

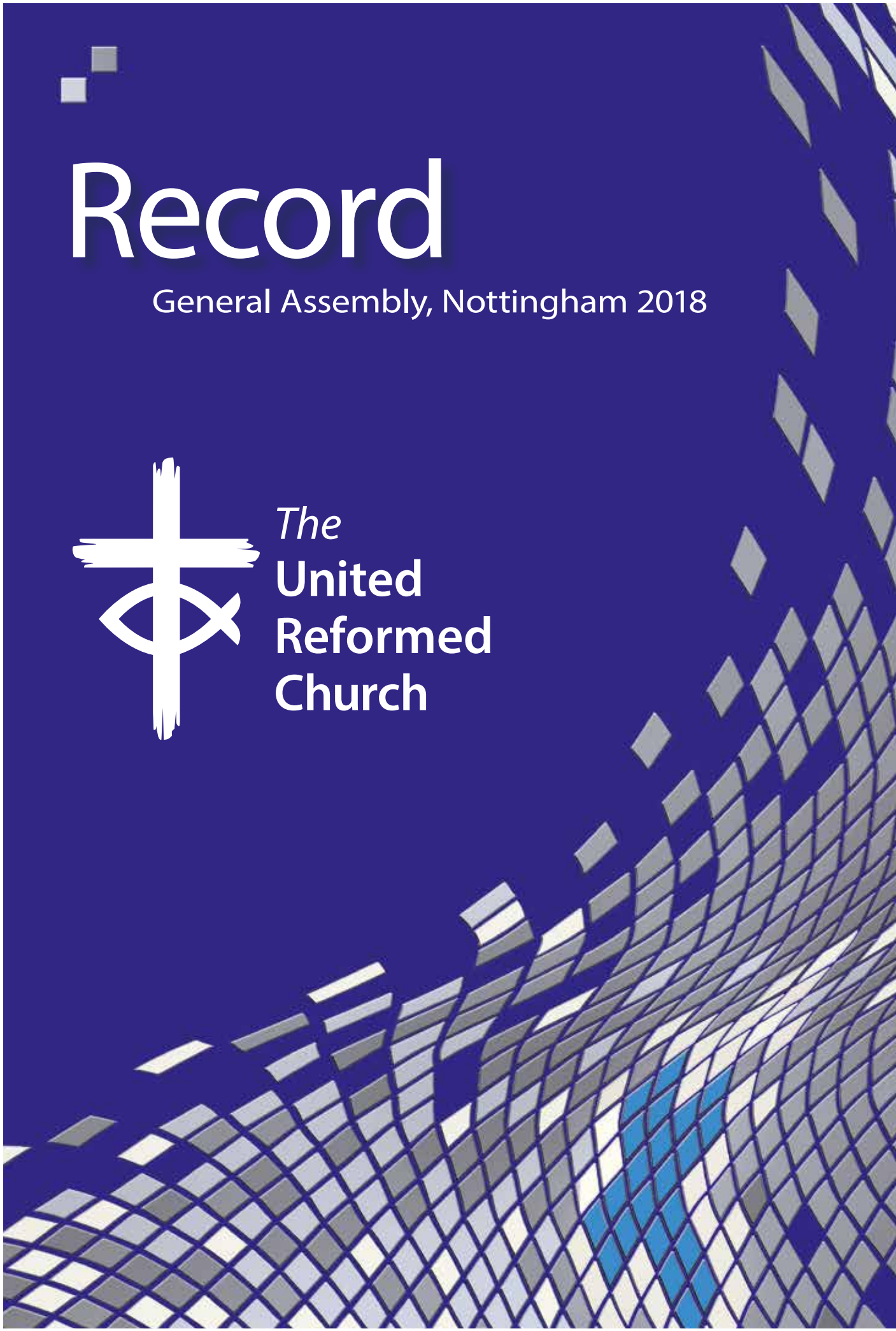


# Record

General Assembly, Nottingham 2018



*The*  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**



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# Matters for consideration and action

United Reformed Church • General Assembly 2018

Resolution number	Description	Report page/s	Record page/s	Synods	Local churches
<b>4</b>	<b>The election of Assembly Moderators</b>	16-19	13	X	
<b>5</b>	<b>The role of Elders in the URC</b>	20-21	25	X	X
<b>25</b>	<b>Faith &amp; Order: Remote URC members</b>	111-113	15	X	
<b>27</b>	<b>Ministries Committee: Active Ministers</b>	133-134	23	X	
<b>28</b>	<b>Ministries Committee: Ministerial calls</b>	135-136	16	X	X
<b>31</b>	<b>Commitment to global and intercultural ministries</b>	159-160	19	X	
<b>37 &amp; 38</b>	<b>Retired Ministers' Housing Society</b>		27	X (37only)	
<b>39</b>	<b>Windrush and 'the hostile environment'</b>		15	X	X



*Opening Act of Worship and signing of the Bible (below)*



*Act of Commemoration for Ministers and Missionaries read by the General Secretary, the Revd John Proctor*



The  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

Friday 6 July 2018

## **Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the United Reformed Church General Assembly**

At Nottingham, and within The Albert Hall

Friday 6 July 2018 2.30pm  
*Session one*

The Moderator, Mr Alan Yates, welcomed members and called on the Revd Peter Meek, Moderator of the East Midlands Synod, to introduce the Rt Revd Monsignor Patrick McKinney, Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham who had given use of his cathedral to the Assembly, who addressed Assembly. The Moderator thanked Mgr McKinney and presented him with a gift.

The General Secretary invited the Moderators to constitute the Assembly, meeting in Nottingham on 6 July 2018, with prayer. The Moderator, the Revd Kevin Watson duly constituted Assembly,

After the singing of a hymn, the Moderators inducted Mr Derek Estill and the Revd Nigel Uden as Moderators of the General Assembly. Mr Estill and Mr Uden both signed the Assembly Bible. The Moderator, Mr Estill, expressed the thanks of the Church to Mr Watson and Mr Yates, and their chaplains, and presented gifts.

The Moderators led an Act of Worship assisted by their chaplains, the Revd David Coaker and the Revd Elaine Colechin. During worship the Moderator, the Revd Nigel Uden, addressed Assembly. During Communion an Act of Commemoration for Ministers and Missionaries who had died since the last Assembly was held. Their names were read to Assembly:

Margaret Allen  
Peter D Arthur  
Mary Austin  
John Albert Berryman  
Ronald James Blick  
Delia Jean Bond  
David John Bremner

Elspeth Marie Browne  
David Robert Bunney  
Phyllis Carpenter  
Brian Alfred Chadwick  
William Connelly  
Arnold James Dawson  
James Dey

Robin Garth Diffey  
Barry Drake  
David Byron Evans  
John Islwyn Evans  
Peter John Evans  
Kim Conrad Fabricius  
John Fielding



Norman Keith Fisher  
 Paul R Floe  
 William Kinstrie Frame  
 Alan James Frost  
 Clifford Bertram Fry  
 John Fuller  
 Frank Glendinning  
 Albert Greasley  
 Anthony John Wigton Groom  
 James Leslie Guthrie  
 Janet Dukes Hargis  
 Kenneth John Henry Hibberd  
 John Cedric Hickmore  
 Micah Hopley  
 John Lloyd Humphreys  
 Philip Martin Hunt  
 Conrad Thomas Husk  
 Thomas Irvine  
 Margaret Dorothea Jones  
 David John Joseph  
 Richard Kayes  
 James Edward Kidd  
 Graham John Knights  
 Griselda Ellen Louise Langdon  
 Kenneth Lyall Lee  
 Norma Jean Leveridge

David Henry Littlejohns  
 Cyril William Lucraft  
 Ernest Cyril Marvin  
 Stephen Harold Mayor  
 William Currie McCrorie  
 Eric McDonald  
 Ian McLeod  
 Albert Edward Molineaux  
 David John Morgan  
 Frederick John Nelson  
 Michael Terence O'Hara  
 Thomas Howard Owen  
 Joan Averil Philips  
 Peter Leonard Pittaway  
 Donald Powis  
 Lydia Eleanor Rapkin  
 Mary Read  
 David Glanville Rees  
 Lewis Gordon Reynolds  
 David Robertson  
 David Gordon Robinson  
 Leslie Robinson  
 Andrew Frank Rock  
 Betty Bury Roe  
 Eileen Mary Sambrooks  
 Geoffrey William Satchell

Joyce Saunders  
 Kenneth Simpkin  
 Stella Elizabeth Sivyour  
 Mavis Maltus Smith  
 Alan John Spivey  
 Philip Bruce Stewart  
 Katherine Winifred Stocks  
 Kenneth Alfred Stork  
 Andrew Woodside Taggart  
 William John Lynd Taylor  
 David Michael Thomas  
 Frederick Ernest Thomson  
 Christopher John Tolley  
 Kenneth James Tracey  
 Douglas Frank Tunbridge  
 David Wilson Turner  
 Frederick Harry Welshman  
 Eileen Mary Wiles  
 Thomas Owen Williams  
 John Hind Wilson  
 Sidney George Woodget  
 Margery Woodland  
 Alice L Wright  
 Ronald Herbert Young

After worship Assembly adjourned until 5pm

The Moderator, Mr Derek Estill, took the chair and invited his Chaplain, the Revd David Coaker to lead Assembly in Prayer.

The General Secretary laid the Roll of Assembly on the table.

#### ROLL OF ASSEMBLY

#### Moderators

1. Mr Derek Estill
2. The Revd Nigel Uden

#### Clerk

3. The Revd Michael Hopkins

#### General Secretary

#### Deputy General Secretary

#### (Administration and Resources)

#### Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship)

#### Deputy General Secretary (Mission)

4. The Revd John Proctor
5. Mrs Jane Baird
6. The Revd Richard Church
7. Ms Francis Brien

#### Moderators of Synods

- |                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 8. Northern       | The Revd David Herbert |
| 9. North Western  | The Revd Andrew Mills  |
| 10. Mersey        | The Revd Jacky Embrey  |
| 11. Yorkshire     | The Revd Kevin Watson  |
| 12. East Midlands | The Revd Peter Meek    |
| 13. West Midlands | The Revd Steve Faber   |

- |                   |                              |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 14. Eastern       | The Revd Paul Whittle        |
| 15. South Western | The Revd Ruth Whitehead      |
| 16. Wessex        | The Revd Clare Downing       |
| 17. Thames North  | The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad    |
| 18. Southern      | The Revd Nicola Furley-Smith |
| 19. Wales         | The Revd Simon Walkling      |
| 20. Scotland      | The Revd Dr David Pickering  |

#### **Convenors of General Assembly standing committees**

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 21. Assembly Arrangements          | The Revd James Breslin                     |
| 22. Children's and Youth Work      | The Revd Jenny Mills                       |
| 23. Communications                 | Mr Peter Knowles                           |
| 24. Education and Learning         | The Revd Professor Neil Messer             |
| 25. Equalities                     | The Revd Helen Mee                         |
| 26. Faith and Order                | The Revd Dr Alan Spence                    |
| 27. Finance                        | Mr Ian Hardie                              |
| 28. Ministries                     | The Revd Paul Whittle (dual qualification) |
| 29. Mission                        | The Revd Bernie Collins                    |
| 30. Nominations                    | The Revd Ray Adams                         |
| 31. Pastoral Reference and Welfare | Mrs Wilma Frew                             |

#### **Convenor of the United Reformed Church Trust**

32. The Revd Richard Gray

#### **Immediate-past Moderators**

33. The Revd Kevin Watson (*dual qualification*)  
34. Mr Alan Yates

#### **Former Moderators** (*two places*)

35. Mr John Ellis  
36. The Revd Elizabeth Welch

#### **Resource Centres for Learning**

- |                                 |                               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 37. Northern College Staff      | The Revd Dr Rosalind Selby    |
| 38. Northern College Student    | Mrs Cath Atkinson             |
| 39. Scottish College Staff      | The Revd Dr John McNeil Scott |
| 40. Scottish College Student    | Mrs Susan Henderson           |
| 41. Westminster College Staff   | Dr Alison Gray                |
| 42. Westminster College Student | Mr Alex Clare-Young           |

#### **United Reformed Church Youth** (*three places*)

43. Ms Hannah Jones  
44. Ms Katie Henderson  
45. Mr Jake Convery

#### **United Reformed Church Chaplain to HM Forces** (*one place*)

46. The Revd David Haslam

#### **Northern Synod**

##### **Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

(*six places*)

47. The Revd Sue Fender  
48. The Revd Joan Grindrod-Helmn  
49. The Revd Dr Tony Haws  
50. Mrs Ann Honey  
51. The Revd Dr Matthew Prevett  
52. *Place unfilled (reserved for an under 26 representative)*

**Lay representatives** (*six places*)

53. Ms Moira Copeland
54. Ms Jean Degenhardt
55. Miss Alison Greaves\*
56. Mrs Jackie Haws
57. Mr Wade Sherman
58. Mrs Maureen Shepherd

**North Western Synod**

**Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

(*12 places*)

59. Mr Mal Breeze
60. The Revd Martyn Coe
61. The Revd Brian Jolly
62. The Revd Sarah Moore
63. The Revd John Piper
64. The Revd Alistair Smeaton
65. The Revd Darleen ten Cate
66. The Revd Alison Termie
67. The Revd Professor David Thompson+
68. The Revd Dr Marion Tugwood
69. The Revd Mike Walsh
70. The Revd Martin Whiffen

**Lay representatives** (*12 places*)

71. Miss Georgina Bowen\*
72. Mr Chris Burton
73. Mrs Kate Grand
74. Mrs Melanie Hall
75. Mr Walt Johnson
76. Mr Lawrence Moore
77. Mrs Linda Orchard+
78. Mrs Marilyn Piper
79. Ms Bekki Radcliffe\*
80. Mr John Skipworth
81. *Place unfilled*
82. *Place unfilled*

**Mersey Synod**

**Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

(*eight places*)

83. The Revd Lorraine Aizlewood-Threlfall
84. The Revd Debbie Brown
85. The Revd Allison Claxton
86. The Revd Malcolm Fife
87. The Revd Louise Franklin
88. The Revd Dr Nicholas Jones
89. The Revd Chris Parker
90. The Revd Ruth Wilson

**Lay representatives** (*eight places*)

91. Ms Rita Griffiths
92. Mr Bill Gould
93. Dr Janet Large
94. Mr Andrew Page
95. Ms Anna Spencer\*
96. Mr David Welsh
97. Ms Megan Wilson\*
98. Dr Ruth Winterburn



**Yorkshire Synod****Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers***(eight places)*

- 99. The Revd Caroline Andrews
- 100. The Revd Dr James Coleman
- 101. The Revd Simon Copley
- 102. The Revd Fran Kissack
- 103. The Revd Angela Lawson
- 104. Mr Simon Loveitt
- 105. The Revd Tim Lowe
- 106. The Revd Justine Wyatt

**Lay representatives** *(eight places)*

- 107. Ms Katherine Buckland\*
- 108. Mr David Miall\*
- 109. Mrs Val Morrison
- 110. Mr Nsubisi Mwakasungura
- 111. Mrs Terasa Raddings
- 112. Mr Ronald Sweeney
- 113. Mrs Janet Virr
- 114. Mrs Kathy Webb

**East Midlands Synod****Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers***(nine places)*

- 115. The Revd Elizabeth Adams
- 116. The Revd Colin Bones
- 117. The Revd Geoffrey Clarke
- 118. Mrs Vicky Longbone
- 119. The Revd Martha McInnes
- 120. The Revd Lesley Moseley
- 121. The Revd George Mwaura
- 122. The Revd Robert Sheard
- 123. The Revd Samuel Silungwe

**Lay representatives** *(nine places)*

- 124. Mrs Margaret Davies
- 125. Miss Natalie Gibbs\*
- 126. Mr David Greatorex
- 127. Mr Gary Hoddinott-Leighton
- 128. Mrs Helen Lidgett
- 129. Miss Sarah Parkin\*
- 130. Mrs Elaine Shardlow
- 131. Mr Alan Thompson
- 132. Ms Catriona Wheeler

**West Midlands Synod****Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers***(ten places)*

- 133. The Revd Martin Hardy
- 134. The Revd Andrew Mann-Ray
- 135. The Revd Carole Marsden
- 136. The Revd Eric Massey
- 137. The Revd Craig Muir
- 138. The Revd Stuart Scott
- 139. The Revd Nadene Snyman
- 140. The Revd Nick Stanyon
- 141. The Revd James Taylor
- 142. The Revd Sue Walker

**Lay representatives** (*ten places*)

- 143. Mrs Claudette Binns
- 144. Mrs Lynda Burton
- 145. Ms Daphne Davey
- 146. Mr John Davey
- 147. Miss Elinor Davies\*
- 148. Mrs Janet Kemp
- 149. Mr Jacob Lowe\*
- 150. Mrs Margaret Marshall
- 151. Mr Peter Mills
- 152. Mr Bill Potter

**Eastern Synod**

**Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

(*11 places*)

- 153. The Revd Dr Catherine Ball
- 154. The Revd Bruno Boldrini
- 155. The Revd Dr John Bradbury
- 156. The Revd Dr Samuel Cyuma
- 157. The Revd Mark Elvin
- 158. The Revd Roy Fowler
- 159. The Revd Charles Mather
- 160. The Revd Dr Rick Mearkle
- 161. The Revd Bryn Rickards
- 162. The Revd Jon Sermon
- 163. The Revd Kathryn Taylor

**Lay representatives** (*11 places*)

- 164. Ms Lindsey Brown
- 165. Mrs Ruth Dixon
- 166. Mrs Penny Flynn
- 167. Miss Helen Glasse\*
- 168. Mr Gil Heathcote
- 169. Mr Keith Hemsley
- 170. Mr Keir Hounsome
- 171. Dr Christine MacLeod
- 172. Miss Anne Scarff
- 173. Mr Aaron Wood\*
- 174. *Place unfilled*

**South Western Synod**

**Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

(*eight places*)

