

MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999

MINUTES

Minutes of the Mission Council held at the Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh on 23rd January 1999.

The meeting was constituted by the Moderator, Mrs. Wilma Frew, who, together with the Chaplains, the Revds Ken and Meriel Chippindale, led the opening worship which included music and images from the World Council of Churches Assembly which had taken place in Harare in December 1998.

99/01 Welcome

The Moderator welcomed everyone to the meeting, mentioning in particular Mr. Neil Platt, FURY Chair, Mrs. Helen Mee from the Scottish Congregational Church, Ms Gabrielle Cox, Church and Society Convener, the Revd Gwynfor. Evans, a representative of the Mersey Synod, the Revd Michael Davies, substituting for the Revd David Helyar, the Revd John Steele, Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness and Mrs. Eva Chiu, Information Technology Project Manager.

99/02 Attendance

There were 62 members present with 13 staff and others in attendance, the Revds Ken and Meriel Chippindale and Mrs. Sally Brooks (Minute Secretary).

Apologies for absence were received from the Revds Liz Byrne, Michael Cruchley, David Helyar, John Jenkinson, Marjorie Lewis-Cooper, Sheila Maxey, John Sutcliffe and Bill Wright, Mrs. Sue Brown, Mrs. Karen Bulley and Dr. Jean Sylvan Evans.

99/03 Minutes of Mission Council 5-7 October 1998

The minutes of the Mission Council held on 5-7 October 1998 were approved and signed with the following correction:

98/60 – Replace “members of staff” with “staff and others”, and insert “the Revd Dr. Finlay Macdonald, Theological Reflector” after “in attendance”.

The Clerk reminded Mission Council of the distinction between members of Council and others in attendance. Only members had the right to vote and speak.

99/04 Matters Arising

98/66 – The General Secretary reported that no objections had been received from synods or district councils to the proposals for union, which meant that only a simple majority would be required at the 1999 General Assembly to ratify the decision. The Congregational Union of Scotland (CUS) had required the approval of 66% of churches and 75% of members and had achieved 85% and 90.4% respectively. A simple majority would be required at the CUS Assembly in September 1999. The General Secretary further reported that it might be necessary to postpone the Unifying

Following the meeting it was discovered that the period of the re-appointment should be from August 31st 2002. Mission Council will be asked to correct this at the March meeting.)

Jenkins reported that the Review Group which had been convened by the Revd Dr. Jack Selvey recommended that the Revd Peter McIntosh be re-appointed as the Director of the Lermere Centre until June 30th 2003. Mission Council agreed that this recommendation should be made to the General Assembly. It was further agreed that the post should be covered in time for a report to be made to the March 2002 meeting of Mission Council.

Jenkins reported that, following concerns expressed at Mission Council, Mrs. Ruth Monahan had been appointed as an independent member of the Review Group for the Chief Accountant and Secretary for Finance. The Group, which would be convened by Dr. Brian Whithall, expected to report to the March meeting of Mission Council.

Jenkins would convene the Appointment Group for the Secretary for Continuing Ministerial Education; it would meet in February and would hope to be able to recommend an appointment.

On behalf of the Nomination Group, the General Secretary moved that: **Mission Council, acting on behalf of the General Assembly, appoints the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod for period of seven years to 31st August 2006.**

It was agreed. It was further agreed that the Mission Council should propose the following resolutions at General Assembly:

Assembly, acting in accordance with paragraph 2(5)(A)(xii) of the Structure, resolves to suspend Rule 7(2)(i) only in order to extend the appointment of the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod.

Assembly extends the appointment of the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod until 31st December 2006.

Mission Council accepted the Report of the Nominations Committee.

2 Report of the Assembly Arrangements Committee

Convener, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, said that there was the possibility that the present arrangements for the counting of the votes in the election for Assembly Moderator could lead to uncertainty. To rectify this, the Committee proposed that the following change be made to the Rules of Procedure:

At the end of Rule 3(6) add: If the process continues until only two names remain, the person who then has the larger number of votes shall be elected.

It was agreed that this be taken to the General Assembly.

The Committee would propose at Assembly:

Assembly agrees that the General Assembly in 2001 will be held residentially, July 16th – 19th at the University of York.

Assembly had agreed that the 2002 Assembly should be residential; the Committee was exploring the possibility that this be held in Scotland.

Work had begun on the review of the patterns of Assemblies after that date, and although there was no report on this yet, the Committee recommended that the following resolution should be taken by the Committee to the General Assembly:

Assembly agrees that future meetings of General Assembly should be held residentially, over a weekend.

Mr. Pratt noted that when the review had been completed it was possible that this would need to be reconsidered.

This was agreed.

99/13 Report of the Mission Council Advisory Group (MCAG) (Paper A)

The Deputy General Secretary introduced the report, noting that paragraphs 1, 2 and 7 were for information. Mission Council agreed with the proposal in paragraph 4 that the successor to Mr. Geoff Lunt as Convener of the Staffing Advisory Group should be appointed at the present meeting. The Clerk asked that nominations should be made by 3.30pm.

The Report from MCAG continues at Minute 99/15. The election of the Convener of the Staffing Advisory Group is recorded at Minute 99/18

99/14 Report on the World Council of Churches Assembly

The General Secretary, assisted by others who had been present at the eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches which had been held in Harare 3rd – 14th December 1998, reported on the proceedings and the issues raised. The theme was: “Turn to God – Rejoice in hope”. The World Council, which was 50 years old, comprised 330 member churches from Protestant and Orthodox traditions. The Roman Catholic Church participated in certain parts of the Assembly.

Information about the World Council and the Assembly could be found on the web-site <http://www.wcc-coe.org> looking in particular for Press Release 57. Four questions were posed:

- 1 How do we as churches engage together in mission and evangelism in the midst of a highly pluralistic world?
- 2 How do we understand baptism as a foundation for the life in community which we are called to share together?
- 3 How do we offer together our resources, witness and action for the sake of the world’s very future?
- 4 How do we walk together on the path towards visible unity?

99/15 Report of MCAG: Responding to Mission Council requests in relation to “Growing Up” (Paper A paragraph 6)

Paragraph 6.1 The Deputy General Secretary introduced the suggestion from MCAG that the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee be asked to commission someone to produce leaflets on all parts of the “Growing Up” paper when revision of that document was complete. The work should be done between March and July so that the leaflets were available at Assembly. This was agreed.

Paragraph 6.4 Mission Council considered the suggestion that the grant from the Council for World Mission (CWM) self-support fund might be used to stimulate and support new local mission projects which were an expression of the Five Marks of Mission. After some discussion the Council agreed to this in principle, noting that consultation with CWM would follow.

Paragraph 6.3 Mission Council agreed that a small task group should be set up to work on a strategy on the use of local church premises. Issues to be considered by the group were suggested. It was agreed that MCAG should prepare the terms of reference and appoint the members of the group. Members of Council were asked to suggest names to the Deputy General Secretary. It was agreed that the task group should report to the Mission Council in March 2000.

99/16 Report of MCAG: The discipline of local church members (Paper A paragraph 3)

It was noted that the correct reference was to “members” not “officers” as in Paper A. Mission Council agreed to set up a small task group to consider the issues and report to Mission Council in March 2000. Members were asked to suggest names to the Deputy General Secretary. MCAG was asked to appoint the group, and suggestions of matters to be considered were made.

99/17 Structures for Mission (Paper I)

The General Secretary introduced the paper, reminding Mission Council that the paper “Growing Up” had suggested that the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee should have new responsibilities, new staffing arrangements and a new name. He noted that the time needed for the transfer of oversight of the Church Related Community Workers from a sub-committee of the Ministries Committee to district councils was likely to be about two and a half years.

There was discussion on the issues raised by the paper, with consideration given to the number of posts required, the way in which post-holders would work together, the overlaps in the responsibilities of the Training Committee and the proposed revised Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee and the distribution of the work of the new committee between the main committee and any sub-committees. It was noted that “Stewardship” should not be defined narrowly in terms of money, but should encompass the use of all resources including gifts, abilities and time. The new committee and sub-committee structure should reflect this.

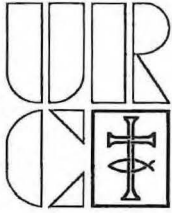
It was agreed that:

- 1) the new committee should have sub-committees;
- 2) in principle Option B in paragraph 6.1 was preferred, and the General Secretary should bring a detailed proposal based on this to the next meeting of Mission Council;
- 3) RPAG be asked to consider the matter of staffing in the light of the CWM Mission Support Fund;
- 4) the present Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee should consider possible names for the new committee, and suggest 2 or 3 alternatives to the next meeting of Mission Council.

99/18 Election of Convener of the Staffing Advisory Group (SAG)

The Moderator reported that Mr. Chris Wright had proposed and Dr. Graham Campling had seconded that Dr. Donald South be appointed as the Convener of SAG from March 1999 for a period of four years or until he ceased to be a member of Mission Council, whichever was the shorter. This was agreed. The Moderator thanked Dr. South for his willingness to serve in this capacity.

The Chaplains led the Council in closing worship.



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999

PAPERS

A	SALMON	Report of Mission Council Advisory Group
B	CREAM	Report on the Consultation concerning the future of Mansfield College
B1	CREAM	Statement on the consultation concerning the future of Mansfield College.
C	PINK	Growing Up - The story so far
D	BRIGHTGREEN	Report from Nominations Committee
E	GOLD	Report from Training and Finance Committees
F	YELLOW	Proposed changes to Section O process
G	BLUE	Proposed changes to Structure
H	LILAC	A note on deployment policy
I	SALMON	Structure for Mission
J	CREAM	
K	PINK	
L	BRIGHTGREEN	
M	GOLD	
N	YELLOW	
O	BLUE	
P	LILAC	



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999



Report of Mission Council Advisory Group

Decisions will be needed on paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6.

