

Record of the 2007 General Assembly

Manchester University



MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

For Consideration *
For Action X

Resolution number	Report	Record		Synods	Local churches
50	Separate document 1/8	29	Consensus decision making	*	
42-48	Document 2	36-37	Human sexuality	*	*
37	151-156	46	Covenant membership and mission		*
40	163-66	52	Assessment procedure	X	
12, 14-19	51-65	62-75	Section O changes and Ministerial Incapacity Procedure	X	
24	85-93	81-90	Changes to Basis and Structure	X	
41	Document 1	97	Lottery Funding	*	*
51	Separate document 1/43	49	Assisted Dying		*
49	Document 3	97	Climate Change		*

Index page 103

Index of Resolutions page 107



Platform party



“Welcome to the United Reformed Church General Assembly 2007”

CONSTITUTION OF ASSEMBLY

At 3.30 pm. Members of Assembly met in the Main Hall of the Armitage Centre on the Fallowfield campus at the University of Manchester. The Moderator, the Revd Elizabeth Caswell constituted the Assembly with prayer, the place and the time having been duly appointed.

INDUCTION OF MODERATOR

The Revd Prof Stephen Orchard, Moderator-Elect, was inducted with prayer into the office of Moderator of the General Assembly of The United Reformed Church. He 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 Elizabeth Caswell and Mr Graham Caswell, together with Revd Neil Thorogood, her chaplain.

Assembly then continued with an introduction to the theme 'Who do you say that I am?' in addition to worship, after which the Moderator gave his address to Assembly.



THE ROLL OF ASSEMBLY

The Roll of Assembly was then placed on the table.

Moderator: Revd Prof Stephen Orchard
Clerk: Revd James Breslin
General Secretary: Revd Dr David Cornick
Deputy General Secretary: Revd Ray Adams

Moderators of Synods:

I	Revd Rowena Francis
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

Convenors of General Assembly Standing Committees and Task Groups:

Assembly Arrangements:	Mr William McVey
Church & Society:	Mr Simon Loveitt
Communications & Editorial:	Revd Dr Kirsty Thorpe
Doctrine, Prayer & Worship:	Revd Dr Susan Durber
Ecumenical/International:	Revd Elizabeth Nash
Education & Learning:	Revd John Humphreys
Equal Opportunities:	Ms Morag McLintock
Finance:	Mr Eric Chilton
Interfaith Relations:	Revd Peter Colwell
Life & Witness Committee:	Revd Peter Ball
Ministries:	Revd Peter Poulter
Mission Council:	Revd Dr David Peel
Nominations:	Revd Malcolm Hanson
Pastoral Reference:	Revd Keith Forecast
Racial Justice & Multicultural Ministries:	Revd Dr Andrew Prasad
Youth & Children's Work:	Revd Neil Thorogood

Synod Clerks:

I	Revd John Durell
II	Mr George Morton
III	Mr Donald Swift
IV	Mrs Val Morrison
V	Mrs Irene Wren
VI	Mr William Robson

VII	Mr Mick Barnes
VIII	Revd Rosalind Harrison
IX	Mr Peter Pay
X	Mr Simon Fairnington
XI	Dr Graham Campling
XII	Revd David Fox
XIII	Dr James Merrilees

Additional Synod Representatives:

III	Mr Matthew Evans, Revd Susan Flynn, Mr Richard Lathaen
V	Revd Jane Campbell, Mrs Margaret Gateley, Mr Andrew Payne
VI	Mrs Melanie Frew, Revd Anthony Howells, Mrs Adella Pritchard, Mr Mark Steele
VII	Revd Richard Church, Miss Victoria Paulding
VIII	Dr Ivan Andrews, Mrs Janet Gray
XIII	Revd Jan Adamson, Mr Ross Angus, Revd Brian Bailey, Revd Mitchell Bunting, Mrs Doris Caldwell, Ms Irene Hudson, Mr Mark Kirkbride, Miss Wilma Sinclair, Miss Janet Stirling

Synod Treasurers:

I	Revd David Walton
II	Mr Gordon Eccles
III	Mr Andrew Martlew
IV	Mrs Margaret Atkinson
V	Revd Richard Turnbull
VI	Revd Roger Woodall
VII	Mr Ronald Wade
VIII	Revd Richard Gray
IX	Mr Nicholas Lowe
X	Mr Michael Gould
XI	Mr Robert Caffyn
XII	Revd Kenneth Graham
XIII	Mr Tom Woodbridge

Theological College Representatives:

Mansfield College	Revd Julian Templeton, Mrs Jennifer Mills
Northern College	Revd Janet Berry, Ms Annette Haigh
Queens Foundation	Miss Claire Gouldthorp Revd Dr Michael Jagessar
Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College	Revd John Dyce, Ms Zamantha Walker
Westminster College	Revd Dr Janet Tollington, Mrs Heather Cadoux

Youth representatives:

Mr Andrew Littlejohns, Miss Sara Paton

Assembly Members from Other Churches in the United Kingdom:

Baptist Union of Great Britain	Mrs Margaret Prisk
Church of Scotland	Revd Valerie Ott
Congregational Federation	Revd Christopher Damp
International Ministerial Council of Gt Britain	Rt Revd Onye Obika
Methodist Church	Deacon Jane Middleton
Moravian Church	Revd David Howarth
Presbyterian Church of Ireland	Revd John Brackenridge
Presbyterian Church of Wales	Revd John Williams
Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference	Dame Anne Doyle
Union of Welsh Independents	Revd Llynos Gordon
United Free Church of Scotland	Revd Stephen Matthews

Assembly Members from Churches outside of Britain and Ireland:

Community of Protestant Council for World Mission	Revd Jan-Gerd Heetderks Ms Nneoma Chima
Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea	Revd Suk In Lee, Revd Kil-Soo Yoon
Protestant Church of the Palatinate (EKP)	Revd Martin Henninger
Reformed Church in France	Revd Richard Taufer
The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan	Revd Ching-Chang Pan
The United Church in Jamaica and Cayman Islands	Mrs Rose Wedderburn
Uniting Church in Australia	Revd Robert Brown

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

Past Presidents, Chairmen and Moderators:

Ms Gwen Hall, Revd Arthur Macarthur, Revd John Johansen-Berg, Revd Martin Cressey, Mrs Rosalind Goodfellow, Revd John Francis, Revd Richard Murray, Revd Bentley Webster, Revd Dr Peter Arthur, Revd George Sharpe, Revd Prof David Thompson, Revd Victor Smith, Revd Alasdair Walker, 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 Alasdair Pratt, Revd Sheila Maxey, Revd Dr David Peel, Revd Elizabeth Caswell

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 Gregory Thompson, Revd Pamela Ward, Mrs Kate Baxter, Miss Felicity Tunnard
- B: Revd Raymond Anglesea, Revd Philip Gray, Revd Ann Jackson, Mr Geraint Goodfellow, Miss Heather Laing, Mrs Eileen Livingstone
- C: Revd Ruth Crofton, Revd Tjarda Murray, Revd Dr David Whiting, Mr Matthew Appleyard, Mrs Daphne Clarke, Ms Jan Harper
- G: Revd Barry Welch, Miss Alison Beecroft

Synod II

- J: Revd Iain MacKenzie, Revd Rachel Poolman, Mrs Gina Dennison, Mrs Rosalind Fearon
- K: Revd Peter Grey, Revd Norma Johnson, Ms Sarah Moore, Revd Geoffrey Townsend, Mr Oliver Bruce, Mr Derek Estill, Mrs Jennifer Liddell, Miss Lynne Wigginton
- L: Revd Richard Bradley, Mrs Sheila Coop, Revd Janet Sutton, Mrs Sheila Brain, Mrs Kathleen Tyldsley, Mr James Wickens
- M: Revd Geoffrey Clarke, Revd Sally Thomas, Ms Marie Trubic, Mrs Kathryn Grand, Mr Keith Whiting, Mr David North

Synod III

- A: Revd William Burgess, Revd Timothy Jackson, Revd Sally Willett, Mrs Sheila Davies
- B: Revd Ruth Dillon, Revd Gary McGowan, Mr David Hickman
- C: Revd Dr John Bradbury, Revd Leslie Guthrie, Dr Berta Doodson, Dr Ben Makepeace
- D: Mr David Powell

Synod IV

- A: Revd David Coote, Revd Simon Swales, Mrs Judy Laws, Miss Christina Moffat
- B: Revd David Hudston, Revd Dr Bob Warwicker, Mr Rod Morrison, Mrs Fiona Smith
- C: Revd Angela Hughes, Mr Andrew Murison, Mrs Ruth Sheldrake
- D: Revd Mark Woodhouse, Revd Lynn Britten, Miss Audrey Swale, Mr Eryl Ward
- E: Revd Gillian Brown
- F: Revd John Filsak, Mr Alun Jones

Synod V

- A: Revd Dr Kay Cattell, Revd Peter Meek, Miss Alison Darby, Mr Thomas Hackett
- B: Revd Claire Downing, Mr Peter Downing, Mrs Irene Moore, Miss Avril Timson
- C: Miss Gillian Heald, Revd Christopher Ray, Mr Dennis Russell, Miss Catriona Wheeler
- D: Revd Derek Hopkins, Revd Derek Redfern, Mrs Jeanette Hopkins, Mrs Pat Redfern
- E: Revd Colin Bones, Revd Louise Gee, Mr Tim Dawson, Mr Ian Salmon
- F: Mrs Molly Reardon, Revd David Tatum, Mr Philip Timson

Synod VI

- A: Revd Timothy Lowe, Revd Marion Thomas, Revd Joan Winterbottom, Mr Geoffrey Harrison, Mr David Hood, Mrs Janet Hood
- B: Revd David Cassidy, Revd Jeffrey Hancocks, Revd Shirley Mountcastle, Mrs Brenda Cassidy
- C: Revd James Brown, Revd Norman Whitaker, Mrs Rosemary Allman, Mrs Jill Morris
- D: Revd Simon Helme, Mr Martin Clarke, Mr David Harvey
- E: Revd Christine Fowler, Revd Neil Riches, Revd Graham Sweeney, Mr Joseph Blackburn, Mr James Thomson
- F: Revd Graham Spicer, Mrs Margaret Marshall, Mrs M McIntosh

Synod VII

- A: Revd Charles Croll, Revd Bruce Waldron, Miss Gillian Hall, Mrs Sharn Waldron
- B: Revd Mark Ambrose, Revd Kenneth Forbes, Revd Samantha White, Mr Shannon Craig, Mr Joel Green, Ms Jeanette Wade
- C: Revd Jonathon Sermon, Revd Nigel Warner, Miss Alice Nicholls, Mrs Elizabeth Whitten
- D: Revd John Roche, Mrs Enid Gear, Miss Debbie Kingston, Revd David Lewis
- E: Revd Catherine Ball, Revd Murray George, Revd Duncan Goldie, Mr Alan Curtis, Mrs Faith Paulding, Mr Christopher Wright
- F: Mrs Wendy Cooper, Revd Andrew Hollins

Synod VIII

- A: Revd Martyn Neads, Revd Stuart Nixon, Mrs Maria Mills, Mrs Sylvia Warren
- B: Revd Glyn Millington, Ms Suzanne White
- C: Revd Nicholas Adlem, Revd Jennifer Kilgour, Mr Hugh Barlow, Mr Brian Knight
- D: Revd Vivian Henderson, Revd Timothy Richards, Mr George Faris, Mrs Brenda Jesse
- E: Revd Andrew Francis, Mr John Saunders, Mrs Lucy Gough, Mr Douglas Hempstock
- F: Revd Ronald Garner, Revd Kenneth Marsh, Revd Maurene O'Hagan, Mrs Anne Fletcher, Miss Sylvia Nutt
- G: Revd Robert Jones, Mrs Barbara Madge
- H: Revd Roy Fowler, Mrs Margaret Skyrme
- J: Revd John Rees, Mrs Peggy Gray

Synod IX

- A: Mrs Alison Dalton, Revd Clive Sutcliffe, Mrs Joyce Sutcliffe, Mrs Phyllis Williams*
- B: Revd Frank Cochrane, Revd Edward Symmons, Mrs Christine Hardwick
- C: Revd Eric Massey, Revd Peter Trow, Miss Janet Bousfield, Mr Joshua Norris
- D: Revd Phillip Jones, Revd Alison Toplas, Mrs Vivien Gerhold, Mr Gordon McCallum
- E: Revd Clare Callanan, Revd Fleur Houston, Revd Ruth Whitehead, Mr Colin Ferguson, Mr Kaihsu Tai, Mr Malcolm Townsend

Synod X

- A: Revd John Danso, Revd Jonathan Dean, Revd Dr Roger Scopes, Mrs Viv Barthram, Ms Val Nogueira, Ms Georgina Siriboe
- B: Revd Elizabeth Shaw, Revd David Varcoe, Miss Melisa Burrell, Mr Graham Hinton
- C: Revd Gwennyth Collins, Revd Bridget Powell, Mr David Eldridge, Mr Martin Powell
- D: Revd David Lawrence, Revd Martin Truscott, Revd Jane Wade, Mrs Amanda Hobbs, Mr Andrew Jack, Mrs Anne Lewitt
- E: Revd David Atkinson, Revd Hugh Graham, Mr Keith Berry, Mrs Eleanor Boateng, Ms Perry Reid
- F: Revd Jayne Bazeley, Revd Clare Davison, Mr Jim Laurie, Mr Matthew Prett

Synod XI

- A: Revd Suk In Lee, Revd Jenny Snashall, Professor David Cutler, Mr Chase Newton, Mr Clive Snashall, Mrs Cynthia Stock
- B: Revd Jane Rowell, Revd George Watt, Ms Grace Marriott
- C: Revd William Bowman, Revd Barry Carter, Revd Martyn Coe, Miss Elizabeth King, Mrs Marion Parfitt, Mr Mark Robinson
- D: Revd Peter Southcombe, Revd Alan Wharton, Miss Pamela Tolhurst, Miss Louisa Weeks
- E: Revd Samuel Cyuma, Mrs Veronique Cyuma, Mr Grant Gulczynski, Mr Martin Hayward
- F: Revd Roy Cole, Revd Philip Osborn, Mrs Christine Robertson, Mr David Walters
- G: Revd John Gordon, Revd David Littlejohns, Mrs Janet Davidson

Synod XII

- A: Revd Alexander Brown, Revd Kathleen Gartside, Mr Ray Brown, Mr Dave Gartside
- B: Mrs Rosie Buxton, Revd Samantha Caton, Revd Stuart Jackson, Mrs Diane Brain
- C: Revd Birgitta Johnson, Revd Shelagh Pollard, Mrs Eleri Cabbage, Mrs Jean Silvan Evans
- D: Revd Dr Neil Messer, Mrs Mary Jeremiah
- E: Revd Colin Foreman, Revd Nanette Lewis-Head, Ms Janet Drogan
- F: Revd Michael Hodgson, Mr Ian Ashton, Mr Alwyn Batley
- G: Revd Paul Floe

Synod XIII

- A: Revd John Bremner, Revd Susan Kirkbride, Ms Morag Donaldson, Dr Scott Spurlock
- B: Revd Kathryn Price, Mr Simon Peters
- C: Revd Craig Jesson, Revd Gordon Smith, Mrs Christine Ford, Mr Alexander Kirkpatrick
- D: Revd Stephen Brown, Revd Kristin Ofstad
- E: Revd Timothy Huc, Mrs Barbara Bruce

Greetings from the Moderator



Reception of Visitors and Assembly Members from Other Churches

Local Visitors were introduced by the Revd Peter Brain, Moderator, Yorkshire Synod:

- The Rt Revd Michael Lewis - Bishop of Middleton
- Bishop Doye Agama - Apostolic Church of Great Britain
- The Rt Revd David Gillett - Bishop of Bolton
- The Revd Andrew Funnell - NW Baptist Association
- The Revd John O'Reilly - RC Diocese of Shrewsbury

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

were introduced by the Revd Elizabeth Nash, Convenor of the Ecumenical Committee:

- Church of Scotland - Rt Revd Sheilagh Kesting
Revd Sheila Maxey
Revd Valerie Ott
- Presbyterian Church of Ireland - Rt Revd John & Mrs Christine Finlay
Revd John Brackenridge
- Presbyterian Church of Wales - Revd Dr John Tudno Williams
- The Methodist Church - Deacon Jane Middleton
- The Moravian Church - Revd David Howarth
- The Congregational Federation - Revd Christopher Damp
- The United Free Church of Scotland - Revd Stephen Matthews
- The Baptist Union of Gt Britain - Mrs Margaret Prisk
- Roman Catholic Bishops Conference - Dame Anne Doyle
- International Ministerial Council of Gt Britain - Rt Revd Onye Obika
- CYTUN - Mr Sion Rhys Evans
- CTBI - Revd Canon Bob Fyffe

They were greeted by the Moderator of General Assembly. The Rt Revd Sheilagh Kesting responded on their behalf.

Visitors and Members from Overseas were introduced by the Revd Elizabeth Nash:

- The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands - Mrs Rose Wedderburn
- The Uniting Church in Australia - Revd Rob & Mrs Gill Brown
- The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea - Revd Yoon Kil-Soo,
Revd Lee, Suk In
- The Protestant Church of the Palatinate (EKP) - Revd Martin Henninger
- Council for World Mission - Ms Nneoma Chima
- The Reformed Church of France - Revd Richard Taufer
- The Mission Covenant Church, Sweden - Revd Ola Bojestig
- The Community of Protestant Churches in Europe - Revd Jan-Gerd Heetderks

Receiving Mission Partners:

- The Ghanaian Minister in London - Revd Godwin Odonkor
- The Chaplain to Taiwanese students, Manchester - Revd Shou-Hui Chung and
Dr Wei-Hsiang Lin

The following were also introduced:

- The Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar - Revd Jean Olivier Rakotomalala
- The United Church of Zambia - Revd Charles Lungu

The Revd Jan-Gerd Heetderks was invited to respond on behalf of the above.

The Revd Peter Colwell, convener of the Inter Faith Relations committee introduced the following local guests:
Councillor Afzal Khan, the Muslim community and former Lord Mayor of Manchester
Mr A K Sinha – Geeta Bhavan Hindu Temple

The Moderator invited Councillor Khan to give a greeting to Assembly.

The Chaplain, the Revd Lucy Brierley closed with prayer.



