauded.

The Assembly sang the verse "Through our lives and by our prayers, your Kingdom come" and adjourned.

Thursday, 8th July 1999

Second Session

The Moderator invited the Chaplain to lead the Assembly in prayer.

The Moderator introduced Dr David Goodbourn, General Secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and invited him to address the Assembly. Dr Goodbourn spoke of his vision for the ecumenical movement in these islands, highlighting the need for the sharing of resources of all kinds.

The Moderator thanked him and wished him well in his appointment; the Assembly endorsed this with applause.

Mission Council

The General Secretary explained that since the printing of the Book of Reports, it had been realised that the wording of Resolution 13 contained therein was inadequate. He asked permission of the Assembly to replace it with Resolutions 13A - 13E. This was granted.

The General Secretary introduced and moved Resolution 13A:

Resolution 13A

Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland

General Assembly approves the following two amendments to the Proposals for union with the Congregational Union of Scotland (document dated March 1998) namely:

(i) **the following paragraph shall be added as Paragraph 3 (c) (iii) of Part 3:**

'Any member church of the Congregational Union of Scotland which does not comply with the requirements set out in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) of this paragraph shall nevertheless be a concurring church if it passes before the 30th day of November 1999 a resolution to concur which complies with the formalities laid down in sub-paragraph (i) above, notice of which shall have been given by the person specified in the resolution addressed to the General Secretary of the Congregational Union of Scotland by the 31st day of December of 1999'.

(ii) **the following amendment shall be made to Paragraph B (ii) of Part 4, namely that the second sentence thereof shall be replaced by the following sentence:**

'Any assets of the council will at the date of unification be passed to the newly formed Synod of Scotland'.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly; there being none, he invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 13A was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 13B:

Resolution 13B Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland

General Assembly resolves that, should either or both of the amendments referred to in Resolution 13A fail to be carried by the 1999 Annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of Scotland, the effect will be to nullify General Assembly's approval thereof under Resolution 13A, thus leaving the original wording in place.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly; there being none, he invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 13B was carried.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 13C:

Resolution 13C Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland

In the event of the Annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of Scotland approving the said amendment(s), then, in accordance with Paragraph 3(l) of the Structure, General Assembly invites synods to discuss the proposed amendment(s) specified in Resolution 13A and agrees that, should any synod pass a resolution that the said amendment(s) be not proceeded with, such resolution must reach the General Secretary of the United Reformed Church no later than the 30th day of November 1999.

The Clerk explained the process whereby the amendments could be ratified, then the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 13C was carried.

Mrs Wilma Frew then introduced and moved Resolution 13D:

Resolution 13D Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 1998 to give approval to the Proposals for Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland (document dated March 1998) in all respects save for the two proposed amendments which are the subject of Resolution 13A and also to approve the amendments to the Basis and Structure of the United Reformed Church listed in Appendix C to the document.

The Revd John Arthur, General Secretary of the Congregational Union of Scotland, and the Secretary of the Mid Scotland District Council both spoke to indicate their pleasure that this point had been reached.

Resolution 13D was carried.

Mrs Wilma Frew moved Resolution 13E:

Resolution 13E Union with the Congregational Union of Scotland

General Assembly resolves to meet together with the Annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of Scotland as a Unifying Assembly in Glasgow on 1st April 2000.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 13E was carried.

The Moderator then greeted the Revd John Arthur and the Revd Jack Dyce of the Congregational Union of Scotland and asked them to convey the best wishes of the Assembly to the Assembly of the Congregational Union of Scotland. Members of Assembly applauded warmly.

Ecumenical Committee

The Moderator invited the Revd Bob Andrews, Convener of the Ecumenical Committee, to introduce the report of the Committee. Before proceeding with the report, Mr Andrews invited the Moderator to greet the following people: Mrs Rosemary Wass from the Methodist Church, the Revd Robert Anderson, Director of World Exchange, the Revd Emmanuel and Mrs Alice Frimpong at the end of his 5 year term as Ghanaian chaplain and the Revd Dr John Samuel Ponnusamy at the end of his 3 year term as a mission partner through the Council for World Mission. On behalf of the Assembly the Moderator wished them well.

In presenting the report, Mr Andrews spoke of the wide brief of the Committee, noting that it required a flexible response. He referred to different initiatives in Wales, Scotland and England. Mr Andrews paid tribute to the Revd Barrie Scopes, Convener of the Overseas Exchange Sub-Committee, for the meticulous care and concern with which he carried out his task. He also thanked Ms Lesley-Anne Morgan, the International Relations Programme Administrator, for her work in co-ordinating the Belonging to the World Church Programme.

The Moderator invited comments and questions from the Assembly following which the Moderator invited Mr Andrews to respond.

Mr Andrews presented and moved Resolution 48:

Resolution 48

Belonging to the World Church - Membership of General Assembly

Assembly agrees to amend paragraph 2(5)(e) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church so that it reads: "Up to twelve representatives from the partner churches of the United Reformed Church outside Britain and Ireland or such other number as the Assembly shall from time to time determine;"

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly; there being none, he invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 48 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The General Secretary proposed that in accordance with paragraph 3(i) of the Basis and Structure, Resolution 48 be referred to Synods with 15th of March 2000 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.

Dr David Thompson took the Chair.

Mr Andrews introduced Resolution 49 and with the Moderator's permission invited the Revd Ray Adams and Ms Bethan Galliers to address the Assembly recalling their experiences at St. Andrews Hall. The Moderator thanked them to the applause of the Assembly.

Mr Andrews then moved Resolution 49:

The Assembly, having received the report on the decision by the College's Council to close St Andrew's Hall Missionary College,

- a) gives thanks for the service offered to the church in this country and overseas by the college and for the witness to the "glorious gospel of the blessed God" it has promoted;**
- b) calls upon the Ecumenical Committee to ensure that the resources released to the United Reformed Church from the sale of the college are used for the requirements of the United Reformed Church in mission education and training in a world church context.**

The Moderator invited comments and questions from the Assembly, following which he invited Mr Andrews to respond. This he did noting that the decision to close St Andrew's Hall had not been taken by the United Reformed Church, but was the responsibility of St Andrew's Hall Council which was made up of 25 members only four of whom represented the United Reformed Church. He expressed the shock felt by the Ecumenical Committee at the speed of the process; it had hoped for a greater period of discussion of ideas and alternatives. Mr Andrews reiterated the commendations of the work of St. Andrew's Hall already expressed.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 49 was carried.

