



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Glamorgan 2004

July 3rd - 6th

Assembly
Record



The
United
Reformed
Church

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

For Consideration *
For Action X

Resolution Number	Annual Reports	Assembly Record		Local Churches	District Councils	Synods
39	-	10	Charity Trusts	*	-	-
11	38	22	Changes to Section O Part 1	-	-	X
38	116	23	Youth & Children's Work Committee	*	*	*
27	121	24	Equipping the Saints	X	X	X
6/7	34	26	Non Stipendiary CRCWs & changes to Basis of Union	-	-	X
1	16	28	Residential Care	*	-	-
13	39	29	Changes to Structure regarding resignation of ministers	-	-	X
22	57	34	Get Noticed	*	-	-
34	88	36	Review of Training Needs	*	*	*
18	50	41	Commitment for Life	*	-	-
16	43	46	General Assembly Representation	-	*	-



The
United
Reformed
Church

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



Minutes of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH 2004

Saturday, 3 July 2004

First Session

Constitution of Assembly

At 3.30 pm. members of Assembly met at the University of Glamorgan. The Moderator, the Revd D Alasdair Pratt constituted the Assembly with prayer, the place and the time having been duly appointed.

Induction of Moderator

The Revd Sheila Maxey, Moderator-Elect, was inducted with prayer into the office of Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church. She signed the Assembly Bible and was presented with an inscribed copy of the Bible by the retiring Moderator of Assembly.

Thanks to the Retiring Moderator

The thanks of the Church were expressed by the Moderator to the Revd D Alasdair Pratt and Mrs Sheila Pratt together with Revd Carolyn Smyth, his chaplain.

A canticle was sung by Revd Carolyn Smyth.

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

Moderator:	Revd Sheila Maxey
Clerk:	Revd James Breslin
General Secretary:	Revd Dr David Cornick
Deputy General Secretary:	Revd Raymond Adams

Moderators of Synods:

I	Revd Peter Poulter
II	Revd Peter Brain
III	Revd Howard Sharp
IV	Revd Arnold Harrison
V	Revd Terry Oakley
VI	Revd Elizabeth Welch
VII	Revd Elizabeth Caswell
VIII	Revd David Grosch-Miller
IX	Revd Adrian Bulley
X	Revd Roberta Rominger
XI	Revd Nigel Uden
XII	Revd Peter Noble
XIII	Revd John Arthur

Conveners of General Assembly Standing Committees:

Assembly Arrangements:	Mr William McVey
Church and Society:	Revd Martin Camroux
Communications and Editorial:	Revd Martin Hazell
Doctrine, Prayer & Worship:	Revd John Young
Ecumenical:	Vacant
Equal Opportunities:	Revd Wilfred Bahadur
Finance:	Mr Eric Chilton
Interfaith Relations:	Revd Dr John Parry
Life and Witness:	Revd Brian Jolly
Ministries:	Mr John Ellis
Nominations:	Revd Principal Stephen Orchard
Pastoral Reference:	Revd Keith Forecast
Racial Justice:	Revd Andrew Prasad
Training:	Revd John Humphreys
Youth & Children's Work:	Revd Kathryn Price

Synod Clerks:

I	Revd John Durell
II	Mr George Morton
III	Mr Donald Swift
IV	Mrs Val Morrison
V	Mrs Irene Wren
VI	Mr Bill Robson
VII	Mr Mick Barnes
VIII	Revd Roz Harrison
IX	Mr Peter Pay
X	Revd Martin Hazell
XI	Dr Graham Campling
XII	Revd David Fox
XIII	

Additional Synod Representatives:

I	Revd Ronald Forster
II	Revd Susan Armitage, Revd Lis Mullen
III	Revd Dr David Pickering, Mr Richard Lathaen, Mrs Pam Sharp
IV	Mrs Val Jenkins
V	Revd Elizabeth Nash, Mrs Ann Ball, Mr Iain Bhagwandin, Mrs Barbara Turner
VI	Revd Simon Helme, Mr Chris Basterfield, Mrs Melanie Frew
VII	Revd Richard Church, Mr Andrew Perkins, Miss Lisa Wilkinson
VIII	Revd Carla Grosch-Miller, Revd Peter Henderson, Revd Paul Snell
IX	
X	
XI	
XII	Revd Michael Cruchley, Revd Colin Richards, Ms Helen Stenson
XIII	Revd Stephen Brown, Revd Mary Buchanan, Revd Alan Paterson, Revd Carolyn Smyth, Mr Barclay Bannister, Mrs Helen M Mee, Dr Jim Merrilees, Mr Brian Walker

Synod Treasurers:

I	Revd David Walton
II	Mr Gordon Eccles
III	Mr Andrew Martlew
IV	Miss Margaret Atkinson
V	Mr Geoff Milnes
VI	Revd Roger Woodall
VII	Mr Clifford Patten

- VIII Revd Richard Gray
- IX Mr Nigel Grice
- X Mr Michael Gould
- XI Revd John Waller
- XII Mr Patrick Hickey
- XIII Mr Tom Woodbridge

Theological College Representatives:

Mansfield College	Revd Dr Walter Houston	Mrs Jenny Mills
Northern College	Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee	
Queens Foundation	Revd Canon Dr David Hewlett	Mr Martyn Neads
Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College:	Revd Jack Dyce	Mr Craig Jesson
Westminster College	Revd Dr Janet Tollington	Dr Kay Cattell

Youth representatives:	Miss Fleur James	Mr Gareth Jones
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Assembly Members from Other Churches in the United Kingdom:

Baptist Union of Great Britain	Revd Michael Cleaves
Congregational Federation	Mrs Valerie Price
General Synod of the Church of England	The Ven Richard Blackburn
International Ministerial Council of Gt Britain	Revd Agatha Baptiste
The Moravian Church	Revd Jan Mullin
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Revd Dr Donald Watts
Presbyterian Church of Wales	Revd Neil Kirkham
Roman Catholic Bishops Conference	Revd Andrew Faley
The Church in Wales	Revd Canon Enid Morgan
The Church of Scotland	Revd Eric Cramb
The Methodist Church	Revd Martyn Skinner
Union of Welsh Independants	Revd Kevin Davies
United Free Church of Scotland	Revd John McFie

Assembly Members from Churches outside of Britain and Ireland:

Conference of European Churches	Revd Dr Susan Jones
Council for World Mission	Revd Dr Jooseop Keum
Guyana Congregational Union	Revd Keith Haley
Mission Covenant Church of Sweden	Revd Thord-Ove Thordson
Reformed Church in Hungary	Revd Bertalan Tamas
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Uganda	Revd Wilberforce Wabulo
United Protestant Church in Belgium	Revd Eddy Van Der Borght

Chaplain (URC) to HM Forces in Britain:	Revd Steven Whiting
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Past Presidents, Chairmen and Moderators:

Ms Gwen Hall, Revd Norman Birnie, Revd Arthur Macarthur, Revd John Johansen-Berg, Revd Martin Cressey, Mrs Rosalind Goodfellow, Revd John Francis, Revd Richard Murray, Revd Bernard Waterton, Revd Bentley Webster, Revd Dr Peter Arthur, Revd George Sharpe, Revd Dr David Thompson, Revd Victor Smith, Revd Alasdair Walker, Revd Dr Philip Morgan, Revd David Dale, Revd Cyril Franks, Revd Edmund Banyard, Revd Keith Forecast, Revd Graham Cook, Revd Malcolm Hanson, Mrs Ruth Clarke, Revd Donald Hilton, Revd Dr Jack McKelvey, Revd John Reardon, Revd David Jenkins, Mrs Wilma Frew, Revd Peter McIntosh, Revd William Mahood, Revd Elizabeth Welch, Revd John Waller, Revd D Alasdair Pratt

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 Colin Biggs, Revd Ed Butlin, Mrs Joyce Calcraft, Ms Ann Honey
- B: Revd Kay Alberg, Mr Ron Golightly, Revd Peter Heckels, Revd David Herbert, Revd Nigel Watson, Mr Peter Yorke, Mrs Alison Watson
- C: Revd Kenneth Harris, Mrs Daphne Clarke, Mrs Dorothy Harris, Mrs Margaret Humberston, Mrs Helen Stephenson
- E: Revd Geoffrey Haigh, Revd Robert Sheard, Mrs Olive Cronie, Mrs Ros Fearon

Synod II

- A: Revd Robert Canham, Revd Anne Gray, Revd Eileen Sambrooks, Mrs Lindsey Cottam, Dr Roger John
- B: Revd Georgina Brotherton, Revd Christopher Weddle, Miss Valerie Atkinson, Mr Peter Barnes, Ms Mary West
- C: Revd Martin Smith, Revd Sally Thomas, Revd Geoffrey Townsend, Mr George Grime, Mr Eddie Ledger, Mrs Elspeth Smith,
- D: Revd George McCleave, Revd Brenda Moore, Revd Mike Thomason, Mrs Sheila Brain, Mrs Vera Dudley,
- E: Revd Alan Wickens, Revd David Wiseman, Miss Judith Haughton, Miss Jennifer Platt, Mrs Wendy Smith, Revd Janet Sutton
- F: Revd Dr Donald Firth, Mr Ben Morrell, Revd Brian O'Neill, Revd Bruce Upperton, Revd Mike Walsh, Mr Michael Williams, Ms Liz Boyes, Ms Elizabeth Exley
- G: Mrs Margaret Beasley, Revd Kate Gray, Miss Charlotte Mole Morgan, Revd Martin Truscott

Synod III

- A: Revd Ruth Allen, Revd Brian Holroyd, Revd Christopher Tolley, Dr Roger Allen, Ms Carol Booth, Mr Alan Small,
- B: Revd Linda Elliott, Revd Julie Martin, Mr John Peet, Revd Kathy Wilson, Mrs Margaret Blair
- C: Revd Kathie Bennett, Mr Jason Elliott, Revd Alison Hall, Mr Neil Parr, Mrs Joan Power
- D: Revd Martin Hardy, Revd Blair Kirkby, Revd Sarah Simpson, Mr David Kirkby, Mr David Powell, Mrs Carolyn White

Synod IV

- A: Revd Graham Maskery, Revd Michael Mewis, Mrs Pauline Mewis, Mrs Ann Murison
- B: Revd Jane Rowell, Revd Dr David Stec, Revd Dr Bob Warwicker, Mrs Judith Garthwaite, Mrs Betty James, Mr Chris Reed
- C: Revd Peter Clarkson, Revd Bill Frame, Revd Ray Stanyon, Ms Catherine Lewis-Smith, Mr Mick Stead, Mr John Tilbury
- D: Revd Paul Breeze, Revd Howard Jones, Revd Brenda Sugden, Mrs Judith Drake, Miss Marjorie Hunt, Mrs Pat Wilson
- E: Revd John Mackerness, Mrs Margaret Morgan, Miss Ruth Norton
- F: Revd George Courtney, Revd Timothy Key, Mr Brian Evans, Mr Alun Jones,

Synod V

- A: Revd David Legge, Revd Brian Norris, Revd Stephen Sawyer, Mr Christopher Hackett, Mrs Gwen Johnson, Ms Tamara Oates
- B: Revd Clare Downing, Revd Richard Eastman, Revd Malcolm Fife, Mr David Coxhead, Miss Avril Timson, Mrs Eileen Williams
- C: Revd Chris Coe, Revd Steven Faber, Revd Reginald Rooke, Miss Hazel Bond, Mrs Joan Cook, Mr Philip Laws,
- D: Revd Paul Bedford, Revd Ann Jack, Revd Derek Redfern, Mr Andrew Jack*, Mrs Pat Redfern, Mr Bryan Thomas
- E: Revd Duncan Wilson, Revd Clifford Wilton Mrs Eileen Glass, Mrs Jill Turner
- F: Revd Eric Allen, Revd John Bernard, Mrs Margaret Gateley, Mrs Molly Reardon

Synod VI

- A: Revd Franziska Herring, Revd Ruth Maxey, Revd Geoffrey Rodgers, Mr Geoff Harrison, Mrs Dorothy Hewitson, Mr Jim Hewitson, Miss Sarah Hopkins, Mrs Adella Pritchard
- B: Revd Timothy Harwood, Revd Shirley Mountcastle, Mrs Mary Hillary, Mrs Isabel Jacob
- C: Revd Ruth Mitchell, Revd Stuart Scott, Revd Denis Simons, Mr Terry Blake, Miss Rachel Greening*, Mrs Pat Radford
- D: Revd Glyn Jenkins, Revd Heather Whyte, Mrs Sheila Jenkins, Mr John Potter
- E: Revd Bob Ash, Revd Peter Peirce, Revd Ian Ring, Revd Paul Whittle, Mrs Virginia Lawson, Mrs Rita Routley, Miss Isobel Simmons, Mrs Nancy Thomas
- F: Revd Erica Beglin, Revd David Poulton, Miss Claire Holmes, Mrs Margaret Marshall, Mr Alan Martin

Synod VII

- A: Revd Ian Fosten, Revd David Littlejohns, Revd John Marsh, Miss Gillian Hall, Mr Andrew Littlejohns, Mrs Jackie Marsh
- B: Revd David Bunney, Revd Adrienne Dones, Revd Nick Mark, Revd Cecil White, Mrs Eileen Cross, Mr Frank Cross, Mrs Joan Seaborn, Mr John Seaborn
- C: Revd Paul Andrianatos, Revd Donald Macalister, Revd Allen Morton, Mr William Grieve, Mrs Libby Hill, Mrs Margaret Obey
- D: Revd Martin Kitchener, Revd David Sebley, Revd Trevor Williams, Mr Stanley Trencher, Mrs Carol Williams
- E: Revd Malcolm Hope, Revd David Simpson, Revd Gordon Smith, Revd David Yule, Mr Peter Richards, Mr Philip Wade, Mr Peter West
- F: Revd Thomas MacMeekin, Mr John Bannister

Synod VIII

- A: Revd Patricia Whittaker, Mrs Jill Stidson, Mr Frank Whittaker
- B: Revd Helen Pope, Revd Richard Pope, Mrs Jean Potter
- C: Revd Jacqui Knight, Revd Sandra Lloydlangston, Mr Brian Knight, Mr Timothy Searle
- D: Revd Gwyneth Jones, Revd Michael Whitfield, Mr Don Puddy, Mr John Willis
- E: Revd Norman Whitaker, Revd Andrew Francis, Ms Sarah Lane, Mrs Joan Trippier
- F: Revd Tracey Lewis, Revd Hazel Martell, Revd Heather Pencavel, Revd Angela Steele, Mrs Pam Brain, Miss Natasha Joyner, Ms Rita Joyner, Mr Ron Turner
- G: Revd Barbara Bennett, Mrs Barbara Madge
- H: Revd Graham Hoslett, Mrs Eileen Robinson
- J: Revd Jennifer Davies, Mrs Peggy Gray

Synod IX

- A: Revd Graham Long, Revd Dr Donald Norwood, Revd Clive Sutcliffe, Mrs Margaret Norwood, Mrs Joyce Sutcliffe
- B: Revd Maz Allen, Revd Frank Cochrane, Revd Stephen Wilkins, Miss Lisa Bloxall, Miss Jill Cole, Mrs Christine Hardwick
- C: Revd Nigel Douglas, Revd Michael Thomas, Revd David Williams, Miss Ruth Hezlett, Mr Roy Markham, Ms Sarah Power,
- D: Revd David Bedford, Revd Michael Burrell, Mrs Jean Antcliffe, Mr Peter Bulley, Mr Gordon McCallum, Mrs Lynne Upsdell
- E: Revd Peter Flint, Revd Fleur Houston, Revd Lynda Spokes, Revd Robert Weston, Mr Robert Bailey, Miss Madeline Diver, Mr Colin Ferguson, Miss Jean Stolton

Synod X

- A: Revd John Cox, Revd Susan McKenzie, Revd Geoffrey Roper, Mrs Heather Floyd, Mrs Moira Naylor, Ms Rosemary Watts
- B: Revd Dr Tony Haws, Revd Elizabeth Kemp, Revd Dr Alan Spence, Miss Helen Boyes, Mrs Jackie Haws, Mr Tony Thomas
- C: Revd David Parkin, Revd Michael Playdon, Revd Erna Stevenson, Mr Keith Webster, Ms Shirley Knibbs, Mrs Sue McCoan

- D: Revd David Aplin, Revd Paul Dean, Revd Tony Ruffell, Dr James Anderson, Mrs Rowena Dean, Mrs Mair Luck
- E: Revd Bruce Allinson, Revd David Downing, Revd John Macaulay, Mrs Tina Ashitey, Miss Barbara Leighton MBE, Miss Samira Young
- F: Revd Alison Mackay, Revd Lythan Nevard, Mr Lee Redican, Revd David Skipp, Mr Roy Clark

Synod XI

- A: Revd Michael Hensman, Revd Ceri Lewis, Revd Alexander Mabbs, Revd Terry Sparks, Miss Avril Hiscock, Mr David Howell, Mr Romilly Micklem, Mr Benjamin Munyaneza
- B: Revd John Du Bois, Revd John Joseph, Revd Jennifer Millington, Revd Christopher Parker, Miss Jill Campbell, Mr Paul Griffin, Miss Harriet Lindsay, Mr Matthew Moreton
- C: Revd Jack Beeson, Revd Jim Horne, Mrs Marion Bayley, Miss Lizzie King, Mr Peter Sheehan, Mr John Twidale, Miss Louisa Weeks*
- D: Revd Richard Alford, Revd Peter Clark, Revd Alan Wharton, Mr Richard Blackwell
- E: Mrs Anne Catherall, Mr Jim Catherall, Mr James Wells, Mrs Susan Wootton
- F: Revd Michael J Davies, Revd Roy Cole, Revd Dr Gerald Munro, Dr Sas Conradie, Miss Sarah Perry, Mrs Christine Robertson
- G: Revd Peter Elliott, Revd John Gordon, Revd Kenneth Lynch, Mrs Celia Elliott, Mrs Maureen Lawrence, Miss Naomi Lynch