Councillor Afzal Khan greets Assembly



The main hall

Second Session

The Moderator, the Revd Prof Stephen Orchard



“Communion offering from General Assembly will go to the Church of North India children’s projects”

The Moderator welcomed those who were attending the Assembly for the first time, and introduced the leaders of the Assembly Bible studies. He noted that the communion offering from General Assembly would go to the Church of North India children’s projects.

The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, Mr William McVey, presented the Order of Business, and offered guidance on the conduct of the Assembly.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING DEPUTY CLERK

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of the Resolution:

RESOLUTION 52

Appointment of Acting Deputy Clerk

General Assembly resolves to appoint the Revd Michael Hopkins as acting Deputy Clerk for this session of the Assembly.

The Resolution was carried.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The report of the Nominations Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Malcolm Hanson.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 28:

RESOLUTION 28

Nominations

General Assembly appoints committees and representatives of the Church as set out on pages 99–109 of the Book of Reports subject to additions and corrections contained in the Supplementary report before Assembly.

ASSEMBLY BOARDS, 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 2006 are indicated by one asterisk (*), two asterisks (**) denotes those whom Assembly 2007 is invited to appoint for the first time (#) indicates a Convener Elect who will become Convener in 2008, the symbol † denotes someone who has been invited to extend his/her period of service.
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]

Convener-Elect: # Dr David Robinson ** [2012]

Secretary: Office & Personnel Manager

Synod Representative for forthcoming Assembly

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

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

3.1.1 TELLERS AT ASSEMBLY 2008 FOR THE ELECTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MODERATOR(S)

Dr Graham Campling [Convener], Dr Jim Merrilees, Revd John Durrell**

3.2 CHURCH and SOCIETY

Convener: Mr Simon Loveitt [2010]

Secretary: Secretary for Church and Society

Revd David Pickering [2009]

Revd Margaret Tait [2009]

Mrs Susan Clarke [2010]

Revd Michael Jagessar [2010]

Mr Themba Moyo [2010]

Mrs Judith Garthwaite ** [2011]

Mr Blair Kessler ** [2011]

3.2.1 CHURCH AND SOCIETY – Commitment for Life Sub-Committee

Convener: Mrs Melanie Frew

3.3 COMMUNICATIONS and EDITORIAL

Convener: Revd Kirsty Thorpe [2011]

Secretary: Secretary for Communications

Revd Paul Snell [2008]

Revd Janet Sutton [2008]

Ms Julia Wills [2008]

Mrs Valerie Jenkins [2009]

Ms Catherine Lewis-Smith [2009]

Mr Ron Sweeney [2009]

Mr Richard Lathaen [2009]

Mrs Esther Searle ** [2011]

Vacancy [2011]

3.4 DOCTRINE, PRAYER and WORSHIP

Convener: Revd Dr Susan Durber [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Mrs Chris Eddowes [2008]

Revd Jason McCullagh [2008]

Revd Peter Trow [2008]

Revd Gordon Smith [2009]

Miss Suzanne McDonald [2009]

Revd Lance Stone ** [2011]

Ms Christine Chalstrey ** [2011]

Revd Ruth Dillon ** [2011]

Revd Ruth Crofton ** [2011]

Mr Mark Argent ** [2011]

Mr Malcolm Townsend ** [2011]

3.5 ECUMENICAL

Convener: Revd Elizabeth Nash [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Revd Graham Maskery [2009]

Revd Anthony Howells [2009]

Revd Sarah Moore [2010]

Mr David Barber [2010]

Miss Isobel Simmons** [2011]

Mrs Margaret Gateley ** [2011]

Revd Stuart Jackson representing the National Synod of Wales

Revd Mary Buchanan representing the National Synod of Scotland

3.5.1 ECUMENICAL – International Exchange Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Linda Elliott [2011]

Secretary: Secretary for International Relations

Mrs Sylvia Jackson [2009]

Revd Nigel Uden [2010]

Dr Harry Potter [2010]

Dr Pamela Cressey [2010]

Revd Philip Gray ** [2011]

Mrs Angela Wickens ** [2011]

3.6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Convener: Ms Morag McLintock [2010]

Secretary: Revd Derek Hopkins [2008]

Dr Ruth Shepherd [2008]

Revd Kate Gartside [2009]

Revd John Macaulay [2010]

Revd Pam Ward [2010]

Mr Jim Hurst [2010]

Vacancy [2011]

3.7 FINANCE

Convener: The Treasurer

Chief Finance Officer: Mr Andrew Grimwade

Mr Errol Martin [2008]

Mr Graham Law [2008]

Revd Dick Gray [2009]

Mr Graham Morris [2009]

Mr John Kidd [2009]

Revd Kathryn Taylor [2010]

Mrs Jane Humphreys ** [2011]

Mr Brian Hosier ** [2011]

Chairman of the Trustees

3.8 INTER-FAITH RELATIONS

Convener: Revd Peter Colwell [2011]

Secretary: Mrs Jean Potter [2008]

Dr Iain Frew [2008]

Revd Helen Pollard [2008]

Mr David Jonathan [2009]

Revd Tim Clarke [2010]

3.9 LIFE and WITNESS

Convener: Revd Peter Ball [2010]

Secretary: Secretary for Life and Witness

Mrs Sheila Brain † [2008]

Mr Colin Ferguson † [2011] Revd Ian Fosten † [2011]

Revd Kate Gray [2008]

Mr Emmanuel Nkusi [2008] Revd Simon Walkling [2009]

Mr Patrick Smyth [2009]

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 † [2008]

Mrs Susan Wilkinson † [2008]

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 the Windermere Centre

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

Revd Terry Oakley [2008]

Revd Alan Evans [2009]

Mrs Joanna Morling [2009]

Dr Roger Allen [2010]

Mrs Helen Renner ** [2011]

Revd Ruth Whitehead ** [2011]

Convener of Assessment Board

3.10.1 MINISTRIES – Accreditation Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Gwennnyth Collins [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

Revd Howard Sharp [2009]

Mr Simon Rowntree [2009] Mr Rod Morrison [2009]

Mrs Pat Evans [2010]

Revd Sue Henderson ** [2011]

3.10.2 MINISTRIES – CRCW Programme Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Robert Day [2008]

#Revd Paul Whittle ** [2012]

Secretaries: The CRCW Development Workers

Revd Tracey Lewis [2008]

Mrs Maureen Thompson [2009]

Mrs Shirley Rawnsley [2010]

Revd Daphne Lloyd [2010]

Revd Helen Pope ** [2011]

Vacancy

3.10.3 MINISTRIES – Leadership in Worship Sub Committee

Convener and Assembly Lay Preaching Advocate: Mrs Jan Harper ** [2011]

Mr Edward Strachan ** [2011]

Revd Gwynfor Evans ** [2011]

Mr Alan Cotgreave ** [2011]

3.10.4 MINISTRIES – Maintenance of Ministry Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Geoffrey Roper [2009]

Secretary: Mr David Taylor [2010]

Mr David Hayden [2008]

Mr Brian Knight [2010]

Revd Kenneth Summers [2010]

Mrs Jane Mackerness ** [2011]

The Treasurer

Convener of Pensions Executive

3.10.5 MINISTRIES – Retired Ministers Housing - Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd David Bedford [2010]

Secretary: Secretary Retired Ministers Housing Society Ltd

Mrs Elizabeth 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 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 Wilfred Bahadur, Revd Janet Adamson, Revd Siân Collins,

Mrs Wendy Smith

Retiring 2012

Mr Geoffrey Harrison **, Mr James Horton **, Mrs Margaret Jenkins **,

Revd Janet Maxwell **, Revd William Young **

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 Elizabeth Caswell [7], Revd Rosalind Harrison [8], Mr Peter Pay [9], Mr Adrian West [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 Alasdair Pratt [2011]

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary

Revd Meryl Court [2008]

Mrs Margaret Carrick Smith [2009]

Mrs Delyth Rees [2011]

Revd Adrian Bulley ** [2011]

[ex officio: The Treasurer The General Secretary...The Secretary for Welfare]

3.13 RACIAL JUSTICE and MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY

Convener: Revd Carla Grosch-Miller [2011]

Secretary: Secretary for Racial Justice

Revd Helga Cornell [2008]

Mrs Pat Poinen [2009]

Revd Rosemary Tusting [2009]

Dr Ben Makepeace [2010]

Mrs Heather Al-Jawad ** [2011]

Revd Naison Hove ** [2011]

3.14 EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Convener: Professor Malcolm Johnson [2011]

Secretary: The Secretary for Education and Learning

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]

Mrs Carol Durose ** [2011]

Revd Dr Robert Pope ** [2011]

3.15 YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

Convener: Revd Neil Thorogood [2010]

Secretary: Revd Steven Faber [2008]

Revd Timothy Meachin [2008]

Revd Siân Collins [2009]

Revd Robert Weston [2009]

Miss Rosemary Simmons [2009]

Ms Ruth Hezlett [2009]

Mrs Rita Griffiths [2009]

Revd Heather Whyte [2010]

Mrs Anthea Coates ** [2011] Mr Christopher Gill ** [2011]

FURY Chair

FURY Council Member

3.15.1 PILOTS MANAGEMENT Sub Committee

Convener: Revd David Downing ** [2011]

Member: Mrs Denise Beckley [2010]

[Other members of the sub-committee are appointed by the Youth and Children's Work Committee. The Congregational Federation also has two representatives.]

3.16 DISCIPLINARY PROCESS – Commission Panel

Convener: Mrs Helen Brown [2009]

Deputy Convener: 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 James Brown
Revd Kenneth Chippindale †	Revd Meryl Court	Mr Derek Craig
Miss Kathleen Cross	Revd Alison Davis †	Revd John Du Bois †
Mr David Eldridge	Revd Joan Grindrod-Helmn †	Mr Peter Jolly
Mrs Barbara Lancaster	Miss Elizabeth Lawson QC †	Revd Nanette Lewis-Head
Dr Fiona Liddell	Revd Julian Macro †	Mrs Barbara Madge
Revd Nicholas Mark	Mrs Jean McAslan	Dr James Merrilees
Mr Geoffrey Milnes	Revd David Pattie	Revd Sandra Pickard
Revd Shelagh Pollard	Mr Nicholas Pye †	Mr Neil Robinson
Mrs Pamela Sharp	Revd Raymond Singh †	Mr Alan Small
Mr Patrick Smyth	Revd Yvonne Stone	Revd Prof David Thompson †
Mrs Lynne Upsdell	Ms Elizabeth Whitten	Revd Joan Winterbottom
Mr Kenneth Woods	<i>Vacancy</i>	

Revd Colin Offor ** [2012]

Mr David Westwood ** [2012]

Revd Nicholas Adlem ** [2012]

Miss Judith Haughton ** [2012]

Mrs Jessica Hannen ** [2012]

Revd Carolyn Smyth ** [2012]

Revd Dr Kay Cattell ** [2012]

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 Synod Moderators and three representatives from each Synod together with the Conveners of Assembly Committees.

Northern Synod	Revd John Durell, Miss Elaine Colechin, Mr Michael Louis
North Western Synod	Miss Kathleen Cross, Revd Alan Wickens, Revd Rachel Poolman
Mersey Synod	Revd Jennifer Morgan, Mr Donald Swift, (<i>Vacancy</i>)
Yorkshire Synod	Mrs Val Morrison, Revd Pauline Loosemore, Mr Roderick Garthwaite
East Midlands Synod	Mrs Irene Wren, Mrs Margaret Gateley, Revd Jane Campbell
West Midlands Synod	Revd Anthony Howells, Mr Bill Robson, Mrs Adella Pritchard
Eastern Synod	Mr Michael Barnes, Mrs Joan Turner, Revd Cecil White
South Western Synod	Revd Rosalind Harrison, Mrs Janet Gray, Revd Richard Pope
Wessex Synod	Revd Ruth Whitehead, Mr Peter Pay, Revd Clifford Bembridge
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: (*To be appointed from and by the Trustees*)

Secretary: (*To be appointed by the Trustees*)

Trustees:

Miss Joyce Bain ** [2010]	Mr Ernest Gudgeon [2010]	Dr Brian Woodhall ** [2010]
Mr John Ellis [2011]	Mrs Val Morrison ** [2012]	Dr Augur Pearce ** [2012]
Mr Alan Small [2012]	Revd Dr David Thompson [2012]	Miss Rachel Greening ** [2014]
Dr David Robinson ** [2014]		Mr John Woodman ** [2014]
Co-opted Trustee: Revd Michael J Davies ** [2010]		
[<i>ex officio</i> : Moderator of General Assembly **, General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary **]		

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 Michael Davies [2008]

Revd Graham Spicer [2009]

Revd Ivor Rees [2011]

Vacancy [2012]

[*ex officio*

Honorary Treasurer

Convener Investment Committee

Convener MoM Sub-Committee

Convener 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

Mr Hartley Oldham

Mr Graham Stacy

Dr John Thompson

Dr Elaine Kaye

Dr Brian Woodhall

Vacancy

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
General Synod of Church of England
Methodist Conference
Congregational Federation
General Assembly of Church of Scotland [note 5]

Revd Elizabeth Caswell

Revd Graham Maskery

Revd Jason Askew

Revd Stuart Jackson

Revd Elizabeth Caswell,

Revd Neil Thorogood,

Revd Mary Buchanan

Revd Mitchell Bunting

Revd John Humphreys

Revd Mary Buchanan

To be decided

Revd Stuart Jackson

Revd Keith Jones

Revd Stuart Jackson

Revd David Bunney

United Free Church of Scotland [note 5]

Scottish Episcopal Church [note 5]

Methodist Church in Scotland [note 5]

Baptist Union of Scotland [note 5]

Presbyterian Church of Wales [note 5]

Union of Welsh Independents [note 5]

Church in Wales Governing Board [note 5]

Provincial Synod of the Moravian Church

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 (CWM) Assembly 2006

Revd David Coleman, Mrs Ann Shillaker, Ms Catherine Lewis-Smith (CWM Trustee), Secretary for International Relations

7.1.1 CWM European Region Meeting 2005 - 2008

Revd David Coleman, Mrs Ann Shillaker, Ms Catherine Lewis-Smith, Secretary for International Relations, Deputy General Secretary (CWM Europe Trustee)

7.2 World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) General Council

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

7.3 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) Church Leaders' Meeting

General Secretary

7.3.1 CTBI – Senior Representatives' Forum

General Secretary, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

7.3.2 CTBI – Environmental Issues Network

Revd David Coaker, Revd Dr David Pickering

7.3.3 CTBI – Church and Society Forum

Mr Stuart Dew, Mr Simon Loveitt

7.3.4 CTBI – Churches' Criminal Justice Forum

Mrs Wilma Frew

7.4 Churches Together in England (CTE) – Forum 2006

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

7.4.1 CTE – Enabling Group

Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

7.4.2 CTE – Coordinating Group for Local Unity

Revd Terry Oakley, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

7.4.3 CTE – Churches Together for Healing

Revd Delia Bond, Revd Deborah McVey

7.4.4 CTE – Women's Coordinating Group

Revd Samantha White

7.4.5 CTE – Churches' Committee on Funerals and Crematoria

Revd Delia Bond, Revd Sally Thomas

7.4.6 CTE – Free Churches' Education Committee

Mr Graham Handscomb, Mrs Gillian Kingston

7.4.7 CTE – Churches' Joint Education Policy Committee

Mr Graham Handscomb

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

Revd John Humphreys, Revd Mary Buchanan

7.6 National Sponsoring Body for Scotland [see note 5]

Revd John Humphreys, Revd Mary Buchanan

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

Revd Peter Noble

7.7.1 Commission of Covenanted Churches [see note 5]

Revd Peter Noble, Revd Stuart Jackson, Mrs Ann Shillaker

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

Revd Roberta Rominger, Revd Barbara Bennett, Revd Kay Alberg, Miss Emma Pugh, Revd Peter Rand (co-opted), Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

8.2 Roman Catholic – United Reformed Church Bilateral Dialogue

Revd Prof David Thompson, Revd Dr John Bradbury, Revd Dr Sarah Hall, Mrs Ann Shillaker, Mr Malcolm Townsend, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

8.3 Church of England – United Reformed Church Bilateral Dialogue (God's Reign and our Unity)

Revd Elizabeth Welch, Revd Dr David Peel, Secretary for Ecumenical Relations

8.4 Anglican/Moravian Contact Groups

Revd David Tatem

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

Revd John Humphreys, Revd Mary Buchanan, Revd John Young

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 Education and Learning Committee
	Secretary for Education and Learning

9.2 New College London

Foundation Trustees:
Mr Graham Stacy † [2011]
Mr Philip Wade † [2011]
alternate Mr Colin Howard [2008]
Mr John Smethers [2009]

9.3 Northern College

	Secretary for Education and Learning [2009]
	Revd David Jenkins [2009]
	Mr Bill McLaughlin [2009]
	Miss Margaret Atkinson [2011]
	Mrs Helen Brown [2011]
	Revd Dr Robert Pope [2011]
Luther King House Educational Trust	Secretary for Education and Learning

9.4 Westminster College: Board of Governors

Convener: Revd Prof David Thompson [2008]
 Clerk: Revd Cecil White
 # Professor Sir Anthony Bottoms ** [2014]
 Revd Craig Muir [2009]
 Mr John Kidd [2009]
 Mr Brian Long [2010]
 Revd Fleur Houston [2010]
 Dr Jean Stevenson ** [2013]
 Secretary for Education and Learning

9.4.1 Cheshunt Foundation

Mr David Butler †
 (Vacancy)

9.4.2 Cambridge Theological Federation

Convener Westminster College Governors

9.5 Homerton College Trustees

Lady Sally Williams † [2010]
 Revd Prof 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 Education and Learning in attendance

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

10.1 Caterham School

Revd Nigel Uden † [2011]

10.2 Eltham College

Revd Terry Sparks ** [2011]

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]
 Revd David Cuckson † [2010]

10.5 Silcoates School,

Prof Clyde Binfield † [2011]
 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 Martin Ambler ** [2011]

10.8 Bishops Stortford College

Mr Anthony Trigg [2011]

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

The General Secretary
 Mr Hartley Oldham

Congregational Fund Board

Revd Margaret Taylor
 Revd Eric Allen
 Mr Anthony Bayley † [2011]
 Revd David Helyar † [2011]
 Revd Geoffrey Roper ** [2011]