- 175. The Revd Chris Baillie
- 176. The Revd John Bremner+
- 177. The Revd Gerald England
- 178. The Revd Tracey Lewis
- 179. The Revd Phil Nevard
- 180. The Revd Janet Sutton-Webb
- 181. The Revd Robert Weston
- 182. *Place unfilled (reserved for an under 26 representative)*

**Lay representatives** (*eight places*)

- 183. Mr George Faris
- 184. Mr Roger Newton
- 185. Mrs Janet Gray
- 186. Ms Michelle Howard
- 187. Mrs Beverley Wride

- 188. Mrs Jacquey Newton
- 189. Ms Truida Mutare
- 190. Miss Amy Weston\*

### **Wessex Synod**

#### **Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

*(13 places)*

- 191. The Revd Lucy Brierley
- 192. The Revd Peter Clark
- 193. The Revd Tim Clarke
- 194. The Revd Trish Davis
- 195. The Revd David Downing
- 196. The Revd Dr Sarah Hall
- 197. The Revd Graham Hoslett
- 198. The Revd Timothy Meachin
- 199. The Revd Martyn Needs
- 200. Ms Pat Oliver
- 201. The Revd Wilbert Sayimani
- 202. The Revd Raymond Stanyon
- 203. *Place unfilled*

#### **Lay representatives (13 places)**

- 204. Miss Alice Hoyle\*
- 205. Miss Maddie Loudon\*
- 206. Mr Andrew Gibb
- 207. Mrs Enala Bhebhe
- 208. Mrs Susan Brown
- 209. Mr Lewin Cox
- 210. Mrs Wendy Dunnett
- 211. Mrs Christine Hardwick
- 212. Mr Philip Le Fanu
- 213. Mrs Rosie Martin
- 214. Mrs Janet Meachin
- 215. Mrs Thelma Roberts
- 216. Mrs Margaret Telfer

### **Thames North Synod**

#### **Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

*(12 places)*

- 217. The Revd Nancy Babarinde
- 218. The Revd Sally Bateman
- 219. The Revd James Fields
- 220. The Revd Hugh Graham
- 221. The Revd Kate Hackett
- 222. The Revd Terry Hinks
- 223. The Revd Naison Hove
- 224. The Revd Shahbaz Javed
- 225. The Revd Derek Lindfield
- 226. The Revd John Macaulay
- 227. The Revd Dr Allan Smith
- 228. The Revd Julian Templeton

#### **Lay representatives (12 places)**

- 229. Mr Joseph Amoah
- 230. Mrs Sandra Bailey
- 231. Mrs Gertie Barker
- 232. Ms Nneoma Chima
- 233. Ms Jessica England\*

- 234. Mr Simon Fairnington
- 235. Mrs Ireen Goulding
- 236. Mr Isaac Harvey\*
- 237. Mr Tom Howells\*
- 238. Mr Joshua Naz
- 239. Mr Antony Obi-Ezekpazu
- 240. Mrs Carole Lindfield

**Southern Synod**

**Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

*(16 places)*

- 241. The Revd Bridget Banks
- 242. The Revd Michael Davies
- 243. The Revd Alison Davis
- 244. The Revd Derrick Dzandu-Hedidor
- 245. The Revd Bernard Fidler
- 246. The Revd Dr George Kalu
- 247. The Revd Martin Knight
- 248. The Revd Anne Lewitt
- 249. The Revd Alex Mabbs
- 250. The Revd Peter McIntosh
- 251. The Revd Reginald Mudenda
- 252. The Revd Kim Plumpton
- 253. The Revd Angela Rigby
- 254. The Revd Helen Warmington
- 255. The Revd George Watt
- 256. *Place unfilled*

**Lay representatives** *(16 places)*

- 257. Mr John Bunker
- 258. Mrs Hazel Burnham
- 259. Mr Mark Camp
- 260. Dr Terry Cooke-Davies
- 261. Mrs Judy Davies
- 262. Mr John Denison
- 263. Miss Johanna Harfield\*
- 264. Mrs Marie Jackson
- 265. Mr Peter Jackson
- 266. Mrs Nnenna Kalu
- 267. Mr Alan Kirby
- 268. Mrs Kay McIntosh
- 269. Mr Wilfred Rhodes
- 270. Mrs Jenny Sheehan
- 271. Ms Pam Tolhurst
- 272. Mr Reuben Watt\*

**Wales Synod**

**Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers**

*(five places)*

- 273. The Revd Dr Jason Askew
- 274. The Revd Adrian Bulley
- 275. The Revd Ian Kirby
- 276. The Revd Kathryn Price
- 277. The Revd Branwen Rees

**Lay representatives** *(five places)*

- 278. Mr Chris Atherton
- 279. Mrs Judith Dolben

280. Miss Joanna Harris\*  
 281. Miss Isobel Henson\*  
 282. Miss Victoria Turner\*

### Scotland Synod

#### Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers

*(ten places)*

283. The Revd Andy Braunston  
 284. The Revd Mitchell Bunting  
 285. The Revd Sue Kirkbride  
 286. The Revd Steven Manders  
 287. The Revd Catherine McFie  
 288. The Revd David Scott  
 298. The Revd Judith Tatton-Schiff  
 299. The Revd Mary Taylor  
 300. Ms Marie Trubic  
 301. The Revd William Young

#### Lay representatives *(ten places)*

302. Mr Mark Kirkbride  
 303. Ms Morag McLintock  
 304. Mrs Lesley Richmond  
 305. Dr Nicola Robinson  
 306. Mr William Robson  
 307. Miss Myra Rose  
 308. Mr Joshua Undy-Jamison\*  
 309. *Place unfilled*  
 310. *Place unfilled*  
 311. *Place unfilled*

#### British and Irish Ecumenical representatives *(six places)*

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 312. The Right Revd Susan Brown | The Church of Scotland             |
| 313. Mrs Yvonne Campbell        | The Congregational Federation      |
| 314. The Revd Glenn Coggins     | The Church of England              |
| 315. The Revd Conrad Hicks      | The Methodist Church               |
| 316. Pastor David Howe          | The Baptist Union of Great Britain |
| 317. The Revd Brian Jones       | The Presbyterian Church of Wales   |

#### International Ecumenical representatives *(six places)*

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 318. Pfarrer Martin Henninger  | The Evangelical Church of the Palatinate               |
| 319. The Revd Joseph Kassab    | The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon    |
| 320. The Revd Lydia Neshangwe  | The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa     |
| 321. The Revd Davide Ollearo   | The Waldensian Church                                  |
| 322. The Revd Dr Eric So       | The Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China |
| 323. The Revd Norbert Stephens | The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands    |

#### Council for World Mission *(1 place)*

324. The Revd Wayne Hawkins

Several other ecumenical guests were present for some or all of Assembly. Only those whose are members of Assembly are recorded here.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> \*indicates those synod representatives aged 25 or under at the time of their appointment.  
 +indicates those appointed to a vacant place from another synod under Rule 1.5.



## Greetings

The Moderator invited the Pastoral Listeners, the Revd Dr Jason Askew, Mrs Janet Gray, and the Revd Craig Muir to stand and identify themselves. He explained their role.

The Moderator invited the Revd Peter Meek to introduce the Lord Mayor of Nottingham, Councillor Liaqat Ali. Cllr Ali welcomed Assembly to Nottingham.

The Revd Philip Brooks asked the Moderator to greet British and Irish ecumenical guests:

The Right Revd Susan Brown	The Church of Scotland
Mrs Yvonne Campbell	The Congregational Federation
The Revd Glenn Coggins	The Church of England
The Revd Conrad Hicks	The Methodist Church
The Revd David Howe	The Baptist Union of Great Britain
The Revd Brian Hugh Jones	The Presbyterian Church of Wales



*Lord Mayor of Nottingham,  
Councillor Liaqat Ali*

The Revd Dr Michael Jagassar asked the Moderator to greet international ecumenical guests:

The Revd Dr Collin Cowan	General Secretary of the Council for World Mission
The Revd Dr Mario Fischer	General Secretary of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe.
The Revd Wayne Hawkins	Council for World Mission, Europe Region
Pfarrer Martin Henninger	The Evangelical Church of the Palatinate
The Revd Joseph Kassab	The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
The Revd Lydia Neshangwe	The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa
The Revd Davide Ollearo	The Waldensian Church
The Revd Dr Eric So	The Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China
The Revd Norbert Stephens	The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

The Moderator invited the Rt Revd Susan Brown, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to address Assembly.

The Moderator invited the Revd Joseph Kassab, General Secretary of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and the Lebanon, to address Assembly.

On behalf of Assembly the Moderator thanked Mrs Brown and Mr Kassab for their words of greeting.

## Procedural Matters

The Clerk gave a number of notices of practical and procedural matters.

The Clerk moved:

### Resolution 33:

**General Assembly appoints the following as members of any facilitation group that may be required for this Assembly:**

<b>Mr Jake Convery</b>	<b>The Revd Derrick Dzandu-Hedidor</b>
<b>The Revd Steve Faber</b>	<b>The Revd Louise Franklin</b>
<b>Mr Keir Hounsome</b>	<b>The Revd Naison Hove</b>
<b>Ms Hannah Jones</b>	<b>The Revd Fran Kissack</b>
<b>Mr Peter Knowles</b>	<b>Mrs Rosie Martin</b>
<b>The Revd Dr Matthew Prevett</b>	<b>The Revd Ruth Whitehead</b>

This was agreed unanimously.

The Clerk moved:

**Resolution 34:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly appoints Ms Morag McLintock as convenor of tellers for this Assembly.**

This was agreed unanimously.

The Clerk moved:

**Resolution 35:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly appoints as tellers for the election of Moderators of General Assembly 2020-22 the Revd Sarah Moore, the Revd Dr John Bradbury and Ms Catriona Wheeler, with Ms Wheeler to serve as convenor.**

This was agreed unanimously.

The Clerk moved:

**Resolution 42:** \_\_\_\_\_

- a) **General Assembly appoints the Revd Andy Braunston as Minute Secretary for the 2018 meeting of Assembly, assisted by Mrs Ann Barton and Mrs Jane Baird as necessary, because of the absence of the Revd Ken Forbes through illness.**
- b) **General Assembly appoints Mrs Jane Baird and Ms Francis Brien as Minute Secretary for the November 2018 meeting of Mission Council, when the Revd Ken Forbes is due to be on sabbatical.**
- c) **General Assembly offers its best wishes to the Revd Ken Forbes for a speedy recovery from his current illness, and for his planned sabbatical in the autumn of 2018.**

This was agreed unanimously.

The Moderator invited the Immediate-Past Moderator, the Revd Kevin Watson, to share his reflections.

The Moderator invited the Revd Helen Mee, convenor of the equalities committee to move Resolution 24.

After discussion this business was remaindered due to lack of time.

The Moderator invited Mrs Val Morrison, convenor of the task group on the future of General Assembly, to present the report on behalf of Mission Council, and answer questions of clarification about the report.

The Moderator introduced a World Council of Churches initiative, entitled, The Twelve Faces of Hope. This exhibition seeks to raise awareness of issues around Palestine and Israel through art works which had been installed around the Assembly Hall. The Moderator unveiled the first picture and invited Assembly to look at all twelve pictures.

Closing Devotions were led by the Chaplain, the Revd David Coaker.

The Assembly adjourned to meet again tomorrow morning at 9.00 am.



*The*  
**United  
 Reformed  
 Church**

Saturday 7 July 2018  
*Session two*

The Assembly resumed at 9.00 am, and was led in worship by the Chaplain, the Revd Elaine Colechin and the Bible Study led by the Revd Dr Kathy White.

The Moderator, the Revd Nigel Uden, was in the chair.

The Moderator invited the Clerk to address Assembly on a number of procedural matters.

The Moderator invited the convenor of the children's and youth work committee, the Revd Jenny Mills, to move Resolution 22.

Resolution 22: General Assembly re-commits the United Reformed Church to the Charter for Children and its implementation in this 21st century world.

Ms Hannah Jones proposed, and Mr Reuben Watt seconded, an amendment:

**Resolution 22:**

**General Assembly tasks the Children and Youth Work Committee to re-evaluate the Charter for Children and to bring a Charter to General Assembly 2020 for the URC to commit to, taking into account all that has been referred to in General Assembly 2018 and in the Children and Youth Review and in the wider church.**

The amendment was carried and became the substantive resolution.

This was passed by consensus.

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to introduce the Revd Dr Collin Cowan, General Secretary of the Council for World Mission who addressed Assembly and responded to questions from Assembly.

The Revd Wayne Hawkins presented a gift from the Council for World Mission to the Moderator and the Moderator presented a gift from Assembly to Dr Cowan.

The Moderator invited the Clerk to explain the process for the election of Moderators of General Assembly 2020 to 2022 and then led Assembly in prayer before inviting representatives to cast their votes.

The Moderator invited Assembly to take a short break.

Assembly reconvened at 11.05am.

The Moderator invited the Revd Kevin Watson to propose the various resolutions from Mission Council and suggested that the Moderator call upon Ms Hannah Jones to propose Resolution 4. Ms Jones sought the permission of Assembly to move the resolution an amended form, which was agreed by Assembly:

#### **Resolution 4:**

**General Assembly agrees that the following principles shall be written into the Rules of Procedure for the election of its Moderators:**

- a) All Synods should supply a brief biography and reasons for nomination of any nominees;**
- b) The nominees will each be given up to three minutes in the Assembly to present their biography;**
- c) The nominees will each be given up to three minutes in the Assembly to respond to a question from the Moderator;**

**General Assembly instructs the Clerk and General Secretary to redraft the appropriate section of the Rules of Procedure, incorporating these principles, and bring the new draft to Mission Council for approval, not later than spring 2019 – thus in time for a new procedure to be used at the 2020 meeting of General Assembly.**

The Resolution was passed, recognising disagreement.

The Moderator, Mr Derek Estill, took the Chair.

The Pilots' Big Speak Out event joined the Assembly, and engaged in conversation with the Assembly on a number of matters of mutual concern.

The Moderator invited Mr Simon Loveitt, a Church Related Community Worker, to address Assembly about the ministry of Church Related Community Workers in the 30th anniversary year of the commencement of this ministry within the United Reformed Church.

The General Secretary reported on the Ministerial Disciplinary Process and Incapacity Procedure since the last meeting of General Assembly in 2016:

- 1. Three disciplinary cases that have been before the Assembly Commission have concluded since the last meeting of Assembly. One of these cases also went before an Appeal Commission. In none of these three cases has the Church found it appropriate to remove the minister from the Roll. The total cost to the central budget of the Church was £75,744.*
- 2. Further, one of the cases reported in 2016 had indeed concluded before the last Assembly, but not all the bills had come in. There has since been a further cost of £3645, above the sum reported in 2016.*
- 3. No cases have been dealt with under the Incapacity Procedure.*

The Moderator invited Assembly to allow Resolution 43 to be put as an additional urgent resolution. Assembly agreed. The Moderator then invited the General Secretary to move Resolution 43.

**Resolution 43:**

**Assembly resolves to alter the guidance given in Resolution 17 of 2014, so that the final clause will read as follows, by addition of the words underlined: Assembly confirms that all other Assembly appointments are open to members of the URC and to members of those Churches which belong to one or more of WCRC, DECC, CWM, Action of Churches Together in Scotland, Churches Together in England, Cytun (Churches Together in Wales), the Free Churches Group and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI).**

In a response to a question, the General Secretary stated that United Reformed Church shares no geographical territory with the Irish Council of Churches, nor was the United Reformed Church a member of the Irish Council of Churches, and hence this was why he had not proposed their inclusion in the resolution.

This was passed by majority.

The Moderator invited the Immediate Past Moderators, the Revd Kevin Watson and Mr Alan Yates, to present the Congregational and General Community Awards.

Mr Yates indicated that the quality of the applications was so high that it had been decided that all four would be jointly awarded the prize. The joint winners were:

*The Meeting Place, Stocksbridge*

*Rhyl United Church, The Ask Centre*

*Trinity Church, Abingdon, the Trinity Learning Project*

*Zion URC, Northallerton, Secret Garden*

The Chaplain, the Revd David Coaker, said grace and Assembly adjourned for lunch.

*Session three*

The Moderator, Mr Derek Estill, took the chair.

The minutes for Friday's session were accepted.

The synod moderators introduced newly ordained ministers and commissioned Church Related Community Workers to the Moderators who warmly greeted those who were present. Those ordained, commissioned or inducted into URC ministry since the last Assembly were noted to be:

The Revd Liz Adams, Castle Hill, Doddridge Memorial & Headlands

The Revd Sally Bateman, Trinity Golders Green

The Revd Stephen Best, Synod of Wales Area Transitional Ministry

The Revd Andy Braunston, Barrhead, Shawlands, Stewarton

The Revd Lisa-Maria Browning, Union Church Margate

The Revd Stewart Cutler, St Ninian's Stonehouse

The Revd Martin Ferris, Sanderstead

The Revd Dr Nick Jones, Heswall and St George's, Thornton Hough

Ms Maria Lee, Church of Our Saviour and North Avenue, Chelmsford

Ms Vicky Longbone, Derby A2C Community Project

The Revd Paul O'Connor, Burton Green, High Cross Church Somerford & Walkford

The Revd Angela Rigby, Christ Church Tonbridge and St John's Hill, Sevenoaks

The Revd David Martin Scott, Duke Street & Saughtonhall

The Revd Dr Adam Scott, North Western Synod Clinical Theological Adviser & Chaplain at St Peter's House, Manchester (transferred from the Baptist Union)

The Revd Daleen Ten Cate, Mission and Discipleship Mentor, North Western Synod

The Revd Josh Thomas, Bordon and Petersfield and Liss



Ministers who celebrated the Jubilee of their ordinations were recognised through a PowerPoint presentation. The Revds John Marsh, Peter McIntosh, and Professor Stephen Orchard were in attendance and were presented to the Moderators who greeted them warmly thanking them for their service.

The Moderator declared that speeches are limited to three minutes for the rest of the day.