The Moderator paid warm tribute to St Andrews Hall.

The Revd Peter McIntosh resumed the Chair.

Training Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Training Committee, the Revd Dr John Sutcliffe, to present the report of the Committee. This he did, expressing thanks to colleagues. Dr Sutcliffe introduced the Revd Jean Black, Secretary for Continuing Ministerial Education, Mr Howard Nurden, Youth and Children's Work Trainer for Southern Synod, and Mr Stephen Collins, Youth and Children's Work Training and Development Officer for Thames North Synod. The Moderator greeted them.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly on the report and invited Dr Sutcliffe to respond.

The Moderator thanked the Committee for their work and Assembly applauded.

Mission Council

The Moderator invited the Revd John Waller, Deputy General Secretary, to introduce and move Resolution 18:

General Assembly welcomes the report of the Training Committee on the positive response of Mansfield College to the inspection report of 1997, and commends the staff and governing body on the imaginative work that has been done.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly following which he invited Assembly to vote.

Resolution 18 was carried.

Mr Waller presented and moved Resolution 19:

Resolution 19 Use of colleges review

Assembly, having heard the basis on which it was formed, accepts the advice of Mission Council that the United Reformed Church should cease to use one of the present colleges for initial ministerial training.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to comment. Following a number of speeches, the Revd Peter Rand proposed and the Revd David Bradburn seconded that the motion be now put. The Moderator decided that in fairness, he would allow those speakers who had already approached the microphone to speak. After the last speaker had spoken, the Revd Alison Davis proposed and Mr Bill Irving seconded that the motion **be now put**. This was agreed.

Mr Waller replied to the debate.

The Moderator led the Assembly in a moment of quiet reflection and then took the vote on Resolution 19. The Moderator asked the tellers to count the votes.

The votes were: 191 in favour and 208 against the resolution.

The Moderator declared Resolution 19 not carried.

In view of this, Mr Waller asked the permission of the Assembly to withdraw Resolution 20:

Resolution 20 Initial ministerial training at Mansfield College

Assembly resolves not to use Mansfield College for initial ministerial training for the foreseeable future and asks the Training Committee to make careful and sensitive arrangements to phase out its current use for this purpose.

The Assembly agreed, so Resolution 20 was withdrawn.

The Moderator invited Mr Waller to move Resolution 21. With the permission of the Assembly, Mr Waller did so with an amendment to replace "other than" with "in addition to".

Resolution 21

The future use of Mansfield College

General Assembly supports the conversations that have begun between Mansfield College, the Congregational Federation and the Training Committee concerning the continued use of the theological and training resource of the College for purposes in addition to initial ministerial training.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to comment and asked Mr Waller to respond.

Resolution 21 was carried.

Mr Waller asked the permission of Assembly to move Resolution 22 in a corrected form. This being granted, he moved:

General Assembly gives thanks to God for the work of Mansfield College, Oxford, in the training of ministers for the Congregational and United Reformed Church ministry since 1886; offers prayers for those who have borne the brunt of the uncertainty of the past two years; and seeks the blessing of God's grace on staff, students and governing body as they plan for future service to the Christian Church.

Resolution 22 was carried.

The Assembly applauded and the Moderator and the Assembly thanked Mr Waller.

The Assembly sang the verse: "Through our lives and by our prayers, your Kingdom come" and adjourned.

Thursday, 8th July 1999

Third Session

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 Assembly approved the minutes of all three sessions of Wednesday 7th July.

The Revd Alasdair Pratt, Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, outlined the evening's business.

Church and Society Committee

Ms Gabrielle Cox, Convener of the Church & Society Committee, formally moved Resolution 45. With the permission of the moderator, Ms Cox introduced Mr Afif Safieh, a Palestinian Christian, who spoke to Resolution 45.

Resolution 45 The Middle East

Assembly, noting the continuing military action around the Gulf and the lack of progress within the Israeli - Palestinian negotiations, and in renewing its concern for the region:

- a) affirms that Jerusalem, a thrice-holy city, should be accessible to the adherents of the three monotheistic faiths and believes that any settlement of the territorial claims of Palestinians and Israelis should honour the holiness and wholeness of the city as a shared city in terms of sovereignty and citizenship;
- b) looks for a fresh start to meaningful negotiations following the General Election in Israel and developments around May 4, and invites the British government to press with its EU partners for a clear role under the auspices of the United Nations in the peace process;
- c) deplores the systematic confiscation of identification cards (and consequent loss of right of residency) from increasing numbers of Palestinian Jerusalemites, and continuing human rights abuses both by Israeli and Palestinian security forces and the evidence of corruption and political infighting within the Palestinian leadership;
- d) questions the assumptions on which British forces are engaged in bombing targets in Iraq and urges the British government and its EU partners, through the United Nations, to apply a more coherent and comprehensive foreign and defence policy vis-à-vis the Middle East;
- e) supports the calls being made for a fundamental revision of the sanctions currently in force against Iraq and regrets the leading involvement of British companies in the construction of the Ilusu dam in Turkey;
- f) welcomes the trend for pilgrimage groups to the Holy Land, including the representative URC group travelling next winter as part of the Pilgrim 2000 programme to make time for deliberate encounters with indigenous Christians; AND
- g) authorises the Assembly officers to send Christian greetings, together with a copy of this resolution, to the church leaders in Jerusalem, assuring them of the prayers of the United Reformed Church for them individually and collectively, especially during this period of the millennium.

Mr Alistair Ellefsen-Jones proposed the following amendment to Resolution 45:

That clause a) should read as follows:-

Affirms that Jerusalem, as a holy city, should be accessible to the adherents of all the Abrahamic faiths and believes that any settlement of the territorial claims of Palestinians and Israelis should honour the holiness and wholeness of the city as a shared city in terms of sovereignty and citizenship;

Revd Carole Ellefsen-Jones formally seconded the amendment and reserved the right to speak later.

The amendment was carried.

The Moderator invited comments from the Assembly and with permission the Revd Peter Brain responded to these. Mr Afif Safieh also expressed gratitude for Assembly's concern.