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,
 Revd Kirsty Thorpe
 Revd Prof David Thompson
 Dr David Robinson ** [2011]

Wharton Trust

Dr John Thompson [2009]

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 26:

RESOLUTION 26

Appointment of the Moderator for Yorkshire Synod

General Assembly appoints the Revd Kevin Watson to serve as Moderator of the Yorkshire Synod for a period of seven years from 1 March 2008 until 31 January 2015, subject to review before the end of that period.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 27:

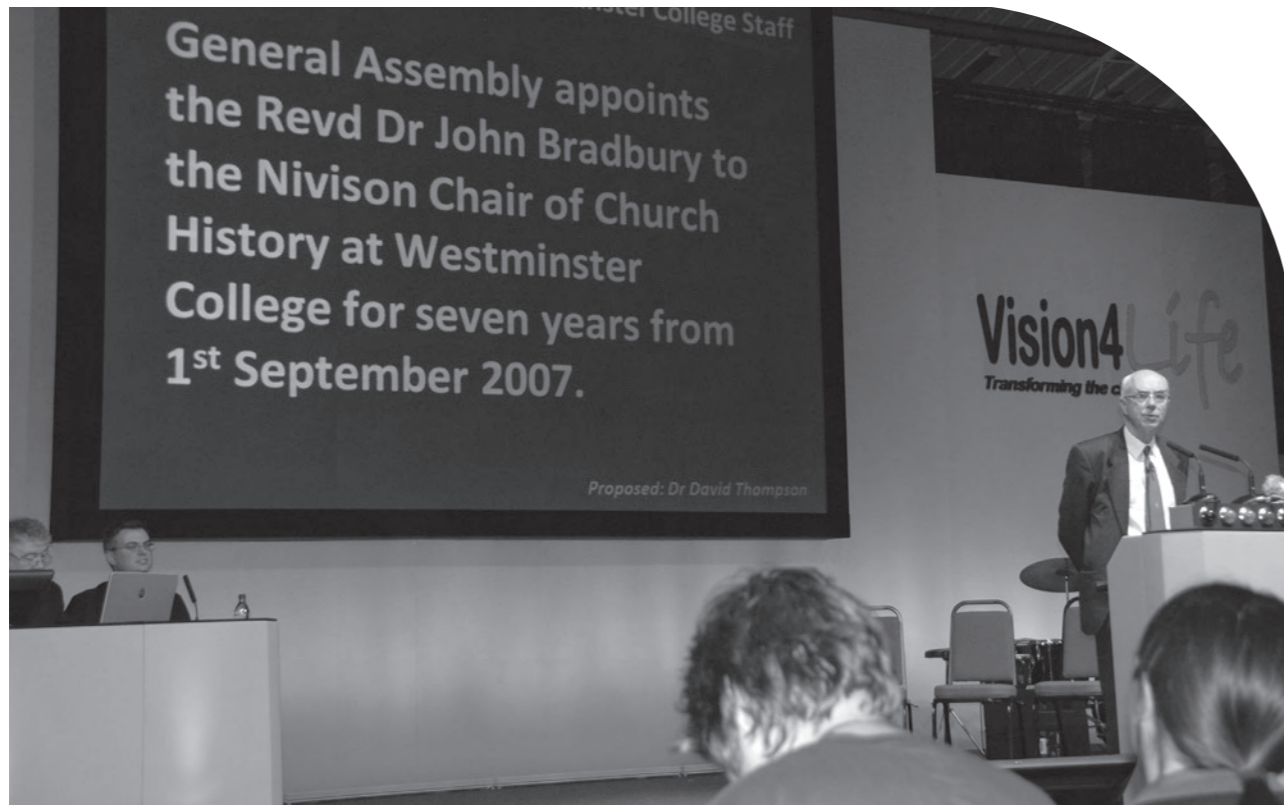
RESOLUTION 27

Appointment of the Moderator for North Western Synod

General Assembly appoints the Revd Richard Church to serve as Moderator of the North Western Synod for a period of seven years from 1 September 2007 until 31 August 2014, subject to review before the end of that period.

The Resolution was carried.

The Moderator welcomed the Revd Richard Church, the Revd Kevin Watson, the Revd Martin Hazell, Director of Communications, and the Revd Dr Susan Durber, Principal of Westminster College.



The Revd Prof David Thompson moved adoption of Resolution 53. Seconded by the Revd John Humphreys:

RESOLUTION 53

Westminster College

General Assembly appoints the Revd Dr John Bradbury to the Nivison Chair of Church History at Westminster College for seven years from 1 September 2007.

The Resolution was carried.

The Moderator welcomed Dr Bradbury.

The Revd Prof David Thompson took the Chair.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Eric Chilton, presented the report of the Finance Committee.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 29:

RESOLUTION 29

Trustees' Report and Annual Accounts

General Assembly receives the Trustees' Report and adopts the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2006.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 30:

RESOLUTION 30

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.

Mr Chilton responded to a question about Pricewaterhouse Coopers' relationship with firms involved in practices the United Reformed Church might regard as unethical.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 31:

RESOLUTION 31

The giving of the members of the Church to central funds

General Assembly gratefully acknowledges the giving of the churches in 2006 to the Ministry and Mission Fund and the work of the local church, district and synod treasurers.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 22:

RESOLUTION 22

Revised Arrangements for nominating directors of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund (Report page 49 para 5.7)

General Assembly agrees the revised arrangements for nominating directors of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund.

In response to a question from the Revd Malcolm Hanson, Mr Chilton confirmed that four directors of the Pension Fund are directly appointed by the fund's members, and that the revised arrangements do not affect this.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 32:

**Resolution 32 Revised remit of the Finance Committee
(Report page 49 para 5.8 and Document 7 on page 115)**

General Assembly agrees the revised remit for the Finance Committee (as set out in Document 7).

The Assembly Clerk moved an amendment to Resolution 32:

General Assembly agrees to revise the remit of the Finance Committee to read:

RESOLUTION 32 Revised remit of the Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is responsible for the general financial oversight of funds administered for the benefit of the United Reformed Church, its long-term financial planning, and the preparation and control of its budget under the authority of Mission Council and the Trustees.

The Committee will ensure the proper procedures are in place for the maintenance of accounting records, controlling and monitoring the budgetary process, and the preparation of financial statements in compliance with applicable United Kingdom law and accounting standards. To this end the Committee should expect to liaise with auditors at least once per annum.

The Committee may take such decisions with regard to the finances of the Church as are necessary within the policies set by General Assembly.

The proposer accepted the amendment.

Mr Gordon Eccles, proposed an amendment that the words 'should expect to' be deleted and replaced with 'must'. Seconded by Mrs Faith Paulding.

The amendment fell.

The Resolution was carried.
Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 23:

RESOLUTION 23 Governing Document

General Assembly adopts the Governing Document for the constitution of the body to take responsibility for and be accountable to the temporal authorities for its religious and other charitable work.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Chilton moved adoption of Resolution 54:

RESOLUTION 54 Pension Fund Contributions

General Assembly, being representative of Local Churches, Synods and the whole Church re-affirms its commitment to the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund and undertakes to make arrangements to meet any deficits in the funding requirements which may arise from time to time.

The Resolution was carried.

On the recommendation of the Treasurer the Assembly agreed to send its thanks to the Revd John Waller for his work as Chair of Trustees. The Moderator presented a gift to Mr Eric Chilton and offered the Assembly's best wishes as he retires from the office of Honorary Treasurer.

CHURCH CLOSURES

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 8:

RESOLUTION 8 Church Closures

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

Baguley	North Western
Dalry	Scotland
Dartmouth Road, Paignton	South Western
Dodington	West Midlands
East Sheen, Wimbledon	Southern
Haughley	Eastern
Hodge Lea, Milton Keynes	East Midlands
The Rock Church Centre, Liverpool	Mersey
Ventnor	Wessex

The Resolution was carried.

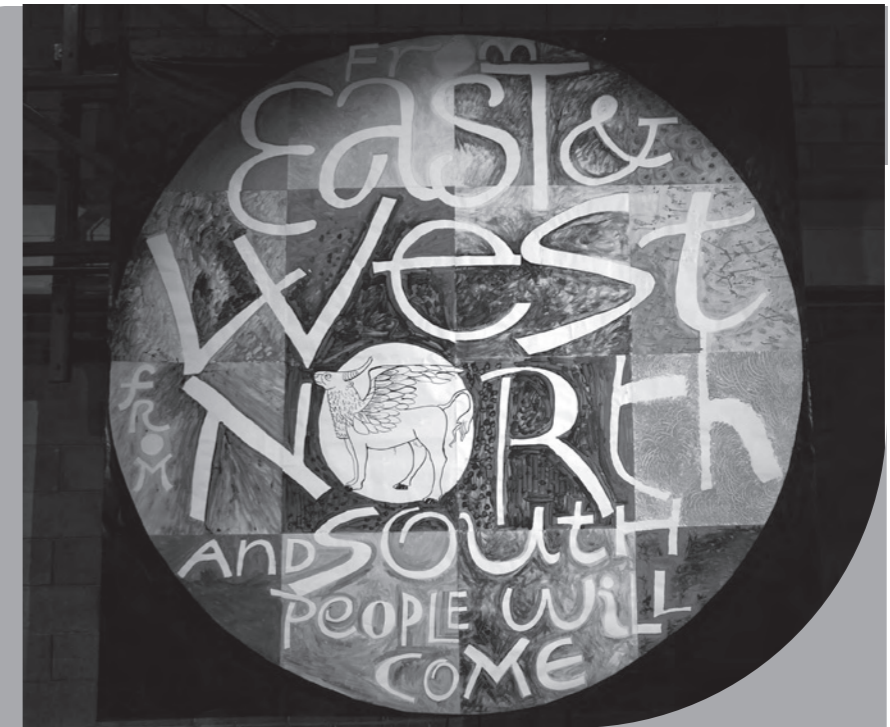
After worship led by the Chaplain, the Assembly adjourned.



The Chaplain, the Revd Lucy Brierley



Revd Suk In Lee being greeted



Preparing for a new day

“From east and west, north and south, people will come.”

● Opening worship, which included the Sacrament of Holy Communion, was conducted by the Chaplain; Bible study was led by the Revd Roberta Rominger.

The General Secretary led the Assembly in commemoration of those Ministers and Missionaries who had died since the last meeting of Assembly:

Ministers/CRCWs

- CHILDS, Malcolm Leslie Frederick
- CLEMENT, William Henry
- CLIFF, Norman Howard
- DALE, D H
- FORSYTH, John Gibson
- HARRINGTON, John F W
- HEWITT John Edward
- HISLOP, Joseph
- HOWE, Mary Patricia
- JONES, Gareth Trevor
- JORDAN, Albert Frederick
- KENRICK, Bruce
- KIRBY, Denis F
- KNEE, Doris
- MANNING, Norman
- MACLAGAN, Hamish
- MATHER, Joseph Edward
- MILNE, Andrew Cobb

NKUSI, Emmanuel
 PUGH, Leslie
 REES, Michael J
 SEYMOUR, Alan
 STANFIELD, Lorna
 STONE, Leslie
 WARD, Ronald Martin
 WIGGINS, Francis Ronald
 WILTON, Stanley

Missionaries

Dr Perla Greeves
 Mrs Eileen Jacob (nee Bending)
 Mrs Eileen Hagyard
 Mr Frank Hodgson
 Miss Mary Smith

PLATTS, Alice
 PURVIS, William
 SEXTON, Stanley
 SOUTHERN, Kenneth
 STOKES, W Ronald
 THRAVESTON-LAMBERT, Irene
 WEST, Robert Arthur Christopher
 WILLIAMS, William Dennis
 YEO, Samuel

Miss Kathleen Coltman
 Revd Stanley Wilton
 Revd Elizabeth McChesney Clark
 Dr Rodney Todman



Rosemary Buxton, newly ordained CRCW, being greeted by the Moderator

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 Assembly.

Each of those present was greeted in turn and received by the Assembly with applause.



Revd Andrew Birch being greeted by the Moderator

Northern Synod

Revd Yvonne Tracey

(Moderator: Revd Rowena Francis)

Blyth URC/ South East Northumberland Ecumenical Area

North Western Synod

Pat Oliver (CRCW)
 Revd Lindsey Cottam
 Revd Sheila Coop

(Moderator: Revd Peter Brain)

Tonge Moor URC
 Fylde and Wyre (in absentia)
 Oldham Town Centre Chaplaincy

Mersey Synod

Revd Richard Howard

(Moderator: Revd Howard Sharp)

Hoole and Rock Farndon (in absentia)

East Midlands Synod

Revd Gillian Heald
 Revd Louise Gee
 Revd Victor Webb

(Moderator: Revd Terry Oakley)

John Robinson Memorial Church, Gainsborough
 Burton Joyce, Nottingham
 West End United Church, Wolverton, Milton Keynes
 (in absentia)

Eastern Synod

Revd Samantha White
 Revd Jonathan Sermon
 Revd Murray George

(Moderator: Revd Elizabeth Caswell)

West Suffolk Group
 The Chelmsford Group and Church of Our Saviour
 Saffron Walden, Newport and Clavering

South Western Synod

Revd Timothy Richards
 Revd Vivien Henderson
 Revd Jennifer Kilgour
 Revd Martyn Needs

(Moderator: Revd David Grosch-Miller)

Mid-Somerset Group
 Hospital Chaplain and District Minister
 Tiverton Group
 Laura, Torpoint and Methodist Circuit

Southern Synod

Revd Bridget Banks
 Revd William Bowman
 Revd Andrew Birch
 Revd Suk In Lee
 Revd Jennifer Snashall

(Moderator: Revd Nigel Uden)

Christ Church Pound Hill and Trinity Ifield
 Emmanuel, West Wickham and Elmers End
 Clive Vale, St Luke and St Mark's
 Kingston and New Malden
 District Minister and Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner

Synod of Wales

Rosemary Buxton (CRCW)

(Moderator: Revd Peter Noble)

St David's URC/ Church in Wales LEP

Jubilee Ministers

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

Ordained 1937

Elfed JONES
Arthur MACARTHUR

Ordained 1947

Byron EVANS
Dorothy HAVERGAL-SHAW
John MACKELVIE
David VAN DAALEN

Ordained 1957

Brian BAILEY
Roy BONES
Vivian BUDDLE
Reginald BURTON
Donald CLARKE
John COHEN
Alan COLES
Robert CRAWFORD
Ivor DAVIES
Colin EVANS
Paul FULLER
James GARROW
Wilfred GEORGE
Philip GRIFFITHS
Kenneth HALL
Donald HILTON
Michael LAY
Cyril LUCRAFT
Ernest MARVIN
Frederick MOORE
Eric NELSON
Thomas NICHOLSON
Brian PAVITT
Thomas SHEPHERD
John SLOW
Alan SPIVEY
Kenneth STORK
John SUTCLIFFE
Hamish WALKER
Jean WILKINSON
Ambrose WRIGHT

Ordained 1967

Christopher BAKER
Anthony BRADSHAW
William DOWNIE
Norman EDSALL
Brian EYLES
Stephen HAINE
John HEYWOOD-THOMAS
Brian HOLROYD
David HUDSTON
David JENKINS
Eric KIRKMAN
Patrick LIDGETT
Thomas LOWE
Murdoch MACKENZIE
William MAHOOD
John MARSH
George McCLEAVE
John MORGANS
Derek NUTTALL
Michael O'HARA
Michael PLAYDON
Peter POULTER
Helen PULLIN
Brian RAWLING
Graham ROBSON
Geoffrey TOLLEY
Derek WALES
Kenneth WILKINSON

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

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 55, seconded by the Assembly Clerk:

RESOLUTION 55

Revd Arthur Macarthur

General Assembly sends greetings and best wishes to the Revd Arthur Leitch Macarthur, former Moderator, Clerk and General Secretary as he celebrates the seventieth anniversary of his ordination.

The Resolution was carried by acclamation.

The Moderator greeted the Revd Dr Walter Houston and wished him well on behalf of the General Assembly on his retirement from Mansfield College.

The Revd David Jenkins took the Chair.

MISSION COUNCIL (PART 1)

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell presented the report of Mission Council, and moved adoption of Resolution 56:

RESOLUTION 56

Re-appointment of General Secretary

General Assembly appoints the Revd Dr David Cornick to serve as General Secretary for a further period of seven years from 1 August 2008 until 31 July 2015.

The Resolution was carried by acclamation and the Assembly stood to greet Dr Cornick on his return to the Hall.

The Revd Elizabeth Nash moved adoption of resolution 50:

RESOLUTION 50

Consensus Decision Making

- 1) **General Assembly resolves that:**
 - a) **from the close of Assembly 2007 it shall adopt a system of decision making by consensus in addition to the process of making decisions by majority voting.**
 - b) **all discussions and decisions will begin by using consensus procedures except the election of the Moderator of the General Assembly and matters covered by section 3(1) & (2) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church which will be dealt with by majority voting.**
- 2) **General Assembly resolves to amend the Standing Orders of the General Assembly by adding a new section 2 and renumbering the current sections 2 to 12 as 3 to 13.**

Consensus Procedures for the Councils of the United Reformed Church

The purpose of council meetings of the United Reformed Church include:

- > worshipping, sharing, learning and building community together.
- > sharing in formal occasions and welcoming visitors.
- > overseeing the life and work of the church by
 - receiving the reports of committees and people who are accountable to the council.
 - taking decisions concerning the life and work of the United Reformed Church such as
 - deciding priorities
 - planning work to be done, changed or not done,
 - considering issues and channelling them to the other councils of the church,
- > being responsible for the financial and trust life of the church.

Further details of the functions of the councils of the church are found in the Manual.

The process of consensus:

Consensus means a decision of the council reached unanimously, or where a small minority of members of the council is willing to accept a proposal that is not their first preference.

Agreement means a decision of the council where, after careful consideration of the options, a small number is unable to accept the majority opinion but agree to stand aside so that the matter may be resolved.

