



# MISSION COUNCIL

## 3-5 October 2003

# MINUTES

### FRIDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2003

#### 03/54 Welcome

The Moderator, the Revd Alasdair Pratt, welcomed everyone to the meeting, mentioning in particular:- the Revd Sheila Maxey (Moderator-elect of General Assembly); the Revd Dr Des van der Water (General Secretary of CWM) as Theological Reflector; the Revd Terry Oakley (Moderator of East Midlands synod); the Revd Richard Mortimer (Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith and Order); the Revd John Humphreys (Convener of Training Committee); the Revd Dr John Parry (Convener of Inter-faith relations); the Revd Martin Hazell (Convener of Communications and Editorial); Ms Rosemary Simmons (FURY joint-chair); the Revd Chris Vermeulen (North Western synod); the Revd Pauline Loosemore (Yorkshire synod); Mrs Melanie Frew (West Midlands synod); Dr Pamela Cressey (Eastern synod); the Revd Clive Sutcliffe (Wessex synod); Mr David Howell (Southern synod); the Revd Dr Roger Scopes (Thames North synod); Mr Norman Greville (substituting for the Revd David Miller from the East Midlands synod); the Revd Rachel Poolman and the Revd Bill Mahood (conveners of task groups).

Worship was led by the Chaplain, the Revd Carolyn Smyth. The Moderator's Reflection was from Exodus 14 v.5-18 and V.21-

#### 03/55 Attendance

There were 73 voting members present with 14 staff and others in attendance and Mrs Barbara Hedgecock (Minutes Secretary).

Apologies for absence were received from Dr Andrew Bradstock, Ms Avis Reaney, Mrs Jenny Carpenter, the Revd Bill Wright, Mrs Janet Gray, the Revd David Miller, the Revd John Young, Mrs Val Morrison, the Revd Ken Forbes and Miss Catriona Smith.

#### 03/56 Minutes of Mission Council 25-27<sup>th</sup> March 2003

The minutes of the meeting held on 25-27<sup>th</sup> March 2003, which had been circulated, were presented by the Clerk, who drew attention to the following amendments: page 1, **03/17** line 4: *add* ' the Revd' Pauline Loosemore (representing Yorkshire synod) *insert* 'replacing' (*delete*: in the absence of) the Revd John Jenkinson; Page 5: **03/30 6.5.1 – line 16 – delete** The scouts have local groups rather than national groups; *insert* ' Over the last few years the Scout Association has devolved the management of most of its National Activity Centres to local management committees'. (See Minute 03/63)

#### 03/57 Matters Arising

**03/42** section 5: two resolutions from Yorkshire Synod had been referred to the Mission Council Advisory Group. As the Group had not yet had the opportunity to consider this it would be reported to January Mission Council.

**03/42** section 6: as a result of comments at last Mission Council regarding the date of Mission Council in March 2005, it had been changed to 4th-6th March 2005 (dates in Paper J).

**03/58 Additional Business**

The Deputy General Secretary informed Mission Council of the following:

- i) A number of additional items collected in Paper J and J1 – would be fitted in at different points in the agenda
- ii) Mission Council Briefing (omitted from agenda): Training Committee – Training review – would be taken on Saturday afternoon or in the evening session

**03/59 Mission Council Advisory Group Report (Paper G)**

The Deputy General Secretary presented the report of MCAG.

Paragraph 1. The Resolutions from the closed session at March Mission Council were being acted upon.

Paragraph 2. Assembly Book of Reports circulation policy: January 03 Mission Council had resolved **that the General Assembly Book of Reports be circulated freely to members of Assembly and to each local church but that otherwise copies be available for purchase.** All Committee reports are available on the Church Website. It was noted at Mission Council Advisory Group that a number of letters and messages had been received – and would be forwarded to the Assembly Arrangements Committee. Mission Council concurred with its previous decision.

**03/60 Additional Business (Paper J)**

Paragraph 3. **Luther King House Educational Trust:**

The General Secretary moved that: **Mission Council authorises the Training Committee to appoint the United Reformed Church's representative to the Board of the Luther King House Educational Trust with effect from this meeting of Mission Council until further notice.** The Revd Dr John Parry seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

**03/61 Additional Business (continued) (Paper J1)**

Paragraph 3. **Convener of Grants and Loans Group:**

As the present convener, the Revd Angus Duncan was due to retire in January as convener, the Deputy General Secretary gave notice that a successor would have to be appointed. He asked members of Mission Council to bring a name before the end of Mission Council.

**03/62 Notices**

The Deputy General Secretary welcomed back Sheila Andrews (P.A. to the General Secretary) and welcomed Krystyna Bilogan (newly appointed P.A. to the Deputy General Secretary) to her first meeting of Mission Council.

**03/63 Minutes of Mission Council 25-27th March 2003 (Continued from Minute 03/56)**

The Clerk expressed his gratitude to Mr John Ellis for pointing out further errors in the Minutes of March 03 but as they were of a minor nature the Clerk suggested that corrections be made to the official copy of the minutes but that in the meantime the Minutes be approved. This was agreed and Moderator signed the Minutes.

**03/64 "Time for Action" report (Paper C)**

The Moderator welcomed the Revd Bill Mahood (convener of the inter-disciplinary, inter-committee working party) who introduced the report, after which Mission Council divided into informal groups to consider how to deal with paragraph 3 on page 4 of the report:

**It is essential that the United Reformed Church decides where ultimate responsibility lies for the implementation of its policy on sexual harassment and abuse. It is likely that, given the structures of the URC, ultimate responsibility must lie with the General Secretariat, although it would be possible for this to be delegated to an individual or a small group. Whoever is ultimately responsible for overseeing the policy on sexual abuse must ensure that –**

1. **sexual abuse is discouraged and prevented within the life of the United Reformed Church,**
2. **all members of the United Reformed Church and its structures are regularly made aware of the problem of sexual abuse and the existence of the procedures available,**
3. **local churches are made aware of the Guidelines and of the help and support that is available in implementing them,**
4. **awareness raising material is made available and training offered,**
5. **there is a pool of people specifically identified and trained in supporting local churches dealing with allegations of sexual abuse,**
6. **every formal written complaint of sexual abuse is investigated,**
7. **advice and support is available to persons who are subjected to sexual abuse and to those who have been accused or convicted of acts of sexual abuse,**
8. **disciplinary measures are implemented where appropriate,**
9. **the procedures of the policy are regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet adequately the policy objectives,**
10. **records are maintained as required.**

This was followed by a plenary discussion with the General Secretary summing up the major points: the need to produce guidelines; the need to identify material and training resources; the need to identify specially gifted people with the specific experience in points 5-7 and 6-8; should be the responsibility of Section O Process in relation to ministers, points 9-10. These issues were discussed later in the agenda. The Moderator thanked the Revd Bill Mahood and the working party for their contribution. (*See Minute 03/78*)

### **03/65 Resource Planning Advisory Group (Paper F)**

The Convener, the Revd Julian Macro presented the Report of RPAG and brought 4 resolutions. On the request of Mr John Ellis the Moderator agreed to take the resolutions in the order 3,2,1,4.

Resolution 3:

**The Staffing Advisory Group undertake a review of all staff posts in consultation with the General Secretary's Review Group, co-opting additional personnel to help with the review as necessary, with the aim of presenting a report on this SAG review to Mission Council in January 2005.**

This was agreed.

Resolution 2:

**That where staff posts are to be renewed for two years or less the current post-holders should be offered the automatic opportunity of renewal.**

This was agreed.

On the advice of the Clerk, the phrase "Acting on behalf of General Assembly" was added to Resolution one which then read:

Resolution 1:

**Mission Council acting on behalf of General Assembly resolves that the post of CRCW Development Worker be renewed for two years.**

The resolution was agreed.

Resolution 4:

**In the light of the impending retirement of the Office and Personnel Manager, a group consisting of Val Morrison (as Convener), John Woodman, David Marshall-Jones and Eileen McClenaghan (with authority to co-opt and consult) should report to Mission Council as soon as possible with proposals relating to staff management and other related issues in Church House.**

This resolution was agreed.

#### **03/66 Ministries: Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-Committee (Paper D)**

Mr Eric Chilton, the Hon Treasurer brought the resolution:

**Mission Council sets the basic stipend for 2004 at £18,576.**

This was agreed with one abstention.

#### **03/67 Additional Business (Paper J)**

The Deputy General Secretary brought the following for information only.

Paragraph 1 - United Reformed Church Criminal Records Bureau Churches Agency for Safeguarding Reference Group. A group had met informally but it was planned to bring a formal proposal and terms of reference to the January 2004 Mission Council.

Paragraph 4 – Nominations Committee. The nominating group for the appointment of a Youth Secretary, convened by the Revd Peter Noble, brought the following resolution:

**Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly, appoints Mr John Brown as Secretary for Youth Work for a period of five years, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.**

This was agreed.

#### **03/68 Task Group of Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority (Paper E and Oct 02 Paper F pages D3-8)**

The Revd Rachel Poolman presented Paper E on behalf of the Task Group.

Recommendation 6 on page 2 of Paper E had been revised to read:

**Mission Council requests that all councils and meetings of the United Reformed Church examine their nominations procedures and the make up of their membership to ensure that the breadth of the membership of the United Reformed Church is appropriately reflected as far as possible when we meet together.**

This was agreed.

Mr John Ellis proposed and the Revd John Humphries seconded an amendment to Resolution 9 (page D8 of Paper F) to read:

**Mission Council requests the Ministries Committee in consultation with the Training Committee, to create a development policy for Ministers and CRCWs which incorporates arrangements for continuing ministerial education and appraisal.**



The Ministries Committee was asked to do more work on this amended recommendation.

Recommendation 10

**Mission Council recommends the production of a middle range disciplinary procedure that matches the present grievance procedure.**

An amendment in the name of Mr Ken Woods and Mr John Seager, which had been moved in January 2003, was ruled out of order.

The Revd John Waller proposed and the Revd Elizabeth Welch seconded a further amendment to Recommendation 10:

**Mission Council requests the Section O Working Group to produce a middle range disciplinary procedure that matches the present grievance procedure.** The revised Recommendation 10 was agreed.

Mission Council then met in groups. (*See Minute 03/70*)

The Chaplain led worship and Mission Council adjourned.

#### **SATURDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2003**

Mission Council joined in Worship led by the Chaplain, which included Bible Study from Acts 10.

#### **03/69 Mission Council Advisory Group (Paper G, Item 3 and Paper J, Item 2)**

The Deputy General Secretary informed Mission Council that since General Assembly's decision to close the National Youth Resource Centre at Yardley Hastings, the Centre Management Committee had decided that the date of closure should be 31<sup>st</sup> December 2003. Redundancy notices had been issued to staff and the Revd Deborah McVey had been appointed as interim centre minister until closure. The Deputy General Secretary outlined proposals for managing the outcome of the Assembly's decision. He proposed and Irene Wren seconded the following resolution :

**Mission Council welcomes the creation of a Yardley Hastings Buildings Management Group to monitor transition of use for the building previously occupied by the National Youth Resource Centre and under the trusteeship of the United Reformed Church Trust. Mission Council notes that the group shall consist of two representatives of the United Reformed Trust, two representatives of East Midlands synod, one member of the former Centre Management Committee and one representative of the local Church.**

This was agreed.

The Deputy General Secretary reported that Mr Eric Chilton (Hon Treasurer) and Mr Tony Bailey (the staff member responsible for Assembly-owned properties) had been appointed by the United Reformed Church Trust to the Management Group with Mr Eric Chilton as convener. In response to a question, Mr Eric Chilton replied that the Buildings Management Group would be responsible to MCAG as Charity Trustees of the United Reformed Church. The General Secretary brought to the attention of Mission Council the amount of sensitive work that the Deputy General Secretary had carried out in respect of Yardley Hastings.

**03/70 Task Group of Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority (Papers E, E1, J1 and Oct 02 Paper F pages D3-8) (Continued from 03/68)**

The Revd Rachel Poolman and the Revd Brian Jolly introduced Papers E1 and E2. Mission Council then divided into groups to discuss questions relating to recommendations D8-D11 contained in Paper J1, paragraph 2. This was then followed by a plenary session.

Dr Peter Clarke moved an amendment to Recommendation 13. This was seconded and agreed. The amendment was approved.

Amended Resolution 13

**Mission Council resolves to progress the discussion of the role of synod Moderators in the movement of ministers by:**

- i. Requesting any input the Moderators Meeting may wish to table;**
- ii. Agreeing to consider this alongside the report of the PCLA Task Group and Paper E2; and**
- iii. Intending to make a decision on policy at the January 04 Mission Council.**

The General Secretary offered to produce a paper jointly with the Secretary of Moderators Meeting and Convener of Ministries Committee to assist Mission Council in its deliberations.

It was noted that Recommendations 14-17 would be withdrawn.

**03/71 Youth and Children's Work Committee**

The Revd Kathryn Price presented a report on behalf of the Youth and Children's Work Committee. In response to a question, the Treasurer stated that provision would be made in the 2005 budget for a "Ginger Group" project, and that this would be inserted into the detailed budget at a later stage.

**03/72 Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee (Paper B)**

The Moderator gave permission for the Revd Richard Mortimer to present the report of the Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee and to bring the altered remit of the committee, made available in the Reports to 2003 General Assembly, for approval.

Remit of the Committee

**The purpose of the Committee is:**

- to encourage and advise the Councils and Committees of the United Reformed Church in their continual study of theology, enabling the Church to reflect upon and express its doctrines;**
- to participate in and respond to ecumenical and inter-faith discussions on doctrinal matters;**
- to produce resources and arrange consultations, in response to requests or on its own initiative, in order to enable the Church in all its councils to grow in faith, devotion and spiritual experience;**
- to publish regular and occasional prayer and worship materials;**
- to support and develop ecumenical and international collaborations in the areas of faith and order and spirituality;**
- to oversee the work of the Prayer Handbook Group and the network for Silence and Retreats.**

This was agreed.

### **03/73 Mission Council Advisory Group**

The Deputy General Secretary brought item 4 of the report. The Revd Richard Mortimer was asked to report on a meeting he had attended of the Anglican Council for Christian Unity. There had been a very warm response to the Pastoral Strategy document, which was presented at the meeting.

### **03/74 "Faith Stance on the global crisis of life" (Paper H)**

The Moderator gave permission for the Revd Phillip Woods, Secretary for International Relations to present a summary of the paper produced by WARC. This was followed by group discussion.

### **03/75 Ministries: Church Related Community Workers as Non-Stipendiary Ministers (Paper A)**

Mr John Ellis, Convener of Ministries Committee brought a draft report and resolutions to Mission Council:

#### Resolution A

**General Assembly agrees to extend the principles of Non-Stipendiary Ministry to CRCW ministry. The Assembly resolves that:**

- (i) non-stipendiary CRCW candidates would be expected to follow the same training path as for stipendiary CRCWs by training at Northern College on the 'Faith in Living' programme;
- (ii) the minimum age for commencement of training for non-stipendiary CRCW candidates shall be 21 years of age.

This was agreed.

#### Resolution B

**General Assembly resolves to amend the Basis of Union and Structure of the United Reformed Church as follows (*with additions and amendments shown in italics*):**

- a) Add to the end of the sentence at paragraph 22 of the Basis of Union (as agreed by General Assembly in July 2003):  
*"Their service may be stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and in the latter case their service is given within the area of a District or Area Council and in a context it has approved."*
- b) Amend paragraph B2(3)(A)(iii) on page B6 (July 2000 edition of the Manual) to read:  
*"To appoint, or to concur in the appointment of, non-stipendiary ministers and church related community workers to their particular service and to review this service at stated intervals;"*

This was agreed.

#### Resolution C

**General Assembly resolves to make the following amendments to its policies as set out in the Manual:**

- a) Amend the paragraph entitled 'The Ministry of Word and Sacraments' on page K3 (July 2000 edition of the Manual) to read:  
 "Ministers serve in a stipendiary or non-stipendiary capacity and may work as one minister of Word & Sacraments alongside the Elders or in a team with other stipendiary or non-stipendiary colleagues. A team may also involve *stipendiary or non-stipendiary church related community workers*. It may be ecumenical."
- b) Amend the paragraph entitled 'There are three models of non-stipendiary ministry' on page K4 (July 2000) to read:  
 "Model III—ministers *and church related community workers* in secular employment *and church related community workers working for the URC or other Christian organisations or denominations*. Service set apart to be a focus for mission in the place of work or leisure. It is related to a local church or District or Area Council."
- c) Add before the paragraph on Accreditation on page K13 (July 2000):  
 "*Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Work.*  
*The minimum level of qualifications and achievement of the stated core competencies to become an accredited stipendiary CRCW would also be applicable for accredited Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Workers.*
- Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Work candidates would be expected to follow the same training path as for stipendiary Church Related Community Workers by training at Northern College on the 'Faith in Living' programme.*
- The normal minimum age for the commencement of training for the non-stipendiary ministry of church-related community work shall be 21 years of age.*
- Otherwise, the same regulations apply to the age of entry to the non-stipendiary ministry of church related community work as those pertaining to the ministry of Word and Sacraments.*
- The procedures and decisions required to transfer between stipendiary and non-stipendiary service for ministers of Word and Sacraments also apply for the transfer between stipendiary and non-stipendiary church related community work."*
- d) Amend section L 18 (July 2000) to read:  
 "*Stipendiary Ministers and Church Related Community Workers*  
 The United Reformed Church will meet the normal training costs (fees and maintenance) of all ordinands *and CRCWs-in-training* and their dependants from central funds. We nevertheless encourage ordinands *and CRCWs-in-training* to first seek funding from grant awarding bodies, where possible.  
 <Rest of paragraph unaltered>
- Non-stipendiary Ministers and Church Related Community Workers"*  
 <Rest of paragraph unaltered>
- e) Amend the penultimate sentence of section L 21.1 (July 2000) to read:



**“For non-stipendiary ministers *and church related community workers* who, because of other work cannot attend a mid-week course, a ‘week’ means two weekends each lasting from Friday evening until Sunday teatime.”**

This was agreed.

