



General Assembly 2006

Exeter University

July 7th-10th



ASSEMBLY RECORD

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

For Consideration *
For Action X

Resolution Number	Annual Reports	Assembly Record		Local Churches	District Councils	Synods
15	48	20	Charity Trusts	*	*	*
18	59	21	Church Magazines	*		
17	56	25	Peacemaking	*		*
14	48	36	Listed Buildings			X
47	136	49	Changes to Basis			X
64		50	Amendment to Structure			X
9	43	58	Amendments to Section O			X
57	87	62	Ministry and Mission Fund Review			*



The
United
Reformed
Church

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



Minutes of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH 2006

Friday, 7th July 2006

First Session

Constitution of Assembly

At 3.30 pm. members of Assembly met in the Great Hall on the Streatham campus at the University of Exeter. The Moderator, the Revd Dr David Peel constituted the Assembly with prayer, the place and the time having been duly appointed.

Induction of Moderator

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell, 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 David and Mrs Pat Peel together with Revd Jill Thornton, his chaplain.

Assembly then continued in worship, after which the Moderator gave her address to Assembly.

The Roll of Assembly was then placed on the table.

Moderator:	Revd Elizabeth Caswell
Clerk:	Revd James Breslin
General Secretary:	Revd Dr David Cornick
Deputy General Secretary:	Revd Ray 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 Humphreys

Conveners of General Assembly Standing Committees and Task Groups:

Assembly Arrangements:	Mr William McVey
Church and Society:	Revd Martin Camroux
Communications and Editorial:	Revd Martin Hazell
Doctrine, Prayer & Worship:	Revd Dr Susan Durber
Ecumenical/International:	Revd Elizabeth Nash
Equal Opportunities:	Revd Wilf Bahadur
Finance:	Mr Eric Chilton
Interfaith Relations:	Revd Dr John Parry
Life and Witness:	Revd Brian Jolly
Ministries:	Mr John Ellis
Mission Council:	Revd Dr David Peel
Nominations:	Revd Principal Stephen Orchard
Pastoral Reference:	Revd Keith Forecast
Racial Justice & Multi Cultural Ministries:	Revd Andrew Prasad
Training:	Revd John Humphreys
Youth & Children's Work:	Revd Kathryn Price

Synod Clerks:

I	Revd John Durrell
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	Dr Jim Merrilees

Additional Synod Representatives:

I	
II	Revd Susan Armitage, Mr Lawrence Moore
III	Mr Richard Lathaen, Revd John Oldershaw, Mrs Sally Buttifant
IV	
V	Mrs Margaret Gateley
VI	Revd Anthony Howells, Mr Chris Basterfield, Mrs Melanie Frew
VII	Revd Deborah McVey, Mrs Linda Harrison
VIII	Revd Peter Henderson, Revd Paul Snell
IX	
X	
XI	Revd Susan Henderson, Miss Louisa Weeks
XII	
XIII	Revd Jan Adamson, Revd John Smith, Revd Mary Taylor, Mr Barclay Bannister, Mr Stewart Cutler, Mrs Irene Merilees, Mr Craig Jesson, Mr Patrick Smyth, Ms Jen Wilson

Synod Treasurers:

I	Revd David Walton	VIII	Revd Richard Gray
II	Mr Gordon Eccles	IX	Mr David Butler
III	Mr Andrew Martlew	X	Mr Michael Gould
IV	Mrs Margaret Atkinson	XI	Revd John Waller
V	Revd Richard Turnbull	XII	Mr Paul Roberts
VI	Revd Roger Woodall	XIII	Mr Tom Woodbridge
VII	Mr Clifford Patten		

Theological College Representatives:

Mansfield College	Revd Dr Walter Houston	Mr Richard Howard
Northern College	Revd Dr John Campbell	Ms Patricia Oliver
Queen's College	Revd Michael Jagessar	Mr Andrew Mann
Scottish College	Revd Jack Dyce	Ms Zam Walker
Westminster College	Revd Dr Janet Tollington	Ms Ann Sheldon

Youth representatives: Miss Sara Paton, Miss Isobel Simmons

Assembly Members from Other Churches in the United Kingdom:

Baptist Union of Great Britain	Mrs Jacqui Keenan
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales	Dame Anne Doyle
Church of Scotland	Revd Alister Goss
Churches Together in England	Ms Jenny Bond
Congregational Federation	Revd Christopher Damp
International Ministerial Council of Great Britain	Rt Revd Onye Obika
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Revd Dr Donald Watts
Presbyterian Church of Wales	Mr Eric Ellaway
The Church of England	Mrs Anne Foreman
The Methodist Church	Revd Peter Sulston
The Moravian Church	Revd Edward Sanniez
The World Council of Churches	Revd Dr Deenabandhu Manchala
Union of Welsh Independents	Revd Llynos Gordon
United Free Church of Scotland	Revd Stephen J W Matthews

Assembly Members from Churches outside of Britain and Ireland:

Churches of Christ in Malawi	Revd Goodwin Zainga
Congregational Christian Church in Samoa	Revd Henry Iputau
Council for World Mission	Ms Elizabeth Joy
Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren	Revd Joel Ruml
Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana	Rt Revd Dr Livingstone Buama
Ghanaian Minister in London	Revd Godwin Odonkor
Synod of the Church of North India	Mr Kirti Kosala
United Church of Zambia	Rt Revd Lackson Chibuye

Chaplain (URC) to HM Forces in Britain:

Revd Michael Meachin

Past Presidents, Chairmen and Moderators:

Ms Gwen Hall, Revd Arthur Macarthur, Revd John Johansen-Berg, Revd Principal 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 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, Revd Sheila Maxey

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 Ron Forster, Revd Dr Tony Ritchie, Miss Felicity Tunnard
B: Revd Elizabeth Blair, Mr John Drew, Mrs Alison Drew, Miss Heather Laing
C: Revd Julie Martin, Revd Colin Offor, Revd Meg Robb, Mr Ernest Dale, Mrs Chris Eddowes, Mrs Maranny Jones
G: Revd Carla Hall, Mrs Susan Rand

Synod II

- J: Revd Lis Mullen, Revd Robert Sheard, Mr John Hindle, Mrs Olive Cronie
K: Revd Helga Cornell, Revd Geoffrey Townsend, Revd James Whatley, Mr Oliver Bruce, Mr Derek Estill, Mr George Grime, Mrs Hilda Hurst, Miss Lynne Wigginton
L: Revd Richard Bradley, Revd George McCleave, Revd Dr Kirsty Thorpe, Mrs Sheila Brain, Mr Andrew Harding, Mr James Wickens
M: Revd Robert Day, Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee, Miss Samantha Aspinall, Ms Marie Trubic, Miss Katie Unsworth, Mr Keith Whiting

Synod III

- A: Revd Ruth Allen, Revd Tim Jackson, Revd Andrew Willett, Dr Roger Allen, Mrs Sheila Davies, Mrs Alison Lee
B: Revd Gary McGowan, Revd Peter Lyth, Mrs Pat Crozier, Mr John Gelder
C: Revd John Bradbury, Revd Gordon Smith, Mr Peter Bate, Dr Berta Doodson
D: Revd Arnold Dixon, Revd Blair Kirkby, Revd Martin Hardy, Mr David Powell

Synod IV

- A: Revd Helen Drummond, Revd Trevor Holborn, Mrs Eileen Holborn, Mrs Jackie Harris
B: Revd Dr Sarah Hall, Revd Nick Percival, Mrs Lorraine Percival, Mr Chris Reed
C: Revd Bernie Collins, Revd Gwen Collins, Mrs Anne Parker, Mr John Tilbury
D: Revd Paul Breeze, Revd Stella Hayton, Miss Edith Askham, Mr James Horton
E: Miss Ina Barker
F: Revd George Courtney, Revd Timothy Key, Mrs Jennifer Pearson

Synod V

- A: Revd Dr Kay Cattell, Revd Jenny Yule, Mrs Helen Lidgett, Ms Tamara Oates
B: Revd Jay Phelps, Revd Pamela Smith, Mr Andrew Payne, Miss Avril Timson
C: Revd Malcolm Childs, Revd David Miller, Miss Belinda Edney, Mr Grenville Jackson
D: Revd Mark Westerman, Miss Sarah Bedford, Mrs Julia Hamilton, Mr Tony Hodgkinson
E: Revd Duncan Wilson, Mr Christopher Jennings, Ms Linda Granville, Mrs Sylvia Salmon
F: Revd Trish Davis, Revd David Tatem, Mr Jonathan Davis, Mr Daryl Hagan

Synod VI

- A: Revd Diana Cullum-Hall, Revd Paul Frampton, Revd Joan Winterbottom, Mr David Hood, Mrs Janet Hood, Mr Geoff Harrison
B: Revd David Cassidy, Mrs Brenda Cassidy, Miss Rachel Greening, Mrs Avril King
C: Revd Gerald England, Revd Stuart Scott, Mrs Rosemary Allman, Mrs Helen Yare
D: Revd Stuart Drummond, Revd Heather Whyte, Mrs Liz Shankland, Miss Charlotte Carter-Jones
E: Revd Dr Deborah Anderson, Revd Kenneth Chippindale, Revd Bob Ash, Mrs Lorraine Ash, Mr Dennis Neville, Mr Mark Steel
F: Revd Rowena Francis, Revd Graham Spicer, Miss Claire Davis, Mrs Margaret Marshall

Synod VII

- A: Revd Owen North, Revd Rosemary Tusting, Mr Ron Wade
B: Revd Jim Dalglish, Revd Marc Kenton, Revd Christopher Wood, Mr Shannon Craig, Mr Gordon Craig, Miss Ann Devereux, Mr Matthew Dones
C: Revd Dr Leonard Phelps, Revd Nigel Warner, Mr Stan Deacon, Mr David Jenkins
D: Revd Ruth Mitchell, Revd Geoffrey Wright, Miss Moira Baptie, Mrs Mary Goodhew
E: Revd Alex Jacob, Revd Lance Stone, Mr Martin Ballard, Miss Claire Goldthorpe
F: Revd Thomas MacMeekin

Synod VIII

- A: Revd Colin Biggs, Revd Arthur Climpson, Mrs Jill Stidson
B: Revd Glyn Millington, Mrs Jean Baker
C: Revd Craig Bowman, Mrs Pat Bellis, Mrs Pam Davis
D: Revd Tim Richards, Revd Michael Whitfield, Mrs Audrey Bartlett, Miss Ida Reeves
E: Revd Michael Hodgson, Revd Geoffrey Gleed, Ms Sara Crabb, Mrs Joan Trippier

- F: Revd Tracey Lewis, Revd Angela Steele, Revd Heather Pencavel, Mrs Elizabeth Holmes,
Mr Robin Pencavel
- G: Revd Bob Jones, Mrs Barbara Madge
- H: Mrs Shirley Paton
- J: Mrs Peggy Gray

Synod IX

- A: Revd Michael Manley, Revd Margaret Tilley, Mr Bryan Chant, Mrs Kathleen Chant
- B: Revd Cliff Bembridge, Revd Thomas Grant, Mrs Daphne Bembridge, Mrs Christine Hardwick
- C: Revd Mary Thomas, Revd Norman Vivian, Miss Janet Bousfield
- D: Revd Lucy Brierley, Revd Michael Hopkins, Revd Stephen Thornton, Mr Jim Bulley, Mrs Vivien Gerhold,
Mrs Lynne Upsdell
- E: Revd Dick Wolff, Revd Robert Weston, Revd Ruth Whitehead, Mr Colin Ferguson, Miss Beryl Knotts,
Mrs Margaret Telfer

Synod X

- A: Revd Robert Barthram, Revd Philip Stewart, Revd Julian Templeton, Mr John Escott, Mr Vic Russell,
Ms Georgina Siriboe
- B: Revd Kathy Wilson, Revd Ian Wiseman, Mr Martin Van Steveren, Miss Lilian Evans
- C: Revd Preben Andersen, Revd Alan Kirkcaldy, Mrs Gill Dean, Ms Catherine McFie
- D: Revd Sue Chapman, Revd John Hardaker, Revd Tony Ruffell, Mrs Jill Hardaker, Mrs Gill Hughes,
Mr Lawrence Patterson
- E: Revd David Atkinson, Mrs Christine Hall, Miss Barbara Leighton, Mrs Perry Reid, Mr Keith Berry
- F: Revd Lythan Nevard, Revd Anne Sardeson, Mr Solomon Brown, Mrs Jean Wyber

Synod XI

- A: Revd Gerald Moule, Revd Brenda Pearson, Mrs Sylvia Back, Mrs Jeanette Chamberlain, Mr Clive Snashall,
Mr Ernest Wu
- B: Revd Nicola Furley-Smith, Revd David Skitt, Mrs Jo Le Febvre, Mr Michael Musgrove
- C: Revd John Cook, Revd David Morgan, Revd Brenda Morton, Mrs Marion Bayley, Miss Lizzie King,
Mrs Wendy Swan
- D: Revd Kenneth Thom, Mr Michael Downing, Mr Matthew Percival, Miss Pamela Tolhurst
- E: Revd Bruce Allinson, Revd Geoff Felton, Revd Peter Southcombe, Mrs Sarah Felton
- F: Revd Michael Davies, Revd Philip Osborn, Revd Bryan Shirley, Mrs Mies Campling, Mr Graham Purdye,
Mr David Walters
- G: Revd Peter Newell, Revd Andrew Sellwood

Synod XII

- A: Revd Peter Nunn, Mr Malcolm Breeze, Mr Ray Brown, Mr David Clarkson
- B: Revd Alison Davis, Revd Alan Thomasson, Mr Wilf Arnold
- C: Revd Siân Collins, Revd Birgitta Johnson, Mr Allen Powell, Mr Ian Summers
- D: Revd Ivor Rees, Mrs Delyth Rees
- E: Revd Nanette Lewis-Head, Revd Malcolm Shapland, Ms Janet Drogan, Mrs Barbara Shapland
- F: Revd Michael Cruchley, Revd David Salisbury, Mrs Liz Tadd
- G: Revd Simon Walkling

Synod XIII

- A: Revd Linda Rice, Mr Simon Peters, Mr Scott Spurlock
- B: Revd John Sanderson, Ms Irene Hudson
- C: Revd Gordon Smith, Miss Elizabeth King, Mr Alex Kirkpatrick, Ms Morag McLintock
- D: Revd Stephen Brown
- E: Revd Timothy Huc, Mr Keith Muskett

Reception of Visitors and Assembly Members from Other Churches

Local Visitors were introduced by Revd David Grosch-Miller, Moderator of the South Western Synod:

Councillor Norman Shiel	–	The Lord Mayor of Exeter
Rt Revd John Ford	–	Suffragan Bishop of Plymouth (CofE)
Rt Revd Christopher Budd	–	Bishop of Plymouth (RC)
Revd Simon Taylor	–	Churches Together in Devon
Revd John Carne	–	Chair of Plymouth and Exeter Methodist District
Major Clifford Bradbury	–	SW Divisional Commander, Salvation Army
Revd Jonathan Edwards	–	SW Regional Minister and General Secretary designate, The Baptist Church

Visitors and Assembly members from Churches in the United Kingdom and overseas

were introduced by the Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, the Revd Richard Mortimer. Those present were received by the Moderator:

Baptist Union of Great Britain	Mrs Jacqui Keenan
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales	Dame Anne Doyle
Church of Scotland	Revd Alister Goss
	Rt Revd Alan McDonald
	Mrs Judith McDonald
Churches Together in Britain and Ireland	Revd Canon Bob Fyffe
	Dr Rosemary Power
Churches Together in England	Ms Jenny Bond
Congregational Federation	Revd Christopher Damp
International Ministerial Council of Great Britain	Rt Revd Onye Obika
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Rt Revd Dr David Clarke
	Mrs Hazel Clarke
	Revd Dr Donald Watts
	Mrs Fiona Watts
Presbyterian Church of Wales	Mr Eric Ellaway
The Church of England	Mrs Anne Foreman
The Methodist Church	Revd Peter Sulston
The Moravian Church	Revd Edward Sanniez
The World Council of Churches	Revd Dr Deenabandhu Manchala
Union of Welsh Independents	Revd Llunos Gordon
United Free Church of Scotland	Revd Stephen J W Matthews

The overseas guests were presented by the Revd Elizabeth Nash, Convener of the Ecumenical Committee. Mrs Jean Potter, Secretary of the Committee for Interfaith Relations introduced the other-faith guests, Imam Siyid from the Exeter mosque and Mr Tony Reese from the Exeter synagogue.

Following greetings by the Rt Revd Alan MacDonald on behalf of the UK visitors and members, the Rt Revd Livingstone Buama on behalf of the overseas guests and members, and Mr Tony Reese on behalf of the other-faith guests, the Moderator gave her address to Assembly.

Following prayer, Assembly was adjourned.

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.

Under the guidance of the Moderator and the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, the General Assembly explored the principle of consensus decision making.

The Moderator made a statement relating to a number of events which had occurred in the past year and their relation to the Moratorium on the discussion of Human Sexuality.

The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer.

Mission Council

The Revd Dr David Peel introduced the Mission Council report. He highlighted Mission Council's work on *Catch the Vision*, issues of sexual abuse in the Church, and the URC's ethical investment policy.

Nominations Committee

The report of the Nominations Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Principal Stephen Orchard.

Members

Convener: Revd Dr Stephen Orchard [2006]

Revd Malcolm Hanson #** [2010]

Secretary: Revd Elizabeth J Brown [2009]

Synod Representatives:

I	Revd Kevin Watson	II	Revd Ruth Wollaston	III	Revd John Oldershaw
IV	Mrs Val Morrison	V	Mrs Irene Wren	VI	Dr Tony Jeans
VII	Revd Richard Church	VIII	Revd Roz Harrison	IX	Mr Peter Pay
X	Revd Martin Hazell	XI	Dr Graham Campling	XII	Dr Jean Silvan-Evans
XIII	Dr Jim Merrilees	with the Immediate Past Moderator and General Secretary			

1. ASSEMBLY STAFF APPOINTMENTS

1.1.1 **The Nominating Group**, convened by the Revd Dr Susan Durber, recommended the appointment of the Revd Rowena Francis to serve as Moderator of the Northern Synod from 1 January 2007 for a period of seven years, subject to review before the end of that period.

1.1.2 **The Nominating Group** for Moderator Elect of the North Western Synod will be convened by Mrs Irene Wren.

1.1.3 **The Nominating Group** for Moderator Elect of the Yorkshire Synod will be convened by the Revd Cecil White.

1.1.4 **The Nominating Group** for Principal Elect of Westminster College will be convened by the Revd Sheila Maxey.

1.2.1 **The Nominating Group** convened by the Revd Deborah McVey recommended the appointment of Ms Jo Williams for the position of Children's Work Development Officer at Church House from 24th July 2006 until 31st July 2007.

1.2.2 **The Nominating Group** for a Director of Communications at Church House will be convened by the Revd Dr Stephen Orchard.

1.2.3 **The Review Group** for the post of CRCW Development Worker at Church House will be convened by Ms Daphne Beale.

1.2.4 **The Review Group** for the post of Secretary for Training at Church House will be convened by Mrs Bridget Fosten.

1.2.5 **The Review Group** for the post of Pilots Development Officer at Church House will be convened by Mr Simon Rowntree.

1.3 **The Group for the Role of Treasurer** convened by the Revd John Waller completed its work and nominated Mr John Ellis to serve as Assistant Treasurer with immediate effect and as Hon. Treasurer of the United Reformed Church from Assembly 2007 until 2111.

2. RESPONSE TO 2005 GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 16 AND 36

The Committee had set up a process for consultation with the Equal Opportunities and Racial Justice and Multicultural Ministries Committees. Records were being kept of those approached to serve on committees and monitoring of appointments to committees would take place in consultation with the Equal Opportunities Committee.

3. 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 2005 are indicated by one asterisk (*), two asterisks (**) denotes those whom Assembly 2006 is invited to appoint for the first time (#) indicates a **Convener Elect** who will become Convener in 2007.
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.

3.1 ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

Convener: Mr William McVey [2008]

Secretary: Mrs Ann Barton

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

3.1.1 Tellers for Election of Moderator for 2008

Mr Peter Pay [Convener], Dr Graham Campling, Dr Jim Merrilees**

3.2 CHURCH and SOCIETY

Convener: Mr Simon Loveitt [2010]

Secretary: Secretary for Church and Society

Revd Tjarda Murray [2007]

Miss Emma Pugh [2007]

Revd David Pickering [2009]

Revd Margaret Tait [2009]

Mrs Susan Clarke** [2010]

Revd Michael Jagessar** [2010]

Mr Themba Moyo** [2010]

3.2.1 COMMITMENT FOR LIFE sub committee

Convener: Mrs Melanie Frew

3.3 COMMUNICATIONS and EDITORIAL

Convener: Revd Martin Hazell [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for Communications

Revd Kirsty Thorpe#** [2011]

Revd Martin Whiffen [2007]

Ms Julia Wills [2008]

Mr Ron Sweeney [2009]

Revd Paul Snell [2008]

Mrs Valerie Jenkins [2009]

Mr Richard Lathaen [2009]

Revd Janet Sutton [2008]

Ms Catherine Lewis-Smith [2009]

Mr Jerome Whittingham** [2010]

3.4 DOCTRINE, PRAYER and WORSHIP

Convener: Revd Dr Susan Durber [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Revd Prof Alan Sell [2007]

Miss Sarah Lane [2007]

Revd Jason McCullagh [2008]

Miss Suzanne McDonald [2009]

Revd Geoffrey Clarke [2007]

Dr John Turner [2007]

Revd Peter Trow [2008]

Mrs Jill Jenkins [2009]

Revd Hilary Collinson [2007]

Mrs Chris Eddowes [2008]

Revd Gordon Smith [2009]

3.5 ECUMENICAL

Convener: Revd Elizabeth Nash [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Mrs Ann Shillaker[2007]

Revd Anthony Howells [2009]

Revd Stuart Jackson representing the National Synod of Wales

Revd Mary Buchanan representing National Synod of Scotland

Mrs Pat Gurr [2008]

Revd Sarah Moore** [2010]

Revd Graham Maskery [2009]

Mr David Barber** [2010]

3.5.1 ECUMENICAL - INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Chris Baillie [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for International Relations

Revd Linda Elliott#** [2011]

Revd Nigel Uden** [2010]

Mrs Eileen McIlveen [2007]

Dr Harry Potter** [2010]

Mrs Sylvia Jackson [2009]

Dr Pamela Cressey** [2010]

3.6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Convener: Ms Morag McLintock [2010]

Secretary: Revd Derek Hopkins [2008]

Revd Sue MacBeth [2007]

Revd John Macaulay** [2010]

Dr Ruth Shepherd [2008]

Revd Pam Ward** [2010]

Revd Kate Gartside [2009]

Mr Jim Hurst** [2010]

3.7 FINANCE

Convener: The Treasurer

Secretary: *to be advised*

Revd David Dones [2007]

Mr Graham Law [2008]

Mr John Kidd [2009]

Convener of the URC Trust

Mrs Marie Whitman[2007]

Revd Dick Gray [2009]

Revd Kathryn Taylor** [2010]

Financial Secretary

Mr Errol Martin [2008]

Mr Graham Morris [2009]

3.8 INTER-FAITH RELATIONS

Convener: Revd Dr John Parry [2007]

Secretary: Mrs Jean Potter [2008]

Revd Peter Colwell#** [2011]

Mr David Jonathon [2009]

Dr Iain Frew [2008]

Revd Tim Clarke** [2010]

Revd Helen Pollard [2008]

3.9 LIFE and WITNESS

Convener: Revd Peter Ball[2010]

Secretary: Secretary for Life and Witness

Mrs Sheila Brain [2007]

Revd Michael Hodgson [2007]

Revd Simon Walkling [2009]

Mr Colin Ferguson [2007]

Revd Kate Gray [2008]

Mr Patrick Smyth [2009]

Revd Ian Fosten [2007]

Mr Emmanuel Nkusi [2008]

Revd Patricia Davis** [2010]

3.9.1 LIFE and WITNESS - STEWARDSHIP Sub-Committee

Convener: Mr Ray McHugh[2008]

Secretary: Secretary for Life and Witness

Mrs Jackie Haws[2007]

Mrs Susan Wilkinson [2007]

Revd John Durrell [2008]

Mr Gareth Curl [2009]

Revd Sarah Simpson** [2010]

3.9.2 WINDERMERE ADVISORY GROUP

Convener: Revd Bernard Collins [2009]

Secretary: The Director of Windermere

Mrs Irene Wren [2008]

Revd Carole Allison[2009]

Revd Jan Berry [2009]

Convener of Windermere Management Committee Convener of Life and Witness Committee

Representative of Carver URC

3.10 MINISTRIES

Convener: Revd Peter Poulter [2010]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Mrs Joan Trippier [2007]

Revd Paul Whittle [2007]

Revd Terry Oakley [2008]

Revd Alan Evans [2009]

Mrs Joanna Morling [2009]

Dr Roger Allen** [2010]

Convener of Assessment Board

3.10.1 MINISTRIES - ACCREDITATION Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Gwen Collins [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Revd Tony Wilkinson [2007]

Revd Howard Sharp [2009]

Mr Simon Rowntree [2009]

Mr Rod Morrison [2009]

Mrs Pat Evans** [2010]

3.10.2 MINISTRIES - CRCW Programme Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Bob Day [2008]

Secretary: The CRCW Development Workers

Mr Peter Twilley [2007]

Revd Tracey Lewis [2008]

Mrs Maureen Thompson [2009]

Mrs Shirley Rawnsley** [2010]

Revd Daphne Lloyd** [2010]

3.10.3 MINISTRIES - LAY PREACHING Support Sub Committee

Assembly Lay Preaching Advocate: Dr Philip Theaker [2007]

And four members elected by the Lay Preaching Commissioners Consultation

3.10.4 MINISTRIES - MAINTENANCE OF MINISTRY Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Geoffrey Roper [2009]

Secretary: Mr David Taylor [2010]

Mrs Lyn Alford [2008]

Mr David Hayden [2008]

Mr Brian Knight** [2010]

Revd Ken Summers** [2010]

The Treasurer Convener of Pensions Executive Financial Secretary

3.10.5 MINISTRIES - RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING - Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd David Bedford [2010]

Secretary: Secretary Retired Ministers' Housing Society Ltd

Mrs Liz Tadd [2009]

Revd Elizabeth Caswell [2008]

Revd Michael Spencer* [2011]

Revd Nanette Lewis-Head** [2012]

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

3.10.6 ASSESSMENT BOARD

Convener: Prof David Cutler [2009]

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

Retiring 2010 Revd David A L Jenkins, Revd Dr Irene John, Revd Edward Sanniez, Revd Lesley Charlton

Retiring 2011** Revd Wilf Bahadur, Revd Jan Adamson, Revd Sian Collins, Mrs Wendy Smith

3.11 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Malcolm Hanson [2010]

Secretary: Revd Elizabeth Brown [2009]

Synod Representatives: Revd Kevin Watson [1], Revd Ruth Wollaston [2], Revd John Oldershaw [3], Mrs Val Morrison [4], Mrs Irene Wren [5], Dr Anthony Jeans [6], Revd Richard Church [7], Revd Roz Harrison [8], Mr Peter Pay [9], Revd Martin Hazell [10], Dr Graham Campling [11], Dr Jean Silvan-Evans [12], Dr James Merrilees [13], with the Immediate Past Moderator and the General Secretary.