- 1) At each stage of the process the moderator will clarify the nature of the session, that is whether it is for information, discussion or decision making.
- 2) Worship is a vital element in the meeting of every council of the church.
- 3) Community building is important to help the process of consensus to work.
- 4) General Sessions include ceremonial occasions, formal addresses and opening and closing ceremonies etc.
- 5) The Information Session:
This session aims to inform the council on the issue to be considered. A range of options may be presented to the council by different people who can speak in favour of their option. Those presenting issues, reports or proposals may speak for no more than five minutes unless the council agrees to an extension of time. Members of the council are then free to ask questions on the issue or seek for clarification or further information.
- 6) The Discussion Session:
This is the opportunity for discussion of various viewpoints and vigorous debate on different opinions. Speakers may speak for no more than three minutes. All those present may contribute.
- 7) The methods used may include prayer, buzz groups, group discussions, speeches to the whole council, time for thinking during a break etc. The use of coloured cards is very helpful at this stage. In particular the moderator should ensure that those who have different backgrounds or who disagree or who are unsure are given space to contribute to the debate, as well as those who are enthusiastic.
- 8) **The quality of discussion is significantly improved if the council meets around tables so that small group discussion can happen quickly and easily.**
- 9) As the discussion session proceeds possible ways forward for the church are developed until a specific proposal is reached.
- 10) The Decision Session:
Only those council members present may contribute to this session, they may speak for no more than three minutes.

- 11) Discussion continues with speakers contributing to the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal. At all times, speakers are encouraged to suggest a way forward for the council, rather than merely speaking with passion for a pre-determined view. Minor changes of wording can be agreed as the discussion proceeds. It is important to hear from those **indicating disquiet or disapproval as well as those who are enthusiastic.**
- 12) The proposal should be displayed throughout the discussion in such a way that all can see the text and any progressively agreed changes to it.
- 13) If there is a major new insight expressed, then it may be appropriate to move back into a discussion session.
- 14) After summing up where the assembly seems to be heading, the moderator checks whether the assembly is nearing consensus using one or more **questions such as the following:**
What is your response to this proposal? (inviting a show of indicator cards)
 - i) Do you believe we have consensus in support of this proposal?
 - ii) Do you believe we have consensus not to support this proposal?
 - iii) If there is strong but not unanimous support:
 - 1) Who supports the proposal?
 - 2) **Who does not support the proposal as your first option, but is prepared to accept it? Are you prepared to have the issue declared resolved by consensus?**
 - 3) Who is not prepared to accept the proposal?
 - a) After further discussion accept that they have been heard and agree to live with the outcome. Are you prepared to have the issue declared resolved by agreement? If so they may choose to record their dissent.
 - 4) Who is not prepared to accept the proposal? Look for further possibilities including:
 - i) adjourning the discussion to another time or place perhaps with more work before reconsideration
 - ii) ask the Moderator to continue to work on the issue with relevant people until the next Assembly
 - iii) refer the issue to another council or group to deal with
 - iv) decide the issue is unnecessary/inappropriate to continue dealing with
 - v) declare that there are diverse views which Christians may hold with equal integrity.
 - 5) Only if the issue is urgent move to majority decision.

The Moderator

The role of the moderator is very important.

The Moderator:

- assists the assembly to discern the will of God as far as possible
- is alert to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as members contribute
- **pauses for prayer or buzz group reflection as appropriate**
- encourages trust and integrity in contributions
- ensures care and support for those whose honesty or minority voice makes them vulnerable
- invites members to respond to speeches showing indicator cards, and **reflects the mood of the meeting as it becomes apparent**
- **suggests or encourages creative modifications of a proposal, picking up insights expressed**
- summarises discussion from time to time to assist in focusing the discussion.

The Council and Moderator may be assisted by a facilitation group. This will be appointed at the beginning of each Assembly by the Assembly. It will:

- enable group work, collate responses from groups and report back to the council
- help and support the Moderator
- be responsible for the display of the text under discussion.

Coloured Cards

Coloured cards are not essential in consensus decision making – but they are helpful.

Each member is given two cards:

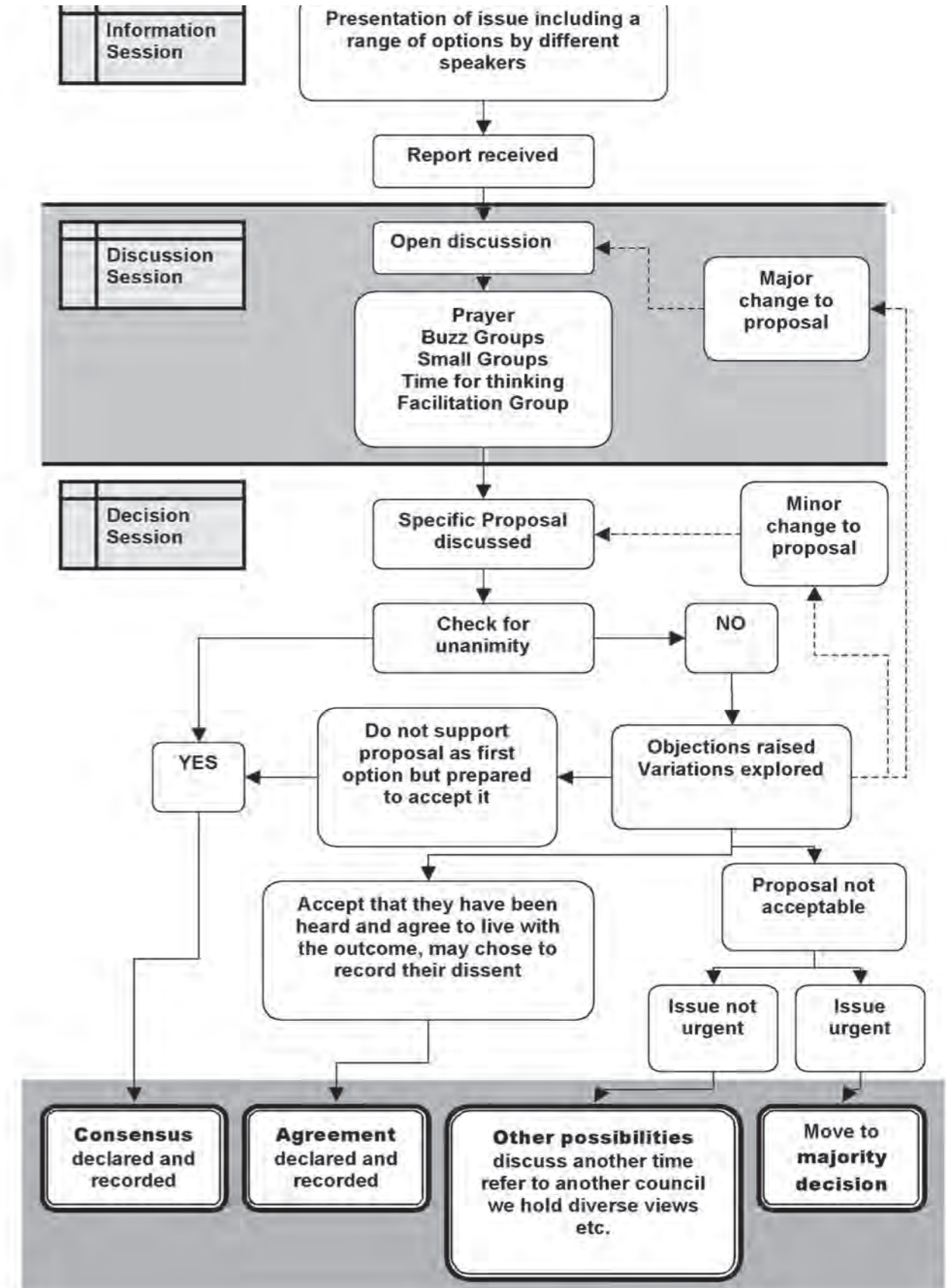
1. Orange – held at the end of a speech and so that the Moderator can see, indicates warmth towards a point of view, or approval of a proposal.
2. Blue – held at the end of a speech and so that the Moderator can see, indicates coolness about what has been heard or disapproval of a proposal.
3. Cards held crossed indicate to the Moderator it’s time to move on to the next subject.

Cards should be shown when the Moderator asks for them and so that the Moderator can see them. They indicate response to what has just been said. They help the Moderator to gauge the strength of feeling for various ideas, and to invite speeches from those who are unsure or cool towards the proposal.

Changes of Order

Changes of order may be raised by any member of Assembly at any time during the meeting and must refer to the proceedings of the council. The Moderator asks the member to state their change of order. The Moderator rules on it immediately, or asks for a decision by the Assembly via a simple majority vote. Changes of order include:

1. Out of order – the speaker is digressing from the matter being discussed.
2. Closed session – that the matter in hand is sensitive and should be conducted in private. This is voted on immediately without discussion. It can be raised more than once during a discussion. If it is agreed, all those who are not members of the council must leave. Members must treat the subsequent discussion in the strictest confidence and must not divulge its content or process to non-members.
3. Adjournment of the discussion – this is voted on immediately without further discussion. It can be proposed more than once in a discussion. It cannot be brought by a person who has already spoken. When the discussion is resumed the person whose speech was interrupted has the right to speak first.
4. Personal explanation – A member feeling that some material part of their former speech has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may ask to make a personal explanation.
5. Objection – A member may raise objection if the remarks of a speaker are deemed offensive or derogatory.



3) Since the rules of procedure 1.3 state that “standing orders ... shall apply to all meetings of the Assembly and, in so far as they are applicable, to meetings of synods ... and their committees”, General Assembly encourages Mission Council, Assembly Committees, Synods and their committees to use the consensus procedures.

The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard resumed the Chair.

Mrs Nash responded to questions regarding the use of coloured cards, and the use of consensus decision-making in financial matters, noting that coloured cards should be used only when the Moderator calls for them.

The Resolution was carried.

● SYNOD PRESENTATION

The East Midlands Synod made its presentation.

● SYNOD MODERATORS

The Revd Peter Brain presented the report of the Synod Moderators.

The Moderator greeted the Revds Arnold Harrison and Peter Brain and wished them well in their retirement.

● POST MORATORIUM TASK GROUP

The Revd Malcolm Hanson presented the report of the post-moratorium Task Group and responded to a number of questions and comments.

The Assembly Clerk presented the minutes of Saturday 7th July, session 1 and 2. The Assembly approved the minutes.

The Assembly adjourned.

Post-moratorium task group



Post-moratorium task group



“There are so many things to talk about but it is right that we should talk about these things”

Children’s Assembly quotation

● POST MORATORIUM TASK GROUP REPORT

Prior to returning in plenary session, the Assembly met in small groups to discuss the report of the post-moratorium task group.

● CHILDREN’S ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly received an audio-visual report from the Children’s Assembly.

● POST-MORATORIUM TASK GROUP

The Legal Adviser outlined some of the legal implications of decisions on human sexuality, with reference to anti-discrimination law.

The Revd Malcolm Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 42:

RESOLUTION 42

Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality

General Assembly welcomes and accepts Mission Council's guidance concerning the ending of the moratorium on policy decisions on matters of human sexuality.

Resolution 42 was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 43:

RESOLUTION 43

Human sexuality

General Assembly agrees to the wording of the Commitment on Human Sexuality.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 44:

RESOLUTION 44

Human sexuality

General Assembly adopts the Commitment on Human Sexuality on behalf of the church.

After some debate, the Resolution was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 45:

RESOLUTION 45

Human sexuality

General Assembly calls for further detailed discussions on aspects of human sexuality to be initiated in the light of the Catch the Vision process, with guidance from Mission Council and in the spirit of the Commitment.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 46:

Resolution 46

Human sexuality

Acknowledging the value of earlier work on human sexuality, and recognising that there has been some confusion about the implications of the moratorium, General Assembly regrets that the extent of "reflection, prayer and sharing" has been limited over the past seven years and encourages the continuing use of that earlier material.

An amendment was proposed by Mr William Robson, seconded by Mrs Faith Paulding:

RESOLUTION 46

Human sexuality

Acknowledging the value of earlier work on human sexuality, and recognising that there has been some confusion about the implications of the moratorium, General Assembly encourages the continuing use of the earlier material.

Following debate, the amendment was carried.

The Resolution, as amended, was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 47:

RESOLUTION 47

Human sexuality

General Assembly asks Mission Council to set up a task group to oversee the process of addressing issues of human sexuality, particularly those set out in the report, and to enable the process of widening discussions to involve the whole church.

Mr Hanson responded to a number of questions and comments, with particular regard to ecumenical involvement and the widening of the discussions to involve the whole church.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr Hanson moved adoption of Resolution 48:

RESOLUTION 48

Human sexuality

General Assembly urges members of councils and local churches not to press for policy decisions on these matters during this process, but to join in discussions that might help to increase understanding and unity.

The Resolution was carried.

The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer.

The Revd Elizabeth Welch took the Chair.

DOCTRINE, PRAYER AND WORSHIP

The Report of the Doctrine, Prayer and Worship Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Dr Susan Durber, who responded to a number of questions and comments from the floor. The Assembly received the report with applause. After questions and debate on paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of the report, further debate was remaindered.

The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard resumed the Chair.

CATCH THE VISION

The General Secretary reported on progress of the Catch the Vision process. The Revd Dr John Campbell introduced the next stage of Catch the Vision, 'Vision4Life'.

ELECTION OF MODERATOR OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2008

The Chaplain led the Assembly in prayer and ballot slips were collected.

The Assembly adjourned.



The General Secretary, The Revd Dr David Cornick

Commemoration of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act



“It’s exciting to realise that you belong to something bigger than just your church”

Children’s Assembly quotation

The Assembly joined in a Commemoration of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.





Children's Assembly in progress



Commemoration of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act

"We are only kids but we do have a lot to say for ourselves"

Children's Assembly quotation

● Opening worship was led by the Chaplain; Bible Study was led by Mrs Rose Wedderburn.

● **CHILDREN'S ASSEMBLY REPORT**

Assembly received a report of the Children's Assembly and notice of the 'Pilots' Safari' to be held in May 2008.



RACIAL JUSTICE

The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad moved adoption of Resolution 35:



Revd Dr Andrew Prasad, Convener, RJMM

RESOLUTION 35

Anniversary of the abolition of the British Slave Trade

In commemorating the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in British territories General Assembly adopts the following statement of regret and commitment and calls upon all members of the United Reformed Church to do the same:

- We recognise the inhuman treatment of Africans transported across the Atlantic as slaves and forced to work in degrading conditions.
- We are sorry for the legacy of that oppression which still distorts our relations with one another.
- We rejoice in the courage of those, black and white, who challenged the values of their day that allowed the slave trade to happen, and we pledge ourselves to recognise the dignity of all God's people and to build our society on that principle.
- We commit ourselves to the continuing struggle for justice for all the oppressed, including the many who are held in bondage today.

The Resolution was carried.

The report of the Racial Justice and Multicultural Ministry Committee was presented by the Convener.

The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad moved adoption of Resolution 58:

Resolution 58

Membership of Assembly

General Assembly instructs that as from 2010, each synod shall appoint not less than one and preferably two of its representatives to Assembly from its black and minority ethnic constituencies. Should a synod be unable to make such an appointment, that place shall be transferable to another synod which can draw on representatives from those communities.

Owing to pressure of time, debate on this resolution was deferred to a later point in Assembly.



The Moderator welcomed two International Visitors:

The Revd Jean Olivier Rakotamalala	Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar
The Revd Charles Lungu	United Church of Zambia

The Revd Malcolm Hanson took the Chair.

CATCH THE VISION

The Revd Dr John Campbell responded to comments and questions on the 'Vision4Life' programme.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 1:

RESOLUTION 1 'Think-tank' on mission and spirituality

General Assembly instructs Mission Council and the Nominations Committee to do such further work as is necessary to create a 'think-tank' on mission and spirituality.

After some debate, the Resolution was carried.

In moving adoption of Resolutions 2, 3 and 4 the General Secretary outlined the process of change that would result from these resolutions, and paid tribute to the hard work and commitment of members and officers of those committees whose work would now be passed on to the new Committee and Department.

The General Secretary responded to a number of questions and comments, and the Resolutions were put to the vote.

RESOLUTION 2 A new Department of Mission

General Assembly adopts the plan for the creation and functioning of a Mission Committee and Department.

The Resolution was carried.

RESOLUTION 3 A new Department of Mission

General Assembly instructs Mission Council to bring proposals for the Mission Department's work programme to the 2008 Assembly.

The Resolution was carried.

RESOLUTION 4 A new Department of Mission

General Assembly instructs Mission Council to arrange for a review of the working of the Mission Department in January 2010 and to report its findings and recommendations to the 2010 Assembly.

The Resolution was carried.

The General Secretary moved adoption of Resolution 5:

RESOLUTION 5 Election of Moderators

General Assembly resolves that as from 2008 it shall elect two Moderators at its biennial meeting, one a minister of Word and Sacraments or a Church Related Community Worker, and one an Elder, to serve together for the following two years.

An amendment was proposed by Ms Morag McLintock, seconded by the Revd Elizabeth Nash:

Add 'or a lay member' after the phrase 'and one an Elder'.

After debate, the amendment fell.

After further debate, Resolution 5 was carried.

Revd Elizabeth Nash moved adoption of Resolution 5a, seconded by Ms Morag McLintock.

RESOLUTION 5a Election of Moderators of General Assembly

General Assembly asks Mission Council to review the whole process for the nomination and election of Moderators of General Assembly.

The Resolution was carried.

The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard resumed the Chair.

LIFE AND WITNESS

The report of the Life and Witness Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Peter Ball. Assembly was addressed by the Revd Graham Jones, National Rural Officer for the United Reformed Church and the Methodist Church.

Mr Ball presented the paper 'Covenant Membership and Mission' and moved adoption of Resolution 37:

Resolution 37 Covenant Membership and Mission

General Assembly:

- a) reaffirms local church membership as an expression of faithful and committed response to God's covenant with creation and Christ's call to discipleship within the fellowship of the Church;
- b) encourages all churches to initiate conversations within their congregations and with other partners on renewing their understanding of covenant membership and to explore the importance of personal faith and commitment in creating flourishing communities;

- c) asks Mission Council to examine the feasibility of providing the option of multiple membership within the United Reformed Church, and between the United Reformed Church and ecumenical partners, which is recognised by local churches and the wider Church;
- d) asks Mission Council to devise a process for agreeing local church contributions towards the Ministry and Mission Fund which do not primarily focus on membership numbers, with a view to implementing it throughout the United Reformed Church;
- e) invites local churches to explore holding an annual Covenant Service as a way of renewing the corporate commitment of existing members, welcoming new members and providing a regular focus for discussion about the meaning and context of membership within the United Reformed Church.