Resolution D

**General Assembly resolves to make the following changes to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration agreed at the 2003 General Assembly:**

- a) **Amend section ‘5.4 Exclusions:- 5.4.3 Non-stipendiary ministers’ to read:  
“Non-stipendiary ministers *and Non-stipendiary CRCWs*”**
- b) **Amend section ‘9.2.1 to read:  
“An interest free loan is available to ordinands for the stipendiary ministry, former non-stipendiary ministers *and non-stipendiary CRCWs* at the time they take up stipendiary ministry, and to CRCWs upon commissioning (see Appendix A).”**

This was agreed.

The Clerk confirmed with the Convener of Ministries Committee that he wished Mission Council to present this report to General Assembly.

#### **03/76 Training Committee – Additional Business (Paper J)**

The Revd John Humphreys expressed gratitude to the Revd John Proctor for his work as Convener of the Committee over the past 12 years. The Moderator had also written a letter of thanks to him. The Revd John Humphreys presented his report as follows:

1. The Revd David L. Jenkins would soon have come to the end of his appointment as Co-ordinator on the TSL Sub Committee and Training Committee. This being a salaried position, it was hoped to place an advert soon so that the new occupant could be in position by the summer.
2. Since the resignation of the Revd Jean Black as Continuing Ministerial Education Secretary, the Revd Roy Lowes had taken over this responsibility as well as that of Training Secretary. A review of the CME sub committee was nearing completion and the committee had advised the Training Committee of the urgency of appointing a dedicated POET Officer. Discussions had already commenced to expedite the matter and it was noted that the appointment would be on a 50% basis.
3. At the March Mission Council the Revd John Proctor circulated a brief paper highlighting the reasons behind the Training Committee’s review on training. The review would be taken to General Assembly 2004 with recommendations brought to General Assembly 2005. The committee would welcome any thoughts and ideas regarding the ways the denomination could meet its training needs. These should be sent to the Secretary for Training.
4. The General Synod of the Church of England has decided to proceed with the Hynde Report and the following three issues were brought to Mission Council’s attention:

- a) The United Reformed Church being closely involved with the Church of England in training colleges and courses, there were concerns about the implications of the Hynde Report on this partnership.
  - b) The Church of England was working to a tight timetable for reorganising training on a regional basis.
  - c) The Church of England does not have training requirements in Wales and Scotland.
5. The General Synod would decide by April 2004 on 8/10 regions in which training would be organised. The Revd John Waller would represent the United Reformed Church on the working group looking at the regions.
  6. The document "Oversight and Care" had been agreed by the Training Committee and the Moderators meeting on training for ministry. It would be circulated to synods and students. The Committee wished to express their thanks to the Revd John Proctor for the work he carried out on their behalf. Mission Council thanked the Revd John Humphreys for presenting the report.

#### **03/77 Additional Business (Paper J)**

Item 5. The Training Committee moved on behalf of the Governors of Westminster College **Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly, re-appoints the Revd Dr Janet Tollington to the Glendyne Chair of Old Testament Studies at Westminster College, Cambridge, for a further period of seven years, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004 until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011.**

The Resolution was agreed.

#### **03/78 "Time for Action" (Paper C) (Continued from Minute 03/64)**

The Deputy General Secretary, reporting on the comments received from the plenary an group session, identified the need

- For a "Good practice" document.
- For the help of 'experts' (both counsellors and theologians).
- To investigate work of ecumenical partners and non-church agencies.
- To produce training and awareness-raising material.
- For an appropriate disciplinary procedure for these who are not ordained ministers (made easier by the existence of a "Good practice" document).
- For Assembly and synod authorisation to implement policy.

The next part of the process was defined in the following proposal:

#### **Mission Council invites the Life & Witness Committee:**

- **To convene a meeting of relevant groups, committees and individuals to identify the areas in which Mission Council can develop a safe practice policy for the United Reformed Church in response to the CTBI Time for Action report;**
- **And to enable the Mission Council Advisory Group to bring proposals to a future meeting of Mission Council.**

**The recommendation was carried.**

Those already named by the Time for Action Working Party who had been involved in the process to date, and who should be consulted, included:

The Youth & Children's Work Committee  
The Community of Women & Men  
The Moderators Meeting  
Section O Working Party

The Chaplain led worship and Mission Council adjourned.

**SUNDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2003**

Mission Council, led by the Moderator and the Chaplain, met for worship, which included the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

**03/79 "Glimpses of God's tomorrow': the story so far"**

The General Secretary gave an update on the research which was part of the review of the United Reformed Church. The Treasurer also reported on expenditure during 2002. The General Secretary then asked members of Mission Council to write their thoughts on "I dream of a Church that ...." and to submit them for further consideration by the Review Group.

**03/80 Thoughts from the Theological Reflector**

The Moderator introduced the Theological Reflector, the Revd Dr Des van der Water (General Secretary of CWM) who offered a preliminary reflection on the Mission Council. (The text would be circulated with the minutes)

He noted 3 related issues which had emerged from the Council meeting:

1. There was concern amongst participants as to what kind of a church we were? This question was in one particular discussion and clearly illustrated in the paper *Time for Action*.
2. The discussions on Personal & Conciliar Leadership and Authority revealed the need for mutual trust relationships, with each link playing an equal part.
3. A quest for a new vision as a Church – which required being prepared to change.

The Moderator thanked the theological reflector for his moving and challenging address and sent good wishes for his work with CWM.

**03/81 Close**

The Moderator expressed his thanks for the support and leadership from those around him at this meeting and thanked those who were attending for the last time: the Revd Graham Cook (Moderator, Mersey synod), who had attended every Mission Council meeting since the beginning; the Revd Angus Duncan (Grants & Loans Group Convener); Mr Ken Woods (Eastern synod) and Mrs Veronica Taylor (Wessex synod).

Closing Worship was led by the Chaplain.



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# The United Reformed Church

86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT, United Kingdom  
Deputy General Secretary: The Revd Raymond Adams

To: Members of Mission Council  
and staff in attendance

28<sup>th</sup> August 2003

Dear Colleague,

**Mission Council: 3-5 October 2003**  
**Ushaw College, Durham**  
**Telephone 0191 373 8502**

It is my pleasure to welcome those of you who are new to Mission Council to your first meeting, and to welcome back those who are regular attenders. We shall meet in Durham in five weeks' time, and, in order to ensure that our arrangements are completed in time, please would you supply, as soon as possible, and preferably within a week of receiving this letter, the information we need about your requirements for accommodation, meals and transport.

Enclosed are some preliminary papers:

- directions for getting to Ushaw College
- a list of members (to help people plan to share transport, where possible)
- an expense slip (to be completed and handed in at the meeting)
- a paper of background information on Mission Council
- a form for your accommodation and meal requests, and certain other necessary information.

Lunch times on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October shall be arranged to correspond with the arrival and departure times of the mainline train services to and from Durham station (which is about three miles from Ushaw College). Lunch on Friday will be at 1.15 p.m. and on Sunday at 12.30 p.m.

Arrangements are being made for transport to meet trains arriving at Durham station at 12.30 p.m. and 12.50 p.m. (the arrival times of mainline trains from Scotland, and the south and west of England). Please indicate on the form if you wish to take advantage of this service.

There are no bedrooms on the ground floor at Ushaw College, but there is a lift to the first floor. If you have a mobility problem, and would like to be allocated a room near the lift, please indicate on the form. It may also be necessary for some people to share a bedroom (depending on the total number attending). If you are prepared to do this, please indicate on the form. The advantage of sharing is that twin-bedded rooms are ensuite.



You are invited to volunteer to be a group leader and/or reporter during the year 2003-4. Though we did not use formal groups very much last year, it would be good to have a system in place in case we decide to do so. It is not an onerous task, and no one will be expected to fulfil the same role (either leader or reporter) more than once in the year, if people respond as positively as usual.

Although the agenda is still to be finalised, Mission Council will be asked to consider a report from the working party, set up in January, to consider the CTBI report *Time for Action: sexual abuse, the churches and a new dawn for survivors*. Copies of the whole report are available from the Church House Book Room (£7.95) if you wish to purchase one. Comments from the working party will be sent out with the papers in the second mailing. The Council will also be asked to consider the remaining part of the report of the task group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership. Please bring Paper F (October 2002 Mission Council) with you, if you have a copy. The Revd Rachel Poolman, who convened the group, will prepare a summary of the discussion held at the two previous Mission Councils (October 2002 and January 2003) where this has been on the agenda. She will also produce a paper to guide us through the remaining section. If you require a copy of Paper F to be sent to you in the second mailing, please indicate on the form. All other preparatory papers for Mission Council should be sent out in about three weeks' time.

For future planning, it may be helpful for you to have details of Mission Council dates and venues in 2004:

Saturday 24 January	Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh
Friday 19 - Sunday 21 March	The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick
Tuesday 5 - Thursday 7 October	All Saints Pastoral Centre, London Colney

I look forward to seeing you at Ushaw College.

In the meantime, all good wishes.

Yours sincerely



The Revd Raymond Adams  
Deputy General Secretary



## MISSION COUNCIL

*3-5 October 2003*

### **What are we about in Mission Council?**

This paper is written particularly with those new to Mission Council in mind. It may also help some older hands!

#### The original vision

This was set out in the Reports to the Assembly of 1992. "The purpose of the Mission Council is to enable the Church, in its General Assembly, to take a more comprehensive view of the activity and the policy of the Church, to decide more carefully about priorities and to encourage the outreach of the Church to the community. Its service is directly towards the Assembly, but its concern is with the whole church and all its members, so it will seek to be aware of the pains and joys, the adventures and hopes of the whole body. As the Assembly is representative of the whole Church, so the Mission Council will listen to and will serve the local churches, to help them in their missionary vocation. It is a Mission Council and so the aim it will have in mind is to ensure that all we undertake centrally and all we are as a denomination is directed towards the mission of God in the world, towards that Kingdom of justice, peace, forgiveness and hope which is true life and which Christ brings in his person. The Council will ask, is this programme, this appointment, this budget, this grant, this statement designed to further the overall mission, or simply to maintain our human structures of institutional life? It is by such criteria that priorities will have to be assessed, not only when new work is proposed but as the existing work of the church is reviewed".

#### The members

Each of the 13 synods represented by 4 people, including its Moderator. These 52 people form the main body of the membership. The other significant group of members is the 14 Conveners of Assembly standing committees. FURY Council has 2 representatives. Finally, the Assembly officers and certain other officers of the Church are members. This currently adds up to a total of 77 but the actual membership is slightly less as a few people are members in more than one category.

#### In attendance

The number present at any Council meeting is usually around 90. This is because a number of members of staff and other consultants are present to advise the conveners and the Council itself. Whilst they do not have a vote and can only speak with permission, those in this category participate in group work and in many ways play a very important part in the life of the Council.



## Paper

There are normally 2 mailings before each Council. The first contains practical information about the Council and may include other reports if they are ready. The second contains the agenda and timetable, and (as far as possible) all other papers to be considered by the Council. You need to build reading time into your diary in the week before every meeting!

## Meetings

The Council meets 3 times a year, in October and March residentially for 48 hours, in January for a full Saturday. The meetings relate very much to the General Assembly: in October we take up any matters referred by Assembly, in January we begin to look ahead to the next one, and in March we focus on the Assembly in the following July. Our input also comes from committees of Assembly, which may want advice or decision, from the task groups we appoint and from the synods. At the moment we could do with more of the latter.

## Style of meeting

Worship and Bible Study are central to our meeting. They are the responsibility of the Moderator and her/his Chaplain. Much of the time we meet in plenary session, with the Moderator in the chair and the Clerk keeping us in order. Normal rules for the conduct of business apply, although hopefully we can usually be more informal than an Assembly. It helps if speakers identify themselves. We use small groups (or about 10 people) in a variety of ways. Our normal practice is to change the membership of groups for each meeting. The style of our working together is most affected by the informal conversations we have at coffee breaks and meal times - and late at night!

## Advice

Advice is welcome from all quarters but Mission Council has 4 standing Advisory Groups. Mission Council Advisory Group (MCAG) plans the agenda and necessary follow up, and provides support for the Moderator and General Secretary. The Resources Planning Advisory Group (RPAG) prepares annual budgets, and makes recommendations on the use of human and financial resources. The Staffing Advisory Group (SAG) considers staff posts due to become vacant and proposals for new posts, and brings appropriate recommendations to Mission Council through RPAG. The Grants and Loans Group considers and co-ordinates central grants. It makes an annual report to Mission Council. Elections to these groups normally take place at the March meeting, although casual vacancies have to be filled from time to time.

## Making Connections

All this is about what happens at Mission Council. Whilst at their best our meetings are "aware of the pains and joys, the adventures and hopes of the whole body", to many in the Church, Mission Council seems very remote. Therefore a key role of the synod representatives in particular is to act as channels of communication, both before and after meetings.

## Administration

The administration of Mission Council is the responsibility of the Deputy General Secretary, to whom all reasonable comments and questions may be addressed!

John Waller  
August 2001





## MISSION COUNCIL 3-5 October 2003

The Moderator:	Revd Alasdair Pratt	Past Moderator:	Revd John Waller
General Secretary:	Revd Dr David Cornick	Moderator Elect:	Revd. Sheila Maxey
Deputy General Secretary:	Revd Ray Adams	Treasurer:	Mr Eric Chilton
Clerk:	Revd. James Breslin	Legal Adviser:	Mrs Janet Knott

### Assembly Standing Committees

Doctrine Prayer & Worship:	Revd John Young
Life & Witness:	Revd Brian Jolly
Church & Society:	Revd Martin Camroux
Youth & Children's Work:	Revd Kathryn Price
Ecumenical:	Revd John Rees
Ministries:	Mr John Ellis
Training:	Revd John Humphreys
Finance:	Mr Eric Chilton
Communications & Editorial:	Revd Martin Hazell
Nominations:	Revd Dr Stephen Orchard
Assembly Arrangements:	Mr William McVey
Equal Opportunities:	Revd. Wilf Bahadur
Inter-Faith Relations:	Revd. Dr John Parry
Racial Justice	Revd Andrew Prasad

### Fury Council

Miss Rosemary Simmons  
Ms Amanda Wade

### 13 synod Moderators, plus 3 representatives from each synod

1 Revd Peter Poulter	Revd Pamela Ward, Dr Peter Clarke, Mrs Roberta Wood
2 Revd Peter Brain	Revd Chris Vermeulen, Mr George Morton, Mrs Janet Eccles
3 Revd Graham Cook	Mr Donald Swift, Revd. Martin Hardy, Revd. John Kingsley
4 Revd Arnold Harrison	Revd John Jenkinson, Mr John Seager, Mrs Val Morrison
5 Revd Terry Oakley	Mrs Ann Ball, Mrs Barbara Turner, Revd David Miller
6 Revd Elizabeth Welch	Mrs Melanie Frew, Mr Simon Rowntree, Revd. Simon Helme
7 Revd Elizabeth Caswell	Revd Victor Ridgewell, Mr Ken Woods, Dr. Pamela Cressey
8 Revd David Miller	Revd Roz Harrison, Revd Paul Snell, Miss Angela Bebbington
9 Revd Adrian Bulley	Revd Clive Sutcliffe, Mrs Veronica Taylor, Revd David Bedford
10 Revd Roberta Rominger	Mrs Helen Clapp, Revd Dr Roger Scopes, Revd Jane Wade
11 Revd Nigel Uden	Mrs Marion Bayley, Revd Lesley Charlton, Mr David Howell
12 Revd Peter Noble	Revd David Marshall-Jones, Mrs Janet Gray, Mr W Stuart Jones
13 Revd John Arthur	Revd Ken Forbes, Mrs Helen Mee, Miss Catriona Smith

### In attendance

Minute Secretary	Mrs Barbara Hedgecock	Rural Consultant	Mrs Jenny Carpenter
Moderator's Chaplain	Revd Carolyn Smythe	Editor, Reform	Revd David Lawrence
Church & Society	Dr Andrew Bradstock	Training	Revd Roy Lowes
International Church Relations	Revd Philip Woods	Ecumenical Relations	Revd Richard Mortimer
Ministries	Revd Christine Craven	Director, Windermere Centre	Mr Lawrence Moore
Finance	Ms Avis Reaney	Communications	Mrs Carol Rogers
Youth Work		Childrens Advocate	Mrs Rosemary Johnston
Office & Personnel Manager	Mr Hilary Gunn	Convener RPAG	Revd Julian Macro
Life & Witness	Revd John Steele	Secretary RPAG	Revd Bill Wright
Pilots Development Officer	Mrs Karen Bulley	Grants & Loans Group Convener	Revd Angus Duncan
Church Related Community	Ms Suzanne Adofo /	Racial Justice Secretary	Mrs Katalina Tahaafe-William
Work development workers	Mr Stephen Summers	Yardley Hastings Centre Minister	
Theological Reflector	Revd Des van der Water		





# The United Reformed Church

86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT, United Kingdom  
Deputy General Secretary: The Revd Raymond Adams

To: Members of Mission Council  
and staff in attendance

25<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Dear Colleague,

Mission Council: 3-5 October 2003  
Ushaw College, Durham  
Telephone 0191 373 8502

The enclosed papers come as the second mailing for our meeting at Ushaw College. Though there are fewer papers to read than on some occasions, there are several major issues which shall require Mission Council's careful consideration. I draw attention to four:

- The United Reformed Church's response to the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland report, 'Time for Action: sexual abuse, the Churches and a new dawn for survivors'. **Paper C** is the report of the working party which Mission Council established last January. The full report is available for purchase (as I indicated in the first mailing).
- The final section of the Task Group's report on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority, which comments on the process by which ministers are called to serve local churches, and the rôle of synod moderators within it, will be presented to the Council. The convener of the group has written **Paper E** to bring us up-to-date with the discussion which started at the October 2002 Mission Council, but, because of the pressure of other business, we were unable to complete it before General Assembly. Please re-read and remember to bring with you **Paper F (cream) from the October 02 Mission Council** (unless you have already asked for another copy to be sent). **Paper E1** contains alternative proposals about the call of ministers produced by the Ministries Committee's deployment working party. Though the working party was set up for another purpose than the consideration of personal and conciliar leadership and authority, it was felt that its different conclusions about the way ministers should be called to local churches should be fed in to the Mission Council discussion. The Deployment Working Party's report is not being presented to Mission Council at this stage, so paper E1 is circulated to inform and assist our decision-making about the PCLA task group report before us.
- There will be an opportunity, in groups, for Mission Council to respond to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches' document, 'Faith stance on the global crisis of life' (**Paper H**). General Assembly (in Resolution 31) asked synods and district councils to consider this. Mission Council's discussion may, therefore, both stimulate the process, and provide comments for the Secretary for International Relations to collate with those from other parts of the church.