The Moderator invited the convenor of the faith and order committee, the Revd Dr Alan Spence, to move Resolution 25:

### Resolution 25:

**General Assembly recognises that some people who wish to continue as members of the United Reformed Church are unable to do so in the normal way, often because they live at a great distance from any local church of the URC, or their circumstances require a greater degree of mobility than enables them to be church members in the normal way. General Assembly requests each Synod to consider whether they can identify one or more local churches which have a vocation to hold the membership of such people, who could be received onto the roll of that local church simply by resolution of the Church Meeting. General Assembly further requests that Synods continue to treat such a local church fairly and justly in regard both to scoping and requested contributions to the Ministry and Mission fund.**

This was passed recognising disagreement.

The Moderator invited the convenor of the Mission Committee, the Revd Bernie Collins, to move Resolution 31. After discussion it was clear it was not possible to resolve by consensus and so the Moderator ruled that the matter be referred to a facilitation group.

The Moderator invited Ms Francis Brien and the Revd Steve Faber to move Resolution 39:

### Resolution 39:

**The ‘Hostile Environment’ In the light of recent revelations about the treatment of some members of the ‘Windrush Generation’ and other migrants, General Assembly: a) expresses its deep concern that the government’s ‘hostile environment’ policies (now being referred to as the ‘compliant environment’) are leading to destitution, discrimination and distrust in society b) calls for an approach to immigration that treats every individual, whatever their status, with humanity, dignity, respect and fairness c) encourages church members to study the Joint Public Issues Team’s new report on this subject, and consider taking the actions outlined in the report d) directs the Mission Committee to work with others to make appropriate representations to government, to make the Church’s concerns known.**

A suggestion by the Revd John Bremner to add a quotation from Leviticus 19:33-34 into the report did not find favour.

The Resolution passed by consensus.

The Moderator, the Revd Nigel Uden, took the chair.

The Moderator invited the convenor of the ministries committee, the Revd Paul Whittle, to move Resolutions 28, 29, 37 and 38.

## Resolution 28:

**General Assembly encourages a flexible approach to how ministerial calls are issued and concurred, noting the variety of existing practice and the provisions of sections 1(1)(b), 1(1)(c), 2(1)(vii), 2(4)(A)(iii) and 2(4)(A)(vii) of the Structure of the URC.**

In discussion Mr Whittle assured Assembly that there was no change in the locus of Call which continues to rest, as at present, with the Church Meeting issuing a call and the synod concurring.

This resolution was passed recognising disagreement.

The Moderator invited Mrs Val Morrison to resume the report of the Task Group on the Future of Assembly Working Party and move Resolutions 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 36, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19.

The General Secretary, as Deputy Clerk, explained that all of these Resolutions, except 18 and 19, required a two thirds majority to pass.

## Resolution 6:

**General Assembly resolves that:**

- a) **General Assembly should primarily be funded from the Ministry and Mission Fund, rather than by Synods or individuals;**
- b) **members of General Assembly be given fuller information on the costs of General Assembly, and a clearer invitation to consider making a donation, including the option of donating by Gift Aid;**
- c) **all papers be issued electronically as the primary means of dissemination, but those who wish may choose to receive paper copies at the expense of the Assembly budget;**
- d) **it prefers to meet in a venue either around tables or with significant breakout rooms if possible;**
- e) **from the start of General Assembly 2020, Moderators should be inducted at the close of the Assembly which begins their term of office and should therefore chair the General Assembly at the end of their term of office;**
- f) **every effort be made to encourage a variety of voices to speak, by giving priority to those who have not spoken before.**

Jessica England proposed, and Victoria Turner seconded, an amendment to c:

*with a suggested optional donation to encourage people to receive their copies electronically if they can.*

The amendment failed.

The resolution passed by the required 2/3 majority.

## Resolution 7:

**General Assembly resolves to change its membership as follows:**

- a) **There shall be the same number of representatives from each Synod.**
  - b) **There shall be no additional representation from the National Synod of Scotland (thereby rescinding a previous Assembly decision to grant six additional representatives to the National Synod of Scotland).**
  - c) **Moderators shall be included in the representation from the Synods.**
- Details of how this would change the Structure of the United Reformed Church are set out in the body of the report.**

The resolution passed by the required 2/3 majority.

**Resolution 8:**

**General Assembly resolves to cease the current pattern of rotation of venue, previously informally agreed, and to meet regularly in the centre of the UK, as outlined in pages 61 to 62 of the *Book of Reports 2018*, with immediate effect.**

The resolution passed by the required 2/3 majority.

**Resolution 9:**

**General Assembly wishes its future pattern of meetings to be that set out in Option D.**

The Revd John Piper moved an amendment to add the words *'except that General Assembly remits to Mission Council decisions about the future of its meetings in line with Resolution 19'* to option D.

The General Secretary advised that Resolutions 19 and 9 when read together covered the intent of Mr Piper's amendment, following which Mr Piper withdrew the amendment.

The resolution passed by the required 2/3 majority.

Resolution 10: The number of synod representatives shall be 208, who shall be divided among the synods equally. Within each synod, at least one third of its representatives shall be either Ministers of Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Workers, and at least one third shall be lay.

The Revd Dr John Bradbury asked if a straw poll of Assembly could be taken asking if a lower number than 208 members would be commend itself. Assembly indicated the figure of 208 was better than anything lower.

The Revd Craig Muir proposed an amendment, which was seconded, that replaced the word 'lay' with the words 'Elders or lay'. This was passed, and Resolution 10 was amended to read:

**Resolution 10:**

**The number of Synod representatives shall be 208, who shall be divided among the Synods equally. Within each Synod, at least one third of its representatives shall be either Ministers of Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Workers, and at least one third shall be Elders or lay.**

The resolution passed by the required 2/3 majority.

**Resolution 11:**

**The number of representatives of churches outside Britain and Ireland shall be five, with a further place for a representative of the Council for World Mission, and there shall be five representatives from partner churches within Britain and Ireland.**

The resolution passed by the required 2/3 majority.

Resolution 12: The number of representatives of URC Youth, in addition to the twenty-six youth places available for appointment by Synods, shall be two.

Mr Reuben Watt moved an amendment to add 'The Moderator Team' instead of 'two'.

The General Secretary advised that such an amendment would be difficult and that the Resolution could more helpfully specify the number of representatives sent by URC youth rather than the specific roles. In response Mr Watt changed his amendment to change the word 'two' to 'three'.

The amendment was accepted and Resolution 12 became:

**Resolution 12:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**The number of representatives of URC Youth, in addition to the twenty-six youth places available for appointment by Synods, shall be three.**

The resolution passed by the required 2/3 majority.

**Resolution 13:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**The number of EM1 students shall be one, rather than one from each Resource Centre for Learning.**

The Revd Michael Davies proposed the Resolution be not put. This was seconded by the Revd Andrew Mann Ray. This was carried.

Assembly then met to consider the Reports not subject to resolution from its various Committees in parallel sessions, and then adjourned for dinner.

After dinner Assembly met for worship led by URC Youth, and the Assembly then adjourned until 9.00 am on Sunday.





The  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

Sunday 8 July 2018

## Sunday 8 July 2018 *Session four*

The Assembly resumed in session at 9.00 am, and opening Worship was led by the Chaplain and the Bible Study by the Revd Dr Kathy White.

The Moderator, Mr Derek Estill, took the chair.

The Moderator invited Ms Catriona Wheeler to announce the results of the elections for Moderators of Assembly. Ms Wheeler announced that the Revd Clare Downing and Mr Peter Pay had been elected as Moderators of General Assembly for the years 2020-2022. The Moderator congratulated the Moderators-Elect and greeted them. Ms Downing made suitable reply and the General Secretary indicated that Mr Pay accepted the election but was currently unwell.

The Moderator invited the Revd Dr Matthew Prevett to present an amended version of Resolution 31 from the Facilitation Group:

### **Resolution 31:**

#### **General Assembly:**

- a) reaffirms its longstanding commitment to engage with global and intercultural themes (including justice, peace, partnerships, mutuality in giving and receiving, solidarity and discipleship) and its desire to make this engagement integral to the whole life of the United Reformed Church;**
- b) encourages Synods in their mission and ministry to recommit to give appropriate time for, and attention and intention to, the sharing and development of these themes;**
- c) directs Mission Council to reflect and report to Assembly 2020 on how the Church lives out this global and intercultural commitment.**

The resolution passed by consensus.

The Moderator invited the Revd Bernie Collins, convenor of the mission committee, to introduce Mrs Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, the CEO of Christian Aid who then addressed Assembly.

The Moderator greeted and thanked Ms Linda Mead for her work at Church House in the Commitment for Life Programme.

The Moderators led Assembly in an Act of Worship, during which the General Secretary preached.

Assembly then adjourned for lunch.



## Session five

The Moderator, the Revd Nigel Uden, took the Chair.

The Minutes of Saturday's session were accepted subject to a slight change to the editing of Resolution 4.

The Moderator ruled that speeches would continue to be limited to 3 minutes for the remainder of the day.

The Moderator invited the Revd Professor Neil Messer, convenor of the education and learning committee, to address the Assembly and to invite it to give thanks for the Training for Learning and Serving (TLS) programme, and greet retiring staff members.

The Revd Stanley Jackson addressed Assembly about TLS and thanked various people who had been involved in its planning and delivery; he noted that over 1,000 students had taken its courses.

The Revd Dr John Parry thanked Mr Jackson on behalf of Assembly.

The Moderator presented gifts to various people involved in the life and delivery of TLS.

The Moderator invited the convener of the assembly arrangements committee to move an amended version of Resolution 21 (the previous version had different dates):

### Resolution 21:

**General Assembly resolves to meet in Birmingham at the University of Aston from 10th July to 13th July 2020 or at such other time and place as may be duly determined.**

This was passed by consensus.

The convenor thanked and paid tribute to Ann Barton, the Secretary of the Assembly arrangements committee, for her hard work over the years as she prepares to retire. Assembly recorded its warm thanks.

The Moderator invited the Revd Clare Downing and the Revd Dr Andrew Prasad to present the Synod Moderators' Report. The Moderator thanked the synod moderators for their service on behalf of Assembly.

The Moderator invited Assembly to pay tribute to the churches which had closed since the last Assembly:

### Resolution 20:

**General Assembly notes the closures, with praise to God for the worship and witness offered by these fellowships across the years.**

#### *Northern Synod*

Barnard Castle United Reformed Church, Barnard Castle, 2 October 2016  
Oxclose LEP, Washington, 1 September 2017 (Noting that Oxclose ceased to be a local ecumenical partnership on 1 September 2017 but continues as an Anglican Church.)

#### *North Western Synod*

Mossley Abney, Ashton-under-Lyne, 23 April 2017

*Mersey Synod*

Salem United Reformed Church, Orrell, 24 September 2017

*Yorkshire Synod*

No church closures to report in this period.

*East Midlands Synod*

Danesholme Community Church, Corby, 15 January 2017

*West Midlands Synod*

Brierley United Reformed Church, Brierley, 6 August 2017

Gorsty Hill United Church, Stoke-on-Trent, 31 August 2016 (Noting that Gorsty Hill United Church ceased to be a local ecumenical partnership on 31 August 2016, but continues as a Methodist church.)

Newton Road United Reformed Church, Birmingham, 31 December 2017

Sharpness United Reformed Church, Sharpness, 4 April 2016.

St John's United Reformed Church, Stourbridge, 31 December 2016

St Michael's & All Angels, Stourport-on-Severn, 31 August 2016 (St Michael's & All Angels ceased to be a local ecumenical partnership on 31 August 2016, but continues as an Anglican church.)

Union Free Church, Wellington, 31 March 2018

*Eastern Synod*

Castle Hedingham United Reformed Church, Castle Hedingham, 4 June 2016

Cavendish United Reformed Church, Cavendish, 15 October 2017

Christ Church United Reformed Church, Sudbury, 7 January 2018

Mattishall United Reformed Church, Mattishall, 31 December 2016

Terling United Reformed Church, Terling, 31 March 2017

*South Western Synod*

Bickington United Reformed Church, Bickington, 28 January 2018

Bradley Stoke, Holy Trinity, Bristol, 10 September 2017 (Noting that the URC withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership on 10 September 2017 but that it continues with Methodist and Anglican involvement.)

Christchurch United Reformed Church, Charmouth, 27 November 2016

Sidmouth United Reformed Church, Sidmouth, 1 January 2017

Stoke sub Hamdon United Reformed Church, Stoke sub Hamdon, 31 December 2016

Yeovil United Reformed Church, Yeovil, 10 June 2017

*Wessex Synod*

Christ Church, Creekmoor, 2 October 2016 (Noting that the URC withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership on 2 October 2016 but that it continues as an Anglican church.)

Lords Hill Ecumenical Church, Southampton, 16 July 2016 (Noting that the URC withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership on 16 July 2016 but that it continues as an ecumenical church.)

Lovedean United Reformed Church, Lovedean, 16 October 2016

Lytchett Minster United Reformed Church, Lytchett Minster, 30 June 2016

Temple Cowley United Reformed Church, Oxford, 5 November 2017

*Thames North Synod*

Chigwell Row United Reformed Church, Chigwell, 30 September 2016

Feltham United Free Church, Feltham, 28 January 2018

Queens Park United Reformed Church, London, 20 March 2016

*Southern Synod*

Folkestone United Reformed Church, Folkestone, 10 December 2016

Hartley United Reformed Church, Hartley, 25 September 2016

Northfleet United Reformed Church, Northfleet, 2nd April 2017

*National Synod of Wales*

Caersalem United Church, Ebbw Vale, 18 April 2017 (Noting that the URC withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership on 18 April 2017 but that it continues as a Baptist church.)

Newtown United Reformed Church, Newtown, 24 July 2016

Northop United Reformed Church, Northop, 5 November 2017

Porth United Reformed Church, Porth, 15 May 2016

Wesley United Church, Abercynon, 14 January 2017

*National Synod of Scotland*

Portobello United Reformed Church, Edinburgh, 30 April 2016

Selkirk United Reformed Church, Selkirk, 17 December 2017

The Moderator then led Assembly in Prayer.

The Moderator invited the convenor of the mission committee, the Revd Bernie Collins, to make the following statement to Assembly on relations with the Presbyterian Church of Ireland:

*Members of Assembly may have seen media coverage of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), a month ago. One piece of business concerned us directly. The Assembly decided that it would bring to an end a practice that we believe dates from 1843, and would no longer be formally represented at our Assembly nor invite representation from us at their Assembly. The particular concern that has prompted this is the resolution on the marriage of same-sex couples, taken by our URC Assembly at Southport in 2016.*

*Kevin Watson, who as Moderator represented us in Belfast, received this news with courtesy, although there is reason for regret that a partnership which has done much for our two churches is now significantly weakened. The PCI remains open to informal opportunities for collaboration with us, and although we do not work extensively with them, Kevin was able to say very clearly that continuing contact is important. While the two churches are currently some way apart in our approaches to a variety of questions, there remain matters in which we can gain from keeping communication open.*

*Further we have many people in our churches and some in our ministry who have moved from Ireland to the lands where we serve. We value these people highly, and we shall continue to welcome members of the PCI who wish to worship with us, either as occasional visitors, or during student years, or after moving to settle here.*

After hearing various expressions of concern about the developments in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland the Moderator assured Assembly that this matter will be carefully monitored and considered by the Mission Committee and invited the Chaplain to lead Assembly in prayer.

The Moderator invited the Revd Bernie Collins, convenor of the mission committee, to introduce Mrs Yvonne Campbell, General Secretary of the Congregational Federation, to address Assembly.

The Moderator invited the convenor of the nominations committee, the Revd Ray Adams, to move Resolutions 40 and 41.

**Resolution 40:**

**General Assembly notes and approves the changes set out in Section B of the report.**

This was passed by consensus.

**Resolution 41:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly appoints those named in Section C of the report.**

This was passed by consensus.

The Moderator greeted the Revd John Bremner on his appointment as Ecumenical and Interfaith Officer for the National Synod of Scotland.

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to move the *en bloc* resolutions 1, 2, 3, 23, 26, 27 and 32.

**Resolution 1:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly extends the appointment of the Revd Michael Hopkins as its Clerk to the end of the 2024 meeting of General Assembly.**

**Resolution 2:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly extends the appointment of the Revd Simon Walkling as Moderator of the National Synod of Wales to 31 August 2024.**

**Resolution 3:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly extends the appointment of the Revd Paul Whittle as Moderator of Eastern Synod to 31 August 2023.**

**Resolution 23:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly extends the membership of the equalities committee to include a nominee of URC Youth.**

**Resolution 26:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly notes the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017.**

**Resolution 27:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly adopts the definition of an active Minister on page 134 of the *Book of Reports*.**

**Resolution 32:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**General Assembly appoints committees and representatives of the Church as set out on pages 163 to 178 of the *Book of Reports*, subject to the additions and corrections contained in the supplementary report to Assembly.**

These were all passed unanimously.

The Moderator greeted the Revd Michael Hopkins, Clerk, the Revd Simon Walkling, Moderator of the National Synod of Wales and the Revd Paul Whittle, Moderator of the Eastern Synod who had been reappointed to their roles by resolutions 1, 2, and 3.

Assembly returned to remaindered business

The Moderator invited Mrs Val Morrison to move resolutions 14, 36, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

**Resolution 14:**

**the convener of the pastoral reference and welfare committee shall not be a member of Assembly.**

On a request from the Revd Steve Faber it was clarified that this resolution removes this office from membership of Assembly, but the individual who occupied this office could be a member as a synod representative or in some other role.

This was passed by over a 2/3 majority.

**Resolution 36:**

**The Deputy Treasurer of the Church shall be a member of General Assembly.**

This was passed by over a 2/3 majority.

**Resolution 15:**

**Those elected as Moderator of General Assembly at the 2018 General Assembly shall serve from 2020 to 2022, dividing between them, by agreement, the chairing of the Assemblies of 2021 and 2022.**

This was passed by over a 2/3 majority.

