

Paper M4

Appointments to the General Secretariat

Moderators of General Assembly

Basic information

Contact name and email address	The Revd Nigel Uden nigel.uden@urc.org.uk Mr Derek Estill derek.estill@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision re General Secretary; take note of report re DGS(D).
Draft resolution(s)	Acting on behalf of General Assembly, Mission Council appoints the Revd Dr John Bradbury to serve as General Secretary of the Church from 1 June 2020 to the end of General Assembly 2027.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	Commending a nomination and noting the work, thus far, of an appointment group.
Main points	As resolution.
Previous relevant documents	Papers O1 and O2, May 2019
Consultation has taken place with...	Members of the respective nomination and appointment groups.

Summary of impact

Financial	These appointments are within budget. While there will be some extra cost in having a three month overlap in the General Secretary role, there would be other costs in not doing so.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	The GS post in particular has a lot of ecumenical contact.

1. The Revd John Proctor having intimated his intention to retire as General Secretary in August 2020, Mission Council received proposals from the human resources advisory group about the job description and person specification. These being approved, a nominating group was created, convened by The Revd Nigel Uden as a Moderator of the General Assembly, and including representatives of the URC's Committee Conveners elected by Mission Council, and people from the Assembly Appointments Panel, identified by the nominations committee.

2. Advertising led to people being nominated, three of whom then submitted an application form. All three sets of detailed paperwork were appreciated by the panel, and revealed people who already exercised significant and valued ministries. Two candidates were interviewed, and after careful consideration the nominating group unanimously brings to Mission Council the name of the Revd Dr John Bradbury.
3. Dr Bradbury is a minister serving Downing Place United Reformed Church, Cambridge, Stetchworth and Cheveley URC and Whittlesford URC. He received his theological education at the universities of Edinburgh, Tübingen and Cambridge. He was ordained in 2004, to work as part of the ecumenical team in the centre of Liverpool, and to minister with Earle Road URC in Picton, an inner-city area. As part of this work, John worked closely with the Bread Church, part of the Somewhere Else community, an early Fresh Expression (new type) of church. In 2007, John was appointed to teach Systematic Theology and Church History at Westminster College, Cambridge, where he eventually served as Vice-Principal and for a substantial period as Acting Principal.
4. The nominating group warmly commends Dr Bradbury to Mission Council, as a minister gifted with theological acuity, strategic thinking, pastoral sensitivity and a warm personality.
5. Subject to Mission Council's approval, he will commence work on 1 June 2020, shadowing John Proctor, and will be inducted at the General Assembly in July.
6. The Revd Richard Church also retires next summer, on 31 July 2020, and we shall therefore have a vacancy for a new Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship). Appointment to this post is determined by the interviewing group, and does not depend on Mission Council decision. However, it is important that Mission Council know of the work of the appointing group, convened by Mr Derek Estill.
7. The vacancy has been advertised, a number of serious applications were received, and interviews were held on 15 October. However, the group is not ready at the moment to make an appointment, and it will therefore continue its work, reporting to Mission Council in March and if need be to General Assembly in July.
8. Incidentally, the reason that the General Secretary's post has been addressed by a nomination group while the Deputy's post is being handled by an appointment group goes back to a 2010 Assembly resolution. Synod Moderators and Officers of Assembly are nominated by the groups that interview them but can only be formally appointed by Mission Council or General Assembly. Whereas other Assembly-appointed staff are directly appointed by the group chosen to interview for the post. The General Secretary comes under the first of those rubrics; the DGS (Discipleship) under the second.