The Moderator invited Assembly to vote on the substantive Resolution 45:

Resolution 45

The Middle East

Assembly, noting the continuing military action around the Gulf and the lack of progress within the Israeli - Palestinian negotiations, and in renewing its concern for the region:

- a) Affirms that Jerusalem, as a holy city, should be accessible to the adherents of all the Abrahamic faiths and believes that any settlement of the territorial claims of Palestinians and Israelis should honour the holiness and wholeness of the city as a shared city in terms of sovereignty and citizenship;**
- b) looks for a fresh start to meaningful negotiations following the General Election in Israel and developments around May 4, and invites the British government to press with its EU partners for a clear role under the auspices of the United Nations in the peace process;**
- c) deplores the systematic confiscation of identification cards (and consequent loss of right of residency) from increasing numbers of Palestinian Jerusalemites, and continuing human rights abuses both by Israeli and Palestinian security forces and the evidence of corruption and political infighting within the Palestinian leadership;**
- d) questions the assumptions on which British forces are engaged in bombing targets in Iraq and urges the British government and its EU partners, through the United Nations, to apply a more coherent and comprehensive foreign and defence policy vis-à-vis the Middle East;**
- e) supports the calls being made for a fundamental revision of the sanctions currently in force against Iraq and regrets the leading involvement of British companies in the construction of the Ilusu dam in Turkey;**
- f) welcomes the trend for pilgrimage groups to the Holy Land, including the representative URC group travelling next winter as part of the Pilgrim 2000 programme to make time for deliberate encounters with indigenous Christians; AND**
- g) authorises the Assembly officers to send Christian greetings, together with a copy of this resolution, to the church leaders in Jerusalem, assuring them of the prayers of the United Reformed Church for them individually and collectively, especially during this period of the millennium.**

Resolution 45 as amended was carried.

The Moderator thanked the representatives of the Church and Society Committee and Mr Safieh.

Synod Resolution

The Moderator invited Revd Stephen Newell to move Resolution 5. Mr Newell asked for the consent of the Assembly to withdraw the resolution.

Resolution 5 Faithfulness, Chastity and Marriage Preparation

General Assembly affirms the consistent teaching of the Church based on Scripture that calls us to faithfulness within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman and to chastity outside marriage, and urges Churches Together at County and local levels to explore the possibility of setting up ongoing marriage preparation courses to which all couples in their area preparing for marriage could be invited.

Mr T Jefferies, seconder, indicated his concurrence, and the Assembly gave its consent. Resolution 5 was therefore withdrawn.

Mission Council

The Moderator invited Mrs Wilma Frew to introduce the report of Mission Council.

Mrs Frew reminded Assembly that the Human Sexuality Pastoral Group was still in existence and that if it was needed contact should be made via the General Secretary or the Deputy General Secretary. Mrs Frew also commented on the setting up of new task groups, expressing gratitude to those who assisted the Mission Council in this way.

Mrs Frew asked the Revd Elizabeth Caswell to speak on behalf of the Millennium Task Group which she did, with particular reference to the Millennium candle.

The Moderator thanked the representatives of Mission Council, noting that the remaining resolutions would be taken later.

Communications and Editorial Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener, Mr Chris Wright, to present the report of the Communications and Editorial Committee. This he did, highlighting matters in the printed report and mentioning the new means of disseminating information which had replaced the Information Service mailings.

The Moderator invited comments to which Mr Wright responded, confirming that the publication referred to in paragraph 5 of the report was correctly titled: "Articles of Reformed Faith and Religion".

Mr Wright introduced and moved Resolution 47:

Resolution 47

Communication Strategy

Assembly notes the action strategy being developed by the Communications and Editorial Committee for a five year programme as printed in the Book of Reports and commends it for implementation at every level of the Church.

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

Resolution 47 was carried.

The Moderator thanked Mr Chris Wright it being his last Assembly as Convener of the Communications and Editorial Committee.

The Chaplain led worship and the Assembly adjourned.

Resolution 23 Special Committee to nominate the General Secretary

General Assembly appoints a special committee to nominate the next General Secretary, consisting of those named on page 48-49 of the 1999 Book of Reports.

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

Resolution 23 was carried.

Mrs Frew moved Resolution 24:

Resolution 24 Scottish representatives on the special committee to nominate the General Secretary

General Assembly agrees, in the light of the imminent union, to invite the Congregational Union of Scotland to appoint two representatives to be members of the special committee to nominate the next General Secretary, with a view to the Synod of Scotland, at its first meeting, confirming them as members of the committee under rules of procedure 4(2). (In the event of union not proceeding, this invitation would be withdrawn).

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

Resolution 24 was carried.

Mrs Frew moved Resolution 25:

Resolution 25 To extend the period of service of the Moderator of the Northern Synod

General Assembly, acting in accordance with paragraph 2(5)(A)(xii) of the Structure, resolves to suspend Rule 7(2)(i) only in order to extend the appointment of the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod.

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

Resolution 25 was carried.

Mrs Frew moved Resolution 26:

Resolution 26 To extend the period of service of the Moderator of the Northern Synod

General Assembly extends the appointment of the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod until 31 December 2006.

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

Resolution 26 was carried.

The General Secretary introduced and moved resolution 9:

Resolution 9

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

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 1998 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.

There being no comments or questions the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 9 was carried.

The General Secretary introduced and moved Resolution 10:

Resolution 10

Amendment of Structure 3(1)

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 1998 to amend 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.

There being no comments or questions the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 10 was carried.

The General Secretary introduced and moved Resolution 11:

Resolution 11

Changes to Structure

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 1998 to make the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church:

- 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".

There being no comments or questions the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 11 was carried.

The General Secretary introduced and moved Resolution 12:

Resolution 12

Disciplinary procedures

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 1998 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)”.

There being no comments or questions the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 12 was carried.

The General Secretary introduced and moved Resolution 27:

Resolution 27

The Section O process - ministerial discipline

Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Section O process (See the procedure for constitutional amendment set out in paragraph 3(1) of the Structure.):

Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.9

Delete Provincial

Paragraph 3.13

Insert a new Paragraph as follows:-

References to district councils shall be understood to include area councils in Scotland, such area councils being in every respect identical with district councils and wherever the words “district council” or “district” appear they shall, as regards Scotland, be read as meaning “area council” or “area”.

Paragraph 4.2

Delete the final sentence.

Paragraph 5.1

Delete Provincial

Paragraph 7.1.1

Insert a new paragraph as follows:

No person shall be a member of the Commission Panel or of any Appeals Commission and at the same time also be a member of any Synod Panel or Mandated Group as defined in the Rules of Procedure.