On the advice of the Clerk, paragraph d) of the resolution was ruled out of order, and the Resolution was put with paragraph d) deleted.

The revised resolution, with subsequent re-numbering was:

RESOLUTION 37

Covenant Membership and Mission

General Assembly:

- a) **reaffirms local church membership as an expression of faithful and committed response to God’s covenant with creation and Christ’s call to discipleship within the fellowship of the Church;**
- b) **encourages all churches to initiate conversations within their congregations and with other partners on renewing their understanding of covenant membership and to explore the importance of personal faith and commitment in creating flourishing communities;**
- c) **asks Mission Council to examine the feasibility of providing the option of multiple membership within the United Reformed Church, and between the United Reformed Church and ecumenical partners, which is recognised by local churches and the wider Church;**
- d) **invites local churches to explore holding an annual Covenant Service as a way of renewing the corporate commitment of existing members, welcoming new members and providing a regular focus for discussion about the meaning and context of membership within the United Reformed Church.**

The Resolution was carried.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The report of the Church and Society Committee was presented by the Convener, Mr Simon Loveitt.

Mr Loveitt introduced the paper on Assisted Dying.

The Assembly adjourned.

Second Session

Simon Loveitt introduces the paper on Assisted Dying



“Community means people respect each other”

Children’s Assembly quotation

- The Assembly met in small groups to discuss the paper on Assisted Dying.

REPORT FROM CHILDREN’S ASSEMBLY

The Assembly received an audio-visual report from the Children’s Assembly.

ASSISTED DYING

Mr Simon Loveitt moved adoption of Resolution 51:

Resolution 51**Assisted Dying**

General Assembly affirms the report Assisted Dying, as encapsulated in the following statements:

- i) **As Christians we regard all human life as being God given, and therefore precious; we believe that death is not the end and we have faith that there is a more perfect life to follow.**
- ii) **We recognise that there is a time to die and that there are circumstances in which it will be wrong to continue to provide treatment designed to prolong life.**
- iii) **We recognise that some palliative treatment for the terminally ill, makes the patient more comfortable and pain free, but can also hasten death. We believe this to be acceptable, as long as the primary purpose of the treatment is pain relief and comfort of the patient.**
- iv) **We could not support legislation that would empower medical staff to intervene in ways which deliberately seek to assist a patient to die. We would therefore oppose any change in the law to permit voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide.**
- v) **We believe that a Living Will or Advance Directive which has been prepared by a patient of sound mind, can be helpful for carers and relatives; however we do not believe such a document should be used to facilitate a person's death.**
- vi) **We believe that additional resources are needed to provide more uniformly available and more high quality palliative care.**
- vii) **We recognise the valuable contribution made by carers. We express our prayerful support for those who work in, and promote hospices, and others who care, befriend and provide support for the dying.**

Mr Hugh Barlow moved an amendment to clause (i), seconded by Mrs Viv Henderson:

Amendment to Resolution 51 (clause (i)):

after 'all human life is God-given and precious' add: 'but we acknowledge the wretchedness of those terminally ill people who cannot believe that their continued life is worthwhile.'

After debate, the amendment fell.

Clause (i) was carried.

After debate, Clause (ii) was carried.

Mr Loveitt moved an amendment to clause (iii):

iii) We recognise that some palliative treatment for the terminally ill makes the patient more comfortable and pain free but can also hasten death. We believe this to be acceptable, as long as the intention of the treatment is pain relief and comfort of the patient.

The Assembly agreed to the replacement of clause (iii) with the amended text.

Clause (iii), as amended, was carried.

After brief debate, clause (iv) was carried.

After brief debate, clause (v) was carried.

After brief debate, clause (vi) was carried.

After brief debate, clause (vii) was carried.

The final, amended, form of the resolution was:

RESOLUTION 51**Assisted Dying**

General Assembly affirms the report Assisted Dying, as encapsulated in the following statements:

- i) **As Christians we regard all human life as being God given, and therefore precious; we believe that death is not the end and we have faith that there is a more perfect life to follow.**
- ii) **We recognise that there is a time to die and that there are circumstances in which it will be wrong to continue to provide treatment designed to prolong life.**
- iii) **We recognise that some palliative treatment for the terminally ill makes the patient more comfortable and pain free but can also hasten death. We believe this to be acceptable, as long as the intention of the treatment is pain relief and comfort of the patient.**
- iv) **We could not support legislation that would empower medical staff to intervene in ways which deliberately seek to assist a patient to die. We would therefore oppose any change in the law to permit voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide.**
- v) **We believe that a Living Will or Advance Directive which has been prepared by a patient of sound mind, can be helpful for carers and relatives; however we do not believe such a document should be used to facilitate a person's death.**
- vi) **We believe that additional resources are needed to provide more uniformly available and more high quality palliative care.**
- vii) **We recognise the valuable contribution made by carers. We express our prayerful support for those who work in, and promote hospices, and others who care, befriend and provide support for the dying.**

The Moderator greeted Mr Stuart Dew on relinquishing his Church and Society responsibilities.

PASTORAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The report of the Pastoral Reference Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Keith Forecast, who moved adoption of Resolution 33:

RESOLUTION 33**Pastoral Reference Committee**

- a) **General Assembly thanks and discharges the Welfare Sub-Committee of the Pastoral Reference Committee and directs that its responsibilities be discharged directly by the Pastoral Reference Committee.**
- b) **General Assembly resolves that the Pastoral Reference Committee be known as The Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee.**

The Resolution was carried.

The Moderator thanked Mr Forecast for his work as Convener.

The Assembly agreed to the withdrawal of Resolution 7. The Revd David Grosch-Miller, on behalf of the South Western Synod, moved adoption of Resolution 6, seconded by the Revd Dick Gray.

RESOLUTION 6 Retired Ministers' Housing Society Funds

General Assembly expresses its deep concern at the extent to which the Retired Ministers' Housing Society has found it necessary to borrow funds from the general funds of the United Reformed Church and urges Synods to donate 10% of the net proceeds of any sale of redundant church property held by the Synod under Schedule 2 Part 1 of the United Reformed Church Trusts completed on or after 1st January 2007 and where there is no continuing congregation, to the Society to assist it to repay its borrowing in the shortest possible time.

After debate, the Resolution was carried.

MINISTRIES

The Convener of the Ministries Committee, the Revd Peter Poulter, moved adoption of Resolution 40:

Resolution 40 The Assessment procedure from July 2007

General Assembly, noting the demise of District Councils will require changes to the assessment process, approves the following aims for the procedure to be used when assessing candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Work;

- i) **There should be one common practice throughout the United Reformed Church, thereby reaffirming the decision made in the 1996 criteria for assessment work from July 2007,**
- ii) **There should be a common United Reformed Church standard for the selection of candidates for training.**

In line with the above aims the following procedure for assessment will be adopted:

INTERVIEW OR CONVERSATION	
The Enquiry stage	
Meeting with Minister or Interim Moderator	Informal and exploratory.
Meeting with Moderator/or Moderator's deputy	Informal and informative. However the Moderator has a responsibility to check that the potential candidate fulfils the basic age, membership and educational criteria agreed by General Assembly. If a candidate does not meet any or all of the criteria the Moderator should discuss what steps could be taken in order for the candidate to satisfy the criteria or what other forms of service might be offered to the Church.

Enquirers Conferences	At any point during this stage of the process the potential candidate should attend a Synod Enquirers Conference.
THE FORMAL CANDIDATING STAGE	
CHURCH MEETING INTERVIEW	Produces a decision of a Council of the Church. <i>If the decision is not to recommend the candidate will not proceed to the next stage.</i>
SYNOD INTERVIEWS	Produces a decision of a Council of the Church. <i>If the decision is not to recommend the candidate will not proceed to the next stage.</i> Therefore any candidate who goes on to the Assessment Conference goes sponsored by the Synod.
ASSESSMENT BOARD CONFERENCE	With the demise of the District Council, in the case of candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments, Synod will need to arrange for an assessed service and see through any appropriate placement work or 'shadowing'. The Synod also will need to collect local knowledge and opinion of the candidate, which is set in a wider context than that of the local church alone, to help in reaching an informed decision. The new Structures of each Synod will doubtless determine how that is to be achieved. The Synod interview should also identify whether there are determining factors in each candidate's situation, personal or otherwise, which the interviewers would want the Training Board, which interviews on behalf of the Education and Learning Committee, to take into account in selecting the resource centre and training programme. This information should be sent to the Training Board via the Ministries office along with the report on the candidate for the Assessment Board. In the event that the Assessment Board does not recommend a candidate for training then the Secretary of the assessment Board must notify the relevant Synod and arrange a meeting in order to come to an agreed decision about the candidate. No candidate will be informed immediately of the decision of the Assessment Board or the training recommendation. This allows time for any divisions over the recommendation to be resolved between the Board and the Synods and ensures an equality of treatment for each candidate. The Synods will arrange for each candidate to be debriefed after the decision has been made known and ensure that the candidates who have not been accepted for training receive appropriate support. This may include an element of mentoring if the candidate has been advised to reapply after completing some further, wider exploration of the United Reformed Church.
During training	The Synods will be asked to continue to exercise the pastoral care of the candidates as is presently the case. This should not present a conflict since no candidate will have been sent to the Assessment Conference who does not have the prior support of the Synod. Synods will also continue to attend the annual progress meetings with the training institution. However copies of these reports should be sent to the Assembly Ministries/Education and Learning Committees which have responsibilities on behalf of the whole Church. This will enable the Committees to evaluate, and learn from, the decisions that have been taken and raise their awareness of any concerns which may emerge.

During debate, the Revd Keith Forecast moved an amendment:

Replace the first sentence of the section 'During Training', and replace with:

'The sending synods and the synods where training takes place shall liaise regarding the appropriate exercise of pastoral care of the candidates.'

Seconded by the Revd John Bremner.

The amendment was carried.

The Resolution, as amended, was carried.

RESOLUTION 40

The Assessment procedure from July 2007

General Assembly, noting the demise of District Councils will require changes to the assessment process, approves the following aims for the procedure to be used when assessing candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Work;

- i) There should be one common practice throughout the United Reformed Church, thereby reaffirming the decision made in the 1996 criteria for assessment work from July 2007,
- ii) There should be a common United Reformed Church standard for the selection of candidates for training.

In line with the above aims the following procedure for assessment will be adopted:

INTERVIEW OR CONVERSATION	
The Enquiry stage	
Meeting with Minister or Interim Moderator	Informal and exploratory.
Meeting with Moderator/or Moderator's deputy	Informal and informative. However the Moderator has a responsibility to check that the potential candidate fulfils the basic age, membership and educational criteria agreed by General Assembly. If a candidate does not meet any or all of the criteria the Moderator should discuss what steps could be taken in order for the candidate to satisfy the criteria or what other forms of service might be offered to the Church.
Enquirers Conferences	At any point during this stage of the process the potential candidate should attend a Synod Enquirers Conference.
THE FORMAL CANDIDATING STAGE	

CHURCH MEETING INTERVIEW

Produces a decision of a Council of the Church. *If the decision is not to recommend the candidate will not proceed to the next stage.*

SYNOD INTERVIEWS

Produces a decision of a Council of the Church. *If the decision is not to recommend the candidate will not proceed to the next stage.*
Therefore any candidate who goes on to the Assessment Conference goes sponsored by the Synod.

ASSESSMENT BOARD CONFERENCE

With the demise of the District Council, in the case of candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments, Synod will need to arrange for an assessed service and see through any appropriate placement work or 'shadowing'. The Synod also will need to collect local knowledge and opinion of the candidate, which is set in a wider context than that of the local church alone, to help in reaching an informed decision. The new Structures of each Synod will doubtless determine how that is to be achieved.

The Synod interview should also identify whether there are determining factors in each candidate's situation, personal or otherwise, which the interviewers would want the Training Board, which interviews on behalf of the Education and Learning Committee, to take into account in selecting the resource centre and training programme. This information should be sent to the Training Board via the Ministries office along with the report on the candidate for the Assessment Board.

In the event that the Assessment Board does not recommend a candidate for training then the Secretary of the assessment Board must notify the relevant Synod and arrange a meeting in order to come to an agreed decision about the candidate.

No candidate will be informed immediately of the decision of the Assessment Board or the training recommendation. This allows time for any divisions over the recommendation to be resolved between the Board and the Synods and ensures an equality of treatment for each candidate.

During training

The Synods will arrange for each candidate to be debriefed after the decision has been made known and ensure that the candidates who have not been accepted for training receive appropriate support. This may include an element of mentoring if the candidate has been advised to reapply after completing some further, wider exploration of the United Reformed Church.

The sending synods and the synods where training takes place shall liaise regarding the appropriate exercise of pastoral care of the candidates. This should not present a conflict since no candidate will have been sent to the Assessment Conference who does not have the prior support of the Synod.

Synods will also continue to attend the annual progress meetings with the training institution. However copies of these reports should be sent to the Assembly Ministries/Education and Learning Committees which have responsibilities on behalf of the whole Church. This will enable the Committees to evaluate, and learn from, the decisions that have been taken and raise their awareness of any concerns which may emerge.

The Moderator welcomes
The Revd Richard Taufer



ECUMENICAL GUESTS

The Moderator welcomed ecumenical and international guests:

The Revd Richard Taufer
Mrs Maragret Prisk
The Rt Revd Onye Obika

Eglise Réformé de France
Baptist Union of Great Britain
Secretary General of the International Ministerial
Council of Great Britain

Mrs Wilma Frew took the Chair.

ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE

The report of the Ecumenical Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Elizabeth Nash, who moved adoption of Resolution 36:

RESOLUTION 36

Ecumenical Engagement

General Assembly adopts *the Statement on the Nature of the United Reformed Church's Ecumenical Engagement.*

The Resolution was carried.

The Revd Elizabeth Nash thanked all who had been involved in the work of the Ecumenical Committee, and particularly the Church House Staff. She paid especial tribute to Philip Woods, who leaves the post of Secretary for International Relations in October.

The Moderator thanked the Convener and members of the Committee for their work.

The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard resumed the Chair.

FURY

General Assembly received a presentation by members of FURY.



INTER-FAITH COMMITTEE

The report of the Inter Faith Relations Committee was presented by the Convener, the Revd Peter Colwell.

SYNOD PRESENTATION

The Eastern Synod made its presentation.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION

Mr Simon Loveitt, on behalf of the Church and Society Committee moved adoption of Resolution 59:

Resolution 59 **Emergency Resolution**

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, meeting in Manchester, reaffirms its view that resorting to violence, and attempts to bomb and kill, are not the way to address senses of grievance and injustice. It expresses its dismay at the recent terrorist incidents in London and Glasgow. It realises that such actions are an affront to the Muslim communities, when they are claimed to have been committed in their name. We understand that there is a potential for some to respond negatively; our prayer is that this should not happen.

The Revd Peter Colwell moved to insert the words 'overwhelming majority of'. The proposer accepted the amendment, and the Assembly agreed.

RESOLUTION 59

Emergency Resolution

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, meeting in Manchester, reaffirms its view that resorting to violence, and attempts to bomb and kill, are not the way to address senses of grievance and injustice. It expresses its dismay at the recent terrorist incidents in London and Glasgow. It realises that such actions are an affront to the overwhelming majority of Muslim communities, when they are claimed to have been committed in their name. We understand that there is a potential for some to respond negatively; our prayer is that this should not happen.

The Resolution was carried.

MODERATOR OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2008

Mr Peter Pay, Convener of Tellers for the election of the Moderator of the General Assembly, reported that 291 votes had been cast, 1 paper had been spoiled and that the Revd John M Marsh had been duly elected as Moderator of the General Assembly 2008.

The Clerk presented the minutes of the first, second and third sessions of Saturday 8th July. The Assembly accepted the minutes.

The Assembly adjourned.



Children's Assembly in progress



The Assembly received an audio-visual presentation from the Children's Assembly.

MISSION COUNCIL

Mr William McVey moved adoption of Resolution 57:

RESOLUTION 57 Amendment to the Plan for Partnership

Paragraph 6.1.6.1 reads:

A Minister/CRCW aged 55 years or over at the date of initial induction to stipendiary service under the Plan may not join the URCMPF (United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund). Only in those circumstances will an amount agreed by MoM Sub-committee be paid, at the Minister/CRCW's request, to any personal pension arrangement chosen by that Minister/CRCW.

The Resolution was carried.

Mr McVey moved adoption *en bloc* of Resolutions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 38 and 39:

RESOLUTION 9 Ministerial Disciplinary Process (Section O): Ratification of Replacement of existing Part 1 (Report page 52 para 6.3.8)

Resolution 9 ratifies the replacement of the existing Part I, first approved by Assembly last year under Resolution 8. Note that this ratifying resolution shows the wording of the new Part I stripped of the cross-references to MIP.

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision to replace the existing Part I of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline with the following:

[Note: The wording below shows Part I without the references to the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure, the introduction of which was deferred by General Assembly 2006. On behalf of the General Assembly Mission Council has agreed that these changes be made.]

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. 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 and offer guidance but only within the limits prescribed in Section F of Part II.

1.2 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.

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 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.

3.2 As part of such consideration, the Assembly Commission or the 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.

4. 4.1 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.

4.2 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.

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

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

6. 6.1 Save only as provided in Paragraph 6.2, this Part I of the Section O Process is subject to Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure.

6.2 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.

6.3 All such changes to the Section O Process as are made by Mission Council under Paragraph 6.2 shall be reported to the next meeting of the General Assembly.

RESOLUTION 10

Section O: Ratification of amendments to the Structure

(Report page 52 para 6.3.9)

Resolution 10 ratifies the amendments to the Structure in relation to Section O first approved by Assembly last year under Resolution 9.

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision 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 11

Section O: Replacement of existing Part II

(Report page 52 para 6.3.10 and Document 4)

General Assembly agrees to replace the existing Part II of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline with that included as Document 4 in the Section O Papers.

RESOLUTION 12

Ministerial Incapacity Procedure

(Report page 52 para 6.3.11)

Resolution 12 is a resolution to introduce a procedure (to be known as 'the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure') designed for dealing with cases of Ministers or Church-Related Community Workers who may be suffering from incapacity as instanced in the resolution below.

