

# Paper D3

## Appointment of tutor in New Testament Language, Literature and Theology

### Governors of Westminster College

#### Basic information

<b>Contact name and email address</b>	Convener of Governors, the Revd Nigel Uden <a href="mailto:nigel.uden@urc.org.uk">nigel.uden@urc.org.uk</a>
<b>Action required</b>	Take note.
<b>Draft resolution(s)</b>	<b>None.</b>

#### Summary of content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	Informing Mission Council that due process has been completed.
<b>Main points</b>	A successful process of advertising, shortlisting and interview has resulted in an appointment to the post, which became vacant in summer 2018, when the Revd Dr Yak hwee Tan moved on.
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	Governance of Westminster College, General Assembly Record, 1996, appendix one, college appointments committee, 2.2.4.2, page 14.
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	All relevant parties: education and learning committee; URC human resources; Cambridge Theological Federation; University of Cambridge Divinity Faculty; Westminster staff and students.

#### Summary of impact

<b>Financial</b>	URC minister's stipend and the Plan for Partnership.
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	This post will operate, as for the current post-holder, in the ecumenical setting of teaching and learning within the Cambridge Theological Federation and more widely.

1. After three years in post, the Revd Dr Yak hwee Tan stepped down in the summer of 2018 from her post as Tutor in New Testament Language, Literature and Theology at Westminster College. The Governors moved to fill the vacancy as soon as possible, eager to avoid a gap in provision of core biblical teaching at Westminster. After due process, the post was accepted by an eminently suitable

candidate, as was reported to Mission Council in March 2018. In due course, the candidate withdrew acceptance of the offer for personal and family reasons.

2. An interim arrangement was made, and for the academic year 2018 to 2019, the college has been very well served by Dr Jane McLarty, in whose debt both Westminster and the United Reformed Church will long remain.
3. Again, concerned for a timely but careful selection process, an appointment committee, chaired by the Revd Nigel Uden, Convener of Westminster's Board of Governors, was established. This included representatives of the college teaching staff (the Principal), the Convener of the College's Board of Studies, a representative of Westminster's students, a representative of the biblical teachers of the Cambridge Theological Federation, a representative of the Divinity Faculty of the University of Cambridge, the Deputy General Secretary (administration and resources) and the Secretary for Education and Learning.
4. The post was advertised widely through the summer of 2018, and many applications were received from around the world. Long-listing and short-listing created invitations to four candidates to attend Westminster for interview. All candidates had opportunities to see round the college, meet key administrative staff, talk informally with students and have a meal with other members of the college teaching staff. Each candidate presented teaching material to the entire appointment committee and a number of students, and participated in two interviews with two sets of four members of the appointments committee. The full committee then met to discuss the outcome.
5. A unanimous decision was taken to appoint the Revd Jonathan E. Soyars (Wheaton College, BA; Princeton Theological Seminary, MDiv, ThM; University of Chicago, MA, PhD). Jonathan, a priest in the Episcopal Church (USA), is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of New Testament and Louisville Institute Postdoctoral Fellow at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. Previously he taught at Wake Forest School of Divinity and the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, where the Ph.D. was awarded in New Testament and Early Christian Literature. He has also served in a variety of denominational and congregational contexts across the United States. We eagerly anticipate the arrival of Jonathan, his spouse and their two young sons in Cambridge in August and look forward to the ways that he will contribute to the mission of the College, the Cambridge Theological Federation, the URC and its ecumenical partners in the years ahead.

*N. P. Uden  
April 2019*