3.12 PASTORAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Keith Forecast [2007]

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary

Revd Alasdair Pratt#** [2011]

Revd David Grosch Miller [2007]

Revd Meryl Court [2008]

Mrs Margaret Carrick Smith [2009]

Mrs Delyth Rees** [2011]

Convener of Welfare Sub-Committee

The Treasurer

The General Secretary

3.12.1 PASTORAL WELFARE -Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Alan Wharton [2007]

Secretary: Mrs Judy Stockings

Mrs Delyth Rees#** [2011]

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

3.13 RACIAL JUSTICE and MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY

Convener: Revd Andrew Prasad [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for Racial Justice

Mrs Sandra Ackroyd [2007]

Mrs Elaine Patrick [2007]

Revd Carla Grosch Miller# [2011]

Revd Helga Cornell [2008]

Mrs Pat Poinen [2009]

Revd Rosemary Tusting* [2009]

Dr Ben Makepeace** [2010]

3.14 TRAINING

Convener: Revd John Humphreys [2007]

Secretary: The Secretary for Training

Professor Malcolm Johnson#** [2011]

Mrs Valerie Burnham [2007]

Dr Ian Morrison [2007]

Revd Rachel Poolman [2008]

Revd Richard Church [2008]

Revd Dr John Campbell [2009]

Mr John Saunders* [2009]

Revd John Smith** [2010]

Revd Ruth Allen** [2010]

Mr Clive Parsons** [2010]

3.15 YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

Convener: Revd Neil Thorogood [2010]

Secretary: Revd Steven Faber [2008]

Mrs Doreen Watson [2007]

Mr Augustus Webbe [2007]

Revd Tim Meachin [2008]

Revd Sian Collins [2009]

Revd Robert Weston [2009]

Miss Rosemary Simmons [2009]

Ms Ruth Hezlett [2009]

Mrs Rita Griffiths [2009]

Revd Heather Whyte** [2010]

FURY Chair

FURY Council Member

3.15.1 PILOTS MANAGEMENT Sub Committee

Convener: Revd Pamela Smith

Member: Mrs Denise Beckley** [2010]

3.16 DISCIPLINARY PROCESS - Commission Panel

Convener: Mrs Helen Brown [2009]

Deputy Convener: Revd David Helyar [2007]

Deputy Convener Elect: Miss Kathleen Cross

Secretary: Mrs Wilma Frew** [2011]

Members:

Mr Martin Ballard

Miss Ina Barker

Revd Wendy Baskett

Revd David Bedford

Revd James Bolton

Revd Jim Brown

Revd Ken Chippindale

Mrs Janice Cockcroft

Mr Des Colechin

Revd Meryl Court

Mr Derek Craig

Miss Kathleen Cross

Revd Alison Davis

Revd John Du Bois

Mr David Eldridge

Mr Colin Ferguson

Revd Joan Grindod-Helmn	Mr Peter Jolly	Mrs Barbara Lancaster	Miss Elizabeth Lawson QC
Revd Nanette Lewis-Head	Dr Fiona Liddell	Revd Daphne Lloyd	Revd Julian Macro
Mrs Barbara Madge	Revd Nicholas Mark	Revd Ted Marley	Mrs Jean McAslan
Revd Denise Megson	Dr Jim Merrilees	Revd Sandra Pickard	Revd Shelagh Pollard
Mrs Sheila Pratt	Mr Nicholas Pye	Mrs Pamel Sharp	Revd Raymond Singh
Mr Alan Small	Mr Patrick Smyth	Revd Dr David Thompson	Mrs Lynne Upsdell
Ms Elizabeth Whitten	Revd Joan Winterbottom	Mr Ken Woods	Mr Geoff Milnes
Mr Neil Robinson	Revd David Pattie	Revd Yvonne Stone	

3.17 PANEL FOR THE APPOINTMENT AND REVIEW OF SYNOD MODERATORS

Mrs Sally Abbott	Revd Mary Buchanan	Revd Craig Bowman	Mrs Helen Brown
Dr Graham Campling	Revd Lesley Charlton	Revd Dr Susan Durber	Dr Jean Silvan Evans
Mrs Janet Gray	Mr Alun Jones	Revd Nanette Lewis-Head	Mr John Lumsden
Mr Okeke Azu Okeke	Mr Simon Rowntree	Revd Raymond Singh	Mr Ron Todd
Revd Cecil White	Mrs Irene Wren		

4. 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 Offor, Revd Peter Poulter
North Western Synod	Miss Kathleen Cross, Revd Alan Wickens, Revd Rachel Poolman
Mersey Synod	Revd Jenny Morgan, Mrs Wilma Prentice, Mr Donald Swift
Yorkshire Synod	Mrs Val Morrison, Revd Pauline Loosemore, Mr Roderick Garthwaite
East Midlands Synod	Mrs Irene Wren, Mrs Margaret Gateley, Revd Yolande Burns
West Midlands Synod	Mrs Melanie Frew, Revd Anthony Howells, Mr Bill Robson
Eastern Synod	Mr Mick Barnes, Revd Victor Ridgewell, Mrs Joan Turner
South Western Synod	Revd Roz Harrison, Mrs Janet Gray, Revd Richard Pope
Wessex Synod	Mrs Glenis Massey, Revd Clive Sutcliffe, Revd Ruth Whitehead
Thames North Synod	Revd John Macaulay, Mr David Eldridge, Revd David Varcoe
Southern Synod	Dr Graham Campling, Mrs Maureen Lawrence, Mr Nigel MacDonald
National Synod of Wales	Revd Stuart Jackson, Mrs Liz Tadd, Mrs Barbara Shapland
National Synod of Scotland	Miss Irene Hudson, Revd Alan Paterson, Mr Patrick Smyth

5. TRUST BODIES

5.1 UNITED REFORMED CHURCH TRUST

Chairman: Revd John Waller [2011]

Secretary: Mr Tony Bayley

Directors:

Mrs Fiona Smith [2008]

Dr Geoffrey Sides [2009]

Mr Ernest Gudgeon [2010]

Mr Donald Swift [2010]

Mrs Jill Stidson [2011]

Mr Alan Small** [2012]

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

5.2 THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH MINISTERS' PENSION TRUST LTD

BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman: Mr Brian Moere

Secretary: *to be advised*

Members of URC:

Mr Brian Moere [2008]

Mr Michael Goldsmith [2009]

Mrs Hilary Reynolds [2011]

Mr Andrew Perkins** [2011]

Members of Fund:

Revd Gwen Thomas [2007]

Revd Michael Davies [2008]

Revd Graham Spicer [2009]

Revd Ivor Rees* [2011]

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

5.2.1 PENSIONS EXECUTIVE

Convener: Mr Maurice Dyson [2010]

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

5.3 CONGREGATIONAL MEMORIAL HALL TRUST

Revd Dr Peter Jupp
Dr John Thompson

Mr Hartley Oldham
Dr Elaine Kaye

Mr Graham Stacy
Dr Brian Woodhall

5.4 THE AUSTRALIAN FRONTIER SERVICES CHARITABLE TRUST

Mr Clem Frank

Mr Brian Wates - joint appointment with Uniting Church in Australia

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

Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Revd Dr David Peel
General Synod of Church of England	Revd Fleur Houston
Methodist Conference	Revd Richard Mortimer
Congregational Federation	Revd Martin Smith
General Assembly of Church of Scotland [note 5]	Revd Dr David Peel, Revd John Humphreys, Revd Jill Thornton
United Free Church of Scotland [note 5]	Revd John Wylie
Scottish Episcopal Church [note 5]	Revd John Humphreys
Methodist Church in Scotland [note 5]	Revd Mary Buchanan
Baptist Union of Scotland [note 5]	Revd John Humphreys
Presbyterian Church of Wales [note 5]	Revd Dr David Peel
Union of Welsh Independents [note 5]	Revd Stuart Jackson
Church in Wales Governing Board [note 5]	Revd Stuart Jackson
Provincial Synod of the Moravian Church	Revd David Bunney

7. 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.

7.1 Council for World Mission Assembly

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

7.1.1 CWM European Region Meeting 2006-2009

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

7.2 WARC General Council

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

7.3 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

This body is currently undergoing re-organisation.

7.3.1 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland - Environmental Issues Network

Revd David Coaker, Revd Dr David Pickering, Mr George Morton

7.4 Churches Together in England - Forum 2006

General Secretary, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Miss Alison Micklem, Revd Peter Poulter, Revd Andrew Prasad, Mrs Helen Renner, Revd Elizabeth Nash, Mrs Wilma Frew, Mr Stuart Dew, Mr John Brown, Ms Suzanne McDonald

7.4.1 Churches Together in England - Enabling Group

Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

7.4.2 Churches Together for Healing

Revd Delia Bond, Revd Deborah McVey

7.4.3 Free Church Education Committee

Mr Graham Handscomb, Mrs Gillian Kingston

7.5 ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland) [see Note 5]

Forum: Revd John Humphreys, Revd Mary Buchanan

7.6 National Sponsoring Body for Scotland [see note 5]

Revd Mary Buchanan, Revd John Humphreys

7.7 CYTUN (Churches Together in Wales) [see Note 5]

Council: Revd Peter Noble, Revd Stuart Jackson, Mrs Eileen McIlveen

7.8 FREE CHURCH COUNCIL for WALES [see Note 5]

Revd Peter Noble, Revd Stuart Jackson

8. UNITED REFORMED CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES AT FORMAL BI-LATERAL AND MULTI-LATERAL COMMITTEES

8.1 Methodist/United Reformed Church Liaison Committee

The Secretary for Ecumenical Relations together with: Revd Roy Fowler, Revd Roberta Rominger, Revd Barbara Bennett**, Revd Kay Alberg**, Miss Emma Pugh**

8.2 Anglican/Moravian Contact Groups

Revd David Tatem

8.3 Tri-lateral Conversation of the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church

Revd Mary Buchanan, Revd John Humphreys, Revd John Young

8.4 The Commission of Covenanted Churches within CYTUN [see Note 5]

Revd Peter Noble, Revd Stuart Jackson, Mrs Ann Shillaker

9. URC REPRESENTATIVES ON GOVERNING BODIES OF THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES ETC.

9.1 Mansfield College:

Ministerial and Educational Training Committee: Revd Fiona Thomas [2009]
Revd Nigel Appleton** [2010]
Convener of the Training Committee
Secretary for Training

9.2 New College London

Foundation Trustees:
Mr Graham Stacy [2007]
Mr Philip Wade [2007]
alternate Mr Colin Howard [2008]
Mr John Smethers** [2009]

9.3 Northern College

Secretary for Training [2009]
Revd David Jenkins [2009]
Mr Bill McLaughin [2009]
Miss Margaret Atkinson** [2011]
Mrs Helen Brown** [2011]
Revd Dr Robert Pope** [2011]
Secretary for Training
Luther King House Educational Trust

- 9.4 Westminster College: Board of Governors** Convener: Revd Dr David Thompson [2008]
 Clerk: Revd Cecil White
 Revd Craig Muir [2009]
 Mr John Kidd [2009]
 Mr Brian Long [2010]
 Revd Fleur Houston [2010]
 Mrs Sally Abbott** [2012]
 Secretary for Training
- 9.4.1 Cheshunt Foundation** Mr David Butler
- 9.4.2 Cambridge Theological Federation** Convener Westminster College Governors
- 9.5 Homerton College Trustees** Lady Sally Williams [2007]
 Revd Dr David Thompson [2008]
 Mr John Chaplin [2009]
 Mrs Elisabeth Jupp** [2010]
- 9.6 Queen's College, Birmingham** Revd Elizabeth Welch
 Mr Simon Rowntree*
 Secretary for Training in attendance
- 9.7 Aberystwyth (Memorial College)** Mr Leslie Jones

10. GOVERNORS OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS WITH WHICH THE URC IS ASSOCIATED

- 10.1 Caterham School** Revd Nigel Uden [2007]
 Mr John Mathias [2008]
- 10.2 Eltham College** Revd Derek Lindfield [2007]
- 10.3 Walthamstow Hall** Mrs Margaret Abraham
- 10.4 Milton Mount Foundation** Mr Graham Rolfe [2008]
 Mr Brian West [2008]
 Revd Nicola Furley-Smith [2008]
 Ms Hilary Miles [2010]
Vacancy [2010]
- 10.5 Silcoates School** Prof Clyde Binfield [2007]
 Dr Peter Clarke [2009]
 Dr Moira Gallagher [2009]
 Mrs Valerie Jenkins [2009]
 Mrs Val Morrison** [2010]
 Revd Alan F T Evans** [2010]
- 10.6 Taunton School** Revd David Grosch-Miller
- 10.7 Wentworth College** Revd Daphne Hull
- 10.8 Bishops Stortford College** Revd Nigel Rogers

11. 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	Revd Dr David Cornick 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
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 Dr Kirsty Thorpe Revd Dr David Thompson Dr John Thompson [2009]
Wharton Trust	

Principal Orchard moved adoption of Resolution 33:

Resolution 33

Nominations

General Assembly appoints committees and representatives of the Church as set out on pp 93-101 of the Book of Reports subject to additions and corrections contained in the Supplementary report before Assembly.

Resolution 33 was carried.

Principal Orchard moved adoption of Resolution 34:

Resolution 34

Clerk of the General Assembly

General Assembly agrees to re-appoint the Revd James A Breslin as Clerk of the General Assembly from the close of General Assembly 2007 to the close of General Assembly 2012.

Resolution 34 was carried.

Assistant Treasurer

Principal Orchard moved the nomination of Mr John Ellis as Assistant Treasurer, with a view to his succeeding the current Honorary Treasurer.

The Assembly agreed.

The Moderator thanked Principal Orchard for his service as Convener of the Nominations Committee.

Finance Committee

In presenting the report of the Finance Committee, the Honorary Treasurer, Mr Eric Chilton, thanked the Church House staff for their work over the past year, and moved adoption of Resolution 20:

Resolution 20

Accounts

General Assembly adopts the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005.

Resolution 20 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 21:

Resolution 21

Appointment of Auditors

General Assembly resolves that PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP be 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 21 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 22:

Resolution 22

The giving of the members of the Church to central funds

General Assembly gratefully acknowledges the giving of the churches in 2005 to the Ministry and Mission Fund and the work of the local church, district and synod treasurers.

Resolution 22 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 23:

Resolution 23

United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund contributions

General Assembly resolves that the total contribution to the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund should be increased to 23% with effect from 1 January 2007. This will be made up of a Church contribution of 17.25% (increased from 15.65%) and Ministers' contributions of 5.75% (increased from 4.5%).

Resolution 23 was carried.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 15:

Resolution 15

Charity Trusts

General Assembly notes the clarification of and alterations to the advice concerning Charity Trusts given to the General Assembly in 2001 and 2004 and asks synods, synod trust companies, district councils/area meetings and local churches to ensure that all are aware of their responsibilities.

Following debate and questions, to which the Assembly Clerk responded, Resolution 15 was carried.

Church Closures

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 6:

Resolution 6

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 history.

Alpha, Greenfield	Wales
Aveley	Eastern
Birdhopecraig, Northumberland	Northern
Bosham	Southern
Clevedon	South West
Embleton, Northumberland	Northern
Emmanuel, Leicester	East Midlands
Hardware St, West Bromwich	West Midlands
Harwich Road, Colchester	Eastern
Horwich, Lee Lane	North Western
Iglesia Cristiana de Newham, Plaistow	Thames North
Moorgreen, Derbyshire	East Midlands
Norton	Northern
Preston, Grimshaw St	North Western
Ravenstonedale	North Western
Saintwell, Ely	Wales
Southfleet	Southern
St Andrew's, Goodmayes	Thames North
Union, Frodsham	Mersey
Zion, Newbridge	Wales

Resolution 6 was carried.

New Church

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 5:

Resolution 5

New Church

General Assembly receives Cambourne LEP, Cambridgeshire as a local church of the United Reformed Church.

On behalf of the Assembly, the Moderator greeted the Revd Peter Wood, minister of Cambourne LEP.

Resolution 5 was carried.

Retiring Moderator

The retiring Moderator, the Revd Dr David Peel, addressed the Assembly, reflecting on his year in office. After worship led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.

Opening worship was led by the Chaplain; Bible study was led by Mr Lawrence Moore, Director of the Windermere Centre.

The Revd Dr David Peel took the Chair.

South West Synod

The South West Synod made a presentation on its life and work.

Communications and Editorial Committee

The report of the Communications and Editorial Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Martin Hazell assisted by the Secretary for Communications, Mrs Carol Rogers.

The Moderator paid tribute to the Revd David Lawrence who had returned to pastoral ministry after serving as editor of *Reform* for twelve years.

The Moderator greeted Mrs Carol Rogers, and wished her well on her retirement after nineteen years as Secretary for Communications.

Mr Hazell moved adoption of Resolution 18:

Resolution 18

Leaflet on Church Magazines

General Assembly commends the leaflet on Church Magazines to all local congregations.

Resolution 18 was carried.

Mr Hazell moved adoption of Resolution 19:

Resolution 19

Review of the Work of the Communications and Editorial Committee

General Assembly receives and accepts the review carried out by the Communications and Editorial Committee and instructs it to continue to explore the proposals to:

- a) develop an effective and more professional website**
- b) appoint a new editor to work with an editorial board to oversee the final months of Reform and to develop a new URC journal**
- c) develop new ways of improving the bookshop service**
- d) concentrate on publications of a worship/spiritual nature**
- e) explore ways of providing a professional Press Office service to deal with the media at national and local levels**
- f) explore and develop new ways of promoting the role of the United Reformed Church in extending Christ's kingdom to the world.**

After brief debate, to which Mr Hazell responded, Resolution 19 was carried.

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell resumed the Chair.

Equal Opportunities Committee

The report of the Equal Opportunities Committee was presented by the Secretary, the Revd Derek Hopkins.

The Moderator thanked the Revd Wilf Bahadur as he ends his period of service as Convener of the Equal Opportunities Committee, and welcomed the incoming Convener, Ms Morag McLintock.

Election of Moderator of General Assembly 2007/8

The Assembly Clerk explained the voting procedure. The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer, and ballot slips were collected.

Youth and Children's Work Committee

The report of the Youth and Children's Work Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Kathryn Price and FURY Chair, Ms Isobel Simmons.

The Moderator greeted:

Ms Jo Williams	Children's Work Development Officer
Mr Chris Burgham	Young Persons Training Officer, West Midlands
Mr Stewart Cutler	Youth & Children's Work Training and Development Officer, Scotland
Mr Nick White	Youth & Children's Work Training and Development Officer, Southern
Mr Malcolm Evans	Youth & Children's Work Training and Development Officer, Mersey

Mrs Price moved adoption of Resolution 40:

Resolution 40

Safe Church Declaration

General Assembly instructs Mission Council to revisit the 'Declaration of a Safe Church' and bring to the next Assembly proposals to extend its provisions to cover emotional, physical and domestic abuse and neglect.

After debate, Resolution 40 was carried.

Mrs Price moved adoption of Resolution 41:

Resolution 41

CORE

General Assembly endorses that view that all those working with children in the United Reformed Church should be adequately trained for their role. The ecumenically produced material CORE skills for children's ministry is welcomed as the most useful means to this end and commended to local churches.

After brief debate, Resolution 41 was carried.

Mr Colin Udall outlined the Child Friendly Church award scheme, invited the Moderator to present certificates to representatives of two churches in the Leicester District, and moved adoption of Resolution 42:

Resolution 42

Child Friendly Church Award

General Assembly commends the Child Friendly Church Award scheme to local churches and recognises the award as a sign of good practice.

Resolution 42 was carried.

The Moderator thanked Mrs Price for her service as Convener of the Youth and Children's Work Committee.

Synod Moderators

The report of the Synod Moderators was presented by the Revd Peter Poulter.

The Moderator greeted the Revd Peter Poulter and wished him well on his retirement; she greeted the new Moderator of the Northern Synod, the Revd Rowena Francis, and the Revd Peter Brain, who will retire as Moderator of the North Western Synod before the 2007 General Assembly.

Mission Council

The Assembly debated the Mission Council report.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 13:

Resolution 13

Adjustment to the process for submitting nominations for the Moderator of General Assembly

General Assembly authorises that the following words be inserted in the Rules of procedure to create a new paragraph 3.5 (the existing paragraphs 3.5-3.12 being renumbered 3.6-3.13)

'if after 31st March or after the period for withdrawal there shall be no nominations the General Secretary shall forthwith notify the clerks of the synods and invite them to request nominations from the executive committees or equivalent of their synods. Such nominations, accompanied in each case by a note of the consent of the person nominated and a brief biography, must be in the hands of the General Secretary by 15th May.'

Resolution 13 was carried.

The Moderator greeted the Revd Graham Jones, joint URC/Methodist rural consultant.

The Assembly adjourned.

The Assembly approved the minutes of Friday 7th July, first and second sessions.

Catch the Vision

The General Secretary and members of the Steering Group reported on the *Catch the Vision* process.

The Revd Elizabeth Welch took the Chair.

The General Secretary responded to a number of questions and comments.

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell resumed the Chair.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 44:

Resolution 44

Resolutions returned for ratification (1)

General Assembly resolves that there shall be one level of council between the General Assembly and the local church.

Resolution 44 was carried.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 45:

Resolution 45

Resolutions returned for ratification (2)

General Assembly resolves that as from General Assembly 2007, there shall be one level of council between the General Assembly and the local church, the thirteen 'new Synods.'

Two synods, Eastern and Thames North, who had rejected the resolutions, were invited to make statements.

After some debate, the Revd Tim Jackson proposed that the resolution be now put, seconded by Ms Morag McLintock. The Assembly agreed by more than the required two-thirds majority.

Following the General Secretary's response, a vote was taken, and Resolution 45 was carried.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 46:

Resolution 46

Resolutions returned for ratification (3)

General Assembly resolves that, as from 2007, General Assembly shall meet every two years.

Following debate, the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee responded, a vote was taken, and Resolution 46 was carried.

Assembly Moderator 2007-8

The Revd Roz Harrison, Convener of Tellers for the election of the Moderator of General Assembly, reported that 342 votes had been cast, 2 papers had been spoiled, and that the Revd Principal Stephen Orchard had been duly elected as Moderator of General Assembly 2007-8.

North Western Synod

The North Western Synod made a presentation of its life and work.

Training Committee

The report of the Training Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd John Humphreys.

Mr Humphreys presented the Training Committee review and responded to a number of questions and comments.

Mr Humphreys moved adoption of Resolution 35:

Resolution 35

Regional Training Partnerships

General Assembly in pursuance of the Training Committee's report urges:

- a) Training Committee to continue promoting the development of partnerships in pursuit of Assembly's commitment to integrated and dispersed Christian education, nurture and training for the whole people of God in line with the principles agreed by Assembly in resolution 51 of 2005.**
- b) the Synods in England to participate as proactively as possible in the development of the ecumenical Regional Training Partnerships for the training and nurture of the whole people of God in line with the policies agreed by General Assembly and specifically resolution 35 of 2005.**

Resolution 35 was carried.