- It is a year since Mission Council asked the General Secretary to instigate a major review of the United Reformed Church. Under the title, 'Glimpses of God's tomorrow: the story so far', David Cornick will update the Council on the research which is in progress, offer some new thoughts, and lead a discussion.

At this Mission Council there will be several people (synod representatives and committee conveners) joining us for the first time. Among them we shall be pleased to welcome the Revd Dr Des van der Water, General Secretary of the Council for World Mission who, on this occasion, will act as our theological reflector.

The following papers are enclosed

A: Church Related Community Workers as Non-Stipendiary Ministers

B: Doctrine Prayer and Worship

C: Working party report on 'Time for Action'

D: Maintenance of the Ministry sub-committee

E: Commentary on the report of task group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority.

E1: Section of report of the Deployment Working Party prepared for the Ministries Committee.

F: Resource Planning Advisory Group

G: Mission Council Advisory Group

H: 'Faith stance and the global crisis of life' – discussion paper

(J: Additional business – will be tabled at Mission Council)

Please remember to bring all these papers with you, as well as a Bible and, if possible, a copy of Rejoice and Sing. For those arriving by train at 12.30 p.m. or 12.50 p.m., there is a taxi rank outside the station. Please share taxis with other representatives (I leave it to you to decide how to identify yourself - a red carnation, perhaps, or a rolled copy of Assembly Reports?!)

If you have any questions about the agenda, need us to make special arrangements for you, or you do not have all the papers you require, please contact either Sheila Andrews (020 7916 8645) or Krystyna Bilogan (020 7916 8646) at Church House.

I look forward to seeing you at Mission Council.

With good wishes

Yours sincerely



The Revd Raymond Adams  
Deputy General Secretary



**MISSION COUNCIL**  
*3 – 5 October 2003*

**AGENDA AND  
TIMETABLE**

The General Assembly has agreed that every agenda should be headed with the question, what are the ecumenical implications of this agenda?

**FRIDAY**

*12.00 noon onwards* Check in

*1.15p.m.* Lunch

*2.15p.m.* Opening Worship and Bible Study

Welcome and apologies  
Minutes of Mission Council held on 25-27 March 2003  
Matters arising  
Notice of additional business: MC Briefing on Training

Mission Council Advisory Group Report -1 (Paper G)

*3.30p.m.* Tea

*4.00p.m.* "Time for Action ": report of the working party (Paper C)

Resource Planning Advisory Group (Paper F)

Ministries: Maintenance of the Ministry sub-committee  
(Paper D)

*6.30p.m.* Dinner

*7.45 p.m.* Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority  
(recommendations 6, 9 &10 )  
(Paper E and Oct 02 Paper F pages D3-8)

*8.15 p.m.* Groups

*9.15 p.m.* Evening Prayers

**SATURDAY**

*8.30a.m.* Breakfast

*9.15a.m.* Morning Worship and Bible Study

*10.00a.m.* Mission Council Advisory Group -2 (Paper G)

Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee (Paper B)

*10.30a.m.* Coffee

11.00a.m. Report of Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority -  
section 3  
**(Paper E; Oct 02 Paper F  
pages D8- D12; Paper E1)**

12.20 p.m. End of session

12.30 p.m. *Lunch*

*Free time*

3.30p.m. *Tea*

4. 00p.m. Youth and Children's Work Committee

'Faith stance on the global crisis of life': introduction and group discussion  
**(Paper H)**

6.30p.m. *Dinner*

7.30p.m. Ministries: Church Related Community Workers as Non-Stipendiary  
Ministers **(Paper A)**

Nominations

Any additional business: Training committee update  
**(Paper J)**

9.00p.m. *Evening Prayers*

## **SUNDAY**

8.30a.m. *Breakfast*

9.15a.m. Service of Holy Communion

10.30a.m. *Coffee*

10.45a.m. 'Glimpses of God's tomorrow: the story so far'  
an update on research in progress, some new thoughts and an opportunity for  
discussion - The General Secretary

12.15p.m. Closing Worship

12.30p.m. *Lunch*

Depart





## MISSION COUNCIL *3-5 October 2003*

### Notes for Group Leaders

First, thank you for agreeing to lead a group. Mission Council will break into both formal and informal groups during its meeting in Durham. You are only responsible for the formal groups at the following times:

#### **Friday evening : 8.15 – 9.00 p.m.**

The purpose of this group is

- a) For members of Mission Council (particularly new ones) to meet others in a group setting
- b) Recognising the sensitivity of the issue for some, it is important that there be an opportunity for all who have participated in the plenary discussion on 'Time for Action' report (**Paper C**) to reflect, and see if there are any further issues arising from the presentation and plenary discussion, which they would like to convey to the Deputy General Secretary (in written note form) for further consideration, or by Mission Council Advisory Group, or a future Mission Council.
- c) To allow for Mission Council representatives to remind themselves (or inform new members) of the broad thrust of **October 2002 Paper F on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority** – and partly in preparation for the Section to be discussed the next day. Each group ought to contain a synod moderator – who will be able to explain the present practice of introducing ministers to local pastorates. It would be good to check that everyone is familiar with the present system, and to be able to compare theory with their own experience. (There will be no group reporting back on this – as there will be other informal groups on Saturday)

#### **Saturday afternoon : 5.15 – 6.10 p.m.**

This session will be given to discussing **Paper H** – following an introduction by Philip Woods.

Unless otherwise directed by Philip, it would be good for the groups to look at " Our Faith stance" pages 4-6, and

- a) Comment on the content of this statement, particularly the faith stance.
- b) What response would the group make to the WARC?
- c) How could the statement be used within the United Reformed Church (in local churches or more widely)?

d) How are some of its principles being put into practice already; and how could they be put into practice?

Any comments should be fed back to the Secretary for International Relations, Philip Woods.

Ray Adams

**Groups** -The first named person is asked to act as group leader and the second named person in each group as reporter

<p><b>Peter Brain</b>  <b>Marion Bayley</b>  Eric Chilton  Brian Jolly  David Miller (S.Western)  Lawrence Moore  Andrew Prasad  Rosemary Simmons  Pamela Ward  Des van der Water  Roberta Wood</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">A</div>	<p><b>Peter Clarke</b>  <b>William McVey</b>  Adrian Bulley  Martin Camroux  Lesley Charlton  Richard Mortimer  Terry Oakley  Alasdair Pratt  Carolyn Smythe  John Steele  Amanda Wade</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">B</div>
<p><b>Graham Cook</b>  <b>Paul Snell</b>  Andrew Bradstock  Janet Eccles  Rosemary Johnston  Janet Knott  Roy Lowes  Stephen Orchard  Peter Noble  John Seager  Jane Wade  Ken Woods</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">C</div>	<p><b>Roz Harrison</b>  <b>John Ellis</b>  Suzanne Adofo  John Arthur  John Kingsley  Julian Macro  Kathryn Price  Peter Poulter  Barbara Turner  Chris Vermeulen  Philip Woods</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">D</div>
<p><b>John Humphreys</b>  <b>Veronica Taylor</b>  Karen Bulley  Helen Clapp  Melanie Frew  Hilary Gunn  Arnold Harrison  Simon Helme  John Rees  John Waller  Irene Wren</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">E</div>	<p><b>Sheila Maxey</b>  <b>David Marshall-Jones</b>  Wilf Bahadur  Elizabeth Caswell  David Cornick  Pamela Cressey  Christine Craven  Martin Hardy  David Howell  George Morton  Clive Sutcliffe</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">F</div>
<p><b>Simon Rowntree</b>  <b>Roberta Rominger</b>  Angela Bebbington  James Breslin  Angus Duncan  Norman Greville  Stuart Jones  Carol Rogers  Donald Swift  Katalina Tahaafe-Williams  Nigel Uden</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">G</div>	<p><b>Helen Mee</b>  <b>David Lawrence</b>  Ray Adams  David Bedford  Martin Hazell  Pauline Loosemore  John Parry  Avis Reaney  Victor Ridgewell  Roger Scopes  Elizabeth Welch</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">H</div>





# MISSION COUNCIL 3-5 October 2003

# AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

## Annotated Agenda for Moderator and his supporters

*Timings in red are suggestions only*

### FRIDAY

2.15p.m. Opening Worship and Bible Study

**3.00 p.m.** Welcome and apologies

**The Moderator** welcomes the following to their first Mission Council (for some, in their present role)

The Revd Sheila Maxey (Moderator-elect of General Assembly)

The Revd Dr Des van der Water (General Secretary of CWM) as theological adviser

The Revd Terry Oakley (Moderator of East Midlands synod)

The Revd Richard Mortimer (Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith and Order)

The Revd John Humphreys (Convener of Training Committee)

The Revd Dr John Parry (Convener of Inter-faith relations)

The Revd Martin Hazell (Convener of Communications and Editorial)

Ms Rosemary Simmonds (FURY joint-chair)

The Revd Chris Vermeulen representing the North Western synod

The Revd Pauline Loosemore (was welcomed at the last Mission Council as substitute for the Revd John Jenkinson on that occasion, when in fact she was replacing him as a one of the representatives of Yorkshire synod)

Mrs Melanie Frew representing West Midlands synod

Dr Pamela Cressey representing Eastern synod

The Revd Clive Sutcliffe representing Wessex synod

Mr David Howell representing Southern synod

The Revd Dr Roger Scopes representing Thames North synod

Mr Norman Greville (substituting for the Revd David Miller from the East Midlands synod)

Welcome

The Revd Rachel Poolman) - *conveners of task groups who are here to present reports*

The Revd Bill Mahood ( to Mission Council

(Ask if there are any others present for the first time)

**The Deputy General Secretary** presents apologies from

Dr Andrew Bradstock (secretary for Church and Society)

Ms Avis Reaney (Financial secretary)

Mrs Jenny Carpenter (Rural Consultant)

The Revd Bill Wright (secretary of RPAG)

Mrs Janet Gray (representing the synod of Wales) is recovering from a serious road accident

The Revd David Miller (East Midlands synod representative)

The Revd John Young (convener of Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee)

Mrs Val Morrison (Yorkshire synod)

The Revd Ken Forbes (synod of Scotland)

Miss Catriona Smith (Synod of Scotland)

Minutes of Mission Council held on 25-27 March 2003

**The Clerk** should draw attention to the following corrections

- i) Page 1: **03/17** line 4 - *add* ' the Revd' Pauline Loosemore - representing Yorkshire synod - *insert* 'replacing' (*delete*: in the absence of) the Revd John Jenkinson
- ii) Page 5: **03/30 6.5.1 - line 16 - delete** The scouts have local groups rather than national groups. *insert* ' Over the last few years the Scout Association has

*Note:*

*Carolyn Smith's father has died in last few weeks.*

*So has Janet Knott's father (legal advise)*



**Deputy General Secretary**

- a) (Space for Yardley Hastings business from Friday afternoon to be concluded)  
 b) United Reformed Church/ Methodist Pastoral Strategy – responses to RA by 31st October. The General Secretary and (with permission) Secretary for Ecumenical Relations may have something to add.

**10.20 a.m. (latest) Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee (Paper B)**

**Richard Mortimer** (with Moderator's permission) to present DPW report:

- a) Mission Council to agree remit of committee  
 b) Report on civil registration of weddings

10.30a.m. Coffee

11.00a.m. Report of Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority - section 3 (**Paper E; Oct 02 Paper F pages D8-D12; Paper E1 and E2**)

**11.0 Rachel Poolman** to lead (**Paper E and Oct 02 Paper F**)

**11.10 Brian Jolly** to explain **Paper E1 and E2**

**11.15** Discussion (in situ) in small groups, of issues (**Paper J1 para 2** has the following questions printed:

- a) What are the main issues and principles in this report which pages D8-D11 seek to address in its proposal for revised practice?  
 b) What can be improved in present practice?  
 c) If Mission Council agrees to (Paper E) resolution 13, what particular concerns would it wish the group to consider?

**11.45 onwards** Decision to be made on Resolution 13 (also need to agree to withdraw resolutions 14-17)

**12.18: Deputy General Secretary** - any notices

12.20 p.m. End of session

12.30 p.m. Lunch

**Free time**

3.30p.m. Tea

4. 00p.m. Youth and Children's Work Committee

(**Convener: The Revd Kathryn Price** – report – no resolutions) :

**4.30 p.m. – up to 5.00 (if time)**

Mission Council Briefing: Training Review\* – **John Humphreys (Convener)** to lead

**5.00: Secretary for International Relations** (with Moderator's permission) will introduce **Paper H** 'Faith stance on the global crisis of life' followed by dispersal into Groups for discussion (until 6.10 p.m.)

6.30p.m. Dinner

7.30p.m. Ministries: Church Related Community Workers as Non-Stipendiary Ministers

(**John Ellis: Convener of Ministries**)

March MC resolu -  
 Minutes p13 03/47  
 "MC encourages the YHTG to include in its report an alternative resolu 2 (19) which will summarise in positive terms the recommendations of the 2002 Y+CW Review"

Resolutions A (i) (ii)

B

C

D



8.00

## Nominations

(Dr Stephen Orchard: convener of Nominations -

(Paper J) para 4.

Convener of Nominating Group (Peter Noble) to make a statement:  
**Resolution re Mr John Brown (Secretary for Youth Work)**

8.15 Additional business

(Paper J) para 5.

**Training Committee - John Humphreys (Convener) to lead:**

a) **Paper J:** page 3 item 5: **Resolution** re Dr Janet Tollington (Westminster College)  
 Resolution needs slight amplification (as underlined) :

**" Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly, reappoints the Revd Dr Janet Tollington to the Glendyne Chair of Old Testament Studies at Westminster College, Cambridge for a further period of seven years, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004 until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011**

(Fri p.m.) b) **Paper J:** page 2 item 3: Luther King House Educational Trust (**General Secretary comment?**)

(Fri p.m.) **Deputy General Secretary (Paper J1)** will draw attention to the need to elect a **convener for Grants and Loans Group** at the January Meeting. Need to note that the Secretary (Jean Thompson) will retire at Assembly 2004, but there will be an overlap if an appointment is made in January.

Any essential notices

9.00p.m. *Evening Prayers***SUNDAY**8.30a.m. *Breakfast*9.15a.m. *Service of Holy Communion*10.30a.m. *Coffee*

10.45a.m. 'Glimpses of God's tomorrow: the story so far'  
 an update on research in progress, some new thoughts and an  
 opportunity for discussion **The General Secretary leads**

12.15p.m. *Closing Worship*12.30p.m. *Lunch**Depart*





# MISSION COUNCIL

3 - 5 October 2003

# AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

The General Assembly has agreed that every agenda should be headed with the question, what are the ecumenical implications of this agenda?

