

Paper D2

Governors of Westminster College
Appointment of Tutor

United Reformed Church 2017
Church 2017
Church 2017



Paper D2

Governors of Westminster College, Cambridge

Appointment of Tutor in Church History and Doctrine

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Nigel Uden nigel.uden@urc.org.uk
Action required	To note the appointment of a new tutor at Westminster College
Draft resolution(s)	None

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	Informing Mission Council that due process has been completed.
Main points	A successful process of advertising, shortlisting and interview has resulted in an appointment to the post that will become vacant upon the departure in mid-2017 of the Revd Dr John Bradbury following his acceptance of the call to be minister of Emmanuel United Reformed Church, Cambridge and of Duxford and Whittlesford United Reformed Churches, with effect from June 2017.
Previous relevant documents	Governance of Westminster College, General Assembly Record, 1996, Appendix 1, College Appointments Committee, 2.2.4.2, page 14.
Consultation has taken place with...	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

Financial	Stipend and other provisions for a United Reformed Church minister according to the Plan for Partnership.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	This post will operate, as for the current post-holder, in the fully ecumenical setting of teaching and learning within the Cambridge Theological Federation and more widely.

Appointment process

1. After some 10 years in post as Tutor in Church History and Doctrine at Westminster College, Cambridge, the Revd Dr John Bradbury accepted the call of Emmanuel, Cambridge, Duxford and Whittlesford United Reformed Churches to be their minister with effect from the summer of 2017. There is much appreciation of Dr Bradbury's ministry at Westminster, to which he has brought both academic excellence and administrative acuity. An appointment committee, chaired by the Revd Nigel Uden, convenor of Westminster's Board of Governors, was established. This included representatives of the college teaching staff (the Principal), the convenor of the Board of Studies, a representative of Westminster's students, a representative of the doctrine 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.
2. The post was advertised widely during early 2017, and a total of 22 applications were received. Long-listing and short-listing created invitations to four candidates to attend Westminster in early April. 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. Candidates presented teaching material to the appointment committee and a number of students, and participated in two interviews with two sets of four members of the appointments committee. The entire committee then met to discuss the outcome.
3. A unanimous decision was taken to appoint The Revd Dr Robert Philip Pope. An alumnus of Westminster, and a minister of the United Reformed Church since 2001, Dr Pope is currently Reader in Theology, University of Wales: Trinity St David; from 2012 to 2016 he was Joint Head of School of Theology, Religious Studies and Islamic Studies. Dr Pope has considerable familiarity with the United Reformed Church, as, inter alia, a local minister, a former member of the Education and Learning Committee, a former convenor of the Faith and Order Committee, and a governor of Northern College (Chair from 2008-2017). His very strong academic portfolio is complemented by wide teaching involvement both in tertiary education and in local churches as well as with key administrative acumen. Westminster is delighted that Dr Pope has accepted this appointment.

Paper G4

Finance Committee

New Treasurers arrangement

United Reformed Church
2017
Church 2017

Paper G4

Finance Committee

New Treasurer arrangements

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	John Ellis, Treasurer john.ellis@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision
Draft resolution	Mission Council resolves to amend 2(a)(iii) of the URC Investment Committee's Terms of Reference to read: 'the Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer of the United Reformed Church'.

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	a) To inform Mission Council of the planned division of work between the incoming Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer. b) To ask Mission Council to make an enabling amendment of the Terms of Reference of the Investment Committee.
Main points	With the post of Deputy Treasurer becoming a permanent part of the structure of the Church, the role will become more of a job share with the Treasurer than a general cover for the Treasurer.
Previous relevant documents	None
Consultation has taken place with...	Convenor of the Investment Committee

Summary of Impact

Financial	None
External (e.g. ecumenical)	None

New Treasurer arrangements

A job share

1. Mission Council will recall that from 1 July 2017 Mr Ian Hardie will be the Treasurer and the Revd John Piper Deputy Treasurer.
2. With the post of Deputy Treasurer now being consolidated as a permanent position within our denominational structures, Ian and John intend to divide the traditional role of the Treasurer between them in a different way from previously. The most visible aspect of this will relate to the 18 internal committees and other groups that the Treasurer has normally attended. The basic model is that the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer intend to divide the lead role in the Treasurers' relationship with individual committees between them.
3. While nothing is intended to be rigid, the typical pattern will be that for each committee either Ian or John will be the regular occupant of the Treasurer's seat after July 2017. This will provide continuity for each committee while sharing the Treasurer workload between the Treasurer and the Deputy. The allocation of committees between them will be based on expertise, geography and other factors and is in no way an attempt to imply that some committees are more important than others.
4. As an illustration for Mission Council's information, the initial division of committees from July 2017 is as follows.