1. **Task group on small churches.** The group has been constituted and has begun its work. The members are: Graham Robson (Convener), Stuart Scott (Secretary), Ray Adams, Rosalind Fearon, Barbara Flood-Page, Sheila Rudofsky, Raymond Singh and Rosemary Wass (a Methodist representative).
2. **The resignation of ministers and secession of local churches.** The Provincial Council of the Southern Synod has asked that consideration be given to pastoral provision for ministers who may resign as a result of the human sexuality debate. This, and the possible secession of local churches on the same issue, was discussed by MCAG at length. Work has begun on a paper on both subjects, which it is intended to offer to Mission Council in March. The paper will not assume any particular outcome to the debate. In the discussion the point was made that any paper on this subject was very much secondary to the human sexuality discussion itself.
3. **The discipline of local church officers.** The Thames North pastoral consultants have produced a report on the pastoral aspects of the question but they do not feel competent to deal with disciplinary issues. MCAG believes that the need for some agreed understanding of Church discipline is likely to increase and so it proposes the appointment of a small task group. Members of Mission Council are invited to think of the names of people who could be asked to be part of the group. Legal and constitutional expertise will be useful, as well as a good knowledge of the Church. Any proposals the task group makes will need to be consistent with the disciplinary process for ministers.
4. **Convener of the Staffing Advisory Group.** The present convener, Geoff Lunt, is due to retire after the March Mission Council. In view of the fact that there have been a number of recent changes in the membership of the Group, MCAG recommends that the next Convener is elected at the January meeting and is invited to attend any meetings between then and March. This will also help continuity. The convener must be a member of Mission Council and will serve for four years, or until s/he ceases to be a member of Council, whichever is the shorter.
5. At its meeting in January 1998 Mission Council agreed that in the event of the unavailability of the Secretary of the Disciplinary Commission to carry out necessary duties, the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee would act as Secretary. At the time it was recognised that a second deputy was needed but none was proposed. A suggestion will be brought to the January 1999 meeting.

6. **Responding to Mission Council requests in relation to "Growing Up".** MCAG considered the four specific requests which were addressed to it, and its response is as follows:

6.1 *Concerning the whole church reflecting on Part 1 of the paper:* The recommendation is that the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee be asked to commission someone to produce leaflets on all parts of the paper when revision is complete. The work would need to be done between March and July, so that the leaflets were available at Assembly as a means of encouraging wider discussion.

6.2 *Concerning revision of the structure and remits of the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee:* the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary have been asked to carry out the necessary consultations and prepare proposals.

6.3 *Concerning a strategy on the use of local church premises:* the recommendation is that a small task group be formed to work on this. Any proposals should not be limited to big schemes. Again, members of Mission Council are invited to think of possible names.

6.4 *Concerning the grant from the CWM self-support fund:* MCAG proposes that the most appropriate response would be to use the money to stimulate and support new local mission projects which are an expression of the Five Marks of Mission. If Mission Council approves this idea in principle, then it is suggested that there would need to be discussion with CWM before a proposal and guidelines were taken to General Assembly.

7. It was reported to MCAG that a Church House appointment of an I.T. Project Manager had been made. Mrs Eva Chiu begins work on 4 January, on an 18 month contract. Whilst her work will be focused on improving the effectiveness of the I.T. systems at Church House, it will also include communication with the synod offices and other centres. This is seen as a significant response to the Assembly resolution on I.T.

John Waller
December 1998



MISSION COUNCIL

23 January 1999

B

Report to Mission Council on the consultation concerning the future of Mansfield College

Background

1. The starting point of this paper is the discussion in the March 1998 Mission Council on a report from the Use of Colleges review group (Paper L). The outcome of that discussion was that Mission Council refused to make a decision on the future use of Mansfield College for initial ministerial education until two things had happened. One was that the College had had time to make a complete response to a highly-critical inspection report in 1997. The other was that there had been opportunity for wider consultation.

Process

2. The Mission Council Advisory Group appointed the then officers of Mission Council, David Jenkins and John Waller, and the Moderator of the Eastern Synod, Elizabeth Caswell, to carry out the consultation. What follows is the report of the three of us.
3. We believed it a primary responsibility to have full contact with Mansfield College. We therefore met with a sub-committee of the college governors, one of our number met the college principal, two of our number met the principal and the bursar, at different stages in our work. This was in addition to our longest conversation in the general consultation described below.
4. We also recognised the need for conversation with the Congregational Federation, which uses Mansfield for initial ministerial education in a few instances. Diary constraints meant that one of our number with the General Secretary met the Federation representatives. They had some proposals about possible alternative uses of the College for other aspects of ministerial education. It was agreed that a meeting should be held between representatives of the two denominational training committees. This meeting is scheduled to be held between the completion of this report and the January Mission Council.
5. We held a day of general consultation at United Reformed Church House on Wednesday, 9 December, to which all who wished to come were invited through a letter in 'Reform'. On that day we met
 - Six individuals
 - Representatives of the Reading and Oxford District Council; the governing body and ministerial training and education committee of Mansfield College: the Training Committee of the General Assembly; the student body of Mansfield College.

We also received 15 letters from people who preferred to make their representations in writing.

We had made available to us a number of other papers, including the 1997 inspection report to Mansfield College and the college's definitive response to it (see paragraph 1).

Issues

6. We have been struck by the complexity of the issues that must ultimately be determined by the General Assembly. Much of the public debate, and some of the submissions made to us, has tried to simplify things in a way that has not been helpful. Those at the centre of things - the College authorities, the Training Committee, the review group - are trying to deal with the complexities, and they deserve respect. However, respect can include criticism as well as personal support.
7. It was represented to us very strongly that the Mansfield College of today is very different from what it was, even three years ago. In so far as that is true (and it seems to us to be so), it does reduce the value of some of the comments made in public debate on both sides.
8. We are not competent to give a full picture of the College. However we think it important that Mission Council should be aware that since 1995 Mansfield has been a full college of the University of Oxford with responsibilities to the university for its governance. The College has a Principal (currently David Marquand, a former Government Minister) and a governing body of fellows. In terms of numbers of students, the ministerial training programme represents about 10% of the College's work. The programme is overseen by the Ministerial Training and Education Committee, a sub-committee of the governing body. By its statutes the College is required to provide ministerial education for the United Reformed Church and the Congregational Federation. It is also, uniquely in Oxford, required to have a chaplain from the Reformed tradition. In recent times the ministerial training programme has been guided by 1½ staff members, with additional teaching bought in from the theological faculty. We recognise that this paragraph is a simplified and selective description of the College.
9. Since the new structures were put in place in 1995 it seems to us that there has not been a corresponding adjustment in the methods of communication between the governing body, the ministerial and education training committee, and the Training Committee. This communication weakness has increased the sense of frustration in the current tense situation.
10. All those who asked to meet us (as distinct from those we asked to see) made representations in favour of continuing to use Mansfield College for initial ministerial education. That was hardly surprising, since it was this voice which felt it had not been given a sufficient hearing.
11. The main points made to us, in a variety of guises, were:
 - Mansfield College has a long and honoured history in the training of ministers in the Congregational and Reformed tradition.

- The continuance of that history was enshrined in the statutes of the College, to which the United Reformed Church was a party, only three years ago.
- It is the only college used by the United Reformed Church which is not a seminary, namely a place devoted only to the preparation of people for ministry. At Mansfield people work cheek by jowl with those studying in other disciplines, and have to be able to defend the faith that is in them to people of all faiths and none.
- It draws upon rich theological resources, in its library and in the wider theological faculty.
- Despite comments about elitism, Oxford University is regarded world wide as a centre of academic excellence, a place to which many future leaders come, and the wider Reformed family would find it hard to understand why the United Reformed Church wanted to let go of its foothold in the University.
- Mansfield College is a resource, in particular for the churches of Oxford.
- A training institution in Oxford is accessible to students from a wide area, some of whom will have commitments that make it difficult to travel to another centre.
- An inspection was carried out in 1997, to which the College has responded by making and proposing major changes: a lot of hard work will have been wasted if the courses are now not used. For Mansfield this is a moment of opportunity.
- It is for the theological health of the United Reformed Church to maintain training in a variety of settings and emphases.
- Theology in Oxford is Anglican-dominated and the Reformed contribution of Mansfield is especially valued - not least by the Anglican Colleges.
- The United Reformed Church should not look at this as simply a ministerial training issue. Oxford is a significant place: the college gives us a platform from which to engage in mission to the corridors of power.

Conclusions

12. As we read and listened to thousands of words, we reminded ourselves that we were charged to carry out a consultation, not to make a decision. We therefore make no comment on the strength of these arguments, except to observe that similar arguments (with appropriate contextual variations) could be advanced for the continued use of any of the colleges for initial ministerial education.
13. We believe that Mission Council needs to face the issues raised by the Use of Colleges review group, using this report and the recent response of Mansfield College to its inspection report as additional evidence. To allow the present painful uncertainty to continue beyond the March 1999 Mission Council and July 1999 Assembly seems to us to be totally unacceptable.