## FRIDAY

12.00 noon onwards *Check in*

1.15p.m. *Lunch*

2.15p.m. *Opening Worship and Bible Study*

*Welcome and apologies  
Minutes of Mission Council held on 25-27 March 2003  
Matters arising  
Notice of additional business*

*Mission Council Advisory Group Report -1 (Paper G) 1, 2, (3)*

3.30p.m. *Tea*

4.00p.m. *"Time for Action ": report of the working party (Paper C) Res? ~~2-3-4~~*

*Resource Planning Advisory Group (Paper F) Res 1, 2, 3, 4*

*Ministries: Maintenance of the Ministry sub-committee (Paper D) Res*

6.30p.m. *Dinner*

7.45 p.m. *Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority (recommendations 6, 9 & 10) (Paper E and Oct 02 Paper F pages D3-8) Res 6, 9, 10*

8.15 p.m. *Groups*

9.15 p.m. *Evening Prayers*

## SATURDAY

8.30a.m. *Breakfast*

9.15a.m. *Morning Worship and Bible Study*

10.00a.m. *Mission Council Advisory Group -2 (Paper G) (3).4.*

*Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee (Paper B)*

10.30a.m. *Coffee*



11.00a.m. Report of Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority -  
section 3 (Paper E; Oct 02 Paper F pages D8- D12; Paper E1) Res.

12.20 p.m. End of session

12.30 p.m. Lunch

Free time

3.30p.m. Tea

4. 00p.m. Youth and Children's Work Committee

'Faith stance on the global crisis of life': introduction and group discussion  
(Paper H)

6.30p.m. Dinner

7.30p.m. Ministries: Church Related Community Workers as Non-Stipendiary  
Ministers Res. A (i)(ii) C (Paper A)

Nominations (PAPER J) <sup>B</sup> para 4. (Res)

Any additional business (Paper J)

9.00p.m. Evening Prayers

Training : > para 5. (Res)  
> para 3. (~~Friday~~)  
(para 1 - Fri pm) Paper J1 : para 3.

## SUNDAY

8.30a.m. Breakfast

9.15a.m. Service of Holy Communion

10.30a.m. Coffee

10.45a.m. 'Glimpses of God's tomorrow: the story so far'  
an update on research in progress, some new thoughts and an opportunity for  
discussion - The General Secretary

12.15p.m. Closing Worship

12.30p.m. Lunch

Depart



**Church-Related Community Work (CRCW) as a Non-Stipendiary Ministry**

**1. Starting points**

**1.1** The URC Basis of Union says of NSMs :- "their service is given within the area of a District or area Council and in a context it has approved" (para.21 on page A7 of The Manual, July 2000)

**1.2** The 1995 General Assembly of the URC agreed three models of non-stipendiary ministry as given in K4 of The Manual:

*Model I - service in a congregation as part of a team. The pattern is taken from the former eldership of the Churches of Christ and is limited in scope and local in nature.*

*Model II - pastoral charge of a small congregation, or service as part of a team of ministers caring for a group of churches*

*Model III - ministers in secular employment. Service set apart to be a focus for mission in the place of work or leisure. It is related to a local church or District Council.*

**1.3** The Report to Mission Council (MC) about Church-Related Community Work (Cook & Day, September 1998) was concerned about, amongst other matters, the:

*"identification of key issues for the development of the programme such as the accreditation of workers from other denominations and the need for recognition of 'non-stipendiary' Church-Related Community Workers" (p11 of 1998 MC report)*

Whereas the accreditation of workers from other denominations was agreed by Mission Council, there was not the "time and person power" (para. 7.2 page 16) to consider the wider implications of Diaconal Ministry, 'para-ministries' or non-stipendiary Church-Related Community Work at that point.

This document attempts to address the latter issue and to promote the recognition and affirmation of NS CRCWs.

**2. The case for Non-Stipendiary Church-Related Community Workers**

**2.1** Following Mission Council's approval of the Recommendations in its 1998 Report, CRCWs have been progressively integrated into the systems which apply to all Stipendiary Ministers (see recommendation 4 page 2 of the 1998 Report). It seems reasonable to expect that this progression towards parity and compatibility extends to include Non-Stipendiary Ministry for CRCWs.

**2.2 Model I.** There is a specific case for 'locally called and locally appointed' CRCWs, as has already been recognised for some non-stipendiary ministers of Word & Sacraments within Model I. This case is particularly strong in the field of community ministry where people may have lived, worked and developed relationships with local residents for the majority of their lifetime in their neighbourhood, and who subsequently demonstrate a calling to the ministry of Church Related Community Work, but as a particular service and calling back within their specific neighbourhood. Whereas the vast majority of CRCWs see their lifelong calling as being to the whole church, there are nevertheless one or two CRCWs who have been commissioned in recent years who have demonstrated a strong calling back to their own neighbourhoods, plus a few others who have been unable to pursue a potential calling because of the present unavailability of a particular route to exercise community ministry in their own neighbourhood.



2.3 A creative benefit resulting from the acceptance of Model I for NS CRCWs would be the opening up of opportunities to have more than the maximum of two CRCWs commissioned in each Synod without affecting the number of stipends paid to ministers of Word & Sacraments in a Synod. Without altering or compromising the required level of competence and qualification to become an accredited CRCW, or the quality standards, or application process to become an accredited Church-in-Community, the funding of this local ministry from local sources could enable the desired growth of Church Related Community Work without putting extra demands upon the Ministry and Mission Fund.

2.4 **Model II.** This Model would not apply to CRCW.

2.5 **Model III.** An important basis for mission is that:

“The Church exists for the sake of God’s world, and its ministry is focussed in the world, for the world, for God’s sake. Jesus called his disciples to be light – that is, to be distinctive signs of hope and truth. He also called them to be salt and yeast – that is, to be dissolved in the world as agents of God’s transforming grace and love”

(Patterns of Ministry para.2.1 page 115, URC General Assembly 1995)

Recognising accredited CRCWs who work within secular agencies as “agents of God’s transforming grace and love” and as exercising a Non-Stipendiary Ministry, would affirm the mission of the Church and of the individuals concerned.

2.6 Since NSMs of Word & Sacraments under Model III can have their ministry within a secular agency recognised, CRCWs who have moved from an accredited Church-in-Community to a non-URC community work agency would be able to have this non-stipendiary ministry recognised and affirmed if it is still concerned with mission, social justice and Kingdom of God values and if there is a context for the ‘church-relatedness’ element of the ministry within the District or Area Council. At present, those accredited CRCWs who have moved on from accredited URC Church-in-Community positions to work for other community work-related organisations are seen to have ‘left’ the CRCW programme, even though they may still be exercising their gifts and ministry, albeit in a different place. A number of CRCWs who are not presently at a URC accredited Church-in-Community still acknowledge and wish to develop their community development work ministry and vocation, and an accepted understanding of NS CRCW would create a recognised avenue for them to remain within the URC ministry of CRCW.

2.7 On a pragmatic level, there would hopefully be less ‘wastage’ in terms of the training and support investment towards CRCWs since fewer accredited CRCWs would completely ‘leave’ the programme but move from a stipendiary to non-stipendiary context. This could well result in accredited NS Church-Related Community Workers returning to stipendiary ministry with accredited Church-in-Communities at a later stage since work within a secular agency could be seen more as a training and development opportunity for a particular period, rather than at present having to ‘leave’ the recognised CRCW ministry.

2.8 Those who presently do ‘leave’ the CRCW programme are not just lost to the local and national church, but also cease to be District / Area and Synod members. Recognising Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Workers would still enable an involvement in and a sharing of the CRCWs’ experience for District / Area and Synod mission strategies.

2.9 Another benefit to the Church as a whole could be that more people would be encouraged to consider this particular ministry since it could be exercised on a part-time basis alongside earning their living from another occupation, or once someone has retired from paid employment. However, community development work does require a substantial commitment of time, expertise and energy and a minimum commitment, say, of 15 hours per week should be expected of a NS CRCW.



**2.10** A slight variation in the present understanding of NSM could enable our wider ecumenical agenda for church related community work to be addressed and demonstrated, both providing for, and stimulating more church related community work in other denominations. Model III of NSMs 'working in secular employment' could be extended to embrace those URC-accredited CRCWs who may work for and receive remuneration from other denominations, Christian agencies or para-church organisations as church related community workers but still retain their URC local church and District / Area membership and relationships. They could still be recognised as URC CRCWs but as employed and paid by these other organisations. At present they are again seen to have 'left' the CRCW ministry, even though they may well be exercising exactly the same ministry.

### **3. Some examples of Non-Stipendiary CRCWs**

For all these examples, a prerequisite is that the person described is an accredited URC CRCW who has been called, prepared, trained and is qualified for this particular ministry and office.

**3.1** Shola is employed by the local authority as a part-time teacher for 2.5 days each week. Additionally, she spends approximately 20 hours each week working as a volunteer with her local URC church as a community development worker. She is presently training and working alongside some other church members who, following the church service for Homelessness Sunday that she organised with a home group, have now linked up with the local YMCA to provide a 'soup kitchen' facility. She also represents the church on an inter-agency group working with the local authorities to provide emergency accommodation for local homeless people.

**3.2** Pete is employed full-time by the local authority as a community development work trainer. He is also a member of his local URC and commissioned by the District as a NS CRCW, bearing a Christian witness in his 'secular workplace' and using his experiences in facilitating worship around the local churches.

**3.3** Chantelle has lived in her neighbourhood for the past 20 years and been an activist for many community development initiatives during this period on a voluntary basis, often working with her fellow members at her local URC. She believes that she is being called to be a professional CRCW for her neighbourhood and this has been confirmed by the proper Candidating & Assessment process. Her church has successfully applied to become an URC-accredited Church-in-Community but the Synod already has 2 CRCWs receiving a stipend, and therefore will not be able to have more stipendiary CRCWs except at the expense of a stipend paid to a minister of Word & Sacraments. Once she is qualified, instead of receiving a stipend, she will be paid a salary from funds raised jointly by the local church, district and Synod (probably accessing grant aid for local community development).

**3.4** Bevan is employed full-time by the Shaftesbury Society as a community worker working with a local Methodist church. He works with and on behalf of this local church on regeneration issues in the neighbourhood and also regularly reports to the URC District about his work and potential joint mission opportunities between the URC and the Methodist Connexion.

**3.5** Freda is working for a local Church of England parish church as a community worker on a Church Urban Funded neighbourhood project. Using a local house as a base and rooms at the church for events, she works with local residents and church members to set up a credit union, a residents association, a luncheon club and an after-school club.

### **4. Candidating and Assessment for Non-Stipendiary Church-Related Community Workers**

**4.1** *"Candidates for Church Related Community Work must be members of the URC of two years' standing and need to satisfy pre-assessment criteria approved by the General Assembly."* (The Manual, K13, July 2000) Candidates have to have their potential calling tested by a formal Assessment process. This would be presumed to apply to Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Workers as it does for stipendiary CRCWs. (see K13 of The Manual)



4.2 Additionally, the following regulations apply to the age of entry to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments. (See K4 of The Manual)

*-“Training for the stipendiary Ministry of Word & Sacraments may begin from the date of a candidate’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, recognising that enquiries may be made several years earlier. The normal minimum age for the commencement of training for the non-stipendiary Ministry of Word and Sacraments shall be 25”*

*-“Ordination to the non-stipendiary Ministry of Word and Sacraments should take place by the age of 60, and to this end, given the present Assessment and Training processes, formal application for training for the non-stipendiary Ministry of Word and Sacraments must be received by the Synod by the date of the applicant’s 55<sup>th</sup> birthday.”*

These regulations are proposed to also pertain to NS CRCWs except for the minimum age of commencement of training which, it is proposed, should be 21 years of age, as for stipendiary CRCW candidates.

## **5. Training & qualifications of Non-Stipendiary Church-Related Community Workers**

5.1 Non-stipendiary CRCW candidates would be expected to follow the same training path as for stipendiary CRCWs by training at Northern College on the ‘Faith in Living’ programme.

5.2 Since NS Church Related Community Workers would still need to be adequately trained and qualified, a widening of the scope of this ministry should increase the demand for CRCW training places at Northern College. Additionally, Synods may indeed contribute towards training costs if NS candidates were to be ‘returning’ to their sending Synod, whereas, at present, stipendiary CRCWs may be called to a post anywhere in the URC.

5.3 The cost of this training is estimated to be comparable with the cost of training stipendiary CRCWs and the URC Training Committee are aware of the budget implications of NS candidates training for CRCW ministry. However, this is considered to be a reasonable investment in return for increasing the sustainability of CRCW training and to address the recruitment needs for CRCWs by vacant URC accredited Churches-in Community.

5.4 The minimum level of qualifications and achievement of the stated core competencies to become an accredited stipendiary CRCWs would also be applicable for accredited Non-stipendiary CRCWs.

## **6. The calling and Commissioning of Non-Stipendiary Church-Related Community Workers**

6.1 This would follow the same process as for a stipendiary CRCW (see The CRCW Handbook Section 5) which in turn observes and is similar to the protocol for calling ministers of Word & Sacraments, including District / Area involvement and concurrence.

6.2 NS CRCWs would need the appropriate letter code alongside their name in the URC Year Book.

## **7. Movement between Stipendiary and Non-Stipendiary Church-Related Community Workers**

7.1 The General Assembly in 1990 recognised that there will be some movement either way between stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministers, and agreed procedures accordingly. It is envisaged that these procedures would also include CRCWs (See K6 of The Manual). *“Further information on the transfer between stipendiary and non-stipendiary forms of service can be obtained from Synod Offices or the Ministries office.”* (The Manual, K7)



7.2 "Applications to transfer from non-stipendiary to stipendiary ministry must be received by the Synod before the date of the applicant's 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday." (See K4 of The Manual) This could now include CRCWs.

## 8. Terms of Settlement for Non-Stipendiary Church-Related Community Workers

8.1 The URC Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration does not apply to NS Ministers of Word & Sacraments and neither would it therefore relate to NS CRCWs: "*Ministers NOT to be included: Non-stipendiary ministers*" (para.5.4.3). This would need to be amended to also exclude Non-stipendiary CRCWs. Interest free loans are available to former non-stipendiary ministers at the time they take up the stipendiary ministry (para. 9.2.1) and The Plan would need to be amended so as to apply to non-stipendiary CRCWs at the time that they take up stipendiary ministry.

## 9. Support for Non-Stipendiary Church-Related Community Workers

9.1 Non-stipendiary CRCWs would be fully recognised as part of the CRCW programme and therefore be included in all the support networks and events available to accredited CRCWs via the CRCW Office. The agreements made by all parties in The CRCW Covenant would also be deemed to be applicable to NS CRCWs, apart from those referring to The Plan for Partnership (Section 11, i & ii.).

Steve Summers & John Ellis

June 2003, amended Sept. 2003.

(Approved by the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee 18.2.03 and Ministries Committee 5.6.03)



## Resolutions:

### Resolution A

**General Assembly agrees to extend the principles of Non-Stipendiary Ministry to CRCW ministry. The Assembly resolves that:**

- (i) **non-stipendiary CRCW candidates would be expected to follow the same training path as for stipendiary CRCWs by training at Northern College on the 'Faith in Living' programme;**
- (ii) **the minimum age for commencement of training for non-stipendiary CRCW candidates shall be 21 years of age.**

### Resolution B

**General Assembly resolves to amend the Basis of Union and Structure of the United Reformed Church as follows (with additions and amendments shown in italics):**

- a) Add to the end of the sentence at paragraph 22 of the Basis of Union (as agreed by General Assembly in July 2003):  
*"Their service may be stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and in the latter case their service is given within the area of a District or area Council and in a context it has approved."*
- b) Amend paragraph B2(3)(A)(iii) on page B6 (July 2000 edition of the Manual) to read:  
*"To appoint, or to concur in the appointment of, non-stipendiary ministers and church related community workers to their particular service and to review this service at stated intervals;"*

*(4 A + B are ratified by 2005 GA, then.)*

### Resolution C

**General Assembly resolves to make the following amendments to its policies as set out in the Manual:**

- a) Amend the paragraph entitled 'The Ministry of Word and Sacraments' on page K3 (July 2000 edition of the Manual) to read:  
*"Ministers serve in a stipendiary or non-stipendiary capacity and may work as one minister of Word & Sacraments alongside the Elders or in a team with other stipendiary or non-stipendiary colleagues. A team may also involve stipendiary or non-stipendiary church related community workers. It may be ecumenical."*
- b) Amend the paragraph entitled 'There are three models of non-stipendiary ministry' on page K4 (July 2000) to read:  
*"Model III—ministers and church related community workers in secular employment and church related community workers working for the URC or other Christian organisations or denominations. Service set apart to be a focus for mission in the place of work or leisure. It is related to a local church or District or area Council."*
- c) Add before the paragraph on Accreditation on page K13 (July 2000):  
*"Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Work."*



*The minimum level of qualifications and achievement of the stated core competencies to become an accredited stipendiary CRCW would also be applicable for accredited Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Workers.*

*Non-stipendiary Church Related Community Work candidates would be expected to follow the same training path as for stipendiary Church Related Community Workers by training at Northern College on the 'Faith in Living' programme.*

*The normal minimum age for the commencement of training for the non-stipendiary ministry of church-related community work shall be 21 years of age.*

*Otherwise, the same regulations apply to the age of entry to the non-stipendiary ministry of church related community work as those pertaining to the ministry of Word and Sacraments.*

*The procedures and decisions required to transfer between stipendiary and non-stipendiary service for ministers of Word and Sacraments also apply for the transfer between stipendiary and non-stipendiary church related community work."*

d) Amend section L 18 (July 2000) to read:

*"Stipendiary Ministers and Church Related Community Workers*

The United Reformed Church will meet the normal training costs (fees and maintenance) of all ordinands and CRCWs-in-training and their dependants from central funds. We nevertheless encourage ordinands and CRCWs-in-training to first seek funding from grant awarding bodies, where possible.