Mr Humphreys moved adoption of Resolution 36:

Resolution 36

Resource Centres for learning

General Assembly in line with the Training report, welcomes the commitment of the Northern, Scottish and Westminster Colleges to act for the United Reformed Church in a new role as resource centres for learning and to undertake dispersed, integrated training and Christian education for the whole people of God. General Assembly agrees to keep its relationship with these resource centres for learning under ongoing review and asks the Training Committee to report on them to the Assembly of 2012.

Resolution 36 was carried.

Mr Humphreys moved adoption of Resolution 37:

Resolution 37

College based training

- a) General Assembly agrees that Northern, Westminster and the Scottish Colleges acting as resource centres for learning, are to have sole responsibility for ensuring the delivery of initial ministerial education (Education for Ministry 1). Northern College will continue to have sole responsibility for initial training of Church Related Community Workers. This will apply to all candidates recommended for training in the 2006/7 candidating process and thereafter.**
- b) General Assembly instructs the Training Committee to work with those Synods which have students currently training in institutions affected by resolution 37a (including those sent by the 2005/2006 candidating process) in order to secure their continuing care and the satisfactory completion of their ordination (Education for Ministry 1) training.**

On the motion of the Clerk, the Assembly agreed by the required two-thirds majority, to continue the session in Committee.

The Revd Elizabeth Welch spoke in favour of retaining the Queen's Foundation for EM1 training.

The Assembly adjourned.

FURY

Following a FURY presentation 'Drumming for Trade Justice' and an account of a recent visit to our church partners in Jamaica, both of which were part of a nationwide initiative to raise awareness of Trade Justice, the Rt Revd John Gladwin, Bishop of Chelmsford and Chair of Christian Aid, addressed the Assembly.

Christian Aid

Dr Gladwin described something of the current work of Christian Aid, its priorities and challenges, and was received by the Assembly with warm applause. A number of members of Assembly shared their stories, experiences and impressions of Christian Aid and its work.

The Moderator greeted Ms Linda Mead, Co-ordinator of *Commitment for Life*, who had taken up her post since the last meeting of the Assembly.

Worship

After announcements by the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, and worship led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.

Worship was conducted by the Chaplain.

Mersey Synod

The Mersey Synod made a presentation of its life and work.

Church and Society Committee

The report of the Church and Society Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Martin Camroux.

The Revd John Johansen-Berg moved adoption of Resolution 17:

Resolution 17

Peacemaking: A Christian Vocation

General Assembly adopts the Report 'Peacemaking: A Christian Vocation' and commends it for study by Synods and local congregations, and as a helpful guide for church leaders who may be called upon for comment on the ethical considerations relating to war and peace.

The Revd Robert Weston, seconded by the Revd Michael Hopkins, proposed that the resolution be now put. Carried by the required two thirds majority.

Resolution 17 was carried.

The Moderator thanked the Revd Martin Camroux for his service as Convener, and welcomed the recently appointed Secretary for Church and Society, Mr Stuart Dew.

Ecumenical and Overseas Guests

The Moderator welcomed:

Dr Rosemary Power
The Rt Revd Onye Obika

Ecumenical Officer, CTBI
General Secretary, International Ministerial Council for Great Britain
PCUSA
The Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
Congregational Christian Church of Samoa

The Revd Liza Hendricks
The Revd Ola Bojestig
The Revd Henry Iputau

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

Those celebrating the 50 years (1956 Ordination)

Arthur BAKER	Henry MARTIN
Brian BAKER	Charles MEACHIN
Douglas BALE	David MORRIS
David BREMNER	Peter NEWELL
George CHAPMAN	Michael PEVY
Norman CLIFF	Ivor REES
Robert COURTNEY	Leslie STONE
Arthur CROSS	Michael THROWER
Robert DUNCAN	Francis TOMES
Alan DUNSTONE	John WARD
William EDWARDS	John WHITEHORN
Derek FITCH	Donald WOFFENDEN
Francis HUGHES	Sidney WOODGET
Bruce KENRICK	
Brian KIRK	

Those celebrating 60 years (1946)

Geoffrey BECK
Harry BEEBY
Anthony GREEN
Thomas JONES
Norman MCPHERSON
Raymond NORMAN
Henry STARKEY
Stanley WILTON

Those celebrating 70 years (1936)

Frank BROWN

Those celebrating 75 years (1931)

Kathleen HENDRY

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

Reception of New Ministers and CRCWs

Synod Moderators introduced Ministers and Church Related Community Workers who had been ordained or commissioned since the previous meeting of the General Assembly. Each of those present was greeted in turn and received by the Assembly with applause.

Northern Synod (Moderator: Revd Peter Poulter)

Yvonne Tracey (*in absentia*) Blyth/East Northumberland Ecumenical Area

North Western Synod (Moderator: Revd Peter Brain)

Richard Bradley Hope Denton & Trinity Audenshaw (UM) Pastorates

Mersey Synod (Moderator: Revd Howard Sharp)

Peter Lyth Churchtown and Hampton Road URCS

Yorkshire Synod (Moderator: Revd Arnold Harrison)

Alison Termie Spen and Calder Enterprise (SPACE)

East Midlands Synod (Moderator: Revd Terry Oakley)

Kay Cattell Marlpool and Selston URCS

South West Synod (Moderator: Revd David Grosch-Miller)

Ian Robert McDonald Southernhay, Exeter

Wessex Synod (Moderator: Revd Adrian Bulley)

David Moss Dorset District/West Moors Group
Lucy Brierley Woking URC
Clare Callanan Reading & Oxford District/Faringdon United Church
Alison Dalton (CRCW) Longham, Skinner Street & Parkstone URCS, Poole

Thames North Synod (Moderator: Revd Roberta Rominger)

Elizabeth Shaw (*in absentia*) Eastcote and Northwood Hills

Southern Synod (Moderator: Revd Nigel Uden)

John Cook Bexley, Bexleyheath and Welling URCS
David Morgan Trinity URC, Bromley & Bromley Town Centre Chaplain

National Synod of Scotland (Moderator: Revd John Humphreys)

Craig Jesson Airdrie Park and Coatbridge URCS

In presenting the newly ordained ministers from the Wessex Synod, Mr Bulley made particular mention of the Revd Colin Harley who, but for his tragic death only weeks after ordination, would have been presented at this Assembly. The Moderator greeted the new Ministers and CRCWs.

Training Committee

The Convener of the Training Committee, the Revd John Humphreys, moved adoption of Resolution 39:

Resolution 39

Lewis & Gibson Scholarship Rule change

General Assembly resolves to amend the Lewis and Gibson Scholarship Regulations, approved by Resolution 40 of General Assembly 2000, by inserting a new regulation (vi) as follows, and numbering (vi) to (x) as (vii) to (xi):

(vi) Scholars shall be elected for one year at a time, and, subject to satisfactory reports on their progress being received by the Electors, may be re-elected for a total period not exceeding four years.

Resolution 39 was carried.

Assembly Worship

The Assembly joined in worship, during which the Sacrament of Holy Communion was celebrated. 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 2005:

Gordon William Ernest BAKER
George Robinson BARR
Albert William BARRAH
Desmond Hugh BENDING
Norman BIRNIE
James Ian BROOKS
James Harold COUCH
David Neville CROWTHER
Adrienne DONES
Thomas George DYER
John Gibson FORSYTH
Frank Ronald HALL
Colin HARLEY
Frederick James HOLLEY
Mary Patricia HOWE
Nellie HUDSON
James Henry Marsh JOLLIFFE
David Ellis LEWIS
Thomas Irvine MACKAY
Philip MORGAN
John Richard MOWAT
Margaret Gray Plenderleith NUTTALL
John Reginald William PAULL
David Brinley RICHARDS
Henrietta Isabel SHORT
William Charles Edward SIMPSON
Hamish SMITH
Stanley Gilbert SMITH
Douglas Galloway STEWART

Richard Charles TUCKER
Kenneth Thomas WALTERS
Joseph WARREN
Donald Frank WILKINS
George John WILLIAMS
Ronald Franklin WILLIAMS,
John William Patrick WILLIAMSON
Douglas Vincent YOUNG

DEACONNESS

Agnes PURDIE

MISSIONARIES

Owen ABEL
Margaret RILEY
Dorothy TODMAN
Anne WALKER

Sunday 9th July

Second Session

West Midlands Synod

The West Midlands Synod made a presentation of its life and work.

The Moderator greeted the Revd Bernard Thorogood, former General Secretary and the Revd Kathleen Hendry, celebrating the 75th anniversary of her ordination.

Training Committee

The Moderator reminded the Assembly that it was still in Committee under Standing Order 5a.

The Assembly continued to address Resolution 37:

Resolution 37

College based training

- a) **General Assembly agrees that Northern, Westminster and the Scottish Colleges acting as resource centres for learning, are to have sole responsibility for ensuring the delivery of initial ministerial education (Education for Ministry 1). Northern College will continue to have sole responsibility for initial training of Church Related Community Workers. This will apply to all candidates recommended for training in the 2006/7 candidating process and thereafter.**
- b) **General Assembly instructs the Training Committee to work with those Synods which have students currently training in institutions affected by resolution 37a (including those sent by the 2005/2006 candidating process) in order to secure their continuing care and the satisfactory completion of their ordination (Education for Ministry 1) training.**

Assembly debated the Resolution fully, along with two tabled amendments.

The Moderator declared the Committee stage to be at an end, and Standing Orders were reinstated.

The Revd Elizabeth Welch moved adoption of the amendment to Resolution 37, paragraph a:

- a) 'General Assembly agrees that Northern, Westminster, **the Queens Foundation**, and the Scottish College are to have sole responsibility for ensuring the delivery of initial ministerial education (Education for Ministry 1). Northern College will continue to have sole responsibility for initial training of Church Related Community Workers. This will apply to all candidates recommended for training in the 2006/7 candidating process and thereafter.'

The amendment fell.

The Revd Adrian Bulley moved adoption of the amendment to Resolution 37, paragraph a:

- a) 'General Assembly agrees that Northern, Westminster, **the Southern Theological Education and Training Scheme (STETS)** and the Scottish College are to have sole responsibility for ensuring the delivery of initial ministerial education (Education for Ministry 1). Northern College will continue to have sole responsibility for initial training of Church Related Community Workers. This will apply to all candidates recommended for training in the 2006/7 candidating process and thereafter.'

The amendment fell.

Resolution 37 was put before the Assembly.

The Resolution was carried.

The Revd Sheila Maxey took the Chair.

The Revd Dr Walter Houston moved adoption of Resolution 61:

Resolution 61

Mansfield College

General Assembly, mindful of the past contribution of Mansfield College Oxford to ministerial education and the advancement of theological learning among Congregational and Reformed Churches in this country and worldwide; recognizing the College's desire to continue to be of service to the Church in the educational field; and appreciative of the resources in personnel and learning materials available there and in Oxford University; encourages the Training Committee to continue its discussions with the College to identify and implement appropriate ways of enabling it to make a distinctive contribution to the educational work of the United Reformed Church.

Seconded by the Revd Michael Hopkins.

Resolution 61 was carried.

Assembly Arrangements Committee

The report of the Assembly Arrangements Committee was presented by the Convener, Mr William McVey.

Mr McVey moved adoption of Resolution 43:

Resolution 43

General Assembly 2008

Assembly agrees that General Assembly in 2008 will meet at the Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh from 10th to 13th July.

Resolution 43 was carried.

Mr McVey moved adoption of Resolution 51:

Resolution 51 Membership of General Assembly

General Assembly adopts the criteria for representation at General Assembly with effect from the Assembly in 2008 as set out below:

Representation at General Assembly shall consist of:

Those who are members of the United Reformed Church, with the exception of those appointed from categories specified in paragraphs seven and eight below who need not be members of the United Reformed Church.

In compliance with Trustee law, members of Assembly must be at least 18 years of age. Should a Synod or other body entitled to appoint, appoint someone under 18 years of age that person shall have full speaking rights only.

1. Representation of Local Churches at each Assembly: this shall be based on the latest regional membership (Synods¹) of the United Reformed Church. A total number of such places as determined by Assembly on the advice of Mission Council shall be available; these will be allocated on the basis of the proportion of members of the United Reformed Church in each region to the total membership of the United Reformed Church.
 - 1.1 Within the places for each region, two places shall be reserved for young people (those 26 years of age and under). If these places are not filled from within the region they may be offered to young people from another region. Remaining young people's spare places may not be utilised by anyone over 26 years of age.
 - 1.2 After the deduction of the two places for young people, any odd number of places shall be increased to the next even number.
 - 1.3 In addition to the number of places calculated under the formula, including the young people's places, the Synod of Scotland shall retain their six additional places in accordance with the agreement. When necessary, the number of places for the Synod of Scotland under the formula shall be increased to the next even number before the addition of the six extra places.
2. The representation from each region shall be balanced equally between Ministers and lay. Any shortfall in one category of representation must be balanced by a reduction in the other category of representation. No substitute is allowable from the other category.

- 3 In conjunction with maintaining the balance between lay and ordained people, each region must decide for itself who can best reflect the needs and life of the church at that time in their region. However, regions are reminded of the equal opportunities policy of the church.
- 4 Representation shall normally be for a complete cycle of four years – this will enable representatives to attend two consecutive meetings of the biennial General Assembly.
- 5 Each region shall be also entitled to the attendance of their Moderator; this is in addition to the places under the formula, the even-number additions, and the Synod of Scotland additional places.
- 5.1 If a region's Moderator is, for the time being, an Officer of Assembly², the Moderator-Elect, or a past Moderator entitled to attend Assembly, then an alternate may be appointed by the region.
- 6 Other members of General Assembly shall include:
 - The Officers of Assembly
 - The Moderator-Elect
 - The immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly, the previous past Moderator of General Assembly and an additional past Moderator
 - The Convener of each of the standing committees of General Assembly
 - A staff representative and a student representative from each of such recognised theological colleges as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
 - A serving URC Chaplain to the forces of the Crown
- 7 Other members of General Assembly shall include:
 - Assembly-appointed staff in such number as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
 - Representatives of FURY in such numbers as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
 - A representative of the Council for World Mission
- 8 Further, as members of General Assembly, there may be invited:
 - Representatives of ecumenical partners in the United Kingdom in such number as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
 - Representatives of our worldwide partners in such number as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
- 9 There shall also be invited to attend as guests of the General Assembly, representatives of:
 - Such local ecumenical partners in the region in which the Assembly is being held as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
 - Such ecumenical partners in the United Kingdom as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine.
 - Such of our worldwide partners as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
 - Others agreed by Mission Council on an occasional basis

Following debate, Mr McVey responded to a number of questions, and after further debate, Resolutions 51 and 52 were, on the advice of the Assembly Clerk, remaindered until a later session of Assembly.

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell resumed the Chair.

Synod Resolution

On behalf of the East Midlands Synod, the Revd Elizabeth Nash moved adoption of Resolution 1:

Resolution 1 Discussion and decision making at General Assembly

General Assembly acknowledging the importance of discerning the mind of Christ in the councils of the church and believing that the current procedures used in making decisions are not necessarily the best, instructs Mission Council

- a) to explore consensus procedures for decision making at Assembly level and bring detailed proposals to General Assembly in 2007**
- and**
- b) to explore ways in which background information on key resolutions can be made available to local churches sufficiently in advance of Synod and General Assembly meetings to allow issues to be discussed so that representatives can be aware of the views of the wider membership.**

Seconded by Mrs Irene Wren.

Following debate, it was proposed that the resolution be now put.

Assembly agreed by more than the required two thirds majority.

The proposer responded to the debate, and Resolution 1 was carried.

Mr McVey presented an amended version of Resolution 51.

Resolution 51 Membership of General Assembly

General Assembly adopts the criteria for representation at General Assembly with effect from the Assembly in 2008 as set out below:

Representation at General Assembly shall consist of:

Those who are members of the United Reformed Church,
with the exception of those appointed from categories specified in paragraphs seven and eight below who need not be members of the United Reformed Church.

Subject to clarification of Trustee Law, all those appointed by a synod or other body, shall have full voting rights, regardless of age.

1. Representation of Local Churches at each Assembly: this shall be based on the latest regional membership (Synods¹) of the United Reformed Church. A total number of such places as determined by Assembly on the advice of Mission Council shall be available; these will be allocated on the basis of the proportion of members of the United Reformed Church in each region to the total membership of the United Reformed Church.
 - 1.1 Within the places for each region, two places shall be reserved for young people (those 26 years of age and under). If these places are not filled from within the region they may be offered to young people from another region. Remaining young people's spare places may not be utilised by anyone over 26 years of age.
 - 1.2 After the deduction of the two places for young people, any odd number of places shall be increased to the next even number.
 - 1.3 In addition to the number of places calculated under the formula, including the young people's places, the Synod of Scotland shall retain their six additional places in accordance with the agreement. When necessary, the number of places for the Synod of Scotland under the formula shall be increased to the next even number before the addition of the six extra places.

- 2 The representation from each region shall be balanced equally between Ministers and lay. Any shortfall in one category of representation must be balanced by a reduction in the other category of representation. No substitute is allowable from the other category.
- 3 In conjunction with maintaining the balance between lay and ordained people, each region must decide for itself who can best reflect the needs and life of the church at that time in their region. However, regions are reminded of the equal opportunities policy of the church.
- 4 Representation shall normally be for a complete cycle of four years – this will enable representatives to attend two consecutive meetings of the biennial General Assembly.
- 5 Each region shall be also entitled to the attendance of their Moderator; this is in addition to the places under the formula, the even-number additions, and the Synod of Scotland additional places.
- 5.1 If a region's Moderator is, for the time being, an Officer of Assembly², the Moderator-Elect, or a past Moderator entitled to attend Assembly, then an alternate may be appointed by the region.
- 6 Other members of General Assembly shall include:
 - The Officers of Assembly
 - The Moderator-Elect
 - The immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly, the previous past Moderator of General Assembly and an additional 2 past Moderators
 - The Convener of each of the standing committees of General Assembly
 - A staff representative and a student representative from each of such recognised theological colleges as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
 - A serving URC Chaplain to the forces of the Crown
- 7 Other members of General Assembly shall include:
 - Assembly-appointed staff in such number as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
 - Representatives of FURY in such numbers as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
 - A representative of the Council for World Mission
- 8 Further, as members of General Assembly, there may be invited:
 - Representatives of ecumenical partners in the United Kingdom in such number as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
 - Representatives of our worldwide partners in such number as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
- 9 There shall also be invited to attend as guests of the General Assembly, representatives of:
 - Such local ecumenical partners in the region in which the Assembly is being held as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
 - Such ecumenical partners in the United Kingdom as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine.
 - Such of our worldwide partners as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
 - Others agreed by Mission Council on an occasional basis

It was moved that the Resolution be not put. The motion fell.

The Revd Roberta Rominger moved the amendment that the sentence re Forces Chaplains be moved from the end of para 6 to the end of para 8.

After debate the amendment fell.

Mrs Helen Lidgett moved the amendment:

'Assembly agrees to delete "Assembly-appointed staff in such number as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine"

Seconded by the Revd Michael Hopkins.

The amendment fell.

The Assembly Clerk proposed an amendment to delete '2008' and replace with '2010'; seconded by the Revd Michael Hopkins.

The amendment was carried.

The General Secretary moved that the motion be now put. Many members seconded. Carried by more than the required two thirds majority..

The Substantive Motion was then moved:

Resolution 51

Membership of General Assembly

General Assembly adopts the criteria for representation at General Assembly with effect from the Assembly in 2010 as set out below:

Representation at General Assembly shall consist of:

Those who are members of the United Reformed Church, with the exception of those appointed from categories specified in paragraphs seven and eight below who need not be members of the United Reformed Church.

Subject to clarification of Trustee Law, all those appointed by a synod or other body, shall have full voting rights, regardless of age.

- 1. Representation of Local Churches at each Assembly: this shall be based on the latest regional membership (Synods¹) of the United Reformed Church. A total number of such places as determined by Assembly on the advice of Mission Council shall be available; these will be allocated on the basis of the proportion of members of the United Reformed Church in each region to the total membership of the United Reformed Church.**
 - 1.1 Within the places for each region, two places shall be reserved for young people (those 26 years of age and under). If these places are not filled from within the region they may be offered to young people from another region. Remaining young people's spare places may not be utilised by anyone over 26 years of age.**
 - 1.2 After the deduction of the two places for young people, any odd number of places shall be increased to the next even number.**
 - 1.3 In addition to the number of places calculated under the formula, including the young people's places, the Synod of Scotland shall retain their six additional places in accordance with the agreement. When necessary, the number of places for the Synod of Scotland under the formula shall be increased to the next even number before the addition of the six extra places.**
- 2 The representation from each region shall be balanced equally between Ministers and lay. Any shortfall in one category of representation must be balanced by a reduction in the other category of representation. No substitute is allowable from the other category.**
- 3 In conjunction with maintaining the balance between lay and ordained people, each region must decide for itself who can best reflect the needs and life of the church at that time in their region. However, regions are reminded of the equal opportunities policy of the church.**

- 4 Representation shall normally be for a complete cycle of four years – this will enable representatives to attend two consecutive meetings of the biennial General Assembly.**
- 5 Each region shall be also entitled to the attendance of their Moderator; this is in addition to the places under the formula, the even-number additions, and the Synod of Scotland additional places.**
- 5.1 If a region’s Moderator is, for the time being, an Officer of Assembly², the Moderator-Elect, or a past Moderator entitled to attend Assembly, then an alternate may be appointed by the region.**
- 6 Other members of General Assembly shall include:**
The Officers of Assembly
The Moderator-Elect
The immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly, the previous past Moderator of General Assembly and an additional 2 past Moderators
The Convener of each of the standing committees of General Assembly
A staff representative and a student representative from each of such recognised theological colleges as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
A serving URC Chaplain to the forces of the Crown
- 7 Other members of General Assembly shall include:**
Assembly-appointed staff in such number as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
Representatives of FURY in such numbers as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine
A representative of the Council for World Mission
- 8 Further, as members of General Assembly, there may be invited:**
Representatives of ecumenical partners in the United Kingdom in such number as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
Representatives of our worldwide partners in such number as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
- 9 There shall also be invited to attend as guests of the General Assembly, representatives of:**
Such local ecumenical partners in the region in which the Assembly is being held as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
Such ecumenical partners in the United Kingdom as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine.
Such of our worldwide partners as the Assembly on the advice of Mission Council may from time to time determine
Others agreed by Mission Council on an occasional basis

Resolution 51 was carried.

Resolution 52

General Assembly agrees that the total regional representation at General Assembly, with effect from the Assembly in 2008, shall be set at 200 members before taking into account the additional members for the Synod of Scotland and the Moderator of each Synod. Minor adjustment shall be permitted to produce an even number of representatives in each region.

Mr Colin Ferguson proposed an amendment to replace ‘200’ with ‘250’. Seconded by the Revd Alasdair Pratt.

After debate, the amendment was carried.

The amended Resolution 52 was put to the vote:

General Assembly agrees that the total regional representation at General Assembly, with effect from the Assembly in 2010, shall be set at 250 members before taking into account the additional members for the Synod of Scotland and the Moderator of each Synod. Minor adjustment shall be permitted to produce an even number of representatives in each region.

It was moved that the Resolution be now put: carried by more than the required two thirds majority.

Resolution 52, as amended, was carried.

Resolution 56 Assembly Membership Changes to the Structure

General Assembly resolves to amend the Basis and Structure of the United Reformed Church as follows.

To amend paragraph 2.(5) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church to read:

2.(5) The General Assembly which shall embody the unity of the United Reformed Church and act as the central organ of its life and the final authority, under the Word of God and the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, in all matters of doctrine and order and in all other concerns of its common life shall consist of:

- (a) Such number of representatives of synods (ministerial and lay in equal numbers) as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine. These numbers shall be calculated proportionately to the total membership of each synod, as recorded in the year book of the United Reformed Church (at present this calculation shall be such as to produce a total of synod representatives not exceeding 200.)
- (b) among the representatives of synods shall be included at least two from each synod aged 26 or under, at the date of appointment. Should a synod prove unable to make such an appointment it may appoint from another synod but these persons must be 26 or under at the date of appointment.
- (c) The moderators of the General Assembly and of the synods, [The Moderator elect of the General Assembly] such other officers of the General Assembly as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine (The Assembly has determined that the Clerk of Assembly, the General Secretary and the Deputy General Secretary shall be members of Assembly).
- (d) Where the Moderator of synod is an officer of the Assembly, a committee convener or otherwise entitled to membership of the assembly, the synod concerned shall appoint a substitute as its representative.
- (e) The convener of each of the standing committees of the General Assembly;
- (f) A staff representative and a student representative, being members of the United Reformed Church, from each of such recognised theological colleges as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine;
- (g) Such number of representatives from the partner churches of the United Reformed Church outside of Britain and Ireland as the Assembly shall from time to time determine;
- (h) Such other ministers and elders of the United Reformed Church as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine (the Assembly has added to its membership one serving United Reformed Church chaplain to the forces, nominated each year by the Organising Secretary of the United Board, in consultation with the three Principal Chaplains, SIX representatives of the Synod of Scotland
- (i) The previous two moderators of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church provided that such former moderators are members of the United Reformed Church;

- (j) Such number of representatives of the Fellowship of United Reformed Youth, being members of the United Reformed Church, as the Assembly shall from time to time determine (at present two);
- (k) Representatives of other denominations in the United Kingdom as the General Assembly may from time to time determine;
- (l) A representative of the Council for World Mission.
- (m) Such number of Assembly-appointed staff as the General Assembly may from time to time determine.