Paragraph 7.1.2

**The existing Paragraph 7.1 will become 7.1.2.
Also delete Provincial.**

Paragraph 10.2

Delete the existing Paragraph 10.2 and add the following Paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3.

10.2 If the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission considers that there has been some conduct, statement, act or omission on the part of the Minister which, although not sufficiently serious to justify deletion is nevertheless of sufficient concern to justify lesser disciplinary action against the Minister it may, whilst allowing the name of the Minister to remain on the Roll, take either or both of the following steps, the first being part of its decision and the second being by way of recommendation:-

10.2.1 It may issue a written warning to the Minister that any continuance or repetition of any of the disciplinary matters complained of might be considered a cause for deletion by a future Assembly Commission or Appeals Commission.

10.2.2 It may append recommendations to its decision in accordance with Paragraph 16.1.3.

10.3 If the decision of the Appeals Commission is to delete the name of the Minister from the Roll, it will in recording its decision also consider Paragraph 16.1.4.

Paragraphs 11.1, 14.2, 14.3 and 14.6

Delete Paragraph 10.2 and substitute Paragraph 10.2.1.

Paragraph 16.1

Delete and substitute the following:

16.1 In recording its decision the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission as the case may be shall comply with the following:

16.1.1 It shall state whether its decision is unanimous or by a majority.

16.1.2 It shall append a written statement of its reasons for reaching its decision, but shall not be obliged (unless it wishes to do so) to comment in detail on all or any of the matters of evidence laid before it.

16.1.3 In the event that the decision is not to delete the name of the Minister from the Roll it may in its written statement append such recommendations as it considers will be helpful to moderators of synod, district councils, local churches and others within the Church in relation to the future ministry of the Minister.

16.1.4 If the decision is to delete the name of the Minister from the Roll of Ministers it is particularly requested to include appropriate guidance to assist moderators of synod, district councils, local churches and others within the Church concerning any restrictions which might be placed upon any church-related activities involving the Minister after his/her deletion.

16.1.5 In addition to its power to make recommendations or to offer guidance under Paragraph 16.1.3 or Paragraph 16.1.4 respectively, the Appeals Commission may if it sees fit endorse, overrule, vary or modify in any way any recommendation made or guidance offered by the Assembly Commission in the case in question.

Paragraph 21

*In the first and second sentences, **delete** Provincial Moderator **and substitute** moderator of the synod.*

In the last sentence delete Province and province **and substitute** synod each time.

There being no comments or questions the Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 27 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The General Secretary proposed that in accordance with paragraph 3(i) of the Basis and Structure, Resolution 27 be referred to Synods with 15th of March 2000 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with. This was agreed.

The General Secretary then introduced Resolution 28, giving an assurance that should the one remaining deaconess resume service she could take her proper place in the councils of the church. Mr Burnham moved Resolution 28:

Resolution 28

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 paragraph 1(2)(a) by inserting the following sentence after the existing second sentence: "The expression 'Provincial Synod' when used in the United Reformed Church Acts of 1972 and 1981 shall in relation to property in Wales be read as referring to the national Synod of Wales."**
- b) **Amend the existing category at paragraph 2(3)(a) by deleting the words "deaconesses" and "registered local pastors". This paragraph would then read: "All ministers, registered pastors (in Scotland) and church-related community workers engaged directly in the service of the United Reformed Church within that district, and Assembly appointed ministers who are members of a local church in that district".**
- c) **Amend the existing category at paragraph 2(3)(b) by deleting the words "deaconesses" and "registered local pastors". This paragraph would then read: "Such other ministers, registered pastors (in Scotland) and church related community workers as shall from time to time be appointed by the synod as hereinafter provided".**
- d) **Amend the existing category at paragraph 2(4)(a) by deleting the words "deaconesses" and "registered local pastors". This paragraph would then read: "All ministers, registered pastors (in Scotland) and church-related community workers who are for the time being members of district councils within the province or nation".**
- e) **Delete the present category 2(4)(xiv).**
- f) **Renumber the existing categories 2(4)(xv) - 2(4)(xvii) as 2(4)(xiv) - 2(4)(xvi)**

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

Resolution 28 was carried with the necessary two-thirds majority.

The General Secretary proposed that in accordance with paragraph 3(i) of the Basis and Structure, Resolution 28 be referred to Synods with 15th of March 2000 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with. This was agreed.

The General Secretary moved Resolution 29, with the permission of the Assembly making a minor correction to the wording of section h):

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

- a) In the last line of paragraph 1(3) delete “provincial”.
- b) In the second line of paragraph 1(5) after “province” insert “or nation”.
- c) In the fourth line of paragraph 2(4) delete “provincial”.
- d) In the second line of paragraph 4(2) delete “provincial”.
- e) Delete the existing paragraph 6(1) and replace with: “In Wales and Scotland there shall in each case be a single synod. The area of the church in England shall be divided into such number of synods as the Assembly on the recommendation of the Mission Council may from time to time determine”.
- f) Delete the first sentence of paragraph 6(2), and in the second sentence delete “provincial”.
- g) In the first line of paragraph 6(3) replace “province” with “synod” and insert after “districts”: “(or areas in Scotland)”. In the second line delete “provincial”.
- h) Change the heading to section 7 to “MODERATORS OF SYNOD”.
- i) In the first line of paragraph 7(1) delete “provincial”.
- j) In the first line of paragraph 7(4) replace “provincial moderator” with: “moderator of synod”, and in the third line delete “provincial”.
- k) In the first line of paragraph 7(5) delete “provincial”.
- l) In the second line of the note to section 7 replace “provincial moderators” with: “moderators of synod”.
- m) In the second line of paragraph 8(9) delete “provincial”.

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

Resolution 29 was carried.

Nominations Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Nominations Committee, the Revd Glyn Jenkins, to present the Report of the Committee. In doing so, Mr Jenkins drew the attention of the Assembly to the list of nominations in the Book of Reports and to the Supplementary Report before the Assembly. The corrected Report was as follows:

1. ASSEMBLY STAFF APPOINTMENTS

1.1 The Review Group for the East Midlands Moderator of Synod was convened by Mrs Ruth Clarke and recommended that the appointment of Revd Malcolm Hanson be extended until 30 Sept 2003.

1.2 The Review Group for the Southern Moderator of Synod was convened by Revd Sandra Lloydlangston and recommended that the appointment of Revd David Helyar be extended until 31 Aug 2001.

