

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1978

8th – 11th MAY

THE FLORAL HALL

Promenade, Southport

REPORTS TO ASSEMBLY

The United Reformed Church in England & Wales
86 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RT

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The United Reformed Church

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES and other papers submitted to the GENERAL ASSEMBLY SOUTHPORT, May 8th-11th, 1978

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee met on three occasions during the year and at each meeting matters of substance fell to be considered.

2. **Assembly Minutes** Attention was drawn to the inadequacy of the minute of the Assembly (p.23) regarding United Reformed Church/Methodist relations and the following was accepted as a corrected version:

The report having been received the Revd M. H. Cressey spoke to the section dealing with the work of the At Home Committee and moved the following resolution which the Assembly agreed should be amended by the substitution of 'foster closer' for 'maintain close' in line 5 of the original printed version:

The Assembly resolves that at this time closer relations with the Methodist Church be pursued not through bilateral conversation on union but through common participation in the Churches' Unity Commission and other ecumenical bodies and by the development of local co-operation, and to these ends instructs the World Church and Mission Department to foster closer liaison with the appropriate agencies of the Methodist Church, particularly through a liaison group including representatives of the Department, of the Provincial Moderators and of local joint churches.

An amendment was moved by the Revd E. F. Cattermole, seconded by the Revd M. Hanson, which would have resulted in the following resolution:

The Assembly resolves that at this time closer relations with the Methodist Church be pursued through common participation in the Churches' Unity Commission and other ecumenical bodies and by the development of local co-operation, and to these ends instructs the World Church and Mission Department to foster closer liaison with the appropriate agencies of the Methodist Church, particularly through a liaison group including representatives of the Department, of the Provincial Moderators and of local joint churches and instructs its Department of World Church and Mission to ask the Conference of the Methodist Church whether it considers the present time appropriate for the beginning of bilateral conversations with a view to union.

By agreement this was withdrawn and a further amendment proposed by the Revd D. Hannen, and seconded by the Revd E. F. Cattermole, was then discussed, namely to substitute for the last section of the withdrawn amendment after the words 'joint churches' the following: 'and to inform the Conference of the Methodist Church that the United Reformed Church would welcome an invitation to consider beginning bilateral conversations with a view to union if and when the Conference shall consider the time right for such conversations.'

This amendment, on being put to the vote, was defeated. The original resolution was then adopted.

3. **Loyal Address** The Executive received an acknowledgment from the Home Secretary, on behalf of the Queen, of the Assembly's Loyal Address and welcomed news that the URC had been represented in the personal presentation of an Address on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee by the Moderator, the Chairman of FURY and the General Secretary.

4. 'Interim Moderator' As requested, the Provincial Moderators submitted a paper concerning the use of the term 'Interim Moderator' and its main proposals were agreed in the following form:

1. The name 'Interim Moderator' be reserved for those cases where a District Council appoints a minister or elder to give pastoral care during a vacancy until such time as a minister is inducted.
2. Those appointed by a District Council to care for pastorless local churches which cannot be grouped under existing ministers should be called by some other appropriate title.

5. Terminable Appointments of Full-Time Officers The Executive adopted the following rules for the guidance of the Nominations Committee in the making of new appointments or the extension of periods of service:

- A. Departmental Secretaries shall normally be appointed to serve for seven years in the first instance. Other Executive Secretaries within Departments shall normally be appointed to serve for five years in the first instance.
- B. Proposals for the extension of their appointments for further specified periods may be brought to the Nominations Committee by the Central Committees of the Departments concerned. The Nominations Committee at its discretion shall bring such proposals to the Assembly or its Executive for approval.
- C. Chairmen of Committees and Secretaries of Committees shall normally be appointed for a period of six years. At the explicit request of the Committee concerned, one further shorter period of service may be proposed by the Nominations Committee to the Assembly or its Executive.
- D. The appointment of full-time Secretaries to be Secretaries of Committees shall be made on an ex officio basis and without time limit, e.g. Secretary—the Departmental Secretary.
- E. The Nominations Committee in moving the appointment or re-appointment of any Secretary may propose a variation of these rules under special circumstances duly explained.
- F. These rules shall apply to all future appointments. Appointments previously made shall be held in accordance with the terms agreed when they were made.

6. Office Structures At the instance of the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee further consideration was given to the report on Office Structures and it was agreed that the Four Departments should remain, that the Revd C. K. Meachin's position should be redesignated as Secretary for Stewardship. The Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee was asked to be responsible for the involvement of the URC in the New Initiative in Evangelism.