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 or Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs) who are regarded as being incapable of exercising, or of continuing to exercise, their respective ministries on account of (i) medical and/or psychiatric illness and/or (ii) psychological disorder and/or (iii) addiction 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 or Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs) who are regarded as being incapable of exercising, or of continuing to exercise, their respective ministries on account of (i) medical and/or psychiatric illness and/or (ii) psychological disorder and/or (iii) addiction. 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 or, in the case of a CRCW, at his/her commissioning.

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* or Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs)*, whilst not perceived to have committed any breach of discipline, are nevertheless regarded as being incapable of exercising, or of continuing to exercise, ministry on account of (i) medical and/or psychiatric illness and/or (ii) psychological disorder and/or (iii) addiction.
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 or CRCW and on all the councils of the Church*.
3. Subject only to Section H of Part II, when the case of any Minister or CRCW 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 or CRCW 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 or CRCW.
5. Although the operation of the Incapacity Procedure is not based upon the conscious breach by the Minister or CRCW of the promises made at ordination or commissioning, 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 (in the case of Ministers) Paragraph 2 of Schedule E thereto and (in the case of CRCWs) Paragraph 2 of Schedule F, Part II thereto which state the responsibilities undertaken by those who become Ministers and CRCWs of the Church and the respective criteria which they must apply in the exercise of their ministries.
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.

RESOLUTION 13**Ministerial Incapacity Procedure Part II**
(Report page 52 para 6.3.11 and Document 5)

Resolution 13 takes the same form as Resolution 11 of 2006

General Assembly resolves to take note of Part II of the proposed Ministerial Incapacity Procedure contained in Document 5 and requests Mission Council to bring this to the next following Assembly for decision in this form, subject to such amendments as may be recommended by Mission Council.

RESOLUTION 14**Ministerial Incapacity Procedure:
Changes to the Structure**
(Report page 52 para 6.3.12)

Resolution 14 amends the Structure in order to create a new Synod function which will give Synods a responsibility in relation to any recommendations or guidance made by an Assembly Commission or Appeals Commission under the Section O Process [or a Review Commission or an Appeals Review Commission under the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure – to be added if the resolution to approve the introduction of MIP is approved by Assembly].

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

Paragraph 2(4)(A)

Add a new function:

2(4)(A)(xv) to ensure that, where an Assembly Commission or an Appeals Commission following a Hearing under the Section O Process [or a Review Commission or an Appeals Review Commission following a Hearing under the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure – to be added if the resolution to approve the introduction of MIP is approved by Assembly] appends recommendations to its decision not to delete the name of a minister from the Roll of Ministers or a church related community worker from the Roll of Church Related Community Workers or appends guidance to its decision to delete the name of the minister or church related community worker from the respective Roll, any such recommendations are brought fully to the attention of those responsible for exercising oversight of the minister or church related community worker in future and that any such recommendations (or guidance, if such be the case) are brought fully to the attention of any others identified under the relevant Process or Procedure as being proper and appropriate persons to receive such information.

Renumber the existing functions 2(4)(A)(xv) and (xvi) 2(4)(A)(xvi) and (xvii) respectively.

RESOLUTION 15**Ministerial Incapacity Procedure: Church
Related Community Workers**
(Report page 52 para 6.3.13)

Resolution 15 taking the same form as Resolution 12 of 2006 omitting the final part of last year's resolution referring to Section C, the Rules of Procedure on Appeals, but extended to bring church-related community workers within the ambit of the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure (MIP)

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church to bring church-related community workers within the ambit of the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure (MIP):

Paragraph []

The following to be introduced as a new Paragraph of the Structure to be numbered []

[].1 The Procedure contained in this Paragraph [] of the Structure (known as the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure) shall apply where those responsible for initiating it in respect of any particular minister or church related community worker consider that s/he is or may not be exercising the ministry of Word and Sacrament or the ministry of Church Related Community Work as the case may be in accordance (in the case of ministers) with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E thereto and (in the case of CRCWs) with Paragraph 2 of Schedule F, Part II thereto and perceive the issue as relating to the incapacity of the minister or CRCW on account of (i) medical and/or psychiatric illness or (ii) psychological disorder or (iii) addiction.

[].2 No right of appeal shall lie against the decision taken in accordance with Paragraph [].1 above to initiate the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure in respect of any minister or CRCW.

[].3 The decision reached in any particular case (whether or not on appeal) under the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure shall be made in the name of the General Assembly and shall be final and binding.

[].4 As soon as any minister or CRCW becomes the subject of a case under the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure, none of the Councils of the Church shall exercise any of its functions in respect of that minister or CRCW in such a manner as to affect, compromise or interfere with the due process of that case, provided that the provision of such pastoral care as shall be deemed appropriate shall not be regarded as a breach of this paragraph.

Paragraph 2(4)(A)(viii)

Replace the words 'the Disciplinary Process referred to in Function (xv) below' with the words 'the Ministerial Disciplinary Process referred to in Function (xiv) below or the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure referred to in Paragraph [] of the Structure.'

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xi)

Add the words '... and Part I of the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure referred to in Paragraph [] of the Structure.'

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xviii)

Replace the words ‘the Disciplinary Process referred to in Function (xxiii) below’ with the words ‘the Ministerial Disciplinary Process referred to in Function (xxiii) below or the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure referred to in Paragraph [] of the Structure.’

Paragraphs 2(5)(A)(xxiv) and (xxv)

Add new Paragraphs 2(5)(A) (xxiv) and (xxv) as follows:

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xxiv)

‘To make and (if necessary) to terminate all appointments to the Standing Panel and to any administrative office under the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure and to exercise general oversight and supervision of the operation of that Procedure (save only that decisions in individual cases taken in accordance with that Procedure are made in the name of the General Assembly and are final and binding).’

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xxv)

‘To provide for the setting up of an Appeals Review Commission in accordance with the Ministerial Incapacity Procedure for the hearing of appeals under that Procedure.’

Renumber the existing Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xxiv) as (xxvi)

Identify the Paragraph immediately after the General Assembly Functions as 2(5)(B)

RESOLUTION 16

Changes to Section O Part 1 (Report page 52 para 6.3.14)

Resolution 16 makes changes to Section O, Part I, based on Resolution 1 but extended to make the necessary changes to Section O occasioned by the introduction of the MIP and the intention to bring CRCWs in to the Church’s ministerial disciplinary process.

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 or a church-related community worker (CRCW) 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 CRCWs as the case may be 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 or CRCW 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 or CRCW involved in a case within the Section O Process relates to or involves a perceived incapacity on the part of that Minister or CRCW which might render him/her unfit to exercise, or to continue to exercise, the ministry of Word and Sacrament or the ministry of Church Related Community Work on account of (i) medical and/or psychiatric illness or (ii) psychological disorder or (iii) addiction, 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 or CRCW 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 or the CRCW’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 or the CRCW 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 or CRCW 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 or CRCW 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 (in the case of Ministers) Paragraph 2 of Schedule E thereto and (in the case of CRCWs) Paragraph 2 of Schedule F, Part II thereto which state the responsibilities undertaken by those who become Ministers and CRCWs of the United Reformed Church and the respective criteria which they must apply in the exercise of their ministries.

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 or CRCW occurring prior to his/her ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament or his/her commissioning to the ministry of Church Related Community Work as the case may be which, in the Commission's view and when viewed in the light of Schedule E or Schedule F to the Basis of Union, would have prevented, or was likely to have prevented, him/her from becoming ordained or commissioned, where such conduct was not disclosed by the Minister or CRCW to those responsible for assessing his/her candidacy for ordination or commissioning.

5. 5.1 A Minister or CRCW may appeal against the decision of the Assembly Commission to delete his/her name from the Roll of Ministers or CRCWs 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 or CRCW from the Roll of Ministers or CRCWs 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 or CRCW.

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 17

Changes to Section O Part 1 (Report page 52 para 6.3.15)

Resolution 17 makes changes to Section O, Part I, based on Resolution 1 but extended to make the necessary changes to Section O occasioned by the intention to bring CRCWs into the Church's ministerial disciplinary process. Unlike Resolution 16 this resolution does not include references to the MIP.

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 or a Church Related Community Worker (CRCW) 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 CRCWs as the case may be or alternatively whether a written warning should be issued to him/her. 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 and offer guidance but only within the limits prescribed in Section F of Part II.

1.2 Once the disciplinary case of any Minister or CRCW 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.

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 or CRCW and on all the councils of the Church.**

3. 3.1 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 (in the case of Ministers) Paragraph 2 of Schedule E thereto and (in the case of CRCWs) Paragraph 2 of Schedule F, Part II thereto, which state the respective responsibilities undertaken by those who become Ministers or CRCWs of the United Reformed Church and the criteria which they must apply in the exercise of their ministries.

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

4. 4.1 A Minister or CRCW may appeal against the decision of the Assembly Commission to delete his/her name from the Roll of Ministers or CRCWs 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.

4.2 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 or CRCW from the Roll of Ministers or CRCWs 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 or CRCW.**

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

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

6. 6.1 Save only as provided in Paragraph 6.2, this Part I of the Section O Process is subject to Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure.

6.2 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.**

6.3 All such changes to the Section O Process as are made by Mission Council under Paragraph 6.2 shall be reported to the next meeting of the General Assembly.

RESOLUTION 18

Changes to the Basis of Union to include CRCWs in the ministerial disciplinary process (Report page 53 para 6.3.16)

Resolution 18 makes changes to the Basis of Union to bring Church-Related Community Workers within the ambit of the Church's ministerial disciplinary process

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Basis of Union to provide for the Section O process to include church-related community workers:

Paragraph 20

Add the following sentences at the end of the paragraph:

In the United Reformed Church all ministries within the life of the Church shall be open to both men and women. Appropriate affirmations of faith shall be made by those entering upon all ministries within the life of the Church.

Paragraph 21

After the words 'to their office.' add a new sentence as follows:

The ordination and induction of ministers shall be in accordance with Schedules C and D.

After the first paragraph, add an additional paragraph as follows:

The totality of ministers who fall within any of the categories defined within 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.

Paragraph 22

Replace the words 'and are then commissioned and inducted to their office to serve for a designated period' with 'are then commissioned to the office of church related community worker and inducted to serve in a particular post for a designated period'.

Paragraph 26

Remove this paragraph as its contents have been transferred to Paragraphs 20 and 21 in the changes proposed above.

Schedule E, Paragraph 4

Remove the word 'disciplinary' on the last line.

Schedule F

The existing Schedule F to become Schedule F, Part I and a new Schedule F, Part II to be added as follows:

Part II

Those who have been called to the Ministry of Church Related Community Work and commissioned and inducted to their office in accordance with Paragraph 22 of the Basis of Union shall constitute the Roll of Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs) of the United Reformed Church.

CRCWs 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 affirmations made by CRCWs at commissioning and induction (Schedule F Part I) and the Statement concerning the nature, faith and order of the United Reformed Church (Schedule D) in accordance with which CRCWs undertake to exercise their ministry.

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 CRCW's conditions under the plan for partnership in ministerial remuneration) to suspend a CRCW which involves a temporary ban on the exercise of the duties of his/her ministry by the CRCW concerned but not his/her removal from the Roll of CRCWs.

A CRCW under suspension shall not represent him/herself as a CRCW and shall refrain from all activity which may lead others to believe that he/she is acting as such. Suspension also means that the CRCW may not exercise the rights of membership of any council of the Church. Suspension does not remove any of the rights accorded by the process of determining the matter which had led to the suspension.

A person whose name has been deleted from the Roll of CRCWs and who remains a member of the United Reformed Church has the privileges and responsibilities of that membership, but not those of a CRCW and should refrain from all activity which may lead others to believe that he/she is acting as a CRCW. However, should that person be re-instated to the Roll of CRCWs he/she would on being called to a post approved by the United Reformed Church need to be inducted to that post but not commissioned since commissioning is not repeatable.

RESOLUTION 19

**Amendment of Structure to include
CRCWs in the ministerial disciplinary process**
(Report page 53 para 6.3.17)

Resolution 19 amends the Structure to bring CRCWs within the ambit of Section O

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church to provide for the Section O Process to include church-related community workers:

Paragraph 1(4)

Add an additional Paragraph 1(4) as follows:

Unless otherwise expressly stated or clearly excluded by the context, the expressions 'minister', 'ministers', 'ministry' and 'ministerial' when used in the Structure shall refer to the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Paragraph 2(3)(A)(i)

After the words 'oversight of' add '(i)' and after the words 'General Assembly' add 'and (ii) church-related community workers'.

Paragraph 2(3)(A)(ii)

After the word 'ministers' (the first time it appears) add 'or church-related community workers' and after the word 'ministers' (the second time it appears) add 'and any commissioning and induction of church-related community workers'.

Paragraph 2(3)(A)(vi)

After the word 'ministry' add 'of word and sacrament or the ministry of church-related community work'.

Paragraph 2(3)(A)(viii)

After the word 'ministers' add 'or church-related community workers'.

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 or church-related community worker is or may not be exercising his/her ministry of word and sacrament or church-related community work as the case may be in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E (in the case of ministers) or Paragraph 2 of Schedule F, Part II (in the case of church-related community workers) to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that minister or church-related community worker 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 or church-related community worker 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)(A)(xix)(I)

After the words 'lay people' add '/church-related community workers'.

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 or church-related community worker 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 or church-related community worker (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 or church-related community worker under Function (xviii) above.

Paragraph 2(4)(A)(v)

Alter the word 'ministry' to 'ministries of word and sacrament and church-related community work'.

Paragraph 2(4)(A)(vi)

Alter the word 'ministry' (the first time it appears) to 'ministries of word and sacrament and church-related community work' and alter the word 'ministries' (the second time it appears) to 'the above ministries'.

Paragraph 2(4)(A)(vii)

After the words 'Roll of Ministers' add 'or the Roll of Church-Related Community Workers'.

Alter the words 'Function (xv)' to 'Function (xiv)'.

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 or church-related community worker is or may not be exercising his/her ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union or Paragraph 2 of Schedule F, Part II, as the case may be, to refer the case of that minister or church-related community worker 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 or church-related community worker 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 or church-related community worker 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 or church-related community worker (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 or church-related community worker under Function (xiv) above.

Paragraph 2(5)(f)

After the word 'ministers' add a comma and the words 'church-related community workers'.

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(v)

Alter the words 'adequate ministerial training' to 'adequate training for ministers and church-related community workers'.

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xviii)

After the words 'Roll of Ministers' add 'and the Roll of Church-Related Community Workers'.

Paragraph 2(5)(A)(xix)

After the word 'ministers' add a comma and the words 'church-related community workers'.

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 or church-related community worker is or may not be exercising his/her ministry in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Schedule E or Paragraph 2 of Schedule F, Part II to the Basis of Union, to refer the case of that minister or church-related community worker 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 or church-related community worker 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 2(5)(B) with the following:

Once the Disciplinary Process has commenced in the case of any minister or church-related community worker, 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 or church-related community worker (save only in the provision of such pastoral care as may be appropriate) until the Process has been duly concluded.

RESOLUTION 20**Ratification of the Listed Buildings Appeals Procedure**
(Report page 56 para 6.5.8)

A resolution to ratify Resolution 14 of 2006 as regards a new Appeals Procedure to apply in the case of Listed Buildings:

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision taken under Resolution 14 of 2006 to make the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church:

Paragraph 5(2)

In the opening sentence, after 'outside paragraph 5(1)' add 'or paragraph 5(3)'.

Paragraph 5(3)

Add a new paragraph 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 hereunder shall be dealt with in accordance with that procedure and not under paragraph 5(2) above.'

RESOLUTION 21**Changes to the rules of procedure on Appeals (Listed Buildings)**
(Report page 56 para 6.5.8)

A resolution to make a change to the Rules of Procedure on Appeals as regards a new Appeals Procedure to apply in the case of Listed Buildings:

General Assembly agrees to make the following change to the Rules of Procedure on Appeals:

Replace the existing Paragraph 8.11 with the following: 'The provisions of this Section "Rules of Procedure on Appeals" shall not apply to cases which are being determined within the Ministerial Disciplinary Process or the Church's Control Procedure under the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations for the time being in force.'

RESOLUTION 38**for transfer from non-stipendiary to stipendiary service**

General Assembly rescinds General Assembly 1997 Resolution 34 (f),
f) Assembly resolves that applications to transfer from non-stipendiary to stipendiary ministry must be received by province before the date of the applicants 53rd birthday,

and resolves that from this point forward there shall be no upper age limit for transfer from non-stipendiary to stipendiary service.

RESOLUTION 39 Amendments to the Plan for Partnership

General Assembly agrees the following changes to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration to reflect age discrimination legislation and the changes to the Structures of the Church.

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

5.2.3 Students who have already commenced training for the stipendiary ministry of the URC, giving ministry during their vacations, with [District Council] *Synod* approval, to URC pastorates which are in vacancy.

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

Existing Paragraphs 5.4.2 and 5.4.3 are re-numbered 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 respectively.

6.3.1 [District Councils] *Synods* [(taking advice from Synod where required)] should take note of the condition and facilities of the manse or, if alternative housing arrangements are to be made, should approve the details of the arrangements before concurring in calls and regularly thereafter.

6.3.2.1 If the accommodation is owned or rented by the minister/CRCW, a housing allowance, agreed by the pastorate and the minister/CRCW, and approved by the [District Council] *Synod*, shall be payable. Guidelines for calculating allowances will be issued by the MoM Sub-Committee (see Appendix B).

6.3.4.1 **Car: where a minister/CRCW provides a car, the financial arrangements shall be agreed with the [District Council] *Synod*, the local church and the minister/CRCW. The MoM Sub-Committee shall distribute annually the rates of reimbursement for mileage undertaken on church business, which must not be exceeded (see Appendix A).**

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

8. ADDITIONAL PAID WORK

Stipends and other allowances paid to full-time ministers/CRCWs shall normally be on the basis that these represent the main earned remuneration. It is recognised that a minister/CRCW will from time to time accept other paid work (e.g. hospital chaplaincies or teaching). Where this work, in the view of the [District Council and Synod Moderator] *Synod*, can be performed without detriment to the pastoral care of church, congregation and local church witness, the additional remuneration may be retained by the minister/CRCW involved, **provided the work does not exceed the equivalent of one working day per week.** Where more than one day per week is involved the [District Council and the Synod Moderator] *appropriate committee of the Synod or the Synod Moderator* should consult with the MoM Sub-Committee who may decide to reduce the stipend by an appropriate amount.