Synod XII

- A: Revd Kate Gartside, Revd Simon Walkling, Mrs Maureen Jones, Mr Jonathon Whyler
- B: Revd David Marshall-Jones, Revd Alvan Richards-Clarke, Mrs Sheila Jones, Mr Ron Prosser
- C: Revd Klaus Gutwein, Revd Shelagh Pollard, Revd Gethin Rhys, Ms Bethan Noble, Mrs Christine Roberts, Mr S J Sansom
- D: Revd Stuart Jackson, Revd David Salisbury, Mrs Edwina Davies, Mr Jonathan Price
- E: Revd Alison Davis, Mr Richard Laws
- F: Revd Peter Gaskell, Revd Alan Willcocks, Mr Alwyn Batley, Mrs Liz Tadd

Synod XIII

- A: Revd George Sykes, Revd Mary Taylor, Revd John Wylie, Mrs Doris Caldwell, Dr Andrew Davidson, Mrs Kathleen Ziffo
- B: Revd David Coleman, Revd Paul Jupp, Mr Drummond McNicol, Mrs Maureen Stewart, Mr Patrick Smyth
- C: Revd Connie Bonner, Revd Gordon Smith, Mr Clive Bonner, Mrs Margaret Gillan
- D: Mrs Helen Muir, Pastor Jack Muir
- E: Revd Danny Cheyne, Mr David Barr, Mrs Henrietta Colwell, Mrs Mary Howat

Reception of Visitors and Assembly Members from Other Churches

Local Visitors were introduced by Revd Peter Noble, Moderator, Synod of Wales:

Revd Vaughn Rees, chaplain from the University of Glamorgan
 Canon Bob Reardon STL, Vicar General, the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales
 The Revd John Garland, The Covenanted Baptist Churches in Wales
 Dr T Hefin Jones, President of the Union of Welsh Independents
 Revd Will Morrey, Chair of the South Wales Methodist District and also President of the Methodist Conference
 Revd Gethin Rhys, General Secretary of ENFYS, the Covenanted Churches in Wales

Visitors and Assembly members from Churches in the United Kingdom and overseas were introduced by the General Secretary, Revd Dr David Cornick. Those present were received by the Moderator:

The Baptist Union Of Great Britain
 Congregational Federation
 General Synod of the Church of England
 International Ministerial Council of Great Britain

Revd Michael Cleaves
 Mrs Valerie Price
 The Ven Richard Blackburn
 Revd Agatha Baptiste and
 Mr Baptiste
 Revd Jan Mullin

The Moravian Church

Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Presbyterian Church of Wales
Roman Catholic Bishops Conference
The Church in Wales
The Church of Scotland

The Methodist Church
Union of Welsh Independants
United Free Church of Scotland

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
CYTUN

Conference of European Churches
Council for World Mission
Guyana Congregational Union
Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba
Presbyterian Church of Mozambique
Reformed Church in Hungary
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Uganda
United Protestant Church in Belgium

Revd Dr Donald Watts
Rt Revd Dr Ken Newell and
Mrs Newell
Revd Neil Kirkham
Revd Andrew Faley
Revd Canon Enid Morgan
Dr Alison Elliot OBE
Revd Eric Cramb and
Mrs E Cramb
Revd Sheilagh Kesting
Revd Martyn Skinner
Revd Kevin Davies
Revd John McFie and
Mrs A McFie
Mrs Gillian Kingston
Miss Sylvia Scarf

Revd Dr Susan Jones
Revd Dr Jooseop Keum
Revd Keith Haley
Revd Thord-Ove Thordson
Revd Dr Carlos Camps
Revd Mario Nyamuxwe
Revd Bertalan Tamas
Revd Wilberforce Wabulo
Revd Eddy Van Der Borgh

Three volunteers at Penrhys were welcomed also by the Moderator:

Churches of Jesus Christ in Madagascar
Akany Avoko Children's Home in Madagascar
Reformed Church in Hungary

Mr Jean Elyse Rajafetra
Ms Naomy Philippine
Ms Ilona Berecz

Additionally the Moderator greeted the Revd Bernard Thorogood, former Clerk and General Secretary, who was present in the Assembly.

Following greetings by Dr Alison Elliot on behalf of the UK visitors and members, and the Revd Bertalan Tamas on behalf of the overseas guests and members, two songs were sung by the choir of the Korean Presbyterian Church which meets in the Sketty United Reformed Church in Swansea.

The Moderator gave her address to Assembly, and following prayer, Assembly was adjourned.

Saturday 3rd July 2004

Second Session

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

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, Mr William McVey, presented the Order of Business, drawing attention to the list of errors and omissions in the Book of Reports.

Retiring Moderator

The retiring Moderator, the Revd D Alastair Pratt, addressed the Assembly.

Finance

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Eric Chilton, presented the Report of the Finance Committee and, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 23:

Resolution 23

Accounts

General Assembly adopts the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2003

Resolution 23 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 24:

Resolution 24

Auditors

General Assembly resolves that RSM Robson Rhodes LLP be re-appointed auditors of the United Reformed Church, to hold office until the conclusion of the next meeting at which accounts are laid before General Assembly and that their remuneration be fixed by the Finance Committee.

Resolution 24 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 25:

Resolution 25

Ministry & Mission Fund

General Assembly gratefully acknowledges the giving of the churches in 2003 to the Ministry and Mission Fund and the work of the local church, district and synod treasurers.

Resolution 25 was carried with acclaim.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 39:

Resolution 39

Charity Trusts

General Assembly notes the clarification of and alterations to the advice concerning Charity Trusts originally issued to the General Assembly 2001.

“ In the reports to Assembly 2001 Paragraph 1.3, Page 29, it was stated that the Charity Commissioners would normally regard the elders’ meeting of the local church as the charity trustees for the local church. While this remains the case for the ‘working funds’ of the local church and for any properties that might be held other than under the terms of Schedules 1&2 of the URC Acts, it is not the case for properties held under the terms of these schedules. Most United Reformed Church property, Churches, Halls and Manses, is held under Schedule 1 or 2 and for such property the charity trustees are those individuals or bodies specifically appointed for this purpose under paragraph 7 which is identical in both schedules, normally but not invariably the ‘Synod Trust Company’ or one of the former “Incorporated ‘County Unions/Associations”” Some responsibilities of the charity trustees are delegated to the local church in accordance with the United Reformed Church Acts. This advice does not therefore affect the current situation whereby the local church has responsibility for day to day care, safety and insurance of property.”

Seconded by the Assembly Clerk

Resolution 39 was carried.

The Revd Principal Stephen Orchard presented the Report of the Nominations Committee and, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 31:

General Assembly appoints Committees and representatives of the Church as set out in pp 77-84 of the Book of Reports subject to additions and corrections contained in the Supplementary report before Assembly.

I. ASSEMBLY STAFF APPOINTMENTS

- 1.1 **The Nominating Group, convened** by Revd Peter Noble, recommended the appointment of Mr John Brown to serve as Secretary for Youth Work for 5 years from 1 January 2004 until 31 December 2008
- 1.2 The Review Group, convened by Revd David Jenkins, recommended the re-appointment of Revd Arnold Harrison to serve as Moderator for Yorkshire Synod from 1 September 2004 until retirement on 29 February 2008.

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 2003 are indicated by one asterisk (*), two asterisks (**) denotes those whom Assembly 2004 is invited to appoint for the first time. (#) indicates a **Convener Elect** who will become Convener in 2005. (▶▶) indicates a **Secretary Elect** who will become Secretary in 2005.
- 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.
- 5 In accordance with the decision of General Assembly 2000 some nominations have been made by the National Synods of Wales and Scotland.

2.1 ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

Convener: Mr William McVey [2006]

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

2.1.1 Tellers for Election of Moderator for 2006**

Mrs Val Morrison [Convener], Revd Martin Hazell, Mr Peter Pay

2.2 CHURCH and SOCIETY

Convener: Revd Martin Camroux [2006]

Secretary: Secretary for Church and Society

Revd Alan Paterson [2005]

Revd Owiny Laber [2005]

Mr Geoffrey Duncan [2006]

Mr Simon Loveitt [2006]

Revd Tjarda Murray [2007]

Mrs Glenna Paynter [2007]

Miss Emma Pugh [2007]

2.3 COMMUNICATIONS and EDITORIAL

Convener: Revd Martin Hazell [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for Communications

Revd Bob Maitland [2005]

Mr Peter Knowles [2005]

Revd Martin Truscott [2005]

Ms Eleri Evans [2005]

Mr Philip George [2006]

Revd Martin Whiffen [2007]

Revd Paul Snell **[2008]

Revd Janet Sutton **[2008]

Ms Julia Wills **[2008]

2.4 DOCTRINE, PRAYER and WORSHIP

Convener: Revd John Young [2005]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Revd Dr Robert Pope [2005]

Revd Alistair Smeaton [2005]

Revd Prof Alan Sell [2007]

Revd Geoffrey Clarke [2007]

Revd Hilary Collinson [2007]

Revd Dr Susan Durber# [2009]

Miss Sarah Lane [2007]

Dr John Turner [2007]

Mrs Chris Eddowes **[2008]

Revd Jason McCullagh **[2008]

Revd Peter Trow **[2008]

2.5 ECUMENICAL

Convener: Revd Elizabeth Nash** [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Revd Bryan Shirley [2005]

Revd Cecil White [2005]

Revd Rowena Francis [2006]

Mr Malcolm Porter [2006]

Revd Lindsey Sanderson [2006] Mrs Ann Shillaker [2007]

Mrs Pat Gurr ** [2008]

Revd Stuart Jackson representing the National Synod of Wales

Revd Mary Buchanan representing National Synod of Scotland

2.5.1 ECUMENICAL - INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Chris Baillie [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for International Relations

Revd Birgit Ewald [2005]

Mrs Heather Barnes [2006]

Revd Nigel Uden [2006]

Mrs Eileen McIlveen [2007]

Revd Michael Thomason [2007]

2.6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Convener: Revd Wilf Bahadur [2006]

Secretary: Revd Derek Hopkins [2008]

Ms Gloria Bujan [2005]

Mr Derek Estill [2006]

Mr Alan Hart [2006]

Revd Sue MacBeth [2007]

Dr Ruth Shepherd **[2008]

Mrs Louise Sanders **[2008]

2.7 FINANCE

Convener: The Treasurer

Secretary: Financial Secretary

Mr John Woodman [2005]

Ms Alison Holt [2006]

Revd David Dones [2007]

Mrs Marie Whitman [2007]

Mr Errol Martin **[2008]

Mr Graham Law **[2008]

Convener of the URC Trust

2.8 INTER-FAITH RELATIONS

Convener: Revd Dr John Parry [2007]

Secretary: Mrs Jean Potter [2008]

Miss Marie Williams [2005]

Revd Peter Colwell [2006]

Dr Iain Frew **[2008]

Revd Heather Pollard ** [2008]

2.9 LIFE and WITNESS

Convener: Revd Brian Jolly [2006]

Secretary: Secretary for Life and Witness

Revd Kenneth Forbes [2005]

Revd Peter Hurter [2005]

Revd Linda Elliott [2006]

Mrs Sheila Brain [2007]

Mr Colin Ferguson [2007]

Revd Ian Fosten [2007]

Revd Michael Hodgson [2007]

Revd Kate Gray** [2008]

Mr Emmanuel Nkusi** [2008]

2.9.1 LIFE and WITNESS - STEWARDSHIP Sub-Committee

Convener: Mr Ray McHugh [2008]

Secretary: Secretary for Life and Witness

Mr Mick Barnes [2005]

Revd David Legge [2006]

Mrs Jackie Haws [2007]

Mrs Susan Wilkinson [2007]

Revd John Durrell ** [2008]

2.9.2 WINDERMERE ADVISORY GROUP

Convener: Mr Jim Wilkinson [2005]

Secretary: The Director of Windermere

Dr Peter Clarke [2005]

Revd Bernard Collins # [2009]

Mrs Irene Wren** [2008]

Convener of Windermere Management Committee, Convener of Life and Witness Committee,

Representative of Carver URC

2.10 MINISTRIES

Convener: Mr John Ellis [2006]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Mrs Alison Biggs [2005]

Revd Stuart Brock [2005]

Revd Pauline Barnes [2006]

Mrs Joan Trippier [2007]

Revd Paul Whittle [2007]

Revd Terry Oakley** [2008]

Convener of National Assessment Board

2.10.1 MINISTRIES - ACCREDITATION Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Ken Chippindale [2005]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Revd Keith Argyle [2005]

Mrs Sheila Telfer [2005]

Mrs Judith Booth [2006]

Revd Adrian Bulley [2007]

Revd Tony Wilkinson [2007]

Revd Gwen Collins **# [2009]

2.10.2 MINISTRIES - CRCW Programme Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Bob Day *[2008]

Secretary: The CRCW Development Workers

Mr Chris Lawrence [2005]

Revd John Burgess [2006]

Mrs Janet Holden [2006]

Mr Peter Twilley [2007]

Revd Tracey Lewis** [2008]

2.10.3 MINISTRIES - LAY PREACHING SUPPORT Sub Committee

Assembly Lay Preaching Advocate: Dr Philip Theaker [2007]

And four members elected by the Lay Preaching Commissioners Consultation

2.10.4 MINISTRIES - MAINTENANCE OF MINISTRY Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd John Piper [2007]

Secretary: Financial Secretary

Mr Patrick Hickey [2007]

Mrs Lyn Alford** [2008]

Mr David Hayden** [2008]

Mr David Taylor** [2008]

The Treasurer

Convener of Pensions Executive

2.10.5 MINISTRIES - RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING - Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd David Bedford * [2009]

Secretary: Secretary Retired Ministers' Housing Society Ltd

Mr Malcolm Lindo [2007]

Mrs Edith Tolley [2005]

Mrs Pauline Mewis [2006]

Revd Elizabeth Caswell [2008]

The 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 Tony Bayley at Church House

2.10.6 ASSESSMENT BOARD

Convener: Mrs Darryl Sinclair [2005]

Retiring 2005 Prof David Cutler#, Revd Rachel Poolman Dr Jean Stevenson, Mrs Joyce Sutcliff,

Retiring 2006 Revd Thomas Heggie, Revd Michael Mewis, Revd Peter Poulter, Revd Hilma Wilkinson

Retiring 2007 Revd Diana Cullum-Hall, Miss Sarah Dodds, Revd Roy Fowler, Mrs Wilma Frew,

Mrs Pat Poinen, Revd Nigel Uden, Revd Simon Walkling

Retiring 2008 Mrs Judith Harris, Mrs Barbara Lancaster, Dr Cameron Wilson

Retiring 2009 Mrs Tina Ashitey**, Dr Peter Clarke**, Mr Hugh Abel**

2.11 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Dr Stephen Orchard [2006]

Secretary: Revd Hazel Martell [2005]

Revd Elizabeth Brown ** » [2009]

Synod Representatives: Revd Peter Poulter [1], Revd Ruth Wollaston [2], Revd John Oldershaw [3],

Mrs Val Morrison [4], Mrs Irene Wren [5], Dr Anthony Jeans [6], Revd Elizabeth Caswell [7],

Revd Roz Harrison [8], Mr Peter Pay [9], Revd Martin Hazell [10], Dr Graham Campling [11],

Dr Jean Silvan Evans [12], Revd John Arthur [13], with the Immediate Past Moderator and the

General Secretary.