<Rest of paragraph unaltered>

**Non-stipendiary Ministers and Church Related Community Workers"**

<Rest of paragraph unaltered>

e) Amend the penultimate sentence of section L 21.1 (July 2000) to read:

"For non-stipendiary ministers and church related community workers who, because of other work cannot attend a mid-week course, a 'week' means two weekends each lasting from Friday evening until Sunday teatime."

## **Resolution D**

**General Assembly resolves to make the following changes to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration agreed at the 2003 General Assembly:**

a) Amend section '5.4 Exclusions:- 5.4.3 Non-stipendiary ministers' to read:

*"Non-stipendiary ministers and Non-stipendiary CRCWs"*

b) Amend section '9.2.1 to read:

*"An interest free loan is available to ordinands for the stipendiary ministry, former non-stipendiary ministers and non-stipendiary CRCWs at the time they take up stipendiary ministry, and to CRCWs upon commissioning (see Appendix A)."*

## Ray Adams

**From:** John Ellis [EllisJ@methodistchurch.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 17 September 2003 18:36  
**To:** james BRESLIN  
**Cc:** steve.summers@urc.org.uk; ray.adams@urc.org.uk; suzanne.adofo@urc.org.uk; christine.craven@urc.org.uk  
**Subject:** RE: CRCW as NSM

James -

That is a most helpful response - and, if I may say so, properly Presbyterian! Thank you.

On the substance, you have highlighted several points where discussion on previous drafts has also focused. I was reluctant to make the paper longer but if the general idea gets support I can see the advantages of fleshing out further those paragraphs. That said, though, I believe we are only able to proceed along these lines if the Church is willing to accept a world where not everyone has their ministry fitted into a tidy box, defined centrally. One benefit of discussing this proposal will be to sense where the current mood of Mission Council is on that theme (which of course was highly relevant to decisions taken at the 1995 Assembly on Patterns of Ministry and in 2000 on NSMs). I shall also argue for some consistency: people can certainly argue churches should not be allowed to employ CRCWs outside the M&M Fund's resources, but if so, it seems to me they also have to argue that we should not allow churches to employ Pastoral Assistants, Youth workers, etc outside the central resource constraints either.

On the process, I deduce we should go ahead with this version of the paper for this Mission Council. If Steve sees this correspondence before Friday noon and is horrified, please could he contact me on Friday morning. Unless he hears from me by 1300 on Friday, please could Ray send out the paper in its present form for Mission Council.

Thanks again for your help.

Regards

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** james BRESLIN [SMTP:breslin@newcastleurc.freemove.co.uk]  
**Sent:** 17 September 2003 16:11  
**To:** EllisJ@methodistchurch.org.uk  
**Cc:** steve.summers@urc.org.uk; ray.adams@urc.org.uk; suzanne.adofo@urc.org.uk; christine.craven@urc.org.uk  
**Subject:** CRCW as NSM

Dear John,

Thank you for sending me the copy of Steve Summers' paper and your outline of the process you envisage following.

18/09/2003



From a Clerk's point of view I see no problem except you might wish to pursue questions of cost before the report comes onto the floor of the Assembly.

This having been said I am not sure that the proposal, in its current form, is ready to go to the Assembly. I am probably going beyond my brief as Clerk, but there are a few questions that spring to mind and which the paper does not answer.

Paragraphs 1.2 and 2.2 dealing with Model I non-stipendiary ministry and the equivalent CRCWs does not seem to me to make clear what the difference between these two offices would be. The argument that it is particularly valuable "in the field of community ministry...." Is the argument for model 1 NSMs A little more work on how the two are to be differentiated might be useful.

In Paragraph 2.4 Model II non-stipendiary ministry is dismissed as not appropriate, but it could be argued that a non-stipendiary CRCW working along side a stipendiary CRCW or as a part of a mixed team of Ministers, bot stipeniary and non-stipendiary, in some kind of group or team ministry might fall into this category.

Equally in paragraphs 2.5 ff, Model III ministry as applied to CRCWs, in my opinion, also needs more work. It is relatively clear when a minister in secular employment is functioning as a minister and when he or she is functioning as a teacher or a lawyer or whatever. This is much less clear with a CRCW. My local YMCA employs a large number of Detached Youth Workers. As Youth Workers they are under the control and direction of the YMCA Board. I am not clear where the line between the work that is done by an individual on behalf of the YMCA stops and that done by the same individual on behalf of the URC starts!

Lastly, I worry about the example presented in paragraph 3.3. This could be seen as an attempt to get round the restrictions on numbers imposed by the General Assembly. The difference between a full time community worker paid a stipend by the URC and under the control of a committee appointed by the URC District Council, with representatives of the local church in its membership, and a full time community worker paid a salary by the URC, albeit in the guise of a local church rather than the M&M fund, and under the control of a committee appointed by the local church with representatives of the District Council in its membership seems to me to be very fine. Add into the pot the fact that both workers would have CRCW status, membership of District Council and Synod and equal access to the resources of the CRCW support staff and the distinction becomes even finer.

I don't think any of my criticisms of the paper are killers, rather they are intended as comments on bits that might benefit from more work. I see no reason why this should not be done after an initial presentation to Mission Council, but would press for it to be done before the matter goes to the Assembly.

James

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18/09/2003



## MISSION COUNCIL

*3-5 October 2003*

# B

### Doctrine, Prayer and Worship Committee

The Committee wishes to bring two matters to Mission Council.

#### Remit of the Committee

We present our altered remit, made available in the Reports to 2003 General Assembly, for approval.

The purpose of the Committee is:

- to encourage and advise the Councils and Committees of the United Reformed Church in their continual study of theology, enabling the Church to reflect upon and express its doctrines;
- to participate in and respond to ecumenical and inter-faith discussions on doctrinal matters;
- to produce resources and arrange consultations, in response to requests or on its own initiative, in order to enable the Church in all its councils to grow in faith, devotion and spiritual experience;
- to publish regular and occasional prayer and worship materials;
- to support and develop ecumenical and international collaborations in the areas of faith and order and spirituality;
- to oversee the work of the Prayer Handbook Group and the network for Silence and Retreats.

#### Civil Registration

In September 1999 the Registrar General announced a fundamental review of the Civil Registration Service and a first Consultation Document was published. In the light of responses received, a Government White Paper: "Civil Registration: Vital Change" was published in January 2002. This set out the intention to move to a celebrant-based system for marriage, similar to existing law and practice in Scotland. The Moderators were consulted about the principle and about changes to the form of contracting words.

In July of this year the government published a second, detailed Consultation Document: "Civil Registration: Delivering Vital Change". A further response has been requested from each denomination, especially on where and when a marriage may take place, and after consultation with the Deputy General Secretary the Revd Richard Mortimer has agreed to collate a response from the Doctrine, Prayer and Worship Committee.

The Advisory Group on Faith and Order has been asked to do some thinking on the question of whom the United Reformed Church might authorise as marriage celebrants, with particular reference to the doctrine of ordination.



**MISSION COUNCIL**  
*3-5 October 2003*

C

**TIME FOR ACTION**  
Sexual abuse, the Church  
and a new dawn for survivors.

**Report of Task Group to Mission Council.**

Before making any comment about the Report it is necessary to say that it is about the whole church, every congregation, every Council, every committee and task group. In every place and on each occasion that the Report is considered, presented or discussed there may be people present who are hurting because of their own experience of abuse. It may also be that there are those who have abused and may or may not be wrestling with their own knowledge of what they have done and their guilt at the pain they have inflicted. Therefore we should not behave or speak as though we are dealing with abstract concepts or with people and situations in other places. We cannot use the language of 'them'. In Christian care and love we must use the language of 'us'.

**TIME FOR ACTION** is a very important and timely report. It is the product of a Task Group set up by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and given the task to examine issues of Sexual Abuse in the Church. At the beginning of the Report there are details of how they carried out their task, of who they talked to and consulted. They include people who have suffered abuse and live each day with its consequences and those who have a professional involvement. Each, in their own way, was an expert, having specialist knowledge in the matter of sexual abuse.

It is not a perfect report; no report ever is. It could be argued that it is repetitive in places. It appears to be unequal in its treatment of the abuse of children and that of adults although to some extent this is rectified as the report develops. It understates the experience of the abuse of men. The theological approach described in chapter 11 will not meet with the approval of everyone, partly because of its methodology. Nevertheless it is a report that deals with realities and any weaknesses in the report must not be allowed to deflect us from its main substance and its call for action. Sexual abuse is a reality, and is known to be a reality in the day to day life of the church. Many reading this paper will know of incidents in local churches. There is no denomination that is immune from it.

We must welcome this Report wholeheartedly, listen carefully to what it is saying and work out strategies for every part of our life together that will be a proper response to what is asked and, more importantly, to the people for whom this report seeks to be a voice. The Report is pleading that within the church we take the matter of sexual abuse very seriously indeed. Within all our structures we must ensure that an abused person is able to tell their story, knowing that it will receive a proper response. Creating the conditions within which a person can tell their story is crucial to this Report. It is about trust and acceptance, both of the story and of the person. Recent publicity given to



accusations of abuse within the church has taught us that it is possible for such accusations to arise at any time and any place. But people will only be free to voice their experience if they know that, first and foremost, they will be heard. It will of course be necessary to judge and assess accusations in the search for justice. But judgement must not be foremost otherwise people will never be able to find their voice and the church will have refused to face up to the evil that may be within its life.

There are three separate groups of people who have experienced abuse that are highlighted within the Report:

- children who have been abused
- adults who are living with the memories of abuse during their childhood
- adults who have been or are being abused.

There is also consideration given to the pastoral care and reconciliation of the abuser and of appropriate ways in which someone who has been guilty of abuse can still have an appropriate place within the life of the church. The church must be about healing, both for those who have experienced abuse and for those who have abused. It cannot be about a silence that is in fact acquiescence in the abuse nor can it be about a vengeance that destroys relationships and denies all possibility of growth and reconciliation. The church must seek to reflect the mind of Christ and to hold out the possibility of the fullness of life that is God's will for us.

The United Reformed Church has already done considerable work and implemented various measures in the area of sexual abuse. It is important that this is stated clearly and proper appreciation is given to that work. We are neither surprised by what is contained in **TIME FOR ACTION** nor having to start from scratch in responding to it. There are four particular areas that reflect the bulk of this work.

1. **Section O Process.** In the discussions and planning preceding the implementation of the Section O Process those responsible for it were able to reflect on the long experience of the United Reformed Church (and its constituent parts) in responding to complaints of abuse. Within that experience there were examples of both good and bad practice. There were certainly examples where the church seemed to be more concerned with its own reputation and the reputation of its ministry than with the welfare of the complainant. The period of the preparations for the Section O Process was also a time of greater awareness of the extent of the problem within the whole church and therefore also of a greater sharing of ecumenical insights and procedures. The subsequent work of those responsible for implementing the work of the Process has meant that there is a continuing awareness of the needs of the church in this area. Through the work of the Mandated Groups and Panels at District, Synod and National level there is a considerable number of people who are able to deal with others at a very difficult time in their lives with sensitivity and concern. The value of the structures of the Section O Process and the experience of implementing them is considerable in helping us to respond to **TIME FOR ACTION**.
2. **The Youth and Children's Work Committee.** It is this committee that has been responsible for making the church aware of **Child Protection Issues** and the need to do all that is possible to ensure the safety of the children and young people of our



- church. It has taken very seriously the provisions of the Children Act. It has drawn up the *Good Practice Guidelines* and constantly reminds us of their importance and the carefulness with which we should be implementing them. General Assembly in 1994 urged all congregations to discuss and implement all material in the *Good Practice Pack* as part of the church's obligation to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children and young people involved in church life. In 1997 Assembly agreed to monitor the use of the pack through Districts and Synods.
3. The URC Community of Women and Men Group. It is this group that is often closest to the sources of information about abuse in the church and most readily hears the stories of those who have been abused. It knows of the need to build up trust and to create an environment within which pain can be expressed. So the extent of their experience is considerable and it is of depth and immediacy. In the last couple of years the group has felt frustrated because in December 2001 it produced a draft document entitled **UNITED REFORMED CHURCH POLICY AND PROCEDURE IN RESPONSE TO CASES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**, together with suggested guidelines for local churches. At that time the group was advised that it was not possible to take it further immediately, because of other work that was being done on a different but related area (Section O). The point is obvious from this, that there are dangers inherent in different groups working with similar or overlapping concerns, not least of delay. It must also be acknowledged that there is considerable value and insight in the work done by the Community of Women and Men Group. More recently it has also given close attention to the recommendations of **TIME FOR ACTION**, bringing to it its considerable expertise.
  4. Synod Moderators. It is inevitable that the Synod Moderators will be aware of situations where sexual abuse has involved the ordained ministry of the church or has led to breakdown of relationships within congregations. It is likely that they will be the ones to whom a complaint is made, who may have to institute the disciplinary procedures of the church and who may be expected to give support in a wide variety of situations. The Moderator's Meeting has already given consideration to **TIME FOR ACTION** and ways in which as a body and as individuals they can help to implement it.

#### **Knowing what is already being done, how is the URC to respond to TIME FOR ACTION?**

This Report is intended as an awareness raising report. We need to find ways in which every church is aware of its responsibilities to protect people and to respond to those who have been abused. This is the starting point and from this must flow the awareness of what is involved at every other level of the church. It is not enough to find the right procedures and hope that these will be acted upon by congregations and by individual members of the church.

We believe that the URC's response to the Report should be formulated over a period of two years. A major presentation on **TIME FOR ACTION** and its concerns should take place at General Assembly 2004. It should be part of the Assembly business and not a fringe meeting. It should contain within it the expectation (requirement) that the



issues will be discussed at Elders' and Church Meetings and at Distinct Councils and Synods. All the Committees and Task Groups of the church should be asked to report on how they intend to respond to the recommendations of **TIME FOR ACTION**. An ecumenical group from CTBI is producing awareness-raising training material.

Guidelines similar to the *Good Practice Guidelines Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church* should be drawn up and endorsed by General Assembly 2005. As far as possible these should be generic in nature. We should not have to draw up separate guidelines for local churches and for committees, etc. The guidelines should help us to recognise ways in which we can be the Church, with certain attitudes that we share and an openness to others and their stories that will help people to have confidence in us and in the response that we will give. However, the guidelines should also be specific enough to help in the recognition of the need to share information and to know what to do in order to initiate the disciplinary procedures of the church where necessary. In drawing up the guidelines due recognition should be given to the work already done and that work should be used wherever possible.

It is essential that the United Reformed Church decides where ultimate responsibility lies for the implementation of its policy on sexual harassment and abuse. It is likely that, given the structures of the URC, ultimate responsibility must lie with the General Secretariat, although it would be possible for this to be delegated to an individual or a small group. Whoever is ultimately responsible for overseeing the policy on sexual abuse must ensure that -

1. sexual abuse is discouraged and prevented within the life of the United Reformed Church,
2. all members of the United Reformed Church and its structures are regularly made aware of the problem of sexual abuse and the existence of the procedures available,
3. local churches are made aware of the Guidelines and of the help and support that is available in implementing them,
4. awareness raising material is made available and training offered,
5. there is a pool of people specifically identified and trained in supporting local churches dealing with allegations of sexual abuse.
6. every formal written complaint of sexual abuse is investigated,
7. advice and support is available to persons who are subjected to sexual abuse and to those who have been accused or convicted of acts of sexual abuse,
8. disciplinary measures are implemented where appropriate
9. the procedures of the policy are regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet adequately the policy objectives,.
10. records are maintained as required.

Only when such a policy is in place will we be able to say that we have given a full response to **Time for Action**. As a denomination that is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland we are very grateful for the people and the work that has produced this report but our gratitude will be best expressed in taking seriously its findings and implementing its recommendations.



### Case Studies

*This material should be used only with great care and with support available for anyone who may be distressed by it.*

A District representative to General Assembly offers the FURY representative a lift in his car. The young woman accepts. However, on the way he makes it clear that wishes to have sex. He places his hand on her thigh suggestively. When she arrives at Assembly she is very distressed and confides in a friend from another District saying that there is no way she can go home in the same car as him

The minister confides to one of his Elders that a woman who has started attending Worship and came seeking pastoral care is making sexual advances to him. At first she was friendly but now she contrives to meet him when he is alone at church and has visited the manse on numerous occasions. Both he his wife are not sure what to do as she is very persistent and won't take no for an answer.

You notice that the visiting lay preacher's wife is holding her arm awkwardly and that she has a bruise down the side of her face. When you ask how she is, she breaks down and tells you that her husband is abusing her. Her own church's minister, whom she has told several times, has merely said that all marriages have their rough patches and if she prays God will give her the strength to keep her marriage vows.