1.3 The Review Group for the Secretary for Training, convened by Revd David Helyar recommended that the appointment of Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee be extended until 31 Aug 2002.

1.4 The Review Group for the Director of the Windermere Centre, convened by Revd Dr Jack McKelvey recommended that the appointment of Revd Peter McIntosh be extended until 30 June 2003.

1.5 The following appointment groups have been convened:

1.5.1 Church Related Community Work Development Officer, convened by Revd Graham Cook.

1.5.2 Pilots Development Officer, convened by Revd Chris Baker.

1.5.3 Secretary for Continuing Ministerial Education, convened by Revd Glyn Jenkins.

1.5.4 North Western - Synod Moderator - convened by Revd Angus Duncan.

1.5.5 Financial Secretary and Chief Accountant - convened by Revd David Hannen.

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 1998 are indicated by one asterisk (*), two asterisks (**) denotes those whom Assembly 1999 is invited to appoint for the first time. (#) indicates a representative of the Scottish Congregational Church who is being co-opted until General Assembly 2000.

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

Synod Representative for forthcoming Assembly

Synod Representative for previous Assembly who is then replaced after 'review' meeting by Synod 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 David Fraser [2000]

Mr George Morton [2001]

Dr Sue Brisley [2002]

Revd Ken Cox [2003]**

Revd Raymond Singh [2003]**

Mrs Helen Warmington [2003]**

Mrs Marva Ward [2003]**

Miss Catriona Waterson [2003]**

Revd Alan Patterson #

2.3 COMMUNICATIONS and EDITORIAL

Convener: Revd Graham Cook [2003]**

Secretary: Secretary for Communications

Mrs Pat Stannard [2000]

Revd David Coleman [2000]

Revd Paul Brewerton [2001]

Mr Richard Lathaen [2001]

Ms Kirsty Thorpe [2001]

Revd Michael Forster [2001]

Mr John East [2001]

Revd Peter Moth [2001]

Revd Roger Hall [2001]

2.4 DOCTRINE, PRAYER and WORSHIP

Convener: Revd Dr Colin Thompson [2001]

Secretary: Revd Terry Hinks [2000]

Revd Dr Janet Tollington [2001]

Ms Kirsty Thorpe [2002]

Mr Colin Ferguson [2002]

Revd Thelma Cole [2003]**

Revd Dr David Peel [2003]**

Revd Nadim Nassar [2003]**

Revd John Young #

Revd Hugh Graham [2003]**

Revd Charles Martin [2003]**

2.5 ECUMENICAL

Convener: Revd Bob Andrews [2001]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

Ms Bethan Galliers [2000]	Mrs Jackie Marsh [2001]	Revd Richard Mortimer [2001]
Revd John Rees [2001]	Revd Mary Buchanan [2002]	Revd Philip Jones [2002]
Revd Elizabeth Nash [2002]	Revd Stuart Jackson representing the Synod of Wales *	
Revd Peter Arthur [2000]**	Revd John R Smith #	

2.5.1 ECUMENICAL - OVERSEAS EXCHANGE Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd John Crocker [2003]**

Secretary: Secretary for International Relations

Mrs Virginia Becher [2001]	Mr Peter Bryant [2002]	Revd Keith Forecast [2002]
Revd Keith Riglin [2002]	Revd Gwenneth Collins [2003]**	

2.6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Convener: Revd Nannette Lewis Head [2003]**

Secretary: Ms Ruth Norton [2003]**

Mrs Lucille King [2000]	Ms Georgette Margrett [2001]	Revd Wilf Bahadur [2001]
Miss Stella Salmon [2002]	Revd Derek Hopkins [2002]	Revd Susan Armitage [2003]**

2.7 FINANCE

Convener: The Honorary Treasurer

Secretary: The Chief Accountant

Mr Bill Grieve [2000]	Miss Catriona Waterson [2001]	Mr Alan Duncan [2002]
Mr Gordon Latham [2003]**	Revd John Piper [2003]**	Convener of the URC Trust

2.8 INTER-FAITH RELATIONS

Convener: Mrs Daphne Beale [2003]**

Secretary: Revd Brenda Willis [2000]

Mrs Linda Hopley	Mr Matthew Bean [2003]**	Revd Jonathan Dean
Revd David M Taylor [2002]		

2.9 LIFE and WITNESS (formerly Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness)

Convener: Revd Frank Beattie [2003]**

Secretary: Secretary for Life and Witness

Revd Bob Day [2000]	Miss Tina Arthur [2001]	Mr David Williams [2002]
Revd Peter Ball [2002]	Revd Suzanne Hamnet [2003]**	Mrs Sheila Thatcher [2003]**
Revd Kenneth Forbes #	Revd Eddie Boon [2003]**	Revd Bob Warwicker [2003]**

2.9.1 LIFE and WITNESS - STEWARDSHIP Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Julian Macro [2000]

Secretary: Secretary for Life and Witness

Mr Tom Hamilton [2000]	Mr Geoffrey Wood [2000]	Mrs Susan Wilkinson [2002]
Mr Frank Dale [2003]**	Mrs Sheila Yates [2003]**	

2.10 MINISTRIES

Convener: Revd Graham Long [2001]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Revd Tony Ruffell [2000]	Revd Graham Sweeney [2000]	Revd Martha McInnes [2001]
Revd Brian Jolly [2001]	Ms Sally Abbott [2002]	Revd Roz Harrison [2003]**
Revd Tjarda Murray [2003]**	Miss Marjory King #	Convener of National Assessment Board

2.10.1 MINISTRIES - ACCREDITATION Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Robert Way [2001]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Mrs Julie McLaren [2001]	Revd Graham Robson [2001]	Mrs Frances Caldwell [2002]
Mr Peter Mann [2003]**	Revd Roberta Rominger [2003]**	

2.10.2 MINISTRIES - CRCW Management Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Susan Flynn [2002]

Secretary: Mr John Boddy

Mr Simon Loveitt

Revd Alison Hall [2002]

Revd Peter Cruchley Jones [2002]

Revd Clifford Wilton [2002]

Mrs Diana Herbert [2003]**

2.10.3 MINISTRIES - LAY PREACHING Sub Committee

Lay Preaching Commissioner: Mrs Carol Dixon [2003]**

And four members elected by the Lay Preacher Commissioners Consultation

2.10.4 MINISTRIES - MAINTENANCE OF MINISTRY Sub-Committee

Convener: Mr Geoffrey Wood [2003]**

Secretary: Mrs Judy Stockings [2003]**

Revd Tony Wilkinson [2000]