2.12 PASTORAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Keith Forecast [2007]

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary

Mrs Irene Brunskill [2005]

Revd David Grosch-Miller [2007] Revd Meryl Court ** [2008]

Mrs Sharn Waldron ** [2008]

Convener of Welfare Sub-Committee The Treasurer The General Secretary

2.12.1 PASTORAL WELFARE -Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Alan Wharton [2007]

Secretary: Mrs Judy Stockings

[*ex officio* Financial Secretary, The Treasurer, Convener Pastoral Reference Committee]

2.13 RACIAL JUSTICE

Convener: Revd Andrew Prasad [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for Racial Justice

Revd John Campbell [2005]

Mrs Sandra Ackroyd [2007]

Mrs Elaine Patrick [2007]

Revd Norman Setchell [2007]

Revd Carla Grosch-Miller *[2007] Mr Iain Bhagwandin** [2008]

Revd Helga Cornell** [2008]

2.14 TRAINING

Convener: Revd John Humphreys [2007]

Secretary: The Secretary for Training

Revd Principal John Dyce [2005]

Mrs Susan Brown [2006]

Revd Sue Henderson [2006]

Revd Malachie Munyaneza [2006]

Mrs Valerie Burnham [2007]

Dr Ian Morrison [2007]

Revd Rachel Poolman ** [2008]

Mrs Kate Breeze** [2008]

Revd Richard Church** [2008]

2.15 YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

Convener: Revd Kathryn Price [2006]

Secretary: Revd Steven Faber **[2008]

Mrs Daphne Clarke [2005]

Ms Lorraine Downer [2005]

Revd John Sanderson [2005]

Mrs Elaine Thomas [2005]

Mr Huw Morrison [2006] Mrs Doreen Watson [2007]

Mr Augustus Webbe [2007]

Revd Tim Meachin** [2008]

*another**[2008]*

FURY Chair

FURY Council Member

2.16 DISCIPLINARY PROCESS - Commission Panel

Convener: Mrs Helen Brown [2005]

Deputy Convener: Revd David Helyar [2007]

Secretary: Mr Brian Evans [2005]

Revd Alison Hall ▶▶ ** [2010]

Members:

retiring 2007

Dr Noreen Baillie

Miss Ina Barker

Mr Keith Brookes

Revd Ken Chippindale

Revd Jessie Clare

Mrs Janice Cockcroft

Miss Kathleen Cross

Revd Alison Davis

Revd John Du Bois

Mr Ralph Forsyth

Mrs Wilma Frew

Revd Joan Grindrod-Helmn

Mr Alan Hart

Revd Peter Killick

Miss Elizabeth Lawson QC

Revd Julian Macro

Revd Ted Marley

Revd Denise Megson

Mrs Sheila Pratt

Mr Nicholas Pye

Revd Michael Rees

Revd Dr David Thompson

Mrs Shelagh Tweed

retiring 2009 **

Mr Martin Ballard

Revd Wendy Baskett

Revd David Bedford

Mrs Hazel Berry

Revd James Bolton

Revd Jim Brown

Mrs Ruth Clarke

Mr Colin Ferguson

Mr Peter Jolly

Mrs Barbara Lancaster

Revd Daphne Lloyd

Mrs Barbara Madge

Mr Peter Mann

Revd Nicholas Mark

Mrs Vera Maskery

Mrs Jean McAslan

Revd Sandra Pickard

Revd Shelagh Pollard

Revd Raymond Singh

Mr Don Taylor

Mrs Lynne Upsdell

Ms Elizabeth Whitten

Mr Clive Willis

Revd Joan Winterbottam

2.17 PANEL FOR THE APPOINTMENT AND REVIEW OF SYNOD MODERATORS

Revd Craig Bowman, Mrs Helen Brown, Revd Lesley Charlton, Dr Jean Silvan Evans, Mrs Janet Gray, Mr Alun Jones, Mr Simon Rowntree, Mr Ron Todd, Revd Cecil White, Mrs Irene Wren

3 MISSION COUNCIL

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

Northern Synod	Revd John Durell, Revd Colin Ofor, Mrs Susan Rand
North Western Synod	Miss Kathleen Cross, Mrs Janet Eccles, Revd Chris Vermeulen
Mersey Synod	Revd Martin Hardy, Mrs Wilmer Prentice, Mr Donald Swift
Yorkshire Synod	Mrs Val Morrison, Revd Pauline Loosemore, Mr Roderick Garthwaite
East Midlands Synod	Mrs Anne Ball, Mrs Barbara Turner, Mrs Irene Wren
West Midlands Synod	Mrs Melanie Frew, Revd Simon Helme, vacancy
Eastern Synod	Mr Mick Barnes, Revd Victor Ridgewell, Miss Joan Turner
South Western Synod	Revd Roz Harrison, Mrs Janet Gray, vacancy
Wessex Synod	Revd David Bedford, Mrs Glennis Massey, Revd Clive Sutcliffe
Thames North Synod	Mrs Helen Clapp, Revd Dr Roger Scopes, Revd Jane Wade,
Southern Synod	Dr Graham Campling, Revd Lesley Charlton, Mr David Howell
National Synod of Wales	Mrs Janet Gray, Mr Stuart Jones, vacancy
National Synod of Scotland	Mrs Helen M Mee, Revd Alan Paterson, vacancy

4 TRUST BODIES

4.1 UNITED REFORMED CHURCH TRUST

Convener: *to be advised*

Secretary: Mr Tony Bayley

Directors

Mr Peter Ward [2005]

Revd Leslie Watson [2006]

Mrs Fiona Smith [2008]

Mr Malcolm Littlefair [2009]

Dr Geoffrey Sides* [2009]

Mr Ernest Gudgeon** [2010]

Mr Donald Swift** [2010]

[*ex officio* Financial Secretary, General Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Secretary-Retired Ministers' Housing Society]

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

Chairman: *to be advised*

Secretary: Financial Secretary

Members of URC: Mr Richard Nunn [2005], Mr Philip Sheridan [2006],

Mr Brian Moere [2008], Mr Michael Goldsmith [2009]

Members of Fund: Revd Kenneth Graham [2005], Revd Gwen Thomas [2007],

Revd Michael Davies [2008], Revd Graham Spicer [2009]

[*ex officio* Financial Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Convener MoM sub-committee, Convener MoM Pensions Executive]

4.2.1 PENSIONS EXECUTIVE

Convener: Mr Maurice Dyson [2010]

the Pensions Executive reports to the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pensions Trust Board, the Maintenance of Ministries sub committee and to the Finance committee

4.3 CONGREGATIONAL MEMORIAL HALL TRUST

Revd Peter Grimshaw

Revd Dr Peter Jupp

Mr Hartley Oldham

Mr Graham Stacy

Dr John Thompson

Dr Elaine Kaye

4.4 THE AUSTRALIAN FRONTIER SERVICES CHARITABLE TRUST

Mr Clem Frank

Mr Brian Wates - joint appointment with Uniting Church in Australia

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

Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Revd D Alasdair Pratt
General Synod of Church of England	Revd Fleur Houston
Methodist Conference	Revd Elizabeth Nash
General Assembly of Church of Scotland [note 5]	Revd D Alasdair Pratt, Revd John Arthur, Revd Mary Buchanan
Presbyterian Church of Wales [note 5]	Revd D Alasdair Pratt
Union of Welsh Independents [note 5]	Revd Stuart Jackson
Congregational Federation	Revd Richard Mortimer
Church in Wales Governing Board [note 5]	Revd Stuart Jackson
United Free Church of Scotland [note 5]	Mr Alan K Smith
Provincial Synod of the Moravian Church	Revd David Tatem

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 Council for World Mission Assembly 2003

Revd David Coleman, Mrs Olive Bell, Ms Catherine Lewis-Smith, Secretary for International Relations

6.1.1 CWM European Region Meeting 2003 – 2006

Revd David Coleman, Mrs Olive Bell, Ms Catherine Lewis-Smith, Secretary for International Relations,
Deputy General Secretary

6.2 WARC General Council 2004

Ms Sarah Hall, Ms Emma Pugh, Revd David Pickering, Secretary for International Relations, General Secretary

6.3 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland - Assembly 2002

General Secretary, Convener of the Ecumenical Committee.

Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Secretary for Church and Society,

Revd Ray Adams, Miss Nikki Andrews, Mrs Ruth Clarke, Miss Lorraine Downer, Mrs Wilma Frew,

Mrs Katalina Tahaafe-Williams, Mrs Jackie Yeomans, Revd John Young

6.3.1 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland - Church Representatives Meeting

General Secretary, Mrs Wilma Frew

4.4 Churches Together in England - Forum 2003**

General Secretary, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Mr Mark Argent, Revd Bernie Collins,

Miss Alison Micklem, Mr Dan Pipe, Revd Peter Poulter, Revd Andrew Prasad, Mrs Helen Renner,

Revd Kirsty Thorpe, Mrs Darnett Whitby-Reid

6.4.1 Churches Together in England - Enabling Group

Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

6.5 ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland) see Note 5

Central Council

Revd John Arthur

6.6 CYTUN (Churches Together in Wales) see Note 5

Council The Synod Ecumenical Officer (alternate Synod Moderator)

Mrs Jackie Yeomans (alternate Mrs Eileen McIlveen)

6.7 FREE CHURCH COUNCIL for WALES see Note 5

Synod Ecumenical Officer (alternate Synod Moderator)

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

7.1 METHODIST/URC Liaison Committee

The Secretary for Ecumenical Relations together with: Ms Rachel Greening, Revd Peter Poulter, Revd Roy Fowler, Revd Harry Lanham, Mr Kevin Lewis

7.1.1 HEALTH and HEALING DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Revd Brenda Russell, Dr Margaret Moore, Mrs Jackie Ballard, Revd Delia Bond

2.2 Anglian/Moravian Contact Goups

Revd David Tatem

7.3 ENFYs (The Commission of Covenanted Churches in Wales) see Note 5

Synod Moderator, Synod Ecumenical Officer, Mrs Ann Shillaker, Revd Dr Robert Pope

7.4 SCOTTISH CHURCH INITIATIVE FOR UNION [SCIFU] see Note 5

Synod Moderator, Revd Alan Paterson, Synod Ecumenical Officer, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

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

8.1 Mansfield College:

Ministerial and Educational Training Committee: Professor Malcolm Johnson [2006]
Revd Rachel Poolman [2006]
Convener of the Training Committee
Secretary for Training

8.2 New College London

Foundation Trustees:
Mr John Smethers [2006]
Mr Graham Stacy [2007]
Mr Philip Wade [2007]
alternate Mr Colin Howard *[2008]

8.3 Northern College

Miss Margaret Atkinson [2007]
Mrs Helen Brown [2007]
Revd Dr Robert Pope* [2007]
Secretary for Training [2009]
Revd David Jenkins [2009]
Mr Bill McLaughin [2009]

Council of the Partnership for
Theological Education, Manchester:

Secretary for Training

8.4 Westminster College: Board of Governors

Convener: Revd Dr David Thompson [2008]
Clerk: Revd Clifford Wilton [2006]
Mrs Sally Abbott [2006]
Revd Craig Muir [2009]
Mr John Kidd [2009]
Mr Brian Long **[2010]
another **[2010]
Secretary for Training

8.4.1 Cheshunt Foundation

Mr David Butler [2007]

8.4.2 Cambridge Theological Federation Convener Westminster College Governors

8.5 Homerton College Trustees

Mr John Chaplin [2005]
Mrs Elisabeth Jupp [2006]
Lady Sally Williams [2007]
Revd Dr David Thompson [2008]

8.6 Queen's College, Birmingham

Revd Elizabeth Welch
*another***
Secretary for Training in attendance

8.7 Aberystwyth (Memorial College)

Mr Leslie Jones

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

9.1 Caterham School	Revd Nigel Uden **[2007] Mr John Mathias **[2008]
9.2 Eltham College	Revd Derek Lindfield [2007]
9.3 Walthamstow Hall	Mrs Margaret Abraham
9.4 Milton Mount Foundation	Revd George Thomas [2006] Mrs Clare Meachin [2006] Revd David Cuckson [2006] Mr Graham Rolfe **[2008] Mr Brian West ** [2008]
9.5 Silcoates School	Dr Peter Clarke [2005] Revd Arnold Harrison [2005] Mrs Val Morrison [2006] Prof Clyde Binfield [2007] Mr David Figures [2007] Mrs Valerie Jankins [2009]
9.6 Taunton School	Revd David Grosch-Miller
9.7 Wentworth College	Revd Daphne Hull
9.8 Bishops Stortford College	Revd Nigel Rogers

10. Miscellaneous:

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

Retired Ministers' and Widows' Fund	Mr Ken Meekison Mrs Jill Strong Revd Julian Macro**
Christian Education Board of Trustees Publications Development Group	Mrs Patricia Hubbard Mrs Rosemary Johnston
Churches Main Committee	Ms Avis Reaney Mr Hartley Oldham
Congregational Fund Board	Revd Margaret Taylor Revd Eric Allen Revd John Taylor Mr Anthony Bayley Revd David Helyar
Guides' Religious Advisory Panel	Mrs Susan Walker
Pilots Management Committee	Mr Huw Morrison
Samuel Robinson's Charities	Mr Tony Alderman**
Scouts' Religious Advisory Group	Revd David Marshall-Jones
United Reformed Church History Society	Mrs Mary Davies Revd Michael Hopkins Mrs Carol Rogers Revd Kirsty Thorpe** Revd Dr David Thompson
Wharton Trust	Mr Norman Fabb

Resolution 31 was carried.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 5:

Resolution 5

Closure of Local Churches

General 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.

**Claypath, Durham
Baker Street, Stockport
Heywood
Lower Chapel, Darwen
Elsecar
St. Edith's, Wilton
Cockfosters
Paddington Chapel
Wingrave**

**Northern
North Western
North Western
North Western
Yorkshire
Wessex
Thames North
Thames North
Thames North**

After brief debate, Resolution 5 was carried.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 4:

Resolution 4

New Church & Mission Projects

General Assembly receives the churches listed below as local churches and mission projects of the United Reformed Church.

**Mission Project
Local Church**

**Ingleby-net
Church Langley Church**

**Northern
Eastern**

Resolution 4 was carried.

The Assembly welcomed the Revd Tom MacMeekin, representing Church Langley.

The Moderator presented a shield made of Lego and created as a memento of the Pilots day at Legoland to each of the 13 synods.

Mr Colin Ferguson moved adoption of Resolution 40:

Resolution 40

Hungerford

General Assembly expresses its support for the Hungerford Churches Together in their concern at the BBC proposal to make a programme about the 1987 Hungerford Tragedy. It therefore urges the BBC to reconsider these proposals and instructs the General Secretary of the United Reformed Church to write to the BBC on our behalf, in such terms.

Seconded by the Revd Peter Flint

After debate, Resolution 40 was carried.

Mission Council

The Assembly Clerk, on behalf of Mission Council, moved adoption of Resolution 10:

Resolution 10

Ratification of Section O Part I changes (Resolution 9 2003)

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 2003 to make the following changes to Part I of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline:

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 1.2. Insert 'disciplinary' after the opening words 'Once the'

Paragraph 2

Insert '(whether or not on appeal)' after the words 'particular case'.

Paragraph 3

Insert the following additional definitions in their correct alphabetical positions and amend the sub-numbering of the other definitions as required:

'Initial Enquiry' shall mean the enquiry conducted by the Mandated Group in conjunction with the Moderator of the Synod during the period beginning when it is called in by the Moderator and ending when it serves either a Notice of Non-Continuance or a Referral Notice in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. 'Notice of Non-Continuance' shall mean a Notice served on the Moderator of the Synod by the Mandated Group at the conclusion of the Initial Enquiry to indicate that it does not intend to proceed further with the disciplinary case against the Minister.

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 4.1 Delete the current paragraph and replace with:

'Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph 4.4, appointment to the Commission Panel shall be by Resolution of the General Assembly on the advice of the Nominations Committee (or such other committee as may in the future perform the functions of the Nominations Committee), who shall in considering persons for appointment take into account (i) the need for balance and for a variety of skills and specialisations, particularly in the following areas – experience in ministerial oversight, theology and doctrine, law, counselling, psychology, mental health, experience in conduct of meetings and tribunals, and (ii) the advantages of including on the Commission Panel persons from a variety of ethnic minority backgrounds.

Paragraph 4.2 Insert the words 'Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph 4.4,' before the words 'Members of the Commission Panel'

Paragraph 4.4 Insert a new Paragraph 4.4 'When any member of the Commission Panel reaches the age of seventy, s/he must forthwith resign from the Commission Panel and shall no longer be eligible to serve on any new Assembly Commission, but any person who reaches his/her seventieth birthday whilst serving on an Assembly Commission in a case in progress may continue so to serve until the conclusion of that case.

Paragraph 6

Paragraph 6.4 Delete all and replace with: 'Those charged under this Paragraph 6 with the appointment of the Assembly Commission shall (so far as possible) (i) appoint at least one man and at least one woman onto the Assembly Commission, and (ii) have regard to the nature of the case, the need for balance and the skills, specialisation and cultural understanding of the members of the Commission Panel.'

Paragraph 7

Paragraph 7.1.1 Delete all.

Paragraph 7.1.2 Re-number as 7.1.

Paragraph 8

Delete all and insert 'Procedural matters arising under the Section O Process shall in every case be dealt with in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.'

Paragraph 11

Paragraph 11.3 Add a new Paragraph 11.3 'No-one other than the Parties has any right of appeal from a decision of the Assembly Commission.'

Paragraph 12

Delete all and insert:

12.1 'The Appeals Commission for the hearing of each such appeal shall consist of the following five persons:

- (a) a Convener who shall be a member of The United Reformed Church (but not necessarily a member of the General Assembly) with legal and/or tribunal experience to be selected by the officers of the General Assembly and**
- (b) the Moderator of the General Assembly or if for any reason he/she should be unable to serve, a former Moderator of the General Assembly to be selected by the officers of the General Assembly and**
- (c) three other members of the General Assembly to be selected by the officers of the General Assembly.**

12.2 'The relevant date for ascertaining whether persons qualify for appointment under Paragraph 12.1 is the date on which under the Rules of Procedure the Secretary of the Assembly Commission notifies the General Secretary that an appeal has been lodged against the decision of the Assembly Commission.'

12.3 'In selecting persons for appointment to the Appeals Commission in accordance with Paragraph 12.1(c) the officers of the General Assembly shall, so far as possible, apply the same criteria as are set out in Part I, Paragraphs 4.1 and 6.4, in relation to appointments to the Commission Panel and to Assembly Commissions.'

12.4 'All persons proposed for appointment to an Appeals Commission, in any capacity, are subject to Part I, Paragraph 7.1.'

Paragraph 18

Delete 'shall, if requested to do so, appoint a representative to attend any hearing conducted under the Section O Process for such purpose' and insert 'shall appoint a representative to attend the Hearing for such purpose, unless his/her attendance has been expressly dispensed with by the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission as the case may be.'

Paragraphs 21 & 22

Delete all and insert a new Paragraph 21

21.1 Save only as provided in Paragraph 21.2, this Part I of the Section O Process is subject to Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure.

21.2 Mission Council acting in the name of General Assembly has authority by single resolution of that Council to make as and when necessary and with immediate effect such changes to Part I as are, on the advice of the legal advisers to The United Reformed Church, required to bring the Section O Process into line with the general law of the land consequent upon any changes in legislation and/or case law.

All such changes to the Section O Process are made by Mission Council under Paragraph 21.2 shall be reported to the next annual meeting of the General Assembly.

Resolution 10 was carried

The Assembly Clerk, on behalf of Mission Council, moved adoption of Resolution 11:

Resolution 11

New changes to Section O Part I

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to Part I of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline:

Paragraph 4.2

Add the following words at the end of this Paragraph: '....but any person who reaches the end of the term of his/her appointment on the Commission Panel whilst serving as a member of an Assembly Commission in a case in progress may continue so to serve until the conclusion of that case.'