(In order to comply with Trust and Charity law all members of the General Assembly must be at least eighteen years of age. Where a representative is seventeen years or younger, at the date appointed for the first session of the General assembly, that representative shall have full speaking rights but shall not be entitled to vote)

The General Assembly shall elect a moderator and such other officers as it shall from time to time think desirable. (The Assembly has appointed the following to serve as officers with the moderator: the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary, the Clerk of Assembly, The Treasurer and the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee.) It shall also appoint a Mission Council with power to act in its name in matters of urgency between meetings of the General Assembly and to discharge such other functions as the General Assembly may from time to time direct. The General Assembly shall appoint standing committees which subject to the General Assembly shall have charge of the continuing interests of the church. It may also appoint special committees which subject to the General Assembly shall have charge of such matters as the General Assembly may assign to them from time to time. The General Assembly may appoint to any such committee members of the United Reformed Church who are not members of the General Assembly.

A number of legal questions had been raised concerning Resolution 51, and on the advice of the Clerk, Resolution 56 which would have begun the process of amending the structure of the United Reformed Church to comply with Resolutions 51 & 52 was withdrawn until the necessary legal advice was to hand.

Mission Council

The Deputy General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 14:

Resolution 14

To amend the Structure as regards an Appeals Procedure covering Listed Buildings

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Structure and the Rules of Procedure of the United Reformed Church:

STRUCTURE – paragraph 5 – Appeals

Paragraph 5(2)

In the opening sentence, after ‘outside paragraph 5(1)’ add ‘or paragraph 5(3)’

Paragraph 5(3)

Add a new paragraph 5(3) as follows

‘Applications for consent to carry out works to buildings coming within the Church’s Control Procedure under the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations for the time being in force and appeals from decisions made thereunder shall be dealt with in accordance with that procedure and not under paragraph 5(2) above’.

The General Secretary moved that: 'in accordance with Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 14 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2007 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.'

The Assembly agreed

The Assembly adjourned.

Sunday 9th July

Third Session

Ministries Committee

The report of the Ministries Committee was presented by the Convener, Mr John Ellis, and members of the Committee.

Mr Ellis responded to a number of questions and comments and moved adoption of Resolution 24:

Resolution 24

Revised Remit of the Lay Preaching Support Sub-Committee

General Assembly

- i) agrees that the Lay Preaching Support Sub-Committee should be renamed the Leadership in Worship Committee and be given the following remit:**
 - a) To support Lay Preachers**
 - b) To support other lay people involved in leading worship**
 - c) To encourage members of congregations to become more involved in leading worship**

- ii) requests the Nominations Committee to propose, as soon as possible, an initial list of names to serve on this Sub-Committee, including at least one Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher.**

Mr Ellis responded to a question and Resolution 24 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 25:

General Assembly approves the following procedures in respect of changes to ministerial service:

1 Statement of Reasons

A Minister/CRCW who decides to move or resign should be asked by the Synod Moderator to make a written statement about the reasons for that course of action. A copy of this statement should be sent by the Moderator to the Secretary for Ministries.

2 Move from one pastorate or post to another within the United Reformed Church

- a) Where a Minister is moving from one pastorate or post to another, they should discuss with the Moderator whether there are particular reasons behind the move which should be shared with the local church/post that is entering a vacancy.
- b) In the case of termed appointments for CRCWs and those in Special Category Ministry, most moves come at the recognised end of that appointment. The same procedure should nonetheless be followed to help with reflection on the ministry.
- c) When a Minister is changing pastorates because of difficulties, some form of counselling or debriefing should be offered through the Moderator.

3 Move away from ministerial service in the United Reformed Church without resignation from the Roll of Ministers/list of CRCWs

- a) Some Ministers and CRCWs move out of posts under the auspices of the United Reformed Church in order to exercise another form of service. If the Minister/CRCW wishes to remain on the Roll/list, their move should be subject to the concurrence of the Church.
- b) In such a case, the Minister/CRCW should provide a copy of their stated reasons for wishing to move out of URC ministerial service to the appropriate Council of the Church (currently District Council) and seek concurrence with the proposed move.
- c) If concurrence is granted, the Minister/CRCW would remain on the Roll of Ministers/list of CRCWs and his/her name would continue to appear in the Yearbook. He/she would be under the oversight and care of the Synod in which they reside. The Minister/CRCW would be eligible to seek a future pastorate/post within the United Reformed Church upon request to the Moderators.
- d) If concurrence is not granted and the Minister/CRCW proceeds with the move, the District should send a report of the District decision to the Accreditation Sub-Committee. This report should:
 - i) set out details of the post the Minister/CRCW has accepted;
 - ii) the reasons why the District did not consider it appropriate to give concurrence.

If the Accreditation Sub-committee gives approval for the move, the Minister's/CRCW's status would remain as in (c) above.

If the Accreditation Sub-Committee upholds the decision of the District, the Minister/CRCW would be deemed to have resigned from the Roll of Ministers/list of CRCWs. His/her name would no longer appear in the Yearbook. If a Minister/CRCW does not receive concurrence and was removed from the Roll/list, he/she would have the right of appeal to the Ministries Committee.

- e) **The Ministries Committee copy of the Minister's/CRCW's statement should be added to their file, together with a record of whether the move was with or without the concurrence of the Church.**
- f) **If a Minister/CRCW is already outside a post under the auspices of the United Reformed Church and moves to a fresh sphere of service, the same procedure should be followed if they wish to remain on the Roll/list.**

4 Resignation from the Roll of Ministers/list of CRCWs

- a) **When the resignation of a Minister/CRCW from the Roll/list is accepted, his/her written statement should be added to his/her Ministries Committee file.**
- b) **This statement should be consulted if the former Minister/CRCW seeks reinstatement to the Roll/list at some future date.**
- c) **If a Minister/CRCW were not prepared to give reasons for their resignation this fact should be noted on their file.**

Following debate, to which Mr Ellis responded, Resolution 25 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 26:

Resolution 26

Duty to consider extension of full-time stipendiary service

General Assembly approves the adoption of the following procedure for the duty to consider extension of full time stipendiary service by a Minister of Word and Sacraments or a Church Related Community Worker beyond the retirement age set by the United Reformed Church.

- 1 In the month of a Minister's 64th birthday the payroll office shall confirm the expected date of retirement as the end of the month in which he/she is 65.**
- 2 If a Minister does not wish to retire on that date he/she must apply for an extension of full time service for a maximum of three years.**
- 3 He/she shall speak to the Synod Moderator and thereafter submit an application for an extension of full time service to the appropriate Council of the Church (currently District Council).**
- 4 On receipt of the application, the Council shall consult with the Minister, Moderator, Elders of the Church/es/post and the Church Meeting(s), where the Minister is in a pastorate, to see whether or not the individual circumstances warrant an extension of full time stipendiary service. The circumstances to be considered shall include:**
 - a Minister drawing near to the end of a particular project or piece of work who might need to spend a year or two to bring it to a conclusion;**
 - plans for a new grouping of churches in a particular area where it is felt desirable for the Minister to remain for a short while to see plans through to fruition;**
 - a Minister, coming into ministry later in life, who might have just a short time to go before qualifying for retired ministers' housing;**
 - a Minister whose spouse has a short period to go before retirement.**
- 5 If the Council agrees with the request, the Minister's application, together with an account of the particular circumstances and a record of both the local church's/post's support and that of the appropriate Council, will be sent to the Secretary for Ministries for a decision by the Accreditation Sub-Committee. In reaching this decision the**

Accreditation Sub-Committee shall consider the individual circumstances alongside the overall responsibility of the United Reformed Church to monitor Minister numbers so that:

- a) the financial responsibility to support the ministerial work force is not threatened; and
- b) the introduction of newly ordained and commissioned ministers is not curtailed.

- 6 The Secretary for Ministries shall inform the appropriate Council and the Minister of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee. If the decision is to accept an extension then a new date of retirement shall be agreed.
- 7 A year before the revised date of retirement, the payroll office shall once again write to the Minister and if a further extension of full time stipendiary service is requested the United Reformed Church must consider the request. The procedure set out above will therefore be repeated.

Following brief debate, Resolution 26 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 27:

Resolution 27

Return to work after ill-health retirement

General Assembly adopts the following procedure for return to work after ill-health retirement of Ministers and Church Related Community Workers.

When a Minister or CRCW who has previously retired on grounds of ill-health wishes to return to work:

- i) The Minister/CRCW will inform the Moderator of the Synod in which they are living.
- ii) The Moderator will:
 - a) Inform the Secretary for Ministries
 - b) Arrange for a Synod interview with the Minister/CRCW to assess personal and spiritual readiness to return to work and assess any further training needs. The council of the Church that gave concurrence for retirement of that Minister/CRCW should be consulted, as well as the Moderator of the Synod.
- iii) The Secretary for Ministries will arrange for medical references to be gathered. These will include a report from the Minister's/CRCW's own doctor and if applicable his/her consultant and an independent medical/psychiatric assessment paid for by the United Reformed Church. The United Reformed Church's medical referee, or whomsoever the referee names as a specialist in each individual case, will conduct this assessment.
- iv) A recommendation will be sent by the Synod to the Secretary for Ministries following the Synod interview.
- v) The Secretary for Ministries will take the medical and Synod reports to the Accreditation Sub-Committee who will then take the decision as to whether the Moderators may introduce the Minister's/CRCW's name to a local church or post, subject to the completion of any agreed training programme.
- vi) The local church or post will be made aware by the Moderator that the individual is returning to work after retirement on the grounds of ill health.
- vii) The Minister will remain in receipt of the pension and, where applicable, in Church housing until he/she receives a call.
- viii) If there has been no call by a local church after a year the situation will be reviewed. This review will involve a meeting between the Minister and the

Moderator in the first instance. Following that meeting the Moderator will advise the Accreditation Sub-Committee as to whether the Minister's name should remain available for introduction to a pastorate.

- ix) Should the original health problem recur to the point where early retirement on the grounds of ill health becomes necessary, there should be a streamlined procedure for approving retirement on the grounds of ill-health. There will normally be no further opportunity to return to ministerial service.

Following brief debate, Resolution 27 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 28:

Resolution 28

Amendments to The Plan for Partnership

General Assembly agrees the following changes to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration.

Deletions are shown in [square brackets] and additions are shown in *italics*.

5.4.1 Those in full-time service over the age of 65 years [and 6 months], except those approved by the Ministries Committee (para 5.2.2)

6.1.3 Maternity/*Adoption*/*Paternity* provisions: details of arrangements for [maternity pay and] parental leave *and pay* can be obtained from the MoM office.

6.1.4 *Jury Service: ministers who are called for Jury Service should inform the MoM Office as soon as possible to enable the loss of earnings declaration to be completed in advance.*

6.1.[4]5 Pulpit supply fees: when the MoM Office has been advised that a minister remunerated under the Plan in unable to work due to ill-health or is on [maternity] *parental leave or is on Jury Service* 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 the 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 MoM Office.

Existing Paragraphs 6.1.5, 6.1.5.1, and 6.1.5.2 are re-numbered 6.1.6, 6.1.6.1, and 6.1.6.2 respectively.

Existing Paragraphs 6.1.6 and 6.1.6.1 are re-numbered 6.1.7 and 6.1.7.1 respectively.

7. HOLIDAY [PROVISION] ENTITLEMENT

7.1 Ministers/CRCWs are entitled to 5 weeks holiday in each calendar year and one further Sunday away from the pastorate. When a minister/CRCW 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, *parental leave*, *Jury Service*, 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.

APPENDIX A – APPROVED RATES UNDER THE PLAN

6.1.1	[Maximum part-time stipend	75% of full time]
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Resolution 28 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 29:

Resolution 29

Pension Fund Changes re Civil Partnerships

General Assembly resolves to amend the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund, with effect from 5 December 2005, so that the following definition is added to the definitions section of the Rules:

'Civil Partner: in respect of a member, a person who has entered into a civil partnership with the member which is recognised under the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (and which has not been dissolved or annulled by a court).'

The following Rule is also added as a new Rule 49:

'A member's Civil Partner shall be treated for the purposes of the Rules as if he or she were the member's spouse but only in respect of:

benefits that are attributable to Pensionable Service from 5 December 2005, including that day, or, in the case of money purchase AVCs, to contributions payable on or after that date; and

benefits that are not attributable to Pensionable Service and are payable as a result of the member's death on or after 5 December 2005.

The pension sharing appendix shall be deemed to be amended to the extent required to comply with the Civil Partnership Act 2004.'

Following debate, Resolution 29 was carried, with four abstentions.

The Revd Elizabeth Nash moved adoption of Resolution 62:

Resolution 62

Pension Fund & Civil Partnerships

General Assembly instructs the Ministries Committee to re-examine Rule 49 of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund, to consider the emendation of this rule so that a member's Civil Partner might be treated in all respects as though he or she were a spouse, and to report accordingly to Mission Council.

Seconded by the Revd Terry Oakley.

Proposed by Revd Nigel Warner that the Resolution be not put. There were several seconders.

The motion was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 30:

Resolution 30

Pension Fund Rule on Ill-health Retirement

General Assembly resolves to amend the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund, with effect from the date of this resolution, so that the Rule 20 is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

'Ill-health Retirement

1.1 In the event that a member retires before normal pension age on account of incapacity to undertake the duties of a stipendiary minister or CRCW due to ill-health duly certified to the satisfaction of the Pension Trustee in accordance with the requirements of Rule 20.2, he/she shall be entitled to an immediate pension which shall be calculated as provided in Rule 18 but by reference to the member's full prospective Pensionable Service up to normal pension age.

1.2 An ill-health pension shall only be put into payment if the Pension Trustee has received evidence from a registered medical practitioner that the member is, and will continue to be, unable to carry on his or her occupation because of physical or mental impairment.

1.3 The Pension Trustee shall review the state of health of any member who receives a pension under this Rule 20 at regular intervals and at least once every five years, except where the Pension Trustee considers this inappropriate (for example, in cases of severe ill-health or when the time for review is within twelve months of the member reaching normal pension age); and the member shall submit to any medical examinations which the Pension Trustee may require in order to carry out such a review.

1.4 If any member who has been granted an ill-health pension recovers sufficiently and undertakes remunerated employment, that member must advise the Pension Trustee accordingly.

1.5 The Pension Trustee may vary or suspend any pension payable under this rule if the Pension Trustee considers that the member no longer satisfies the condition described in sub-rule 20.2 for the payment of an ill-health pension.

1.6 Provision for dependent children may be payable (see Rule 48).'

Resolution 30 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 31:

Resolution 31

Pension Fund Rule changes Part I

General Assembly resolves to make the following amendments to the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund, with effect from 6 April 2006.

1. Early Leavers

To add the following definition to the definitions section of the Rules, as follows:

'Cash Transfer Sum: means the cash equivalent of the member's benefits calculated by the Actuary in accordance with the statutory provisions prevailing from time to time.'

Rule 29 shall be amended so that the words: 'If a member leaves the qualifying service of the URC' are deleted and replaced with: 'If a member leaves Pensionable Service'.

In addition, Rule 29.1.1 shall be amended so that a further sentence is added, as follows:

'Where a member has at least three months but less than two years qualifying service he/she shall also be entitled to the option of taking a Cash Transfer Sum which may be transferred to any other pension scheme or arrangement duly authorised by law to receive such payment provided that such a transfer would not be an unauthorised payment. A receipt from the receiving pension scheme or arrangement shall be a full discharge of the Pension Trustee's liabilities in respect of the pension.'

A new sub-rule 29.1.3 shall be added as follows:

'The Pension Trustee must notify the member of the right to make an election for a Cash Transfer Sum and must inform the member that if he or she does not make an election by the reply date specified in the notification, the Trustee will pay a cash refund (as described in sub-rule 29.1.1). If the member makes an election for a Cash Transfer Sum before the reply date (or any later date allowed by the Pension Trustee), the Pension Trustee must give effect to it. Otherwise, the Pension Trustee must pay a cash refund (as described in sub-rule 29.1.1) to the member.'

2. Commutation

Rule 17.3 (prohibiting the commutation of pension attributable to AVCs made on or after 8 April 1987) shall be deleted, and sub-rule 17.4 shall be renumbered 17.3 and any references to it shall be replaced accordingly.

Rule 26.2 (also prohibiting the commutation of any pension attributable to AVCs made under arrangements first entered into by the member after 7 April 1987) shall be deleted sub-note 26.3 shall be renumbered 26.2 and any references to it shall be replaced accordingly.

3. Pensions for dependent children

Rule 48 shall be amended so that the words 'PROVIDED THAT a pension shall be paid only until the child attains age 23 if the pension would otherwise be an unauthorised payment under the Finance Act 2004' are added immediately after the words 'whichever is the earlier' at the end of the first paragraph.

In addition, Rule 48 shall be amended so that the first line of the third paragraph shall be deleted and replaced as follows:

'From January 2006 the initial level of the pension in respect of a dependent child or children shall be £929pa for the first dependent child and £471pa per child for any further dependent children.'

4. Other Dependants

The definition of 'Dependant' in the definitions section of the Rules shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

'Dependant: a person who:

- (a) was married to the member at the date of the member's death; or**
- (b) is a child of the member as described in rule 48; or**
- (c) in the opinion of the Pension Trustee, at the date of the member's death, was financially dependent on the member, had a financial relationship with the member of mutual dependence or was dependent on the member because of mental or physical impairment.'**

5. General Finance Act 2004 amendments

The schedule summarising the Inland Revenue limits shall be amended so that it is in two parts, with the wording in the current schedule being entitled 'Part II' and the following wording added as an introduction to the schedule and as Part I:

'This schedule is divided into 2 parts:

Part I sets out the overriding tax rules that apply to the Fund with effect from 6 April 2006, and Part II summarises the Inland Revenue Limits that applied to the Fund before 6 April 2006, and which shall be deemed to continue to apply on and after 6 April 2006, subject to the modifications described in Part I.

Part I – Tax Rules

1. **Definitions:** In this Part I the following words and phrases have the following meanings:

A-Day: 6 April 2006

Authorised Payment: a payment authorised in accordance with section 164 of the Finance Act 2004 (an authorised member payment) or section 175 of that Act (an authorised employer payment).

Finance Act: Finance Act 2004

HMRC: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Inland Revenue Limits: the limits which in the opinion of the Pension Trustee would have applied to benefits and contributions, if the tax regime in force before A-Day had continued to apply on and after A-Day, in order not to prejudice the Fund's exempt approved status under that tax regime, assuming that HMRC practice (as summarised in the practice note IR12 and in HMRC Updates) and any concessions granted in relation to the Fund by HMRC would have continued on the same basis as applied immediately before A-Day. Inland Revenue Limits are summarised in Part II of this schedule.

Unauthorised Payment: an unauthorised payment as defined in section 160(5) of the Finance Act.

2. **Overriding effect:** This Part I of the schedule overrides any other provisions of the Trust Deed and Rules of the Fund that are inconsistent with it except clause 9 of the Trust Deed (power of amendment) and any other provision conferring a power to modify the Fund.
3. **Registered pension scheme:** The Fund is intended to be a registered pension scheme for the purposes of Part 4 of the Finance Act. The Pension Trustee shall not be required to take any action if in its opinion doing so could jeopardise the status of the Fund as a registered pension scheme.
4. **Unauthorised Payments:** Any provision of the Trust Deed and Rules which would require the Pension Trustee to make an Unauthorised Payment shall be construed as conferring discretion upon the Pension Trustee or managers to make that payment. However, if immediately before A-Day, the consent of the URC, a Participating Body, or any other person, would have been required before the Pension Trustee could make a payment, then the discretion conferred by this paragraph to make a payment of that type may be exercised only with the consent of that person.
5. **Pension for life:** A pension payable to a member under the Fund must be payable for life and must not reduce in payment, except in circumstances permitted under paragraph 2(4) of schedule 28 of the Finance Act 2004.

- 6. Inland Revenue Limits:** If in the opinion of the Pension Trustee a payment otherwise due from the Fund would cause Inland Revenue Limits to be exceeded, it shall be reduced to the extent necessary to prevent it from doing so in the manner decided by the Pension Trustee. Accordingly, benefits shall not unless the Pension Trustee decides otherwise with the consent of the Assembly exceed the Inland Revenue Limits as summarised in Part II of this schedule. If a combination of payments would cause Inland Revenue Limits to be exceeded, the Trustees shall reduce all or any of them in any manner which they think fit but only to the extent necessary to satisfy the Pension Trustee that Inland Revenue Limits are not exceeded.
- 7. Approval:** Any provision of the Fund that refers to a requirement that Approval must not be jeopardised or prejudiced (whether expressed in those terms or not) or to a requirement that consent or approval must be obtained from the Board of the Inland Revenue as a condition of any payment or action shall be interpreted as follows. The Pension Trustee shall decide whether in its opinion the condition would probably have been met had similar circumstances arisen before A-Day, and if so, the condition will be treated as met. Otherwise, the condition will be treated as not met.
- 8. Cash sums:** The Pension Trustee shall have the power to permit any member or a dependant (including members whose pensionable service ended before A-Day and their dependants) to exchange the whole or part of any benefit otherwise payable under the Fund (including, in the case of the member, benefits payable in respect of his/her dependant) for a lump sum, on terms decided by the Trustee having consulted the Actuary (except to the extent if any) that the Rules provide, separately from this Schedule, for a cash sum to be payable in the circumstances that apply to the member, whether of the same or a different amount, and for a method of determining the terms on which pension is exchanged, in which case the relevant provisions of the Rules shall apply), so long as:
 - 8.1** the cash sum is an Authorised Payment (see in particular Schedule 29 to the Finance Act 2004);
 - 8.2** the exchange is not prohibited by section 91 of the Pensions Act 1995;
 - 8.3** the exchange does not cause a breach of the preservation, revaluation or contracting-out requirements of the Pension Schemes Act 1993.

Subject to paragraphs 8.1 and 8.3, the Pension Trustee may decide to pay benefits as a cash sum without the member's or dependant's consent, if it would have had the power to do so under the Rules as they applied on 5 April 2005 or the pension is attributable in the opinion of the Pension Trustee to qualifying service on or after 6 April 2006.

Any restriction in the Rules on the amount of benefit that may be paid as a cash sum shall be ignored and this provision overrides paragraph 6 (Inland Revenue Limits) and paragraph 7 (Approval).'

Resolution 31 was carried.

Mr Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 32:

General Assembly resolves to make the following amendments to the Rules of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund, with effect from the date of this resolution.

1. **Participating Bodies**

The current definition of 'Participating Bodies' in the Rules shall be amended by the words:

'in accordance with rule 14A', after the words:

'means such United Reformed Churches or any other body admitted to membership of the Fund'.

A new Rule 14 A shall be added as follows:

14A Participating Bodies

14A.1 A church or other body may participate in the Scheme and so become a Participating Body if it agrees by deed to be bound by the Definitive Deed and Rules as a Participating Body. Participation may take place only if Approval is not prejudiced and with the consent of the Assembly which must also execute the deed. Participation shall start when the deed is executed or on such earlier or later date as may be specified in the deed. The new Participating Body must, unless the URC directs otherwise, agree to nominate the Principal Employer to make decisions for it which relate to the Pensions Act 1995 (in particular the operation of section 16 to 21 and section 35) or to the Pensions Act 2004 and any regulations made under either of those Acts under which it is envisaged that one employer in a multi-employer scheme may act for all the employers participating in the scheme.

14A.2 a participating body (other than the URC) withdraws from the fund on the withdrawal date which is the earlier of the following dates:

14A.2.1 the date specified in a written notice from the Participating Body to the Pension Trustee that the Participating Body is terminating its liability to contribute to the Fund and withdrawing from membership of the Fund;

14A.2.2 the date specified in a written notice from the URC to the Trustees, copied to the Participating Body, that the Participating Body is to terminate its contributions to the Fund and to withdraw from the Fund; or

14A.2.3 the date that the Participating Body goes into liquidation, is dissolved or ceases to carry on business.

14A.3 If there is any doubt if and when the Withdrawal Date has occurred, this is decided by the Pension Trustee. The Participating Body has no further liability under the Trust Deed and Rules of the Fund after the Withdrawal Date (except for paying any arrears of contributions due before the Withdrawal Date) but this does not affect any continuing liability imposed by the Pension Schemes Act 1993, the Pensions Act 1995, the Pensions Act 2004 or the Finance Act 2004 or any other legislation or legal requirement.