Miss Margaret Atkinson [2000]**

Mrs Jill Strong [2003]**

The Honorary Treasurer

2.10.5 MINISTRIES - RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING - Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Simon Swailes [2002]

Secretary: Mr Clive Willis [2003]**

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

2.10.6 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT BOARD

Convener: Mr Brian Evans [2001]

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, Miss 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

Retiring 2004 Revd Marilyn Allen **, Revd Craig Bowman **, Revd Graham Hoslett **,
Revd Kevin Watson **, Revd Ray Adams **

2.10.7 PANEL FOR ASSESSMENT CONFERENCES - CRCW - Sub-Section

Mrs Daphne Beale [2000]

Revd Peter Loveitt [2000]

Revd Kate McIlhagga [2000]

Mrs Ann Sutcliffe [2000]

Revd Bob Day [2003]**

Mr Andrew Edwards [2003]**

Mr Graham Ghaleb [2003]**

Mrs Kathleen Stephenson [2003]**

Ms Allison Trimble [2003]**

2.11 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Glyn Jenkins [2002]

Secretary: Mr Desmond Curry [2001]

Synod Representatives: Miss Janet Turner [1], Revd Geoff Tolley [2], Revd Angus Duncan [3],

Mr John Seager [4]*, Revd Christopher White [5], Mr Simon Rowntree [6], Revd Elizabeth Caswell [7],

Revd Ray Adams [8], Revd George Thomas [9], Revd Adrian Bulley [10], Mrs Christine Meekison [11],

Revd John Humphries [12], Revd John Arthur #, with the Immediate Past Moderator and the General Secretary

2.12 PASTORAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd David Jenkins [2003]**

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary

Revd Arnold Harrison [2003]**

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: Revd Nelson Bainbridge [2003]**

Secretary: Mrs Judy Stockings

2.13 TRAINING

Convener: Revd John Proctor [2003]**

Secretary: The Secretary for Training

Revd Sandra Dears [2000]	Dr Iain Frew [2000]	Revd Ruth Ball [2001]
Mrs Helen Brown [2002]	Revd Roy Lowes [2002]	Dr Andrew Dawson [2002]
Dr Graham Campling [2003]**	Revd Carole Ellefsen-Jones [2003]**	Revd John Dyce #
Revd Dr John Parry [2003]**		

2.14 WINDERMERE ADVISORY GROUP

Convener: Revd David A L Jenkins [2001]

Secretary: The Director of Windermere

Revd Angela Hughes [2000]	Revd Stephen Thornton [2001]	Revd Douglas McFarlane [2003]**
Convener of Windermere Management Committee	Convener of Life and Witness Committee	
Minister of Carver URC		

2.15 YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

Convener: Revd Derek Lindfield [2002]

Secretary: Mrs Soo Webster [2003]**

Mr Lewis McKenzie [2000]	Revd Philip Nevard [2000]	Mr Gareth Curl [2001]
Revd Margaret Collins [2001]	Mrs Caroline Chettleburgh [2002]	Mrs Brenda Cheer [2003]**
Mrs Rita Joyner [2003]**	Revd Kathryn Price [2003]**	Mr Mark Williams [2003]**
FURY Chair	FURY Council Member	

2.16 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
Dr David Thompson	Miss Sheila Tweed		

New Appointments following GA98 Resolution 14 **:

Mr John Moore, Mr Ray Holden, Mr Mike Garnett, Mr Donald Taylor, Mr Peter Mann, Mr Peter Jolly, Dr John Kennedy, Mr Ian Lloyd Parry, Mrs Barbara Martin, Ms Rachel Greening, Mrs Vera Maskery, Mrs Ruth Clarke, Mrs Elizabeth Whitten, Revd John Chisholm, Revd David Main, Revd Raymond Singh, Revd David Skitt, Revd Dr Rick Mearkle, Revd Brenda Hill, Revd Margaret Taylor, Revd Joan Winterbottom, Revd Margaret Juhasz, Revd Shelagh Pollard, Miss Janice Jeater, Mr Martin Ballard,

3 MISSION COUNCIL

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

Northern Synod	Dr Peter Clarke, Mrs Wilma Prentice, Revd Pamela Ward
North-Western Synod	Revd Geoffrey Townsend, Mrs Margareta Batchelor, Mrs Janice Cockcroft
Mersey Synod	Mrs Lillian Clovell, Dr Donald South, Revd Gwynfor Evans
Yorkshire Synod	Revd John Jenkinson, Mr Steve Wood, Mrs Val Morrison
East Midlands Synod	Mrs Jill Strong, Revd Clifford Wilton, Mrs Irene Wren
West Midlands Synod	Mr Simon Rowntree, Mrs Erica Young, Revd Tom Bayliss
Eastern Synod	Revd Michael Burrell, Mr Ken Woods, Revd Clive Sutcliffe
South Western Synod	Revd John Rees, Mrs Mary Eden, Revd Sandra Lloydlangston
Wessex Synod	Mr Graham Rolfe, Revd David Williams, Mrs Sue Brown
Thames North Synod	Revd Rachel Poolman, Mr Geoffrey Duncan, A N Other (To be advised)
Southern Synod	Mrs Christine Meekison, Revd Margaret Collins, Dr Graham Campling
Wales Synod	Dr Jean Sylvan Evans, Mrs Delyth Rees, Mr Peter Devaney

4 TRUST BODIES

4.1 UNITED REFORMED CHURCH TRUST

Convener: Dr Brian Woodhall

Secretary: Mr Clem Frank

Directors

Revd Tony Burnham

Mr Clem Frank

Mrs Christine Meekison

Mr Graham Stacy

Mr Clive Willis

Dr Brian Woodhall [2004]

Mr John Squires [2004]

Ms Valerie Ham [2004]

Mr David Marshall-Jones [2004]

Mr Peter Ward [2005]**

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 Desmond Davies

Mr Tom Swan

Mr Ray Chambers [2001]

Mrs Lindy Anderson [2002]

Mr Richard Nunn [2003]**

Members of the Fund: Revd John Martin

Revd Dr Arthur Chadwick

Revd Alasdair Walker [2001]

Revd Jessie Clare [2002]