Paragraph 9

The existing Paragraph 9 to become 9.1 and a new paragraph to be added as 9.2:

'9.2 As part of such consideration, the Assembly Commission or Appeals Commission shall be entitled to have regard to any conduct on the part of a Minister occurring prior to his/her ordination to the ministry which, in the Commission's view and when viewed in the light of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, would have prevented, or was likely to have prevented, him/her from becoming ordained, where such conduct was not disclosed by the Minister to those responsible for assessing his/her candidacy for ordination.'

After debate, and clarification by the General Secretary, Resolution 11 was carried.

The General Secretary proposed that: 'In accordance with paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 11 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2005 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.' **The Assembly agreed.**

After worship led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.

Sunday 4th July 2004

First Session

Opening worship was conducted by the Chaplain; Bible study was led by the Revd Dr Janet Tollington.

Catch the Vision

The General Secretary presented the report of the Catch the Vision Steering Group. The Moderator greeted members of the Catch the Vision steering Group. It was noted that there would be opportunity for debate later in the Assembly.

The Revd D. Alasdair Pratt took the Chair.

Synod Resolutions

Mrs Rosalind Fearon, on behalf of Northern and North Western Synods, moved adoption of Resolution 2:

Resolution 2

Northern & North Western Synods

General Assembly agrees to transfer the Local Churches at Bewcastle; Brampton; Carlisle; Silloth; Wigton; Cockermouth; Harrington; Workington; Penrith & Penruddock and Whitehaven from the Northern Synod to the North Western Synod and authorises the two Synods to effect this transfer at a date convenient to both.

Seconded by Mrs Ruth Clarke

Resolution 2 was carried.

The Revd Paul Breeze, on behalf of Yorkshire Synod, moved adoption of Resolution 3:

Resolution 3

Yorkshire Synod

General Assembly invites Local Churches and Church Members to adopt Sunday 3rd October, or such other date as may be more suitable, as a Day of Repentance and Rededication in which they may repent of their shortcomings and recommit themselves to Christ, the eternal Word of God made flesh.

Seconded by the Revd Ray Stanyon

After debate, the Revd John Marsh, seconded by the Revd Brian O'Neill, proposed that the Resolution be now put. **Assembly agreed**, with the required two-thirds majority.

Resolution 3 fell.

Election of Moderator of General Assembly 2005/6

The Assembly Clerk explained the voting procedure. The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer and the vote was taken.

Youth and Children's Work

The Report of the Youth and Children's Work Committee was presented by the Revd Kathryn Price.

After responding to a number of questions, Ms Price, on the Committee's behalf, moved adoption of Resolution 38:

Resolution 38

Youth & Children's Work Committee

General Assembly notes that after considerable research the Youth and Children's Work Committee has been unable to comply with the instruction contained in resolution 12 of 2003 'to use the model of the Ginger Group teams and work with others in drawing up plans for the development of a team to become a resource to local churches . . . '.

General Assembly therefore calls upon the Youth and Children's Work Committee:

- to re-establish a network of District and Synod youth secretaries to complement the children's work network;
- to develop an Assembly-wide data base of youth and children's groups and workers, with the aim of sharing resources and skills;
- to have regular quality mailings, building on the success of *Urchin* and *Bridge*, which shall include opportunities for the participation of young people and children;
- to develop a five year plan, focusing work under the headings of Belonging, Worship, Discipleship, Evangelism and Action. All are to be featured in every year, but with a particular emphasis on one in each;
- to ensure that all those working within the United Reformed Church with children and young people are adequately trained for their role;
- to monitor, in collaboration with Training Committee, training in work with children and young people offered at all levels, including ordination, Continuing Ministerial Education and Training and Learning for Service;
- to support and advocate the Youth and Children's Work Trainers' programme;
- to create a forum for theological reflection on youth and children's ministry both within the United Reformed Church and ecumenically;
- to offer opportunities for children and young people and those who work with them to explore faith development and spirituality;
- to ensure good stewardship.

After debate, **Resolution 38 was carried.**

A film was shown of the Pilots' visit to Legoland.

Mission Council

The Mission Council Report was presented by the Revd D Alasdair Pratt.

The Revd Ray Adams and Mr John Ellis responded to a number of questions.

Assembly adjourned.

Sunday 4th July 2004

Second Session

The Assembly Clerk presented the minutes of Saturday 3rd July; the Assembly approved the minutes subject to minor corrections.

Synod Presentation

The Yorkshire Synod made its presentation.

Ministries

Mr John Ellis, on behalf of the Ministries Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 27:

Resolution 27

Equipping the Saints

General Assembly:

- a) welcomes the report **Equipping the Saints**;
- b) challenges every congregation to respond locally to recommendations 1 and 2;
- c) invites comments on recommendations 3 to 13 from churches, Area/District Councils and Synods to be sent to Ministries Committee by 31st December 2004; and
- d) requests further work to be done by Ministries Committee in co-operation with the Catch the Vision Review Group and others so that formal proposals can be brought to the 2005 meeting of General Assembly.

Mr Ellis responded to a number of questions and comments.

Resolution 27 was carried.

The Assembly Clerk, on behalf of Mission Council, moved adoption of Resolution 12:

Resolution 12

New changes to Section O Part II

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to Part II of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline:

Section A

Change the heading of Section A from 'Introduction' to 'General' to avoid confusion with the Introduction to the whole of Section O, which is being re-instated.

Paragraph B.6.2

Alter the wording in the brackets at the end of the paragraph to '(see also Paragraphs B.8.2 and B.11)'.

Paragraph B.8.1

At the end of the paragraph, add the following words: '(as to the contents of the written notice of suspension, see also Paragraph B.11).'

Paragraph B.11

Add a new B.11 as follows:

'The Notice of Suspension, whether issued under Paragraph B.6.2 or Paragraph B.8.1, shall inform the Minister that, in accordance with these Rules of Procedure, any conduct on his/her part which breaches or contravenes Paragraph 4 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union may be taken into account by the Assembly Commission in reaching its decision under Paragraph 10 of Part I.'

Paragraph B.12

The existing B.11 to become B.12

Paragraph C.1.6

Add a new Paragraph C.1.6 as follows:

'On receipt of the Minister's response under Paragraph C.1.2 and any documents which may accompany it, provide the Mandated Group with copies thereof.'

Paragraph C.1.7

Add a new Paragraph C.1.7 as follows:

'In any case arising as a consequence of a Notice of Reference back, where comments are received from either of the parties as a result of the invitation contained in Paragraph C.1.3, provide the other party with copies thereof.'

Paragraph E.3.1

Replace the existing Paragraph E.3.1 with the following:

'E.3.1

Unless the case is subject to compulsory adjournment under Paragraph E.7, the Secretary of the Assembly Commission shall as soon as practicable after the appointment of the Assembly Commission:

E.3.1.1 provide the Convener and the other members of the Assembly Commission with (i) copies of the Referral Notice, (ii) the Minister's response under Paragraph C.1.2 and (iii) any documents which may accompany it and

E.3.1.2

in the case of any Assembly Commission appointed as a consequence of a Notice of Reference back, provide the Convener and the other members thereof with copies of (i) the Notice of Reference back, (ii) the documents, statements and information delivered to the previous Assembly Commission in accordance with these Rules of Procedure and (iii) any comments received from the parties as a result of the invitation contained in Paragraph C.1.3 and

E.3.1.3

consult with the Convener and the other members of the Assembly Commission and, where possible, with the Parties as to a suitable venue, date and time for the Hearing and, having so consulted, decide thereupon.

'Paragraph G.6

Delete the words 'The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be the Convener of the Appeals Commission but s/he...' and replace them with the words 'The Convener of the Appeals Commission..'

Resolution 12 was carried

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 14:

Resolution 14

Ratification of Westminster College Bursar

(Resolution 8 2003)

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 2003 to make the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church about the role of the Bursar of Westminster College.

Delete 'and Bursar' from General Assembly function (vi) and replace 'Board of Studies' and with 'Board of Governors' in that same function so that it reads:

'... to make regulations respecting Theological Colleges belonging to the United Reformed Church, to appoint the principal, professors and other members of the teaching staff, and Board of Governors, and to superintend their work'.

Resolution 14 was carried.

The Moderator welcomed Lord Dafydd Ellis Thomas, Presiding Officer of the National Assembly of Wales, and invited him to address the Assembly.

Moderator 2005-2006

Mr Donald Swift, Convener of Tellers for the election of the Moderator of the General Assembly, reported that the Revd Dr David Peel had been duly elected as Moderator of General Assembly 2005-2006.

On behalf of Mission Council, Mr John Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 6:

Resolution 6

Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Workers

General Assembly agrees to extend the principles of Non-Stipendiary Ministry to CRCW ministry. The Assembly resolves that:

- a) non-stipendiary CRCW candidates would be expected to follow the same training path as stipendiary CRCWs;
- b) the minimum age for commencement for training for non-stipendiary CRCW candidates shall be 21 years of age.

After discussion, **Resolution 6 was carried.**

On behalf of Mission Council, Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 7:

General Assembly resolves to amend the Basis of Union and Structure of The United Reformed Church as follows:

- a) **Add to the end of paragraph 22 of the Basis of Union (as agreed by General Assembly in 2003):**
- b) **Amend paragraph B2(3)(A)(iii) on page B6 (July 2000 edition of the Manual) to read:
“to appoint, or to concur in the appointment of, non-stipendiary ministers to their particular service and to review this service at stated intervals;”**

Resolution 7 was carried.

The General Secretary proposed that:

‘In accordance with paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 7 be referred to synods with the 31st March 2005 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.’

The Assembly agreed.

Assembly Worship including Holy Communion

The Moderator, assisted by the Chaplain, presided as the Assembly celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

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 previous General Assembly.

Ministers who had served at home and as missionaries overseas and had died since Assembly 2003:

Raymond William ARNOLD
 William Frederick AUSTIN
 Percy Noble BROWNE
 Cedric William CARR
 Charles Henry COUPLAND
 Derek Pitt CHURCHWARD
 Elizabeth DAVIES
 John Graham FARMER
 Leslie FIDGEN
 Basil FILBY
 Douglas MacKenzie GORDON
 David Robert HANNEN
 Brian Oliver JOHANSON
 John JOHANSON
 John Hugh MORRIS
 Vernon NEWMAN
 Donald Stuart PARBURY
 William Robert PATTON
 Kathleen Mary PAYNE
 Nigel George PORTER
 John Selwyn ROBERTS
 Marjorie ROWLANDS
 Joseph Ian Young SHARPE

Dorothy STEVENSON
 Anna Barbara Mary WILLIAMS
 John Howard WILLIAMS
 Ronald Ernest WRIGHT
 Brian Arthur Frederick WROE

Missionaries

Norman CLARKE
 Margaret CRAGG
 Margaret EDWARDS
 Molly FLETCHER
 Peggy HAWKINGS
 Daphne HENDERSON
 Lillian LEGG
 Andrew MIDIAN (serving in the UK 94-97)
 Betty POOLE
 Violet PORRITT
 Jean THOMAS

The Assembly adjourned.

The Revd Elizabeth Welch took the Chair.

Synod Resolution

The Revd Eileen Sambrooks, on behalf of the North Western Synod, moved adoption of Resolution 1:

Resolution 1

North Western Synod

General Assembly expresses concern about the shortage of places in residential care and domiciliary support for the elderly and other vulnerable people, following legislation regulating provision of such care, and instructs the Church and Society Committee to consider the matter and take appropriate action.

Seconded by Dr Roger John

The General Secretary proposed the following amendment:

' ... provision of such care, and invites the Church and Society committee to consider the policy issue, and each local church to pursue their concerns about care of the elderly with their Member of Parliament.'

Seconded by the Rev Michael Davies

The amendment being accepted by the Proposer and Seconder, the amended Resolution 1 became the substantive resolution.

The Revd Geoffrey Roper proposed a further amendment:

'...with their member of Parliament, and their local authority.'

Seconded by Mr Colin Ferguson.

The amendment being accepted by the Proposers, the amended Resolution 1 became the substantive resolution.

After discussion, and on the advice of the Assembly Clerk, Assembly agreed that the phrase 'care of the elderly' should read 'this care'.

This final version of Resolution 1 was put to the Assembly:

Resolution 1

North Western Synod

General Assembly expresses concern about the shortage of places in residential care and domiciliary support for the elderly and other vulnerable people, following legislation regulating provision of such care, and invites the Church and Society committee to consider the policy issue, and each local church to pursue their concerns about this care with their Member of Parliament, and their local authority.

Resolution 1 was carried.

The Moderator resumed the Chair.

Mission Council

The Assembly Clerk, on behalf of Mission Council, moved adoption of Resolution 13:

Resolution 13 Changes to Structure regarding Resignation of Ministers

General Assembly agrees to the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church:

Paragraph 2(3)A(viii)

Insert the words 'not currently the subject of any case within the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline referred to in Function (xviii) below)' after the word 'ministers'.

Paragraphs 2(3)A(xviii), 2(4)A(xiv) and 2(5)A(xxiii)

In all these paragraphs, delete the words 'following initial enquiry' on the first line and add the words 'at the appropriate time as specified in that Process' at the end of the Paragraph.

Paragraph 2(3)(B)

Delete the existing Paragraph 2(3)(B) and replace it with the following:

B.1 'As soon as any minister becomes the subject of a case under the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline, the District Council shall not exercise any of its functions in respect of that minister in such a manner as to affect, compromise or interfere with the due process of that case, provided that the provision of such pastoral care as shall be deemed appropriate shall not regarded as a breach of this Paragraph.'

B.2 'The responsibility for calling in the District Council's Mandated Group to conduct an Initial Enquiry which marks the beginning of the Disciplinary Process rests with the Synod Moderator acting in consultation with such officers of the District Council as s/he considers appropriate.'

Paragraph 2(4)(B)

Delete the existing Paragraph 2(4)(B) and replace it with the following:

'As soon as any minister becomes the subject of a case under the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline, the Synod shall not exercise any of its functions in respect of that minister in such a manner as to affect, compromise or interfere with the due process of that case, provided that the provision of such pastoral care as shall be deemed appropriate shall not regarded as a breach of this Paragraph.'

Final unlettered paragraph immediately after Paragraph 2(5)A(xxiv)

Delete this paragraph and replace it with the following:

2(5)(B) 'As soon as any minister becomes the subject of a case against a minister under the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline, neither General Assembly nor Mission Council on its behalf shall exercise any of General Assembly's functions in respect of that minister in such a manner as to affect, compromise or interfere with the due process of that case, provided that the provision of such pastoral care as shall be deemed appropriate shall not regarded as a breach of this Paragraph.'

Paragraph 2(4)(A)(viii)

Amend the reference in this paragraph from Function (xv) to (xiv).

Resolution 13 was carried

The General Secretary proposed that: 'In accordance with paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 13 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2005 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.' **The Assembly agreed.**

On behalf of Mission Council, the Revd Ray Adams moved adoption of Resolution 8:

Resolution 8

Racial Justice & Multicultural Ministry

General Assembly agrees that:

- a) the Racial Justice Committee be renamed the Racial Justice and Multicultural Ministry Committee;**
- b) there should be cross representation between the Racial Justice and Multicultural Ministry Committee and other Assembly committees, together with the opportunity for an occasional inter-committee forum, to ensure its work is effectively integrated with the whole work of the United Reformed Church, and in particular with its work in developing relations with new migrant churches.**

Resolution 8 was carried.

Thames North Synod

The Thames North Synod made its presentation.
After worship led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.

Monday 5th July 2004

First Session

Opening worship was conducted by the Chaplain; Bible study was led by the Revd Janet Tollington.

Synod Moderators' Report

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell presented the Report of the Synod Moderators.

The Moderator, on behalf of the Assembly, thanked the Synod Moderators for their report and for their work throughout the year. She greeted the Revd John Arthur, who would be retiring in March 2005.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 45:

Resolution 45

General Assembly directs that in addition to the names of former ministers and missionaries commemorated at the Assembly Communion, the General Secretary shall include the names of such former moderators and clerks of Assembly, whose deaths have been notified to the Assembly Office during the previous twelve months, not otherwise included in the list.

Seconded by the General Secretary.

Resolution 45 was carried.

The Moderator then called on the Assembly to stand in silence in memory of Mr Raymond Arthur Heritage, Moderator of the General Assembly 1986-87.

The Revd Alasdair Pratt took the Chair.

Nominations

The Revd Principal Stephen Orchard, on behalf of the Nominations Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 32:

Resolution 32

Appointment of Synod Moderators 1

General Assembly notes the following guidance, adopted by Mission Council, for the Appointment of Synod Moderators and the Review of their Appointments.

A. New appointments

1. Preparing for meeting

1.1 The Nominating Group for an initial appointment by General Assembly will consist of eight people. Four people, including the Convenor of the Group, will be appointed by the Nominations Committee from a panel elected by the General Assembly. Four people will be appointed by the Synod where the vacancy exists and will be responsible for ensuring that the views of church members throughout the area of the Synod are given proper consideration.

1.2 The General Secretary will normally act as secretary to the Group and will arrange the dates and places of meetings. The beginning of the process will most probably be in the September prior to the Assembly at which the appointment will be made.

1.3 All costs will be met by the synod to which the appointment is being made, except the out of pocket expenditure of those appointed by the Nominations Committee, which will be a charge on the General Assembly. The services provided by the General Secretary and his/her office shall not be a charge on the Group.

1.4 The Synod Clerk will ensure that a comprehensive process of consultation is carried out within the Districts and churches of the Synod and among ecumenical partners before the Group holds its first meeting. The Synod Clerk may serve as a voting member of the Nominating Group.