**Resolution 16:**

**After 2022 there shall be one Moderator of General Assembly at any one time, and Assembly resolves to amend the Structure of the United Reformed Church to reflect this change and make it clear.**

The Revd Dr George Kalu proposed an amendment to keep one Moderator who would be elected for three years with the term renewed at every Assembly.

The General Secretary, as Deputy Clerk, advised that it would be more helpful to discuss this under the task group to be set up in Resolution 18

The Revd Sally Bateman moved, and the Revd Alison Davis seconded, that the resolution be not put. This passed and the resolution was not put.

**Resolution 17:**

**General Assembly instructs the Mission Council to make detailed alterations to sections 1, 2, and 3 of the Rules of Procedure, upon the advice of the Clerk, to effect the decisions of principle that it has made.**

This was passed by over a 2/3 majority.

Resolution 18: General Assembly further extends the remit of the task group on the Future of General Assembly to propose recommendations on the expectations of General Assembly on the activities to be undertaken by the Assembly Moderator(s).

The Revd Dr George Kalu moved, and the Revd Jenny Mills seconded, an amendment to add 'and the duration of service' to Resolution 18.

The Moderator referred Resolution 18 to the facilitation group.

The General Secretary moved under paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, that resolutions 7, 10 and 14 be referred to synods, with responses to reach him by 31 March 2019.

This was agreed unanimously.

The Moderator, Mr Derek Estill, took the chair.

The Moderator led Assembly in a round table Interfaith conversation.

The Moderator, the Revd Nigel Uden, took the Chair.

The Moderator invited Mr Jatinder Singh Birdi, Co-Chair of the Inter-Faith Network, to address Assembly.



*Mr Jatinder Singh Birdi*

The Moderator invited the Immediate Past Moderator, Mr Alan Yates, to present the report of Mission Council.

Mr Yates asked the Moderator to invite the Revd Professor David Thompson to propose Resolution 5:

### Resolution 5:

**General Assembly, resolves to add a further question for Elders to Schedule B of the Basis of Union as follows:**

**Q: Do you promise as an elder of the United Reformed Church to seek its well-being, unity and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always so far as you are able to build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?**

**A: By the grace of God I do, and all these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

This was passed with over 2/3 majority.

The General Secretary moved under paragraph 3(1) of the Structure, that resolution 5 be referred to synods and local churches, with responses to reach him by 31 December 2019. This passed with unanimously.

The Moderator invited Ms Victoria Paulding to address Assembly on the 20-40 Task Group. The Moderator, on the request of the Revd Steve Faber, invited Assembly to warmly accept the report and commended its study and dissemination throughout the Church.

The Moderator invited the Revd Richard Church to address Assembly on the Safeguarding Report and to introduce the URC Safeguarding Advisor, Mr Ioannis Athanasiou.

The Chaplain led Assembly in Closing Prayers, after which the Assembly adjourned until 9.00am on Monday morning.



*The Revd Elaine Colechin, Chaplain to the Revd Nigel Uden*





*The*  
**United  
 Reformed  
 Church**

## Monday 9 July

Assembly resumed at 9.00 am, the Chaplains led Assembly in Worship and the Revd Dr Kathy White gave the Bible Study.



### *Session six*

The Moderator, the Revd Nigel Uden, took the chair.

The Moderator thanked Dr White for leading the Bible Studies on behalf of Assembly.

The Moderator invited the Immediate-Past Moderator, Mr Alan Yates, to share his reflections. The Moderator thanked Mr Yates for his thoughts and service over the last two years.

The Moderator returned Assembly to Resolution 24 which had been remaindered on Friday.

Resolution 24: General Assembly welcomes the attention already given to diversity by the nominations committee and invites the equalities committee to seek ways of supporting the nominations committee in this aspect of its work.

The Revd Tracey Lewis suggested adding the words:  
*with a view to furthering equalities within the life and nature of the whole Church.*

The Revd Helen Mee, convenor of the equalities committee, accepted the extra words and they were added to the resolution.

### **Resolution 24:**

**General Assembly welcomes the attention already given to diversity by the nominations committee and invites the equalities committee to seek ways of supporting the nominations committee in this aspect of its work with a view to furthering equalities within the life and nature of the whole Church.**

This was passed by consensus.

The Moderator invited the convenor of the ministries committee to move resolutions 29, 30, 37 and 38 which had been remaindered on Saturday.

Mr Whittle asked Assembly's permission to add the following words to resolution 30 (underlined words were suggested by the Revd Professor Neil Messer and accepted by Mr Whittle).

noting that the training is not required to meet the standard set out in Resolution 37 of 1997 and that further training might be required before an NSM Model 4 can transfer to other forms of non-stipendiary ministry or to stipendiary ministry.  
Assembly agreed to the changes to the resolution.

Mr Whittle moved Resolution 29.

### Resolution 29:

**General Assembly authorises a model four non-stipendiary ministry which will provide for locally ordained ministers, taking account of how that fits with the other ministries of the Church, including stipendiary ministry, non-stipendiary ministry as it currently is, local leadership (recognising that there is no denominational scheme as yet) and the Eldership, including the specific role of authorised Elders, this model to be as outlined on pages 138 to 139 of the *Book of Reports*.**

Mr Whittle accepted a suggestion to change the words "no denominational scheme as such" to 'as yet'.

After lengthy but inconclusive discussion the Moderator ruled that the Resolution be remitted to Mission Council.

Consequently Mr Whittle withdrew Resolution 30.

### Resolution 30:

**General Assembly instructs the Ministries Committee and Education and Learning Committee to implement model four non-stipendiary ministry in consultation with the assessment board and the Resource Centres for Learning noting that the training is not required to meet the standard set out in Resolution 37 of 1997 and that further training might be required before an NSM Model 4 can transfer to other forms of non-stipendiary or to stipendiary ministry.**

The Moderator invited Mr Whittle to move Resolutions 37 and 38:

### Resolution 37:

**Recognising the valuable work undertaken by the Retired Ministers' Housing Society, General Assembly gives thanks to all who have contributed to that work across the years, particularly, at this point, recognising the monies raised in response to the appeal launched in 2006.**

This was passed by consensus.

### Resolution 38:

**General Assembly recognises the continuing needs of the Society and encourages appropriate giving in various forms to aid its work.**

Mr Chris Atherton suggested the addition of the words:  
*General Assembly requests that Synods reconsider the use of capital receipts used to support the work of the Church centrally.*

The Moderator ruled this as out of order in terms of Standing Order 5.6.2 and 5.6.5.

After discussion, the Moderator tested the mood of Assembly. Consequently Mr Whittle withdrew the Resolution.

The Moderator invited the Revd Steve Faber to move Resolution 18 which had been amended by the Facilitation Group:

### Resolution 18:

**General Assembly extends the remit of the Task Group on the Future of General Assembly to propose recommendations on the number of Assembly Moderators, the duration of service, and the expectations of General Assembly on the activities to be undertaken by the Assembly Moderator(s).**

**The Task Group is instructed to bring recommendations to Mission Council in May 2019 so that any possible changes to the Structure may be initiated and referred to Synods in the autumn of 2019 and returned to Assembly 2020 for final decision.**

This was passed by consensus.

The Moderator invited Mrs Val Morrison, convenor of the task group on the Future of General Assembly, to move Resolution 19:

### Resolution 19:

**General Assembly:**

- a) **further extends the remit of the task group on the future of General Assembly to consider changes to Mission Council in the light of decisions made by the General Assembly,**
- b) **instructs the task group to report to each meeting of Mission Council, and**
- c) ~~instructs Mission Council to make appropriate changes to its size, composition, and meeting pattern if these are ready to be made before the next meeting of General Assembly:~~

On the advice of the General Secretary Mrs Morrison withdrew paragraph c from the Resolution.

The Resolution was passed by consensus.

The Moderator invited Ms Francis Brienen to address Assembly on the Walking the Way initiative.

The Moderator invited Mr Alan Yates to present the main part of the Mission Council report.

The Moderator thanked the Immediate-Past Moderators for the report and work of Mission Council.



The Moderator invited the Immediate-Past Moderator, Mr Alan Yates, to read the Address to The Throne:

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty:

*The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church now meeting in Nottingham sends loyal greetings to Your Majesty.*

*Since the General Assembly last met, the Duke of Edinburgh has retired from public life. We express our thanks for his remarkable lifetime of service and wish him good health and fulfilment in his retirement.*

*Many members of our churches shared in the joy of the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex this May. The sermon preached by the Most Reverend Michael Curry was a forceful reminder that our God is a God of love, and that this has important implications for how we relate to one another. As he said, "Jesus of Nazareth taught us that the way of love is the way to a real relationship with the God who created all of us, and the way to true relationship with each other as children of that one God, as brothers and sisters in God's human family."*

*As a church, we are troubled by some developments in society and government that are acting to diminish this relationship.*

*In the year when we are celebrating 70 years since the Empire Windrush arrived in Tilbury Docks, we have been appalled by recent revelations about the treatment of some members of the 'Windrush Generation' and other migrants as a result of the government's 'hostile environment' policies. General Assembly passed a resolution expressing its deep concern that these policies are leading to destitution, discrimination and distrust in society.*

*Over the last year we have been engaged in a process of reflecting on the legacies of the transatlantic slave trade with members of our sister churches in the Council for World Mission. We are mindful that historic injustices form a backdrop to Britain's international responsibilities and immigration policies, and create a particular imperative to ensure that every individual, whatever their status, is treated with humanity, dignity, respect and fairness.*

*A major issue of continuing concern to the church is poverty and inequality in Britain, and especially the impact of welfare changes being pursued by Your Majesty's Government. Many of our church members are involved in running and supporting foodbanks, which have seen major increases in demand, especially in areas where Universal Credit has been rolled out. We believe that a benefit system which drives families into debt and leaves them hungry is a failing benefit system.*

*However, we are glad to live in a country which takes seriously its role and responsibilities in tackling global poverty, and commend Your Majesty's Government for its continued commitment to the international aid budget. Many in our churches play their own part in helping people around the world to escape poverty through giving, practical action and campaigning, notably through the United Reformed Church's own Commitment for Life programme, which has made a significant impact over the 26 years since it started. At General Assembly we were encouraged to hear from the new Chief Executive of Christian Aid.*

*We are a diverse denomination and include members of many races, life experiences and economic backgrounds. As a church, we are enriched and strengthened by the involvement of people from the Commonwealth, from continental Europe, and from other parts of the world in our congregations and ministry. We are together members of the body of Christ, and as St Paul says in his First Letter to the Corinthians, 'if one member suffers, we all suffer together.' We therefore suffer and stand alongside all those who are facing prejudice, uncertainty and unfair treatment in our society today, and continue to pray that our political leaders will exercise wisdom, compassion and good judgement in these challenging times for our country and our world.*

*We also pray that our generous God of love will strengthen, sustain and guide Your Majesty in the years ahead.*

The Assembly approved this address and directed that it be sent to Her Majesty.

The Moderator invited the Revd Clare Downing to give her acceptance speech as Moderator Elect of Assembly. Mr Peter Pay was unwell, and his speech of acceptance was read to Assembly by the General Secretary.



*The Revd Clare Downing,  
Moderator Elect of Assembly*

The Minutes of Sunday's sessions were accepted with a number of minor amendments. Assembly resolved to authorise the Officers of Assembly to agree Monday's minutes.

The Moderator thanked the staff, stewards, and the team at Albert Hall for helping to ensure a good Assembly.

The Moderator invited Mrs Margaret Marshall, West Midlands Synod Clerk, to thank the East Midlands Synod for their hospitality and to welcome Assembly to Birmingham in 2020.

The General Secretary thanked the Moderators for their work in chairing Assembly.

Assembly was led in a Closing Act of Worship which included an address from the Moderator, Mr Derek Estill.



*Moderator, Mr Derek Estill*

The General Secretary informed the Moderator that the Assembly had completed its business and would next meet in Birmingham at the University of Aston on 10 July 2020 or at such other time and place as shall be determined.

# Church closures

## Synod 1 Northern Synod

### Barnard Castle United Reformed Church

The origins of Barnard Castle United Reformed Church are lost in the silence which followed the Act of Conformity in 1662. There was local persecution of non-conformists, who worshipped in secret in several places. An independent church fellowship emerged in the 1740's, when they built a small church in a back lane in the village of Cotherstone, five miles from Barnard Castle.

This fellowship planted an Independent church in Barnard Castle in 1808. It held an annual bazaar from that time to raise funds to build a Sunday School and larger church which they achieved in 1834 and 1837. The Sunday School was opened with a missionary breakfast, at which the preacher was the Revd, John Williams, who was in Britain from the New Hebrides, raising funds to print his translation of the New Testament into Rarotongan. The church continued to hold its bazaar until 2015 – and continued to support the funding of John Williams missionary ships until the late 20th century.

This independent church joined the Congregational Union in the late 19th century and the United Reformed Church in 1972. Around 1900 the church gave much support to local citizens suffering unemployment and organised activities for children and teenagers in the later 20th century. Saturday coffee mornings provided welcome social contact for elderly people. Many local organisations used the church hall for their activities. The church was a strong supporter of ecumenical activities through Churches Together in Barnard Castle. For the last fifteen years, it shared its premises with Barnard Castle Christian Fellowship.

Once there were several Congregational churches in Teesdale – the closure of this church means there are now none.

The church closed on 2 October 2016.

### Oxclose

Oxclose ceased to be a local ecumenical partnership on 1 September 2017, but continues as an Anglican Church.

## Synod 2 North Western Synod

### Mossley Abney

Abney United Reformed Church, Mossley, held its final Service on Sunday 23 April 2017. It was a very sad, hard, decision made by the elders and members to close the church – known locally as the little church on the hill. During the five years prior to closing Abney experienced falling numbers in its congregation, many of whom were advancing in age.

After a quinquennial inspection – which highlighted more structural issues than we had anticipated and being unable to meet the cost of such work or qualify for funding towards the cost of the work required – several meetings were held over an 18 month period with the Moderator and members of the pastoral group to discuss the position and allow the elders and members of Abney a time of prayer, thought and discussions around the future options.



Following one of these meetings in December 2016, the Church Meeting in January 2017 took the difficult decision to close Abney church.

Abney's final service was both an uplifting celebration of all that Abney has been – and a very emotional service led by the elders and members of Abney. All the hymns were chosen by elders and members as were the Bible readings and two poems. Ken Greer represented the Synod and led us in prayers.

We were supported at the service by many local individuals and people from Mossley Churches Together as well as the many visiting ministers and lay preachers who have led worship at Abney for many years. We are indeed thankful for such support not only over the years but also at our final service.

We held a buffet lunch after the service where we shared together in a social time of fellowship. There were lots of memories which fetched both tears and smiles – it was a wonderful end for those of us who have had so many years of love and fellowship together at Abney church.

The church closed on 23 April 2017.

### **Synod 3 Mersey Synod Salem United Reformed Church**

Orrell Salem URC started as a small house group in the village in 1804. The house group soon became more groups and a church building was built, followed by a church hall.

For 213 years the Salem fellowship has faithfully served the village through commitment, declaration and faithfulness. It has done this through close ecumenical work with the five other village churches (one Anglican, one Roman Catholic and three Methodist); with the village primary/junior school founded by the Revd John Holgate, minister of Salem (1820-63); weekly 'Open House' coffee mornings, lunches, a nearly new shop; three Mums and Tots groups; weekly/fortnightly prayer and Bible study meetings; open fellowship social and community meetings and through charity involvement.

It has certainly been a community church with its 'cement and foundations' being the weekly acts of worship through the congregation's love for Jesus and their willingness to proclaim the Gospel story in word and action.

After much prayerful deliberation and following ecumenical discussions with the now four (and shortly to be three) village churches regarding amalgamation, the small congregation decided to move in other directions.

A final service was held on 24 September 2017 when 'the baton was handed over' to the Living Faith Fellowship from the neighbouring village, trusting that the Christian Witness to God will continue – in another dimension – in Orrell.

The church closed on 24 September 2017.

### **Synod 4 Yorkshire Synod**

*There were no closed churches in Yorkshire Synod in this reporting period.*

## Synod 5 East Midlands Synod

### Danesholme Community Church

In October 1965, the Corby Development Corporation gave details of plans which proposed the development of the southern area of Corby to accommodate an additional 35,000 people. In February 1966, the Corby Council of Churches published a report based on a resolution passed in May 1965, expressing the desire that the area be designated as one for ecumenical experiment. This was the beginning of a church plant which would over the years have different names, and be supported by different denominations, but at the heart of its mission was the idea of it being a presence of Christian faith within in the Danesholme housing project, where God's word would be active and present.

The churches in Corby had concluded they could no longer afford – either in money, people power, or on grounds of scandal – to act independently in newly developing areas. The ecumenical team began therefore with the basic assumption that there would be a single congregation, sponsored by the major denominations. The church would therefore be led by a team and not an individual.

On 1 November 1968 meetings began between Corby Ecumenical Parish Provisional Sponsoring body and delegations from the Church of England, Church of Scotland, Baptist, Congregational and Methodist Churches, plus a Roman Catholic observer. On 1 December 1969 a working party started to discuss proposed facilities for Danesholme Communicare Centre in which church denominations were present from Corby Ecumenical Parish Sponsoring Body with other council officials. Amongst other things the church would be part of this central community centre project.

The sponsoring body acted on behalf of the denominations to give oversight for ministry and an organisational structure for the church plant. It followed that suggestions were then made as to who would be suitable to be part of this leadership team.

The congregation first gathered in April 1974 for an Easter Day celebration and worship in a bungalow on Ibsen Walk and continued here until the centre was ready. Danesholme Community Centre, entrusted to Danesholme Communicare Association, opened with a inter-denominational service on 26 April 1975.

Over the years this innovative ecumenical project became set to one side by some of the founding denominations and in April 1995 the name was changed to Danesholme Community Church, with the Baptist Association and the United Reformed Church providing ministry on an alternating basis.