14. At this point we deliberately go beyond our brief. It seems to us that, however regrettable the consequence, the argument of the Use of Colleges review group (that we should cease to use one of the colleges for initial ministerial education) is compelling unless
- 14.1 The minimum number of students required by Mansfield, Northern and Westminster is less than indicated in the report. Given that recently they have continued with less than their stated minimum, we think this point should be checked carefully with the colleges.
- OR
- 14.2 The number of students accepted for training was to increase to a level which would give a sustainable minimum entry for all three colleges (see paragraph 26 of use of colleges report). The Assembly resolution on recruitment may encourage us to hope that this will be the case. However our understanding is that the assessment process is so far dealing with smaller numbers in 1998/9 than in recent years.
- OR
- 14.3 The United Reformed Church changes the method by which it funds training. At present we pay the colleges the fees appropriate to the number of students we send. In a climate where all academic institutions are finding it very hard indeed to remain financially viable, the number of students is a critical factor for the colleges. An alternative would be to give each of them a block grant, say equivalent to the fee income of their agreed minimum number, whether or not it proved possible to send that many students. We recognise that this would be a very expensive policy change but at some point rhetoric and resource have to be put together and judged together.
15. We suggest that the main Mission Council debate on this subject should be delayed until March, to allow the Training Committee to take account of all the evidence and to bring a recommendation or recommendations.
16. We recognise that other conversations need to continue which go beyond the somewhat limited brief of the Use of Colleges review group. In particular we hope that the various ideas about our continued involvement with Mansfield College, in the event that the initial ministerial education programme is withdrawn, are pursued. We urge that this be done collaboratively, not separately, by the Training Committee, the Congregational Federation, and the relevant people in Mansfield College.
17. We are thankful for God's grace in supporting us and many other people in a fraught and complex situation, and we pray that we and our fellow members of Mission Council will be enabled to grasp the full significance of one of the most difficult decisions we have had to face. To make this reference to God is no afterthought: it is grace that enables us to do more than our human thoughts and emotions can accomplish.

Elizabeth Caswell
David Jenkins
John Waller

December 1998

MINISTERIAL TRAINING AT MANSFIELD COLLEGE

Following the consultation meeting on 9th December 1998, Mansfield College wishes to draw the attention of the URC Mission Council to five crucial concerns on the College's part.

1. The College is, in principle, happy to continue to provide a programme of initial ministerial training for the URC and the Congregational Federation. Through no fault of the College, however, the vote of the URC Assembly in July 1998 inevitably created uncertainties about the future of the programme. The College cannot bind itself to continue to provide this programme in a condition of continuing uncertainty. Fixed costs arise from the programme, and if the College is to continue to provide it, it must be sure that they will be met.
2. The College believes that the alternatives to the existing ministerial training programme sketched out in the Appendix to its response to the URC Inspector's review provide the basis for an innovative and exciting way forward should the Church ultimately decide to discontinue initial ministerial training at Mansfield.
3. However, fixed costs would also be associated with any alternative; and the College would need an assurance from the URC that it would meet them should an alternative be decided upon.
4. The College believes that the College Bursar and the relevant officers of the Church should initiate discussions about the financial implications of all these matters as soon as possible, so that the Governing Body of the College and the URC Assembly are fully aware of them when they have to reach decisions.
5. The College needs to know as soon as possible with whom in the Church it will be dealing and who will be in a position to conclude any agreement on the Church's behalf.



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999

B

**Report to Mission Council on the consultation
concerning the future of Mansfield College**

Background

1. The starting point of this paper is the discussion in the March 1998 Mission Council on a report from the Use of Colleges review group (Paper L). The outcome of that discussion was that Mission Council refused to make a decision on the future use of Mansfield College for initial ministerial education until two things had happened. One was that the College had had time to make a complete response to a highly-critical inspection report in 1997. The other was that there had been opportunity for wider consultation.

Process

2. The Mission Council Advisory Group appointed the then officers of Mission Council, David Jenkins and John Waller, and the Moderator of the Eastern Synod, Elizabeth Caswell, to carry out the consultation. What follows is the report of the three of us.
3. We believed it a primary responsibility to have full contact with Mansfield College. We therefore met with a sub-committee of the college governors, one of our number met the college principal, two of our number met the principal and the bursar, at different stages in our work. This was in addition to our longest conversation in the general consultation described below.
4. We also recognised the need for conversation with the Congregational Federation, which uses Mansfield for initial ministerial education in a few instances. Diary constraints meant that one of our number with the General Secretary met the Federation representatives. They had some proposals about possible alternative uses of the College for other aspects of ministerial education. It was agreed that a meeting should be held between representatives of the two denominational training committees. This meeting is scheduled to be held between the completion of this report and the January Mission Council.
5. We held a day of general consultation at United Reformed Church House on Wednesday, 9 December, to which all who wished to come were invited through a letter in 'Reform'. On that day we met
 - Six individuals
 - Representatives of the Reading and Oxford District Council; the governing body and ministerial training and education committee of Mansfield College: the Training Committee of the General Assembly; the student body of Mansfield College.

We also received 15 letters from people who preferred to make their representations in writing.

We had made available to us a number of other papers, including the 1997 inspection report to Mansfield College and the college's definitive response to it (see paragraph 1).

Issues

6. We have been struck by the complexity of the issues that must ultimately be determined by the General Assembly. Much of the public debate, and some of the submissions made to us, has tried to simplify things in a way that has not been helpful. Those at the centre of things - the College authorities, the Training Committee, the review group - are trying to deal with the complexities, and they deserve respect. However, respect can include criticism as well as personal support.
7. It was represented to us very strongly that the Mansfield College of today is very different from what it was, even three years ago. In so far as that is true (and it seems to us to be so), it does reduce the value of some of the comments made in public debate on both sides.
8. We are not competent to give a full picture of the College. However we think it important that Mission Council should be aware that since 1995 Mansfield has been a full college of the University of Oxford with responsibilities to the university for its governance. The College has a Principal (currently David Marquand, a former Government Minister) and a governing body of fellows. In terms of numbers of students, the ministerial training programme represents about 10% of the College's work. The programme is overseen by the Ministerial Training and Education Committee, a sub-committee of the governing body. By its statutes the College is required to provide ministerial education for the United Reformed Church and the Congregational Federation. It is also, uniquely in Oxford, required to have a chaplain from the Reformed tradition. In recent times the ministerial training programme has been guided by 1½ staff members, with additional teaching bought in from the theological faculty. We recognise that this paragraph is a simplified and selective description of the College.
9. Since the new structures were put in place in 1995 it seems to us that there has not been a corresponding adjustment in the methods of communication between the governing body, the ministerial and education training committee, and the Training Committee. This communication weakness has increased the sense of frustration in the current tense situation.
10. All those who asked to meet us (as distinct from those we asked to see) made representations in favour of continuing to use Mansfield College for initial ministerial education. That was hardly surprising, since it was this voice which felt it had not been given a sufficient hearing.
11. The main points made to us, in a variety of guises, were:
 - Mansfield College has a long and honoured history in the training of ministers in the Congregational and Reformed tradition.

- The continuance of that history was enshrined in the statutes of the College, to which the United Reformed Church was a party, only three years ago.
- It is the only college used by the United Reformed Church which is not a seminary, namely a place devoted only to the preparation of people for ministry. At Mansfield people work cheek by jowl with those studying in other disciplines, and have to be able to defend the faith that is in them to people of all faiths and none.
- It draws upon rich theological resources, in its library and in the wider theological faculty.
- Despite comments about elitism, Oxford University is regarded world wide as a centre of academic excellence, a place to which many future leaders come, and the wider Reformed family would find it hard to understand why the United Reformed Church wanted to let go of its foothold in the University.
- Mansfield College is a resource, in particular for the churches of Oxford.
- A training institution in Oxford is accessible to students from a wide area, some of whom will have commitments that make it difficult to travel to another centre.
- An inspection was carried out in 1997, to which the College has responded by making and proposing major changes: a lot of hard work will have been wasted if the courses are now not used. For Mansfield this is a moment of opportunity.
- It is for the theological health of the United Reformed Church to maintain training in a variety of settings and emphases.
- Theology in Oxford is Anglican-dominated and the Reformed contribution of Mansfield is especially valued - not least by the Anglican Colleges.
- The United Reformed Church should not look at this as simply a ministerial training issue. Oxford is a significant place: the college gives us a platform from which to engage in mission to the corridors of power.

Conclusions

12. As we read and listened to thousands of words, we reminded ourselves that we were charged to carry out a consultation, not to make a decision. We therefore make no comment on the strength of these arguments, except to observe that similar arguments (with appropriate contextural variations) could be advanced for the continued use of any of the colleges for initial ministerial education.
13. We believe that Mission Council needs to face the issues raised by the Use of Colleges review group, using this report and the recent response of Mansfield College to its inspection report as additional evidence. To allow the present painful uncertainty to continue beyond the March 1999 Mission Council and July 1999 Assembly seems to us to be totally unacceptable.

