

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

October 2018

Dear Colleagues,

**Mission Council
Friday to Sunday 16 to 18 November 2018
The Hayes, 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 doing business is in the 'Standing Orders' (which are also used at General Assembly). These can be found on the URC website at www.urc.org.uk/about-mission-council
2. At General Assembly and Mission Council meetings we take certain business *En Bloc*. The fact that an item is listed as *En Bloc* does not make it 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 A sign-up sheet will be available at the meeting, where you can list the paper you wish to be withdrawn. If an item gets three signatures by close of business on the first day, it will be withdrawn from *En Bloc* and added to our agenda, with time given for discussion.

I need to remind you too that we really rely on every Mission Council member to read the papers and take note of information to relay 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 several papers from the first mailing: a cover letter, an expenses form, directions to our venue, a list of members, and (for new members) 'What we are about in Mission Council.' If any of these are missing, please contact Helen Munt at Church House, 020 7916 2020, helen.munt@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 only applies when Council is in session; members may join in online debates during breaks, about business that is completed (although not on business that has only been adjourned to a later

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session of the meeting). As ever, everything 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 expected at the meeting, listed according to the ways the Moderators presently mean to address them:

Category A: En Bloc

I1	Mission committee update
J1	Nominations
L1	URC Trust: Windermere and Church House
M3 and U2	The General Secretariat
M4	Record of an Assembly commission
N1	Task group on General Assembly
O1 and O2	Human resources advisory group
P1	Marriage in Jersey
T1	Ministerial discipline
Z1	Church House management group

Category B: Majority voting

None

Category C: Consensus decision making

B1-B3	Children's and youth work	
D1	Education and learning	
G1 and G2	Finance	
H1 and H2	Ministries	
I2	Walking the Way	
J2	Supplementary nominations	*
M1 and M2	Listening and strategy	M2*
R1-R3	Safeguarding	
U1	Greenbelt	
U3	The Jubilee in 2022	*

8. One paper – G1, on 2019's budget – is designated by the Moderators as urgent. This is because we need to start the new year with a clear budget, and if consensus eludes us, we shall seek decision in another way.
9. A number of papers, which have to be prepared late, are marked above with an asterisk.* These will be available online a few days before the meeting and, if you have requested hard copy, on arrival at the meeting.
10. 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,