7. New Initiative in Evangelism A response was sent on behalf of the URC to the group called together by the Archbishop to foster the New Initiative. This urged that the stress be on local initiatives using a wide variety of means, that it be conducted in open conversation and with a full acknowledgment of the need for renewal within the Church, the further search for unity and the concern of the Church for the whole life of humanity.

Further reports will be submitted to the Assembly through the World Church and Mission Department.

8. Apportionment The group dealing with Apportionment, having completed its work on the national funds, was urged to proceed with the Apportionment of County Union resources. Schemes are in course of preparation.

9. Membership of CBMS/CFWM An application was submitted and accepted on behalf of the URC for membership of the Conference of British Missionary Societies, now becoming the Conference for World Mission of the BCC.

10. National Insurance The Executive concurred in the recommendation that along with the other Churches, the URC should accept the Government's proposal that from April 1st, 1978 Ministers of Religion should contribute to National Health Insurance under Class I.

11. Maintenance of the Ministry Owing to the decisions of last Assembly concerning possible future increases in stipend, proposals were considered by the Executive on two occasions and at its February meeting the following were approved:

1. The Executive Committee, noting the firm insistence of the Government on the two points of pay policy (the 12 months rule and the 10% guide line) regretfully accepts the recommendation of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee that the basic stipend be increased by only 10% from July 1st, 1978.
2. The Executive Committee approves the recommendation of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee that, as from July 1st, 1978 the scale of Children's Allowances be increased to

0 - 4 years	£60
5 - 11 years	£100
12 and over	£140

3. The Executive Committee approves the recommendation of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee that as from July 1st, 1978 Children's Allowances will be payable in all cases and that these should be a charge on the Fund.
4. The Executive Committee notes the statement of intent prepared by the Committee in regard to future increases in stipend and urges the Committee to do all it can to ensure that these proposals (or an improvement on them) are put into effect. [cf. the Report of the M/M Committee p. 54]
5. The Executive Committee resolves that the rate of assessment for the whole of 1978 should be £5 per member and 48p in the pound of net assessable income.

12. Youth Celebration The Committee encouraged the plans made for the Celebration by the young people in London Churches and in Westminster Abbey of the Fifth Anniversary of the URC and was cheered by the success of the enterprise.

13. Korea At the instance of the Church and Society Department the Committee sent a cable to the President of South Korea and took other steps to bring the suppression of human rights in that country to public notice.

14. Standing Orders At the instance of the Business Committee two revisions were made to the Standing Orders of Assembly which appear as an addition to 2A(i) and as no. 29.

15. Directors The Executive exercised the powers delegated to it under clause 7(2) of the URC Act and made appointments of Directors to several County Unions Incorporated

16. Youth Leadership Training Officers. At the request of the Youth Committee it was agreed to make YLTOs members of the District Council and Synod within which they hold church membership and associate members of all District Councils and Synods within the areas of their appointed service.

17. Silver Jubilee Service In response to widespread concern that the other Churches had no part in the Silver Jubilee Service in St Paul's, an approach was made to the Archbishop and the Bishop of London, and as a result letters have passed to those concerned in the arrangement of such services urging that all future occasions should be celebrated ecumenically.

18. Inductions At the meeting in November three new executive officers of the Assembly were inducted by the Moderator, the Revd Iorwerth Thomas, Miss Janet Booth and Mr Norman Hart.

19. Provincial Moderators During the year three review groups have been at work to bring nominations to Assembly for appointment as Moderators of the West Midlands, Eastern and Thames North Provinces. Nominations were reported to the Executive and are submitted as resolutions appended to this report.

20. Review of Priorities and Resources Discussion took place at two meetings concerning the proper use of the resources available to the Church in a period of sustained inflation. It was recommended and agreed that a review group should be set up. Its task would be to review the priorities of the Church in the next and subsequent five year periods and the resources likely to be available to meet them and to make recommendations.

It was agreed that for ease of operation the core group should be small and London-based, but that some Provinces should be asked to set up small consultative groups to monitor the work of the core group.

21. General Secretaryship The Executive noted the steps being taken by the Nominations Committee to set up the appropriate Committee to bring a nomination to the Assembly of 1979 for appointment as General Secretary and Clerk of Assembly and agreed to transmit a paper of comment from the Moderator's Advisory Committee to the nominating Committee to assist it in its work.

22. Bursledon The Executive in November referred back to the Applications Committee a request from the local church at Bursledon to secede from the URC with its property. On further investigation and advice the Applications Committee brought no recommendation pending further clarification as to how the property could be held for the new purpose. Two other applications were held back pending clarification of this issue. The Clerk was instructed to write to each of the churches concerned in explanation.