Normally attended by the Treasurer:

- URC Trust
- Remuneration Committee
- Mission Council Advisory Group
- Assembly Committee Convenors Meeting
- Retired Ministers' Housing Society Committee of Management
- Retired Ministers' Housing Sub-committee
- Education and Learning Finance Sub-committee
- Westminster College Board of Governors

Normally attended by the Deputy Treasurer:

- Pensions Executive
- Ministers' Pension Fund Trust Board
- Investment Committee
- Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee
- Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-committee

Normally attended by both the Treasurer and the Deputy Treasurer:

- General Assembly
- Mission Council
- Finance Committee
- Annual Consultation of Synod Treasurers
- Inter-Synod Resource Sharing Task Group

5. Changing circumstances and needs may require changes to this division of responsibilities over time. Such changes would be made only after discussion with the relevant committees and after approval by the Finance Committee. Any major

change in the pattern of working would be reported to General Assembly or Mission Council as appropriate.

6. Under this new arrangement, the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer will work in close collaboration with each other on all major issues. However the Treasurer remains the person who is the Officer of General Assembly and is accountable to General Assembly and Mission Council, though on occasions he may ask his Deputy to speak on his behalf.

A tweak

7. While most of these plans can be implemented without further action by Mission Council, for the Deputy Treasurer to be able to function as a full voting member of the Investment Committee requires a small change in that body's Terms of Reference.
8. Section 2(a) of the current Terms of Reference lists five ex officio members of the Committee. In four cases there is already provision for an alternate to be a Committee member. The exception is 2(a)(iii) which reads "the Treasurer of the United Reformed Church". The proposed resolution would bring this clause more into line with the others in 2(a) and enable the Deputy Treasurer to play a full part in the Committee's work.

Resolution

Mission Council resolves to amend 2(a)(iii) of the URC Investment Committee's Terms of Reference to read: 'the Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer of the United Reformed Church'.

Paper I10

Mission Committee

The 2017 General Election

United Church 2017
Church 2017
Reformed Church 2017
Church 2017



Paper I10

Mission Committee

The 2017 General Election

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Grace Pengelly grace.pengelly@urc.org.uk Francis Brienen francis.brienen@urc.org.uk
Action required	Take note.
Draft resolution(s)	None.

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	A briefing to help members of Mission Council, and the wider United Reformed Church, prepare for the 2017 General Election.
Main points	The paper provides some context to the calling of the 2017 General Election, outlines reasons why it is important to Christians to engage with political processes, highlights issues about which the Church should be particularly concerned in the run-up to the election, provides some details around what activities churches might engage in and lists some further resources that members may find helpful.
Previous relevant documents	Mission Council Paper M2, May 2015. General Assembly Record, Southport 2016.
Consultation has taken place with...	The Joint Public Issues Team

Summary of Impact

Financial	None.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	Churches may wish to organize ecumenical hustings within their communities.

The 2017 General Election

1 Background

- 1.1 On 18 April 2017, Prime Minister May announced her desire for the UK to hold a General Election on 8 June 2017. This announcement surprised just about everyone: the media, fellow politicians and, most importantly, voters, who have suddenly been confronted by another election within a very short period.
- 1.2 Over the last three years the UK has hosted two referendums, one on Scottish independence, the other on the UK's membership of the European Union, a General Election, elections for the Scottish Parliament and Welsh and Northern Irish Assemblies, as well as Local Authority and Mayoral elections.
- 1.3 So while some may welcome the opportunities that a General Election presents, many may feel worn out by politics, and less willing to engage with the regular debates and discussion that normally accompany an election. Yet *every* General Election presents an opportunity for citizens to participate critically and constructively in the democratic process, to challenge and scrutinise the policies and rhetoric of politicians, and, on this occasion, to draw attention to issues that are likely to be overshadowed by Brexit.