14A.4 Effect on Members in Pensionable Service: Each Member employed by the withdrawing Participating Body and who is in service in membership of the Fund on the Withdrawal Date is deemed to have left service on the Withdrawal Date and his or her benefits are calculated accordingly under the Trust Deed and Rules.

14A.5 Pension Trustee's powers: On, or at any time following, the Withdrawal Date, the Pension Trustee may make a transfer payment under Rule 36 to secure benefits from an Assurance Company for all or any of the Members who are or were employed by the Participating Body which has withdrawn from membership of the Fund. Otherwise, benefits are payable under the Fund in accordance with the Trust Deed and Rules.

Rule 15.2 shall be amended by the addition of the following words after the first sentence:

'The Participating Bodies shall contribute to the expenses of administering the Fund including such share of the Fund's Pension Protection Fund levy as the Assembly shall determine from time to time on the advice of the Actuary.'

2. Winding-up

Rule 35.1 shall be amended so that the following words are added at the end of it as follows:

'On the determination of the Fund, the Fund shall be wound up in accordance with Rule 35.2 except if, and to the extent, any statutory priority order overrides it.'

Resolution 32 was carried.

The Moderator thanked Mr Ellis as he finishes his period of service as Convener of the Ministries Committee.

Synod Resolution

On behalf of the Wessex Synod, the Revd Ruth Whitehead moved adoption of Resolution 2:

Resolution 2

Housing of Non-stipendiary Ministers

General Assembly notes

- a) that in many of our Districts we are reducing the number of stipendiary ministers and so are finding it increasingly difficult to provide leadership in all of our churches**
- b) that the Charity Commissioners allow charities to use their assets for activities which further the aim of the charity**
- c) that the Anglican church benefits from the possibility of finding non stipendiary ministers for churches by offering 'house-for-duty'**

Assembly instructs Mission Council to investigate the possibility of changing United Reformed Church regulations to allow flexibility in the provision and payment for housing of Non-stipendiary Ministers.

Seconded by Mrs Margaret Telfer.

After brief debate, Resolution 2 was carried.

Catch the Vision

The Assembly moved into committee mode to discuss Resolution 47 and its implications for the Basis of Union and the Structure of the United Reformed Church. The Clerk highlighted a number of minor errors and alterations to the proposed revision of the Basis of Union and Structure of the URC.

In reinstating Standing Orders, the Moderator reminded the Assembly that, during the debate in committee, the following had been agreed:

- Provision of places for two members under the age of 26
- Deletion of a specific maximum number of General Assembly members
- Inclusion of support and care for local churches among Functions of Synods
- Insertion of new clauses (xiv) and (xv) as follows:

(xv) To receive and decide upon applications of recognition as candidates for the ministry.

(xvi) To receive and forward to the General Assembly, recommendations concerning applications for admission into the United Reformed Church for ministers, probationers or congregations.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 47:

Resolution 47

Changes to the Basis and Structure

General Assembly approves the changes to the Basis and Structure of the United Reformed Church consequent upon its acceptance of resolutions 40, 41 and 43 of 2005, as set out in Catch the Vision Appendix 4, pages 141-160 of the book of Reports 2006.

Resolution 47 was carried.

The General Secretary moved that:

'in accordance with Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 47 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2007 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.'

The Assembly agreed.

(N.B. A version of the Basis and Structure containing all the changes proposed and agreed at this year's Assembly is printed as an appendix to this Record of Assembly)

After worship led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.

Worship was conducted by the Chaplain; Bible Study was led by Mr Lawrence Moore.

Revd Michael Cruchley

The Moderator greeted the Revd Michael Cruchley, and wished him well on his retirement after many years first as Rural Consultant for the United Reformed and Methodist Churches and then as Rural Consultant for the synod of Wales.

Revd Brian Jolly

The Moderator thanked the Revd Brian Jolly for his service as Convener of the Life and Witness Committee.

Training Committee

The Revd John Humphreys moved adoption of Resolution 38:

Resolution 38

Westminster College Principal

In light of General Assembly's decisions about the Training Committee's 2006 report it instructs the Training Committee and the Governors of Westminster College to proceed with the appointment of a Principal for Westminster College.

Resolution 38 was carried.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 64 to obviate the problem of future Assembly members being appointed by bodies that no longer exist:

Resolution 64

Amendment to the Structure

**Paragraph 2(5)(a)
Delete 'District Councils' and insert 'Synods'**

Resolution 64 was carried.

The General Secretary moved that 'in accordance with Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 64 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2007 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.'

The Assembly agreed.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 7:

Resolution 7

Amendments to Section O Part II

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

Paragraph A.6

After the words '... Assembly Commission...' insert '... (or the General Secretary in the case of Appeals, save where Paragraph G.10.5 applies)

Section B of Part II

Section B of Part II as shown in the Appendix to this resolution shall replace the existing Section B in its entirety.

Paragraphs C.3.1, C.3.2, C.4.1, E.12.2, E.12.3, G.4.2, G.4.3, G.5, G.10.4, G.10.5

In all these paragraphs, any reference to Paragraphs 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 of Part I shall be replaced by a simple reference to Paragraph 7.1 of Part I.

Paragraphs E.4.1

At the end of the paragraph add the words ‘... whereupon the Secretary shall forthwith provide copies thereof for the Convener and the other members of the Assembly Commission.’

Paragraph E.7.4

At the end of the paragraph add the words ‘... unless the Minister shall have lodged with the Secretary of the Assembly Commission, within twenty-eight days of the passing of the sentence in the criminal case, written evidence that s/he has lodged an appeal against the decision of the criminal court, whether it be against the conviction itself or the sentence imposed.’

Paragraph E.7.6

Add a new Paragraph E.7.6 as follows:

E.7.6 ‘If the Minister has given to the Secretary of the Assembly Commission the written evidence of appeal in the criminal case referred to in Paragraph E.7.4, it shall be his/her responsibility to notify the Secretary of the Assembly Commission of the outcome of his/her appeal in the criminal case as soon as s/he becomes aware of it and to supply to the said Secretary a duly certified court record or memorandum of the decision on the said appeal, whereupon the Section O Process shall be reactivated and the case brought to a hearing as soon as possible. Meanwhile the Minister shall respond promptly to any requests for information from the Secretary of the Assembly Commission as to the progress of the appeal in the criminal case. If the Minister fails to comply with the provisions of this Paragraph, the said Secretary may him/herself seek and obtain the required information as to the progress and outcome of the appeal in the criminal case.’

Paragraph E.8.5

Add a new Paragraph E.8.5 as follows:

E.8.5 ‘Any failure, unnecessary delay or obstruction on the part of the Minister in complying with the requirements of Part II, Paragraph E.7.6.’

Paragraph F.4.3

Add the following words at the end of the paragraph ‘... and the Mandated Group shall thereupon comply with Paragraph H.4.’

Paragraph G.12.5

Add the following words at the end of the paragraph ‘... and, unless Paragraph G.13 applies, the Mandated Group shall thereupon comply with Paragraph H.4.’

Paragraph H.4

Add a new Paragraph H.4 as follows:

H.4 ‘Within one month of the conclusion of each case as provided in Part I, Paragraph 17, the Mandated Group shall prepare a written report of its conduct of the case and submit it to the Secretary of the Assembly Commission, who shall, in order to preserve confidentiality, remove from the report the name and address of the minister, the name of the minister’s church(es) and any other information which might lead to the identification of any individuals involved in the case. The purpose of the report shall be to help those charged with the ongoing

review of the operation of the Section O Process to monitor the performance of Mandated Groups and thus to ensure that all appropriate training and assistance is provided and the highest standards are maintained.'

APPENDIX

B. APPOINTMENT AND ROLE OF MANDATED GROUPS AND INITIATION OF SECTION O

B.1. B.1.1 To enable it properly to carry out its Function 2(3)(A)(xviii) of the Structure, every District Council shall act solely through a group of three persons ("the Mandated Group") which shall have mandated authority to act in the name of the District Council in every matter requiring consideration under that Function.

B.1.2 The Mandated Group called in to deal with any particular case under Paragraph B.6.1, Paragraph B.9.2 or Paragraph B.9.3 has no pastoral role to fulfil and its precise functions are described in Paragraphs B.7 and B.8.

B.2 In cases arising under Paragraph B.6.1 (District Council), the Mandated Groups charged with the responsibilities ascribed to them under these Rules of Procedure shall be constituted in the following manner:

B.2.1 Two members thereof shall be appointed by each District Council on a standing basis from a Synod Panel itself appointed and maintained by each Synod, there normally being on such panel at least one, and preferably two, persons from each District within the Synod. One such member shall, wherever possible, be appointed to the Mandated Group from the District from which the case emanates.

B.2.2 The Synod Moderator or other person responsible for calling in the Mandated Group shall appoint the remaining person to the Mandated Group from the Joint Panel in accordance with the procedure set out in Paragraph B.3.

B.3 B.3.1 There shall be a standing panel ('the Joint Panel') consisting of a maximum of thirteen persons, of whom one shall be nominated by each Synod and selected preferably on account of some legal, tribunal or professional experience or other similar background, which would equip them for assuming a role as part of a Mandated Group. The list of those currently on the Joint Panel shall be held by the Synod Moderators.

B.3.2 In cases arising either under Paragraph B.6.1 (District Council) or Paragraph B.9.2 (Synod) (where one member of the Joint Panel will be required to serve) the Synod Moderator or other person responsible for calling in the Mandated Group shall appoint the remaining member of the Mandated Group for that case from the Joint Panel.

B.3.3 In cases arising under Paragraph B.9.3 (General Assembly or Mission Council on its behalf) the Deputy General Secretary, in consultation with such other officers of General Assembly as s/he considers appropriate, shall constitute the Mandated Group by the appointment of all three persons, each of whom shall be selected from either the Joint Panel or any of the Synod Panels (at least one from the Joint Panel and at least one from the Synod Panels).

B.4 If any member of a Synod Panel or the Joint Panel is a member of a local church connected with a case or has any pastoral or personal involvement in a case or is the subject of a disciplinary complaint, that person shall not form part of the Mandated Group for that case.

B.5 B.5.1 If any member of a Synod Panel or the Joint Panel is disqualified under Paragraph B.4 or is for any other reason unable to act in a particular case, the Moderator of the Synod shall appoint another member from the same panel to serve as a member of the Mandated Group for that case. The Mandated Group for all matters relating to that case shall be its remaining member(s) together with the person(s) appointed under this

Paragraph. If only one such person is disqualified or otherwise unable to act, then, until any such further appointment is made, the mandate shall continue to be held by the remaining two members of the Mandated Group. If two members of the Mandated Group are disqualified or otherwise unable to act, there is no mandate for the remaining member to act alone.

B.5.2 No person shall serve as a member of or as the spokesperson for a Mandated Group in connection with any case where s/he would fall within any of the restrictions contained in Paragraph 7.1 of Part I.

B.6 **B.6.1** **B.6.1.1** If at any time the Moderator of the Synod or (if for any reason s/he should be unavailable or unable to act) the President of the District Council in consultation with such officers of the District Council as s/he considers appropriate believes that there is or may be a disciplinary issue in respect of any minister s/he shall forthwith in the name and on the authority of the District Council call in its Mandated Group, at the same time informing the Minister that this step has been taken. The Section O Process in the case of any Minister shall commence with the calling in of the Mandated Group.

B.6.1.2: In calling in the Mandated Group, the person so doing:

(i) shall notify those two persons who, as members of the Synod Panel, will form part of the Mandated Group by virtue of Paragraph B.2.1 that they are called upon so to participate, advising them of the identity of the minister but giving no further information at that point and

(ii) shall notify one person from the Joint Panel of his/her intention to invite that person to serve as a member of the Mandated Group, advising him/her of the identity of the minister but giving no further information at that point.

B.6.1.3 In the event that any of the proposed appointees on to the Mandated Group is/are unable or unwilling to act, the process(es) of appointment from a Synod Panel and/or the Joint Panel shall continue until a Mandated Group consisting of three members has been duly constituted.

B.6.1.4 As soon as the above steps have all been taken, the person calling in the Mandated Group shall issue to each member thereof a written statement setting out the reasons for the calling in of the Mandated Group, the names of possible informants and any other sources of information at that time available. To avoid prejudice, that statement must not contain any assumptions or inferences or any personal reflections or opinions.

B.6.2 In cases of extreme emergency, the Moderator or other person entitled to call in the Mandated Group under the Rules of Procedure may, if s/he considers that there are strong and urgent reasons for so doing and only so long as s/he forthwith calls in the Mandated Group under Paragraph B.6.1, suspend the Minister with immediate effect either orally or in writing. Suspension imposed orally shall be immediately confirmed in writing to the Minister and written notice shall also be given to the Secretary of the District Council (see also Paragraphs B.8.2 and B11).

B.6.3 Suspension imposed under Paragraph B.6.2 shall continue during the Mandated Group's initial enquiry period referred to in Paragraph B.7.1. If at the end of that period the Mandated Group serves a Referral Notice on the Minister, it must also serve on him/her a Notice confirming the continuance of the suspension during the Commission Stage.

B.6.4 In the event that the initial enquiry period terminates without the issue of a Referral Notice, the Minister's suspension under Paragraph B.6.2 shall automatically cease on the issue of a Notice of Non-Continuance under Paragraph B.7.2, whereupon the person imposing the suspension under Paragraph B.6.2 shall give written notice of the cessation of the suspension both to the Minister and to the Secretary of the District Council.

B.7 The functions of the Mandated Group called in by the person authorised for that purpose under Paragraph B.6 in any particular case are described in this Paragraph B.7 (as regards the initial enquiry) and in Paragraph B.8 (as regards its role during the Commission Stage):

B.7.1 The Mandated Group shall carry out its own initial enquiry with all due expedition in consultation (where practical and appropriate) with the person calling in the Mandated Group for the sole purpose of ascertaining whether the Commission Stage should be initiated. Having done so, it must bring its initial enquiry to a conclusion in accordance with Paragraphs B.7.2 and B.7.3.

B.7.2 If the Mandated Group decides as a result of its initial enquiry not to proceed any further with the matter, it shall serve on the Moderator of the Synod or other person calling it in a notice to that effect (a Notice of Non-Continuance), which shall have the effect of discharging from further involvement in that case the Mandated Group itself (subject to due compliance by it of Paragraph H.4) and the Council in whose name it conducted the initial enquiry.

B.7.3 On receipt of a Notice of Non-Continuance the person calling in the Mandated Group shall forthwith notify the Minister and the Secretary of the District Council that the Mandated Group is not proceeding any further and if the person calling in the Mandated Group has already suspended the Minister under Paragraph B.6.2 s/he must notify the Minister and the Secretary of the District Council of the immediate cessation of the suspension.

B.7.4 If on the other hand the Mandated Group decides as a result of its initial enquiry to initiate the Commission Stage, it shall follow the procedure laid down in Paragraphs B.8.1 and B.8.3 whereupon the Commission Stage will be initiated.

B.8 **B.8.1** Whenever the Mandated Group, having become aware of any information concerning a Minister under the oversight of the District Council which might require disciplinary investigation, concludes unanimously or by a majority that this is indeed so, it shall forthwith in the name of the District Council suspend the Minister (unless s/he has already been suspended under Paragraph B.6.2, in which case the Mandated Group shall serve on the Minister a notice that his/her suspension shall continue during the Commission Stage) and initiate the Commission Stage in accordance with Paragraph 5 of Part I. Suspension under this Paragraph shall take effect when the Minister receives Notice thereof from the Mandated Group either orally or in writing. Suspension imposed orally shall be immediately confirmed in writing (as to the contents of the written notice of suspension, see also Paragraph B.11).

B.8.2 Suspension, whether imposed under Paragraph B.6.2 or B.8.1, does not imply any view about the correctness or otherwise of any allegations made concerning the Minister, nor does it affect the Minister's stipend nor the Minister's pension arrangements under the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Scheme.

B.8.3 The Mandated Group shall forthwith notify the Moderator of the Synod and the Secretary of the District Council in writing of the issue of the Referral Notice and the Notice of Suspension.

B.8.4 During the Commission Stage it is the responsibility of the Mandated Group to conduct the Investigation in accordance with Section D of these Rules of Procedure, to comply with all procedural matters under the Rules of Procedure and to present the case against the Minister at the Hearing under Section E and at the Hearing of any Appeal under Section G.

B.9 **B.9.1** To enable them to carry out their respective functions under Paragraphs 2(4)(A)(xiv) and 2(5)(A)(xxiii) of the Structure, every Synod and the General Assembly

shall act solely through a group of three persons (“the Mandated Group”) which shall have mandated authority to act in the name of the Synod or the General Assembly as the case may be in every matter requiring consideration under those respective functions.

B.9.2 In connection with any such steps under Paragraph B.9.1 as are required to be taken by a Synod, if at any time the Moderator of the Synod, in consultation with such officers of the Synod as s/he considers appropriate, believes that there is or may be a disciplinary issue in respect of any minister in membership or under the authority of that Synod, s/he shall forthwith in the name of the Synod appoint two persons from the Synod Panel for that Synod and one person from the Joint Panel as provided in Paragraphs B.2 and B.3 to constitute the Mandated Group for the particular case and at the same time inform the Minister that this step has been taken and follow the procedure laid down in Paragraphs B.6.1.2/4. The Mandated Group so appointed shall be deemed to be called in and vested with authority in like manner to the Mandated Group of a District Council called in under Paragraph B.6.1.

B.9.3 In connection with any steps under Paragraph B.9.1 as are required to be taken by General Assembly (or Mission Council on its behalf), if at any time the Deputy General Secretary, in consultation with such other officers of the General Assembly as s/he considers appropriate, believes that there is or may be a disciplinary issue in respect of any minister s/he shall forthwith in the name of General Assembly appoint three persons drawn from the Synod Panels and the Joint Panel as provided in Paragraph B.3.3 to constitute the Mandated Group for the particular case and at the same time inform the Minister that this step has been taken and follow the procedure laid down in Paragraphs B.6.1.2/4. The Mandated Group so appointed shall be deemed to be called in and vested with authority in like manner to the Mandated Group of a District Council called in under Paragraph B.6.1.

B.9.4 The preceding paragraphs of this Section B of Part II shall apply to cases falling within Paragraph B.9 with the necessary changes and in particular the following shall apply:

In Paragraph B.5.1, in the case of a Mandated Group appointed in the name of General Assembly, the words “Deputy General Secretary” shall replace the words “Moderator of the Synod”.

In Paragraph B.7.1, in the case of a Mandated Group appointed in the name of General Assembly the reference therein to the Moderator of the Synod shall be replaced by a reference to the Deputy General Secretary.

In Paragraph B.8.1 the words “the Minister concerned” shall replace the words “a Minister under the oversight of the District Council”, and the second reference to “the District Council” shall be replaced by a reference to “the Synod” or “General Assembly” as the case may be.

B.9.5 On any occasion throughout the Section O Process where notices and papers are required to be sent to the Moderator of the Synod and/or the Secretary of the District Council, then in a case proceeding under Paragraph B.9.3 they shall also be sent to the Deputy General Secretary.

B.10 To initiate the Commission Stage pursuant to Paragraph B.8.1, the Mandated Group in the name of the Council shall take the following steps:

B.10.1 Serve on the Secretary of the Assembly Commission a duly completed Referral Notice which should clearly state the reasons why the Mandated Group believes that a breach of Ministerial Discipline has or may have occurred and which should also include where possible a summary of the supporting information on the basis of which the Mandated Group has issued the Referral Notice and

B.10.2 Serve on the Minister notice of the issue of the Referral Notice and of his/her suspension (or of the continuance of his/her suspension if Paragraph B.6.2 applies).

B.11 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.

B.12 Once a Referral Notice has been issued by a Mandated Group in any case, no further Referral Notice shall in any circumstances be issued in respect of the subject matter of that referral, save only where the Minister has been the subject of an earlier disciplinary case in which the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission issued a written warning under the provisions of Paragraph 10.2.1 or Paragraph 14.3 of Part I.

Resolution 7 was carried.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 8:

Resolution 8

Replacement of existing Section O, Part I

General Assembly agrees to replace the whole of the existing Part I of Section O with the following:

SECTION O

Process for dealing with cases of Ministerial Discipline

PART I – Substantive Provisions

(governed by General Assembly Function 2(5)(xi) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church)

1. 1.1 Under the provisions of this Section O an Assembly Commission (as defined in Section A of Part II) shall operate under the authority of the General Assembly for the purpose of deciding (in cases properly referred to it) the questions as to whether a Minister has committed a breach of discipline and, if the Assembly Commission or, in the event of an appeal, the Appeals Commission should so decide, whether on that account his/her name should be deleted from the Roll of Ministers or alternatively whether a written warning should be issued to him/her. The Assembly Commission or, in the event of an appeal, the Appeals Commission may also decide to make a recommendation/referral in accordance with provisions of Paragraph 1.3. Under the Ministerial Disciplinary Process (known as “the Section O Process”) the Assembly Commission or, in the event of an appeal, the Appeals Commission is also able to make recommendations (other than recommendations under Paragraph 1.3) and offer guidance but only within the limits prescribed in Section F of Part II.

1.2 Subject only to Paragraph 1.3, once the disciplinary case of any Minister is being dealt with under the Section O Process, it shall be conducted and concluded entirely in accordance with that Process and not through any other procedure or process of the Church.

1.3.1 If it considers that the situation concerning a Minister involved in a case within the Section O Process relates to or involves a perceived incapacity on the part of that Minister which might render him/her unfit to exercise, or to continue to exercise, ministry on account of medical, psychological or other similar or related reasons, the Assembly Commission or, in the event of an appeal, the Appeals Commission may make an Order in accordance with the Rules of Procedure referring the case back to the Synod Moderator/Deputy General Secretary or other person who called in the Mandated Group with a recommendation that the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure (as defined in Section A of Part II) be initiated in respect of the Minister concerned, whereupon the Section O Process shall stand adjourned pending the outcome of such recommendation.

1.3.2 The Rules of Procedure contained in Part II shall provide for the service of the above Order (and any accompanying documentation if appropriate) on the Synod Moderator/Deputy General Secretary or other person who called in the Mandated Group and under those Rules s/he shall be required, within the time therein specified, to notify the Secretary of the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission in writing whether the recommendation has been accepted or rejected.

1.3.3 If the recommendation has been accepted, the notification shall specify the date on which the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure was initiated, whereupon the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission shall make a further Order declaring the Ministerial Disciplinary case to be concluded, subject only to the continuation of the Minister's suspension until the issue of his/her suspension has been resolved in accordance with the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure.

1.3.4 If the recommendation has been rejected, the notification shall state the reasons and the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission shall forthwith reactivate the Ministerial Disciplinary case.

2. The Assembly Commission, the Commission Panel, the Appeals Commission and all aspects of the Section O Process shall at all times remain under the jurisdiction and control of the General Assembly which has the authority through the exercise of its functions as contained in Paragraph 2(5) of the Structure to amend, enlarge or revoke the whole or any part of the Section O Process, save only that, so long as it remains in force, the decision reached in any particular case (whether or not on appeal) and any orders made in accordance with this Section O Process shall be made in the name of the General Assembly and shall be final and binding on the Minister and on all the councils of the Church.

3. **3.1** Subject only to Paragraph 3.2, the Section O Process shall not be initiated in respect of any Minister if his/her case is currently being dealt with under the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure.

3.2 The Section O Process may be initiated in respect of a Minister as a result of a recommendation issuing from the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure, in which case there may be a short transitional overlap between the commencement of the Ministerial Disciplinary case and the conclusion of the case within the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure.

4. **4.1** In considering the evidence and reaching its decision, the Assembly Commission or, in the event of an appeal, the Appeals Commission shall in every case have full regard to the Basis of Union and in particular Paragraph 2 of Schedule E thereto which states the responsibilities undertaken by those who become Ministers of the United Reformed Church and the criteria which they must apply in the exercise of their ministry.

4.2 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.

5. **5.1** A Minister may appeal against the decision of the Assembly Commission to delete his/her name from the Roll of Ministers under Section F of Part II or to issue a written warning under that Section by lodging a Notice of Appeal in accordance with the Rules of Procedure at Part II, stating the ground/s of such appeal.

5.2 The Mandated Group of the Council which lodged the Referral Notice in any case may in the name of that Council appeal against the decision of the Assembly Commission not to delete the name of the Minister from the Roll of Ministers by lodging a Notice of Appeal in accordance with the Rules of Procedure stating the ground/s of such appeal.

In any case where no written warning is attached to the decision not to delete, the Notice may state, if the Mandated Group so desires, that the appeal is limited to the question of the issue of a written warning to the Minister.

5.3 No-one other than the Parties has any right of appeal from the decision of the Assembly Commission.

6. Procedural matters shall in every case be dealt with in accordance with the Rules of Procedure as contained in Part II.

7.7.1 Save only as provided in Paragraph 7.2, this Part I of the Section O Process is subject to Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure.

7.2 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.

7.3 All such changes to the Section O Process as are made by Mission Council under Paragraph 7.2 shall be reported to the next meeting of the General Assembly.