14. At this point we deliberately go beyond our brief. It seems to us that, however regrettable the consequence, the argument of the Use of Colleges review group (that we should cease to use one of the colleges for initial ministerial education) is compelling unless
- 14.1 The minimum number of students required by Mansfield, Northern and Westminster is less than indicated in the report. Given that recently they have continued with less than their stated minimum, we think this point should be checked carefully with the colleges.
- OR
- 14.2 The number of students accepted for training was to increase to a level which would give a sustainable minimum entry for all three colleges (see paragraph 26 of use of colleges report). The Assembly resolution on recruitment may encourage us to hope that this will be the case. However our understanding is that the assessment process is so far dealing with smaller numbers in 1998/9 than in recent years.
- OR
- 14.3 The United Reformed Church changes the method by which it funds training. At present we pay the colleges the fees appropriate to the number of students we send. In a climate where all academic institutions are finding it very hard indeed to remain financially viable, the number of students is a critical factor for the colleges. An alternative would be to give each of them a block grant, say equivalent to the fee income of their agreed minimum number, whether or not it proved possible to send that many students. We recognise that this would be a very expensive policy change but at some point rhetoric and resource have to be put together and judged together.
15. We suggest that the main Mission Council debate on this subject should be delayed until March, to allow the Training Committee to take account of all the evidence and to bring a recommendation or recommendations.
16. We recognise that other conversations need to continue which go beyond the somewhat limited brief of the Use of Colleges review group. In particular we hope that the various ideas about our continued involvement with Mansfield College, in the event that the initial ministerial education programme is withdrawn, are pursued. We urge that this be done collaboratively, not separately, by the Training Committee, the Congregational Federation, and the relevant people in Mansfield College.
17. We are thankful for God's grace in supporting us and many other people in a fraught and complex situation, and we pray that we and our fellow members of Mission Council will be enabled to grasp the full significance of one of the most difficult decisions we have had to face. To make this reference to God is no afterthought: it is grace that enables us to do more than our human thoughts and emotions can accomplish.

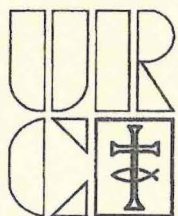
Elizabeth Caswell
David Jenkins
John Waller

December 1998

MINISTERIAL TRAINING AT MANSFIELD COLLEGE

Following the consultation meeting on 9th December 1998, Mansfield College wishes to draw the attention of the URC Mission Council to five crucial concerns on the College's part.

1. The College is, in principle, happy to continue to provide a programme of initial ministerial training for the URC and the Congregational Federation. Through no fault of the College, however, the vote of the URC Assembly in July 1998 inevitably created uncertainties about the future of the programme. The College cannot bind itself to continue to provide this programme in a condition of continuing uncertainty. Fixed costs arise from the programme, and if the College is to continue to provide it, it must be sure that they will be met.
2. The College believes that the alternatives to the existing ministerial training programme sketched out in the Appendix to its response to the URC Inspector's review provide the basis for an innovative and exciting way forward should the Church ultimately decide to discontinue initial ministerial training at Mansfield.
3. However, fixed costs would also be associated with any alternative; and the College would need an assurance from the URC that it would meet them should an alternative be decided upon.
4. The College believes that the College Bursar and the relevant officers of the Church should initiate discussions about the financial implications of all these matters as soon as possible, so that the Governing Body of the College and the URC Assembly are fully aware of them when they have to reach decisions.
5. The College needs to know as soon as possible with whom in the Church it will be dealing and who will be in a position to conclude any agreement on the Church's behalf.



MISSION COUNCIL

23 January 1999

B1

Statement from the General Assembly's Training Committee to Mission Council, on the consultation concerning future use by the Church of Mansfield College

1. The Training Committee recently received the *'Report to Mission Council on the Consultation concerning the future of Mansfield College'* convened by Elizabeth Caswell, John Waller and David Jenkins on 9th December 1998. We understand that the main Mission Council discussion on this matter is likely to take place in March 1999, and we write now to give the January Mission Council some indication of the comment we may be able to offer in March.
2. We have studied with care the Mansfield College *'Review'* of December 1998, and find clear evidence that Mansfield has responded positively to criticisms that were made by its Inspectors in 1997. There is a perception that the discussions at General Assembly in July 1998 were adversely influenced by the Inspectors' criticisms, so that two issues intersected to the disadvantage of Mansfield: the issue of quality and the issue of the nature and extent of the church's training requirements. We are content that the issue of quality is being addressed. Any future decision should be based on the single issue of the nature and extent of the church's requirements.
3. The *'Report on the Consultation'* says at Para 14:
'Other argument of the use of Colleges review group (that we should cease to use one of the colleges for initial ministerial education) is compelling unless...,
and it goes on to refer to (i) the numbers of students required by colleges, (ii) the likely recruitment to training in the coming years, and (iii) the ways in which training is funded by the church. We mean to look at these three matters, the three "unless" clauses at 14.1-14.3.
4. We shall therefore approach colleges to ask for fresh explanation of the minimum numbers of students they need, to ensure financial viability, to allow suitably-sized groups for learning, and to form a viable community of ordinands. We shall also enquire about maximum numbers the colleges can accept, in order to establish how fully the church's foreseeable recruitment to ministry could be met, were Mansfield College no longer to be used. The third "unless", the question of annual funding policy for colleges, will be more clearly addressed once we have heard from the colleges about their annual financial needs - although we point out now that it has not been the church's practice to support ordination training by annual block grants. We meet again as a committee on February 15th, and intend to respond then, in the light of the above replies, to the three 'unless' clauses in para 14 of the *'Report'*.

5. We meet officers of the Congregational Federation on February 2nd, with the intention that any policy on Mansfield College in either Church should be informed by the concerns of the other. We shall pass on to Mission Council the substance of that discussion.
6. The Mansfield College 'Review' puts forward in an appendix several possibilities for *'Alternative Forms of URC Theological Education and Training at Mansfield College'*. We mean to speak with Mansfield, in order to give full and proper consideration to these suggestions - which merit discussion in their own right, whatever be decided about the future of ordination training there.

John Proctor
Acting Convener of the Training Committee
Manchester, 6 January 1999



MISSION COUNCIL

13 - 15 March 1998



For discussion with a view to
presentation to General Assembly

Use of colleges review group

Introduction

1. As part of its major review of training within the Church, in the autumn of 1997 the Training Committee set up a review group to look specifically at the use of colleges for the training of stipendiary ministers.
2. The remit given to the group was:
 - 2.1 To review needs and current arrangements and, in the light of ecumenical commitments of the Training Committee and financial implications for the Church and the Colleges, the provision of college places required for URC ordinands in the foreseeable future.
 - 2.2 To recommend, in time for the General Assembly in 1998, the college or colleges which would be recognised for the education of ordinands in the foreseeable future.
3. The members of the review group were:

The Revd Derek Wales	(Moderator, Wessex Province) Convener
The Revd Jessie Clare	(Barnstaple)
The Revd Dr John Clark	(Principal, Scottish Congregational College)
The Revd Michael Diffey	(New Barnet)
The Revd Kenneth Howcroft	(Secretary for Initial Ministerial Training, the Methodist Church)
Dr Alun Jones	(Cardiff)
The Revd Canon June Osborne	(Canon Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral and Senior Inspector of Theological Colleges and Courses for the House of Bishops)
Mr Graham Stacy	(Treasurer of the Church)

with the Revd John Waller acting as secretary.
4. The group was supplied with background information by the Training Committee.
5. It had a first meeting in London on 2 December 1997. The Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee (Secretary for Training) attended part of the meeting in order to answer questions. The group agreed its method of working.
6. During January members of the group visited the 4 present colleges (Mansfield College, Oxford; Northern College, Manchester; The Queen's College, Birmingham; and Westminster College, Cambridge) in pairs. Before the visits the colleges were asked to make a written submission to the visitors under certain headings. These submissions, together with the visitors' report on their visit, were made available to all members of the review group.

7. The group met to do the major part of its work at St Andrew's Hall, Birmingham from 2 - 4 February. In addition to the papers already mentioned submissions from the Ministries and Training Committees, a paper on finance, a paper on the Scottish Congregational College, and a letter from the Ecumenical Committee were tabled. The latter dealt with discussions concerning the future of St Andrew's Hall and a proposed new programme called Belonging to the World Church.
8. After an initial discussion, the group spent a considerable amount of time talking with a succession of visitors. They were:

The Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee	Training Committee
The Revd Christine Craven	Ministries Committee
The Revd Dr David Cornick, Mr Chris Wright and Dr David Thompson	Westminster College
The Revd Peter Fisher, Dr Paul Smith, and the Revd Dr Neil Messer	Queen's College
The Revd Charles Brock, Dr Elaine Kaye and the Revd Dr Catherine Middleton	Mansfield College
The Revd Dr John Sutcliffe, the Revd Dr Leslie Green, and the Revd Jane Scott	Northern College

The group is grateful to all these friends for their readiness to share openly in what must for some have been a difficult discussion. It was deeply impressed by the quality and commitment of them all and helped by their vision and insight.

9. In 1995 the General Assembly adopted 12 criteria by which the Training Committee will be guided in recognising colleges and courses for ministerial training. The group tested these in its discussion and in conversation with others. The criteria are warmly affirmed as a result of this exercise. In what follows, the word "training" is used generally to describe all that is done to prepare and sustain people in ministry.
10. The group spent a further day drawing up its conclusions and recommendations. These are presented in the remainder of this report.