1.5 The Convenor of the Group and the Synod Clerk will circulate to members of the Group a draft job description and person profile, incorporating the appropriate national and local requirements. The Group will normally approve these by correspondence and will only meet to consider these documents when the Convenor judges there is a serious disagreement. The Synod Clerk will advertise the vacancy in Reform and within the synod. The advertisement should also be posted on appropriate web sites. The advertisement will make it clear that both applications and nominations will be welcomed. The Synod Clerk will oversee the process of issuing details to enquirers. Where the Synod Clerk is advised of a nomination the nominee will be contacted by letter and invited, if willing to be considered, to supply appropriate documentation. All nominees shall receive what is essentially the same letter and be advised who has made the nomination. The closing date for applications will allow details to be circulated to members of the Nominating Group before the short-listing meeting.

2. The meetings of the Nominating Group

2.1 The Nominating Group will agree a short list of applicants to be interviewed. If, in the judgment of the Group, there are no suitable applicants, the Group may re-advertise the post and invite applications from people, or nominations of people, who have not yet been considered.

2.2 The second meeting will carry out interviews with the short-listed candidates and arrive at a name for nomination to the General Assembly. In the event of failure to reach unanimous agreement the support of three Synod and three General Assembly members of the Group is an acceptable basis for a nomination but a simple majority decision is not.

2.3 The Nominating Group will normally bring its recommendation to the Nominations Committee for presentation to the Mission Council in March, there to be confirmed or not. This will enable the General Secretary to arrange preparation for the Moderator-elect and a formal reception at the July General Assembly. However, circumstances may require a different time-table.

B. The re-appointment of a serving Synod Moderator

3. Preparing for meeting

3.1 Before a Review Group is appointed the General Secretary will ascertain from the Moderator concerned whether she/he wishes to be considered for a further period of service. This consultation should take place in time for a Review Group to be formed, consider the matter and reach a conclusion no later than eight months before the end of the current appointment. The Review Group, appointed by the Nominations Committee, will consist of five people from outside the synod concerned. The General Secretary or, in his/her absence, the Deputy General Secretary, will provide services to the Group.

3.2 The synod will appoint its own internal Review Panel, consisting of one representative from each District or equivalent structure under the convenorship of the Synod Clerk. The members of this group would be charged to consult as widely as possible within their constituency. They should meet with the synod Moderator to discover the Moderator's view of the way his/her work has developed and her/his vision for a possible further period of service. The records of any appraisal system should be made available for such a meeting. The panel will then arrive at the synod's view of whether an invitation should be issued for a further time of service.

4. The meetings of the Review Group

4.1 The Review Group will receive written submissions from the Moderator and the Review Panel. They will then meet separately with the Moderator and the Review Panel, or its representatives, and interview them on the basis of their submissions. The Review Group will then reach a conclusion on the re-appointment and inform the Nominations Committee who will bring it to Mission Council no later than six months before the conclusion of the appointment.

4.2 If either the synod or those appointed to act on its behalf between meetings (e.g. an Executive Committee) or the Moderator concerned wishes to challenge the decision of the Mission Council they must enter an appeal within one month of the decision being made. The Mission Council shall then appoint a group of five people to hear the appeal and a member of its staff to provide services. The decision of that group will be final.

After discussion, **Resolution 32 was carried.**

Principal Orchard, on behalf of the Nominations Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 33:

Resolution 33

Appointment of Synod Moderators 2

General Assembly resolves that the Rules of Procedure governing the appointment of Moderators of Synod be amended to read:

7.4 All appointments by the General Assembly to the office of moderator of a synod shall be made on the nomination of a committee consisting of four members appointed by the synod concerned and four members appointed by the Nominations Committee from a panel elected by the General Assembly. The Nominations Committee shall also name the Convener.

7.5 In selecting this representation the synod and Nominations Committee shall have regard to the need to make their selection both widely representative and possessing the necessary skills.

Note: For the procedure to be followed in the appointment and reappointment of moderators of synod see Record of Assembly 2004 [page 31].

Resolution 33 was carried

The Moderator resumed the Chair.

Catch the Vision

The General Secretary, on behalf of the Catch the Vision Steering Group continued the presentation of the Catch the Vision Report, and moved adoption of Resolution 43:

Resolution 43

Catch the Vision

Assembly notes the actions taken by the Catch the Vision Steering Group and endorses its report.

After full discussion, the General Secretary responded, and the Resolution was put to the Assembly.

Resolution 43 was carried.

Resolution 41

Catch the Vision

General Assembly affirms its commitment to paragraph 8 of its Basis of Union, and instructs the Ecumenical Committee to form a small working party to assess what possibilities exist for the United Reformed Church to '..... take further steps towards the unity of all God's people' and to report back to Mission Council and the 2005 Assembly.'

Resolution 41 was carried

The Moderator welcomed the Revd Andrew Faley, representing the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales.

Life and Witness

The Revd Brian Jolly, on behalf of the Life & Witness Committee sought the Assembly's permission to withdraw the Life and Witness Report and Resolution 26 because of unresolved legal questions. The Committee now intends to present this business to the 2005 Assembly. **The Assembly agreed.**

Equal Opportunities

The Revd Wilf Bahadur and Ms Ruth Norton presented the Report of the Equal Opportunities Committee.

The Moderator greeted and offered the Assembly's good wishes to Ms Norton who is to retire as Secretary to the Equal Opportunities Committee.

East Midlands Synod

The East Midlands Synod made its presentation.

Communications and Editorial

The Report of the Communications and Editorial Committee was presented by the Revd Martin Hazell.

Mr Hazell, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 21:

Resolution 21

Communication

General Assembly recognising that Communication is at the heart of the Gospel reaffirms the commitment of the United Reformed Church to openness and accessibility in all its discussions and decisions. Accordingly General Assembly instructs the Communications and Editorial Committee, in co-operation with the other committees of General Assembly to work towards:

- a) providing open access to all documents and resources not considered to be confidential;
- b) the facility for interest groups within the church to engage in discussions at a distance;
- c) a framework of common email addresses throughout the church.

Resolution 21 was carried.

Mr Hazell, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 22:

Resolution 22

Get Noticed

General Assembly recommends to the churches the leaflet "Get Noticed" as a basis of enhancing their visibility in the community.

Resolution 22 was carried.

Assembly adjourned.

Monday 5th July 2004

Second Session

The Assembly Clerk presented the minutes of Sunday 4th July. The Assembly approved the minutes.

Eastern Synod

The Eastern Synod made its presentation.

New Ministers and CRCW's

Synod Moderators introduced ministers and Church Related Community Workers who had been ordained or commissioned since the previous meeting of the Assembly, or transferred from other denominations. (Those whose names had been reported to a previous Assembly but who were received at this Assembly are marked ↗.) Each of those present was greeted in turn and received by the Assembly with applause.

Northern Synod (Moderator: Revd Peter Poulter)

Revd Ed Butlin	Felton, Longframlington & Glanton with Branton
Revd Robert Sheard	North Cumbria Group
Mrs Helen Stephenson	Grindon URC, Sunderland

North Western Synod (Moderator: Revd Peter Brain)

Revd Kate Gray	Wythenshawe
Revd Janet Sutton	Alkington & Providence
Revd Mike Walsh	Heald Green

Ordained 1934

Kenneth Raymond SAINSBURY

Ordained 1944

Alyn Lloyd DAVIES
Granville DAVIES
Edward Philip EASTMAN
Sidney Samuel Thomas EVANS
Stanley Horner HODGSON
Thomas JONES
Ronald Martin WARD

Ordained 1954

Eric Stanley ALLEN
Anthony John BRADSHAW
John Ewart FRANCIS
Colin FURSE
Gordon Ewart HARRIS
Malcolm HILL
Cecil JONES
John Derek JONES
Albert Frederick JORDAN
Sydney Graham LONG
David Edward MARSDEN
Stephen Harold MAYOR
Jeffrey Room PLOWMAN
Brian Edward RANFORD
Roy David ROBINSON
Robin John SLEIGH
Ronald Dougall SPEIRS
Kenneth Fred Dennis TRUNKS
Anthony David TUCKER

Those present were greeted by the Moderator, to the warm applause of the Assembly.

Training Committee

The Revd John Humphreys presented the Report of the Training Committee

Mr Humphreys, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 34:

Resolution 34

Review of Training Needs

General Assembly encourages the Training Committee in its review of training needs, to explore further the pathways A-E contained in the Reports to Assembly 2004 and in order that it might sample opinion and consult widely before reporting with proposals to a future Assembly requests councils, institutions or individuals to submit any comments to the Secretary for Training by the end of November 2004.

After discussion, **Resolution 34 was carried.**

Mr Humphreys moved adoption of Resolution 35:

Resolution 35

Revd D A L Jenkins

General Assembly acknowledges the enormous debt that it owes to the Revd David Jenkins for his services to Training for Learning and Serving offered over the past 9 years and on his retirement from this post records its gratitude to him.

Resolution 35 was carried.

The Moderator greeted Mr Jenkins to the warm applause of the Assembly.

The Revd Principal Jack Dyce, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 36:

Resolution 36

Sabbaticals

General Assembly resolves to rescind the following restriction on Ministers undertaking a sabbatical after the age of 60. '...Ministers are offered...a sabbatical term of up to three months.... but not after the age of 60. A...two month sabbatical will be available... between the ages of 60 and 63' (CME 'Learning for Life Leaflet' 2001, page 4). Applications will now be processed as with most CME requests, via the synod-training officer who will assess the proposal.

Resolution 36 was carried.

Mr Dyce moved adoption of Resolution 37:

Resolution 37

Education for Ministry

- a) General Assembly agrees that all training for Ministers & CRCWs be reconfigured in a single framework called Education for Ministry (EM) in three phases with initial ministerial training as EM 1, Post Ordination and Education Commissioning and Training as EM 2 and Continuing Ministerial Education as EM 3.
- b) General Assembly agrees that Education for Ministry 1 and 2 be reconfigured as a coherent programme, with the learning of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Church Related Community Workers in EM 2 remaining under the care of Synods and the Continuing Ministerial Education sub Committee until the completion of EM 2.
- c) General Assembly welcomes the review of the POET Programme and the implications for the development of POET as spelt out in the text of the Training Committee's Report.

Mr Andrew Francis proposed that the Resolution be now put. Several members of the Assembly indicated their willingness to second.

Resolution 37 was carried.

The Revd John Waller took the Chair

Ministries

The Report of the Ministries Committee was presented by Mr John Ellis.

Mr Ellis, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 28:

Resolution 28

Entry Qualifications

- a) General Assembly reiterates its belief that ordination to the stipendiary Ministry of Word and Sacraments should take place by the age of 55 and to non-stipendiary Ministry of Word and Sacraments by the age of 60. The same ages should apply to the commissioning of Church Related Community Workers.
- b) General Assembly notes that given the current candidating and training procedures, these maximum ages imply that the large majority of candidates will need to have made formal application five years before. Thus normally the latest date for application for stipendiary service will be age 50 and for non-stipendiary service age 55.
- c) General Assembly nonetheless recognises that occasionally candidates have prior qualifications and experience that might shorten training. If any Synod wishes to present an application from a candidate who is already less than five years from the maximum age of ordination, Assembly requests that Synod contact the Secretary for

Training before doing so, in order to gain an indication of whether a shorter period of training is a realistic option.

d) General Assembly, having set minimum ages for commencing training for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments, confirms the minimum age for commencing training for Church Related Community Work ministry shall be 21 years.

Resolution 28 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 30:

Resolution 30

Plan for Partnership

General Assembly amends the Plan for Partnership by inclusion of the words in italics, as follows:

Para 6.1.4 Pulpit supply fees: when the Maintenance of the Ministry Office has been advised that a minister remunerated under the Plan is unable to work due to ill-health or is on maternity leave or is absent on a sabbatical term which lasts for a period of more than four weeks *or is suspended under the Section O Process* or is the Moderator of General Assembly, the actual pulpit supply costs incurred by the church arising because of the absence will be reimbursed to the limit shown in Appendix A. In group pastorates and part time pastorates, reimbursement will only be in respect of services which would have been conducted by the absent minister. Claim forms for the reimbursement of pulpit supply costs can be obtained from the Maintenance of the Ministry Office.

Para 6.3.4.5 Where, following an introduction by a Synod Moderator, a minister / Church Related Community Worker visits a pastorate or community post in vacancy other than in connection with a preaching engagement, the cost of travel shall be paid by the pastorate visited. The pastorate shall be reimbursed from the Ministry and Mission Fund *the actual costs of travel, not exceeding the recommended lower Inland Revenue mileage rate*, of the minister / CRCW and spouse within the UK for a maximum of two visits.

Para 7.1 (currently Para 7) Ministers / Church Related Community Workers are entitled to 5 weeks holiday in each calendar year and one further Sunday away from the pastorate. When a minister / Church Related Community Worker only serves for part of a year the holiday provision should be pro rata. One week of holiday may be carried forward to the following year. Holiday entitlement is not affected by sick leave, in-service training courses or sabbatical leave. *Such periods of leave / absence may result in more than one week's holiday being carried forward into the following year.*

Para 7.2 If a minister / Church Related Community Worker resigns from a pastorate or post immediately following any such period of leave / absence, stipend should be paid for any outstanding holiday entitlement untaken at the date of resignation, which may include outstanding holiday entitlement from the previous year, always provided that District Council concurs with the arrangements.

Para 9.1.2 Except at the time of a minister / Church Related Community Worker's initial induction (when a full resettlement grant is payable) where the pastorate is part-time the grant shall be pro rata according to the scoping of the pastorate to be served. A full retirement resettlement grant will be paid to ministers / Church Related Community Workers who have completed 10 years service up to their retirement date, *whether this is at the age of 65 or earlier*. The grant will be reduced *pro rata* where the minister / Church Related Community Worker has not been in stipendiary service for 10 years, or the years of service have not been full-time.

Resolution 30 was carried.

The Moderator resumed the Chair.

The Moderator greeted the Revd Elizabeth Nash, retiring from her post at WARC.

Church and Society

The Revd Martin Camroux presented the Report of the Church and Society Committee.

Mr Camroux, on behalf of the Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 20:

Resolution 20

Israeli Separation Barrier

General Assembly:

- a) views with deep indignation the Separation Barrier currently being constructed by the Government of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territories;
- b) believes that the Barrier is causing profound social and economic problems for the Palestinian population as well as seriously hampering efforts to find a just and long lasting peace in the region;
- c) condemns unreservedly terrorist attacks upon innocent Israeli civilians but believes that the best way for Government of Israel to provide long-term security for its people is to engage in a peace process that will result in the end of the occupation in accordance with long-standing UN resolutions;
- d) calls upon the UK Government to use its influence to see that construction of the barrier is halted, that existing sections are dismantled and that confiscated land is returned to Palestinians along with compensation for any damage caused;
- e) pledges itself to support the work of peace groups within Israel and the Occupied Territories and UK based advocacy groups, such as Christian Aid and EAPPI in their work in the Occupied Territories.

The Revd Steven Faber moved the following amendment:

‘that paragraph (c) become paragraph (a), and subsequent paragraphs be redesignated accordingly’

Seconded by the Revd Ruth Allen

The amendment fell.

The Revd Elizabeth Welch proposed that the Resolution be now put.

The Assembly agreed.

Resolution 20 was carried.

‘Assets for Life’

The Moderator welcomed the Rt Hon John Battle MP, and invited him to address the Assembly. During his address, Mr Battle introduced the action pack ‘Assets for Life’.

Inter-faith Guests

The Revd John Parry, Convener of the Inter-faith Relations Committee, invited the Moderator to greet guests from other faith traditions:

Prof. Ramez Delpak of the University of Glamorgan and a member of the Baha’i community, and Mrs Delpak.

Mr Alan Schwarz, M.B.E., a member of Cardiff Inter-Faith Association and a Lay Minister to the Cardiff United Synagogue.

The Moderator invited Mr Schwarz to address the Assembly

The Moderator greeted Sally Thomas as she ends her term of office as Secretary of the Ecumenical Relations Committee.

After prayers led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.

Monday 5th July 2004

Third Session

Church and Society

The Revd Martin Camroux, on behalf of the Church and Society Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 19:

Resolution 19

The Environment

General Assembly

- a) affirms its commitment to the Five Marks of Mission with their call to the people of God to be faithful stewards of God's creation and to seek to sustain and renew the life of the earth;
- b) welcomes and endorses 'An environmental policy for the United Reformed Church';
- c) commends churches that have engaged with the United Reformed Church 'Roots and Branches' pack and the subsequent ecumenical 'Eco-Congregation' project; congratulates Zion United Reformed Church Northallerton and Christ Church United Reformed/Methodist Church Ross-on-Wye on gaining the Eco-Congregation Award; and encourages other churches to follow their lead;
- d) pledges its support for Operation Noah, an initiative of the Christian Ecology Link seeking to raise awareness of, and promote action around, the issue of climate change.

After discussion, **Resolution 19** was carried.

Mr Camroux moved adoption of Resolution 17:

Resolution 17

2005 Campaign to Double Aid and Make Trade Just

General Assembly

- a) notes with approval plans for a major mobilization to fight poverty in 2005 incorporating efforts to ensure that the finance is available to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and a concerted campaign to make trade rules work in the interest of poor nations;
- b) pledges its support for this mobilization and for ecumenical action within it.

After discussion, **Resolution 17** was carried.

Mr Camroux moved adoption of Resolution 18:

General Assembly

- a) welcomes the continuing and significant growth in the number of local churches participating in Commitment for Life and the consequent increase in funds raised and campaigning activity;
- b) recognizes the personal effort in promoting the programme put in by advocates in each synod and the effective work of the Director and Programme Assistant;
- c) notes that although there is a continuing focus on partners, through Christian Aid, in four countries, there is an increased and growing emphasis on campaigning for economic justice;
- d) notes the closer relationship between Commitment for Life and the International Relations office and commends to churches the new leaflet produced jointly by both programmes;
- e) agrees that the disbursement of Commitment for Life income shall remain at 75% going to our partners via Christian Aid, 10% for World Development Movement and 15% for Grants and Advocacy;
- f) therefore urges non-participating churches, large and small, to join the Commitment for Life programme, a mission priority of the church, and in the work for justice and peace.