2 Responding in Good Faith

- 2.1 For Christians, engaging with democratic processes is an especially important way in which we can demonstrate our willingness put our faith into action. Irrespective of if you are in a swing seat, a safe seat or if you think all politicians are the same, your voice and your vote do matter. This does not mean that any one particular candidate or party is the answer, but it does mean that as Christians we have a part to play in the world, and that the issues we ask candidates and society to consider are important.
- 2.2 It also means that the way in which we conduct ourselves and treat one other during this election time should model a different way to much of the divisive politics we have seen. As Micah 6:8 says, we are required to 'do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly' with our God. Despite any feelings of fatigue, and irrespective of why it was called, this election is an opportunity for Christians to live out this calling.
- 2.3 The most important contribution you can make to the upcoming election is voting. To do so, you will need to ensure that you are registered to vote in your constituency. This needs to be done by the **22 May**.

3 Issues that matter in 2017

- 3.1 Whilst Brexit is undoubtedly the backdrop against which the election has been called, there are many other important issues which deserve reflection and engagement from voters and politicians in the coming weeks. They relate to both domestic issues, including welfare, poverty, and our asylum system, as well as global concerns, like how to ensure that our responsibilities to support those in the global south are not overshadowed by the complexities of the Brexit negotiation process. Further information on these issues will be found at the Joint Public Issues Team website, which is listed below.

a) Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The Syrian War continues to wreak havoc on the lives of innocent civilians, and the wider humanitarian crises taking place in countries like South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen have not abated. But if they feel forced to leave their countries, refugees and asylum seekers continue to face immense challenges in attempting to rebuild their lives in a new country. **While the UK has donated generously to affected regions, is there also a larger role for the UK to play in hosting displaced persons? What sort of treatment should we provide for asylum seekers when they arrive in the UK?**

b) Poverty and Economic Inequality in the UK

The face of UK poverty has changed over the past two decades. Poverty in the past was tightly linked to unemployment and old-age. Today pensioners are the age-group least likely to experience poverty, and the majority of poor families are in work. Brexit will have a huge effect on the UK economy. For those in poverty the most important questions are around how wealth within the country will be distributed. An incoming government could choose to emphasise post-Brexit policies that target money on poorer areas and on the least wealthy. **Many adults are unable to work full-time or at all due to illness or care responsibilities. How should a new Government ensure that they and their children can avoid poverty?**

c) The UK's Role in the World

After leaving the European Union, the UK will want to develop further positive relationships with European and other nations. A key national interest will be the UK's trade relations with other nations. But at what cost should these trade relations be pursued? **How can the UK ensure that its achievements in the areas of human rights, climate change and international development will not be eroded by new trade agreements with large, powerful economies?**

d) The Future of the Welfare State

Doctors, nurses and teachers report finding it increasingly difficult to perform their duties amidst shrinking budgets. The rapid growth of food banks over the past five years is also raising questions about the role of the Welfare State in the UK. **How much financial support should be given to these services? Should civil society play a larger role in supporting them, or is our increased involvement problematic?**

e) Devolution

The ongoing move towards devolution presents a new set of political opportunities and questions. As regions and nations continue to shift power from the traditional power bases of Westminster and Whitehall, the nature of our political debate is changing. **Will this trend continue in the future?**

4. The UK's withdrawal from the European Union

- 4.1 Although the upcoming election is not a vote about whether the UK should remain in the EU, the way the UK withdraws from the EU is certainly going to be the subject of much debate in the run up to the election.

- 4.2 Across the political spectrum, politicians and parties will have three major concerns:
- a) The strategy the UK Government will use during the negotiations to reach a deal.
 - b) The nature of the deal itself.
 - c) The impact that the withdrawal deal may have, positively or negatively, on the needs of the United Kingdom and the people who live here.
- 4.3 The negotiations that the UK is now engaged in will be some of the widest-ranging and most complex ever undertaken by our Government. Over the course of the negotiations, the following issues¹ will need to be addressed, and ideally, resolved.
- a) The rights of EU and UK citizens in each other's countries
 - b) The UK's spending commitments within the EU budget
 - c) The transfer of EU regulatory responsibilities from the EU to UK law
 - d) Determining the future of contracts drawn up under EU law
 - e) Clarifying the UK's commitment to UN environmental goals made via EU legislation
 - f) The rights of UK and EU fishing fleets to fish in each other's waters
 - g) Renegotiating cross-border security arrangements
- 4.4 At the 2016 General Assembly, the United Reformed Church passed an emergency resolution² responding to the referendum. This stated that *'the Church's responsibility now is to be a voice of love, hope, inclusion and compassion'* and outlined the way in which URC churches could respond. It called on URC members to *'pray for wisdom and honesty for those involved in negotiating the terms of the UK's exit from the EU'* and *'encourages members of the URC to continue to engage with the ongoing political and social debate.'*
- 4.5 As politicians and voters debate the nature of our withdrawal from the EU, you are encouraged to take time to read this resolution and to reflect on the issues it highlights. It drew attention especially to *'the value of being a diverse and multicultural society'* and the *'contributions that nationals of other European countries make to the UK'*. **How can we make sure that these values feature in electoral debates about Brexit?**

5. Things to be aware of

- 5.1 During elections, churches are sometimes unsure about what they can and cannot do or say. The passing of The Lobbying Act in 2014 has led to some further confusion about what work performed by the Church is classed as regulated activity.