Some basic points

11. The group was aware that this was not the first attempt in recent times to consider the number of colleges. In 1995 Westminster College was given a limited guaranteed life by the General Assembly. In 1997 the Training Committee attempted to remove recognition from The Queen's College but was dissuaded by Mission Council. Uncertainty has had a very bad effect on morale. It makes for difficulty in our continued close association with ecumenical partners. It also has an adverse effect on planning, staffing and investment. The group concluded that a clear decision was needed, and one which could stand for some time.
12. Whilst a reduction in the number of colleges has been a feature of our history (Western College, Bristol, New College, London) the 25 year life of URC has seen significant growth in the available training resources. The following list is almost all post the formation of the URC:

St Andrew's Hall	(mission training)
Windermere Centre	(lay training)
Yardley Hastings Centre	(youth training)

Arthur Rank Centre (rural mission & ministry)
Ecumenical ministerial training courses
Provincial Training officers
Provincial Youth & Children's Work Trainers
Training for Learning and Service
Scottish Congregational College (if union with Scottish Congregational Church follows)

13. The group recognised current developments within the United Reformed Church which could lead to a new programme of continuing ministerial education and a much greater emphasis on lay training. Provision needs to be made for enabling these developments. They are developments in which the colleges must be involved but the training resources listed in the previous paragraph will also have a part.
14. The group concluded early in its first meeting that it was only possible to give a credible response to its remit if the consideration was set in a broad context. Ministerial training cannot be considered separately from the training of the whole people of God. There is more to ministerial training than that which is done in the colleges. Whilst this report does not go far into those wider issues, they formed a vital part of the discussion and helped to shape the group's conclusions. Some of them are adumbrated in the final section of this report.
15. It is of vital importance that the people of God are able to express and relate the faith once delivered to the saints to their own lives and to the life of the world. The group believes that theological education, as a task of and for the whole church, needs to be given strong affirmation.
16. The group believes that the United Reformed Church ought to engage in a serious and continuous emphasis on Christian vocation.

From this broad base, this report turns to the narrower remit of the group.

Numbers of students

17. The number of students in training at the colleges and on courses since 1982 is set out in an Appendix. The group believes that it is necessary to plan for a continuation of present levels whilst at the same time doing nothing which would make it difficult to handle an increased number of students in the future.
18. The colleges were asked to indicate the number of students they regarded as the minimum viable number from an educational and financial point of view. Their responses were:

Mansfield	15
Northern	30
Queens	not critical but less than 4 might be regarded as unsatisfactory
Westminster	30

Northern and Westminster colleges are currently operating below these figures.

19. With regard to maximum numbers, reference to the 1989 and 1990 allocations suggests that the existing colleges could cope with a total of at least 40 more students than they have at present.

20. It is clear that the pattern of allocation of students to colleges should ensure both that each year group is sufficiently large to provide mutual support and stimulation, and that each college is free from concern about its financial viability. The group is satisfied that with the existing capacity of the colleges the number of students at present is not sufficient to guarantee such educational and financial advantage, nor is it likely to be in the near future.
21. A compounding factor in the present scene is a possible increase in the use of part-time courses for training stipendiary ministers, further depriving the colleges of some students.
22. One option, which was suggested in more than one of the colleges' submissions, was that the consequences of the smaller number of students in initial ministerial training could be offset by the colleges diversifying into continual ministerial training and lay training. Whilst the group is of the firm belief that such diversification is necessary and desirable, and indeed forms part of the background to its own conclusions, it does not see this in itself as the answer to the problems created by falling student numbers without more radical measures.
23. These considerations led the group to the conclusion that one of the colleges at present receiving students for initial ministerial training should cease to do so. This conclusion was reached with great reluctance.

Ceasing to use a college

24. The group found this part of its task a painful one. This was partly out of recognition of the human consequences of leaving an institution. People's lives and hopes would be considerably disrupted by such a decision. Yet the burden was even heavier than that. Each of the four colleges represents a long and fine tradition of ministerial training. Each has played a distinctive part in the story of the United Reformed Church and its uniting traditions. Each has contributed to the life of the church and wider community in its area. Each is currently served by able and committed staff and each is a place where God is encountered in worship, study and involvement with the community.
25. Each college currently has both strengths and weaknesses. Each of them is different from the others in ways that must contribute to the richness and diversity of the ministry. None of them is so obviously worse than the others that it should not be used to train students for ministry. The group began from a point of affirmation of all four.
26. The group recognised the particular situation of The Queen's College, which is such that it can both manage without United Reformed students and cope with having a small number of them. From a numbers point of view there is advantage to our Church in continuing to recognise Queen's as a place for training ministers, because that allows the flexibility in planning described in paragraph 17 above.
27. However the group wishes to emphasise that its decision regarding The Queen's College was made on a much broader basis than that of fluctuating student numbers. However, Queen's offers a different ecumenical model from the others, and one which can be particularly appropriate for a Church many of whose ministers serve in Local Ecumenical Partnerships with Anglicans and Methodists. The ecumenical representatives on the group strongly urged that the United Reformed Church retained a living, even if small, presence at Queen's. It was noted that the College had recently made a joint staff appointment with the West Midlands Province and, in deciding to recommend that Queen's continue to be

used for training, the group hopes that further relationships can be built with that and other Provinces.

28. In approaching the question of which of the other three colleges should cease to be used, the group took into account a wide range of factors. Chief among these was the potential of each college to fit into the training requirements of the United Reformed Church in the future. These include the initial and further training of ministers and lay people together, within the Reformed tradition but in an ecumenical setting, in an integrated, collaborative and contextual mode, and for a variety of ministries. Among the additional considerations were those of geography and ease of access to colleges for students with dependants.
29. After very careful discussion and consideration of all the evidence presented to it, the group came to the unanimous conclusion that the two colleges that best meet the Church's requirements are Northern and Westminster. There is a value in a north/south presence. Both colleges have developed a good ecumenical model of working. Both work increasingly with Provinces in their region. Both have good links to university theological faculties. Both have responded to challenges of recent reviews. Both have developed particular specialisms. The group concluded that they should both continue to be used for training and that they should be the first focus in allocating students.
30. The group recommends in the light of its preference for Northern and Westminster Colleges that the United Reformed Church ceases to send students for initial ministerial training to Mansfield College with immediate effect, that is, that no students should begin training there in the academic year 1998/89. It further recommends in the College should cease to be used for training not earlier than the end of the academic year 1998/99.
31. These may seem to be harsh and even hasty recommendations. The group believes that enough damage has been done already by the air of uncertainty hanging over all the colleges for the past 3 or 4 years. It believes that delaying or extending a painful decision only makes it more painful. The decision will release energy and creativity. If its recommendation is accepted, the group urges those responsible to give immediate and imaginative pastoral care to all the staff and students who are affected. The group urges the appropriate committees of the General Assembly to arrange necessary financial support during the period of withdrawal.

Allocation to colleges

32. At present there is an average of 18 students per year in training. So long as the number remains at about that level, the group envisaged about 2-3 of them being sent to The Queen's College and the remainder being allocated more or less equally to Northern and Westminster Colleges. This is stated as approximate guidance: the group does not propose any change in the present policy of taking account of the situation and training needs of each student.

The wider agenda

33. The remaining sections of this report are addressed in particular to the Training Committee but also to others whom they concern. These are issues which emerged during the review and which the group believes should be taken further. They are not intended for immediate debate.

34. From more than one place the group heard a plea for a clear and cohesive policy on training. The removal of the uncertainty over the future of colleges will certainly assist that. It will help greatly if more is done to make policy clear. Is it possible to have a URC theological training strategy?
35. The group is concerned about areas in which there are overlapping responsibilities. The Training Committee and the Ministries Committee are responsible for parts of a person's training, care and development from the point of candidating to the end of ministerial service. Sometimes one is responsible, sometimes the other, sometimes both. This has been the cause of some confusion. It needs the attention of the Mission Council. Similarly, alongside the training colleges has grown up a network of other training resources (see paragraph 12). It seems that at times the two strands have a separate existence and sometimes they can see each other as rivals. This is a good time to develop a more formal but flexible pattern of co-operation and partnership. A possible structure could be based on 3 para-regions, each one related to a college.
36. By deliberate decision the group gave a secondary place to finance in its discussions. However it was concerned to note that present college structures and financial arrangements are such that it is very difficult to get a precise idea of the cost of training or the resources available for it. One inevitable result is mixed messages about what can and cannot be afforded.
37. Each of the recommended colleges is deeply engaged in training ecumenically, although each presents a different model. The group wishes to propose, in the case of The Queen's College, (a) that it considers directing some research and offering some courses specifically on mission and ministry in local ecumenical partnerships (these might be offered more widely) and (b) that it considers the development of the black studies course in consultation with the United Reformed Church's multi-racial, multi-cultural development worker as well as ecumenical partners.
38. The group understands that there are uncertainties regarding the placing of the training for Church Related Community Workers. It did not engage with all the issues to be considered but, given the value placed on training people for different ministries together, suggests that consideration be given to the Northern College and/or a combination of Queen's and Westhill Colleges.
39. The group believes that the thought now being given to the future of St Andrew's Hall, and therefore to the placing of overseas scholarship holders, should be related to the Belonging to the World Church programme and to the future life of the colleges in such a way that the exchange of people in training is enhanced.
40. The Congregational Federation currently uses both Mansfield and Northern Colleges. It also has its own training programmes. The group wishes to recommend that the Training Committee have a dialogue with colleagues in the Federation in order to seek the highest practicable level of co-operation in training.
41. The group was sustained in its work by shared worship and Christian fellowship. With the Apostle it affirms, "It is he (Christ) who has given some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip God's people for work in his service, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity inherent in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God....." (Ephesians 4: 11-13 REB)



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999



Growing Up - the story so far

At its October meeting Mission Council discussed the draft document, "Growing Up", along with other major reports on the Church Related Community Work programme and the provision and deployment of stipendiary ministry.

Fifteen resolutions were passed (minutes pages 10-11). This paper sets out the present state of play.

Resolutions 1-3 asked the General Secretary to bring the three papers into a single document which incorporated comments made during the Mission Council discussion. Resolution 4 asked him, with appropriate consultation, to draft a programme for the local church on the Five Marks of Mission. Resolution 9 asked him to develop the section on small churches and to present it to the task group on small churches.