After discussion, the Revd Elizabeth Nash proposed that the Resolution be now put.

Seconded by the Revd Alison Davis. **The Assembly agreed.**

Resolution 18 was carried.

Following prayers led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.

Tuesday 6th July 2004

First Session

Opening worship was conducted by the Chaplain; Bible study was led by the Revd Janet Tollington.

Nominations

Principal Orchard, on behalf of the Nominations Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 46:

Resolution 46

Synod Moderators

Assembly appoints the following panel for the appointment and review of Synod Moderators:

Revd Craig Bowman
Dr Jean Silvan Evans
Mr Simon Rowntree
Mrs Irene Wren

Mrs Helen Brown
Mrs Janet Gray
Mr Ron Todd

Revd Lesley Charlton
Mr Alun Jones
Revd Cecil White

Resolution 46 was carried.

Ministries

Mr John Ellis, on behalf of the Ministries Committee, moved adoption of Resolution 29:

Resolution 29

Reinstatement of Ministers

General Assembly approves the following procedure regarding applications for reinstatement to the Roll of Ministers of the United Reformed Church.

- a) Ministers who have been removed from the Roll of Ministers by resignation or by Assembly decision, and who wish to apply for re-instatement, shall in the first place consult the Moderator of the Synod of the area where they reside. The application procedure may not normally commence until five years have elapsed from the date their name was removed from the Roll.
- b) The Secretary for Ministries shall be informed by the applicant, who will be advised of the procedure to be followed.
- c) The Secretary for Ministries will notify the relevant Synod officer where the applicant resides of the application, and will ask the Synod and District/Area Council to arrange an interview with the applicant. The Secretary for Ministries will ask the Synod that the following documents be obtained by them:
 - i) A personal statement from the applicant which covers:
 - the reason(s) for the deletion or resignation, and a reflection on the circumstances surrounding it;
 - an outline of the applicant's personal development and journey of faith since the deletion or resignation;
 - current employment;
 - the reasons for seeking reinstatement, including their current conviction of call to the ministry.
 - ii) At least two personal references in support of the applicant.
 - iii) A commendation from the applicant's local church.
 - iv) A statement from the Moderator of the Synod where the applicant resides, or an equivalent officer in an overseas church, where appropriate.
 - v) A medical report.
- d) The Synod will forward these papers (except the medical report) to the District or Area Council where the applicant now resides, and ask them to interview him/her and report their observation as to his/her suitability for re-instatement.
- e) It should be noted that where the applicant has moved into a different Synod or Area/District since their name was removed from the Roll, the Synod handling the application will seek the observations of the present Moderator of their previous Synod, and of their previous District. The purpose of this enquiry is to place the present application in the context of the exercise of the applicant's last ministry.
- f) All these papers (except the medical report) will be sent to the Ministries Committee of the Synod where the applicant now resides, who will interview him/her, and report to the Secretary for Ministries.
- g) All these documents, including the medical report at this stage, will be made available to the Accreditation Sub-Committee, which will interview the applicant. Following this final interview the Sub-Committee will decide whether or not to re-instate. The Secretary for Ministries will inform the applicant and his/her Synod of the decision as soon as possible.
- h) On receipt of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee, it shall be open both to the applicant and to the Synod to request a further hearing by the Ministries Committee. This hearing will be before a group from the Ministries Committee composed of members who have had no previous involvement with the reinstatement request. Such an application must be made to the Secretary for Ministries not more than 21 days after the date of the notification of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee to the applicant. There shall be no appeal from the decision of the Ministries Committee.

The Revd Roberta Rominger moved the following amendment:

General Assembly approves the following procedure regarding applications for reinstatement to the Roll of Ministers of the United Reformed Church.

- a) Ministers who have been removed from the Roll of Ministers by resignation or by Assembly decision, and who wish to apply for re-instatement, shall in the first place consult the Moderator of the Synod of the area where they reside. The application procedure may not normally commence until five years have elapsed from the date their name was removed from the Roll.
- b) The Secretary for Ministries shall be informed by the applicant, who will be advised of the procedure to be followed.
- c) The Secretary for Ministries will notify the relevant Synod officer where the applicant resides of the application, and will ask the Synod and District/Area Council to arrange an interview with the applicant, *with the instruction that those appointed to interview the applicant should be people who have had no previous direct involvement with him/her*. The Secretary for Ministries will ask the Synod that the following documents be obtained by them:
 - i) A personal statement from the applicant which covers:
 - the reason(s) for the deletion or resignation, and a reflection on the circumstances surrounding it;
 - an outline of the applicant's personal development and journey of faith since the deletion or resignation;
 - current employment;
 - the reasons for seeking reinstatement, including their current conviction of call to the ministry.
 - ii) At least two personal references in support of the applicant.
 - iii) A commendation from the applicant's local church.
 - iv) A statement from the Moderator of the Synod where the applicant resides, or an equivalent officer in an overseas church, where appropriate.
 - v) A medical report, *together with a psychiatric evaluation if appropriate*.

(Reverse the order of (d) and (e))

- d) It should be noted that where the applicant has moved into a different Synod or Area/District since their name was removed from the Roll, the Synod handling the application will seek the observations of the present Moderator of their previous Synod, and of their previous District. The purpose of this enquiry is to *ensure clarity regarding the reason why the applicant's name was removed from the Roll*.
- e) The Synod *officer* will forward these papers (except the medical report) to the *appointed interviewers of the District or Area Council* where the applicant now resides, and ask them to interview him/her and report their observations *to the Synod Officer* as to his/her suitability for re-instatement.
- f) All these papers (except the medical report) will be sent to the *interviewing panel* of the Synod where the applicant now resides, who will interview him/her, and report to the Secretary for Ministries.
- g) All these documents, including the medical report at this stage, will be made available to the Accreditation Sub-Committee, which will interview the applicant. *The Sub-Committee will have the right to seek the advice and participation of an outside expert if specialist understanding would help them in their judgement*. Following this final interview the Sub-Committee will decide whether or not to re-instate. The Secretary for Ministries will inform the applicant and his/her Synod of the decision as soon as possible.
- h) *For each of the interviews in (e) (f) and (g) the convener of the interview panel shall notify the applicant in advance of the main concerns raised and issues to be discussed*.
- i) On receipt of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee, it shall be open both to the applicant and to the Synod to request a further hearing by the Ministries Committee. This hearing will be before a group from the Ministries Committee composed of members who have had no previous involvement with the reinstatement request. Such an application must be made to the Secretary for Ministries not more than 21 days after the date of the notification of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee to the applicant. There shall be no appeal from the decision of the Ministries Committee.

Seconded by the Revd David Parkin.

The Proposer indicated willingness to accept the amendment.

The amendment was carried.

The Revd Malcolm Hanson moved adoption of the following amendment:

add:

e) Within this process consideration should be given to the views and needs of the congregations where the applicant has served and renumber following paragraphs accordingly"

Seconded by Mrs Irene Wren

The Convener indicated willingness to accept this amendment.

The amendment was carried

After discussion, **Resolution 29, as amended, was carried.**

Resolution 29

Reinstatement of Ministers

General Assembly approves the following procedure regarding applications for reinstatement to the Roll of Ministers of the United Reformed Church.

- a) Ministers who have been removed from the Roll of Ministers by resignation or by Assembly decision, and who wish to apply for re-instatement, shall in the first place consult the Moderator of the Synod of the area where they reside. The application procedure may not normally commence until five years have elapsed from the date their name was removed from the Roll.**
- b) The Secretary for Ministries shall be informed by the applicant, who will be advised of the procedure to be followed.**
- c) The Secretary for Ministries will notify the relevant Synod officer where the applicant resides of the application, and will ask the Synod and District/Area Council to arrange an interview with the applicant, with the instruction that those appointed to interview the applicant should be people who have had no previous direct involvement with him/her. The Secretary for Ministries will ask the Synod that the following documents be obtained by them:
 - i) A personal statement from the applicant which covers:
 - the reason(s) for the deletion or resignation, and a reflection on the circumstances surrounding it;
 - an outline of the applicant's personal development and journey of faith since the deletion or resignation;
 - current employment;
 - the reasons for seeking reinstatement, including their current conviction of call to the ministry.**
 - ii) At least two personal references in support of the applicant.**
 - iii) A commendation from the applicant's local church.**
 - iv) A statement from the Moderator of the Synod where the applicant resides, or an equivalent officer in an overseas church, where appropriate.**
 - v) A medical report, together with a psychiatric evaluation if appropriate.****
- d) It should be noted that where the applicant has moved into a different Synod or Area/District since their name was removed from the Roll, the Synod handling the application will seek the observations of the present Moderator of their previous**

Synod, and of their previous District. The purpose of this enquiry is to ensure clarity regarding the reason why the applicant's name was removed from the Roll.

- e) Within this process consideration should be given to the views and needs of the congregations where the applicant has served.'
- f) The Synod officer will forward these papers (except the medical report) to the appointed interviewers of the District or Area Council where the applicant now resides, and ask them to interview him/her and report their observations to the Synod Officer as to his/her suitability for re-instatement.
- g) All these papers (except the medical report) will be sent to the interviewing panel of the Synod where the applicant now resides, who will interview him/her, and report to the Secretary for Ministries.
- h) All these documents, including the medical report at this stage, will be made available to the Accreditation Sub-Committee, which will interview the applicant. The Sub-Committee will have the right to seek the advice and participation of an outside expert if specialist understanding would help them in their judgement. Following this final interview the Sub-Committee will decide whether or not to re-instate. The Secretary for Ministries will inform the applicant and his/her Synod of the decision as soon as possible.
- i) For each of the interviews in (e) (f) and (g) the convener of the interview panel shall notify the applicant in advance of the main concerns raised and issues to be discussed.
- j) On receipt of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee, it shall be open both to the applicant and to the Synod to request a further hearing by the Ministries Committee. This hearing will be before a group from the Ministries Committee composed of members who have had no previous involvement with the reinstatement request. Such an application must be made to the Secretary for Ministries not more than 21 days after the date of the notification of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee to the applicant. There shall be no appeal from the decision of the Ministries Committee.

Assembly Arrangements Committee

Mr William McVey presented the report of the Assembly Arrangements Committee.

The Moderator greeted Mr Hilary Gunn, who is to retire after seventeen years of service as Office and Personnel Manager at Church House. Mr Gunn was applauded warmly by the Assembly.

The Revd Alasdair Pratt took the Chair.

Mr McVey presented the Report of the Assembly Arrangements Committee. After responding to questions and comments Mr McVey, on behalf of the Committee moved adoption of Resolution 15:

Resolution 15

General Assembly 2006

General Assembly agrees that the General Assembly in 2006 will meet at the University of Exeter from 7th-10th July.

The Assembly agreed

Mr McVey moved adoption of Resolution 16:

Resolution 16

General Assembly Representation

General Assembly resolves, from the close of General Assembly 2004, to change the representation of district councils (ministerial and lay in equal numbers) from, "one representative per eight churches or part thereof plus one per 800 church members or part thereof" to "one representative per twelve churches or part thereof plus one per 1,200 church members or part thereof".

After debate, it was proposed that this Resolution be deferred to the next Assembly...

The proposal fell.

The General Secretary moved that the Resolution be now put

Seconded by the Revd Janet Tollington **The Assembly Agreed**

Resolution 16 was carried.

The Moderator resumed the Chair

Mission Council

Mr Eric Chilton presented the budget for 2005 and, on behalf of Mission Council, moved adoption of Resolution 9:

Resolution 9

Budget for the year 2005

General Assembly accepts the budget for the year 2005, set out in Appendix (7) to the Book of Reports.

After brief debate, **Resolution 9 was carried.**

Assembly Commissions

The General Secretary reported on Assembly Commissions held during the past year. This report is appended to the Record.

Catch the Vision

The General Secretary on behalf of the The Steering Group continued the Catch the vision Report Report, and moved adoption of resolution 44:

Resolution 44

Catch the Vision

Assembly instructs the Steering Group to prepare appropriate worship material for local churches considering the 'Catch the Vision' report, and to include the prayer of commitment in paragraph 2.2.2.

After debate, it was proposed that Resolution 44 be not put..

The proposal fell

After futher debate, **Resolution 44 was carried.**

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 42:

Resolution 42

Catch the Vision

General Assembly requests the Life and Witness Committee to consider the ways in which the local church should be structured in the United Reformed Church, and to bring a report to the 2006 Assembly.

Resolution 42 was carried.

Minutes

The Clerk moved that:

Assembly receives the minutes of Monday 5th July and approves the insertion of the minutes of its closing session into the full minutes after review and any necessary correction by officers of Assembly. **Assembly agreed.**

Address to the Throne

The Revd Alasdair Pratt, the immediate past Moderator, presented the Address to the Throne:

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church now meeting at the University of Glamorgan in Trefforest sends loyal greetings to Your Majesty. We give gratitude to God for all the service you have rendered to our nation during the fifty-two years of Your Majesty's reign.

The situation in Iraq continues to provide a backdrop to our proceedings. While we still question the wisdom and morality of the invasion of the country last year we welcome recent moves towards the establishment of an independent, democratic state. We pray that this will soon enable the Iraqi people to enjoy the peace, stability and security for which they have yearned for so long.

We also remain troubled by the so-called 'war on terror' and are unconvinced that it can succeed without a concomitant war on injustice. Our conviction is that lasting peace and stability are more likely to flow from a dismantling of the structures which perpetuate injustice or division than from violence and aggression.

Many of our churches participate enthusiastically in our overseas aid and development programme, Commitment for Life, which supports vital work in several 'third world' countries. One of these, Zimbabwe, remains one of the most troubled regions of the Commonwealth, and a delegation from the United Reformed Church recently visited projects we support there and shared with the wider Church their reflections on the situation.

Our commitment to justice inspires us to campaign for

- significant changes to the rules governing multilateral trade;
- remission of the debts which burden many of the world's poorest countries; and
- an increase in the proportion of GDP we give as a nation to the developing world.

Last year in our Assembly we pledged our commitment to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and this year we have been reminded of the tremendous opportunities to make progress toward these Goals that will present themselves next year when the UK hosts a Summit of G8 leaders and assumes the presidency of the European Union. The United Reformed Church will play a full part in the campaigns co-ordinated by charities, agencies and churches in 2005 to see real advances made towards eliminating the evil of material poverty and starvation from the two-thirds of the world where they are still features of every day life.

In this country, many of our churches provide an invaluable means of support, encouragement and help in their local community. Particularly where people experience alienation, hostility and discrimination, churches can offer material and spiritual resources to enable them to cope and even to reverse the process. To assist churches to engage in their communities we have produced a resource pack and video, 'Assets for Life', which we pray will be widely used by our own and sister churches. 'Assets for Life' was formally launched at our Assembly by the Rt Hon John Battle MP, the Prime Minister's envoy to the churches and faith communities.

Just as Jesus announced that he had come to bring 'good news to the poor' so we seek to be in prayerful and practical solidarity with all who suffer want in this world of plenty. With other people of faith we believe passionately that all men, women and children are of equal worth and dignity in the sight of God and should have every opportunity to reflect in their lives their status as people created in God's image. This leads us to stand particularly alongside those seeking asylum in the UK who, for fear of the consequences, cannot return to their home.

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

We have the honour to remain your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects.

Revd Sheila Maxey
Moderator

Revd Dr David Cornick
General Secretary

The Assembly approved the address

Moderator Elect

The Moderator-elect, the Revd Dr David Peel, addressed the Assembly.

Vote of Thanks

Mr Bill Robson thanked the National Synod of Wales for its welcome and hospitality, and assured members of a warm welcome to the West Midlands Synod in 2005.

The Moderator thanked those who had been involved in the administration of the Assembly.

The General Secretary thanked the Moderator for her conduct of the Assembly's business.

Closing Worship

The General Secretary formally announced that the Assembly had completed its business and would adjourn to meet as agreed at the University of Warwick on 2nd July 2005 or at such other place or on such other date as may be necessary.

Appendix I

Report of Assembly Commissions

1. There have been three hearings since Assembly met in 2003. In one, a decision was reached by the Commission meeting on March 18th 2004 that the Revd Emyr Evans name be removed from the Roll of Ministers. In the second, although the Commission found that a breach of discipline had occurred, it decided that a written warning was sufficient. In the third, the minister's name was retained on the Roll of Ministers.
2. The costs incurred in the three cases were £3,975.
3. In a fourth case, although the minister was convicted of a serious offence in February 2003, and is now serving a prison sentence, the Commission's proceedings have been adjourned for over a year, pending the outcome of an appeal.

Appendix 2

Catch the Vision

The report of the 'Catch the vision' Steering Group to the General Assembly 2004

[We apologise to Assembly that our report was not available for printing with the Book of Reports and has had to be circulated separately. The research that we have been undertaking has only been completed within the last few days, and is critical to the report, and therefore to Assembly's understanding of the true circumstances of the church. We hope that it will arrive in time for members to consider it prior to the planned debate.]

1. Our remit

1.1 The remit given us by Mission Council, '...urgently and radically to re-think the Church's priorities, programmes and processes..' (Minutes 02/97) is daunting in its magnitude, and we are deeply aware of both the privilege and responsibility given to us. We are also profoundly grateful to all those who responded to us with such openness and creativity. We received over 900 responses to the questionnaire as well as many letters and e-mails, and the correspondence was so vast that we were unable to enter into individual conversations. However, we wish formally to record our thanks to the church in this report.