When the ministry was reassessed by the Baptists and United Reformed Church in the new millennium, it was decided that a church plant in Little Stanion would be attached to the existing ministry of Danesholme Community Church. Over time the once thriving leadership team halved in size and the logistics of church life began to be a struggle. The church also found its reduced congregation size meant they were no longer reaching the community in the way they'd originally aimed to. Little Stanion had already closed several years before, and with much discussion and debate, the congregation made the decision, with the support of their leadership team to close at the end of December 2016. A final celebration for the life of the church was celebrated in January 2017.

The church closed on 15 January 2017.

## Synod 6 West Midlands Synod

### Brierley United Reformed Church

Brierley is situated in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. The foundation stone of the chapel was laid on 3 April 1884, at the initiative of the Revd John Thomas, Minister of Drybrook Congregational Church, who had previously held cottage services in Brierley. The chapel opened on 21 July 1884, as a daughter church of Drybrook, sharing a minister and pastoral care. Within two weeks a Sunday School was started, with 78 scholars and seven teachers. The Sunday School flourished for many years and the premises enlarged to accommodate the increasing numbers.

As employment in the Forest of Dean gradually diminished due to the closure of coal mines and quarries, many young people were forced to move and congregation numbers decreased. In 1961 the chapel became part of the Coleford, St Briavels and Worrall Hill Group of Congregational Churches, with Brierley becoming an equal church to Drybrook, rather than a daughter. In 1972 it became part of the Forest of Dean group of United Reformed Churches. A Pilot company was formed under the ministry of Miss Phyllis Tee and lasted for several years.

During its 133 years of worship of God, and witness to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the spiritual life of Brierley has been maintained and kept bright by the dedication of 22 ministers, many faithful lay preachers, and its committed church members. Its early years were the times of greatest advancement, when the zeal of its members overcame all obstacles to achieve the seemingly impossible. Nevertheless, the chapel has managed to maintain a spiritual presence in the village and will be greatly missed. The church closed on 6 August 2017.

### Gorsty Hill United Church

Gorsty Hill United Church ceased to be a local ecumenical partnership on 31 August 2016, but continues as a Methodist church.

### Newton Road United Reformed Church

A small chapel built in 1808 in memory of the mother of Francis Asbury, stood opposite the present Church.

In 1917 Miss Powell, a Congregationalist, finding the chapel closed, canvassed the area seeking support for its re-opening, which occurred later in that year. Attendance grew and by 1930 the building was too small. An offer was made by Miss Powell's nephews, Frank, Harry and Tom Allen, to build a new church in memory of their mother. A condition of the offer was that the members of the Church raised the first £100 in 12 months. £100 was raised in just nine months and the doors of the Allen Memorial Congregational church were opened on 20 September 1932. The cost of the building was £3000.

With the formation of the URC in 1972, the Newton Road United Reformed Church, retained (Allen Memorial) in memory of its founders. Extensions to the Guild room and kitchen took place in 1969.

The church became part of a partnership of three churches with Hardware Street, West Bromwich, and Salem, Great Bridge. Until its closure in December 2017, Newton Road was the only congregation still meeting.

Sadly, shrinking attendance, an ageing congregation, but mainly the cost of repairs needed to the building, led the members to agree that closure was unavoidable.

The Newton churches provided a Nonconformist Christian presence, and were at the heart of the local community, for a total of 100 years. Their influence will be sadly missed.

The church closed on 31 December 2017.

### **Sharpness United Reformed Church**

The original church building was of iron constructed and erected around 1879 to 1880 as an outreach of Berkeley Congregational Church. The present church was built on the site of the old between 1901 and 1902 and was opened on the 4 June 1902. The Revd William Bailey was the first minister and was described as a man of faith and prayer. The wooden pews were shipped down from Gloucester and moved by the dockers – four to a large, two to a small – from the docks to the church.

Under the guidance of Mr Bailey the church flourished. The chapel became a centre of local community life. The church only had ministry intermittently, until 1961 when Lionel Anderson became minister. The Revd Glyn Jenkins had oversight of Sharpness from 1977 until 1988. The church had joined the United Reformed Church in 1972 and became part of the Dursley Pastorate. Its centenary in 2002 was celebrated by a flower festival and chartering a boat trip down the Sharpness Canal.

The last few decades have seen the gradual decline of the church in membership and activity. Numerous attempts were made to arrest this decline but sadly to no avail. A mural at the front of the church read ‘God so Loved the World that He gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life’. We are thankful that through this place many have heard the good news and we pray God may continue his work in this village in other ways.

The church closed on 4 April 2016.

### **St John’s United Reformed Church**

An independent church was established in 1672 – and in 1788 the congregation split: one section became the Unitarian Church (which is still present) and the other became the Congregational Church, both located in Lower High Street. In 1972 the latter became the United Reformed Church.

In 1978 the Anglican Church of St John’s was facing closure and money was needed to be spent on the URC building so it was decided to form a local ecumenical project between the two. The URC congregation moved in with that of St John’s and the former URC building was let (and eventually burnt down). The LEP agreement was terminated in 2000.

In 1987 the St John’s building was bought by the URC, and in 1990 the Narthex was built at the back of the Church. Services were held here by the Minister and many local lay preachers until closure in 2017.

St John’s dates to 1860 and is a Grade 2 listed building, now with a hole in the roof, but with wonderful acoustics. This led to it being used as a charity concert venue, space enough for the studio of the Black Country Radio, also space enough to have the local Foodbank, and to host the Guides. Arts and Craft exhibitions have also taken place.

The final service was led by a lay preacher, the usual congregation of ten swelled to about 50.

The church closed on 31 December 2016.

## St Michael's & All Angels

St Michael's & All Angels ceased to be a local ecumenical partnership on 31 August 2016, but continues as an Anglican church.

## Union Free Church

The church closed on 26 March 2018.

## Synod 7 Eastern Synod

### Castle Hedingham

Nonconformist worship in Castle Hedingham probably dates back to about 1622, when Richard Blackerby came from Feltwell in Norfolk, where he was banned from preaching because he disagreed with the rituals of the established church. He lived at Ashen, preached at Hundon, Stoke-by-Clare and at Castle Hedingham, and trained several pupils as preachers. In 1672, John Overed, who had been expelled from the rectory in nearby Toppesfield, took out a licence to be a Presbyterian teacher in his house at Hedingham. He also applied for his house to be a Presbyterian meeting place. The foundation date of the church is 1708; in this year a barn was bought and converted into a place of worship for the increasing number of followers. In 1719, when the barn was no longer adequate, the Old Independent Chapel was built, with financial help from residents, including Robert Ashurst, who in the same year had the mansion built in the grounds of Hedingham Castle.

In 1842 the original church building was demolished, and the present church was built on the same site. Now a Grade 2\* listed building, it contains a fine oak pulpit which was formerly located in the previous building, and from which it is thought the hymn writer, Dr Isaac Watts, (1674-1748), may have preached, while he was a guest of the Ashurst family at the castle. Unusually, the building also has box pews. Some of these are large enough to have seating along three sides, an arrangement which would have enabled parents to keep an eye on their children during the service. Originally known as the Independent Chapel, and then as the Congregational Church, the Nonconformist chapel in Castle Hedingham became the United Reformed Church in 1972.

The Sunday School building at the back of the church, was built in 1853 to accommodate the increasing number of children who attended the Congregational Church. In 1872 a day school, used by children of all denominations, moved into the building. This school was known as the British School, because it was partly funded by the British and Foreign Schools Society. In time, the school became the official provider of state education for children at infant and junior level in Castle Hedingham. The building continued in that role until 1973. From 1976 onwards, the building was let by the church to Humphries Weaving Company Ltd, who specialised in the production of historic silk textiles for refurbishment projects in royal palaces and other historic buildings. In 2004, falling demand led to the business being sold to Stephen Walters and Sons Ltd of Sudbury. The vacated building was sold and converted into a single private residence.

In 2002 Hedingham Joint Churches was instituted with the two local Anglican Churches, the Baptist Church and Castle Hedingham URC, holding joint services whenever there was a fifth Sunday in the month. Another notable feature in the life of the church was the Pilot Company, which was instituted in November 1961. To accommodate this activity a large room was built in the gallery behind the organ, and was formally opened on 8 May 1966.

During 2009-10 alterations were carried out to incorporate a wheelchair-accessible toilet in the existing vestry, the refurbishment of the vestry to form a meeting room/side chapel, and the updating of the existing kitchen. From that point onwards, in the winter months, services were held in the meeting room, as, unlike the main church, it was small



enough be effectively heated. From 2010 onwards, our number of attendees remained around ten persons, however, in common with many small congregations, our average age was high, as was the incidence of health-related problems. In 2015 discussions began regarding the future of the church, and in early 2016, with great regret, the decision to close the church was taken. Our last service was held on 4 June 2016, and was attended by between 90 and 100 people. The service was led by our minister, Revd Joshua P Norris, who also gave the address. Notable contributors to the service were the Moderator, Revd Paul Whittle, the Revd Paul Corson, the recently retired minister of Sible Hedingham Baptist Church, Mrs Mary Stanhope, and Mr Richard Root, organist. Members of the congregation took part in a simple but moving ceremony of closure, in which the cross, the Bible, the bread and wine, and finally the cloth, were one by one removed from the communion table. We would like to thank all who attended and took part in the service.

The church closed on 4 June 2016.

### **Cavendish United Reformed Church**

Nonconformist worship in Cavendish can be traced back to November 1703 when two houses in the village were certified by a John Rae of Bury St Edmunds to be set apart for the religious worship of Protestant dissenters.

Further houses were set apart up until 1840 when the existing Chapel was built. This was extended in 1843 by the addition of a school room to the rear of the Chapel. The Garrett family were responsible for the building of the Chapel as a Congregational chapel and they also built a school hall (now the village hall) for the benefit of the congregation's children. This left the village with two churches and two schools, the Anglican being the other. In 1940, the Congregational school was closed and, with the permission of the Charity Commissioners, was sold for the sum of £400. After the war, in 1946, it became the Village Memorial Hall.

Like many rural chapels Cavendish has had a rollercoaster history with many highs and lows. An organ was installed on the balcony in 1902 and then moved in 1927 to the ground floor. 1932 saw electricity being installed thus saving the poor organ blower from the physical labour involved up till then. In 1938 Mr George Savage, a church member, left the sum of £12,000 to establish a charity for the benefit of the aged people of the village. In 1956/7 the charity bought the thatched Alms houses on the Green and continue to administer them to this day.

In 1996 new kitchen and toilets were built onto the rear of the schoolroom and in 2006 a major alteration was made to the entrance of the Church with the removal of pews, lowering of ceiling, new inner doors and wall in glass for the inner lobby, carpeting and upholstered chairs.

In 2005 the church opened its doors to the Roman Catholics of Cavendish who had lost their chapel due to the closure of the Sue Ryder Home. By altering times of worship, the congregations were able to work in parallel and harmony to the benefit of both.

The years between 2006 and 2014 saw a revival in interest and numbers increased, and there was a increase in children's and youth work. But the children grew up and moved away for work etc, as did the youth leaders.

From 2015 to 2017 many different schemes were tried to attract people without success, and with numbers down to two elders and two active members it was decided at the Church Meeting of 11 April 2017 to close the Chapel.

The church closed on 15 October 2017.



## Christ Church URC, Sudbury

Nonconformist worship in Sudbury can be traced back as far as the 1600s when hymn writer Samuel Crossman (My Song is Love Unknown), Vicar of All Saints, was also Minister of the Separated Congregation of Sudbury. Early dissenters met in private houses until Friars Street Meeting House was built in 1707. Worshipers included the Gainsborough family and the artist Thomas was baptised there in 1727.

In 1837 a secession of 15 members led by Emily Gainsborough, the artist's great-niece, founded Trinity Congregational Church on the present site of Christ Church.

The two churches grew in parallel during the 19th Century and both had very large Sunday schools. Ever increasing numbers led to an extension of the Trinity church being built between 1889 and 1896 under the ministry of the Revd Charles Henry Vine. Both churches continued to hold Sunday services as well as a variety of mid-week activities including Bible classes and various social groups. Music was always an important part of worship and was aided by the installation of the Conacher organ in 1911.

In 1956 declining congregations led to a formal amalgamation, with the new church adopting the name of Christ Church Congregational Church. The former Trinity minister, the Revd GW Cameron-Price, became minister of the united church with services being held alternately in each of the buildings. After a short time it was decided to close the Friars Street building with worship continuing at Christ Church. The Friars Street buildings were demolished in 1966 and proceeds from the sale of the site were used to refurbish and rebuild the church hall at Christ Church, the new hall being named Friars Hall.

In 1975, Christ Church became part of the United Reformed Church. For a while the church flourished with a choir, Sunday School, Youth Club and several social groups but gradually, as families moved and the congregation aged, the number of members dwindled. For the last two years services have been held twice a month. Sadly, with a small elderly congregation, the remaining few elders, with the reluctant support of Church Meeting, decided to close.

The closing service on Sunday 7 January 2018 was a service of celebration and thanksgiving for three hundred years of Nonconformist worship and witness in Sudbury, 180 years of which had been in the present building. Members, friends and guests numbered over a hundred, with representatives from local URCs and other Sudbury churches.

The church closed on 7 January 2018.

## Mattishall United Reformed Church

In 1772 a young minister, John Carter, was called by independently minded Christians in the Mattishall area to establish a chapel for their emergent congregation. That same year the chapel at Badley Moor was built and dedicated. Over the course of the next century the chapel flourished and planted a daughter church in nearby Dereham and the village of Yaxham. In 1829 the chapel established a lecture hall more conveniently placed for the village. This hall was used for the Sunday school and for other meetings. In the 1950s the original chapel building was in need of uneconomic repair and so the congregation made the lecture hall their full time home.

Throughout its life the Chapel had benefitted from a committed membership and dedicated ministry – most recently as part of the Norwich Area United Reformed Church.

Although worship, buildings and finances have been faithfully and competently maintained, through the autumn of 2016 the members felt that it was time to consider

seriously the possibility of closing. After a period of conversation and prayer this seemed clearly to be the right course to take. It was decided also to end not with a sad farewell but with a Christmas celebration of 'God with us' and in the company of others whose work and witness within the village would continue.

The Congregational Church in Mattishall began at a time of earnestly protected difference between Christian denominations. It ended with a relaxed, exuberant, ecumenical celebration wherein a variety of approach to worship was a delight and not a source of division. As such, it offers a prophetic witness to today's Church.

The church closed on 31 December 2016.

## Terling United Reformed Church

The United Reformed Church at Terling, always known locally as Terling Chapel, was one of the oldest Nonconformist Churches in all Essex, dating its origins back to 1624.

In the mid-to-late seventeenth century the Revd John Stalham, who was reported to be of 'strict congregational principles' was vicar of Terling. The village had remained very Nonconformist and some parishioners held meetings together at 4 or 5 am at the home of the schoolmaster. Mr Stalham had actually started his incumbency at Terling as a Conformist, re-introducing the Prayer Book services, but soon found his parishioners 'converting' him! Despite being ejected from Terling All Saints' by the 1662 Act of Uniformity, and the Five Mile residency restriction, Stalham remained in Terling as the pastor of an influential congregational Church until his death in 1681. (Ecumenical village relationships had improved sufficiently by 2012 for a joint service of commemoration of the better aspects of 1662, held on the Green between the two Church buildings in the presence of the Synod Moderator.)

By the end of the 17th century the Chapel congregation was said to number two hundred, a sizeable proportion of the village, the population of which has never greatly exceeded 900.

The 18th century brought greater religious tolerance and the local congregation no longer had to worship in secret. Their headquarters was then at the Manse, in the Street: the name remains above the door to this day. The minister then was Nathaniel Wyles, serving until his death in 1748 aged 88. He was succeeded by Benjamin Stennet and it was during his ministry that the chapel building was decided upon, probably because the Manse was by then too small for the congregants. The building was opened in 1753, built more in a 17th than an 18th century style, and is now Grade 2 listed.

In 1798, Terling was in the forefront of the foundation of *The Congregational Union of Essex and its Vicinity* at a meeting in Dunmow.

Little is recorded of Victorian ministries, but by 1895 the building needed major repair. Work was undertaken to remove the gallery and move the pulpit, and the building was made safe and re-decorated, and a small porch was added. It was reopened in Advent 1896.

Sadly, the confidence of the 18th century builders in providing so great a seating capacity for a village chapel proved over-optimistic in the long term. Following the trend of so many chapels, congregations dwindled during the 20th century. Yet Terling Chapel demonstrated remarkable tenacity and determination for decades. In 1972 the decision to become a United Reformed Church was made by its three members, including Mrs Pam Palmer, who served an astounding term as church secretary from 1972 until closure 45 years later! Terling continued to have sufficient confidence in the future to have major work done, from a new floor to a new roof, when God abundantly provided through the *Friends of Essex Churches*.

Under its last ministry, the Chapel re-established links with the village Church of England primary school and the pre-school, with each visiting the chapel for re-enactments of the Christmas story. Home groups met during Advent and Lent, and several members joined with Anglican friends for a monthly Bible study. Highlights of the year were the Christmas Eve service, when the 17 century candelabra would be lit once again, and Maundy Thursday, when the four local parish churches joined with the chapel members for a service of Holy Communion shared at meal tables. One Sunday service a month was joint with the Church of England, alternating venues.

Terling Chapel continued to offer weekly divine worship throughout the 20th century. By the 21st though, the membership was not only small but also elderly and, in most cases, infirm. In 2016 two of its five members, both well into their 90s, passed to glory. The remaining three met in April 2016 to consider the future and decided to give it six more prayerful months and to publicise the chapel around the village. Nothing changed though, and maintaining weekly worship became an unrealistic burden, so the decision was made in October 2016 for Terling Chapel to close, after nearly 400 years of worship and witness. The synod moderator preached at the closure service on 26 March 2017. Nevertheless, all three remaining members still meet one Sunday a month for prayer and Bible study at Pam Palmer's house.

The church closed on 31 March 2017.