Resolution 8 was carried.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 9:

Resolution 9

Amendments to the Structure in relation to the Section O Process

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

Paragraph 2(3)(A)(xviii)

Replace the existing 2(3)(A)(xviii) with the following:

'Where the District Council, acting through its Mandated Group as defined in the Disciplinary Process referred to below, considers that a Minister is or may not be exercising his/her Ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that Minister to the Commission Stage of the Disciplinary Process contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and in every such case to suspend the Minister concerned pending the resolution of the matter under that Process (for the avoidance of doubt the calling in of the Mandated Group under that Process in order to fulfil its responsibilities marking the commencement of the Disciplinary Process).'

Paragraph 2(3)(B)

Replace the existing 2(3)(B) with the following:

'Once the Disciplinary Process has commenced in the case of any Minister, whether by the District Council or by one of the other Councils of the Church, the District Council shall not exercise its functions in respect of that Minister (save only in the provision of such pastoral care as may be appropriate) until the Process has been duly concluded.'

Paragraph 2(3)(C)

Replace the existing 2(3)(C) with the following:

'No appeal shall lie against the decision by a District Council to initiate the Disciplinary Process in respect of any Minister under Function (xviii) above.'

Paragraph 2(4)(A)(xiv)

Replace the existing 2(4)(A)(xiv) with the following:

'In the absence of any reference into the Disciplinary Process by the appropriate district council and where the Synod, acting through its Mandated Group as defined in the Disciplinary Process referred to below, considers that a Minister is or may not be exercising his/her ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that Minister to the Commission Stage of the Disciplinary Process contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and in every such case to suspend the Minister concerned pending the resolution of the matter under that Process (for the avoidance of doubt the calling in of the Mandated Group under that Process in order to fulfil its responsibilities marking the commencement of the Disciplinary Process).'

Paragraph 2(4)(B)

Replace the existing 2(4)(B) with the following:

'Once the Disciplinary Process has commenced in the case of any Minister with the calling in of the Mandated Group under that Process, whether by the Synod or by one of the other Councils of the church, the synod shall not exercise its functions in respect of that Minister (save only in the provision of such pastoral care as may be appropriate) until the Process has been duly concluded.'

Paragraph 2(4)(C)

Replace the existing 2(4)(C) with the following:

'No appeal shall lie against the decision by a Synod to initiate the Disciplinary Process in respect of any Minister under Function (xiv) above.'

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xxii)

Replace the existing 2(5)(A)(xxii) with the following:

'To provide for the setting up of an Appeals Commission in accordance with the Ministerial Disciplinary Process for the hearing of appeals under that Process.'

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xxiii)

Replace the existing 2(5)(A)(xxiii) with the following:

'In the absence of any reference into the Disciplinary Process by the appropriate District Council or Synod (the case of any Minister who is a Moderator of Synod being necessarily dealt with under this provision) and where the General Assembly (or Mission Council on its behalf) acting through its Mandated Group as defined in the Disciplinary Process referred to below considers that a Minister is or may not be exercising his/her Ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that minister to the Commission Stage of the Disciplinary Process contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and in every such case to suspend the minister concerned pending the resolution of the matter under that Process (for the avoidance of doubt the calling in of the Mandated Group under that Process in order to fulfil its

responsibilities marking the commencement of the Disciplinary Process).'

Paragraph 2(5)(B)

Replace the existing unnumbered paragraph immediately following the functions of General Assembly with the following paragraph to be numbered 2(5)(B):

'Once the Disciplinary Process has commenced in the case of any Minister, whether by the General Assembly or by one of the other Councils of the Church, the General Assembly shall not exercise its functions in respect of that Minister (save only in the provision of such pastoral care as may be appropriate) until the Process has been duly concluded.'

Resolution 9 was carried.

The General Secretary moved that 'in accordance with Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 9 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2007 as the final date for responses as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.'

The Assembly agreed.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 10:

Resolution 10 Introduction of procedure for dealing with cases of Ministerial Incapacity and approval of Part I

General Assembly resolves to introduce a procedure (to be known as the "Ministerial Incapacity Procedure") designed for dealing with cases involving Ministers of Word and Sacrament who are regarded as being incapable of exercising ministry on account of medical, psychological or other similar or related reasons and approves the Introduction and Part I of that Procedure in the form set out below:

SECTION P

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH CASES OF MINISTERIAL INCAPACITY

The Introduction which follows does not form part of the text of the Incapacity Procedure

INTRODUCTION

The Procedure which follows allows the Church to deal with the cases of ministers of Word and Sacrament who are regarded as being incapable of exercising ministry on account of medical, psychological or other similar or related reasons.

It is not a disciplinary process and will only be invoked in situations where the Assembly Pastoral Reference Committee, if that committee has been involved, has said that it can do no more.

Whilst considered as a last resort, the Incapacity Procedure will nevertheless enable the Church to take decisive action in cases where the continued exercise of ministry would undermine the promises made by the minister at ordination to lead a holy life and to preserve the unity and peace of the Church.

PART I – subject to Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure
(governed by General Assembly Function 2(5)(xi)
of the Structure of the United Reformed Church)

Note: The words and expressions marked * (the first time they appear) are defined in Part II of this Procedure.

1. Under the provisions of this Ministerial Incapacity Procedure (herein called “the Incapacity Procedure^{*}”) a Review Commission^{*} and, in the event of an appeal, an Appeals Review Commission^{*} shall operate under the authority of the General Assembly for the purpose of considering and deciding upon cases properly referred to it in which Ministers^{*}, whilst not perceived to have committed any breach of ministerial discipline, are nevertheless regarded as being incapable of exercising, or of continuing to exercise, ministry on account of medical, psychological or other or similar or related reasons.
2. The Review Commission, the Standing Panel^{*}, the Appeals Review Commission, and all aspects of the Incapacity Procedure shall at all times remain under the jurisdiction and control of the General Assembly which has the authority through the exercise of its functions as contained in Paragraph 2(5) of the Structure^{*} to amend, enlarge or revoke the whole or any part of this Incapacity Procedure, save only that, as long as that Procedure remains in force, the decision reached in any particular case (whether or not on appeal) and any orders made in accordance with the Incapacity Procedure shall be made in the name of the General Assembly and shall be final and binding on the Minister and on all the councils of the Church^{*}.
3. Subject only to Section H of Part II, when the case of any Minister is being dealt with under the Incapacity Procedure, it must be conducted and concluded entirely in accordance with that procedure and not through any other procedure or process of the Church.
4. The Incapacity Procedure shall not be initiated in respect of any Minister if his/her case is currently being dealt with under the Disciplinary Process, save only where the Incapacity Procedure is initiated as a result of a recommendation from the Disciplinary Process, giving rise to a short transitional overlap between the commencement of the case within the Incapacity Procedure and the conclusion of the Disciplinary Process in relation to that Minister.
5. Although the operation of the Incapacity Procedure is not based upon the conscious breach by the Minister of the promises made at ordination, the Review Commission or, in the event of an appeal, the Appeals Review Commission shall, in considering the matter and reaching its decision, in every case have full regard to the Basis of Union^{*} and in particular Paragraph 2 of Schedule E thereto which states the responsibilities undertaken by those who become Ministers of the Church and the criteria which they must apply in the exercise of their ministry.
6. Save only as provided in Paragraph 7, this Part I of the Incapacity Procedure is subject to Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure.
7. Mission Council acting in the name of General Assembly has authority by a single resolution of that Council to make as and when necessary and with immediate effect such changes to any part of the Incapacity Procedure as are, on the advice of the legal advisers to the Church, required to bring that procedure into line with the general law of the land consequent upon any changes in legislation and/or case law and any such changes as are made under this Paragraph shall be reported to the next annual meeting of the General Assembly.

The Revd William Mahood moved that Resolution 10 be remitted to next year’s Assembly. This was seconded by the Revd John Johansen-Berg.

The Assembly agreed.

Mission Council

The remainder of the Mission Council report was briefly considered.

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Eric Chilton, moved adoption of Resolution 48:

Resolution 48

General Trustees

General Assembly appoints the “United Reformed Church Trust” to serve as Charity Trustee of the United Reformed Church for the purposes of section 97 of the Charities Act 1993 from the close of Assembly 2006 in place of the current trustees Mission Council Advisory Group.

Resolution 48 was carried.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 49:

Resolution 49

The future work of Assembly

General Assembly approves of the principle of dividing its work into three departments, Ministries, Administration and Resources, and Mission policy and Theology, and instructs the Catch the Vision Steering Group to prepare detailed proposals for the 2007 Assembly.

Resolution 49 was carried.

The Revd Alasdair Pratt took the Chair.

Finance Resolutions

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 57:

Resolution 57

Ministry & Mission Fund Review

General Assembly requests all synods to review the methods used to raise their Ministry & Mission Fund contribution, to examine the methods used and proposed in other synods and to report their conclusions to the Finance Committee by the end of January 2007.

Resolution 57 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 59:

Resolution 59

Ministry & Mission Fund Review

General Assembly agrees to the introduction of a system to monitor deployment allocation and Ministry & Mission Fund contribution across synods and instructs the Finance and Ministries Committees to develop this in consultation with the synods.

Resolution 59 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 60:

Resolution 60

Ministry & Mission Fund Review

General Assembly welcomes the report of the Review of the Ministry & Mission Fund and instructs the Finance Committee to take forward the remaining Recommendations, in consultation with synods and such other committees of General Assembly as may be appropriate.

Resolution 60 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of resolution 53:

Resolution 53

2007 Budget

General Assembly considers ministry essential to the worship, life and witness of local churches and wishes to sustain the present link between the number of stipendiary ministers and the overall membership of the Church.

Following brief debate, resolution 53 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 54:

Resolution 54

2007 Budget

General Assembly reminds local churches that they have the responsibility collectively to support the full cost of ministry; including training, pension contributions and retired ministers housing; through their contributions to the Ministry and Mission Fund.

Resolution 54 was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 55:

Resolution 55 2007 Budget

General Assembly accepts the suggestions for reducing expenditure contained in the Catch the Vision report and instructs Mission Council to take what other steps are necessary to reduce the budget deficit for 2007 to an acceptable level.

Ms Isobel Simmons, FURY Chair, proposed the following amendment:

Resolution 55

2007 Budget

General Assembly accepts the suggestions for reducing expenditure contained in the Catch the Vision report and instructs Mission Council to explore with the relevant committees what steps are possible to reduce the budget deficit.

Seconded by Mr Mark Steel.

The proposer indicated willingness to accept the amendment.

Resolution 55, as amended, was carried.

The Revd Jay Phelps moved adoption of Resolution 63:

Resolution 63

National Celebration Event

General Assembly instructs Mission Council to investigate and report to the next Assembly the organising of a "National Celebration Event" for the purposes of Celebration, Teaching, Worship and Fellowship to be held every two years and open to all members and adherents, at their own cost.

Seconded by Mrs Irene Wren.

Following debate, Resolution 63 was carried.

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell resumed the Chair.

Synod Resolution

Mrs Val Morrison moved adoption of Resolution 4:

Resolution 4

Heritage Lottery Fund

In the light of the diminishing government funding available for the repair and upkeep of historic church buildings, especially listed buildings, and the diverse way in which the Lottery is now being used to fund other agencies and sources of financial support, General Assembly resolves to revisit its 1995 resolution and instructs Mission Council to report to Assembly 2007.

Seconded by the Revd Arnold Harrison.

Following debate, Resolution 4 was carried.

On behalf of the West Midlands Synod, the Mrs Wilma Frew moved adoption of Resolution 3:

Resolution 3 Synods and CRCW management

General Assembly re-affirms the value of the Church Related Community Work ministry and, in particular, the commitment to allocate CRCW posts in each Synod. However, recognising the important contribution of local knowledge in all deployment it asks that the Ministries / CRCW Programme Sub-Committee devolve to the Synods the task of terming and reviewing CRCW posts.

Seconded by Mr Bill Robson.

Malcolm Breeze moved that the Resolution be not put; seconded by Marie Trubic.

The Assembly agreed, by more than the required two thirds majority.

Ministries

Mr John Ellis moved adoption of Resolution 16:

Resolution 16

Ministerial development

General Assembly:

- a) **agrees in principle to replace the existing scheme for ministerial Accompanied Self-Appraisal with a more comprehensive review scheme which would:**
 - i) **eventually include all Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers;**
 - ii) **operate biennially;**
 - iii) **be based around an agreed role description for the Minister;**
 - iv) **retain the confidential accompanied self-appraisal discussion for the Minister;**
 - v) **include open discussions involving both the Minister and the pastorate or post;**
 - vi) **would become, from a date to be agreed, a standard part of the Terms of Settlement when a Minister starts in a new pastorate or post;**
- b) **asks the Ministries Committee to prepare a detailed scheme, to consult the Synods and to report back to Mission Council; and**
- c) **authorises Mission Council to implement a scheme.**

Following debate, Resolution 16 was carried.

Assembly Commission

The General Secretary reported on Assembly Commissions held during the past year. There had been 1 hearing since Assembly 2005 and the name of the Revd Neville Husband had been deleted from the Roll. The cost had been £2530.41.

The Assembly Clerk moved that:

Assembly receives the minutes of Saturday, and approves the insertion of the minutes of Sunday and Monday into the full minutes after review and any necessary correction by officers of the Assembly.

The Assembly agreed.

Address to the Throne

The Revd Sheila Maxey, former Moderator, presented the address to the Throne:

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, meeting in Exeter, sends greetings, in the year of Your Majesty's 80th Birthday.

This year's General Assembly has received a study document produced jointly by a working group from our Church and the Methodist Church entitled *Peacemaking: a Christian Vocation*. It affirms that Christians believe peace to be God's fundamental will for the created order, and that they have a responsibility to witness to this truth, to those in power.

Three years ago, the Church expressed grave reservations about the wisdom of the military initiative in Iraq, undertaken by Your Majesty's government and the United States' administration. Today, as people with a desire for peace and reconciliation, we are greatly troubled by the continuing conflict and loss of life. It seems to us, that the military intervention has resulted in one form of tyranny being replaced by another in that country, and has also damaged Britain's good reputation in sensitive areas of the world. We hope and pray that the recently installed Iraqi government will be able to bring about order and unity, and we ask that Your Majesty's government does everything in its power to support it in its endeavours.

Although war divides nations, the issue of climate change should call all governments and peoples to be united in a purposeful response. Most scientific opinion now seems to agree that climate change is happening, and that the actions of human beings are the primary cause. The United Reformed Church is keen to play a constructive part in encouraging its members to be good stewards of God's creation, both collectively and individually. We hope to use our close relationship with the Kiribati Protestant Church in the Pacific Ocean, to help our members see that actions we take may have a direct bearing on the lives of Christian brothers and sisters on the other side of the world. The islands of Kiribati are rarely as much as three metres above sea level; they will be among the first land areas to vanish, as a result of rising sea levels.

Your Majesty will be aware of the report *Faithful Cities: a call for celebration and justice* recently produced by the ecumenical Commission on Urban Life and Faith, to which the United Reformed Church contributed. We were pleased that the Commission found that regeneration schemes had brought riches and new opportunities to many localities, but saddened by the confirmation that this regeneration had forced many people to the margins. Perhaps the most shocking finding of the Commission was that 'We live in one of the most economically unequal countries in Europe'. Other agencies such as Church Action on Poverty and the Citizens Advice Bureau have also drawn attention to the fact that many people are sinking further and further into debt. We urge Your Majesty's government to act upon the call of the Commission for more to be done to tackle such inequality. As a Church, we will do our best to confront selfish lifestyles, both amongst our membership and in the wider population. It is clear, from the New Testament, that reaching out to the marginalised and dispossessed, was absolutely central to Jesus' earthly ministry. In this respect, our Church-Related Community Workers exercise a particularly important ministry.

Many of our members and local churches are active in public service; we believe this to be both a Christian calling and an essential element in sustaining and re-creating a sense of community and common purpose among peoples and nations.

As people of faith, we are heartened by the part that a personal faith clearly plays in Your Majesty's own life. We pray that this will both strengthen and sustain, enabling Your Majesty to continue to lead by example.

Revd Elizabeth Caswell
Moderator

Revd Dr David Cornick
General Secretary

The Assembly approved the address.

Moderator-Elect

The Moderator-elect, the Revd Principal Stephen Orchard, addressed the Assembly.

Vote of Thanks

Mr George Morton thanked South West Synod for its welcome and hospitality, and assured members of a warm welcome to the North western Synod in 2007.

The Moderator thanked the staff of the University of Exeter, the Assembly administrative staff, the platform party, musicians and worship leaders.

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

The Moderator thanked the General Secretary and the members of the Catch the Vision Steering Group.

Closing Worship

Closing worship was led by the Chaplain.

The General Secretary announced that the Assembly had completed its business and would adjourn to meet as agreed at the University of Manchester on 7th July 2007 or at such other place or on such other date as may be necessary.

Appendix

Basis and Structure incorporating all amendments proposed
and agreed at the Assembly 2006.

Changes to the Basis and Structure consequent on the adoption of resolutions 9, 47 & 64 – Assembly 2006.

The Basis of Union of the United Reformed Church

The Church and The United Reformed Church

1. There is but one Church of the one God. He called Israel to be his people, and in fulfilment of the purpose then begun he called the Church into being through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. The one Church of the one God is holy, because he has redeemed and consecrated it through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and because there Christ dwells with his people.
3. The Church is catholic or universal because Christ calls into it all peoples and because it proclaims the fullness of Christ's Gospel to the whole world.
4. The Church is apostolic because Christ continues to entrust it with the Gospel and the commission first given to the apostles to proclaim that Gospel to all peoples.
5. The unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity of the Church have been obscured by the failure and weakness which mar the life of the Church.
6. Christ's mercy in continuing his call to the Church in all its failure and weakness has taught the Church that its life must ever be renewed and reformed according to the Scriptures, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
7. The United Reformed Church humbly recognises that the failure and weakness of the Church have in particular been manifested in division which has made it impossible for Christians fully to know, experience and communicate the life of the one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church.
8. The United Reformed Church has been formed in obedience to the call to repent of what has been amiss in the past and to be reconciled. It sees its formation and growth as a part of what God is doing to make his people one, and as a united church will take, wherever possible and with all speed, further steps towards the unity of all God's people.
9. The United Reformed Church testifies to its faith, and orders its life, according to this Basis of Union, believing it to embody the essential notes of the Church catholic and reformed. The United Reformed Church nevertheless reserves its right and declares its readiness at any time to alter, add to, modify or supersede this Basis so that its life may accord more nearly with the mind of Christ.
10. The United Reformed Church, believing that it is through the freedom of the Spirit that Jesus Christ holds his people in the fellowship of the one Body, shall uphold the rights of personal conviction. It shall be for the church, in safeguarding the substance of the faith and maintaining the unity of the fellowship, to determine when these rights are asserted to the injury of its unity and peace.

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH AND THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

11. Within the one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church the United Reformed Church acknowledges its responsibility under God:
to make its life a continual offering of itself and the world to God in adoration and worship through Jesus Christ;
to receive and express the renewing life of the Holy Spirit in each place and in its total fellowship, and there to declare the reconciling and saving power of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;
to live out, in joyful and sacrificial service to all in their various physical and spiritual needs, that ministry of caring, forgiving and healing love which Jesus Christ brought to all whom he met;
and to bear witness to Christ's rule over the nations in all the variety of their organised life.

THE FAITH OF THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

12. The United Reformed Church confesses the faith of the Church catholic in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It acknowledges that the life of faith to which it is called is a gift of the Holy Spirit continually received in Word and Sacrament and in the common life of God's people. It acknowledges the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people.
13. The United Reformed Church believes that, in the ministry of the Word, through preaching and the study of the Scriptures, God makes known in each age his saving love, his will for his people and his purpose for the world.
14. The United Reformed Church observes the gospel sacrament of baptism into Christ as a gift of God to his Church, and as an appointed means of grace. Baptism is administered with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. It is the sacrament of entry into the Church and is therefore administered once only to any person.

When the Church observes this sacrament it makes explicit at a particular time and place and for a particular person what God has accomplished in Christ for the whole creation and for all humankind – the forgiveness of sins, the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit and newness of life in the family of God. In this sacrament the Church affirms its faith in the action of God in Jesus Christ; and takes corporate responsibility for those receiving baptism, promising to support and nourish them as it receives them into its fellowship. Baptism may be administered in infancy or at an age of responsibility. Both forms of baptism shall be made available in the life of every worshipping congregation. In either case the sacrament of baptism is a unique part of the total process of Christian initiation. When baptism is administered at an age of responsibility, upon profession of faith, those baptised enter at once upon the full privileges and responsibilities of membership. When baptism is administered to infants, upon profession of faith by their parent(s), they are placed under the nurture of the Church that they may be led by the Holy Spirit in due time to make their own profession of faith in Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and enter upon the full privileges and responsibilities of membership. These two patterns of Christian initiation are recognised by the United Reformed Church.

The profession of faith to be made prior to baptism by a believer or at an age of responsibility by one baptised in infancy is indicated in Schedule A.* This profession, and its acceptance by the church which shares in it, is a necessary part of the process of initiation and whenever possible it should be made at a celebration of the Lord's Supper.

* Admission to the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of the Church shall be in accordance with paragraphs 2(1) and 2(2)(vi) of the structure and with Schedule A

The United Reformed Church includes within its membership both persons whose conviction it is that baptism can only be appropriately administered to a believer and those whose conviction it is that infant baptism also is in harmony with the mind of Christ. Both

convictions are honoured by the church and both forms of baptism are understood to be used by God in the upbuilding of faith. Should these differences of conviction within the one church result in personal conflict of conscience it will require to be pastorally reconciled in mutual understanding and charity, and in accordance with the Basis of Union, in the first instance by the elders' meeting of the local congregation, and if necessary by the wider councils of the church. Whether the baptism is of an infant or a believer, whether it is by pouring or immersion, it shall not be such to which a conscientious objection is taken either by the person administering baptism, or by the person seeking it, or by the parent(s) requesting it for an infant.

15. The United Reformed Church celebrates the gospel sacrament of the Lord's Supper. When in obedience to the Lord's command his people show forth his sacrifice on the cross by the bread broken and the wine outpoured for them to eat and drink, he himself, risen and ascended, is present and gives himself to them for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. United with him and with the whole Church on earth and in heaven, his people gathered at his table present their sacrifice of thanksgiving and renew the offering of themselves, and rejoice in the promise of his coming in glory.
16. The United Reformed Church gives thanks for the common life of the Church, wherein the people of God, being made members one of another, are called to love and serve one another and all people everywhere and to grow together in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Participating in the common life of the Church within the local church, they enter into the life of the Church throughout the world. With that whole Church they also share in the life of the Church in all ages and in the communion of saints have fellowship with the Church triumphant.
17. The United Reformed Church at the date of formation confesses its faith in the words of this statement:-

We believe in the one living and true God, creator, preserver and ruler of all things in heaven and earth, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Him alone we worship, and in him we put our trust.

We believe that God, in his infinite love for men, gave his eternal Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who became man, lived on earth in perfect love and obedience, died upon the cross for our sins, rose again from the dead and lives for evermore, saviour, judge and king

We believe that, by the Holy Spirit, this glorious Gospel is made effective so that through faith we receive the forgiveness of sins, newness of life as children of God and strength in this present world to do his will.

We believe in the one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church, in heaven and on earth, wherein by the same Spirit, the whole company of believers is made one Body of Christ, to worship God and serve him and all men in his kingdom of righteousness and love.

We rejoice in the gift of eternal life, and believe that, in the fullness of time, God will renew and gather in one all things in Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.
18. The United Reformed Church, under the authority of Holy Scripture and in corporate responsibility to Jesus Christ its everliving head, acknowledges its duty to be open at all times to the leading of the Holy Spirit and therefore affirms its right to make such new declarations of its faith and for such purposes as may from time to time be required by obedience to the same Spirit.

At the same time the United Reformed Church accepts with thanksgiving the witness borne to the catholic faith by the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. It recognises as its own particular heritage the formulations and declarations of faith which have been valued by Congregationalists, Presbyterians and members of Churches of Christ as stating the Gospel and seeking to make its implications clear*.

* e.g. Among Presbyterians: The Westminster Confession, 1647; A Statement of the Christian Faith, 1956.

Among Congregationalists:

in England and Wales: The Savoy Declaration, 1658; A Declaration of Faith, 1967.

in Scotland: A Statement of Faith, 1949.

Among Churches of Christ: Thomas Campbell's Declaration and Address, 1809.

At the General Assembly of 1997 the United Reformed Church adopted the following alternative version of the statement in paragraph 17 to be available alongside the 1972 statement:

1. We believe in the one and only God, Eternal Trinity, from whom, through whom and for whom all created things exist. God alone we worship; in God we put our trust.
2. We worship God, source and sustainer of creation, whom Jesus called Father, whose sons and daughters we are.
3. We worship God revealed in Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God made flesh; who lived our human life, died for sinners on the cross; who was raised from the dead, and proclaimed by the apostles,
Son of God; who lives eternally, as saviour and sovereign, coming in judgement and mercy, to bring us to eternal life.
4. We worship God, ever present in the Holy Spirit; who brings this Gospel to fruition, assures us of forgiveness, strengthens us to do God's will, and makes us sisters and brothers of Jesus, sons and daughters of God.
5. We believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, united in heaven and earth, wherein by the same spirit.
6. We believe that, in the fullness of time, God will renew and gather in one all things in heaven and on earth through Christ, and be perfectly honoured and adored.
7. We rejoice in God who has given us being, who shares our humanity to bring us to glory, our source of prayer and power of praise; to whom be glory, praise and adoration, now and evermore.