When the church is in vacancy a senior member of the church insists on welcoming people at the door on Sundays where he takes the opportunity of giving the women a hug and a kiss of Christian peace. However, his behaviour is becoming increasingly unacceptable and is upsetting members of the congregation who say they will stay away.

A wife and mother of two junior aged children shares with you as an elder of the church that another elder who is a respected member of the wider community is bothering her. Whenever she arrives at church to clean or arrange flowers he is also there. Whenever he drives past her in the car, he stops. He talks of personal difficulties and seeks comfort from her in cuddles and kisses, which she has not felt able to refuse due to his size and powerful personality. She has told her husband who has confronted the elder and told him to get lost. However, the behaviour of the elder persists.



## TIME FOR ACTION

### Report of consultation with URC Community of Women and Men Group

#### A) General reaction to content of the Report

It is clearly a very important and timely report and is being taken seriously by all the main churches, although action by some is much slower than others. It was presented to the CTBI Church Representatives Meeting in November 2002 and members were asked to report back in April 2003 on the initial responses of the churches. Progress reports will also be expected in November.

We commend the report presented by Revd Sheila Maxey to Mission Council in January, which gives a useful summary of the Report.

- 1) The early emphasis on child abuse could be misleading, although this does lead on to a broadening of the issue later in the book.
- 2) Chapter 9 on Causation is not helpful: the 4 different models are confusing and suggest a "take your pick" approach - it might have been more helpful to concentrate on one model as an example perhaps. The problems of "boundaries" and "roles" (especially of clergy) are raised but not clarified in any helpful way. Clergy wear so many different "hats" that their roles become ambiguous and the boundaries multiply leading to greater risks (see p99). The question of the development of genuine friendships/relationships between clergy and individual people is not dealt with.
- 3) Chapter 10 does not cover very well how to deal with a perpetrator when the situation has arisen within the same community, especially if it is a lay person who is involved. (e.g. arranging to move them into another church community for a limited period). It could be crucial not to have the same pastoral carer dealing with both parties (which may be ok in other counselling situations)
- 4) There has been some criticism of the theology in Chapter 11 mainly on the grounds that it is "feminist". This tends to come from churches less familiar with this sort of approach and must not be used as an excuse to dismiss the issues being raised. There is nothing in it which is not already well-founded in the experiences of the abused.

#### B) Some Comments on the Recommendations

- 1) We should aim at a full presentation to be given to Assembly 2004
- 2) Produce a leaflet to go out to every local church - cf the material already produced by CTE on violence against women - do this ecumenically as far as possible.
- 5) The "survivor" needs to be taken seriously and must be given control of the process (i.e. whether to go through with it or not) - see also 8 + 9 + 11 + 15
- 11) Care must be taken to distinguish between actual counselling services and pastoral care - see also 12, 15, 16.
- 14) We have already recommended that the URC should have clear policies and procedures relating to sexual harassment at all levels of church structures. This should include having "reference" people to whom cases can be referred.
- 15) This needs to be done ecumenically.
- 16) There need to be better support services and guidelines offered to ministers dealing with situations in their congregations - this may not be quite the same as 11 and 14, so do different sets of "rules" need to be produced? Who by?
- 17) A disciplinary process (Section O) needs to be separate from the pastoral caring process.  
We also noted the valuable counselling service offered to ministers and spouses.
- 18, 20, 21) Training is vital - also CME. What about lay training? - equally important!  
It has now become accepted that training is compulsory in relation to child protection, (cf also hygiene regulations in kitchens), so why not on the broader front? Don't let churches become complacent, but ensure that good practice actually exists on the ground, not just at the "policy" level!
- 22, 23, 24) cf corporate supervision practice.
- 31, 32, 33) Explore how to deal with offenders/victims within the same church community - e.g. referring someone on to another church (in confidence) for support.
- 36, 37) Use of language and styles of liturgy must be handled with great care (the male language at the beginning of the liturgy in the book is not the best example of this!!)

How do we get all this on to the agendas of District Councils and also into local churches? Elders' Training could also be crucial - we heard a serious case of a situation where a minister was not supported by the Elders who clearly had no idea of how to deal with a case involving one of their number.



**MISSION COUNCIL**  
*3-5 October 2003*

D

**Ministries: Maintenance of the Ministry Sub-Committee**

**Stipend level for 2004**

**RESOLUTION:** Mission Council sets the basic stipend for 2004 at £18,576.

The basic stipend in 2003 is £17,952. The URC budget for 2004 which was accepted by General Assembly in July 2003 assumed a 3.5% increase in stipend for 2004. However, the actual increase in stipend is set by Mission Council in October when the position is normally reviewed and wider consideration is given to the current circumstances of the Church.

For 2000 and 2001 we used the National Average Earnings ("NAE") figure as the basis for deciding the level of increase in stipends. However, this index is distorted by a small number of very high earners and was considered too high as the basis of the 2002 increase. Instead the latest Retail Price Index ("RPI") - August 2001 - was used. The increase for 2003 was similarly set at the RPI in August 2002 plus 1.5%.

The RPI in July 2003 was 3.1%.

It is recognised that the net pay of ministers has been adversely affected by the increase in national insurance from April 2003 and it will also be adversely affected by the increase of 1.25% in employee pension contributions from January 2004.

It is felt that neither the NAE nor the RPI are wholly satisfactory indices on which to base increases in ministers' stipends. On the other hand, it is felt that the annual increase in stipend ought to take account of some objective comparison of stipends with the earnings of similar professionals, and should not be based solely on what the Church believes it can afford. The Maintenance of the Ministry sub-committee at its meeting in January 2004 intends to compare the current level of stipends in the Church against more relevant indices and salaries / stipends so that the URC budget for 2005 can include a proposed level of stipend that takes account of this work.

On the assumption that this comparison work will be done next year, it is recommended that the stipend for 2004 should be set at £18,576 (which gives a rounded monthly sum), an increase of 3.48%.



**Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority**

**New readers start here**

The Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority (PCLA) report has been considered at the October 2002 and January 2003 Mission Councils. At the October 2002 Mission Council recommendations 1 – 5 of the report were discussed. Recommendations 1 – 4 relate to parts B and C, and recommendation 5 to the first part of part D (Conciliar leadership and authority).

Mission Council requested that the substance of recommendation 1 should be included in the final paragraph of part B. The amended paragraph reads as follows:

para 25 (pB4) line 11

Christians will continue to differ as to how far they believe *they* should adhere to models found in scripture. (DELETE lines 12- 15 even when such models... contemporary situation) INSERT: *Nevertheless, when patterns of church practice are considered they should take account of scriptural models and principles. A survey of scripture reminds us that, whatever our context, the Holy Spirit will continue to lead God's people into forms of leadership and authority that equip us for ministry and mission in our contemporary situation.*

Mission Council also requested that some minor corrections be made to part C. The revised part C is available separately.

Mission Council accepted the substance of parts B and C of the report in October '02, although there were questions over the wording of the recommendations. Parts B and C lay the scriptural and ecclesiological foundations (summarised in paras B25 and C4.12) for part D of the report, which addresses the question of how our Reformed principles are translated into practice in our current context.

At the January 2003 Mission Council there was group discussion about the section on personal leadership and authority (pD3 – D8) and the accompanying recommendations 6-10. There was only time for consideration of recommendations 6 – 8. Recommendation 6 was withdrawn for rephrasing (see below). Recommendations 7 and 8 were referred to the Equal Opportunities Committee for action.

**Mission Council October 2003**

It is sincerely hoped that Mission Council will be able to finish its consideration of the PCLA report at this meeting. It is important to remind members that whilst the issues raised obviously find focus in the recommendations, the substance of the work done by the Task Group lies in the body of report. The sections which we will consider in Durham have their foundations in the theological work done in parts B and C.

The challenge for Mission Council is to address theological principles as well as practical outcomes of those principles. It is not always easy, in a conciliar context, to find ways of grappling with abstract (but crucial) ideas.



## **The recommendations**

Mission Council is asked to revisit Recommendation 6 (pD7) and to consider Recommendation 9 and Recommendation 10 (pD8). Recommendation 10 has been altered to make it clear who is being asked to take its concern further.

### **Recommendation 6 (pD7) has been revised as follows:**

Mission Council requests that all councils and meetings of the United Reformed Church examine their nominations procedures and the make up of their membership to ensure that the breadth of the membership of the United Reformed Church is appropriately reflected as far as possible when we meet together.

### **Recommendation 10 (pD8) has been revised as follows:**

Mission Council recommends ~~to~~ <sup>to produce</sup> the Section O Working Group ~~the production of a~~ middle range disciplinary procedure that matches the present grievance procedure.

### **Recommendations 11 – 17**

Because of the long life of this report (the Task Group started work in 2000) we are aware that the life of the church has moved on since we began our deliberations. Significant pieces of work have been initiated; most notably the Ministries Committee Working Group on Deployment and the 'Radical Review' led by the General Secretary. Many Synods are also in the throes of re-examining the ways they work. The Task Group has tried to listen to and reflect on current trends and thinking and has responded by significantly altering its recommendations relating to the work of Synod Moderators. The substance of its report in this section (pD8 onwards) remains unaltered, but we feel it is now more helpful to treat the accompanying recommendations as follows:

**Recommendations 11 and 12 (pD10) are withdrawn** – these recommendations are linked to each other, and are withdrawn as probably being surplus to requirements at this time.

### **Recommendation 13 (pD12) is revised as follows:**

Mission Council recommends the creation of a small Task Group to review the current procedures for the movement of ministers and to make recommendations about possible future alternatives, giving due consideration to the 3 Principles and 5 Hallmarks on Page D11 of the Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority Task Group Report.

The revised recommendation 13 still expresses a desire to examine the concerns mentioned in the body of the report, but acknowledges that further research needs to be undertaken to ensure those concerns are justified. The Ministries Committee Deployment Group Report was also not available for consultation during the active life of the Task Group and is of obvious relevance in this area. 5 of the members of the PCLA Task Group would be available to continue this work if required.

**Recommendations 14 – 16 (pD12) are withdrawn** – as they are dependent on the original recommendation 13.

**Recommendation 17 (pD12) is withdrawn** – this was originally included because if recommendations 13 – 16 were passed there could have been some doubt about the importance of the Moderators' Meeting.

Rachel Poolman (Task Group Convenor)  
September 2003



"Equal Opportunities ?

A Response from the Deployment Working Party  
to proposals from the  
Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority  
September 2002

The Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority suggests that the current system of introduction of ministers to pastorates in the United Reformed Church needs to be changed. They believe that the relationship between ministers and synod moderators, confused by matters of discipline, accountability, responsibility and pastoral care, makes it unhelpful for moderators to act for ministers in matching them with new pastorates. Further, they criticise the lack of transparency in the work of the Moderators Meeting. They propose that attention is given to creating a new system by which churches take responsibility for finding and calling their own ministers, supported by the moderators but not directed by them. In a précis of their report to Mission Council (October 2002) they write:

*"An equal opportunities policy is about creating a level playing field so that men and women, black people and white, people with disabilities and people of all ages can be properly and fairly considered for and by every pastorate.*

*"Equal opportunities is not about giving favourable treatment to people who are normally treated unfavourably. It is not about helping women and black people to get pastorates, when churches want white men. It is more important to educated churches to look at everyone equally than to help disadvantaged people find jobs...*

*"Without a doubt the moderators seek to be fair and just, but in practice this is not visible. A confidential meeting which decides which ministers may look at which pastorates when neither the ministers nor the pastorates have any direct input and it is all dealt with by a third party cannot be an equal opportunities system. The present process leaves ministers and churches feeling that they cannot contribute to the process, cannot affect what happens to them and that they may not have been treated fairly and justly."*

The Deployment Working Party offers the following observations in response:

1. "Equal opportunities", with its level playing field for every minister, perpetuates prejudice. In an ideal world, a simple educational process would remove the barriers to the participation of women, ethnic minorities, the young and the old, and people with disabilities. In practice, the level playing field is very bumpy, and many would never be allowed even a first foothold.



2. An equal opportunities policy would leave ministers unemployed. Many are geographically constrained: having to compete for the one pastorate available in the area where they are free to serve might mean having to find alternative employment. Where husband and wife are both ministers, it is appropriate that adjacent pastorates be identified for them and that they be given preference in the introduction process.
3. In the current system, the Moderators Meeting serves a benevolently patronising role and function: they endeavour to come to a mind about what is best for everybody. Is this an unacceptable concentration of power, or a legitimate ministry of leadership for the whole church? Between them, the moderators know every minister and every church in the denomination. They match ministers and pastorates out of a sense of mission, genuinely seeking to discern the will of the Spirit. When a minister asks to see a particular profile, the Moderators Meeting will always agree unless there is strong feeling that the match would be inappropriate. Moderators are chosen for their gifts of insight, discernment and vision-building, and they are given the task of shaping the mission of the whole by bringing ministers and churches together in ways that are meant to help each to fulfil Christ's calling. While this flies in the face of equal opportunities philosophy, it is a well-established role in the Christian Church. The Deployment Working Party endorses the ideal at the heart of the current system, believing that it can be of real benefit to ministers, churches, and the United Reformed Church as a whole.
4. It is possible to address the lack of transparency of the Moderators Meeting. The Deployment Working Party proposes a modification of the current system by which ministers and pastorates would agree what was to be said about them in presentation by one moderator to the others and would be entitled to know why a profile had been given or denied. An information sheet on each minister, including previous experience and preferences for the future, would ensure uniformity of presentation.
5. Human imperfection presents a challenge to any system the United Reformed Church might adopt. At present moderators are vulnerable to the accusation that they have passed "problem ministers" from one synod to another without disclosing crucial information, or that they have introduced a minister to a troubled pastorate without revealing the full story to him/her. A system based on the self-presentation of ministers and pastorates would mean that weaknesses would be downplayed and problems hidden altogether. Is it really wrong for 13 moderators, chosen for their insight into people and their maturity of judgment, to engage in a process whereby the weaknesses of ministers and the problems of churches can be taken into account?



**THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH - MINISTRIES COMMITTEE**

**DEPLOYMENT WORKING PARTY**

**EXTRACTS (parts one & three)**  
**FROM THE FINAL REPORT – MARCH 2003**

**PART ONE - INTRODUCTION**

**Preamble**

1.1 Several issues relating to the number and deployment of stipendiary ministers have been around within the denomination for years, some of which were issues unresolved after the Patterns of Ministry report of 1995. At the beginning of 2000 the Ministries Committee, after the annual Deployment Consultation, began to discuss a remit for a working party which might look at the practice of calling and of deploying ministers of word and sacraments. In the spring of 2000 the committee was given notice of a related resolution from Yorkshire Synod that was to be discussed at the October Mission Council. In the light of that it was decided to postpone the formation of a working party to look at deployment issues until after the meeting of Mission Council, and, if instructed by Mission Council, to include the issue raised by the Yorkshire resolution into the remit of the working party. Consequently the Ministries Committee formed this working party with the terms of reference detailed below (which incorporated the concerns of the Yorkshire Synod).

1.2 The Ministries Committee invited the following people to serve: Mr Wilf Arnold [who served until June 2002], Revd Brian Jolly [Convenor], Mrs Helen Mee, Revd Roberta Rominger and Revd Paul Whittle.

1.3 Revd Kirsty Thorpe attended several meetings to provide theological reflection, and Mrs Margaret Jeffrey, from the Board of Ministries of the Church of England, was present on several occasions. Revd Christine Craven has acted as secretary to the working party.

**Terms of reference**

*In the context of the need to develop local strategies for mission and ministry the working party will examine and evaluate:*

- *procedures for the declaration of vacancies;*
- *how churches in vacancy are supported by the councils of the church;*
- *the ways in which ministers are traditionally called to local pastorates, and any variations and considerations that may be emerging locally [eg termed appointments, advertising];*

*and bring recommendations to determine future policy.*

*The working party will also review the present discrepancy between nationally agreed deployment quotas and the actual deployment of ministers, consider how best to resolve the situation as soon as possible, and bring recommendations.*



*In all its work the working party should consider the experience and practise of our traditions and be sensitive to the needs of both churches and ministers.*

*The working party will consult with synods, district councils, local churches and ministers, and, as necessary, with assembly committees, ecumenical partners, etc.*

## **Process**

1.4 The Group began its work in January 2001.

1.10 In February 2002 the group presented an interim report to the Ministries Committee.

1.11 In February 2003 the group presented a draft of its final report to the Ministries Committee. The Committee discussed the report, requested small amendments to aid the clarity of the text, and welcomed it as a document which would helpfully contribute to several ongoing debates within the United Reformed Church.

1.12 This final report ... is now offered to the Ministries Committee, the General Secretary (for use, if appropriate, by the review group set up by the October 2002 Mission Council) and the Deputy General Secretary (for use, if appropriate, by the Mission Council Advisory Group and Mission Council) for consideration about how it can best be used to enhance the church's strategy for mission and ministry.

## **PART THREE – THE PROCESS FOR THE MOVEMENT OF MINISTERS FROM ONE PASTORATE TO ANOTHER**

3.1 We assert that it is important that the church should operate a process which is as transparent and open to scrutiny as possible within the bounds of appropriate confidentiality.