With hindsight it was unwise, if not unfair, to ask the General Secretary to do all this before the January Mission Council, since for a significant amount of the intervening time he has been overseas on CWM and World Council of Churches business. His papers will not be available before March.

Resolutions 5, 7, 10 and 15 asked the Mission Council Advisory Group to address certain matters and their response can be seen in Paper A.

However, in relation to resolution 7, it is the intention of the General Secretary and I to produce a discussion paper at Mission Council in January to enable the meeting to clarify its thinking on the structures and staffing of a committee on mission. It is likely that we shall do this in groups and in plenary session. Please have a look at the relevant parts of "Growing Up" and bring your copy with you.

The other resolutions rest in a number of different places and we can expect a response in due course.

John Waller
7 January 1999



MISSION COUNCIL

23rd January 1999

D

Nominations Committee - report for Mission Council

1. Assembly Staff - Review/Appointment Groups

Secretary for Training

The Group was convened by Revd David Helyar and recommended the re-appointment of Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee until September 30th 2002

Director: Windermere

The Group was convened by Revd Dr Jack McKelvie and recommended the re-appointment of Revd Peter McIntosh until June 30th 2003.

Review Group - Chief Accountant/Secretary: Finance

Following the discussion at last Mission Council, ~~Dr~~ Brian Woodhall has agreed to be the Convener. A meeting is scheduled for 1st March.

Appointment Group - Secretary: Continuing Ministerial Education

This will be convened by Revd Glyn Jenkins and hopes to make an appointment in February

2. Provincial Moderators - Review/Nominating Groups

Northern - This was convened by Revd John Johansen-Berg and the General Secretary will report the outcome.

North-Western - Revd Angus Duncan has agreed to convene and dates in the Autumn have been agreed.

3. Assembly Committees:

Conveners who have accepted invitations:

Training - Revd John Proctor

Ecumenical - Overseas Exchange sub committee - Revd John Crocker

Pastoral Care - Revd David Jenkins

Welfare sub-committee - Revd Nelson Bainbridge

Equal Opportunities - Revd Nannette Head

Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness - Revd Frank Beattie

Secretaries who have accepted invitations

Youth and Children's Work - Miss Soo Webster

Equal Opportunities - Ms Ruth Norton

4. Miscellaneous

Pastoral Visit to Northern Province [GA 98 Resolution 17] Convener: Mr Brian Evans.

National Christian Education Council - Mrs Patricia Hubbard

Governor Northern College: Ms Bethan Galliers

5. Union with SCC

We expressed concern that Minute 98/66b [last para at top of p3] would in fact inhibit the work of the Committee. The General Secretary agreed and accordingly wrote to SCC inviting them to suggest names for our consideration, so that they were not effectively disenfranchised until GA 2000. We have no precedent as when the Churches of Christ joined there were Departmental Committees with provincial representation. Some response from SCC is a matter of urgency as we finalise our preparation for GA99 next week.

Desmond Curry
Secretary



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999



Paper for Mission Council from the Training and Finance Committees.

Mission Council passed the following resolution at its meeting on 5th October 1998.

"Mission Council welcomes the development of the Partnership in Theological Education, Manchester in order to promote genuine ecumenical convergence in governance and learning and asks the Training Committee and the Finance Committee to bring proposals to the January 1999 meeting of the Mission Council regarding the nature and extent of the financial commitment suggested for the United Reformed Church "

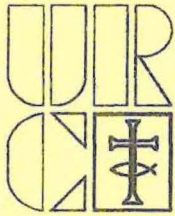
The Training Committee had already endorsed the proposal in principle and the Finance Committee considered a paper from the Treasurer, supported by a 'business plan' received from the principal of the Northern College.

The Committees recommend to Mission Council that a capital investment of £200,000 be made in Luther King House Trust, the trust which will own the property occupied by PTEM, subject to the officers of the Finance Committee being happy with the level of financial expertise available to the Trust, and to the legal structure of the organisation.

Consultations with PTEM concerning the legal structure continue. It is now envisaged that, if a capital investment is made of the order envisaged, the URC will be asked to nominate or appoint at least one members of the board of Luther King House Trust, and the officers of the Finance Committee, in consultation with the Moderator of the North Western Province, are searching for an appropriate person to act

Resolution

Mission Council approves the capital investment of £200,000 in Luther King House Trust, subject to the officers of the Finance Committee being happy with the level of financial expertise available to the Trust, and to the legal structure of the organisation, and requests the General Secretary and the Treasurer to make the nomination or appointment of an appropriate person to the board of the Trust.



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999

F

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SECTION O PROCESS to be presented at the 1999 General Assembly.

PART I – Substantive Provisions (N.B. These changes will need to be taken under the provisions of paragraph 3(1) of the Structure)

Paragraph 3.2 Delete "Provincial".

Paragraph 3.9 Delete "Provincial".

Paragraph 3.13 Insert new paragraph as follows:
References to district councils shall be understood to include area councils in Scotland, such area councils being in every respect identical with district councils and wherever the words "district council" or "district" appear they shall, as regards Scotland, be read as meaning "area council" or "area".

Paragraph 4.2 Delete the final sentence.

Paragraph 5.1 Delete "Provincial".

Paragraph 7.1 Delete "Provincial".

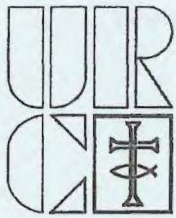
Paragraph 21 Delete "Provincial Moderator" and insert "Moderator of the Synod" in each of two cases;
In the final sentence, delete "Province" and insert "Synod".
In the final sentence, delete "province" and insert "synod".

Please note that necessary changes following the union with the Congregational Union of Scotland will be made to the Introduction to the Section O Process for the next printing.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SECTION O PROCESS to be presented to the 1999 General Assembly.

PART II - Rules of Procedure

- A.2.7 First line – replace “Provincial” with “Synod” and replace “Province” with “synod”
- A.3 Third line – delete “Provincial”
- B.2 First line – delete “Provincial”
Second line – replace “Provincial” with “Synod”
Third line – replace “Province” with “synod”
Fourth line – replace “Province” with “synod”
- B.3 First line – replace “Provincial” with “Synod”
- B.4 First line – replace “Provincial” with “Synod”
- B.5 Second line – replace “Provincial Moderator” with “Moderator of the Synod”
Third line – replace “Provincial” with “Synod”
- B.6.1 First line – replace “Provincial Moderator” with “Moderator of the Synod”
- B.9.1 First line – delete “Provincial”
- B.9.2 First line – delete “Provincial”
Second line – replace “Provincial Moderator” with “Moderator of the Synod”
Third line – delete the first “Provincial” and replace the second “Provincial” with “Synod”
Fourth line – replace “Province” with “synod”
- B.9.3 Third line – replace “Provincial” with “Synod” and replace “Provinces” with “synods”



MISSION COUNCIL

23 January 1999

G

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE STRUCTURE to be presented at the 1999 General Assembly. They will need to be taken under the provisions of paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, and will be presented to the Assembly after the ratification of the changes passed by the 1998 Assembly.

Please note that paragraph 2(3)(a) was amended by Resolution 11 1998 and that paragraphs 2(3)(a), 2(3)(b), 2(4)(a) and 2(4)(xiv) were amended by acceptance of the proposals for union with the Congregational Union of Scotland. (See Appendix C of the Proposals.)

- 2(3)(a) Delete "deaconesses" and delete "registered local pastors". This paragraph would then read: "All ministers, registered pastors (in Scotland) and church-related community workers engaged directly in the service of the United Reformed Church within that district, and Assembly appointed ministers who are members of a local church in that district."
- 2(3)(b) Delete "deaconesses" and "registered local pastors". This paragraph would then read: "Such other ministers, registered pastors (in Scotland) and church related community workers as shall from time to time be appointed by the synod as hereinafter provided."
- 2(4)(a) Delete "deaconesses" and delete "registered local pastors". This paragraph would then read: "All ministers, registered pastors (in Scotland) and church-related community workers who are for the time being members of district councils within the province or nation."
- 2(4)(xiv) Delete.
- 2(4)(xv) – 2(4)(xvii) Renumber as 2(4)(xiv) – 2(4)(xvi)

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE to be presented at the 1999 General Assembly. These relate to the union with the Congregational Union of Scotland, and will be presented after the ratifying vote is taken on the Constitutional changes.

1(3) Last line – delete “provincial”

1(5) Second line – after “province” insert “or nation”

2(4) Fourth line – delete “provincial”

4(2) Second line – delete “provincial”

6(1) Delete and replace with: “In Wales and Scotland there shall in each case be a single synod. The area of the church in England shall be divided into such number of synods as the Assembly on the recommendation of the Mission Council may from time to time determine.”

6(2) Delete the first sentence
Second sentence – delete “provincial”

6(3) First line – replace “province” with “synod” and insert after “districts”: “(or areas in Scotland)”
Second line – delete “provincial”

Heading to section 7 – change to “MODERATORS OF SYNOD”

7(1) First line – delete “provincial”

7(4) First line – replace “provincial moderator” with: “moderator of synod”
Third line – delete “provincial”

7(5) First line – delete “provincial”

Note to section 7 Second line – replace “provincial moderators” with: “moderators of synod”

8(9) Second line – delete “provincial”



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999



A note on deployment policy

The United Reformed Church has had a deployment policy since 1975. From that year until 1984 it was the responsibility of the Deployment Committee, a Committee of the Assembly. It has been within the remit of the Resource Planning Advisory Group since it was set up in 1994.