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

9.1.3 In the case of a minister/CRCW who dies before retirement [(whether or not they have already passed retirement age)] the spouse shall be entitled to the equivalent of a resettlement grant upon the first change of residence. If death occurs after retirement but before the first change of residence then the spouse shall be entitled to the equivalent of a resettlement grant.

9.1.4 Where the minister/CRCW approaches planned retirement and, with the approval of the pastorate and the Synod, moves into property designated as a retirement home, retirement resettlement and removal grants shall be paid. Retirement and resettlement grants shall only be paid once during the ministry of a minister/CRCW, or ministerial married couple.

Existing paragraphs 9.1.4 and 9.1.5 are re-numbered 9.1.5 and 9.1.6 respectively

[9.4.4 The entire paragraph is deleted and repositioned as 9.1.4 as shown above.]

APPENDIX D – NATIONAL MANSE GUIDELINES

1.2 Plan for Partnership

A responsibility is placed upon [District Councils] *Synods* (para. 6.3.1) [-taking advice from Synod-] to take note of the condition and facilities of the manse or, if alternative arrangements are to be made, should approve the details of the arrangement before concurring in Calls and regularly thereafter.

4.1 Maintenance

This is very important and an annual inspection should be undertaken to ensure provision is made for a programme of maintenance. This is for the benefit of the minister and his/her family and is also to ensure the value of the asset is protected. Synods should ensure there is a mechanism in place to monitor the way [District and] the local church(es) exercise their responsibility for maintaining the property in good order. The church should identify who is to be responsible for ensuring the procedure for maintenance of the property is followed. It is normal practice for the church building to be surveyed on a regular basis, normally every 5 years. The manse should be included in such a review.

Resolutions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 38 and 39 were carried.

The General Secretary moved that 'in accordance with Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolutions 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2008 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.'

The Assembly agreed.



"All shall be included in the feast of life"





"All shall be included in the feast of life"



ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

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

CATCH THE VISION

The Assembly Clerk introduced Resolution 24, noting that a decision had yet to be made about youth representation.

The Clerk moved the resolution section by section.

Section 1 was carried.

After brief debate, Section 2 was carried.

After debate, Section 3 was carried.

The Clerk noted that section 4 required a decision about youth representation. After debate, Assembly decided by vote that there should be two youth representatives from each synod. Ms Morag McLintock proposed that the definition of 'youth' should be age 26 and under, in accordance with the constitution of FURY. Seconded by Mr Matthew Prevett. The Assembly agreed.

After debate, Section 4 was carried.

After debate, Section 5 was carried.

Sections 6 and 7 were carried.

RESOLUTION 24

Changes to the Basis and Structure

1. General Assembly resolves to amend the Basis of Union by deleting the words "District or Area Council" and substituting the term "synod" throughout, save in those cases where such substitution would lead to duplication, in which case the words shall simply be omitted.

2. General Assembly resolves to amend the Structure of the United Reformed Church by amending the following sections relating to Local Churches to read:

Paragraph 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. Each synod shall consist of a single district council as hereinafter defined plus such areas of ecumenical cooperation as the Synod shall determine. Each area of ecumenical cooperation shall comprise the geographical area from time to time assigned to it by the General Assembly or by the synod

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.

Paragraph 2(1)(vii)

to call a minister with the concurrence of the synod(s) (see paragraph 2 (4) (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 and 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.)

Paragraph 2(1)(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.

Paragraph 2(2)(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;

3. General Assembly resolves to amend the Structure of the United Reformed Church relating to district and area councils by deleting the whole of Paragraph 2(3) and replacing it with:

2.(3) The district council shall consist of:

- (a) The moderator of the synod for the time being;
- (b) A president appointed by the synod, who shall perform the functions defined as applicable to the chairman in the United Reformed Church Acts 1972, 1981 and 2000;
- (c) A secretary appointed by the synod;
- (d) Such number of representatives of Local Churches within the district, (currently four) as the Synod shall direct
- (e) Up to six co-opted ministers or members of Local Churches, normally elders, as the Synod shall direct

The district council shall meet at least once a year, unless the secretary notifies the members in writing that there is no business for the council to transact.

Functions:

- (A) The district council is responsible for exercising the following Functions:
 - (i) those matters which are the responsibility of the district council under the United Reformed Church Acts of 1972, 1981 and 2000 (including the Schedules to those Acts);
 - (ii) such other matters as may be delegated to it by the General Assembly.

4. General Assembly resolves to amend the Structure of the United Reformed Church relating to synods by deleting the whole of Paragraph 2(4) and replacing it with:

2.(4) 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 engaged directly in the service of the United Reformed Church within that synod;
- (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 normally one. A synod may at its discretion vary the number of representatives of local churches so that a Local Church may appoint two representatives. (where a Local Church, whether a local ecumenical partnership or a Local Church organised according to the second sentence of paragraph 1.(1), comprises two or more congregations worshipping in separate locations, the synod may, on the advice of the district council, 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 as if each congregation were a separate Local Church);
- (d) An elder or retired minister appointed by the synod as an interim moderator who shall be a full member of the synod for the period of the appointment.
- (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) 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.
- (h) Such members as shall from time to time be appointed by the General Assembly.
- (i) Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of such other denominations as the Synod may from time to time determine.
- (j) Two young people, being members of the United Reformed Church, nominated by the synod's youth forum, committee or equivalent;
- (k) All retired ministers not covered by clause 2.4d or 2.4f 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;

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 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, when possible, at least two representatives Aged 26 or under. As far as possible all appointments shall be made in rotation from local churches.
- (xi) to appoint from time to time the President, Secretary and members of the district council or councils within its boundaries.
- (xii) to appoint to service on synod:
 - (I) United Reformed Church ministers/lay people serving as (a) full-time chaplains to universities, colleges, hospitals, and 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;
- (xiii) 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;**
- (xiv) 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.
- (xv) to exercise oversight of all ministers falling within any of the categories 2(4)), (b),(d) and (f) except moderators of synods who are the responsibility of the General Assembly.
- (xvi) 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.
- (xvii) where following initial enquiry either on its own initiative or on a reference or appeal brought by any other party the synod 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;

- (xviii) to appoint, or to concur in the appointment of, non-stipendiary ministers to their particular service and to review this service at stated intervals.
- (xix) 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 after consultation with the appropriate ecumenical partner.
- (xx) to receive the resignation of ministers and to decide upon appropriate action (see also paragraph 2.5.xviii)
- (xxi) 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.
- (xxii) to decide upon all matters regarding erection, major reconstruction or disposal of buildings.
- (xxiii) to receive, hear and decide upon references and appeals duly submitted.
- (xxiv) to do such other things as may be necessary in pursuance of its responsibility for the common life of the church.

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

(C) No appeal shall lie against a decision by the synod to refer any case to the Assembly Commission under Function (xv) 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 council 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 Council

- (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 council 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 district;
- (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 council 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 region 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 council 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 council 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.
5. General Assembly resolves to amend the Structure of the United Reformed Church relating to the General Assembly, by deleting Paragraph 2.(5) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church from its beginning to “The General Assembly may appoint to any such committee members of the United Reformed Church who are not members of the General Assembly.” and substituting:
- 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 250.)**
 - (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, and 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 members 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 two most immediate past moderators of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.
- (j) Two former moderators of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, past chairmen of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, past presidents of the Congregational Church in England and Wales, former moderators of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, former chairmen or presidents of the Annual Conference of the Association of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland, 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 and that they shall have been elected by a college consisting of all such past and former moderators, presidents and chairmen as are members of the United Reformed Church.**
- (k) 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);
- (l) Representatives of other denominations in the United Kingdom as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine;
- (m) A representative of the Council for World Mission.
- (n) Such number of Assembly-appointed staff as the General Assembly may from time to time determine.

The General Assembly shall at its biennial meeting elect one Minister of Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Worker and one Elder of the United Reformed Church to serve jointly as moderators, 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 moderators: 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 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.

6. General Assembly resolves to amend the following parts of the Structure of the United Reformed Church relating to Constitutional amendments to read:

Paragraph 3.(1)(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 also to local churches.

Paragraph 3(1)(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.

Paragraph 3(1)(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.

7. General Assembly resolves to amend Paragraph 5(2) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church to read:

The procedure for dealing with reference and appeals falling outside paragraph 5(1) 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.

The Assembly Clerk moved adoption of Resolution 25:

RESOLUTION 25

Changes to the Rules of Procedure

1. General Assembly resolves to amend the Paragraph 1 of the Rules of Procedure to read:

1. General Assembly

1.1 The Assembly shall meet at least once in every other year. The scheduled meeting in that year, the place and dates of which shall be determined by a preceding Assembly, shall be the Biennial Meeting of the Assembly. At the completion of the business of the Biennial Meeting of the Assembly, the Assembly is adjourned. The members of Assembly at any time between Biennial Meetings of the Assembly remain those who were included on the Roll of Assembly at the constitution of the immediately preceding Biennial Meeting of the Assembly. Any meeting of the Assembly other than the Biennial Meeting shall be a special meeting.

1.2 A special meeting of the Assembly may be convened by the Mission Council or by the Moderator of the General Assembly.

1.3 All meetings of the Assembly shall be convened and held as provided by these rules. The Standing Orders which are printed in the Book of Reports to General Assembly shall apply to all meetings of the Assembly and, in so far as they are applicable, to meetings of synods, district councils and their committees.

1.4 The Roll of Assembly shall be made up by the General Secretary. Synods shall send to the General Secretary, the names and addresses of their representatives to the forthcoming Assembly so as to reach the General Secretary not later than fourteen weeks before the meeting of the Assembly. **Any necessary amendments to the list shall be notified to the General Secretary not later than two weeks before the meeting of the Assembly, at which time the roll shall be held to be complete.**

1.5 When a synod cannot fill all its allotted places at Assembly, its vacant seats may be filled from other synods bearing in mind the need to balance lay and ministerial representation.

2. General Assembly resolves to amend Paragraph 3 of the Rules of Procedure to read:

3. MODERATOR

3.1 The Moderators of the General Assembly shall be elected by ballot in accordance with these Rules. The Moderators shall serve jointly for two years commencing at the biennial Assembly following the Meeting at which the report of the election is received in accordance with Rule 3.10. The period of office for both shall be deemed to begin with the induction of the Moderators and shall continue until the Moderators' successors are inducted into office.

3.2 The Moderators of the General Assembly shall be a minister of word and sacrament or a Church Related Community Worker or an Elder of the United Reformed Church .

3.3 Nominations for election as Moderators of the General Assembly shall be made by a Synod, the consent of the nominees not being required. These nominations shall be in writing under the hand of the Clerk of the Synod and received by the General Secretary not later than the 31st March immediately preceding the Annual Meeting of the Assembly. The Synod shall propose one nominee in each category, but the absence of a nomination in either category shall not invalidate the other nomination.

3.4 The General Secretary shall forthwith send to each person nominated a list of the nominations. Any nominee may, within ten days of the receipt of this list, withdraw from nomination by notice in writing to the General Secretary.

3.5 If after 31st March or after the period for withdrawal there shall be no nominations either in one or in both categories 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.

3.6 If after the period for withdrawal there is only one nomination in either category, this nomination shall be placed before the Assembly and voted upon by secret ballot.

3.7 If the number of those who have been nominated in either category and have not withdrawn is or exceeds two, the election shall be by a secret ballot according to the principle of the single transferable vote. All members of the Assembly shall be entitled to vote. They shall vote by indicating their preference by figures 1, 2, 3 and so forth, but no voting paper shall be invalidated by the absence of alternative choices. If the tellers find that no name has an absolute majority of first choices, the second choices of those who gave as their first choice the name securing the smallest number of such choices shall be added to the first choices for other names. If necessary this process shall continue until one of the names has an absolute majority of votes cast. If the process continues until only two names remain, the person who then has the larger number of votes shall be elected.

3.8 Members of the Assembly shall vote by means of a voting paper containing the name, the usual designation and the church of membership, of each of those accepting nomination which shall be sent by the General Secretary by ordinary post to each such member before the commencement of the biennial Meeting of the Assembly. Brief indication of the reasons for the nomination, as supplied by the synod, may be circulated with the ballot paper. The General Assembly may in any case authorise further means of informing the members about those accepting nomination.

3.9 The General Assembly shall vote to elect the Moderators of the Assembly by secret ballot as an item of business following prayer on either the second or third day of the meeting of the Assembly. The ballot boxes shall be delivered to the tellers by whom alone the boxes shall be opened. They shall report the result of the ballot to the Assembly at a later session.

3.10 As soon as the voting papers have been examined and the result of the poll ascertained, the voting papers shall be closed up under the seal of the tellers or any two of them, and shall be retained by the General Secretary for one month after the election, and shall then be destroyed.

3.11 At each biennial Meeting the Assembly shall appoint, upon the nomination of the Nominations Committee, three tellers to be responsible for the ballot for the ensuing Assembly. The counting of the votes cast shall take place in secret under their supervision and control and they shall:

3.11.1 inform the General Secretary of the name of the persons elected and the General Secretary shall thereupon individually inform those nominated whether or not they have been elected.

3.11.2 report to the Assembly the name of the persons elected, the number of papers received and the number of papers which were invalid.

3.12 If any of the tellers appointed by the Assembly shall become incapable of acting the Moderator shall fill any such vacancy or vacancies and report that action to the Assembly.

3.13 Upon receipt of the report of the tellers by the Assembly the persons elected shall thereupon become the duly elected Moderators for the period commencing at the next biennial Meeting of the Assembly.

The Resolution was carried.

Assembly by vote demitted the Catch the Vision Task Group from office. On behalf of the Assembly, the Moderator warmly thanked the group for its work.

PAST MODERATOR

The immediate Past Moderator, the Revd Elizabeth Caswell, reflected upon her year in office.

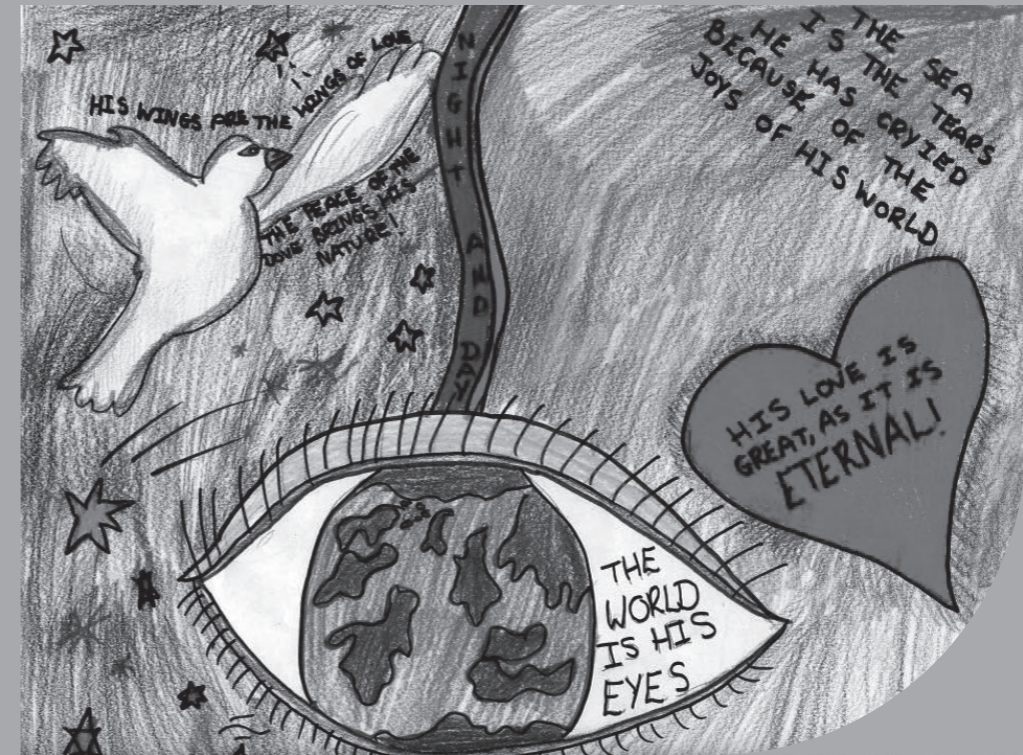
Closing worship was led by the Chaplain, and the Assembly adjourned.

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell





Lat Blaylock of *RE Today* led Assembly in Bible study of Psalm 139 as seen through the eyes and minds of children and young people.



Bible Study

*Bible Study
Psalm 139
Where is God?*

● Opening worship was conducted by the Chaplain; Bible Study was led by Mr Lat Blaylock.

● **CHILDREN'S ASSEMBLY**

The Assembly received an audio-visual report from the Children's Assembly and a presentation from the children on the subject of peace, during which messages of peace were gathered from members of Assembly to be shared with the synods and ecumenical partners.



Mr Simon Loveitt moved adoption of Resolution 41:

Resolution 41 **Heritage Lottery Funding**

Having re-considered its position on Lottery funding, General Assembly accepts, reluctantly, that some local churches will need to make application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to assist with the upkeep and repair of their listed church buildings and, in that respect, revises the advice contained in Resolution 20 of General Assembly 1995, which urged members and councils of the Church to disassociate themselves from the Lottery.

The Assembly accepted an amendment proposed by The Assembly Clerk to delete the words 'upkeep and repair of their listed church buildings', and insert 'upkeep, repair and alteration of their listed church buildings.'

The amendment was carried.

The Revd Peter Southcombe moved the amendment:

'delete the word 'Heritage'.'

Seconded by Martin Hayward

The amendment was carried.

RESOLUTION 41

Lottery Funding

Having re-considered its position on Lottery funding, General Assembly accepts, reluctantly, that some local churches will need to make application to the Lottery Fund to assist with the upkeep, repair and alteration of their listed church buildings and, in that respect, revises the advice contained in Resolution 20 of General Assembly 1995, which urged members and councils of the Church to disassociate themselves from the Lottery.

The Clerk recused himself and left the platform and the General Secretary acted as Clerk for the remainder of the debate.

After debate, the Resolution was carried.