¹ Further information is contained in this Chatham House briefing

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/twt/preparing-uks-brexite-negotiation>

² <https://www.urch.org.uk/images/General-Assemblies/Assembly2016/RECORD-2016w.pdf>

Resolution 50 p.29

- 5.2 Charities, which include church groups, are regulated under the Charities Acts and may not support or oppose a particular political party, candidate or group of candidates, but are allowed to work and campaign in order to bring about changes in the law or government policy. During periods of campaigning, charities are entitled to produce materials to accompany their work and to further their charitable purposes (as long as it does not advocate one candidate/political party.³)
- 5.3 In May 2015, Mission Council received a report⁴ which outlined the reasons why the United Reformed Church would not be registering under the Lobbying Act. The bulk of our 'public issues' work is dealt with by the Joint Public Issues Team, and in view of this, this report stated that the *“primary reason for not registering is that we now think that most of JPIT’s work should not be viewed as regulated. Not much of the work of other Assembly staff is regulated, and initiatives taken in synod or local churches do not count against our central Church total. Therefore, the overall amount of regulated activity for which we are responsible seems unlikely to reach the threshold that would require registration.”*
- 5.4 Undoubtedly, the most important way for churches to be involved in the upcoming election is by encouraging people to engage thoughtfully and prayerfully with the breadth of issues and then to exercise their democratic right to vote. If you or your church is confused about what exactly this means you can do, please do get in touch with the church and society secretary at Church House.
- 5.5 If your church plans to organise a hustings, then it is important to try to invite every political party or independent candidate – if in practice there are objective and impartial reasons for not inviting particular candidates (i.e. too many candidates), this reason must be made clear and public. Further guidance on organising a hustings may be found in the resources listed below.

6. Resources

- 6.1 As normal, the Joint Public Issues Team, which brings together the United Reformed Church, The Methodist Church, The Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Church of Scotland to work on issues of peace and justice, will be publishing various resources designed to help churches reflect on politics in the run up to the election. All of these materials may be found at: www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/general-election-june-2017/
- **“This is a time”** offers some biblical reflections on some of the key themes of this election. You can also download it in Welsh: “Dyma amser...”
 - **“Holding a Question Time Meeting or Election Hustings”** is a resource containing all you need to know to hold a hustings in your constituency.
 - A detailed **issues briefing** will also be available by the time Mission Council has met.

Other helpful websites:

- Christians in Politics: www.christiansinpolitics.org.uk
- Churches together in Britain and Ireland: www.churcheselection.org.uk
- Full Fact: www.fullfact.org
- Simple Politics: www.simplepolitics.co.uk
- Quaker Vote: www.election.quaker.org.uk

³ Churches Legal Advisory Service Circular 2014/17 (9 October 2014)

⁴ https://urc.org.uk/images/MissionCouncil/May-2015/M2_-_The_Lobbying_Act.pdf

Paper J2

Nominations Committee
Supplementary report





Paper J2

Nominations Committee Supplementary report

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Carol Rogers carannrog@aol.com
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council appoints according to the list of nominations in the report.

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	To appoint members of various committees and posts
Main points	See names in report.
Previous relevant documents	
Consultation has taken place with...	The Committee, on which all the synods are represented.

Summary of Impact

Financial	None
External (e.g. ecumenical)	None

Nominations Committee Supplementary report

1. Assessment Board: Mrs Bridget Akinyombo [2017-2022]
The Revd Jamie Kissack [2017-2022]
2. Communications Committee: Ms Lesley Caddy [2017 -2021]
3. Mission Committee: The Revd Sue Fender representing the National Synod of Wales
4. Disciplinary Commission Panel Secretary Mr Philip Laws [2017-2023]
Member Mrs Mary Kelly [2017-2023]
5. Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-committee Convenor
The Revd Pamela Ward to extend her appointment until General Assembly 2018.
6. Ministries Committee: Worship and Learning Advocate : Mrs Jenny Sheehan
7. Finance Committee: Dr Ian Simpson to extend his appointment until 30 June 2019
8. Children's and Youth Work Committee: Ms Camilla Quartey 2017-2021
9. Westminster College Governor: Mr John Ellis
10. Women's World Day of Prayer URC Representative: The Revd Heather Pencavel
11. Correction:
Nominations Committee: the representative of Mersey Synod is Mr Bill Gould
12. For information:
CTE Joint Liturgical Group: The Revd Dr Ana Gobledale
(This is a Mission Committee appointment)