3.2 This can be achieved by ensuring that there is clarity in the process and amongst all participants. Established procedures that have proved to be effective and have taken account of the existing Equal Opportunities Policy should be amended if they are not transparent and open to scrutiny. The church should be open to learning from the civic realm in terms of good practice in the areas of recruitment, transfer and settlement of stipendiary ministers.

3.3 We believe that the synod moderators' meeting enables men and women in our church who have been called to a ministry which recognises their particular gifts of wisdom and leadership to develop a broad overview of the needs of the Church as a whole and to play a significant role in discerning the will of the Spirit for the Church and for local churches and individual ministers. Therefore we propose that the present process for the movement of ministers from one pastorate to another be revised as follows:

### **Proposed Process**

- Ministers would indicate to their Moderator that they felt that the time was right to move, possibly identifying a pastorate or sphere of service that they felt called to from the circulated list of vacancies.
- Synod Moderators would go to the Moderators' Meeting with a brief written description of the Minister, his or her gifts, challenges, experience and preferences for future ministry. This description would have been agreed in advance by both Moderator and Minister and any significant divergence of opinion shared and recorded. It is this description which would form the basis of the introduction of the Minister to the Moderators' Meeting. It is not appropriate that any perception of a Minister should be shared in the Moderators' Meeting that has not been already discussed with the Minister or that would not be fed back to the Minister



following the meeting. (This would have the effect of standardising the information available to the Moderators' Meeting and creating a level of transparency given that the process is open to scrutiny and each individual Minister is aware of the content of the report given to the Moderators' Meeting about him/her.)

- Moderators within their meeting would discuss the vacancies and those Ministers interested in a move and try to match possible Ministers and posts.
- A similar brief description would be provided for each post, including information about the community and District/Area. This description would be agreed by the pastorate, District/Area and Moderator, with any significant divergence of opinion shared and recorded. Again it is not appropriate that any perception of a pastorate should be shared in the Moderators' Meeting that has not been already discussed with the pastorate and District/Area or that would not be the subject of feedback to the pastorate following the meeting.
- It would be possible to significantly increase the information available to Ministers who are considering a move and Ordinands seeking their first call. All pastorate descriptions prepared for the Moderators' Meeting could be posted on the website. It may be technically possible to make this area 'restricted access' so that the information would only be available inside the denomination in the first instance. This would give the individual much more information for consideration before they approach their Moderator. Obviously, those without computer access could request a paper copy. The existing notification of vacancies, which is distributed with salaries, would continue in place.
- Following the matching process Ministers may be offered a number of church profiles to consider.
- Where two or more Ministers express interest in a vacancy, which happens occasionally, each should be able to see the pastorate profile unless it is agreed by the Moderators' Meeting that there is a clear reason why one should be given priority. If it then follows that more than one minister want their personal profile to be considered by the vacant pastorate, the vacancy committee may be offered their personal profiles to consider at the same time. In such a case the vacancy committee should then select one candidate with whom to pursue the process, and immediately return the other personal profiles to the Moderators' Meeting in order that they may be considered for vacant pastorates elsewhere. Should the introduction of the candidate selected by the vacancy committee prove unsuccessful the vacancy would, in the normal way, return to the agenda of the Moderators' Meeting; if it wished, it would then be possible for the vacancy committee to request to see again the personal profile/s of an/other minister/s it had previously returned to the Moderators' Meeting.

District/Area Councils and local pastorates would have the following additional responsibilities within the process:

- A Vacancy Committee would be formed which would include representatives of the District/Area council as well as the local pastorate. The Vacancy Committee should be representative of the whole pastorate and of the District/Area Council.
- The Vacancy Committee would be responsible for agreeing with the District/Area and the Moderator the brief description of the pastorate to be made available to the Moderators' Meeting (and preparing the pastoral profile and proposed details of settlement before the vacancy was declared).



3.4 This process differs from the present process on a number of counts:

- The requirement for the Moderator to present profiles of both Minister and pastorate which are agreed statements or which records areas where there is a significant variance of perception.
- All Synods would be using a standard description thus giving some consistency in the detail available to Moderators.
- The requirement to feed back to Ministers and churches any perception of them held by the Moderator or which is shared during the Moderators' Meeting.
- The possibility of a Vacancy Committee receiving several profiles for consideration. (This has the effect of bringing transparency to the system whilst still incorporating the benefits of a system of leadership and wisdom. It also places locally the responsibility of choosing between two equally eligible candidates.)
- The makeup of the Vacancy Committee to include the District/Area Council.

#### ***'Headhunting'***

3.5 There are occasions when the special circumstances of a pastorate may make it appropriate for a Minister to be sought outwith usual procedures.

3.6 In those instances, as defined by the Moderators' Meeting (as the only group of people who hold a pastoral overview of all pastorates within the United Reformed Church) it will be appropriate to continue the existing practice of identifying a Minister, or number of Ministers, who may have the appropriate skills and attributes to offer ministry to the pastorate in question. Synod Moderators would approach Ministers identified in this way and ask them to consider the possibility of allowing their profile to be forwarded to that pastorate.

#### **The Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority**

3.7 The Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority suggests that the current process for the movement of Ministers from one pastorate to another needs radical change. They believe that the relationship between Ministers and Synod Moderators, confused by matters of discipline, accountability, responsibility and pastoral care, makes it unhelpful for Moderators to act for Ministers in matching them with new pastorates. Further, they criticise the lack of transparency in the work of the Moderators Meeting. They propose that attention is given to creating a new system by which churches take responsibility for finding and calling their own Ministers, supported by the Moderators but not directed by them. A précis of their report to Mission Council in October 2002 included:

*"An equal opportunities policy is about creating a level playing field so that men and women, black people and white, people with disabilities and people of all ages can be properly and fairly considered for and by every pastorate.*

*"Equal opportunities is not about giving favourable treatment to people who are normally treated unfavourably. It is not about helping women and black people to get pastorates, when churches want white men. It is more important to educated churches to look at everyone equally than to help disadvantaged people find jobs ...*

*"Without a doubt the moderators seek to be fair and just, but in practice this is not visible. A confidential meeting which decides which ministers may look at which pastorates when neither the ministers nor the pastorates have any direct input and it is*



*all dealt with by a third party cannot be an equal opportunities system. The present process leaves ministers and churches feeling that they cannot contribute to the process, cannot affect what happens to them and that they may not have been treated fairly and justly."*

3.8 We offer the following observations in response:

1. "Equal opportunities", with its level playing field for every Minister, perpetuates prejudice. In an ideal world, a simple educational process would remove the barriers to the participation of women, ethnic minorities, the young and the old, and people with disabilities. In practice, the level playing field is very bumpy, and many would never be allowed even a first foothold.
2. An equal opportunities policy would leave Ministers unemployed. Many are geographically constrained: having to compete for the one pastorate available in the area where they are free to serve might mean having to find alternative employment. Where husband and wife are both Ministers, it is appropriate that adjacent pastorates be identified for them and that they be given preference in the introduction process.
3. In the current system, the Moderators Meeting serves a benevolently patronising role and function: they endeavour to come to a mind about what is best for everybody. Is this an unacceptable concentration of power, or a legitimate ministry of leadership for the whole church? Between them, the Moderators know every Minister and every church in the denomination. They match Ministers and pastorates out of a sense of mission, genuinely seeking to discern the will of the Spirit. When a Minister asks to see a particular profile, the Moderators Meeting will always agree unless there is strong feeling that the match would be inappropriate. Moderators are chosen for their gifts of insight, discernment and vision-building, and they are given the task of shaping the mission of the whole by bringing Ministers and churches together in ways that are meant to help each to fulfil Christ's calling. While this flies in the face of equal opportunities philosophy, it is a well-established role in the Christian Church. We endorse the ideal at the heart of the current system, believing that it can be of real benefit to Ministers, churches, and the United Reformed Church as a whole.
4. It is possible to address the lack of transparency of the Moderators Meeting. We propose a modification of the current system by which Ministers and pastorates would agree what was to be said about them in presentation by one Moderator to the others and would be entitled to know why a profile had been given or denied. An information sheet on each minister, including previous experience and preferences for the future, would ensure uniformity of presentation.
5. Human imperfection presents a challenge to any system the United Reformed Church might adopt. At present Moderators are vulnerable to the accusation that they have passed "problem Ministers" from one Synod to another without disclosing crucial information, or that they have introduced a Minister to a troubled pastorate without revealing the full story to him/her. A system based on the self-presentation of Ministers and pastorates would mean that weaknesses would be downplayed and problems hidden altogether. Is it really wrong for 13 Moderators, chosen for their insight into people and their maturity of judgement, to engage in a process whereby the weaknesses of Ministers and the problems of churches can be taken into account?





MISSION COUNCIL  
3-5 October 2003

F

**Resource Planning Advisory Group**

RPAG's Report to this Mission Council focuses on staffing matters.

We received a report from the Staffing Advisory Group on the Church Related Community Work Development Worker post.

In October 2002 Mission Council agreed with the recommendation of SAG that the two posts then being reviewed where the current post-holder could continue in post should be renewed for a period of three years (rather than the normal five years) to enable a synchronised review of posts which could be undertaken in the context of the General Secretary's proposed radical review.

From this it follows that to be consistent the CRCW Development Worker post should be renewed for two years so that it too could form part of a wider staffing review. It is emphasised that proposals for a renewal of less than five years are no reflection on the posts or post-holders. RPAG further suggests that where posts are renewed for two years or less the current post-holders should automatically be offered the opportunity of renewal.

**Resolution 1: That the post of CRCW Development Worker be renewed for two years.**

**Resolution 2: That where posts are to be renewed for two years or less the current post-holders should be offered the automatic opportunity of renewal.**

In the light of proposals to enable a synchronised review of staff posts and of measures to bring a number of posts into line with an end point in 2006, it is necessary to undertake a more comprehensive review of staff posts in the context of the wider review of the United Reformed Church and in consultation with those undertaking that review. It is therefore proposed:

**Resolution 3: The Staffing Advisory Group undertake a review of all staff posts in consultation with the General Secretary's Review Group, co-opting additional personnel to help with the review as necessary, with the aim of presenting a report on this SAG review to Mission Council in January 2005.**

In the light of the retirement of the Office and Personnel Manager in 2004, it is necessary to consider the areas of work currently undertaken by Hilary Gunn and suggest the most appropriate arrangements for the future. Because of the exceptional nature of this situation it is therefore proposed that three members of Church House Management Group should undertake this task and that they should have authority to co-opt and consult as needed.



**Resolution 4: In the light of the impending retirement of the Office and Personnel Manager, a group consisting of Val Morrison (as Convener), John Woodman and David Marshall-Jones (with authority to co-opt and consult) report to Mission Council as soon as possible with proposals relating to staff management and other related issues in Church House.**

### **Costs of Ministry**

Many local churches, districts and synods want to know the "True Cost of Ministry": Without an agreed basis for calculating such a figure, it would be misleading to give one – what should be included, what should be excluded? Should the "true cost" take account of initial training, in-service training, administration costs (and, if so, which ones), Assembly Staff costs etc., together with the very variable costs incurred in each Synod? However, where a "Basic Cost of Ministry" figure is required a broad-brush figure to include stipend, employer's NI and Pension contributions would be of the order of £23,500 for each stipendiary Minister. It must be emphasised, however, that there are significant unavoidable additional costs to the Church in connection with the support of our Ministry.





## MISSION COUNCIL *3-5 October 2003*

# G

### Mission Council Advisory Group

#### **1. Resolutions passed by the March 2003 Mission Council in closed session.**

MCAG has appointed three of its number to monitor progress on the six resolutions passed at the March 2003 Mission Council, and to make regular reports at its meetings.

#### **2. General Assembly Book of Reports circulation policy**

Mission Council Advisory Group notes that a number of adverse responses have been received as a result of Mission Council's decision (January 2003 – minute 03/08 second paragraph) to restrict the circulation of printed copies of the Book of Reports to General Assembly. Comments were being referred to the Assembly Arrangements Committee. Mission Council Advisory Group is also aware that the synod moderators wish to raise this matter at Mission Council.

#### **3. General Assembly's decision to close the National Youth Resource Centre at Yardley Hastings**

Since the decision of General Assembly, the Centre Management Committee has decided that the NYRC shall close on 31<sup>st</sup> December. Redundancy details have been conveyed verbally and in writing to employed staff. The Revd Deborah McVey has been appointed as interim-centre minister to provide leadership to and support of staff and community team until closure. Discussions are taking place about the future needs of the Yardley Hastings congregation, and the management of the Centre's building and assets. Yardley Hastings United Reformed Church has been given assurances that its needs will be considered carefully and sympathetically in the immediate future after closure of the Centre. Consideration is being given at present to the constitution of the group which will have management responsibility for the building after 31<sup>st</sup> December 2003. The Deputy General Secretary will give more details at Mission Council.

#### **4. United Reformed and Methodist Churches' Joint Pastoral Strategy**

Responses to this document, which was published before General Assembly, are requested from local churches, district councils, synods and any individuals by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2003. They should be sent to the Deputy General Secretary.

#### **5. Health and Safety at Church House**

The Mission Council Advisory Group, acting as trustee of the United Reformed Church, received the Health and Safety Policy for Church House prepared by the Church House Management Group, and formally



authorised its use as the policy of the United Reformed Church for all those using the building, noting that it would be issued to all staff after suitable training.

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**Members of MCAG:** *the Moderator of General Assembly (the Revd Alasdair Pratt; the immediate past Moderator (the Revd John Waller); the Moderator-elect (the Revd Sheila Maxey\*); the General Secretary (the Revd Dr David Cornick); the Hon. Treasurer (Mr Eric Chilton); two conveners of Assembly committees (Mr John Ellis, the Revd John Rees); and four other members of Mission Council (the Revd Adrian Bulley\*, the Revd Roz Harrison\*, Mrs Helen Mee, Mrs Val Morrison\*. The Deputy General Secretary (the Revd Ray Adams) is secretary. (\* = newly-appointed members)*





**MISSION COUNCIL**  
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H

**World Alliance of Reformed Churches - Faith Stance on the Global Crisis of Life**

At the General Assembly the following private members resolution (Resolution 31) was agreed:

*General Assembly draws the attention of the councils and appropriate committees of the church to 'Faith Stance on the Global Crisis of Life', invites them (as a matter of priority) to find space to discuss and reflect on it, and instructs the Church and Society and Ecumenical Committees to collate responses to the document for report to the 2004 General Assembly.*

Attached is the comprehensive summary of the WARC<sup>1</sup> document referred to in the resolution.

Copies of this document have been circulated through Church & Society networks and the Ecumenical Committee's World Church Advocates network encouraging discussion of the document in the councils of the church and requesting responses by the end of this year so that the two committees can draw up the report requested in the resolution.

In February 2004 we will be hosting a WARC member churches meeting to consider responses to their Covenanting for Justice process and this document in particular. Given the above timetable we should be able to arrive at a United Reformed Church response for that meeting.

As part of this process it would be useful to receive Mission Council's response at this meeting so that it can be incorporated, with any received responses from the wider church, into a draft response/report for consideration by the Ecumenical and Church & Society committees in the New Year.

*Philip Woods*  
*2003-09-22*

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<sup>1</sup> WARC – World Alliance of Reformed Churches



*(Comprehensive Summary)*

## FAITH STANCE ON THE GLOBAL CRISIS OF LIFE

WARC South-South Member Churches' Forum on  
Confessing/Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth (*processus  
confessionis*)  
22 - 26 April 2003, Buenos Aires, Argentina

### Introduction

Representatives of WARC member churches in Asia, Africa, Caribbean, the Pacific and Latin America met from 23 to 26 April 2003 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We gathered together to reflect and take a faith stance in response to the 23<sup>rd</sup> WARC General Council's call for a Committed Process of Recognition, Education and Confession (*processus confessionis*) regarding economic injustice and ecological destruction, which was initiated in Debrecen 1997. Our gathering in Buenos Aires acknowledged the present moment in the world's history as a *kairos*, challenging us to decisive action, because the whole of creation faces a crisis of life and immense suffering.

### Experience

Through sharing our experiences, we discovered the dramatic convergence of the sufferings and crises of both people and nature in the countries of the South. We were unanimous in our recognition of the negative effects of the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO in their domination and exclusion of the Southern nations and their common experience of the negative and destructive effects of deregulation and speculative investments.

We recognised that creation is in crisis. We understood that nation states and democratically elected governments are weakened. We realised that the colonisation of consciousness, reinforced by the media, makes people believe that there is no alternative. We also recognized the current trends of militarism as a total war strategy of security for the global market. We read the signs of the times from the unparalleled integration of economic globalization and global geopolitics.

### Analysis

We are clearly living in a new stage of capitalism, which combines all forms of power and affects all dimensions of life. The capitalist system has switched its focus from production to finance. It is also new in its far-reaching and all-encompassing strategy of domination where the global financial market acts as empire and god. It is bolstered by military, political and ideological power, and its forces determine the survival of the countries and people at the periphery.

Through neo-liberal globalization, the economy, designed to sustain life and the well-being of all, has become a totalitarian faith system of wealth accumulation for the few,



endangering life as a whole on the planet. It is the very essence of neo-liberalism to deregulate the capitalist market driven by an unbridled lust for money and absolute control, thus making the market an idol.