The Revd Alasdair Pratt took the Chair

GLOBAL WARMING

Mrs Melanie Frew moved adoption of Resolution 49:

Resolution 49 **Climate Change**

General Assembly

- i) notes with approval the work already underway on climate change, and reaffirms the need to build this into the whole life of the Local Church;
- ii) recognises that all society, including the United Reformed Church, must shrink its carbon footprint;
- iii) calls upon the Church and Society Committee
 - a) to determine how carbon emissions can best be monitored across the Church;

- b) to develop plans in consultation with the relevant agents of the church to implement year on year cuts in carbon emissions using the expertise of such groups as Eco-Congregations, Operation Noah, Creation Challenge and the Joint Public Issues Team;
- c) to roll this out across the Church, and
- d) to report annually to the Trustees;
- iv) calls upon local churches to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Mr Malcolm Townsend moved an amendment, inclusion of a clause (iv): calls for the urgent development of energy sources alternative to fossil fuels.

Seconded by the Revd Dr John Bradbury.

The amendment was acceptable to Mission Council, and was carried.



RESOLUTION 49

Climate Change

General Assembly

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- ii) recognises that all society, including the United Reformed Church, must shrink its carbon footprint;
- iii) calls upon the Church and Society Committee
 - a) to determine how carbon emissions can best be monitored across the Church;
 - b) to develop plans in consultation with the relevant agents of the church to implement year on year cuts in carbon emissions using the expertise of such groups as Eco-Congregations, Operation Noah, Creation Challenge and the Joint Public Issues Team;
 - c) to roll this out across the Church, and
 - d) to report annually to the Trustees;
- (iv) calls for the urgent development of energy sources alternative to fossil fuels;
- (v) calls upon local churches to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The Resolution, as amended, was carried.

The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard resumed the Chair.

DOCTRINE, PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Debate continued on the report of the Doctrine, Prayer and Worship Committee.



RACIAL JUSTICE

The Revd Andrew Prasad moved adoption of Resolution 58:

Resolution 58 **Membership of Assembly**

As from 2010 among the representatives of Synods shall be included not less than one and preferably two from each Synod from its black and minority ethnic constituencies. Should a Synod prove unable to make such an appointment it may appoint from another Synod, but those persons must be from the black and ethnic minority community.

An amendment to delete the second sentence was proposed by Mr Andrew Littlejohns, seconded by Mr Gereint Goodfellow.

Mr William McVey moved that the amendment be now put; there were several seconders; the Assembly agreed.

The amendment was carried.

The Revd Alan Wharton proposed that 'the matter be deferred to the next Assembly.' Seconded by Mr Philip Timson.

The proposal failed to achieve the required two-thirds majority.

Mrs Wilma Frew moved the amendment 'As from 2010, Synods shall, among the representatives, make every effort to include at least one from its black and minority ethnic constituency.'

The General Secretary moved that the amendment be not put. Seconded by the Revd David Grosch-Miller.

The resolution that the amendment be not put was carried.

The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad, on behalf of the Racial Justice Committee, sought Assembly's permission to withdraw Resolution 58. The Assembly agreed.

The Moderator conveyed the Assembly's thanks to the Revd Dr Andrew Prasad for his work as Convener of the Racial Justice and Multicultural Ministries Committee.

The Clerk moved adoption of the Resolution:

RESOLUTION 24 **Changes to the Basis and Structure**

General Assembly approves Resolution 24 as amended.

The General Secretary moved that 'in accordance with Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, Resolution 24 be referred to Synods with the 31st March 2008 as the final date for responses to the General Secretary as to whether or not this constitutional amendment be proceeded with.'

The Assembly agreed.

DISTRICT COUNCILS

Mr Peter Pay moved adoption of Resolution 60:

RESOLUTION 60 **Thanks for the work of District Councils**

General Assembly gives thanks to Almighty God for the work of District Councils over the last 35 years and expresses its deep appreciation for the faithful service of so many members of the United Reformed Church in running these Districts.

Seconded by Colin Ferguson.

The Resolution was carried with acclaim.

The General Secretary reported that there had been three Section O Commissions in the past year, resulting in the removal of two names from the Roll of Ministers, and at a cost of £6278.85

The Assembly Clerk moved that:

Assembly receives the minutes of session one and two of Monday 9th July, and approves the insertion of the Minutes session three of Monday and the closing session into the full minutes after review and any necessary correction by officers of the Assembly.

The Assembly agreed.

ADDRESS TO THE THRONE

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell presented the address to the Throne:

To the Queen’s Most Excellent Majesty.

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, meeting in Manchester, sends its greetings.

Earlier this year, our Moderator of General Assembly and other representatives were present with Your Majesty at Westminster Abbey, to mark the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. However, our pleasure at being part of that commemoration was qualified by our concern that slavery still exists in many forms. Child labour, forced marriage, the employment of immigrant workers in poor conditions, and the trafficking of women and girls for prostitution are all manifestations of this. We welcome the higher priority now given to these issues by Your Majesty’s government and suggest that work done in Italy and Sweden in addressing demand for trafficked prostitutes, might be used to inform good practice.

We are also conscious of the grave humanitarian consequences of the policies of Your Majesty’s Government in respect of those people whose applications for asylum in the United Kingdom have been turned down. Unable to return to their country of origin through a well-founded fear of persecution, large numbers of men and women are forced into destitution. Our Christian faith teaches us the fundamental importance of treating all God’s people with respect and dignity. Our General Assembly has declared us to be a Multicultural Church, recognising the importance of the contribution we are making in the areas of Inter Faith Relations and Multicultural Ministry.

During the past year, together with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Methodist Church, we have expressed our opposition to renewal of the Trident nuclear weapons programme. We live in an uncertain world, but we believe Britain’s chances of reversing the proliferation of nuclear weapons will not be helped by Your Majesty’s government further developing nuclear capabilities. There are other, more effective, ways of improving security, and many other demands on the billions of pounds that the new deterrent will cost.

We remain concerned about the conflict in Iraq and, increasingly, by the suffering endured by the people of that country and the danger to which British military personnel are exposed. We contrast the involvement of Your Majesty’s government and the American administration in Iraq, with the less energetic attention given to conflicts elsewhere, for instance in Israel/Palestine, Darfur and Zimbabwe, where Britain might use its influence more constructively. We pray for reconciliation, and for a just and lasting peace, in these theatres of conflict.

We applaud the decision of Your Majesty’s government to take a lead in addressing climate change. We entirely support the statement in the draft Climate Change Bill, when it says:

“The United Kingdom...is clearly unable to address the global problem of climate change alone. However, this should not be used as an excuse for not taking further action”.

We wish to play our part in being good stewards of God’s creation and will be developing plans to monitor carbon emissions across the Church, and to implement cuts, year on year.

We are sure it saddens Your Majesty, as it saddens us, that in this, the 56th year of Your Majesty’s reign, the gap between the richest and the poorest in the land is as wide as it was in 1952. The facts are harsh: our country has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the industrialised world, a child from a poor family is more likely to die in infancy than a child of a rich family, and around ten million people (two million of them pensioners) live in poverty. This situation exists in Britain, not the developing World. In 2008, the United Reformed Church will embark upon a campaign, led by Church Action on Poverty, with the ambitious target of creating a just and fair society, free from poverty in all its forms. We believe it is entirely what Christ himself would ask of us, his followers.

We have the assurance that our Christian faith will sustain us in answering our calling. We pray that Your Majesty’s own faith will continue to be both strengthening and sustaining in the year to come.

The Assembly approved the address.

MODERATOR-ELECT

The Moderator-Elect, the Revd John M Marsh, addressed the Assembly.



VOTE OF THANKS

Dr James Merrilees thanked the North Western Synod for its welcome and hospitality, and assured members of a warm welcome to the National Synod of Scotland in 2008.

The Moderator thanked the staff of the University of Manchester, the Assembly administrative staff, musicians, worship leaders, the Chaplain and all who contributed to the smooth running of the Assembly.

The General Secretary thanked the Youth and Children’s Work staff who had organised the Children’s Assembly, the ‘What Do You Think?’ organisers, and the Communications staff.

He thanked the Moderator for his sensitive and efficient leadership of Assembly.



Main Hall

CLOSING WORSHIP

Closing worship was led by the Chaplain and members of the Children’s Assembly.

The General Secretary formally announced that the Assembly had completed its business and would adjourn to meet as agreed at the Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh on 10th July 2008 or at such other place or on such other date as may be necessary.

Index

	Reports page no.	Record page no.
Anniversary of Abolition of Slave Trade (<i>see Slave Trade</i>)		
Accounts (<i>Trustee's Report and Annual Accounts 2006</i>)	(<i>separate document</i>)	20
Accreditation (<i>see Ministries</i>)		
Additional paid work (<i>see Plan for Partnership</i>)		
Address to the Throne	121	99/100
Appeals procedure (<i>see Listed Buildings</i>)		
Assembly Arrangements Committee		81
Assembly, membership		43, 98
roll of		02
Assessment procedure (<i>see Ministries</i>)		
Assisted Dying	51, (<i>separate document: 1/43</i>)	47/49
Auditors, appointment of		21
Basis and Structure, changes to (<i>see also Structure</i>)	85/93	71/75, 81/90, 99
Bradbury, J – Westminster College		20
Brain, P		34
Caswell, E		02, 93
Catch the Vision	7/12	38, 44
Children's Assembly		35, 41, 47, 95
Church and Society	119/120	
Assisted Dying		47/49
Emergency resolution on terrorism		56
Church changes and closures	39/43	23
Church, R – Moderator of North Western synod	109	19
Clerk, appointment of acting deputy		10
Climate Change	48, <i>Document 3</i>	96/98
Colleges, reports from	<i>Information Papers: 9/20</i>	
Commitment for Life	169/170	
Committees (<i>see New Committee Structures</i>)		
Consensus decision making	(<i>separate document: 1/8</i>)	29/33
Cornick, D (<i>see General Secretary</i>)		
Covenant, membership and mission	151/156	45/46
Discipline, Ministerial (<i>see Section O</i>)		
District Councils, thanks for work of		99
Doctrine, Prayer and Worship	49, 135	38, 98
Eastern synod report	35	56
East Midlands synod report	171/172	
Ecclesiology of the URC (<i>see Doctrine, Prayer and Worship</i>)		
Ecumenical Committee	131/133	
Ecumenical engagement, nature of the UR Church's	141/144	54
Ecumenical guests		07, 54
Eldership, consultation on	137/140	
Ethical Investment Advisory Group	50/51	
Finance Committee report	113/116	20
revised remit	49, 115/116	22
FURY presentation		55
General Secretary, reappointment of	49	29
Global warming (<i>see Climate Change</i>)		
Governing document	48,79/82	22

Index

	Reports page no.	Record page no.
Grants and Loans Group report	77	
Guests, Ecumenical and International		07, 43
Harrison, A		34
Heritage Lottery Funding	<i>Document 1</i>	96
History Society (<i>United Reformed Church</i>)	<i>Information Papers: 25</i>	
Housing for Non-stipendiary ministers	47	
Human sexuality (<i>see Moratorium</i>)		
Incapacity Procedure, Ministerial (<i>see Section O</i>)		
Interfaith Relations		
Committee Report	145/146	56
Guests		08
International guests		07
Joint Public Issues Team	48	
Lay Preaching (<i>see Ministries</i>)		
Life and Witness Committee	147/150	45/48
(<i>see also Covenant Membership and Mission</i>)		
Listed Buildings Advisory Group	54/56	
ratification of appeals procedure		
and changes	56, 75/76	76
Lottery (<i>see Heritage Lottery Funding</i>)		
McArthur, A		29
Manse guidelines, maintenance (<i>see Plan for Partnership</i>)		
Marsh, J		38, 56, 101
Membership (<i>see Covenant Membership and Mission</i>)		45/46
Ministers and CRCWs:		
Commemoration of those who have died		25/26
Jubilee of ordination		28
Reception of newly-ordained/commissioned		27
Ministerial Discipline (<i>see Section O</i>)		
Ministerial Incapacity Procedure (<i>see Section O</i>)		
Ministers' Pension Fund (<i>see Pension Fund</i>)		
Ministries:		
Accreditation	157	
Assessment procedure	163/166	50-54
Lay Preaching	159	
Transfer age limit	161	76
(<i>see Plan for Partnership</i>)		
Ministry and Mission Fund		21
Mission Council report	45/56	29/34, 58/78
London Synod Commission	46	
Craven, C	48	
Durber, S	48	
Hazell, M	47	
Lowe, R	47	
Saying sorry	46	
Trustees, nomination of	48	
Mission, covenant membership and		45/46
Mission, new department of	13/21	44
Mission and spirituality think-tank		44
Missionaries: Commemoration of those who have died		26
Moderator of General Assembly		
Election		38, 56
Election of Moderators and review	23	45
Changes to rules of procedure	23	90/92
Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality	<i>Document 2</i>	35/37
Musicians Guild	<i>Information Papers: 27</i>	

Index

	Reports page no.	Record page no.
New Committee Structures	111/112	
Nominations	99/109, 111	10/19
Non-stipendiary ministers (<i>see Housing for</i>)		
Orchard, S		01
Pastoral Reference (and Welfare) Committee	117/118	49
Pension Fund, nomination of directors to Board	49,76	21
Contributions		22
Plan for Partnership, amendments	161,162	58, 77/78
Post Moratorium task group report	<i>Document 2</i>	35
Procedure (<i>see Rules of Procedure</i>)		
Racial Justice and Multicultural Ministry	123/129	42/43, 98/97
Resource Sharing Task Group	49/50	
Retired Ministers' Housing Society Funds		50
Roll of Assembly		02
Rules of Procedure, changes to	95/97	90/92
Schools related to United Reformed Church	<i>Information Papers: 33/37</i>	
Section O		
(<i>Note: Section O text appears both in 'Annual Report Resolutions and Papers', and in a separate booklet called 'Section O Papers' – Documents 4 and 5.</i>)		
Advisory Group report	51/53	
Changes to Section O Part 1	65/69	66/69
Changes to Structure (<i>see Structure</i>)		
Ministerial Incapacity Procedure	61/65, <i>Document 5: 31/48</i>	62/63
Ministerial Incapacity Procedure: CRCWs		65/66
Ratification of replacement of existing Part 1	57/58	58/59
Ratification of amendments to the Structure	59/60	60/61
Replacement of existing Part II	61, <i>Document 4: 3/30</i>	62
Silence and Retreats	<i>Information Papers: 31</i>	
Slave Trade, Anniversary of abolition of	125	39
South western synod resolutions	29	
Standing Orders	<i>Information Papers: 3/8</i>	
Structure, amendment to include CRCWs		
in ministerial disciplinary process	70/75	81/90
(<i>see also Basis and Structure, changes to</i>)		
Students in Training – statistics	<i>Information Papers: 23</i>	
Synod reports and resolutions	29/38, 171/172	49
Synod moderators' report	25/27	
Terrorism, emergency resolution		56
Thames North synod report	37	
Trident debate	48	
Trustees' Report and Annual Accounts	<i>(separate document: 1/28)</i>	20
Trustees, schedule of	83	
Watson, K – Moderator of Yorkshire synod	109	19
Women's World Day of Prayer	<i>Information Papers: 29</i>	
Yorkshire synod report	31/34	

Index of Resolutions

Record Page No.	Title	Resolution number	Report Page No.
44	'Think-tank' on mission and spirituality	1	12
44	A new Department of Mission	2	21
44	A new Department of Mission	3	21
44	A new Department of Mission	4	21
45	Election of Moderators	5	23
45	Election of Moderators	5a	
50	Retired Ministers' Housing Society Fund	6	29
50	Retired Ministers' Housing Guidelines	7	29
23	Church Closures	8	39
58	Ministerial Disciplinary Process (Section O): Ratification of Replacement of existing Part 1	9	57
60	Section O: Ratification of amendments to the Structure	10	59
62	Section O: Replacement of existing Part II	11	61
62	Ministerial Incapacity Procedure	12	61
64	Ministerial Incapacity Procedure Part II	13	63
64	Ministerial Incapacity Procedure: Changes to the Structure	14	63
65	Ministerial Incapacity Procedure: Church Related Community Workers	15	64
66	Changes to Section O Part 1	16	65
69	Changes to Section O Part 1	17	68
71	Changes to the Basis of Union to include CRCWs in the ministerial disciplinary process	18	70
72	Amendment of Structure to include CRCWs in the ministerial disciplinary process	19	72
76	Ratification of the Listed Buildings Appeals Procedure	20	75
76	Changes to the rules of procedure on Appeals (Listed Buildings)	21	76
21	Revised Arrangements for nominating directors of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund	22	76
22	Governing Document	23	83
81 / 90, 99	Changes to the Basis and Structure	24	85
90 / 92	Changes to Rules of Procedure	25	95
19	Appointment of the Moderator for Yorkshire Synod	26	109

Record Page No.	Title	Resolution number	Report Page No.
19	Appointment of the Moderator for North Western Synod	27	109
10	Nominations	28	109
20	Trustee's Report and Annual Accounts	29	114
21	Appointment of Auditors	30	114
21	The giving of the members of the Church to central funds	31	114
22	Revised remit of the Finance Committee - Document 7	32	116
49	Pastoral Reference Committee	33	118
42	Anniversary of the abolition of the British Slave Trade	35	125
54	Ecumenical Engagement	36	133
45 / 46	Covenant Membership and Mission	37	156
76	Upper Age limit for transfer from non-stipendiary to stipendiary service	38	161
77	Amendments to the Plan for Partnership	39	161
50 / 54	The Assessment procedure from July 2007	40	163
96	Heritage Lottery Funding - Document 1	41	(Doc. 1) 8
36	Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality - Document 2	42	(Doc. 2) 12
36	Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality - Document 2	43	(Doc. 2) 12
36	Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality - Document 2	44	(Doc. 2) 12
36	Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality - Document 2	45	(Doc. 2) 12
37	Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality - Document 2	46	(Doc. 2) 12
37	Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality - Document 2	47	(Doc. 2) 12
37	Moratorium on policy decisions on homosexuality - Document 2	48	(Doc. 2) 12
97	Climate Change - Document 3	49	(Doc. 3) 2
29	Consensus Decision Making	50	extra paper
47 / 49	Assisted Dying	51	167
10	Appointment of Acting Deputy Clerk	52	
20	Westminster College	53	
22	Pension Fund Contributions	54	
29	Revd Arthur Macarthur	55	
29	Re-appointment of General Secretary	56	
58	Amendment to the Plan for Partnership	57	
98	Membership of Assembly	58	
56	Emergency Resolution	59	
99	Thanks for the work of the District Councils	60	