MINISTRY IN THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

19. The Lord Jesus Christ continues his ministry in and through the Church, the whole people of God called and committed to his service and equipped by him for it. This service is given by worship, prayer, proclamation of the Gospel, and Christian witness; by mutual and outgoing care and responsibility; and by obedient discipleship in the whole of daily life, according to the gifts and opportunities given to each one. The preparation and strengthening of its members for such ministry and discipleship shall always be a major concern of the United Reformed Church.
20. For the equipment of his people for this total ministry the Lord Jesus Christ gives particular gifts for particular ministries and calls some of his servants to exercise them in offices duly recognised within his Church. The United Reformed Church recognises that Christ gives himself to his Church through Word and Sacrament and through the total caring oversight by which his people grow in faith and love, the exercise of which oversight is the special concern of elders and ministers. Those who enter on such ministries commit themselves to them for so long as God wills: the United Reformed Church having solemnly acknowledged their vocation and accepted their commitment shall appoint them to their particular ministry and give them authority to exercise it within the church, setting them apart with prayer that they shall be given all needful gifts and graces for its fulfilment, which solemn setting part shall in the case of ministers and elders be termed ordination and in the case of church related community workers be termed commissioning.

21. Some are called to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. After approved preparation and training, they may be called to be ministers of local churches, or missionaries overseas, or to some special and approved ministry, and are then ordained and inducted to their office. They are commissioned to conduct public worship, to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments, to exercise pastoral care and oversight, and to give leadership to the church in its mission to the world. Their service may be stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and in the latter case their service is given within the area of a Synod and in a context it has approved.*

* Those persons who, at the time of unification serve as Registered Pastors and are so recognised by the Congregational Union of Scotland, may continue in that service under the same conditions. Such persons shall be authorised by a Synod to preside at the sacraments and to serve as members of that Synod. They may seek further training with a view to applying for recognition as ministers.

22. Some are called to the ministry of church related community work. After approved preparation and training, they may be called to be church related community workers in a post approved by the United Reformed Church, and are then commissioned and inducted to their office to serve for a designated period. This commissioning and induction shall be in accord with Schedules D & F. Church related community workers are commissioned to care for, to challenge and to pray for the community, to discern with others God's will for the well-being of the community, and to endeavour to enable the church to live out its calling to proclaim the love and mercy of God through working with others in both church and community for peace and justice in the world. Their service may be stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and in the latter case their service is given within the area of a Synod and in the context it has approved.

23. Some are called to be elders. They share with ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the pastoral oversight and leadership of the local churches, taking counsel together in the elders' meeting for the whole church and having severally groups of members particularly entrusted to their pastoral care. They shall be associated with ministers in all the councils of the church. Elders elected by the church meeting are ordained to their office and are inducted to serve for such limited period as the church which elects them shall determine. All elders are eligible for re-election, and those elected shall enter upon their office by induction. On moving to another local church an ordained elder is eligible for election by that church to the elders' meeting, and, if so elected, is inducted. The ordination and induction of elders shall be carried out in the course of public worship by a minister of the local church (or, during a pastoral vacancy, by the interim moderator) acting with the serving elders (see Schedule B).*

* Within the Synod of Scotland those office bearers who fulfil the functions of the United Reformed Church eldership will be called elders, or by local church meeting decision, may retain their existing titles. Such persons will be recognised as elders for all purposes by the wider councils of the Church.

24. All other ministries recognised by the uniting churches at the date of unification (as defined by the United Reformed Church Act 1981) shall continue to be exercised in the United Reformed Church without further commissioning, subject always to the decisions of the General Assembly. The United Reformed Church shall determine from time to time what other ministries may be required and which of them should be recognised as ministries in the whole church. It shall decide how those who are to exercise them shall be set apart.

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

Apart from ordained ministers of the United Reformed Church and of other churches, only such recognised persons may be invited.

'The provisions of paragraph 25 are intended to establish the principle that worship should be led by representative persons recognised by the wider church as well as by the local church. The provisions do not prevent the congregation assembled for baptismal or communion service from themselves appointing, as a church meeting, a suitable person to preside at the celebration of the sacrament in a case of emergency, for example if the expected president is taken ill or held up in travel. The provisions do not require such an action rather than a postponement of the baptismal or communion service if that seems preferable.'

26. The ordination and induction of ministers shall be in accord with Schedules C and D. Appropriate affirmations of faith shall also be made by those entering upon other ministries within the life of the church. In the United Reformed Church all ministries shall be open to both men and women.

The totality of ministers who fall within any of the categories defined in Schedule E, Paragraph 1 and are in good standing may be referred to as the Roll of Ministers. Ministers shall conduct their ministry according to the criteria set out in Schedule E.

SCHEDULE A

(see clause 14 in the Basis of Union)

Affirmation of faith to be made at admission to the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of the Church

It is the responsibility of the minister and elders' meeting, before bringing the names of candidates to the church meeting, to be assured of the sincerity of their intention. After adequate preparation, and acceptance by the church meeting, candidates shall be publicly admitted to the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of the Church of Jesus Christ and in particular to the membership of the local church.

This act may include the laying on of hands as a sign of the commissioning of those called by God to the service of Jesus Christ. Acceptance of the candidates, as also their acceptance of their commission, shall be signified by the giving and receiving of the right hand of fellowship.

Thereafter they shall be commended to the love and care of their fellow members.

During the act of admission public profession of faith and of commitment to the Church shall be made:

VERSION I

Either:

(a) by question and answer thus:

Q: Do you confess your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, taking the Father to be your Father, the Son to be your Saviour and Lord, the Spirit to be your helper and guide?

A: I do.

Q: Do you promise, in dependence on God's grace, to be faithful in private and public worship, to live in the fellowship of the Church and to share in its work, and to give and serve, as God enables you, for the advancement of his kingdom throughout the world?

A: I do.

Q: Do you promise, by that same grace, to follow Christ and to seek to do and to bear his will all the days of your life?

A: I do.

Q: And do you trust in his mercy alone to bring you into the fullness of the life of the world to come?

A: I do.

VERSION II

Or: (b) in the form of a declaration such as the following:

I confess my faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
taking the Father to be my Father,
the Son to be my saviour and Lord,
the Spirit to be my helper and guide.
I promise, in dependence on God's grace,
to be faithful in private and public worship,
to live in the fellowship of the Church and to share in its work,
and to give and serve, as God enables me, for the advancement of his kingdom throughout the world.
I promise, by that same grace, to follow Christ and to seek to do and to bear his will all the days of my life.
And I trust in his mercy alone to bring me into the fullness of the life of the world to come.

Or: (c) Addition to Schedule A: Version III

(At Baptism at an age of responsibility or at profession of faith for those baptised as infants)

Q: Do you believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
maker of heaven and earth,
giver of life, redeemer of the world?

A: I do.

Q: Do you repent of your sins, turn away from evil, and turn to Christ?

A: By God's grace, I do.

Q: Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

A: I do.

(At reception into the full privileges and responsibilities of membership)

Q: From the beginning,
believers have continued in the worship
and fellowship of the church:
N, do you commit yourself to this life?

A: I do, with God's help.

Q: With the whole Church, will you proclaim
by word and action the good news of God in Christ?

A: I will, with God's help.

Or: (d) in a form which includes the following elements:

a Trinitarian confession of faith
repentance of sin
a confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord
a promise to share in the worship, fellowship
and mission of the Church.

SCHEDULE B

Affirmations to be made by elders at ordination and induction

NOTE: The service, which takes place at public worship, shall include the reading of the Statement contained in Schedule D and a statement regarding the functions of the elders taken from clauses 19, 20 and 23 in the Basis of Union.

Afterwards the presiding minister shall say to the elders elect:

In the light of this Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church and the statement concerning the functions of the eldership, the elders elect are now asked to answer the following questions:

Q: Do you confess again your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

A: I do.

Q: In dependence on God's grace do you reaffirm your trust in Jesus Christ as saviour and Lord and your promise to follow him and to seek to do and to bear his will all the days of your life?

A: I do.

Q: Do you believe that the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people?

A: I do.

Q: Do you accept the office of elder of the United Reformed Church in this congregation and do you promise to perform its duties faithfully?

A: I do.

SCHEDULE C

(see clause 21 in the Basis of Union)

Affirmations to be made by ministers at ordination and induction

NOTE: The service will also include the reading of the Statement contained in Schedule D, and provision will be made for a statement to be made concerning the circumstances of the call. Ministers may also make a personal statement about their faith and sense of calling. After the statement has been read the presiding minister shall then ask one of the following sets of questions:

VERSION I

Either:

1. A.B., Do you confess anew your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

I do.

2. Do you believe that the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people?

I do.

3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, lived our common life on earth, died upon the cross, and who was raised from the dead and reigns for evermore, is the gift of God's very self to the world? Do you believe that through him God's love, justice and mercy are revealed and forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life are offered to all people? And will you faithfully proclaim this Gospel?

By the grace of God this I believe and this I will proclaim.

4. Do you believe that the Church is the people gathered by God's love to proclaim the reconciliation of the world to God through Jesus Christ?

I do.

5. Are zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, obedience to the Holy Spirit and a desire for the salvation of the world, so far as you know your own heart, the chief motives which lead you to enter this ministry?

They are

6. Do you promise to live a holy life, and to maintain the truth of the gospel, whatever trouble or persecution may arise?

Relying on the strength of Christ, I do.

7. Do you promise to fulfil the duties of your charge* faithfully, to lead the church in worship, to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, to exercise pastoral care and oversight, to take your part in the councils of the Church, and to give leadership to the Church in its mission to the world?

By the grace of God, I do.

8. Do you promise as a minister of the United Reformed Church to seek its well-being, purity and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always to build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?

By the grace of God, I do.

9. Will you undertake to exercise your ministry in accordance with the statement concerning the nature, faith and order of the United Reformed Church?

I will, and all these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.

VERSION II

Or:

1. A.B., will you confess anew your faith?

I confess anew my faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe that the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people.

I believe that Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary,

lived our common life on earth, died upon the cross, and who was raised from the dead and reigns for evermore, is the gift of God's very self to the world.

I believe that through him God's love, justice and mercy are revealed and forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life are offered to all people.

And by the grace of God I promise to proclaim this gospel faithfully.

I believe that the Church is the people gathered by God's love to proclaim the reconciliation of the world to God through Jesus Christ.

2. What leads you to this ministry?

So far as I know my own heart,

I believe that zeal for the glory of God,

love for the Lord Jesus Christ,

obedience to the Holy Spirit

and a desire for the salvation of the world,

are the chief motives which lead me to enter this ministry.

Relying on the strength of Christ,
I promise to live a holy life,
and to maintain the truth of the gospel,
whatever trouble or persecution may arise.

3. Will you faithfully fulfil the duties of your charge?*

* The presiding minister (after appropriate consultation) may modify the wording of question 7 or the answer to question 3 to fit the kind of ministry to which the candidate has been called.

By the grace of God I promise to lead the Church in worship,
to preach the word and administer the Sacraments,
to exercise pastoral care and oversight,
to take my part in the councils of the Church,
and to give leadership to the Church in mission to the world.
As a minister of the United Reformed Church
I promise to seek its well-being, purity, and peace,
to cherish love towards all other churches,
and to endeavour always to build up the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I undertake to exercise my ministry in accordance with the statement concerning the nature, faith and order of the United Reformed Church.
All these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.

SCHEDULE D

A statement concerning the nature, faith and order of the United Reformed Church

(One of the following authorised versions to be read aloud at ordination and induction services.)

VERSION I

1. The United Reformed Church confesses the faith of the Church catholic in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. The United Reformed Church acknowledges that the life of faith to which it is called is a gift of the Holy Spirit continually received in Word and Sacrament and in the common life of God's people.
3. The United Reformed Church acknowledges the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people.
4. The United Reformed Church accepts with thanksgiving the witness borne to the catholic faith by the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and recognises as its own particular heritage the formulations and declarations of faith which have been valued by Congregationalists, Presbyterians and members of Churches of Christ as stating the Gospel and seeking to make its implications clear.
5. The United Reformed Church testifies to its faith, and orders its life, according to the Basis of Union, believing it to embody the essential notes of the Church catholic and reformed. The United Reformed Church nevertheless reserves its right and declares its readiness at any time to alter, add to, modify or supersede this Basis so that its life may accord more nearly with the mind of Christ.
6. The United Reformed Church, under the authority of Holy Scripture and in corporate responsibility to Jesus Christ its everliving head, acknowledges its duty to be open at all times to the leading of the Holy Spirit and therefore affirms its right to make such new declarations of its faith and for such purposes as may from time to time be required by obedience to the same Spirit.

7. The United Reformed Church, believing that it is through the freedom of the Spirit that Jesus Christ holds his people in the fellowship of the one Body, upholds the rights of personal conviction. It shall be for the church, in safeguarding the substance of the faith and maintaining the unity of the fellowship, to determine when these rights are asserted to the injury of its unity and peace.
8. The United Reformed Church declares that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only ruler and head of the Church, has therein appointed a government distinct from civil government and in things spiritual not subordinate thereto, and that civil authorities, being always subject to the rule of God, ought to respect the rights of conscience and of religious belief and to serve God's will of justice and peace for all humankind.
9. The United Reformed Church declares its intention, in fellowship with all the churches, to pray and work for such visible unity of the whole Church as Christ wills and in the way he wills, in order that people and nations may be led more and more to glorify the Father in heaven.

VERSION II

With the whole Christian Church
 the United Reformed Church believes in one God,
 Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
*The living God, the only God,
 ever to be praised.*

The life of faith to which we are called
 is the Spirit's gift
 continually received
 through the Word, the Sacraments
 and our Christian life together.
*We acknowledge the gift
 and answer the call,
 giving thanks for the means of grace.*

The highest authority
 for what we believe and do
 is God's Word in the Bible
 alive for his people today
 through the help of the Spirit.
*We respond to this Word,
 whose servants we are
 with all God's people
 through the years.*

We accept with thanksgiving to God
 the witness to the catholic faith
 in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.
 We acknowledge the declarations
 made in our own tradition
 by Congregationalists, Presbyterians
 and Churches of Christ
 in which they stated the faith
 and sought to make its implications clear.
*Faith alive and active:
 gift of an eternal source,
 renewed for every generation.*
 We conduct our life together
 according to the Basis of Union
 in which we give expression to our faith
 in forms which we believe contain

the essential elements of the Church's life,
both catholic and reformed;
but we affirm our right and readiness,
if the need arises,
to change the Basis of Union
and to make new statements of faith
in ever new obedience to the Living Christ.
*Our crucified and risen Lord,
who leads us in our faith
and brings it to perfection.*

Held together in the Body of Christ
through the freedom of the Spirit,
we rejoice in the diversity of the Spirit's gifts
and uphold the rights of personal conviction.
For the sake of faith and fellowship
it shall be for the church to decide
where differences of conviction
hurt our unity and peace.
*We commit ourselves
to speak the truth in love
and grow together
in the peace of Christ.*

We believe that
Christ gives his Church a government
distinct from the government of the state.
In things that affect obedience to God
the Church is not subordinate to the state,
but must serve the Lord Jesus Christ,
its only Ruler and Head.
Civil authorities are called
to serve God's will of justice and peace for all humankind,
and to respect the rights of conscience and belief.
*While we ourselves
are servants in the world
as citizens of God's eternal kingdom.*

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

SCHEDULE E

1. The following constitute the categories of ministers comprising the Roll of Ministers of the United Reformed Church;
 - a. Ministers of the former Congregational Church of England and Wales and the Presbyterian Church of England who became ministers of the United Reformed Church at its formation in 1972.
 - b. Ministers of the former Re-formed Association of the Churches of Christ who became ministers of the United Reformed Church in 1981.
 - c. Ministers of the former Congregational Union of Scotland who became ministers of the United Reformed Church in 1999.
 - d. Ministers who have been ordained as ministers of the United Reformed Church and inducted to a local pastorate (or some other post approved by Synod) after having received a call with the concurrence of the Synod or have been appointed to a post by councils of the Church or are associate members of a Synod
 - e. Ministers of other churches who have been granted a Certificate of Eligibility by the General Assembly, or the committee designated by the General Assembly with the responsibility to grant Certificates of Eligibility, and who subsequently transferred to the United Reformed Church upon ordination and/or induction to a local pastorate following a call with the concurrence of the Synod
 - f. Ministers of other churches who, with the approval of a Synod, have been permitted by the General Assembly, or the committee delegated by the General Assembly to act on its behalf, to transfer to the United Reformed Church without receiving a call to a local pastorate or without being appointed to a post approved by Synod.
2. Ministers must conduct themselves and exercise all aspects of their ministries in a manner which is compatible with the unity and peace of the United Reformed Church and the affirmation made by ministers at ordination and induction (Schedule C) and the Statement concerning the nature, faith and order of the United Reformed Church (Schedule D) in accordance with which ministers undertake to exercise their ministry.
3. Acting in due exercise of their functions as contained in the Structure of the United Reformed Church, the councils of the Church have authority in certain circumstances (without prejudice to a minister's conditions under the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration) to suspend a minister which involves a temporary ban on the exercise of ministry by the minister concerned but not his/her removal from the Roll of Ministers.
4. A minister under suspension, whether in pastoral charge or not, shall not present him/herself as a minister and shall not preside at communion. The minister shall refrain from all activity which may lead others to believe that he/she is acting as a minister of religion. Suspension also means that the minister may not exercise the ministerial rights of membership of any council of the Church. Suspension does not remove any of the rights accorded by the process of determining the disciplinary matter which had led to the suspension.
5. A person whose name has been deleted from the Roll of Ministers of the United Reformed Church and who remains a member of the United Reformed Church has the privilege and responsibilities of that membership, but not those of a minister of Word and sacraments, and should refrain from all activity which may lead others to believe that he/she is acting as a minister of religion. However, should that person be re-instated to the Roll of Ministers, he/she would, on being called to a pastorate, need to be inducted to that pastorate, but not ordained, since ordination is not repeatable.

SCHEDULE F

(see clause 22 in the Basis of Union)

Affirmations to be made by church related community workers at commissioning and induction.

NOTE: The service will also include the reading of the Statement contained in Schedule D, and provision will be made for a statement to be made concerning the circumstances of the call. Church related community workers may also make a personal statement about their faith and sense of calling. After the statement has been read the presiding minister shall then ask one of the following sets of questions:

Either: VERSION I

1. A.B., Do you confess anew your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

I do.

2. Do you believe that the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people?

I do.

3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, lived our common life on earth, died upon the cross, and who was raised from the dead and reigns for evermore, is the gift of God's very self to the world? Do you believe that through him God's love, justice and mercy are revealed and forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life are offered to all people? And will you faithfully proclaim this Gospel?

By the grace of God this I believe and this I will proclaim.

4. Do you believe that the Church is the people gathered by God's love to proclaim the reconciliation of the world to God through Jesus Christ?

I do.

5. Are zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, obedience to the Holy Spirit and a desire for the salvation of the world, so far as you know your own heart, the chief motives which lead you to enter this ministry?

They are.

6. Do you promise to live a holy life, and to maintain the truth of the gospel, whatever trouble or persecution may arise?

Relying on the strength of Christ, I do.

7. Do you promise to care for, to challenge and to pray for the community, to discern with others God's will for the wellbeing of the community? Do you promise to take your part in the councils of the Church and to endeavour to enable the church to live out its calling to proclaim the love and mercy of God through working with others in both church and community for peace and justice in the world?

By the grace of God, I do.

8. Do you promise as a church related community worker of the United Reformed Church to seek its well-being, purity and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always to build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?

By the grace of God, I do.

9. Will you undertake to exercise your ministry in accordance with the statement concerning the nature, faith and order of the United Reformed Church?

I will, and all these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Or: VERSION II

1. A.B., will you confess anew your faith?

I confess anew my faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe that the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people. I believe that Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, lived our common life on earth, died upon the cross, and who was raised from the dead and reigns for evermore, is the gift of God's very self to the world. I believe that through him God's love, justice and mercy are revealed and forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life are offered to all people. And by the grace of God I promise to proclaim this gospel faithfully. I believe that the Church is the people gathered by God's love to proclaim the reconciliation of the world to God through Jesus Christ.

2. What leads you to this ministry?

So far as I know my own heart, I believe that zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, obedience to the Holy Spirit and a desire for the salvation of the world, are the chief motives which lead me to enter this ministry. Relying on the strength of Christ, I promise to live a holy life, and to maintain the truth of the gospel, whatever trouble or persecution may arise.

3. Will you faithfully fulfil the duties of your charge?

By the grace of God I promise to care for, to challenge and to pray for the community, to discern with others God's will for the wellbeing of the community. I promise to take my part in the councils of the Church and to endeavour to enable the church to live out its calling to proclaim the love and mercy of God through working with others in both church and community for peace and justice in the world. As a church related community worker of the United Reformed Church I promise to seek its wellbeing, purity, and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches, and always to endeavour to build up the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I undertake to exercise my ministry in accordance with the statement concerning the nature, faith and order of the United Reformed Church. All these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Structure of the URC

1.(1) Members of the United Reformed Church associated in a locality for worship witness and service shall together comprise a local church.

1.(1)(a) Since the proper functioning of the local church is so fundamental to the life of the United Reformed Church, where there is a number of small congregations in proximity to one another unable separately to provide leadership and resources for the work of the church, such congregations shall consult with the Synod to formulate an acceptable scheme for joining together with a single membership, a common church meeting and elders' meeting, representative of all the constituent congregations, and a shared ministry.

1.(1)(b) Where two or more local churches together, and in consultation with the Synod, decide that their mission will be more effective if they share resources and ordained ministry, they may, on the decision of the synod, form an association known as a group of churches with a structured relationship and a constitution governing the way in which they relate to one another as to the sharing of both resources and the ordained ministry. Each church within the group shall retain its own identity, and the church meeting and elders' meeting shall continue to exercise all their functions in relation to that church, save that, so long as the constitution shall so declare, decisions relating to the calling of a minister (see paragraph 2(1)(vii) may be taken by a single group church meeting at which all the members of each of the constituent churches in the group shall be eligible to attend and vote.

1.(1)(c) Where two or more local churches together, and in consultation with the Synod, decide that their mission will be more effective if they share ordained ministry (but not other resources) they may, on the decision of the synod, form an association known as a joint pastorate, with a structured relationship with respect to the provision of ordained ministry only and a statement of intent governing the way in which they relate to one another in relation to the sharing of ordained ministry. Each church within the joint pastorate shall retain its own identity, and its church meeting and elders' meeting shall continue to exercise all their functions in relation to that church, save that, so long as the statement of intent shall so declare, decisions relating to the calling of a minister (see paragraph 2(1)(vii)) may be taken by a single joint pastorate church meeting at which all the members of each of the constituent churches in the joint pastorate shall be eligible to attend and vote.

1.(2)(a) The United Reformed Church in England shall be divided into provinces, each having a synod. In Wales and in Scotland, in recognition of the different status of these nations there shall in each case be a single synod to be known as a national synod. The expression "Provincial Synod" when used in the United Reformed Church Acts of 1972 and 1981 shall in relation to property in Wales be read as referring to the national Synod of Wales

1.(2)(b) Throughout this statement of the Structure of the United Reformed Church references to 'Provincial Moderators' shall be read as meaning 'Moderators of Synods' in respect of Scotland and Wales.

1.(3) The oversight of the United Reformed Church shall be the concern both of the local church and wider representative councils. The councils of the United Reformed Church shall be:

(a) the church meeting and the elders' meeting of each local church;

(b) the council of each area of ecumenical cooperation to be known as an area meeting

(c) the synod of province or nation to be known as a provincial or national synod; and

(d) the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.

These four parts of the structure of the United Reformed Church shall have such consultative, legislative and executive functions as are hereinafter respectively assigned to each of them and each shall be recognised by members of the United Reformed Church as possessing such authority, under the Word of God and the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, as shall enable it to exercise its functions and thereby to minister in that sphere of the life of the United Reformed Church with which it is concerned. The consultative, legislative and executive functions of an area meeting shall be devolved from the synod and shall in all cases be subject to an agreement between the Synod and the equivalent body or bodies in the relevant ecumenical partners.

The Composition and Functions of the Councils of the United Reformed Church

2.(1) The Church Meeting of the local church shall consist of those persons who have been admitted to the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of the United Reformed Church and whose names are included on the membership roll of such local church. The church meeting may invite other persons who regularly worship with the local church but whose names are not on the membership roll to attend and speak at its meetings on particular occasions but no such person shall have the right to vote. In the church meeting which shall meet at least once a quarter and at which the minister or one of the ministers shall normally preside, the members have opportunity through discussion, responsible decision and care for one another, to strengthen each other's faith and to foster the life, work and mission of the Church.