2. Vision and the vision statement

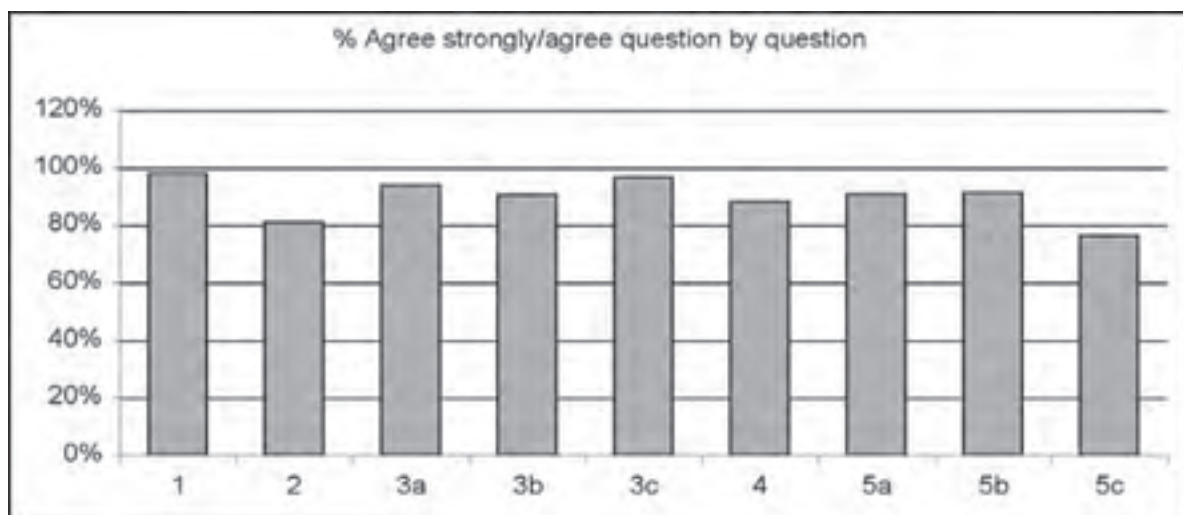
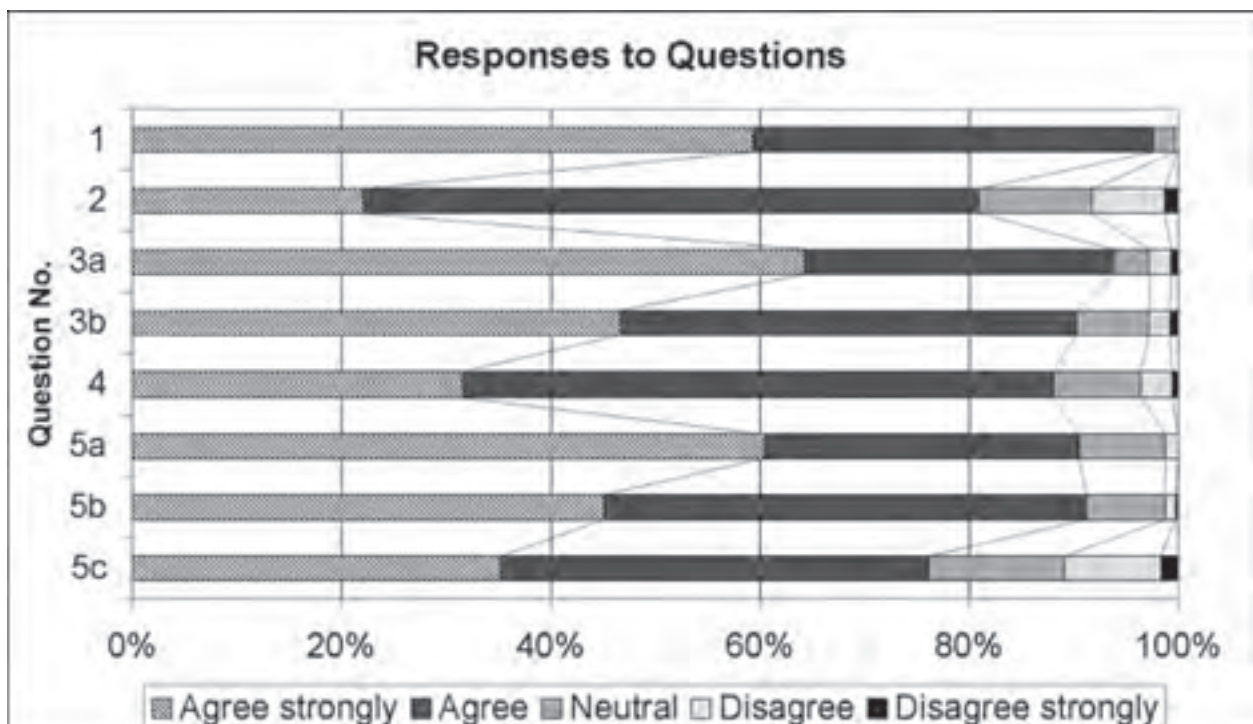
2.1 Consultation has been at the heart of the way we have worked. After the October 2002 Mission Council which set us up, we performed our version of a strengths, weaknesses and opportunities analysis on people in key roles - Moderators, Synod Clerks, Committee Conveners, Church House Secretaries, District Secretaries, M & M Conveners, Mission Enablers and FURY Council. We crunched the returns and produced a list of significant issues that had been identified as needing attention. That formed the basis of a pastoral letter sent to churches and ministers in December 2002, opening up a broader conversation. We then asked the October 2003 Mission Council to dream dreams of the church they'd like to see, and we added that to our database. It was that accumulation of insights, dreams and hopes which formed the quarry for the vision statement which we produced later that month at Windermere. A vision statement responds to the moment. It is therefore necessarily provisional. It allows us to glimpse the future, but does not preclude the creation of new visions.

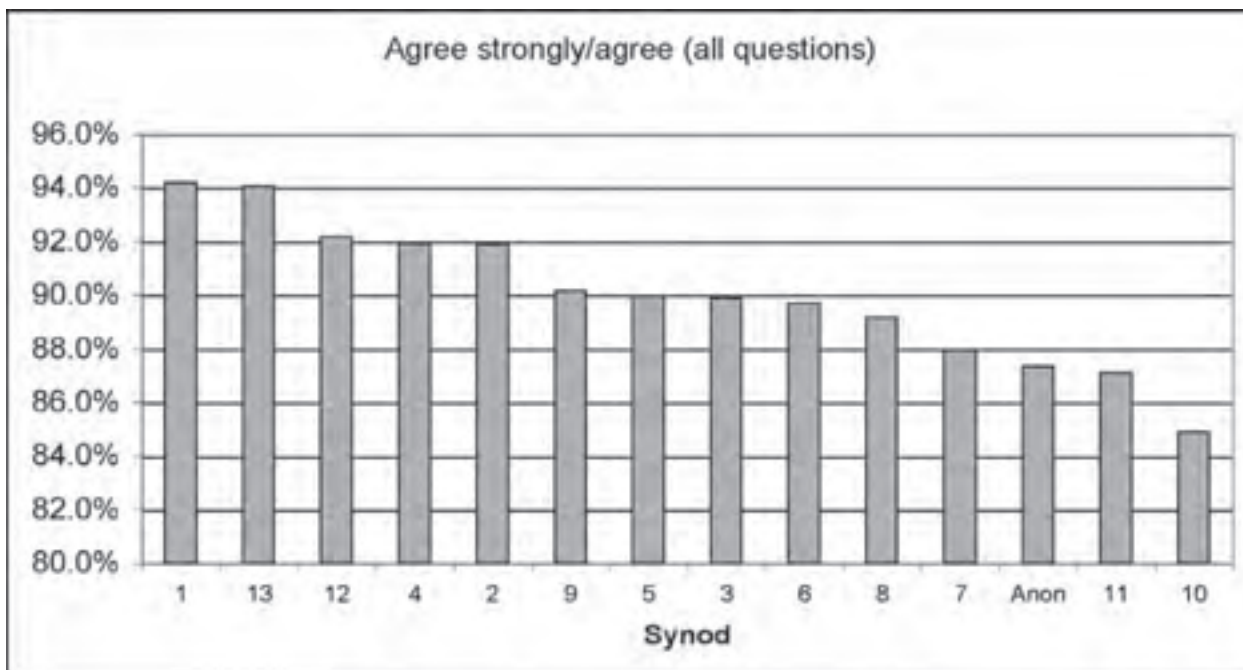
2.2 The vision statement is not a statement of faith; we have a perfectly good one. It was not a mission statement; we adopted the Five Marks of Mission as part of the 'Growing Up' report at our 1999 Assembly. Nor was it a statement of ecumenical principle; we had, after all, accepted the Three Ecumenical Principles at the 2001 Assembly. It was rather, an attempt to articulate what we had heard the church saying to us, and to provide a common vision to which we could assent. The responses to the questionnaire show that it has served that purpose.

2.2.1 The responses were overwhelmingly positive, as the graphs below indicate:

Summary of questions:

1. In practical terms, to remain where we are is not an option.
2. It is our goal to become a vibrant and sustainable faith community in the next 10 years.
- 3a We are called by God to be a church which is centred upon the gospel and the proclamation of its message of freedom and justice.
- 3b We are called to be diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible.
- 3c We will seek, visibly and recognisably, to make a difference to our communities and our society, in the name of Jesus Christ.
4. Achieving our goal will require sacrifices and pruning.
- 5a We will become less bureaucratic.
- 5b We will become more ecumenically focused.
- 5c We will become more reliant on lay leadership.





- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Northern | 7. Eastern |
| 2. North Western | 8. South Western |
| 3. Mersey | 9. Wessex |
| 4. Yorkshire | 10. Thames North |
| 5. East Midlands | 11. Southern |
| 6. West Midlands | 12. Wales |
| | 13. Scotland |

2.2.2 We were grateful to those who acted as Synod listeners for spending a day with us and helping us see the nuances of those responses, and to the many correspondents who wrote in some detail to us about individual words and phrases. The statement was written as a catalyst. Our report and analysis is based on those responses. We rejoice that the statement has helped reveal a broad consensus that allows us to see a way ahead together. However, the range of theological responses we received suggested to us that altering the odd word would be unlikely to result in a universally acceptable statement. So, we have taken note of the comments made, rejoiced in some of the alternatives proposed, and offer the following version, cast in the form of prayer:

May the Spirit of the Lord rest upon us
 may the call of God sustain us
 as we seek to be Christ's people,
 transformed by the gospel
 announcing good news to the poor
 proclaiming freedom for those in prisons of wealth, poverty, disease and disorder
 committed to making a difference
 to the world's kingdoms
 as we live Christ's kingdom.

May we will deploy our resources as the Spirit guides,
 not shirk difficult decisions about the priorities of mission,
 pledge ourselves anew to work with all our fellow Christians
 and use the gifts of all God's people
 so that all may be filled with the Spirit of healing, justice and peace. Amen

3. Growth and decline

3.1 We are people with a vision because we are Jesus people; wonderfully, inextricably, mystically caught up in the life of the living Christ, dealing daily with the possibilities opened up by his resurrection. We are 'in Christ' people and communities, and it is that which makes us different, and it is that which allows us to 'make a difference'. The difference we make is not us but Jesus. The question is whether we are bold enough, courageous enough, sacrificial enough live on the resurrection edge. When we do, remarkable things can happen. Asylum seekers can be welcomed as friends. Racism can be cast away. Drug dependency can be stopped. The unemployed can find work. Violence can be met with gentleness, darkness with light. Lives can be changed and saints made. We know that can happen because we have seen it. It is the freedom Christ brings, the justice for which God craves.

3.2 The call of the vision statement is not new. It has been made over and over again in the history of the church – not least within our own traditions. It is the call for the church to be the church, to discover its true self, to be reformed more fully in its Christlikeness. In a post-Christian age that means being distinctively and uncomfortably different, living 'otherness' or what we might call 'dissent'. It might also mean being church in a radically different way. To speak of the church being 'diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible' is description rather than prescription. Britain, especially in its great metropolises, is multi-cultural. In London now the majority of churchgoers are black. We are challenged by diversity – of cultures, ethnicities, talent and theology, and we need to celebrate that and delight in what it teaches us of God's richness. We are, in some places, blessed with liveliness, a joyful, dynamic engagement with the gospel and the communities in which we live. The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand recently published some commissioned research on non-churchgoers' attitudes to church, and discovered that church is seen '...as a place for needy people – not people like our participants who feel their lives are full and do not wish to be seen as needy.' (the report can be accessed at www.presbyterian.org.nz.2032.0.html). Inclusivity is about people of every ethnicity and culture, gifting and ability - the needy - finding themselves 'in Christ'.

3.2.1 The churches of these islands have been in gradual decline for the best part of a century. Our experience is little different to our ecumenical partners. English Presbyterianism's membership peaked in 1914, English Congregationalism's in 1915, the Churches of Christ in 1932. If the measure is not absolute membership but the percentage of the population who are Christian, the decline in English and Welsh Christianity began in the mid 19th century. That trend has continued in the United Reformed Church; the gentle attrition of losing 2.5 - 3.5% of your membership each year. This is a difficult land in which to be faithful, and we should encourage and nurture those who are still there, not castigate them for failure. In ancient Israel it was not the faithful who were called to repent but the faithless nation.

3.2.2 The Churches Information for Mission Church Life profile showed us that we have roughly a third more members in the 63+ age bracket than the aggregate of churches surveyed. That statistic needs to be interpreted carefully because the aggregate included new and black-led churches which have very different age profiles to the historic denominations, and it reflects national demographics – there simply are more older people in society. Our profile is not markedly different to that of the other historic denominations. We do not wish to be understood as 'ageist'. We are aware of the remarkable leadership that 'grey power' exercises in the church. However, if our age pattern is projected on 20 years it soon becomes clear that we will then be half the size we are now. Some of our correspondents have taken us to task for managing decline rather than encouraging growth. We remain unrepentant. Decline must be managed for the sake of growth. If ignored, it will overwhelm.

3.2.3 Growth and decline are strange creatures. We have received plenty of advice and been pointed to countless programmes which we are assured will result in church growth – a sort of infallible John Innes compost for churches. Whilst we do not doubt the value of these programmes, we doubt if one programme will fit all churches. Our own research shows that between 1999 and 2004 there has been no decline in the URC membership in 328 churches, no decline in the number of regular attenders in 570 churches, and that the average attendance at worship has remained constant at the main service in 440 churches (25.9%). Our analysis of growing churches shows that 9% of our churches grew 1997-2002, most by ones and twos rather than tens and twenties, although there are exceptions. We need to be careful about this research too. That kind of growth pattern may have been present throughout the long arc of decline, we simply do not know. We asked the Moderators to tell us the stories of these churches, and each one was different. We could see no pattern of ministry, demography, theological style or leadership grouping that was common to them all. We (lame?) conclude that the Holy Spirit defied academic analysis, and we rejoice that there is good news to be heard. Reports of our death have been greatly exaggerated.

4. Being church differently

4.1 What does it mean to be 'in Christ' in this new, strange landscape? How can we go on being God's faithful ones, telling the story of Jesus Christ, living resurrection life? This is a time of transition, a movement of cultures. Modernism is dead, but it is as yet unclear what will replace it. In some places traditional, institutional church as we know it will continue to thrive, but elsewhere new forms of being church are coming into being, defined by people and networks rather than buildings, occasionally sharing in large worship events, but for the most part meeting in cells. Not many are in the United Reformed Church, and if there was one sadness about the responses to catch the vision, it was that little imagination is abroad about different ways of being church and different ways of using ministry. One question which must be faced is whether our structures inhibit such experiment. The age of 'Christendom' has passed. We can no longer assume knowledge of the Christian story, still less that people have any understanding of church. Like the early church, we are in an environment of mission, and mission is about finding connections with cultures and societies. In some places and cases that will mean fostering new, imaginative, 'alternative' ways of being church. That can sound threatening and difficult, but we should rejoice that at least in one part of our life we have succeeded remarkably in doing that.

4.2 In May there was a gathering of 6,000 Pilots and their leaders at Legoland – probably the biggest Christian youth event in Britain this year. Pilots is a new way of being church for children and young people mid-week. It has caught the mood, found a way of being church differently. 91% of Pilots attend Pilots every week. It has brought many children, young people and families into the Christian family who would not otherwise be there. It also reveals a trend which is seen elsewhere in the Christian communion in Britain – a move away from a Sunday to a mid-week focus of Christian commitment. When we come to think about how to be church differently, we need to remember that by the grace of God, we can do it, and we've done it. We can live and thrive in God's to-morrow.

5. Where your treasure is...

5.1 If we are to do so, we must deploy our resources well. The underlying equation that surrounds our finances is well known. An ageing and reducing membership is expected to meet ever-increasing costs. If we are to deploy our resources to serve God's to-morrow, we need to manage those resources well. We therefore decided that it was important that we conducted serious research into the financial position of the church. To our surprise no complete picture of the church's finances had ever been drawn. We are deeply indebted to our colleague Eric Chilton, the Church's Treasurer, and his colleagues for rectifying that. We are conscious that more work needs to be done, but for the first time we can catch a glimpse of the whole. The results surprised us, and were available so late in our process that we have had little time to assimilate them and analyse their meaning. We therefore simply lay them on the table.

5.2 Local churches

5.2.1 From a representative sample of churches in each Synod a picture of the overall income and expenditure of local churches for 2002 has been obtained. It is estimated that the total income of churches is in the region of £61.5 million per annum. This comprises the following principal items:

Giving including gift aid	£ 30.6 million	(49.8%)
Interest and dividends	£ 2.8 million	(4.5%)
Rentals and lettings	£ 13.5 million	(22.0%)
Other (includes charity giving) *	£ 14.6 million	(23.7%)

* this includes special fund raising, Commitment for Life, legacies etc.

