



To: Members of Mission Council,  
staff in attendance and observers

February 2016

Dear Colleagues,

**Mission Council**  
**Wednesday to Friday 9 – 11 March 2016**  
**The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire**

I look forward warmly to seeing you at Mission Council, and write now to mention several practical matters as we prepare for the meeting.

1. There will be an introduction session at 12 noon on the first day for new Mission Council members, to outline processes and procedures, introduce the Assembly officers, and explain some items of business. Old timers who would like to attend are welcome too. A full version of our rules for procedure is in the 'Standing Orders' (which are also used at General Assembly), and these can be found on the URC website at: <http://bit.ly/1Xd7UCp>

2. In recent Mission Council meetings we have taken certain business *En Bloc*. Feedback has been very positive. The fact that an item is listed as *En Bloc* does not mean it is less important than timetabled items. Rather, the *En Bloc* list contains those items where the Moderators think that decisions might be reached responsibly without further discussion. You will see that the agenda includes a slot when these items will be voted on.

I suggest you read the *En Bloc* papers first. This will give you time to contact the author of a paper if you have questions. Authors' names and email addresses are noted on the cover sheets. If you think any of these papers need discussion at Mission Council, particularly if you disagree with a proposed course of action, you may ask that a piece of business be removed from *En Bloc*. A sign-up sheet will be available at the meeting, where you can list the paper you wish withdrawn. If an item gets three signatures by close of business on the first day, it will be withdrawn from *En Bloc* and added to our agenda, with time allotted for discussion.

I need to remind you too that we really rely on every Mission Council member to read all the papers and take note of information which should be relayed back to their synods. In using the *En Bloc* method of decision-making there is no wish to bury information or to avoid discussions which Mission Council ought to have. We must all ensure the appropriate flow of information from Mission Council to the synods.

3. You should already have a number of papers from the first mailing: a cover letter, an expenses form, directions to The Hayes, a list of members, and (for new members) 'What we are about in Mission Council.' If you are missing any of these, please contact Krystyna Pullen, 020 7916 8646, [krystyna.pullen@urc.org.uk](mailto:krystyna.pullen@urc.org.uk)

4. Observers and URC staff who are not members of Mission Council should not participate in decision-making. Staff members are welcome to speak but, like observers, they should not use orange and blue cards.

5. I remind you that we are not expected to post on social media sites during business sessions. This restriction is only in place when Council is in session; those attending are free to join in online debates during breaks and after the close of business. As ever, everything written and shared on these sites is the responsibility of the author and subject to the same defamation laws as any other written communication.

6. All bedrooms are en-suite. To comply with the venue's health and safety regulations, please do not bring food from outside into the Centre, nor take food from the dining room to your room.
7. Below are the papers enclosed in this mailing listed according to the ways we mean to address them:

**Category A: En Bloc**

A1	Assembly Arrangements
C1 and C2	<i>Reform</i> : subscriptions and finances
D1	Westminster College
G1	Finance: unaudited out-turn from 2015
I1	JPIT and the Church of Scotland
I2	World Council of Churches
J1 and J2	Nominations
M2	Standing orders and rules of procedure
M4	Census
M6	URC-Methodist Reciprocal Arrangement
O1	Human Resources Advisory Group
P1	Appeals in the URC
P2	Report of the Law and Polity Advisory Group (with annexes P2a and P2b)
T1	Ministerial Incapacity and Discipline

**Category B: Majority Voting**

M5	Resolution 19 of the 2014 General Assembly
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**Category C: Consensus decision making**

M1	Missional Discipleship
R1	Safeguarding Past Case Review

**For information or advice rather than immediate decision**

F1	Authorised elders
I3	Greenbelt
M3	The future of General Assembly

8. A small number of papers, which have to be prepared late, will be made available to you at Swanwick.


C2	<i>Reform</i> : supplementing C1 with the most up-to-date subscription figures
J2	Nominations: a supplement to J1, with further nominations
and possibly	
L1	Update on refurbishment plans for Church House

9. Please note that Paper M4 includes some material that we are not expected to make publicly known until the very end of February.

As always, please come to share, listen, reflect and discern together, and to support each other in fellowship outside the formal timetable. Let us treat one another with grace as together we seek the guidance of God.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



The Revd John Proctor  
General Secretary