Postscript, from the General Secretary:

This is the final list of nominations to be presented by Mrs Carol Rogers, who completes next month her four-year term as secretary of this committee. This is surely one of the most unremitting and time-consuming of our voluntary committee roles. Yet Carol fulfils it with care, patience, persistence and good humour. We are heavily in her debt for this service, and Mission Council may wish to express its very warm and grateful thanks.

Paper M6

General Secretary

Marriage of same sex couples
in Guernsey

United Church 2017
Reformed Church 2017
Church 2017



Paper M6

General Secretary

Marriage of same-sex couples in Guernsey

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	John Proctor john.proctor@urc.org.uk
Action required	Resolution
Draft resolution(s)	<p>Following the passing of Resolution 7 of the Assembly of 2016, Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) notes that under the Same-sex Marriage (Guernsey) Law 2016, the marriage of same-sex couples is now lawful in Guernsey; b) recognises that the competence and functions of the Church Meeting in Guernsey is no different from those of any other Church Meeting in the United Reformed Church; c) accepts that the definition and role of a 'governing authority' in the Same-sex Marriage (Guernsey) Law 2016 are in essentials the same as those of a 'governing authority' under section 26(A)(1) of the Marriage Act 1949 in England and Wales; and therefore d) declares, for the avoidance of doubt, that paragraph B of Resolution 7 applies to Church Meetings in Guernsey in the context of Guernsey legislation as it does to Church Meetings in England and Wales; and further e) directs that, in Guernsey, paragraphs C, E and F of Resolution 7 shall apply with the necessary modifications.

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	To place Church Meetings in Guernsey in the same position as those in England and Wales, following changes in Guernsey legislation, enacted on 2 May 2017.
Main points	Marriages between same-sex couples in Guernsey are now permitted on much the same terms as England and Wales, and this resolution seeks to place our Church Meeting there in the position as England and Wales.
Previous relevant documents	Reports to General Assembly 2016. Minutes of General Assembly, 2016
Consultation has taken place with...	Moderator of the Wessex Synod, and the Local Church Leader of Guernsey URC.

Summary of Impact

Financial	n/a
External (e.g. ecumenical)	No difference to England and Wales

Marriage of same-sex couples in Guernsey

1. Resolution 7 of the 2016 General Assembly declared that Church Meetings were the relevant 'governing authority' for whether a local church of the United Reformed Church did or did not wish to apply for registration for the solemnization of marriages between same-sex couples, according to the law of England Wales.
2. The Minutes of General Assembly, from the afternoon of Sunday 7 July, record that: 'The General Secretary made a statement, being a post-script to the debate on marriage of same-sex couples the previous day...Legislation was under preparation in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, and it might be appropriate for Mission Council to deal with any URC response to that legislation'.
3. Legislation in Guernsey was enacted on 2 May 2017, which provided for the marriage of same-sex couples in terms almost identical to England and Wales.
4. As such, the following resolution is brought, so that Church Meetings in Guernsey are in the same position as those in England and Wales:

Following the passing of Resolution 7 of the Assembly of 2016, Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly:

- a) **notes that under the Same-sex Marriage (Guernsey) Law 2016, the marriage of same-sex couples is now lawful in Guernsey;**
- b) **recognises that the competence and functions of the Church Meeting in Guernsey is no different from those of any other Church Meeting in the United Reformed Church;**
- c) **accepts that the definition and role of a 'governing authority' in the Same-sex Marriage (Guernsey) Law 2016 are in essentials the same as those of a 'governing authority' under section 26(A)(1) of the Marriage Act 1949 in England and Wales; and therefore**
- d) **declares, for the avoidance of doubt, that paragraph B of Resolution 7 applies to Church Meetings in Guernsey in the context of Guernsey legislation as it does to Church Meetings in England and Wales; and further**
- e) **directs that, in Guernsey, paragraphs C, E and F of Resolution 7 shall apply with the necessary modifications.**

M6

United Reformed Church • Mission Council, May 2017