The total expenditure of churches is estimated to be in the region of £57.2 million and the individual items are:

M & M (including District/Synod fees)	£ 21.7 million	(38.0%)
Payments to other denominations (LEP's)	£ 1.4 million	(2.5%)
Ministerial expenses	£ 4.3 million	(7.5%)
Church costs	£ 9.5 million	(16.5%)
Maintenance of buildings	£ 8.0 million	(14.0%)
Other **	£ 12.3 million	(21.5%)

** includes contras to income like Commitment for Life

5.2.2 Several conclusions can be drawn from the sample.

- a) The giving per member of smaller churches is generally greater than in larger churches.
- b) M & M contributions vary considerably as a percentage of the total income of churches, but in more than 70% of churches it is covered by giving.
- c) Under half of local churches income is spent on ministry.
- d) Rentals and lettings generally go a long way to meeting overheads and in some churches do so.

5.2.3 Churches were also asked for the capital value of property and investments. Although it is difficult to estimate the market value of property, insurance cover valuations were used as indicative of the replacement cost of church buildings. In the case of manses, either insurance cover or known market values was used. The total capital value given by the 113 churches in the sample was £94.1 million comprising

Churches including halls, schoolrooms	£ 75.7 million
Manses	£ 9.8 million
Reserve funds in banks, building societies	£ 5.5 million
Gilts and equities	£ 1.3 million
Other property	£ 1.8 million

If this is fully representative of all local churches their total capital is in the region of £1425 million of which manses are worth at least £148 million and reserve funds and investments amount to £103 million.

5.3 Districts and Areas

District/Area revenue income and expenditure is much less and varies very considerably. Some Districts have considerable investments from which a strong income stream is derived but most rely on fees from local churches or grants from Synods. Districts with a turnover of more than £5000 were asked to make a return and some under that figure did so as well. The 17 District returns showed that a total income of £281k. per annum made up of

Fees from churches	£ 70699	(25.2%)
Interest and dividends on investments	£ 57002	(20.2%)
Rentals	£ 10745	(3.8%)
Other (including grants from Synods)	£ 143029	(50.8%)

The total expenditure of £300k. comprised

Training	£ 10827	(3.6%)
Development	£ 45867	(15.3%)
Administration inc. Trust & Property work	£ 48783	(16.2%)
Grants to churches	£ 93867	(31.3%)
Other inc. Synod fees, Pulpit supply, travel	£ 101030	(33.6%)

Very little capital is held by most Districts apart from modest reserves. Exceptionally some Districts have a manse and substantial reserve funds and investments. These amounted to £2.5 million.

5.4 Synods

Synod income is mostly from investments with some levying contributions from local churches.

Expenditure in 2002 was £9.87 million of which £4.298 million was on revenue expenditure

Grants to local churches - for people	£349k.
Grants to local churches - projects	£572k.
Training	£534k.
Other Mission Activities e.g. Development	£1104k.
Support Activities	£1739k.

and the remainder, largely grants to local churches for buildings and manses, could be regarded as capital expenditure.

5.5 Overall revenue income and expenditure of the Church

Using the figures obtained together with those in the central accounts for 2002, a general picture of the annual income and expenditure of the Church can be estimated. Internal transfers like M & M contributions, fees and Commitment for Life have been eliminated as far as possible.

Income	£'000
Local churches	61.500
Districts - interest and rentals	70
Synods - say	4.300
Central - investments, grants, legacies etc.	2.604
Total	£68.474 million

Expenditure	Ministry £'000	Training £'000	Other Mission £'000	Support £'000	Total £'000
Local churches	4.300		562*	30.638	35.500
Districts		11	46	150	207
Synods		534	2.025	1.739	4.298
Central	16.354	1.840	1.706	2.066	21.966
Total	20.654 (33.3%)	2.385 (3.8%)	4.339 (7.0%)	34.593 (55.8%)	61.971

*Commitment for Life

The positive position is largely the result of local churches apparent surplus of £4.2 million.

5.6 Summary of our financial resources

5.6.1 The income of local churches is estimated at £61.5 million per annum, of which half comes from giving. The largest call on that income is M & M and ministerial expenses (45.5%), well under 50%. The costs of running and maintaining local church buildings is a heavy drain on resources and is close to the M & M commitment.

5.6.2 Ministry and Training rightly emerge as the major focus of all Church costs although they only represent 37% of our expenditure. Most Synods and some Districts have investments which produce considerable additional income. This facilitates their work and reduces the call on local churches. However it is worth noting that Synod and District expenditure on Other Mission and Support matches central expenditure.

5.6.3 It is impossible to be precise about capital and in fact little might be served by knowing more in the short term. Church buildings and manses are part of our stock in trade and investments are often restricted funds which have been raised for specific objects. Thus time is needed to arrange the redeployment of capital to meet changing mission goals. However what is clear is the considerable capital value in the Church and thus the opportunity to meet new challenges identified by our vision.

6. The church we long to be

6.1 The responses to the questionnaire reveal to us the kind of church that we would like to be, and therefore the broad areas that need attention if we are to enter God's tomorrow as confident servants.

6.2. The overwhelming support given to the goal that we become a vibrant and sustainable faith community within ten years was accompanied by two main caveats. The first was that the time scale was too generous. We agree that the questions before us are urgent, but we feel that too few of our respondents actually understood the legal processes that Assembly has to adopt to encompass wide-ranging change. Should any change require the alteration of the Basis and Structure, the matter must be referred to Synods under paragraph 3(1) of the structure. So, should a resolution which necessitates such a change be

presented to Assembly in 2005, it would need to be sent to Synods for discussion, and come back to the 2006 Assembly for ratification. Only then could the change be implemented. Given those realities, and the fact that reports to Assembly about changes in our life will be presented to consecutive Assemblies, a time-scale of ten years seems realistic rather than generous.

6.2.1. The second caveat was strongly articulated at the Synod listeners' day, and is far more significant. We were very pleasantly surprised by the strength of the opinion that far from seeking to be a sustainable community, the United Reformed Church should do all that it can to pursue the vision of its Basis of Union, paragraph 8, and '...take, wherever possible and with all speed, further steps towards the unity of all God's people.' The strength of that opinion was in our view such that we could not ignore it. We see the goals of sustainability and ecumenism as complementary rather than contradictory, for our ecumenical experience since 1972 has taught us the virtues of patience and serendipity. However, in the light of the views expressed to us we bring the following resolution:

Resolution 41

'General Assembly affirms its commitment to paragraph 8 of its Basis of Union, and instructs the Ecumenical Committee to form a small working party to assess what possibilities exist for the United Reformed Church to '...take further steps towards the unity of all God's people' and to report back to Mission Council and the 2005 Assembly.'

6.3. There is widespread agreement that our conciliar structure is too complex and in some places is impeding rather than enabling mission. In some parts of the church structures have fallen into abeyance because there simply are not the people to service them. Several Synods have begun to re-consider their structures. The question of the size and frequency of Assembly has also been raised, not least by the Assembly Arrangements Committee. So too has the size and style of Mission Council. These questions revolve around a central question. Do we wish to be a federation of 13 synods (which have grown in power and influence in our history) or a connexional church? The perennial question of the nature of ecumenical boundaries, particularly in relation to regionalisation, is also 'live'. We have therefore commissioned a working group under the convenership of the Revd John Oldershaw, and including all the Synod Clerks, to consider the conciliar structure of the church and bring a report and recommendations to the 2005 Assembly. It is our hope that these proposals may result in both a more mission-focused organisation, and in considerable cost savings. We believe that this will be a critical and significant report.

6.3.1 We are not persuaded that all that hinders the mission of the church is to be found in the wider structures of the church. A host of questions cluster around the life of the local church. We are aware, for example, of a dramatic range of practice in both the frequency and style of Church Meeting across the denomination, and questions are also being raised about the role of membership in an age which shuns 'belonging'. We believe that we should consider anew what structures we need within the local church, and bring the following resolution:

Resolution 42

'General Assembly requests the Life and Witness Committee to consider the ways in which the local church should be structured in the United Reformed Church, and to bring a report to the 2006 Assembly.'

6.4. The work of the Assembly is presently carried out through the central committees of the Church and the Assembly Offices at Church House. We believe that the Catch the Vision process should evaluate that work and its costings, and explore what possibilities there might be for the organisation of Assembly's work. However, we are persuaded that this should follow rather than precede the work that has begun on the conciliar structures of the church. The reasons for that are two-fold. First, the relationship between the councils of the church needs to be defined before it can be decided what work is done where. Second, once that relationship has been defined, consideration needs to be given to what is done where and by whom. Third, we need to consider whether committees are the most appropriate way to deliver that work, or whether some alternative mode of activity would produce better results (eg. Programme Directors working with networks of the committed).

6.4.1 The work of Church House will happen in response to those decisions. Many of our correspondents suffer from two misconceptions about Church House. They think that it is either a black hole or a goldmine. It is a black hole down which ministers disappear who ought to be serving the church in other ways. Assembly should therefore note that there are presently eight ministers employed on Assembly posts in Church House, c.1% of our total stipendiary workforce. The rest of our Assembly staff are lay people. That is a significant shift in employment patterns over the past 5-10 years, and its implications are considerable. Nor, sadly, is the office a goldmine. The options that would be before the church would be relocation, development on the existing site, or the possibility of working towards combining offices with another denomination or ecumenical agency. These are being investigated and a report will be made to Mission Council and Assembly in due season. Assembly should note, however, that our preliminary investigations suggest that the costs of relocation would outweigh the benefits, and that we have also begun active consideration of the two other options.

6.4.2 We feel it right that we should pay tribute to those who work in Church House, in both Assembly-appointed and support roles. These are unsettling and difficult times, and Assembly needs to know that the staff there are entirely focused on the flourishing of the United Reformed Church through their own fields of expertise. We trust that the church in its turn will respect the staff's integrity and treat them with proper consideration.

7. Ministry and the numbers' game

7.1. Two areas of work that are interconnected and require further work are ministry and spirituality/discipleship. They are critical to 'Catch the Vision', for they can help us become what we are called to be, Christ's people in God's tomorrow. The responses to the Vision Statement indicate that we want to be a church 'centred on the gospel', a church that 'makes a difference' in Christ's name in the communities we serve. To achieve that we are willing to make sacrifices, so that we can 'release power to places where mission is done'.

7.2. Careful consideration needs to be given to the number of churches in the United Reformed Church, and the number of ministers who serve those churches.

	Members	Churches	Ministers
1972	200,000	2,080	1,841
2004	84,963	1,698	1,112*
Reduction	57%	26%	39.59%

(*these are notoriously complex figures: this figure includes stipendiary ministers, non- stipendiary ministers, ministers of other denominations serving the URC and active CRCWs)

This table shows that whilst the reduction of the number of ministers roughly tracks that of our membership (it is even more obvious if just the number of stipendiary ministers, (997 is used for the 2004 figure) the number of churches has declined at about half that rate. Many of our respondents perceive this to be the root of our problems. There are those who argue that we have too many church buildings. There are those who argue that we ought to sell a good number of our buildings to finance new ways of being church. There are those who argue that we have too few ministers. There are those who argue that we have too many ministers.

7.2.1 We are clear that this is a complex area which deserves dispassionate analysis and careful thought. We note that the argument for selling buildings which have outlasted their mission potential is compelling. God's people are, after all, on pilgrimage to 'no abiding city'. However, discerning the mission potential of a church is a far more difficult exercise. There is good anecdotal evidence that even the most unlikely dead bones can experience resurrection, and solid statistical evidence that closing churches results in a loss of membership rather than its transfer. We are conscious that the assessment of the missionary viability of buildings is a matter for districts and synods, and that no 'national' strategy will be able to replicate local knowledge.

7.3. We are conscious that the Ministries Committee have undertaken and will continue to undertake a great deal of work on the nature of ministry. In this complex matter of the relationship between churches and ministers and the nature of deployment, we would wish to start with two theological principles -

ministers exist to enable the church to be the church, and the church exists to participate in God's mission in the world. It is that agenda that should determine the way in which ministers are deployed. We respect the many voices telling us that spreading ministry thinly like jam hinders mission and harms ministers. We also hear the cry of ministers who want to be ministers of Word and Sacraments, not middle managers, team leaders or fellowship trainers. We have a profound sympathy with the theological principle behind that cry because it speaks of the importance of rootedness and taking community seriously. Historically most of our congregations have parochial instincts, even if those instincts were formed by rejection from the parochial system in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A residue of that theology informed the brave decision in 1972 that every church should contribute to the cost of ministry and every church receive ministry. Communities are important and churches 'belong' within their communities. That is where their participation in God's mission is focused.

7.3.1. The 'golden age' of the single pastorate is actually an historical myth (at least in England and Wales). If Presbyterian churches were not viable, presbyteries shut them down. Within Congregationalism there were large churches who were never without a minister, except during interregnums (what a telling word!), yet also plenty of smaller churches who never knew full-time ministry. The Churches of Christ, of course, had a completely different pattern of ministry. We still have the most generous minister-member ratio of any mainstream British denomination, although it does not feel like that to most ministers and most congregations. However, we should listen acutely to what this feeling tells us about our present understanding of ministry and practice of deployment.

7.3.2. In reality, the number of options before us is limited, and dependent on the will of the church. If the church decides it needs more ministers, we could increase the number of stipendiary ministers/CRCWs. Giving to the Ministry and Mission Fund would have to increase proportionately. We could propose a strategy of altering the balance between the number of stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministers/CRCWs. That would depend on an increase in vocations to non-stipendiary ministry. Those are the only ways in which our ministerial work force can be increased.

7.3.3. The remaining options are to reduce the number of congregations in the denomination (see above 6.5.3), revisit the principle agreed in 1972 that every church should contribute to the cost of ministry and every church receive ministry, or develop a different pattern of ministry which relies on integrating the ministries of ministers, CRCWs, elders and others. We do not believe that the solutions to this conundrum will be easily achieved. The underlying question of what pattern of ministry is appropriate for the United Reformed Church in the next decades remains. We have worked closely with the Ministries Committee this year as they have developed 'Equipping the Saints'. We welcome their detailed work, and recommend to Assembly that they take responsibility from the Catch the Vision Steering Group for future work on ministry, whilst maintaining their close working and consultative relationship with the Group.

7.3.4. However, we ask Assembly and the Ministries Committee to note that the response to our proposition 5(c) that we become more dependent on lay leadership was the least well-received part of the vision statement. We understand the anxieties raised in the minds of our respondents by that proposition. We had deliberately used the words loosely, to encompass the many kinds of lay leadership already being exercised in the church. That was not clearly understood, and that is our fault. We have considerable sympathy with those respondents who told us that lay leaders (of all kinds) are already giving all that they can. We know from our own experience of that remarkable commitment. Other respondents told us that reliance on lay leadership should not be at the expense of ministry (both stipendiary and non-stipendiary), or that the work of volunteers should not be at the expense of paid professionals. We readily concur. Any future work needs to attend thoughtfully to those voices. We do not believe that we have heard any unwillingness to develop lay leadership, but we do believe that we have heard a significant affirmation of the ministry of Word and Sacraments and CRCWs within the life of the church. Whilst it might be fashionable in some circles to dismiss such a feeling as 'conservative' or 'old model', we demur from that judgement. Any future pattern of ministry needs to appreciate both the depth of emotional attachment, and the instinctive theological perception of the importance of the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments to the well-being of God's people.

8. The heart of the matter - spirituality and discipleship

8.1 God's people are disciples, called to participate in God's mission in their own particular space and time. We detect a yearning for a renewal of spirituality and discipleship at the heart of the church. Clare Short concluded her prophetic speech at the 2003 Assembly by saying, 'This is a time for all good people, and people of faith, and people who are inspired by the teachings of Jesus Christ to mean it, to take it into the mainstream, to move our societies and to move our world forward.' The responses to our process echo that. We believe that this is at the heart of 'Catch the vision'. Within our traditions that sense of discipleship was traditionally expressed through the concept of church membership. We note with interest that according to the Year Book, a third of regular worshippers are not church members, and we hear anecdotal evidence of the Church Meeting being but a pale shadow of its former self. Sociologists point to a crisis of 'belonging' in Western Europe, and our experience may well be a manifestation of that reality.

8.2. We are a people varied in theology and style, but as we have responded to the questionnaire and struggled to put into words what is most important to us, we have shown that there is a passion for Christ abroad in this church, and a deep desire to 'make a difference' for his sake. That needs to be translated into the realities of discipleship, spirituality and mission. We know that much more work is needed here, and we have no idea what the outcome will be, but we have a vision. It is of the United Reformed Church focused around making that difference, alive to God in worship, creative in discipleship, risk-taking in its use of resources. We do not believe that 'one size will fit all', but we dare to believe that evangelists and community regenerators, radical liberals and charismatic conservatives, alternative church proponents and traditional church champions, contemplatives and activists can together discover what it might mean for this church to take mission seriously in our strange yet hopeful context. We ask Assembly to allow us to work further on this during the course of this year, and to bring a report to the 2005 Assembly.

9. Celebrate – for God's sake!

9.1 We know that this report has been eagerly awaited, and that the church has been generous in the way it has given of itself in responding to our questionnaires, statements and conversations. We hope that Assembly will be encouraged and stimulated by the discovering we have made in the course of this year, and that we will set out on the next stages of this pilgrimage with expectation. There are indeed realities with which we must cope, and we have attempted to be honest about them, but there is also much to encourage us. There are areas where there is growth. There are even greater areas where there is no decline. We are more successful than we think at alternative ways of being church if we take our work with Pilots as seriously as we should. Our ecumenical commitment is still passionate, and may yet bear fruit. Most significantly of all, however, we are a church blessed with considerable resources. That means that if we have the will, we can follow the Way.

Resolution 43

Assembly notes the actions taken by the Catch the Vision Steering Group and endorses its report.

Resolution 44

Assembly instructs the Steering Group to prepare appropriate worship material for local churches considering the 'Catch the Vision' report, and to include the prayer of commitment in paragraph 2.2.2

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