Revd Kenneth Graham [2003]**

[*ex officio* Mr Clem Frank, Mr Graham Stacy, Mr Victor Hughff, Mr Geoffrey Wood]

4.3 CONGREGATIONAL MEMORIAL HALL TRUST

Revd Dr Peter Jupp

Mrs Christine Meekison

Revd Maurice Husselbee

Mrs Mary Stacy

Mr Graham Stacy

Mr Arthur Smith

Revd David Hannen

Revd Geoffrey Satchell

Mr Hartley Oldham

Revd Peter Grimshaw

Revd John Taylor

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

Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Mrs Wilma Frew

General Synod of Church of England

Revd Murdoch McKenzie

Methodist Conference

Revd Bob Andrews

General Assembly of Church of Scotland

Mrs Wilma Frew

Scottish Congregational Church

Revd Peter McIntosh

Presbyterian Church of Wales

Mrs Wilma Frew

Union of Welsh Independents

Revd Pamela Lewis

Congregational Federation

Revd David Helyar

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 representatives to other ecumenical bodies, commissions and committees, co-ordinating groups and agencies, who are appointed by the relevant committees, will be distributed to all members of General Assembly. Additional copies are 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

Ms Lesley-Anne Morgan*

Revd John Crocker*

Miss Joanne Ellis*

Secretary for International Relations

6.3 Churches Together in 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 and Miss Sarah King.

6.3.1 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland - Church Representatives Meeting

General Secretary Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

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 ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland)

Central Council

Revd David Taylor Mrs Kathleen Ziffo

6.6 CYTUN (Churches Together in Wales)

Y Gamanfa The Synod Moderator (Wales) Synod Ecumenical Officer
Revd David Wilkinson

Council The Synod Ecumenical Officer (alternate Synod Moderator)
Mrs Jackie Yeomans (alternate Mrs Eileen McIlveen)

6.7 FREE CHURCHES' COUNCIL

Council Secretary for Ecumenical Relations
Mr Bill Boyd [w.e.f. November]** Revd Janet Lees

Executive General Secretary

Women's Council Revd Janet Lees

6.8 FREE CHURCH COUNCIL for WALES

The Synod Moderator (Wales) Synod Ecumenical Officer

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

7.1 SCOTTISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH / UNITED REFORMED CHURCH Negotiating Group

Co-Convener: 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)

Synod Moderator (Wales) Synod Ecumenical Officer Mrs Ann Shillaker
Revd Henry Gordon *To be advised* *To be advised*

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

Moderator of Synod Synod 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, Ms Rachel Greening, Revd Alan Thomasson, Revd Joe Clemson, Revd Geoffrey Clarke and Ms Karen Watts.

7.6 Church of England - Methodist formal talks

URC Ecumenical Participants: Dr David Thompson, Revd Sheila Maxey

7.6.1 Trilateral Informal talks [Church of England/Methodist/URC]

URC Representatives: Revd Bob Andrews, Revd John Waller, Revd Elizabeth Welch with Secretary for Ecumenical Relations as Staff Member

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, Ms Bethan Galliers*
Mrs Helen Brown, Mr Jim Wilkinson
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, Secretary for Training
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
Secretary for Training
Joint Academic Committee
- 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 Chippindale
Secretary for Training in attendance
- 8.7 St. Andrew's Hall Selly Oak
Mrs Mareke Arthur, Mrs Haro Horsfield
Secretary for Training
Secretary for International Relations
- 8.8 Aberystwyth (Memorial College)
Revd Dr Glyndwr Harris, Mr Leslie Jones
- 8.9 Westhill College
To be advised

9. GOVERNORS of COLLEGES and SCHOOLS with which the URC is associated

- 9.1 Caterham School
9.2 Eltham College
Walthamstow Hall
Revd David Helyar, Mr John Mathias*
Revd Clifford Charlton
Miss Margaret Vokins
- 9.3 Milton Mount Foundation
Mrs Gwen Hall, Revd Peter Grimshaw
Revd George Thomas, Miss Nan Mark**
Mr David Butler
- 9.4 Silcoates School
Dr Clyde Binfield, Dr Peter Clarke
Mr David Figures, Revd Arnold Harrison
Mr Brian Herbert, Revd Brenda Hill

9.5 Taunton School
9.6 Wentworth Milton Mount
9.7 Bishops Stortford College

Revd Ray Adams
Revd George Thomas
Mr Hugh Joscelyne [until 2000]

10. Miscellaneous:

The URC is represented on a variety of other national organisations and committees as follows:

Aged and Infirm Ministers Fund	Mr Ken Meekison, Mrs Jill Strong** Mr Laurence Macro
Christian Education Movement Council	Mrs Margi Jenkins
Churches Main Committee	Mr Clem Frank, Mr Hartley Oldham Mr Tegid Peregrine
Congregational Fund Board	Revd Cyril Grant Revd Dorothy Havergal-Shaw
Revd Eric Allen	Revd John Taylor*, Mr Anthony Bayley**
Guides' Religious Advisory Panel	Mrs Susan Walker
National Christian Education Council	Mrs Patricia Hubbard* Mrs Rosemary Johnston
Scouts' Religious Advisory Group	Mr D Marshall-Jones
United Reformed Church History Society	Mrs Mary Davies, Revd Peter Jupp Mrs Carol Rogers
URC Boy's Brigade Companies Council	Revd Eric Wollaston, Dr David Thompson
Wharton Trust	Revd Michael Rees
Widows Fund of the Three Denominations	Mr Norman Fabb Mr Ken Meekison, Mrs Jill Strong** Mr Laurence Macro

11. Visitors to the Northern Synod (1998 Assembly Resolution 17) **

Mr Brian Evans [Convener], Revd Keith Forecast and Revd Sandra Dears

The Moderator invited comments on the work of the Committee and there being none, Mr Jenkins moved Resolution 59:

Resolution 59

Committees and Representatives

Assembly appoints Committees and representatives of the church as set out on pages 113 - 120 of the Book of Reports subject to the additions and corrections contained in the Supplementary Report before Assembly.

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

Resolution 59 was carried.

The Moderator called Mr John Woodman to move Resolution 62. Mr Woodman asked for the consent of the Assembly to withdraw the resolution.

Resolution 62

Assembly resolves that in the appointment of its officers and in the composition of its committees a theological balance shall be sought.

The Revd Sally Willett, seconder, indicated her concurrence, and the Assembly gave its consent. Resolution 62 was therefore withdrawn.