Having recognized all these negative effects of neo-liberal economic globalization, we are convinced that the neo-liberal model cannot be transformed or adjusted, because it has inherent contradictions and has failed again and again in lifting up the countries, nature and peoples of the South to life. Therefore, we are united in our rejection of the neo-liberal model. We share the critique of the global civil movements, including the global peace movement, in resisting and rejecting the neo-liberal model as destructive to all creation.

### Connecting this analysis with our faith

Neo-liberal globalization, therefore, is in complete contradiction to the central tenets of the Christian faith. It is in contrast to God's Economy:

- God's economy is inclusive, neo-liberal economy is exclusive.
- God's economy is a protective economy for the poor, neo-liberal economy is an exploitative economy of the poor.
- In God's economy, wealth flows from the rich to the poor, in the neo-liberal economy, it flows from the poor to the rich.
- The economic index of God's economy is the poor, the neo-liberal economic index is the rich.
- God's economy is based on God's love and grace, neo-liberal economy is based on greed and profit making.
- God's economy is an economy of solidarity, neo-liberal economy is an economy based on limitless competition.

We, representatives of WARC member churches in the South believe that neo-liberal ideology compromises the integrity of the Gospel and that we should take a faith stance against it.

We take a faith stance because the very integrity of our faith is in question. Neo-liberal ideology uses a theological and ideological framework to justify its presumed messianic role by claiming: economic sovereignty, absolute power and authority beyond any regulation, the right to act above national and international law, the right to act beyond ethical and moral rules. It claims that God has blessed prosperity, and poverty and disease are the results of God's disfavour due to disobedience and laziness.

Neo-liberal ideology claims absolute power, a power which is over and against the sovereignty of God and the claims of the Gospel. Therefore, it is critical, for the integrity of our faith, that we take a faith stance. Our Reformed communities have taken such faith stances in the past whenever the Sovereignty of God has been undermined and the Gospel has been at stake politically, socially and economically



(Barmen Declaration 1934, Theological Declaration of Korean Christians 1973, WARC General Council, Ottawa 1982, Confession of Belhar, 1986).

### Our Faith Stance

In line with this history, we, representatives of churches of the Reformed tradition in the South, take a faith stance against neo-liberal ideology and practise so that God may be glorified and the promise of abundant life may be fulfilled:

1. **We reaffirm** that God created the Garden of Life (political, social, economic and ecological as well as spiritual). (Gen. 2:8-9)

**We repent** from idolatry, believing that the empire will bring about the peace and security, and that the power of money will solve all problems. We repent that the doctrine of creation (Genesis 1) has been used to conquer, dominate, exploit, and destroy life, especially women and the earth, and that we have neglected to care for life which is under the threat of ultimate destruction.

**We reject** any claim of economic, political and military power, which subverts God's sovereignty over life. We reject the absolute ownership of property by private entity, personal or corporate, for it denies God's sovereign ownership over all things.

**We resist** the power of death in the forms of global economic exclusion, imperial domination and military hegemony, which annihilates people and the earth.

**We declare** that God's design for the economy is to sustain the life and well being of all creation. We worship God, not Mammon, which demands the limitless sacrifice of life for its existence. We declare that God's sovereign reign means that all creatures are free partners in the whole realm of life.

2. **We reaffirm** that God has made an all-inclusive covenant with all creation (Genesis 9:8-12). This covenant has been sealed by the gift of God's grace, a gift, which is not for sale in the market place (Isaiah 55:1). We reaffirm that God made a covenant of liberation from the imperial powers (Babylon and Rome). God's covenant is over and against any contract, which is the "law" of domination and exploitation. It is an inclusive covenant in which the poor and marginalized are God's primary partners.

**We repent** from believing that Christians have an exclusive relationship with God. We have excluded people because of their class, race, sex, ethnicity or religion. In our beliefs about salvation we have excluded people outside the Christian and also non-human community.

**We reject** any exclusive Christian claim over God's blessing and protection, and thus, we reject any theological justification for neo-liberal ideology and the imperial power.



**We resist** the domination of the global economy, imperial power, military hegemony, and modern science and technology that destroys the wholeness of creation.

**We declare** that God is Creator and Sustainer of all living beings for their common living.

3. **We reaffirm** that the Body of Christ unites the whole cosmos, overcoming all divisions and conflicts. We reaffirm that the garden of life under a new heaven and a new earth is continually sustained and renewed through the Spirit (Colossians 1:16-18, Revelation 21:1-5).

**We repent** from not recognizing the unity of life in the whole universe in the Reign of Christ and the work of the Spirit. We repent that, in the name of Christ, we have condemned the faiths and spiritualities of other peoples as well as degrading other creatures. We repent that by confining the Spirit to the soul, we justified the ideology of individualism.

**We reject** any doctrine of limitless competition, which is the source of economic, political and social conflicts and violence. We reject corruption at all levels as an integral part of the system.

**We resist** any power that promotes the logic of the jungle, an ideology that legitimates the survival of the fittest and the victory of the strong over the weak.

**We declare** that the Body of Christ is unconditionally and universally an inclusive reality, and that the Spirit is an all pervasive energy in the universe that works for the constant renewal of life.

### **Our Covenant for Life**

In response to a liberating God, who made a covenant for life with the whole of creation, we declare the following covenant for the life of the whole created community.

*God of Life,*

You are our God who liberates us from any system of oppression, exclusion and exploitation.

- I. We shall not make Mammon our God, accumulating power and wealth.
- II. We shall not make ourselves an idol, worshipping the effectiveness of our achievements.
- III. We shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord God calling the implementation of the wealth accumulating market and imperial wars a Christian policy.
- IV. We will observe the Sabbath day by not exploiting human labour and destroying Mother Earth.



- V. We will provide for solidarity between the generations, not only by securing a decent living for the aged but also by not burdening the coming generations with ecological damage and debt.
- VI. We shall not murder, excluding from the economy those who have no private property or who cannot sell their labour in the market.
- VII. We shall not tolerate the commodification and sexual exploitation of women and children.
- VIII. We shall not allow the manifold robberies of economic and financial actors.
- IX. We shall not misuse the legal system for our personal profit but promote the economic, social and cultural rights of all people.
- X. We shall not follow the greed of limitless accumulation by depriving our neighbours of their means of production and income so that all may live in dignity on God's rich and beautiful earth.

Buenos Aires 26 April 2003





## MISSION COUNCIL 3-5 October 2003

# J

### Additional Business

#### **1. United Reformed Church Criminal Records Bureau Churches Agency for Safeguarding Reference Group**

The Churches Agency for Safeguarding has been in operation since September 2002. This is an ecumenical body which processes applications, on behalf of the United Reformed Church, of volunteer and employed lay workers to the Criminal Records Bureau for clearance prior to working with children and young people. Rosemary Johnston (supported at present by the Deputy General Secretary) relates to this body on behalf of the United Reformed Church, and has been involved in thinking through and establishing appropriate support systems within our structures.

Though the CAS processes applications, the United Reformed Church is responsible for giving advice and support to local churches where blemished disclosures are received. In the past few months a small 'ad hoc' group has been called together on two occasions when advice was needed. Given the importance of the work, it seems right that the group should be recognised and authorised to do this formally on behalf of the Church. Mission Council, therefore, will be asked in January 2004 to appoint a Reference Group, and agree its terms of reference.

#### **2. Resolutions about Yardley Hastings agreed by the East Midlands Synod**

*The following resolutions were passed by the East Midlands Synod on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2003. Only resolutions 8 and 9 concern Mission Council directly, but all have been printed so that their context is clear.*

1. The East Midlands Synod records its great sadness at the decision of General Assembly to cease to use Yardley Hastings as the National Youth Resource Centre. Agreed.
2. The East Midlands Synod places on record its deep appreciation for all the work and commitment shown by the ministers, staff, volunteers, team members and congregation over the years; and rejoices in the many young lives that have been influenced for Christ through the Centre. Agreed.
3. The East Midlands Synod agrees to appoint, with the Northamptonshire District Council, the Local Action Group, with the remit of seeking to discern an appropriate use of the Centre which will benefit not only the United Reformed Church, but also the wider church and community. Agreed.
4. In discussion it was also agreed to include the following people in the membership of the Local Action Group: the convenor of the Strategy & Ministry Committee, Jane Stapleton and Jonathon Heard from the Northants District.



5. The East Midlands Synod agrees that the Local Action Group should explore on behalf of District Council and Synod all potentially viable options, consult with all potential partners and users, make representations to the Assembly about its conclusions and make regular reports to District Council and Synod in the expectation that any major commitments will only be undertaken after agreement by the District Council and Synod or Synod Executive.

6. The East Midlands Synod notes that the Northamptonshire District Council has set up a fund to Explore future Uses of Yardley Hastings Buildings (EUYPB); that this will be used to enable the urgent work of the Local Action Group, and encourages individuals and churches to support this fund.

7. The East Midlands Synod offers its sympathy and support to the Yardley Hastings congregation in the uncertainties it now faces, and encourages the Northants District Council and the local Leadership Group in their care of the congregation and in their concern for its future.

**8. The East Midlands Synod asks that, in view of the urgency and uncertainty of the current situation, Mission Council clarifies who has authority to act on behalf of General Assembly on matters concerning Yardley Hastings and with whom the Synod and District Council may reach decisions and take actions for the well-being of the local congregation and the future use of the buildings.**

**9. The East Midlands Synod resolves that General Assembly be asked to meet the transitional costs of ministry and to confirm that the contents of the building, which a church might reasonably have use of, will continue to be available to Yardley Hastings URC.**

### **3. Luther King House Educational Trust**

In October 2000 Mission Council appointed John Piper as a director of this then newly formed trust. The United Reformed Church is a stakeholder in LKHET hence the need for it to appoint a director. LKHET is a company whose responsibilities are for the premises and common life of Luther King House, Manchester. Luther King House is the home to Northern College, (as well as other colleges/courses, Methodist, Baptist and the Northern Ordination Course).

At the same time Mission Council authorised either its nominated director, the General Secretary or Treasurer to represent it at the general meetings of the Trust.

Upon the recent appointment of John Piper as Treasurer to the Trust there is now a vacancy for a United Reformed Church representative on the board.

The General Secretary now believes that the time is right to broaden the United Reformed Church representation base on these two bodies and asks Mission Council to agree that the Training Committee be asked to appoint a director to succeed John Piper and provide appropriate representation to the general meetings.



#### 4. Nominations Committee

The nominating group, convened by the Revd Peter Noble, charged with bringing a nomination for the post of Secretary for Youth Work, has completed its task, and brings the following proposal to Mission Council:

##### **Resolution:**

**Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly, appoints Mr John Brown as Secretary for Youth Work for a period of five years, from 1st January 2004 until 31st December 2008.**

#### 5. Training Committee

A review group set up by the Governors of Westminster College, convened by the Revd Dr David Thompson brings the following recommendation through the Training Committee:

##### **Resolution:**

**Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly, re-appoints the Revd Dr Janet Tollington as Director of Old Testament Studies at Westminster College, Cambridge, for a further period of seven years, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004.**

#### 6. Future dates and venues for Mission Council

2004	Saturday 24 January	Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh Park
	Friday 19 – Sunday 21 March	Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick
	Tuesday 5 – Thursday 7 October	All Saints Pastoral Centre, St Albans
2005	Saturday 22 January	Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh Park
	Friday 4 – Sunday 6 March	All Saints Pastoral Centre, St Albans
	Tuesday 4 – Thursday 6 October	Ushaw College, Durham



## Additional Business (continued)

### **1. Paper E: Task Group Report on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority - Notice of an amendment to Recommendation 10**

The following amendment to Recommendation 10 (October 2002 Paper F, page D8) was tabled at the January 2003 Mission Council as part of the plenary discussion, but was not dealt with at the time, due to the debate being deferred through lack of time.

#### **Recommendation 10:**

Mission Council recommends to the Section O Working Group the production of (*add: good practice guidelines to promote good relationships between ministers/ CRCWs and local churches, together with a middle range disciplinary procedure that addresses breakdowns in such relationships* (*delete: matches the present grievance procedure*).

Proposed: Ken Woods

Seconded: John Seager

### **2. Questions to accompany Saturday late morning discussion in informal groups on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority (October 02 Paper F)**

- i) What are the main issues and principles in this report which pages D8-D11 seek to address in its proposal for revised practice?
- ii) What can be improved in present practice?
- iii) If Mission Council agrees to Paper E resolution 13, what particular concerns would it wish the group to consider?

### **3. Convener of Grants and Loans Group (January 2004)**

The Convener of the Grants and Loans Group (The Revd Angus Duncan) has indicated that, on his retirement in January 2004, Mission Council will need to appoint a successor. This needs to be done at the January meeting.

For information:

"The Group considers all grant and loan applications from local churches and local church projects. This includes the grants previously on the agenda of the Advisory Group on Grants and Loans, grants and loans from the Church Building Fund, and the consideration of grant applications to



the CWM self-support fund,. It also stimulates reflection on the theology and practice of mission in the light of its experience.

The group consists of

One representative from each synod

plus, as consultants, the Financial Secretary, the Secretary for International Relations, the Secretary for Life and Witness, the Secretary for Church and Society, a CRCW Development Worker, the Secretary for Youth Work OR the Children's Advocate, the Deputy General Secretary.

The Convener must be a member of Mission Council, or be invited to attend, and will serve for 4 years. The secretary may or may not be a member of Mission Council and serves for 4 years".



## Terms of Reference for a Review Group

### Background

Mission Council (meeting on 26th March 2003) instructed the Mission Council Advisory Group to establish terms of reference for a newly-established review group to consider the lessons for the United Reformed Church arising from a case which had remained unresolved for a considerable number of years. This had involved a minister of the United Reformed Church in relation to several councils of the Church and individuals. The review group was asked to examine the processes which had been adopted to resolve the matter, and to bring recommendations for future good practice. Mission Council instructed its Advisory Group to appoint the review group, and further undertook to consider all recommendations emerging from the review.

### The Group

The review group should consist of three people (two women and a man), the convener being from another denomination (if possible), though there should be at least one member who is familiar with the procedures of the United Reformed Church. Within the group there should be expertise in the areas of clergy abuse, training, and staffing issues (e.g. health and safety).

The group should have access to the report prepared by the Assembly Commission, and to members of the Commission, so as to be able to draw on the experience of those who have studied the particular case in detail. The group shall also have access to any relevant material which has become available since the Commission completed its task. There should also be an opportunity for the minister involved to contribute to the work of the group at some stage.

### Terms of Reference

1. The purpose of the review is to learn lessons from past experience rather than repeat the work of the Commission.
2. The Group should consider present practice in the areas listed below; the way in which they operated in minister A's case; and, where necessary, to make recommendations for improvement or change to the procedures of the United Reformed Church. Areas to be covered should include:
  - i. the existing procedures for the care, support and monitoring of ministerial students on placement, the tasks they should be involved in, and the safeguards in place for both students and those who have responsibility for them.
  - ii. the formal and pastoral procedures which exist for use when allegations of sexual abuse are made against (a) a minister (b) a member of the United Reformed Church.
  - iii. the procedures for ensuring that the terms of settlement of a minister are consistent with terms and conditions contained within the Plan for Partnership, as agreed by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.
  - iv. the support and/or training provided by the United Reformed Church for ministers who find themselves providing pastoral support in cases of extreme trauma.



- v. the procedures for reshaping or dissolving ministerial teams in which there has been a serious breakdown of relationships.
  - vi. the process for assessing the ministry of, and providing pastoral care for, a minister suffering psychiatric problems serious enough to raise questions about his/her current fitness for ministry.
  - vii. the help provided by the United Reformed Church for ministers who are diagnosed as mentally ill or disordered.
  - viii. the discipline which can be imposed on a District or Area Council that fails to fulfil its functions.
  - ix. the respective decision-making powers of the Assembly officers, the Mission Council and the Assembly Pastoral Reference Committee when a minister's circumstances have to be dealt with at Assembly level.
  - x. the systems which are in place for protecting Church House and synod office staff from abuse and violence, particularly if it comes from others within the United Reformed Church.
  - xi. the arrangements in place for ensuring that there is a proper handover between those with responsibility for dealing with difficult pastoral problems and their successors.
3. The Group should consult with the *Time for Action* working party set up by Mission Council in January 2003, and examine research and other material about sexual abuse.
  4. The Group should have access to specialist psychiatric advice, and to legal and other help, as necessary.
  5. The Group should seek to report to Mission Council in January 2005.

Mission Council Advisory Group - 4<sup>th</sup> September 2003





**MISSION COUNCIL**  
*3-5 October 2003*

PAPERS

<b>A</b>	blue	Church Related Community Work
<b>B</b>	canary	Doctrine, Prayer & Worship
<b>C</b>	lilac	Time for Action
<b>D</b>	salmon	Mom
<b>E</b> E1 E2	green	PCLA
<b>F</b>	cream	RPAG
<b>G</b>	gold	MCAG
<b>H</b> J1 J2	pink	Faith Stance
<b>I</b>	blue	
<b>J</b>	canary	Additional Business <span style="float: right;"><i>tabled</i></span>
<b>K</b>	green	
<b>L</b>	salmon	
<b>M</b>	white	
<b>N</b>	light green	