Functions:

Concerning the outgoing of the Church:

- (i) to further the Church's mission in the locality;
- (ii) to develop local ecumenical relationships;
- (iii) to further the Church's compassionate ministry in the locality and throughout the world;
- (iv) to consider and support the wider work of the Church at home and abroad;
- (v) to consider public questions in relation to the Christian faith;
- (vi) to bring concerns for consideration by the elders' meeting and wider councils of the church.

Concerning the nurture of the fellowship:

(vii) to call a minister with the concurrence of the synod(s) concerned (see paragraph 2 (3) A (vii)); (Where two or more churches have formed a group or joint pastorate in accordance with paragraph 1(1)(b) or (c) above on the decision of synod under its function 2(4)(A)(iv), the church meetings of each church may, with the agreement of the synod so long as the group constitution or the statement of intent as appropriate shall so provide, join together as a group or joint pastorate church meeting for the purpose of calling a minister, in which case this function shall be exercised by the group or joint pastorate church meeting.)

(viii) to elect elders and officers, determining their number and period of service, and representatives to wider councils;

(ix) to admit and transfer members, to maintain standards of membership, and to suspend or remove names from the membership roll, always on advice from the elders' meeting;

(x) to consider, always on advice from the elders' meeting, any application for recognition as a candidate for the ministry and to transmit it, if approved, to the synod;

(xi) to adopt financial reports;

(xii) to receive reports and proposals from the elders' meeting, synod and General Assembly and to authorise appropriate action;

(xiii) on the recommendation of the elders' meeting to make or provide for the making of arrangements for the proper maintenance of buildings and the general oversight of all the financial responsibilities of the local church.

And generally:

(xiv) to do such other things as may be necessary in pursuance of its responsibility for the common life of the Church.

2.(2) The Elders' Meeting of the local church shall consist of the minister(s) and the elders elected by the church

meeting of such local church and shall exercise oversight of the spiritual life of the local church. The elders' meeting shall serve the local church and by its relation to the wider councils of the United Reformed Church represent the whole Church to the local church. The minister, or one of the ministers, or during a pastoral vacancy the interim moderator appointed as hereinafter provided, shall normally preside over the elders' meeting.

Functions:

- (i) to foster in the congregation concern for witness and service to the community, evangelism at home and abroad, Christian education, ecumenical action, local inter-church relations and the wider responsibilities of the whole Church;
- (ii) to see that public worship is regularly offered and the sacraments are duly administered, and generally to promote the welfare of the congregation;
- (iii) to ensure pastoral care of the congregation, in which the minister is joined by elders having particular responsibility for groups of members;
- (iv) to nominate from among its members a church secretary (or secretaries), to be elected by the church meeting, to serve both the church meeting and the elders' meeting;
- (v) to arrange for pulpit supply in a vacancy;
- (vi) to keep the roll of members (see paragraph 2 (1)) and (as an aid to the discharge of the congregation's pastoral and evangelistic responsibility) lists of names of adherents and children attached to the congregation, and in consultation with the church meeting to maintain standards of membership and to advise on the admission of members on profession of faith and by transfer, on the suspension of members, and on the removal of names from the roll;
- (vii) to be responsible for the institution and oversight of work among children and young people and of all organisations within the congregation;
- (viii) to call for the election of elders and advise on the number required;
- (ix) to consider the suitability of any applicant for recognition as a candidate for the ministry and to advise the church meeting about its recommendation to the Synod
- (x) to recommend to the church meeting arrangements for the proper maintenance of buildings and the general oversight of all the financial responsibilities of the local church;
- (xi) to act on behalf of the church meeting and bring concerns to the wider councils of the United Reformed Church;
- (xii) to do such other things as may be necessary in pursuance of its responsibility for the common life of the Church.

2.(3) The synod being representative of the local churches in that province or nation united for the purpose of dealing with matters of wider concern shall consist of:

- (a) All ministers, registered pastors (in Scotland) and church related community workers who are for the time being engaged directly in the service of the United Reformed Church within the province or nation;
- (b) All missionaries of the United Reformed Church for the time being on furlough and for the time being resident within the province or nation;
- (c) Representatives of local churches within the province or nation who shall normally be members of the elders' meeting of a local church and who shall be appointed by the church meeting of such local church, the number of such representatives to be: 1-200 members, one representative; over 200 members, 2 representatives; A Synod may, at its discretion vary the

number of representatives of local churches so that both local churches with 1-200 members and local churches with over 200 members appoint two representatives.

(where a local church, whether a local ecumenical partnership or a local church organised according to paragraph 1.(1)(a), comprises two or more congregations worshipping in separate locations, the synod may authorise that local church to appoint representatives to the synod from each constituent congregation to such numbers as would be permitted by the above rule if each congregation were a separate local church);

- (d) Such members of local churches, normally elders, not exceeding twelve (or such other number as the General Assembly may from time to time determine) as may be co-opted by the synod;
- (e) Such members as shall from time to time be appointed by the General Assembly;
- (f) Such retired ministers who have been appointed by the synod as officers of the synod, for the period of their appointment;
- (g) All retired ministers not covered by clause 2.3a or 2.3f residing within the province or nation served by the synod, who shall be associate members of the synod having the right to speak but not to vote at meetings of the synod;
- (h) Two young people, being members of the United Reformed Church, nominated by the synod's youth forum, committee or equivalent;
- (i) Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations as the synod may from time to time determine;
- (j) An elder appointed by the synod as an interim moderator who shall be a full member of the synod for the period of the appointment.

The synod shall elect from among its members a clerk, a treasurer and such other officers as it shall from time to time think desirable and shall determine their periods of service. It may also appoint such committees and for such purposes as it from time to time may think desirable and may appoint to any such committee any members of the United Reformed Church notwithstanding that they are not members of the synod.

Moderators of synods. There shall be a moderator for each synod being a minister appointed from time to time by the General Assembly according to its rules of procedure and responsible to the General Assembly.

The moderator shall:

be separated from any local pastoral charge,

stimulate and encourage the work of the United Reformed Church within the province or nation,

preside over the meetings of the synod and exercise a pastoral office towards the ministers and churches within the province or nation,

suggest names of ministers to vacant pastorates, in consultation with interim moderators of local churches,

preside, or appoint a deputy to preside, at all ordinations and/or inductions of ministers within the province or nation,

The moderators of the synods shall meet together at regular intervals for the better discharge of their duties.

Functions of synod:

A. The Synod is responsible for exercising the following Functions (subject to the restriction referred to in Paragraph (B) below):

- (i) To take action which supports
the spreading of the Gospel at home and abroad,
the life and witness of the United Reformed Church
the interests of the Church of Christ as a whole,
the well-being of the community in which the Church is placed;

- (ii) to encourage church extension within the province or nation, decide upon the establishment of new causes and the recognition of mission projects;
- (iii) to decide upon all matters regarding the grouping, amalgamation or dissolution of local churches.
- (iv) to take appropriate action on matters referred to it by the General Assembly
- (v) to provide a forum for concerns brought forward by Local Churches and to advise thereon.
- (vi) to make proposals to and raise concerns for consideration by the General Assembly.
- (vii) to give (or, where deep pastoral concern for the church requires it, to withhold) concurrence in calls to ministers and, with the moderator of the synod or the moderator's deputy presiding, to conduct, in fellowship with the local church, any ordinations and/or inductions of ministers within the synod.
- (viii) to appoint, in consultation with the local church, an interim moderator during a pastoral vacancy, such interim moderator normally being a serving minister or a retired minister. In exceptional circumstances an elder may be appointed;
- (ix) to support, strengthen and care for all the churches of the synod ensuring that visits are made at regular intervals for consultation concerning their life and work.
- (x) to appoint from time to time such number of representatives to the General Assembly (ministerial and lay in equal numbers) as the General Assembly shall determine. This shall include, at least two representatives under the age of 26. As far as possible all appointments shall be made in rotation from local churches.
- (xi) to appoint to service on synod :
 - (I) United Reformed Church ministers/lay people serving as (a) full-time chaplains to universities, colleges, hospitals, workplaces, where their work is seen to be an extension of the ministry of the synod concerned, (b) secretaries and other full-time officials of ecumenical bodies with which the United Reformed Church is in relationship;
 - (II) United Reformed Church ministers giving significant oversight to local churches, under the general direction of the synod concerned;
 - (III) Ministers, or members of Diaconal Orders, of other churches appointed to serve on behalf of the United Reformed Church in charge of a United Reformed Church or in an ecumenical group including United Reformed Church interests;
 - (IV) Ministers not in pastoral charge who perform duties within the synod in respect of which the synod has some direct responsibility;
- (xii) to consider and where appropriate appoint to service on Synod
 - (I) United Reformed Church ministers/lay people serving as (a) part-time chaplains to universities, colleges, hospitals, workplaces, where their work is seen to be an extension of the ministry of the synod concerned, (b) part-time officials of ecumenical bodies with which the United Reformed Church is in relationship;
- (xiii) to devise strategies which enable and support the exploration of mission opportunities in the region and to encourage in Local Churches concern for service and a sense of responsibility for the wider work of the Church at home and abroad.
- (xiv) to exercise oversight of all ministers falling within any of the categories 2(3) (a), (b) (f) and (g) except moderators of synods who are the responsibility of the General Assembly.

- (xv) to receive and decide upon applications for recognition as candidates for the ministry.
- (xvi) to receive and forward to the General Assembly, recommendations concerning applications for admission into the United Reformed Church from ministers, probationers or congregations.
- (xvii) to give oversight to candidates for the ministry and to candidates for any form of full-time service in the Church at home and abroad, and, in the case of candidates for the ministry, determine their eligibility for a call.
- (xviii) 'Where the Synod, acting through its Mandated Group as defined in the Disciplinary Process referred to below, considers that a Minister is or may not be exercising his/her Ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that Minister to the Commission Stage of the Disciplinary Process contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and in every such case to suspend the Minister concerned pending the resolution of the matter under that Process (for the avoidance of doubt the calling in of the Mandated Group under that Process in order to fulfil its responsibilities marking the commencement of the Disciplinary Process).'
- (xix) to appoint, or to concur in the appointment of, non-stipendiary ministers to their particular service and to review this service at stated intervals.
- (xx) to accredit and provide support and training for lay preachers and worship leaders and, in consultation with the Local Churches concerned, to give authority for appropriate lay persons to preside at the sacraments. Authorisation for lay persons to preside at the Sacraments in Ecumenical Areas shall only be given in consultation with the appropriate Ecumenical Partner,
- (xxi) to receive the resignation of ministers and to decide upon appropriate action (see also paragraph 2.5.xviii)
- (xxii) to seek to expand the range and deepen the nature of the Christian common life and witness in each local community, and in Scotland and Wales to undertake responsibility for national ecumenical relationships on behalf of the whole United Reformed Church, subject to the final authority of the General Assembly.
- (xxiii) to decide upon all matters regarding erection, major reconstruction or disposal of buildings..
- (xxiv) to receive, hear and decide upon references and appeals duly submitted.
- (xxv) to do such other things as may be necessary in pursuance of its responsibility for the common life of the church.

(B) 'Once the Disciplinary Process has commenced in the case of any Minister, whether by the Synod or by one of the other Councils of the Church, the Synod shall not exercise its functions in respect of that Minister (save only in the provision of such pastoral care as may be appropriate) until the Process has been duly concluded.'

(C) No Appeal shall lie against a decision by the Synod to refer any case to the Assembly Commission under Function (xviii) above.

2.(4) The area meeting of each Area of Ecumenical Co-operation being representative of the local churches in that area grouped together for the purposes of fellowship, support, intimate mutual oversight and united action shall consist of representatives of all churches engaged in the area of ecumenical co-operation. The United Reformed Church membership of the area meeting in each area of ecumenical co-operation (hereinafter referred to as the United Reformed Church Committee) shall consist of the moderator of synod, all ministers, church related community workers and registered pastors (in Scotland) engaged directly in the service of the United Reformed Church within the area, representatives of local churches within the area, and such other persons as determined by the constitution of each area meeting as approved by resolution of the synod.

(A) The synod shall delegate to the area meeting the following functions, unless by agreement with the relevant ecumenical partner it is felt that some of these functions should be reserved to the synod, and it shall be the responsibility of the area meeting

- (i) to exercise oversight of all ministers falling within any of the categories 2(3)(a), (b), (f) and (g) except moderators of synods who although members of the area meeting are responsible to the General Assembly;
- (ii) to give (or, where deep pastoral concern for the church requires it, to withhold) concurrence in calls to ministers and, with the moderator of the synod or the moderator's deputy presiding, to conduct, in fellowship with the local church(es), any ordinations and/or inductions of ministers within the area;
- (iii) to appoint, or to concur in the appointment of, non-stipendiary ministers and church related community workers to their particular service and to review this service at stated intervals;
- (iv) to appoint, in consultation with the local church(es) and the moderator of the synod, an interim moderator during a pastoral vacancy, such interim moderator normally being a serving minister or a retired minister. In exceptional circumstances an elder may be appointed;
- (v) to care for all the churches of the area meeting and to visit them by deputies at regular intervals for consultation concerning their life and work;
- (vi) to consider on the recommendation of local churches applications for recognition as candidates for the ministry and to transmit them, if approved, to the synod for decision;
- (vii) to accredit lay preachers
- (viii) to consider resignations of ministers not currently the subject of any case within the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline referred to in Function (xviii) below and, in consultation with the moderator of the synod, to decide upon appropriate action (see also paragraph 2.4.xviii);
- (ix) from time to time to recommend to synod such number of representatives to the General Assembly as the synod shall determine;
- (x) to engage in study concerning the Church's mission in the area and to encourage in the local churches concern for youth work and social service and a sense of responsibility for the wider work of the Church at home and abroad;
- (xi) to promote church extension within the area and to submit proposals to the synod for the establishing of new causes and the recognition of mission projects;
- (xii) to make recommendations to the synod in consultation with the churches concerned and to act on behalf of the synod in consultation with the moderator on all matters regarding the grouping, amalgamation or dissolution of local churches;
- (xiii) to make recommendations to the synod in consultation with the churches concerned and to act on behalf of the synod on all matters regarding erection, major reconstruction or disposal of buildings;
- (xiv) to provide a forum for concerns brought forward by Local Churches and to advise thereon;
- (xv) to hear and make decisions upon appeals brought forward by Local Churches and church members;
- (xvi) to take appropriate action on matters referred to the area meeting by the synod or General Assembly, and to initiate or transmit proposals for consideration by those bodies;

- (xvii) to maintain contact with ecumenical and missionary work in the area;
 - (xviii) where the area meeting considers that a minister is not or may not be exercising his/her ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that minister to be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Process contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and in every such case to suspend the minister concerned pending the resolution of the matter under that Process at the appropriate time as specified in that Process.
- (D) Such functions as relate solely to the work of the United Reformed Church may be discharged by the United Reformed Church Committee of each area meeting.

2.(5) The General Assembly which shall embody the unity of the United Reformed Church and act as the central organ of its life and the final authority, under the Word of God and the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, in all matters of doctrine and order and in all other concerns of its common life shall consist of:

- a) Such number of representatives of synods (ministerial and lay in equal numbers) as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine (at present one representative per 12 churches or part thereof plus one per 1200 church members or part thereof, with an adjustment to add one in the case of each synod if necessary to secure an even number of representatives);
- (b) The moderators of the General Assembly and of the synods and such other officers of the General Assembly and of the synods as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine (The Assembly has determined that Clerks of Synods, Treasurers of Synods, the Clerk of Assembly, the General Secretary and the Deputy General Secretary shall be members of Assembly);
- (c) The convener of each of the standing committees of the General Assembly;
- (d) A staff representative and a student representative, being members of the United Reformed Church, from each of such recognised theological colleges as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine;
- (e) Up to twelve representatives from the partner churches of the United Reformed Church outside of Britain and Ireland or such other number as the Assembly shall from time to time determine;
- (f) Such other ministers and elders of the United Reformed Church as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine (the Assembly has added to its membership one serving United Reformed Church chaplain to the forces, nominated each year by the Organising Secretary of the United Board, in consultation with the three Principal Chaplains, nine representatives of the Synod of Scotland and three representatives from each other synod);
- (g) All former moderators of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church and all past chairmen of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, all past presidents of the Congregational Church in England and Wales, all former moderators of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, all former chairmen and presidents of the Annual Conference of the Association of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland, and all former presidents of the Annual Conference of the Re-formed Association of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland, provided that such former officers are members of the United Reformed Church;
- (h) Such number of representatives of the Fellowship of United Reformed Youth, being members of the United Reformed Church, as the Assembly shall from time to time determine (at present two);
- (i) Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the United Kingdom as the Assembly on the advice of the Mission Council may from time to time determine;

- (j) A representative of the Council for World Mission.

In making its determination from time to time as to the number of members to be comprised in each of the categories (a) to (f) above, the General Assembly shall ensure that:

(i) the total number of members to be drawn from all these categories shall not exceed 750, and

(ii) the number of those in categories (b) to (f) shall not in total exceed one half of those in category (a).

The General Assembly shall elect a moderator and such other officers as it shall from time to time think desirable. (The Assembly has appointed the following to serve as officers with the moderator: the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary, the Clerk of Assembly, The Treasurer and the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee.) It shall also appoint a Mission Council with power to act in its name in matters of urgency between meetings of the General Assembly and to discharge such other functions as the General Assembly may from time to time direct. The General Assembly shall appoint standing committees which subject to the General Assembly shall have charge of the continuing interests of the church. It may also appoint special committees which subject to the General Assembly shall have charge of such matters as the General Assembly may assign to them from time to time. The General Assembly may appoint to any such committee members of the United Reformed Church who are not members of the General Assembly.

Functions:

(A) General Assembly is responsible for exercising the following Functions (subject to the restriction referred to in Paragraph (B) below):

- (i) to oversee the total work of the church;
- (ii) to make decisions on reports and recommendations from its own committees, issue such directions and take such actions as it deems conducive to the propagation of the gospel, the welfare of the United Reformed Church, the interests of the Church of Christ as a whole and the well-being of the community in which the Church is placed;
- (iii) to conduct and foster the ecumenical relationships of the United Reformed Church;
- (iv) to support and share in the missionary work of the Church at home and abroad;
- (v) to determine the standards and scope of an adequate ministerial education and training;
- (vi) 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;
- (vii) to recognise theological colleges previously recognised by the Congregational Church in England and Wales or the Congregational Union of Scotland and such other colleges in such manner and for such purposes as the General Assembly may determine;
- (viii) to appoint moderators of synods;
- (ix) to remit questions concerning the witness and judgement of the church for general discussion in church meetings, elders' meetings, and synods, and to call for reports from these councils;
- (x) to interpret all forms and expressions of the polity practice and doctrinal formulations of the United Reformed Church including the Basis and the Structure and to determine when rights of personal conviction are asserted to the injury of the unity and peace of the United Reformed Church;

- (xi) to alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the United Reformed Church and Part 1 of the Statement of the Ministerial Disciplinary Process referred to in Function (xxiii) below;
- (xii) to make, alter or rescind rules for the conduct of its own proceedings and of those of other councils and commissions of the United Reformed Church and such other rules, bye-laws and standing orders as the General Assembly may from time to time think desirable for the performance of its functions and the carrying into effect of any of the provisions contained in the Basis and the Structure and for the conduct of the business and affairs of the General Assembly and of the other councils and commissions of the United Reformed Church;
- (xiii) to appoint at its discretion additional members to serve on synods;
- (xiv) to make such alterations in the boundaries and groupings of synods and to establish such new synods as the General Assembly may from time to time think desirable;
- (xv) to consider and decide upon references and appeals duly submitted;
- (xvi) to make, alter or rescind rules of procedure for the submission and conduct of references and appeals to and by the councils of the United Reformed Church;
- (xvii) to receive and decide upon applications for admission into the United Reformed Church from ministers, probationers and congregations, transmitted by synods through their moderators;
- (xviii) to decide upon questions regarding the inclusion on the Roll of ministers of the United Reformed Church which have been previously considered and transmitted with recommendations by synods (but excluding any matter which is being dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Process referred to in Function (xxiii) below);
- (xix) to provide for the raising of funds for the work of the United Reformed Church and to determine arrangements for payment of stipends and expenses to ministers and officers of the United Reformed Church and for such other financial matters as the General Assembly may from time to time think desirable;
- (xx) to consider and decide upon issues and representations duly transmitted by other councils of the United Reformed Church;
- (xxi) to make and (if necessary) to terminate all appointments to the Commission Panel and to any administrative office under the Process for Ministerial Discipline contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and to exercise general oversight and supervision of the operation of that Process (save only that decisions in individual cases taken in accordance with that Process are made in the name of the General Assembly and are final and binding);
- (xxii) 'To provide for the setting up of an Appeals Commission in accordance with the Ministerial Disciplinary Process for the hearing of appeals under that Process.'
- (xxiii) 'In the absence of any reference into the Disciplinary Process by the appropriate Synod (the case of any Minister who is a Moderator of Synod being necessarily dealt with under this provision) and where the General Assembly (or Mission Council on its behalf) acting through its Mandated Group as defined in the Disciplinary Process referred to below considers that a Minister is or may not be exercising his/her Ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that minister to the Commission Stage of the Disciplinary Process contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and in every such case to suspend the minister concerned pending the resolution of the matter under that Process (for the avoidance of doubt the calling in of the Mandated Group under that Process in order to fulfil its responsibilities marking the commencement of the Disciplinary Process).'
- (xxiv) to do such other things as may be necessary in pursuance of its responsibility for the common life of the church.

2(5)(B) 'Once the Disciplinary Process has commenced in the case of any Minister, whether by the General Assembly or by one of the other Councils of the Church, the General Assembly shall not exercise its functions in respect of that Minister (save only in the provision of such pastoral care as may be appropriate) until the Process has been duly concluded.'

Constitutional Amendments

3.(1) No exercise by the General Assembly of the function of constitutional amendment contained in 2.5.xi shall have effect unless the following procedure has been followed:

- (a) The proposal for the amendment shall be made in accordance with the Standing Orders of the General Assembly.
- (b) The General Assembly shall vote on a motion to approve the proposal which shall require a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting to pass.
- (c) The General Assembly shall, if such motion to approve the proposal is passed, refer the proposal to synods and may, if it deems appropriate, in exceptional cases refer the proposal also to local churches.
- (d) The General Assembly shall in making any such reference set a final date for responses to be made, which shall normally be at an appropriate time before the next annual Assembly.
- (e) If by such date notice has been received by the General Secretary from more than one third of synods (or, if it has been so referred, more than one third of local churches) that a motion 'that the proposal be not proceeded with' has been passed by a majority of members present and voting at a duly convened meeting of such body, then the Assembly in its concern for the unity of the church shall not proceed to ratify the proposal.
- (f) If by such date such notice has not been received, a motion to agree the proposed amendment shall come before the General Assembly at its next meeting. Such a motion shall require a simple majority of the members present and voting to pass. In its concern for mutual understanding within the life of the church, before voting on such a motion the General Assembly shall invite a representative of any synod from which the General Secretary has duly received notification under 3(1)(e) to present the main reasons for its objection.
- (g) If such a motion is passed by such a majority the amendment shall have effect.
- (h) For the purposes of this paragraph 3(1), only synods and local churches in existence on the date set for responses to be made shall be counted in the calculations.

3.(2) In the case of motions which would have the effect of terminating the separate existence of the United Reformed Church, or of a synod within it, by union with other churches, the voting process to be used shall be not less stringent than in 3 (1) and that process shall be determined by a single vote of the General Assembly which shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to pass. In the case of a proposed union affecting only Scotland or Wales no action will be taken by the General Assembly until a decision in favour of union has been taken by the relevant synod.

Consultation

4. Decisions on the part of any council shall be reached only after the fullest attempt has been made to discover the mind of the other councils or of local churches likely to be affected by the decision.

5. APPEALS

5.(1) No right of Appeal shall lie against the decision of any council of the Church (acting with due authority in the matter) to refer any case to the Assembly Commission, and once such reference has been made that case shall be resolved in accordance with Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church and not under Paragraph 5(2) below.

Any decision reached in accordance with the Disciplinary Process contained in Section O of the Manual of the United Reformed Church has the status of a decision of the General Assembly and is final and binding.

5.(2) The procedure for dealing with reference and appeals falling outside paragraph 5(1) or paragraph 5(3) is as follows:

A local church or any member thereof or elders' meeting may appeal to the synod upon which the local church is entitled to be represented for the resolution of any dispute or difference and may appeal from any decision of such synod to the General Assembly.

A synod may refer any dispute or difference, whether or not the same shall have come before it on a reference or appeal, to the General Assembly.

The decision of the General Assembly on any matter which has come before it on reference or appeal shall be final and binding.

5(3) Applications for consent to carry out works to buildings coming within the Church's Control procedure under the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations for the time being in force and appeals from decisions made thereunder shall be dealt with in accordance with that procedure and not under paragraph 5(2) above.

Note: The procedure for appeals appears in paragraph 8 of the Rules of Procedure for the conduct of the United Reformed Church.

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