The policy has always aimed to share fairly between the synods the resource of stipendiary ministry, apart from those ministers in Assembly appointments and those in the 30 designated special ministries.

Fair sharing has throughout been based on a formula that takes account of three factors: the number of church members, the number of churches, and the total population within the area of each synod. The first two are relevant to the pastoral aspects of ministry. The third to its mission aspect.

The Deployment Committee, with the agreement of the Assembly, gave a weighting to the three factors: the weighting was 3 to number of members, 2 to number of churches, and 1 to population.

Each synod was then given a target number (inevitably a reduced one) towards which it was asked the work over a given period.

There was a period between 1984 and 1994 when the deployment policy was not monitored and, in some places, not continued. Since then the formula has been used only as a guide and as a basis for an annual negotiation between RPAG and representatives of the synods.

This description has been provided as a result of the discussion at the October Mission Council. It leaves a number of important questions open, and these will be addressed by RPAG in time for the March meeting.

January 1999



MISSION COUNCIL

23 January 1999

I

Structures for Mission
references are to *Growing Up*

The Five Marks of Mission are:

- ◆ to proclaim the good news of the kingdom
- ◆ to teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- ◆ to respond to human need by loving service
- ◆ to seek to transform unjust structures of society
- ◆ to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth

1. Introduction

Much of this is already done by the present committees. However *Growing Up* suggested that our present committees did not give enough emphasis to *proclaiming the good news* (See 6.3). It was also noted that while many of our local churches were active in their community, and therefore were fulfilling the marks of responding to *human need by loving service*, this work was not reflected in the committees (See 6.4 and App. 3). The report therefore suggested (6.7) that the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee should be given new responsibilities, new staffing arrangements and a new name.

2. CRCW Management

It has been agreed in principle that the oversight of the CRCWs will be transferred from the sub-committee to district councils. This will be a responsibility of the still-to-be-appointed CRCW Development Worker. (An indication of a possible time scale is that provincial management of 12 YCWTs was achieved over a 12-month period).

Following the decision taken at the October MC, (see minutes 98/85, 86 and 88) the intention is to increase the number of CRCW's to 30.

3. A revised committee structure

At present the DSW committee has a stewardship sub-committee, but carries out the rest of its remit in the main committee. If that remit was extended by taking in the two aspects specially emphasised in *Growing Up*, would that structure still be adequate or should it be changed? Some options are listed below.

4. Name

The present name is long and does not include the *community* remit. Are there better options? One alternative is **Mission Committee** but it has no direct responsibility for world mission (the **Ecumenical Committee**). **Home Mission Committee** implies a difference between it and overseas mission which cannot be justified when we maintain that God's mission is one. **Church Life Committee** is the best suggestion heard so far. It is true that there are many other committees feeding into local church life. However this does not raise theological questions and it can be argued that remit 1 gives a justification for using this title. The weakness is that it is church not world (community) focussing.

5. Staff

There is already a Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship & Witness. However with the additional concern for the local church in the community, the October MC agreed that

the URC gives consideration to the appointment of not one but two persons: the CRCW Development Worker for a period of up to five years, and a second post the designation of which would need to be agreed by MC within its consideration of a total strategy for mission. (Minutes 98/8)

There is however a conflict within 'Growing Up' which needs to be resolved. For elsewhere in the report it is recognised that the CRCW Development Worker will come to have less to do with managing her/his fellow workers and more to do with community work as part of our strategy for mission. One paragraph in the job description states

developing and delivering a comprehensive strategy for mission in the United Reformed church, in close liaison with the Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness and other appropriate committee secretaries

This looks very similar to the task envisaged for a second staff person in the DSW committee.

6. Questions for discussion

6.1. Committee Structure.

Discipleship, Stewardship & Witness Committee's present remit

1. to enable the local church to capture the vision of God's mission for itself and to plan its life accordingly
2. to encourage growth in faith among people of all ages
3. to support the work of elders and the work of district council in its oversight of the local church
4. to encourage the local church to share the gospel and to participate ecumenically in evangelism
5. to challenge members in their stewardship and witness
6. to simulate district councils and synods in the development of their own strategies for mission
7. to support the work of the Windermere Centre and the Rural Consultant.

To carry out its extended remit, do you favour A, B, C or another.

Option A	Main Committee	1,2,3,6 and 7 and a co-ordinating role.
	Sub-Committees	Witness 4 5(witness) Stewardship 5 (stewardship) Community 8

Option B	Main Committee	1, 3(district council), 4,6,7 and a co-ordinating role
	Sub-Committees	Stewardship and Witness 5 Christian Education (or another name)2, 3(elders) Community 8

Note Options A and B both assume that the present CRCW Management Sub-Committee remains with Ministries.

Option C Either A or B except that the responsibility for CRCW Management, will be given to the Community Sub-committee.

6.2. **Staffing.** Do you see the CRCW Development Worker's role evolving into a shared responsibility, with the present Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship & Witness or do you believe a second staff member should be added to work on the issues of local church and the community? Or what?

6.3. **Name.** *Church Life Committee* or what?



MISSION COUNCIL
23 January 1999

MINUTES

Minutes of the Mission Council held at the Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh on 23rd January 1999.

The meeting was constituted by the Moderator, Mrs. Wilma Frew, who, together with the Chaplains, the Revds Ken and Meriel Chippindale, led the opening worship which included music and images from the World Council of Churches Assembly which had taken place in Harare in December 1998.

99/01 Welcome

The Moderator welcomed everyone to the meeting, mentioning in particular Mr. Neil Platt, FURY Chair, Mrs. Helen Mee from the Scottish Congregational Church, Ms Gabrielle Cox, Church and Society Convener, the Revd Gwynfor. Evans, a representative of the Mersey Synod, the Revd Michael Davies, substituting for the Revd David Helyar, the Revd John Steele, Secretary for Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness and Mrs. Eva Chiu, Information Technology Project Manager.

99/02 Attendance

There were 62 members present with 13 staff and others in attendance, the Revds Ken and Meriel Chippindale and Mrs. Sally Brooks (Minute Secretary).

Apologies for absence were received from the Revds Liz Byrne, Michael Cruchley, David Helyar, John Jenkinson, Marjorie Lewis-Cooper, Sheila Maxey, John Sutcliffe and Bill Wright, Mrs. Sue Brown, Mrs. Karen Bulley and Dr. Jean Sylvan Evans.

99/03 Minutes of Mission Council 5-7 October 1998

The minutes of the Mission Council held on 5-7 October 1998 were approved and signed with the following correction:

98/60 – Replace “members of staff” with “staff and others”, and insert “the Revd Dr. Finlay Macdonald, Theological Reflector” after “in attendance”.

The Clerk reminded Mission Council of the distinction between members of Council and others in attendance. Only members had the right to vote and speak.

99/04 Matters Arising

98/66 – The General Secretary reported that no objections had been received from synods or district councils to the proposals for union, which meant that only a simple majority would be required at the 1999 General Assembly to ratify the decision. The Congregational Union of Scotland (CUS) had required the approval of 66% of churches and 75% of members and had achieved 85% and 90.4% respectively. A simple majority would be required at the CUS Assembly in September 1999. The General Secretary further reported that it might be necessary to postpone the Unifying

Assembly from the notified date of 27th November 1999 to 1st or 8th April 2000 because of possible delays in the passage of the Bill through Parliament.

98/80 – Mr. Graham Stacy, Convener of the Finance Committee, introduced a joint report from the Training and Finance Committees (Paper E) and moved the Resolution:

Mission Council approves the capital investment of £200,000 in Luther King House Trust, subject to the officers of the Finance Committee being happy with the level of financial expertise available to the Trust, and to the legal structure of the organisation, and requests the General Secretary and the Treasurer to make the nomination or appointment of an appropriate person to the board of the Trust.

The Resolution was carried.

98/85 – Paper H had been provided for information; it was agreed that any questions would be taken after the report of the Resource Planning Advisory Group (RPAG).

98/91 – The Convener of the Training Committee being absent because of illness, Mission Council agreed to delay consideration of the Training Strategy until the March meeting.

99/05 Proposed changes to the Section O Process (Paper F)

The Clerk presented Paper F, noting that following the forthcoming review of the Disciplinary Process it was probable that further changes would need to be made to the Section O Process. In answer to a question, the Clerk reminded Council that in recognition of the fact that following union with the CUS there would be two national synods as well as the English provincial synods, the 1998 General Assembly had agreed that, wherever possible, references to “province” or “provincial” in the Structure would be changed. Most of the changes proposed in Paper F were of this nature.

Mission Council agreed that the changes contained in Paper F be presented to the General Assembly in July.

99/06 Disciplinary Process Review

The General Secretary reminded Mission Council that it had resolved to conduct a review of the Disciplinary Process in March 1999. Because to date only one case had been taken through the whole process, it would not be appropriate to carry out a full review. However, some lessons had been learnt and it would be helpful to consider making minor changes to the Process. To this end he proposed that Mission Council appoint a small group comprising some of those who had done the initial work on the Process to carry out a minor review and to report to the meeting of Mission Council in March 1999. Mission Council agreed, and appointed The Revd Keith Forecast, the General Secretary, the Secretary for Ministries, the Legal Advisor and the Clerk to the group. They would consult the Revd Alasdair Walker, Secretary of the Assembly Commission.

99/07 Proposed changes to the Structure and Procedures (Paper G)

The Clerk presented Paper G. In answer to a question it was noted that, should the only deaconess return to service, the General Assembly could appoint her as a member of the relevant synod under category 2(4)(f). The Clerk proposed a further addition to the Structure as follows:

The expression "Provincial Synod" when used in the United Reformed Church Acts of 1972 and 1981 shall in relation to property in Wales be read as referring to the national synod of Wales"

Mission Council agreed that the changes contained in Paper G together with this addition be presented to the General Assembly in July.