Mr Jenkins moved Resolution 54:

Resolution 54

Secretary for Training

Assembly re-appoints the Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee as Secretary for Training until 31 August 2002.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 54 was carried.

Mr Jenkins moved Resolution 55:

Resolution 55

Director Windermere Centre

Assembly re-appoints the Revd Peter McIntosh as Director of the Windermere Centre until 30 June 2003.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 55 was carried.

Mr Jenkins moved Resolution 56:

Resolution 56

Moderator Southern Synod

Assembly re-appoints the Revd David Helyar as moderator of the Southern Synod until 31 August 2001.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 56 was carried.

Mr Jenkins moved Resolution 57:

Resolution 57

Moderator East Midlands Synod

Assembly re-appoints the Revd Malcolm Hanson as moderator of the East Midlands Synod until 30 September 2003.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 57 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Revd Glyn Jenkins and the Committee for their very detailed work.

The Revd Peter McIntosh resumed the Chair.

The Moderator invited the Revd Dr John Sutcliffe to present and move Resolution 60. This he did.

Resolution 60

Glendyne Chair, Westminster College

General Assembly re-appoints the Revd Dr Janet Tollington to the Glendyne Chair of Old Testament Studies at Westminster College, Cambridge for five years from 1st September 1999 until 1st August 2004.

The motion was seconded by Dr David Thompson.

The Moderator invited the Assembly to vote.

Resolution 60 was carried.

The Moderator extended a warm greeting to Dr Sutcliffe who had reached the end of his term as Convener of the Training Committee. The Moderator thanked him for his ministry and wished him good health. The Assembly applauded.

District Boundaries

The General Secretary drew the attention of the Assembly to the change in District Boundary which was noted in the Report of the Mersey Synod:

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

Synod Reports

The Moderator introduced The Revd George Thomas who was to present the Synod Reports, greeting him warmly and thanking him for his outstanding service as the Wessex Synod Clerk for 15 years. The Moderator also acknowledged the ways in which Mr Thomas served the Assembly. Mr Thomas, in presenting the Synod Reports, pointed out patterns, similarities and differing emphases in the approaches of the Synods. The Moderator thanked Mr Thomas and those who had written the reports.

In acknowledging the work of the Synod Clerks, the Moderator spoke of the new ministry which the Revd Peter Poulter would shortly begin as Moderator of the Northern Synod, and wished him well.

Equal Opportunities Committee

The Moderator invited the Convener, Mrs Susan Rand, to present the report of the Committee.

The Moderator invited questions from the Assembly and invited Mrs Rand to reply.

The Moderator thanked the Committee for their work, mentioning in particular Mrs Rand and the Revd Simon Walkling who were completing their periods of service as Convener and Secretary respectively. The Assembly applauded.

Ecumenical and Church and Society Committees

The Moderator invited the Revd Gabrielle Ellis to introduce and move Resolution 63 on behalf of the Ecumenical and Church and Society Committees. This she did. The Assembly greeted her moving speech with applause.

Assembly

- a) commends to all local churches the call to prayer for continuing peace-making in Kosovo and in Northern Ireland; and
- b) encourages its officers, on the advice of the Secretaries for International Relations and Church and Society, to share in ecumenical statements and representations over the coming months.

The Moderator led the Assembly in moment of silent prayer before asking members to vote.

Resolution 63 was carried.

Minutes of previous sessions

The Clerk presented the minutes of the first session of Thursday, 8th July 1999. She asked that these 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 correction by the officers of the Assembly. This was agreed.

Address to the Throne

The Moderator invited Mrs Wilma Frew to present the Address to the Throne.

9 July 1999

May it please your Majesty

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

There are a number of historic current events which vividly remind us of the unity and diversity of the people of these islands. A few days ago you were able to open the new Scottish Parliament. The United Reformed Church is on course to unite with the Congregational Union of Scotland next spring and thus has a direct interest in the new Parliament's work. With our members in the Synod of Wales we also welcome the inauguration of the new Welsh Assembly. We shall continue to pray for all those involved in these new instruments of government, especially for the newly elected members, that God's purpose of peace and well-being for all peoples will be pursued.

Although the United Reformed Church is not present in Northern Ireland, we are in close contact with our fellow-Christians there. We have followed with concerned prayer the recent intensive sequence of meetings involving your Ministers with politicians and civil leaders of every persuasion, seeking to ensure that the 'Good Friday Agreement' might be brought to fruition. We pray that the new Assembly for Northern Ireland will begin to function, with mutual respect leading to trust between the parties.

Our Assembly has spent time considering the well-being of children and young people. In many of our churches there are uniformed organisations and other clubs for all ages, alongside our church based children's work. These offer so much to children and young people through a spread of valuable and constructive activities, strengthening their appreciation of Christian values and supporting them especially when family life is hard.

At the other end of life's span, in this International Year of Older Persons, we rejoice to honour the contribution being made by so many older people in churches and within the community, at a time when active old age increasingly extends far beyond the traditional dates of retirement. (Your own mother remains a splendid example to this generation.)

We have all watched with dismay the outbreaks of violence and war in continental Europe. Your visits during the past year to the battle-sites of the First World War on the anniversary of the 1918 Armistice reminded us all how vital it remains to be active for peace even in our own continent. Lest we forget the high price of conflict, we have opportunities to minister to refugees from Kosovo and other trouble-spots further afield, and we continue to press your Government to be more welcoming to those who come seeking sanctuary on our shores.

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 have the honour to remain Your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects

Revd Peter McIntosh
Moderator

Revd Anthony Burnham
General Secretary

The Assembly approved the Address.

The Moderator invited the Moderator-Elect, the Revd Bill Mahood, to address the Assembly.

The Moderator called Miss Janet Layne who thanked the Mersey Synod for all done as host synod, mentioning especially the work of Mr John Yates, Convener, and the members of the Local Arrangements Committee. She thanked the local stewards and the staff of the Floral Hall, Southport, the Assembly Officers and all who had worked to ensure the smooth running of the Assembly.

The Moderator added his personal thanks, mentioning particularly the Chaplain, the Revd Peter Poulter.

The General Secretary thanked the Moderator for the sensitive way in which he had chaired the meeting of the Assembly and formally announced that the Assembly had completed its business and would adjourn to meet as agreed in Glasgow on 1st April 2000.

The Chaplain led the closing worship.

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