## **Synod 8 South Western Synod Bickington United Reformed Church**

The Congregational church was founded in 1835 in the village of Bickington and has been served by a total of 24 ministers in its 182 year history. As is often the lot of small churches, it has been grouped with many other churches in the past, but has continued to serve faithfully the people of the area, even as the village has increasingly felt more like a suburb of Barnstaple.

There are many happy memories – of the Pilot company of the 1940s; the acquiring of the new pipe organ in the 1950s; the opening of the new schoolroom and kitchen extension in the 1970s; and the many ways in which members pulled together in times of difficulty and in rejoicing over the years.

It was in 2017 that church members made the sad decision that Bickington United Reformed Church would close its doors on January 28 2018 for the very last time, with no church members able to take on the roles of elders, church secretary or treasurer. The remaining members of the congregation have received a warm welcome from Sticklepath Methodist Church, just half a mile away, which is currently served by the URC minister from Christchurch, Barnstaple, a United Church in the circuit.

The church closed on 28 January 2018.

## **Bradley Stoke, Holy Trinity**

The United Reformed Church withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership on 10 September 2017 but it continues with Methodist and Anglican involvement.

## **Christchurch United Reformed Church**

In 1662 the Revd Bartholomew Wesley (the great grandfather of John and Charles Wesley) was ejected from the living of St Andrew's Church, Charmouth. Nonconformist worship continued in the village under his leadership and subsequently that of the Revd John Brice – who became the first minister of the Independent Chapel when two mud cottages were converted for worship in 1689. Part of that original building survives today although the building was enlarged in 1815 and renovated several times subsequently, the latest being in 1963.

Over the years, the number of members and those attending the church has ebbed and flowed. There were times when the survival of the congregation was very much in the balance but matters then improved for a time. Nevertheless, the story is of continued faithful struggle rather than great heights of success.

In recent years, although membership remained small, the church provided a valued ministry to holiday makers and summer residents from all over the country and further afield. Relationships with the Anglican Churches within Charmouth and at Catherston became closer, all three combining for Lent lunches, joint services and summer Songs of Praise events. However, a continuing decline in membership, rising costs and the need to carry out extensive work on the building led to the members taking the difficult decision to close. The final service was held on 27 November 2016 conducted by the synod moderator, the Revd Ruth Whitehead.

The church closed on 27 November 2016.

### **Sidmouth United Reformed Church**

The origins of the congregations at Ottery, Sidbury and Sidmouth can be attributed to the labours of the Revds Richard Babbington and Robert Collins, both Puritans. The former became vicar of Sidbury in July 1630 and had resigned by 1650, the latter was ejected in 1662 from the living at Talaton, near Ottery St Mary.

The first meeting place of these early dissenters was an old barn behind the White Hart Inn. It had two exits so that preacher and congregation could escape through the inn should state officials arrive. The congregation moved briefly to Jane French's house in what is now East Street before a chapel was erected (behind the Inn.)

Marsh Chapel was built in 1810 and served as the meeting place until the new Chapel Street chapel was built in a more convenient location in 1846.

In 1939, demographic changes led to the development of a sister congregation at Primley. Sidmouth's population was creeping up the valley and away from the town centre cottages as a new housing estate grew.

It is probably true to say that conflict and strife have never been far from Chapel Street's life over the centuries, but it would also be true to say that the church has played a crucial role in the nurture and care of many townspeople. Chapel Street once ran a thriving Men's Forum and Sunday School of which many townspeople have fond memories.

In more recent times, Christian Aid has been a driving passion of the church, and church members have played a full part in establishing and maintaining the Sid Valley Food Bank.

Sadly, the demographic shifts that prompted the building of Primley in the 1930s have continued unabated, and Chapel Street found itself a little isolated in the town centre and with few members with the energy to drive forward the new vision required for the chapel to have a realistic future. Happily, several of the members have found a welcome new home in the sister church that their forbears had once had the foresight to develop.

The church closed on 1 January 2017

### **Stoke sub Hamdon United Reformed Church**

Stoke sub Hamdon Congregational Church opened for worship on 6 September 1866. At a public meeting held in June 1865: 'It was unanimously decided that earnest efforts should be made to build a Congregational Church in the village.' Land was leased from the Duchy of Cornwall and the foundation stone was laid in October 1865. In 1868 the first minister was appointed and the Sunday School started in September 1866. The Sunday School celebrated a school treat every year in July and could rally over 1,000 in procession.

As time passed the church added numerous activities which flourished for many years: the Boys' Brigade and Life Boys, Girls' Brigade and Girls' Guild, Women's Own and Men's Association. There was also a choir of considerable talent.

In 1881 a magnificent pipe organ was donated to the church and in 1898 a clock was added to the spire to commemorate Queen Victoria's 60 years on the throne.

The church continued as a mainstay of the village for 100 years with a congregation passionate in their beliefs and resolute in their faith, but gradually young people found other interests and the congregation began to decline. Parts of the premises were rented to the local playgroup and some other rooms were rented by Stoke Band and recently the Village charity shop have used some space for storage. Despite attempts to attract more people by varying styles of worship and other ideas, the decline continued until the decision to close was inevitable.

The church closed on 31 December 2016.

### **Yeovil United Reformed Church**

A Congregational presence in the Somerset town of Yeovil dates from 1662 when the Anglican rector left his church along with part of his flock and set up an independent church. Gifted ministers served the fellowship for 355 years – with the final three being women.

There were two buildings – a 1791 one used for worship and later as a hall (used by the American forces prior to D-Day) and a larger one, built in 1878, with organ and gallery. The hall was demolished and the church reordered in 1979, with the pews being removed in 1987.

The church was part of a four-way local ecumenical partnership initiated in 2001. Despite URC enthusiasm it was dissolved in 2013.

In 2016 a declining membership and smaller congregations led to the decision to relinquish the 1878 building and to explore various options for continuing elsewhere. The explorations were abruptly terminated by a decision of church meeting, by the narrowest of margins, to close the church. Some members have moved to other United Reformed, Methodist and Baptist churches.

The Revd Ruth Whitehead the synod moderator, preaching at the final service in June 2017, ended: 'God is in this place: you have known it and felt it and celebrated it week by week over many years, and it is natural to feel sad that you will not come here to worship any more. But do not doubt that God is waiting for you everywhere else in this wide world – and know that the love of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will be with you.'

The church closed on 10 June 2018.

### **Synod 9 Wessex Synod Christ Church, Creekmoor**

The United Reformed Church withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership on 2 October 2016 but Christ Church continues as an Anglican church.

### **Lords Hill Ecumenical Church**

The URC withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership in 16 July 2016, but it continues as an ecumenical church.



## Lovedean United Reformed Church

Lovedean URC celebrated 50 years of worship in Lovedean Village Hall on Sunday 16 October 2016. It was a celebration of joy at reaching their golden year, but, at the same time a celebration tinged with sadness for, due to falling numbers and an increasingly elderly congregation a decision had been taken that the church must close. The day was celebrated with a combined service for the three linked churches of Havant, Emsworth Waterside and Lovedean in the morning followed by a celebration in the afternoon for all those who have supported the church over the past 50 years – ministers, lay preachers and friends. Many kind words were said by those attending, with particular praise for Bob Rayner and his wife Myra who were founder members and leading lights of the church for so many years.

The church had begun in the summer of 1966 when the Revd Peter Chesney met with members of Portsmouth City Council to look at surrounding areas where a new church might be established. Lovedean, some 10 miles from the city, was selected as the most suitable area and this was where Peter, with the help of his wife, Margaret, started to dig the foundations of Lovedean Presbyterian Church of England. With the village hall being the most suitable congregating place, and Sunday service times booked, Peter set out to recruit the congregation.

In October of that year Peter visited families in the area, many of whom had involvements with St Andrews, Portsmouth, and enlisted their support. On Sunday 16 October 1966 the first service was held in the village hall with a congregation of 37. These 28 adults and nine children were to become the heart of a community which through almost 50 years has survived and flourished, if not in wealth or fortune, but in determination and dedication.

Like all new projects, the church's resources were few in those days and, with borrowed hymn books and a suitably disguised old radio casting doubling as a lectern, the church was well equipped. One is tempted to wonder if Margaret Chesney regretted the loss of her velvet evening skirt which made such a suitable covering for the otherwise utilitarian pulpit – this still in use to the present day!

In July 1967 the cause was elevated to the status of 'Preaching Station' and the organisational mould was set. Committees were established, and fundraising began. The goal – a new church building to house its congregation. Sadly, because of a lack of suitable sites and the rapidly increasing costs of land, this dream was never achieved so Lovedean Village Hall continued to be the home of the church – and a lovely home it was. On a Sunday the hall very quickly became a church. Visitors always talked of the 'Lovedean Welcome' – and what a welcome it was.

The church's effects have virtually all found a new home in other local United Reformed Churches and even in Africa. A poignant moment in the Golden Anniversary Celebration was when Bob Rayner presented the Lovedean URC's church stamp to Bethesda Mission whose church is also in Lovedean.

The friendships made at Lovedean church will, we are sure, continue for many years, whether in new homes, or worship places elsewhere.

The church closed on 16 October 2016.

## Lytchett Minster United Reformed Church

The church was founded by a devout group of Independents and Baptists meeting in a village cottage on the late 18th century. In 1824 a local landowner gave land to build a chapel and manse. Records state: 'Those who were able gave of their substance' (including two pairs of mismatched windows!) while 'others gave of their labour'.



Visualise a band of labouring men and women determined to build a worthy 'House of the Lord'. The text 'Holiness becometh Thine House, O Lord' is inscribed on the gallery. Over the ensuing years the church was served by pastors and lay preachers notably from Skinner St, Poole and Richmond Hill, Bournemouth.

In 1966 the church joined the Congregational Church in England and Wales; in 1967 the church saw the ordination and induction of the first woman ordained in Dorset and in 1972 the church joined the URC.

In 1978 a hall, kitchen and car park were built using funds from the sale of the old manse; in 1980 the sanctuary was re-floored, mainly by volunteering members and friends, and 'new' pews and pulpit donated by Cerne Abbas URC. Hall furniture and font was given by Westbourne Baptist Church and the modern oak Communion furniture was made by local craftsman, Cecil Budden.

The church continued to flourish with a strong Bible study and prayer group, Junior Church, Pilots Company and open retirement club. Age Concern established a Day Centre, partly staffed by church members, and many other local organisations and residents used the premises.

Sadly, through age and ill-health of the members the church took the decision to close. We thank God for all he has been able to do through his people here and trust that our legacy will continue to nourish the Christian faith elsewhere. The final service was held on 26 June 2016.

The church was closed on 30 June 2016.

## Temple Cowley United Reformed Church

Cowley Congregational began life in 1873 as a village mission church of the George Street (city centre) church. Between 1921 and 1929 Cowley's population trebled as migrant labourers from Wales and elsewhere sought work in the Morris car plant. Under the leadership of Tom Whatley-White the church adapted to the incomers, providing a 'first port of call' in a strange city as they looked for work, accommodation and a social life. By 1930, with the help of Mansfield College and the other Congregational Churches in Oxford, a new church had been built to accommodate 250 members. The Sunday School numbered 320. The church was at the heart of the new community in every way, with two successive ministers serving as city councillors, and a Working Men's Institute on the premises.

The ten years after the Second World War saw a 40% decline in membership as the first Cowley-born generation developed social institutions independently of the church, which struggled to adapt to the new situation. By 1990 the building had become a financial liability for the 60 or so members, but a major redevelopment turned it into an income-earner which kept the church viable for the next 20 years, creating a base for innovative projects in 'healthy living'.

The 1920s generation came to Cowley to stay, but the more transient population from the 1980s made it increasingly difficult to secure continuity in leadership. Three key members have been ordained to serve other churches since 2006. Proposals to develop an innovative residential Christian community failed to secure interest, and the church closed hoping that others would continue Christian mission from the premises.

The church closed on 5 November 2017.

## **Synod 10: Thames North Synod**

### **Chigwell Row United Reformed Church**

Chigwell Row URC closed on 30 September 2016.

### **Feltham United Free Church**

Feltham United Free Church closed on 28 January 2018.

### **Queens Park United Reformed Church**

Queens Park URC closed on 20 March 2016.

## **Synod 11: Southern Synod**

### **Folkestone United Reformed Church**

Folkestone United Reformed Church closed on 10 December 2016.

### **Hartley United Reformed Church**

After the end of the First World War groups of people moved out of London into the countryside. One such group in Hartley met together for a Nonconformist form of worship and Bible study. In 1927 they formed a Sunday School and founded a Congregational Church. By 1934 they had raised sufficient money with jumble sales, and legacies, to buy a plot on which to build a church. With increased activities – Bible Study, Ladies Working Party and a very successful Boys Club they saved enough to build a Hall behind the Church. This was opened in 1938. Blackout curtains enabled the church and hall to be used throughout the Second World war.

In 1972 we became part of the newly formed United Reformed Church. We pledged to explore unity and worked closely with other churches as a member of the covenanting churches in Hartley and District.

2006 saw a decline in membership, and problems with our church buildings led to us being advised to give up the church buildings since repairs were beyond our finances. After a Service of Thanksgiving and Closure the Rector of All Saints, Hartley, gave us permission to use Hartley All Saints Church for Sunday worship when it was not in use. Later in 2009 when repairs and improvements were made to All Saints we were invited to join with the Anglicans for Sunday morning worship at a combined service at the Church Centre. This proved very successful, and our then Minister was invited to take a service every month.

Sadly in 2016 after over 90 years of Christian witness in the village and since our membership had dropped and we had no church building, we decided to end our mission in Hartley. A final service of Celebration and Thanksgiving for the life and witness of Hartley United Reformed Church took place in September 2016 in the All Saints Church Centre. Our members will join other URC's in the North Kent group.

The church closed on 25 September 2016.

### **Northfleet United Reformed Church**

On 20 June 1850 Northfleet Chapel was opened for worship under the jurisdiction of Princes Street Church, Gravesend. In 1853 14 members applied for, and were granted, permission to be a separate church with the Revd Thomas Butcher as their minister.

The membership steadily grew and under the church's third and fourth ministers – the Revd Thomas Davey and the Revd Bolton – the building was improved and enlarged. In 1925 the Revd Arthur Deakin became minister: his grandparents were among the

original founder members. He was the first of the members who were called to be Ministers of Word and Sacraments: the Revd Arthur Mills and Mrs Jo Clare-Young (who is completing her studies at Westminster College). Two other ministers completed their training at Northfleet.

In 1972 Northfleet became part of the URC and in 1974 along with St Paul's, Gravesend and Hartley became the North Kent Group. Milton Mount and Southfleet joined a few years later. Northfleet worked ecumenically and members took part in the work of The Rainbow Centre.

In 2015 the Reverend Samantha Sheehan became Group Minister and she has walked with and ministered to the members of Northfleet on their journey to closure.

The baton for evangelism in Northfleet has been passed onto The Light of The World Holy Ghost Church of God and we ask for God's blessing on them.

We give thanks to God for all who have been part of Northfleet URC.

The church closed on 2 April 2017.

## **Synod 12: Synod of Wales**

### **Caersalem United Church 12 B 59**

The URC withdrew from the local ecumenical partnership on 18 April 2017 but the church continues as a Baptist church.

### **Newtown United Reformed Church**

A Congregational Church cause was first seen after the 1688 Freedom of Worship Act was passed with a permanent church started by 1818. The present church was built in 1876.

Many of Newtown's church ministers possessed great talent beside preaching. For example, one founded a theological college, another founded the British School in Newtown, one became the Curator of the British Museum, one wrote novels, one was an MP and more recently one was elected Mayor of Newtown.

The Newtown church was always innovative, progressive and ready to adopt new ideas. It was the first in Newtown to be a chapel lit by gas, the first to abolish pew rents and rely upon the weekly offering, the first to adopt individual communion cups and the first to elect women as elders.

The church finally closed in July 2016, not through apathy or fault, but because the extensive repair bill to treat a leaking roof and remedy dry rot was beyond the congregation to meet.

The church closed on 24 July 2016.

### **Northup United Reformed Church**

A fellowship formed in 1879 were given land by Mr R S Hudson of the Hudson Soap Company on which to build the English Congregational Church in Northup village. Mr Hudson, the son of a Congregational Minister from West Bromwich, was an active and generous philanthropist who used his wealth to support the Congregational Church and other charitable and voluntary organisations. He became the first Chairman of the North Wales Congregational Union, a post he held until his death in 1884.

The foundation stone to the chapel was laid in 1880 with the first minister to serve Northop being the Revd Burford Hooke, followed by the Revd John S Williams.

When a new by-pass to the south of the village was constructed in 1931, the chapel building was demolished in its wake. The members held their services for almost a year in an army hut while a new chapel was built - opening in September 1932.

In the 1970s a schoolmaster from Mold, Gordon Aubrey, took charge of the church, including preaching, until his health failed. By the time Menna Marland received the record books in the early 1980s the English Congregational Church had become the United Reformed Church. She served for some ten years. A dwindling congregation by the mid-1990s saw the building vandalised and grounds neglected. This led to an attempt to reverse the trend which was successful in increasing the congregation to around 15, generally from the village of Northop. New doors were added to mark the Millennium and grounds were re-lawned and replanted. The chapel engaged in ecumenical services with the parish church to mark Remembrance Day and to organise a Songs of Praise. Despite these efforts the congregation again dwindled to a small number who have found it impossible to continue. The final Service of Thanksgiving to celebrate the life and witness of the church in Northop took place on in November 2017.

The church was closed on 5 November 2017.

### **Porth United Reformed Church**

Founded in 1882, the members of Porth Congregational Church did not take long to build their own church premises, which opened in 1885. The church stood as a pillar of Nonconformity in the centre of Porth for more than one hundred and thirty years.

The town of Porth (meaning 'gate') stands at the point where the two Rhondda valleys – the Rhondda Fach and the Rhondda Fawr – separate. Porth is, therefore, known as the Gateway to the Rhondda.

Like so many communities in the Rhondda, Porth grew on the strength of the black gold produced by the coalmining industry. With the closure of the pits, along with many such communities in south Wales, Porth declined. Today, the main industry is retail, and most of the 6,000 inhabitants travel to Pontypridd or Cardiff for employment.