99/08 Substitutes for the Secretary of the Assembly Commission

The Deputy General Secretary reminded Council that it had already been agreed that the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee could act in the absence of the Secretary of the Assembly Commission. It was now proposed that the Convener of the Ministries Committee be appointed as a second substitute. This was agreed.

99/09 Report of the Resource Planning Advisory Group (RPAG)

The Revd Duncan Wilson, Convener of the Resource Planning Advisory Group, presented a brief report, concerned with two issues: the budget for the year 2000 and the deployment of ministers. RPAG was gathering information in the normal way in preparation for the presentation of a draft budget at the meeting of Mission Council in March. It was already evident that there were likely to be very considerable calls on financial resources at a time of expected difficulty in increasing Ministry and Mission Fund contributions. It would be for the March meeting to make a judgement concerning the proper use of resources, and RPAG would seek to present all the necessary information then. RPAG was asked if it was possible for figures to be given to the March meetings of synods. The Treasurer replied that although some figures might be available for synods, they would have to be regarded as very tentative until after the March meeting of Mission Council.

On the matter of deployment, Mr. Wilson reported that consultations were taking place with synods on the principles and on the procedure and criteria to be used in determining the figures. The results of these consultations would be reported to a future meeting of Mission Council.

99/10 Mansfield College and the Use of Colleges Review Group (Papers B, B1 and L from March 1998)

The Revd David Jenkins presented Paper B and the Revd Dr. Lesley Husselbee, Secretary for Training, spoke with permission about paper B1. It was stressed that the Training Committee was fully satisfied that the issue of the quality of training at Mansfield College had been appropriately addressed, and that this matter would be taken out of the debate. All were agreed that any future decision should be based on the single issue of the nature and extent of the church's requirements. (See paragraph 2 of Paper B1). There was some discussion following which Mission Council agreed to follow the procedure recommended in paper B. Therefore the matter would be before the March meeting of Council. It was noted that it was important that the pastoral needs of the current students at Mansfield College should be addressed, and that, in particular, steps should be taken to ensure that appropriate communication with them took place.

99/11 Report of the Nominations Committee (Paper D)

The Revd Glyn Jenkins, Convener of the Nominations Committee, presented the report. Mr. Jenkins reported that the Review Group which had been convened by the Revd David Helyar recommended that the Revd Dr. Lesley Husselbee be re-appointed as Secretary for Training until September 30th 2002. Mission Council agreed that this recommendation should be made to the General Assembly.

(N.B. Following the meeting it was discovered that the period of the re-appointment should end on August 31st 2002. Mission Council will be asked to correct this at the March meeting.)

Mr. Jenkins reported that the Review Group which had been convened by the Revd Dr. Jack McKelvey recommended that the Revd Peter McIntosh be re-appointed as the Director of the Windermere Centre until June 30th 2003. Mission Council agreed that this recommendation should be made to the General Assembly. It was further agreed that the post should be reviewed in time for a report to be made to the March 2002 meeting of Mission Council.

Mr. Jenkins reported that, following concerns expressed at Mission Council, Mrs. Ruth Common had been appointed as an independent member of the Review Group for the Chief Accountant and Secretary for Finance. The Group, which would be convened by Dr. Brian Woodhall, expected to report to the March meeting of Mission Council.

Mr. Jenkins would convene the Appointment Group for the Secretary for Continuing Ministerial Education; it would meet in February and would hope to be able to recommend an appointment.

On behalf of the Nomination Group, the General Secretary moved that: **Mission Council, acting on behalf of the General Assembly, appoints the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod for period of seven years to 31st August 2006.**

This was agreed. It was further agreed that the Mission Council should propose the following motions at General Assembly:

Assembly, acting in accordance with paragraph 2(5)(A)(xii) of the Structure, resolves to suspend Rule 7(2)(i) only in order to extend the appointment of the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod.

Assembly extends the appointment of the Revd Peter Poulter as Moderator of the Northern Synod until 31st December 2006.

Mission Council accepted the Report of the Nominations Committee.

99/12 Report of the Assembly Arrangements Committee

The Convener, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, said that there was the possibility that the present rules for the counting of the votes in the election for Assembly Moderator could lead to uncertainty. To rectify this, the Committee proposed that the following change be made to the Rules of Procedure:

At the end of Rule 3(6) add: If the process continues until only two names remain, the person who then has the larger number of votes shall be elected.

It was agreed that this be taken to the General Assembly.

The Committee would propose at Assembly:

Assembly agrees that the General Assembly in 2001 will be held residentially, July 16th – 19th at the University of York.

The Assembly had agreed that the 2002 Assembly should be residential; the Committee was exploring the possibility that this be held in Scotland.

Work had begun on the review of the patterns of Assemblies after that date, and although there was no report on this yet, the Committee recommended that the following resolution should be taken by the Committee to the General Assembly:

Assembly agrees that future meetings of General Assembly should be held residentially, over a weekend.

Mr. Pratt noted that when the review had been completed it was possible that this would need to be reconsidered.

This was agreed.

99/13 Report of the Mission Council Advisory Group (MCAG) (Paper A)

The Deputy General Secretary introduced the report, noting that paragraphs 1, 2 and 7 were for information. Mission Council agreed with the proposal in paragraph 4 that the successor to Mr. Geoff Lunt as Convener of the Staffing Advisory Group should be appointed at the present meeting. The Clerk asked that nominations should be made by 3.30pm.

The Report from MCAG continues at Minute 99/15. The election of the Convener of the Staffing Advisory Group is recorded at Minute 99/18

99/14 Report on the World Council of Churches Assembly

The General Secretary, assisted by others who had been present at the eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches which had been held in Harare 3rd – 14th December 1998, reported on the proceedings and the issues raised. The theme was: “Turn to God – Rejoice in hope”. The World Council, which was 50 years old, comprised 330 member churches from Protestant and Orthodox traditions. The Roman Catholic Church participated in certain parts of the Assembly.

Information about the World Council and the Assembly could be found on the web-site <http://www.wcc-coe.org> looking in particular for Press Release 57. Four questions were posed:

- 1 How do we as churches engage together in mission and evangelism in the midst of a highly pluralistic world?
- 2 How do we understand baptism as a foundation for the life in community which we are called to share together?
- 3 How do we offer together our resources, witness and action for the sake of the world’s very future?
- 4 How do we walk together on the path towards visible unity?

99/15 Report of MCAG: Responding to Mission Council requests in relation to “Growing Up” (Paper A paragraph 6)

Paragraph 6.1 The Deputy General Secretary introduced the suggestion from MCAG that the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee be asked to commission someone to produce leaflets on all parts of the “Growing Up” paper when revision of that document was complete. The work should be done between March and July so that the leaflets were available at Assembly. This was agreed.

Paragraph 6.4 Mission Council considered the suggestion that the grant from the Council for World Mission (CWM) self-support fund might be used to stimulate and support new local mission projects which were an expression of the Five Marks of Mission. After some discussion the Council agreed to this in principle, noting that consultation with CWM would follow.

Paragraph 6.3 Mission Council agreed that a small task group should be set up to work on a strategy on the use of local church premises. Issues to be considered by the group were suggested. It was agreed that MCAG should prepare the terms of reference and appoint the members of the group. Members of Council were asked to suggest names to the Deputy General Secretary. It was agreed that the task group should report to the Mission Council in March 2000.

99/16 Report of MCAG: The discipline of local church members (Paper A paragraph 3)

It was noted that the correct reference was to “members” not “officers” as in Paper A. Mission Council agreed to set up a small task group to consider the issues and report to Mission Council in March 2000. Members were asked to suggest names to the Deputy General Secretary. MCAG was asked to appoint the group, and suggestions of matters to be considered were made.

99/17 Structures for Mission (Paper I)

The General Secretary introduced the paper, reminding Mission Council that the paper “Growing Up” had suggested that the Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee should have new responsibilities, new staffing arrangements and a new name. He noted that the time needed for the transfer of oversight of the Church Related Community Workers from a sub-committee of the Ministries Committee to district councils was likely to be about two and a half years.

There was discussion on the issues raised by the paper, with consideration given to the number of posts required, the way in which post-holders would work together, the overlaps in the responsibilities of the Training Committee and the proposed revised Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee and the distribution of the work of the new committee between the main committee and any sub-committees. It was noted that “Stewardship” should not be defined narrowly in terms of money, but should encompass the use of all resources including gifts, abilities and time. The new committee and sub-committee structure should reflect this.

It was agreed that:

- 1) the new committee should have sub-committees;
- 2) in principle Option B in paragraph 6.1 was preferred, and the General Secretary should bring a detailed proposal based on this to the next meeting of Mission Council;
- 3) RPAG be asked to consider the matter of staffing in the light of the CWM Mission Support Fund;
- 4) the present Discipleship, Stewardship and Witness Committee should consider possible names for the new committee, and suggest 2 or 3 alternatives to the next meeting of Mission Council.

99/18 Election of Convener of the Staffing Advisory Group (SAG)

The Moderator reported that Mr. Chris Wright had proposed and Dr. Graham Campling had seconded that Dr. Donald South be appointed as the Convener of SAG from March 1999 for a period of four years or until he ceased to be a member of Mission Council, whichever was the shorter. This was agreed. The Moderator thanked Dr. South for his willingness to serve in this capacity.

The Chaplains led the Council in closing worship.