Through the successive ministries of Ministers, Deacons and (since the formation of the United Reformed Church) elders, the church – like so many others – has known times of great bounty and times of great famine.

In recent years a combination of the age profile of the congregation, attendant financial constraints and declining buildings have led the congregation to reach the difficult decision that they should close. Many members of the congregation will travel down the valley to Pontypridd where St David's Uniting Church offers a warm welcome.

The legacy of the church will live on, however, in the form of an affordable housing scheme that will blossom on the church site.

The church closed on 15 May 2016.

### **Wesley United Church, Abercynon**

The present Church building was opened as a Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1928.

A special meeting was held by the Methodist Church on 18 May 1990 to discuss the 'Declaration of Intent' with respect to the Methodist Church uniting with the United Reformed Church in Abercynon.

A special service was held on the 6 October 1990 to formally recognise the union between the Abercynon United Reformed Church and Abercynon Methodist Church and future worship to be held at the Methodist Church building. The Church was subsequently renamed Wesley United Church.

It was with much regret that the decision was made to close the Church due to governance issues and costly repairs to the building. We had a toddler group that had been running since 1999 and a membership of 11 when we closed. Those members have found alternative places to worship and the toddler group meet in a different venue.

The church closed on 14 January 2017.

## **Synod 13: Synod of Scotland**

### **Portobello United Reformed Church**

The church opened in 1836 with 15 giving each other the right hand of fellowship. The building was erected in a year and served the community well for many years.

Portobello is the local seaside resort for the City of Edinburgh and, in its day, was a magnet for many visitors with lovely sand and warm sunshine for holiday makers.

It had a chequered history with a membership fluctuating but has been served by many good Ministers. The Revd Charles Duthie, former Principal of the Scottish Congregational College and then of New College, London, served his last ministry with us, to single out one, but it had many good people who took worship.

Locally it was a prime mover in recent years in the setting up of the Monday Centre for the confused elderly and nearly all the current membership served at the Local Church Café and the Just World Shop, as well as supporting many other ventures.

Membership had reduced, and it was felt the upkeep of a listed building was going to prove too expensive. The remaining members took the decision to sell the premises, which have now been turned into an award-winning home for a lovely family of five – Mum, Dad and three boys. Our much-loved church building is now cared for and is appreciated by the family who occupy it, and their neighbours.

The church closed on 30 April 2016.

### **Selkirk United Reformed Church**

On 28 March 1842 a church professing Congregational principles was formed in Selkirk. In 1871 it formed the Evangelical Union and was readmitted to the Congregational Union of Scotland in 1884.

On 1 April 2000 Selkirk Congregational Church became part of the United Reformed Church. The Revd John R D MacKenzie was minister in Galashiels/Selkirk (1991-2002). (Galashiels United Reformed Church closed on 31 December 2011 and on 6 May 2012 the Revd John Humphreys, then the Synod Moderator, led a service at which members from Galashiels were received into Selkirk.)

Selkirk United Reformed Church worshipped using liturgical and ecological resources. The church was involved in ministry and mission as part of Churches Together in Selkirk and the Valleys.

In 2016 a double baptism took place. During 2017 the members of the congregation prayed and had discussions about the future. The Revd Helen Mee, on behalf of East Link, and the Revd David Pickering, Synod Moderator, assisted in the journey

towards a decision on the future of Selkirk United Reformed Church. It was felt that the congregation no longer had sufficient members and financial resources to continue. At a Church Meeting on 22 October it was resolved that Selkirk United Reformed Church would close following worship on Sunday 17 December. A special service of thanksgiving for Selkirk United Reformed Church was held on Sunday 10 December. It was led by Mr Pickering and the Revd Mary Taylor. Friends from local churches and the wider URC shared in the praise and fellowship.

We give thanks to God for all who have worshipped in Selkirk United Reformed Church and enjoyed its peaceful garden.

The church closed on 17 December 2017.

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*The Revd David Coaker,  
Chaplain to Mr Derek Estill*



# Nominations

## Assembly committees and other appointments

Notes:

1. General Assembly Moderators, Assembly Moderators-elect, the Immediate- past Assembly Moderators and the General Secretary are members ex officio of every standing committee. Deputy General Secretaries are members ex officio of every standing committee within their department. Any ex officio member may arrange for an appropriate deputy, such as any Deputy General Secretary or an officer of Assembly, to attend on their behalf. Any committee may invite other Assembly officers (or their deputies) or staff members to attend in a non-voting capacity where the business so requires.
2. Symbols have been used as follows: \*\* denotes those whom General Assembly is invited to appoint for the first time; † denotes those who have been invited to extend their periods of service;
3. Numbers in round brackets following names indicate the member's synod: (1) Northern, (2) North Western, (3) Mersey, (4) Yorkshire, (5) East Midlands, (6) West Midlands, (7) Eastern, (8) South Western, (9) Wessex, (10) Thames North, (11) Southern, (12) Wales, (13) Scotland. This numbering is not shown where it is not relevant.
4. When a member of a committee is there as a representative of another body or a particular category this is indicated in round brackets following the name.
5. Committee membership is normally for a period of four years, though this may sometimes exceptionally be renewable. Committee convenors serve an additional preliminary year as convenor-elect. In sections one to four of the report, appointments with a different term are noted.
6. Dates in square brackets following names indicate the date of retirement, assuming a full term.
7. In accordance with the decision of General Assembly 2000, some nominations are made directly by the National Synods of Wales and Scotland.
8. In years when General Assembly meets, new committee members normally take up their roles at the conclusion of Assembly. In years when Assembly does not meet, they normally begin on 1 July.
9. Nominations to Assembly committees and their subcommittees, and to advisory and task groups serving Assembly and Mission Council, should be of members of the United Reformed Church, or youth representatives who meet the criteria for membership of Assembly. A term of service may normally be completed if someone ceases to be a member of the URC during their term.
10. Nominations of URC representatives to external bodies should either be URC members, or youth representatives who meet the criteria for membership of Assembly, or URC staff who have relevant expertise. The nomination of a staff member would automatically lapse if the person concerned ceased to hold a URC post.

## 1. Mission Council

Mission Council acts on behalf of General Assembly. It consists of the officers of Assembly, the immediate past and elect Assembly Moderators, the deputies to the General Secretary and treasurer, the synod moderators and three representatives from each synod, one of whom is usually, but not necessarily, the synod clerk, together with the convenors of Assembly committees, the chair of the United Reformed Church Trust and three members for URC Youth, including the URC Youth Moderator. In attendance are staff secretaries, Assembly Moderators' chaplains and others as appropriate.

### 1.1 Mission Council advisory group

Convenor: Moderators of General Assembly

Secretary: General Secretary

The Revd Derrick Dzandu-Hedidor [2019]      Mr Peter Knowles [2020]

Mrs Helen Lidgett [2020]      The Revd Ruth Whitehead [2020]

Moderators-elect and Immediate-past Moderators of General Assembly

URC Treasurer

In attendance: The Clerk of General Assembly

### 1.2 Human resources advisory group

Convenor: Mr Geoff Shaw [2021]

Mr Mike Gould [2020]

Mr Alistair Forsyth [2019]

Mrs Bridget Fosten [2020]

Vacancy

General Secretary

Deputy General Secretary (Administration and Resources)

Note: The terms of service on this group are under review.

### 1.3 Law and polity advisory group

Convenor: The Revd Dr John Bradbury [2022]\*\*

Secretary: Mr Neil Mackenzie [2020]

Ms Morag McLintock [2020]

Ms Denise FitzPatrick [2022]

Mr Keir Hounsome [2022] (Synod Clerk)\*\*

Mr Raoul Hewitt (Property, legal and Trust officers: PLATO)

General Secretary

[ex officio: Clerk of General Assembly, legal adviser]

### 1.4 Listed buildings advisory group

Convenor: Mr Peter West [2019] (nominated by the group)

Secretary: The Revd James Mather

The Revd Ray Anglesea (1)

Mr Michael Williams (2)

Ms Alison Lee (3)

The Revd David Figures (4)

Mrs Judith Booth (5)

Mrs Rachel Wakeman (6)

Mr Peter West (7)

Mr Roger James (8)

Mr Gerry Prosser (9)

Mr Christopher Buckwell (10)

Mr Guy Morfett (11)

Mrs Sue Cole (12)

General Secretary, Clerk of General Assembly, Secretary for Ministries, legal adviser

### 1.5 Resource sharing task group

Convenor: The Revd Jacky Embrey [2022] (Synod Moderator)\*\*

Secretary: Mr Chris Atherton

Treasurer: The Revd Dick Gray

Miss Margaret Atkinson

Mr Mike Gould

[ex officio: URC Treasurer]

### 1.6 Methodist/United Reformed Church faith and order conversations

These conversations are not presently active.

**1.7 General Assembly task group**

Convenor: Mrs Val Morrison

The Revd Adrian Bulley

Mrs Margaret Marshall

together with the Clerk of General Assembly.

The Revd Dick Gray

**1.8 Environmental task group**

Convenor: The Revd Rob Weston

The Revd Trevor Jamison

Mr Tom Veitch

Ms Charis Ollerenshaw

**2. General Secretariat****2.1 Faith and order committee**

Members normally serve for six years.

Convenor: The Revd Dr Alan Spence [2023]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

The Revd Dr Catherine Ball (7) [2020]

The Revd Samuel Silungwe [2023]

The Revd Dr Rosalind Selby [2024]\*\*

Ms Anna Briggs (13) [2020]

The Revd Dr Robert Pope [2024]\*\*

General Secretary

**2.2 Nominations committee**

Synods appoint and decide terms for their representation.

Convenor: The Revd Ray Adams [2021]

Secretary: Mr George Faris [2021]

Mrs Melanie Campbell (1)

Mr Bill Gould (3)

Mrs Helen Lidgett (5)

The Revd Paul Whittle (7)

Mrs Sue Brown (9)

The Revd Derrick Dzandu-Hedidor (11)

Miss Morag Donaldson (13)

General Secretary

In attendance: Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries, advising on black and minority ethnic (BAME) nominations.

The Revd Brian Jolly (2)

Mr Chris Reed (4)

Mrs Margaret Marshall (6)

The Revd Dougie Burnett (8)

Mr Simon Fairington (10)

The Revd Adrian Bulley (12)

**2.2.1 Panel for General Assembly appointments**

Members usually serve for five years as training is required.

**Retiring 2019**

Mrs Sue Brown (9)

The Revd Paul Bedford (9)

The Revd Raymond Singh (11)

The Revd Nick Adlem (9)

The Revd Sohail Ejaz (7)

The Revd Reginald Mudenda (11)

**Retiring 2020**

Mrs Sheana Dudley (4)

Mrs Gwen Jennings (8)

The Revd Samuel Silungwe (5)

Mr Clive Curtis (12)

The Revd Dick Gray (8)

The Revd Bill Young (6)

**Retiring 2021**

The Revd David Sebley (7)

Mrs Kate Yates (10)

Mrs Val Morrison (4)

**Retiring 2022**

Mr John Ellis (11)

The Revd Mary Irish (7)

**Retiring 2023**

Mrs Barbara Ellis\*\* (3)

The Revd Alison Hall\*\* (3)

Dr Jim Merrilees\*\* (13)

The Revd Ruth Whitehead\*\* (8)

The Revd Hugh Graham\*\* (10)

Mrs Helen Lidgett\*\* (5)

Ms Helen Stenson† (12)

### 2.3 Ministerial incapacity and discipline (Mind) advisory group

Convenor: The Revd John Durell [2020]

Secretary: The Revd Chris Copley [2022]\*\*

Synod Moderator: The Revd Clare Downing [2021]

Convenor of the Assembly commission

Secretary of the Assembly commission

Convenor of the review commission of the incapacity procedure

Secretary of the review commission of the incapacity procedure

Consultant for ministers and CRCWs: The Revd Ken Chippindale

Consultant for mandated groups: The Revd Alison Davis

Training coordinator: Mr Keith Webster

General Secretary; Clerk of General Assembly

Secretary for Ministries; legal adviser

Co-opted: Mr Hartley Oldham

### 2.4 Disciplinary process – commission panel

Members serve for five years as regular training is required. They may be invited to continue serving beyond this as experience is especially valuable on this panel.

Convenor: The Revd Dr Janet Tollington (7) [2020]

Deputy convenor: Mr Keith Webster (10) [2022]

Secretary: Mr Philip Laws [2022]

Members:

#### Retiring 2019

The Revd Debbie Brown (3)

The Revd Peter Flint (11)

Mr Andrew Harvey (8)

The Revd Graham Maskery (2)

The Revd Sue McCoan (6)

Mrs Pat Poinen (1)

Mr Peter Etwell (1)

Mrs Barbara Goom (8)

The Revd Naison Hove (10)

The Revd Deborah McVey (7)

The Revd Sarah Moore (2)

The Revd Wendy Swan (11)

#### Retiring 2020

The Revd Martha McInnes (6)

The Revd Hilary Collinson (1)

Mr Patrick Smyth (13)

The Revd Rachel Poolman (1)

The Revd Dr Peter Stevenson (11)

The Revd Andy Braunston (13)

#### Retiring 2021

The Revd Dr Kirsty Thorpe (2)

Mrs Diane Moverley (12)

Mr David Jones (5)

The Revd Nigel Adkinson (2)

The Revd David M Miller (6)

Mrs Janet Virr (4)

Mr Ian Corless (9)

#### Retiring 2022

Mr Alan Kirby (11)

Mrs Cathy Glazier (11)

The Revd Craig Muir (6)

Mr Alastair Forsyth (4)

The Revd Ian Kirby (12)

Mrs Mary Kelly (11)

The Revd Jane Campbell (5)

#### Retiring 2023

Mrs Wendy Dunnett (9)†

The Revd Alan McGougan (13)†

Ms Mary Slater (11)†

### 2.5 Standing panel for the incapacity procedure

This panel is normally convened by the member with legal experience.

Members serve one or two five-year terms.

Secretary: Dr Augur Pearce (7) [2022]

Synod Moderator: The Revd Simon Walkling [2023]\*\*

Past Moderator of General Assembly: The Revd Dr Kirsty Thorpe (2) [2022]

Commission officer for the incapacity procedure: The Revd Roy Lowes [2023]\*\*

Mr David Nash (legal experience) [2023]†

Dr Ewen Harley (GP) [2023]†

## 2.6 Pastoral reference and welfare committee

Convenor: Mrs Wilma Frew [2019]

Convenor-elect: The Revd David Grosch-Miller [to serve as convenor 2019-23]\*\*

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship)

The Revd Dr David Pickering (Synod Moderator) [2022]\*\*

Mrs Pam Sharp (9) [2019]

The Revd Camilla Veitch (6) [2020]

Professor Malcolm Johnson [2022]

[ex officio: URC Treasurer; General Secretary; secretary for welfare]

## 3. Mission department

### 3.1 Mission committee

Convenor: The Revd Bernie Collins [2020]

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary (Mission)

Ms Chris Eddowes [2021] (1)

Mrs Angela Bogg (2) [2022]\*\*

The Revd Hilary Smith (3) [2020]

Mr John Cornell (4) [2019]

The Revd Lesley Moseley (5) [2019]

Mr John Davey (6) [2022]†

Vacancy (7) [2022]

The Revd Robert Jordan (8) [2022]\*\*

The Revd Ray Stanyon (9) [2021]

Ms Vivien Andrews (10) [2019]

Mr Martin Hayward (11) [2019]

The Revd Branwen Rees (12) [2022]

Mr John Collings (13) [2019]

#### 3.1.1 International exchange reference group

Convenor: Mrs Judith North (5) [2020]

Members: The Revd Paul Whittle (Synod Moderator) [2022]†

Ms Angela Bogg [2019]

Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries

#### 3.1.2 Commitment for Life (CfL) reference group

Convenor: The Revd Alan McGougan [2020]

At least two CfL advocates

Representative of mission team

Representative of mission committee

Representative from Christian Aid

Representative of Global Justice Now

Mrs Linda Mead (Programme Coordinator, Commitment for Life)

#### 3.1.3 Methodist/URC interfaith reference group

Members normally serve for six years in parallel with Methodist terms.

Co-convenor: The Revd Clare Downing [2019]

Co-convenor-elect: The Revd Tracey Lewis [to serve as co-convenor 2019-25]\*\*

Mr John Mellor (4) [2020]

The Revd Ann Jack (10) [2021]

The Revd Bob Day (2) [2021]

#### 3.1.4 Joint Public Issues Team strategy and policy group

Deputy General Secretary (Mission)

The Revd Steve Faber

#### 3.1.5 Rural strategy group (United Reformed Church/Methodist)

Co-chair: The Revd Steve Faber (Synod Moderator) [2022]

The Revd Peter Ball [2020]

Mr Charles Jolly [2021]

The Revd Elizabeth Kemp [2021]

## 4. Discipleship department

### 4.1 Ministries committee

Convenor: The Revd Paul Whittle [2020]

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

The Revd Dr Martin Camroux (7) [2021]

The Revd Sally Thomas (12) [2019]

The Revd Allison Claxton (3) [2020]

Mr Sam Elliot (11) [2021]

Vacancy

Leadership in worship advocate: Mrs Jenny Sheehan  
 The Revd Nicola Furley-Smith (Synod Moderator) [2022]\*\*  
 Convenor, assessment board

#### 4.1.1 Ministries – accreditation subcommittee

Convenor: The Revd Russell Furley-Smith [2021]  
 Secretary: Secretary for Ministries  
 The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad (Synod Moderator) [2020]  
 The Revd Dr Susan Durber (8) [2021] Mr Rob Moverley (12) [2022]\*\*

#### 4.1.2 Ministries – CRCW programme subcommittee

Convenor: Mr Simon Loveitt [2020]  
 Secretary: CRCW Development Worker  
 Mrs Rosie Buxton (4) [2018] Mr Derek Estill (2) [2019]  
 The Revd Ruth Maxey (5) [2020] Ms Ann Honey [2022]\*\*  
 The Revd Leonora Jagessar Visser t’Hooft (10) [2021]  
 The Revd Peter Meek (Synod Moderator) [2022]\*\*

#### 4.1.3 Ministries – maintenance of ministry subcommittee

Convenor: The Revd David Coote [2022]\*\*  
 Mr David Black (6) [2019]† Mr Keith Berry (7) 2019  
 Mrs Margaret Brock [2021] Mr David Gartside [2022]\*\*  
 Mrs Jean Wyber [2022]\*\*

#### 4.1.4 Ministries – retired ministers’ housing subcommittee

Members normally serve four years but appointments may be extended for two more years.  
 Convenor: The Revd Anne Bedford [2020]  
 Secretary: Secretary of Retired Ministers’ Housing Society Ltd  
 Mr Peter West (7) [2019]  
 Mr Malcolm Lindo (10) [2018]  
 The Revd Ken Summers (3) [2020]  
 The Revd Simon Walkling (Synod Moderator) [2022]\*\*  
 ex-officio: URC Treasurer  
 Properties are managed by a company, Retired Ministers’ Housing Society Ltd.  
 Details of the members of its board etc may be obtained from the Company Secretary at Church House.

#### 4.1.5 Assessment board

Members usually serve for five years as training is required.  
 Convenor: Dr Ewen Harley [2019]  
 Convenor-elect: Professor Bill Gould (3) [to serve as convenor 2019-24]

##### Retiring 2019

The Revd Stuart Radcliffe (2) The Revd Sohail Ejaz (7)  
 The Revd Peter Rand (1) Ms Pat Oliver (9)

##### Retiring 2020

The Revd Lesley Charlton (11) Mrs Jill Shelton (12)

##### Retiring 2021

Ms Karen Campbell (10) The Revd Sue McCoan (10)

##### Retiring 2022

Mrs Bridget Akinyombo The Revd Jamie Kissack (4)  
 Mrs Faith Paulding (7) The Revd Lis Mullen (2)

Mr Keith Reading

##### Retiring 2023

The Revd John Danso\*\* Mr Dan Morrell\*\*



**4.2 Education and learning committee**

Convenor: The Revd Dr Neil Messer [2019]

Convenor-elect: Mr Alan Yates [to serve as convenor 2019-23]\*\*

Secretary: Secretary for Education and Learning

The Revd Dr Jill Thornton (9) [2020]

Mr Robert Pettigrew (3) [2020]

Mr Rudolph Wontumi (10) [2021]

Mrs Sandra Ackroyd [2022]\*\*

Ms Adella Pritchard [2022]\*\*

The Revd Martin Truscott [2022]\*\*

The Revd Dr Rosalind Selby (resource centre) [2022]\*\*

The Revd Mary Thomas (Synod Development Officer)

**4.2.1 Education and learning finance subcommittee**

Chair: Vacancy

Minutes Secretary: Secretary for Education and Learning

Member: The Revd Edward Sanniez

Ex-officio: URC Treasurer, Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship),  
convenor of the education and learning committee

Staff in attendance: Chief Finance Officer

Members of the subcommittee are appointed by the education and learning committee.

**4.2.2 Stepwise task and finish group**

Convenor: Professor Graham Handscomb

Administrator: Ms Philippa Linton

Members:

Mr Pete Atkins (Fresh Expressions)

Mr Iain Johnston (Faith in Community Scotland)

The Revd David Downing (children's and youth work committee)

The Revd Stuart Nixon (mission committee)

The Revd Zaidie Orr (global and intercultural ministries nominee)

The Revd Anne Sardeson (training and development officers' nominee)

Vacancy (resource centres for learning)

Ex-officio: Secretary for Education and Learning, Walking the Way Programme Manager

Members of the group are appointed by the education and learning committee.

**4.3 Children's and youth work committee**

Convenor: The Revd Jenny Mills [2021]

Secretary: Head of Children's and Youth Work

Mrs Ruth Roddison (4) [2020]†

Mrs Alison Tansom (12) [2020]†

Mr Adam Woodhouse (4) [2019]

Mr Sam Brown (11) [2019]

The Revd Jake Tatton (13) [2020]

The Revd Paul Robinson (12) [2021]

Ms Camilla Quarley [2021]

Ms Charmaine Mutare [2022]\*\*

URC Youth Moderator

URC Youth Moderator-elect

**4.3.1 Pilots management subcommittee**

Convenor: Mrs Margaret Smith [2022]\*\*

Member: Mr Derek Goodyear [2021]

Other members of the subcommittee are appointed by the children's and youth work committee.

**5. Administration and resources department****5.1 Assembly arrangements committee**

Convenor: The Revd James Breslin [2020]

Convenor-elect: The Revd Adrian Bulley [to serve as convenor 2020-26]\*\*

Secretary: Facilities Manager

Assembly Moderators

Assembly Moderators-elect

General Secretary

Clerk of General Assembly

Local arrangements committee convenor

## 5.2 Communications

Convenor: Mr Peter Knowles [2019]

Convenor-elect: The Revd Dr Peter Stevenson [to serve as convenor 2019-23]\*\*

Secretary: Head of Communications

Mrs Heather Carr (1) [2019]

Ms Rebecca Gudgeon (2) [2019]

Mr Tim Llewelyn (9) [2019]

Ms Eilidh Cameron (13) [2020]

Mr Stan Hazell (8) [2022]\*\*

The Revd Ian Fosten (7) [2022]†

## 5.3 Equalities committee

Convenor: The Revd Anne Lewitt [2022]\*\*

Secretary: The Revd David Salsbury (12) [2021]

Mr Clive Curtis (12) [2019]†

Mrs Pat Poinen (1) [2019]

Ms Rosie Martin (9) [2020]

Mr Jake Convery [2022]\*\*

Ms Pam Gold [2022]\*\*

## 5.4 Finance committee

Convenor: URC Treasurer

Chief Finance Officer

Chair of URC Trust

Mr Brian Hosier (10) [2019]

Deputy treasurer

The Revd Iain McLaren (11) [2019]

Mr Gordon Wanless (1) [2020]

Mr Ian Simpson (9) [2019]

Mr Bob Christie [2021]

Mr William Potter (6) [2021]

Mr Frank Liddell [2022]\*\*

Mr David Greatorex [2021]

## 5.5 United Reformed Church Trust

Members normally serve for four years, and may only serve a maximum of two terms (eight years). The directors of the Trust appoint new directors from those appointed as members. The members of the Trust elect the chair from among their own number and appoint a secretary and deputy secretary.

Chair: The Revd Richard Gray [2018]

Secretary: Ms Sandi Hallam-Jones

Deputy Secretary: Mr John Samson

Members:

Group one (synods 1, 2, 3,13)

Mr Neil Mackenzie (3) [2020]

The Revd Leslie Morrison (13) [2022]\*\*

Group two (synods 6, 8, 9, 12)

Dr Ian Harrison (8) [2020]

Mr Peter Pay (9) [2022]

Mr David Lathbury (6) [2022]\*\*

Group three (synods 4, 5, 7, 10, 11)

Mrs Margaret Thompson (7) [2020]

Mr Alastair Forsyth (4) [2020]

Ms Catriona Wheeler (5) [2022]\*\*

Mrs Val Morrison (4) [2020]\*\*

URC Youth appointee: Mr Andrew Weston [2021]

General Assembly appointment: Mr Emmanuel Osaé [Dec 2019]

Co-opted member-elect: Mr Clifford Patten (7) [2020]

ex officio: Moderators of General Assembly, Clerk of General Assembly, URC Treasurer  
General Secretary

In attendance: Convenor, investment committee; minute secretary; Chief Finance Officer

### 5.5.1 Church House management group

Convenor: Deputy General Secretary (Administration and Resources)

Mr Mike Gould

Mr Derek Jones

Mr Doug Maxwell

Mr Robert Buss

[ex officio: General Secretary; Chief Finance Officer]

Note: The terms of service on this group are under review.

**5.5.2 Remuneration committee**

Convenor: Mr William McVey

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary (Administration and Resources)

Ms Sushila Jetha (Methodist HR)

Church House staff representative

URC Treasurer

Chief Finance Officer

**5.6 The United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Trust Ltd**

Members normally serve for six years. Terms run until the AGM in September. The directors of the Trust appoint new directors from those appointed as members. The board members elect the chair from among their own number and appoint the company secretary.

Chair: Mr Richard Nunn [2022]\*\*

Secretary: Ms Sandi Hallam-Jones

Members of the URC:

Miss Margaret Atkinson [2020]†

Mrs Bridget Micklem [2019]

Mr Lyndon Thomas [2022]\*\*

Members of fund (appointed by members of fund):

The Revd James Breslin [2021]

The Revd Dr Janet Tollington [2019]

The Revd Paul Bedford [2018]

The Revd Caroline Vodden [2022]

[ex officio: URC Treasurer; convenor, pensions executive; convenor, maintenance of ministry subcommittee; convenor, investment committee]

**5.7 Pensions executive**

Convenor: Dr Chris Evans (9) [2021]

Secretary: Mr Rob Seaman

Members: Mrs Madeleine Brand (9) [2020]

The Revd Steven Manders (13) [2020]

[ex officio: Convenor, maintenance of ministry subcommittee; convenor, investment committee; URC Treasurer]

The pensions executive reports to the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pensions Trust board, the maintenance of ministry subcommittee and the finance committee.

**5.8 Investment committee**

Convenor: The Revd Dick Gray [2022]\*\*

Secretary: Ms Sandi Hallam-Jones

Members: Mr Brian Hosier [2019]

Mrs Jean Hudson [2019]

The Revd Julian Macro [2020]

Mr David Martin [2022]\*\*

[ex officio: URC Treasurer; convenor, pensions executive;

chair of United Reformed Church Trust or another director;

chair of United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Trust or another director;

Treasurer, Westminster College]

In attendance: Chief Finance Officer

**6. Representatives to meetings of sister Churches**

6.1	General Synod of Church of England	The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad
6.2	Methodist Conference	The Revd Roy Fowler
6.3	Congregational Federation	Assembly Moderator
6.4	Church of Scotland	Assembly Moderator, chaplain and synod representative
6.5	United Free Church of Scotland	Synod nomination
6.6	Scottish Assembly of the Congregational Federation	Synod nomination
6.7	Scottish Episcopal Church	Synod nomination
6.8	Methodist Church in Scotland	Synod nomination
6.9	Baptist Union of Scotland	Synod nomination
6.10	Presbyterian Church of Wales	Synod nomination
6.11	Union of Welsh Independents	Synod nomination
6.12	Covenanted Baptists	Synod nomination
6.13	Church in Wales Governing Board	Synod nomination
6.14	Provincial Synod of the Moravian Church	The Revd Edward Sanniez

## 7. Representatives on ecumenical Church bodies

The following have been nominated as United Reformed Church representatives at the major gatherings of the ecumenical bodies listed.

### 7.1 Council for World Mission (CWM) Assembly

Four representatives will be appointed in 2019 for the 2020 CWM Assembly.

### 7.2 World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) General Council

Ms Camilla Quartey  
Programme Officer for Global and Intercultural Ministries

The Revd Dr Phil Wall

### 7.3 Conference of European Churches Assembly

Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations and one other

### 7.4 The Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council

The Revd Rowena Francis  
Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries

The Revd Professor David Thompson

### 7.5 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) Church leaders' meeting

General Secretary

#### 7.5.1 CTBI senior representatives' forum

General Secretary  
Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

#### 7.5.2 CTBI environmental issues network

The Revd Mike Shrubsole

#### 7.5.3 CTBI stewardship network

Mrs Faith Paulding

#### 7.5.4 CTBI consultative group on ministry amongst children (CGMC)

Head of Children's and Youth Work and one other

#### 7.5.5 CTBI interreligious network

Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

#### 7.5.6 CTBI China forum

The Revd John Scott

#### 7.6.1 CTE enabling group

Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

#### 7.6.2 CTE coordinating group for local unity

The Revd Kevin Watson  
Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

#### 7.6.3 CTE Churches Together for Healing

The Revd Deborah McVey

#### 7.6.4 CTE Churches' theology and unity group

Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

#### 7.6.5 CTE group for evangelisation

Deputy General Secretary (Mission)

#### 7.6.6 CTE spirituality coordinating group

The Revd Sue Henderson

**7.6.7 CTE minority ethnic affairs group**

Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries

**7.6.8 CTE joint liturgical group**

The Revd Dr Ana Gobledale

**7.7 Action of Churches Together in Scotland (Acts) members meeting**

Appointed by the URC Synod of Scotland

**7.8 National Sponsoring Body for Scotland**

Appointed by the URC Synod of Scotland

**7.9 Churches Together in Wales (CYTUN)**

Appointed by the URC Synod of Wales

**7.10 Commission of Covenanted Churches in Wales**

Appointed by the URC Synod of Wales

**7.11 Free Church education committee**

Professor Graham Handscomb

Mrs Gillian Kingston

**7.12 European Churches' environmental network**

Mr Charles Jolly

**7.13 Churches' refugee network**

The Revd Fleur Houston

**7.14 Churches' committee on funerals and crematoria**

The Revd Sally Thomas

**7.15 Churches' forum for safeguarding****7.16 Churches' network for nonviolence**

Head of Children's and Youth Work

**7.17 Fresh Expressions**

Deputy General Secretary (Mission)

**7.18 Churches Visitor and Tourism Association**

Mrs Valerie Jenkins

**8. Representatives on formal bilateral and multilateral committees****8.1 Methodist/United Reformed Church liaison group**

Co-convenor: The Revd Nicola Furley-Smith (Synod Moderator) [2020]

The Revd Kay Alberg

The Revd Roy Fowler

The Revd Sally Thomas

Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

**8.1.1 Methodist/ United Reformed Church strategic oversight group**

General Secretary

A General Assembly Moderator

Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

**8.2 Church of England/United Reformed Church bilateral dialogue**

This dialogue will be restarted shortly.

### 8.3 EMU Partnership (Scottish Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church in Scotland and the United Reformed Church Synod of Scotland) [see note 7]

Appointed by the URC Synod of Scotland

### 8.4 Conversations between the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and the Anglican Communion

The Revd Dr Julian Templeton

## 9. Representatives on governing bodies of theological colleges, etc

### 9.1 Northern College

The Revd Raymond Singh [2019]

Mr Willie Duncan [2021]

Mrs Rosie Buxton [2022]

In attendance: Secretary for Education and Learning

Mrs Sheila Davies [2021]

The Revd Mark Bates [2022]

Mr Bill Potter [2022]

### 9.2 Westminster College: board of governors

Governors serve six-year terms, which may be renewed.

Convenor: The Revd Nigel Uden [2020]

Clerk to the governors: Mr Chris Wright [2020]

Honorary treasurer (Westminster College): Mr Andrew Grimwade [2022]

Principal: The Revd Neil Thorogood

Dr Jean Stevenson [2019]

Mr Mark Hayes [2022]

The Revd Dr Rick Mearkle [2022]

Mr John Ellis [2023]

The Revd Jan Adamson [2024]

Note 1: A further six governors are appointed by the Cambridge Theological Federation, the University of Cambridge, Anglia Ruskin University, the college's teaching staff, its students and the Cheshunt Foundation.

Note 2: The Secretary for Education and Learning and the URC Treasurer are normally in attendance.

#### 9.2.1 The Cheshunt Foundation

Mr Guy Morfett

#### 9.2.2 Cambridge Theological Federation

Convenor, Westminster College governors

## 10. Governors of colleges and schools with which the United Reformed Church is associated

### 10.1 Caterham School

The Revd Nicola Furley-Smith

### 10.2 Eltham College

Mr Martin Fosten

### 10.3 Walthamstow Hall

Mrs Isabel Heald

### 10.4 Milton Mount Foundation

Mr Ray Dunnett [2019]

The Revd June Colley [2022]\*\*

The Revd Derek Lindfield [2022]†

The Revd Kevin Swaine [2019]

The Revd Carole Elphick [2022]\*\*

### 10.5 Silcoates School

Dr Moira Gallagher

The Revd Steven Knapton

Mrs Tessa Henry-Robinson

The Revd Dr Janet Lees

Mrs Sue Lee



**10.6 Taunton School** Baptist governor at present

**10.7 Bishops Stortford College** Mr Richard Harrison

## **11. Miscellaneous**

The United Reformed Church is represented on a variety of other national organisations and committees as follows:

### **11.1 Arthur Rank Centre**

The Revd Elizabeth Caswell

### **11.2 Churches Legislation Advisory Service**

Mrs Sheila Duncan General Secretary

### **11.3 Congregational Fund Board**

Mr Anthony Bayley The Revd Geoffrey Roper  
The Revd Eric Allen Mrs Jackie Haws  
The Revd Kate Hackett

### **11.4 Congregational Memorial Hall Trust**

The Revd Derek Wales Mrs Margaret Thompson  
Mr Simon Fairnington Dr Brian Woodhall  
Mr John Ellis Mr Philip Bonnier [2021]

### **11.5 English Heritage's places of worship forum**

Mr Peter West (convenor of the listed buildings advisory group)

### **11.6 Lord Wharton's Charity**

The Revd Derek Lindfield

### **11.7 Methodist faith and order committee**

### **11.8 Retired ministers' and widows' fund**

The Revd Julian Macro Mr Anthony Bayley  
Mrs Liz Sharples

### **11.9 Roots for Churches Ltd**

The Revd John Proctor [2022]

### **11.10 Samuel Robinson's Charities**

Mr Tony Alderman

### **11.11 Scout Association – URC faith adviser**

The Revd David Marshall-Jones

### **11.12 United Reformed Church History Society**

Council Members serve five-year terms which may be renewed.

The Revd Dr Michael Jagessar [2019]† Mrs Jean Wyber [2022]  
The Revd Dr Kirsty Thorpe [2023]†

### **11.13 Women's World Day of Prayer**

The Revd Heather Pencavel

### **11.14 Westhill Endowment Trust**

Mr Simon Rowntree [2019] Mrs Julie Grove MBE [2022]†

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