23. Pension Fund At the instance of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee a Deed of Amendment effecting approved changes in the rules of the Congregational Ministers' Pension Fund was agreed and executed on behalf of the URC by the Moderator and Clerk.

24. Staffing of the Finance and Administration Department In accordance with the request of the Assembly proposals were brought to the November Executive for the future staffing of the F & A Department, and it was agreed that from an appropriate date the following changes should be made:

1. Post of Chief Accountant and Departmental Secretary to be combined.
2. Mr C. M. Frank to be appointed to this post.
3. Vacant post of Deputy Accountant to be filled as soon as possible.
4. A minister to be appointed to serve part-time as secretary of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee.
5. Mr R. J. Gill to be appointed to manage Maintenance of the Ministry day to day business and to work closely with the Secretary of the Committee.
6. Additional clerical facilities to be provided to assist Mr Gill, and Mr H. Doran, voluntary part-time officer, to be invited to continue in his present work.
7. To ensure a smooth turnover and to enable Mr Todd to use his remaining period of service to best advantage, the arrangements at 4, 5 and 6 to come into effect as soon as possible in 1978.
8. The Committee Structure of the Department to come under periodic review and, in particular, the Unified Appeal Committee to be invited to consider its role.

25. Housing in Retirement In view of uncertainties about the demands upon the Churches for the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and the policy of the Memorial Hall Trust, it was agreed to postpone a major appeal for funds for the provision of Retirement Houses.

26. Ministerial Training Costs The Executive referred to the Treasurership Committee its concern that the steeply rising cost of Ministerial Training should be met and the expected deficit in 1977 and 78 be covered, and asked the Ministerial Training Committee and the F & A Department to consult with a view to future policy. The appropriate Committee will report the consequent actions.

27. South Africa At the instance of the Church and Society Department a message of protest was sent to the South African Ambassador setting out the concern of the Church at the banning of Christian organisations in South Africa and the detention of Black leaders without trial. A reply was received and reported at the next meeting.

28. Churches of Christ The Executive heard of the failure of the Scheme for Unification with the Churches of Christ and sent a message to the Council of the Churches of Christ expressing the hope that close relations can be continued and developed.

Consideration was given to the proposals for an auxiliary ministry which were part of the Scheme and the Church Life Department was invited to submit proposals to the Assembly along similar lines.

29. Fen Place The Assembly in 1975 authorised the Executive to consider the future of Fen Place and as a result of prolonged consideration in the Management Committee and the Retired Ministers' Housing Society, a recommendation for closure was brought to the February meeting. After a sustained and sensitive discussion, the Executive requested the Committee of the URC Ministers' Housing Society to make all necessary arrangements for the re-housing of the present residents with a view to closing Fen Place. This resolution was passed with four members voting against and one abstaining. The Executive also invited the Society to consider securing or sharing, for those who desire it, an alternative communal home or homes of an economically viable nature. In the light of this decision the Moderator and Clerk undertook to pay an early visit to the house to communicate these decisions.

30. Deployment Committee On a report of the Deployment Committee it was agreed that that Committee should undertake, as part of its continuing task, the review of different forms of ministry within the Church.

At each meeting recommendations were received from the Nominations Committee and appointments made. These will be reported to the Assembly in the report of the Nominations Committee.

The Minute Book of the Executive Committee will be available at the Assembly.

A. L. Macarthur, *Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly appoints the Revd Frederick Herman Kaan as Moderator of the West Midlands Province from September 1st, 1978 for a period of seven years.
2. The Assembly appoints the Revd Colin Gower Evans as Moderator of the Eastern Province from September 1st, 1978 for a period of seven years.
3. The Assembly appoints the Revd Michael John Davies as Moderator of the Thames North Province from September 1st, 1978 for a period of seven years.
4. The Assembly thanks the Revd R. J. Hall, the Revd R. W. Hugh Jones and the Revd R. E. Taylor for their service to the Church as Moderators of the Thames North, West Midlands and Eastern Provinces respectively.
5. The Assembly ratifies the decision made in 1977 and agrees to amend the last clause of paragraph 9(3)c (p.23) and 9(4)c (p.25) of the Basis of Union to read as follows:

'the number of such representatives to be:

1-200 members	1 representative
201-400 members	2 representatives
401-600 members	3 representatives
601-800 members	4 representatives
over 800 members	5 representatives.'

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE : APPENDIX 1

DEPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd A. G. Burnham

Secretary: The Revd J. Norman Beard

1. The Committee compliments the Provinces on the responsible way in which they have begun to move towards the goals set for the end of 1979. A consultation between the Committee and the representatives of the Provinces has been arranged for September 1978. This is to ensure that the fullest discussion possible may take place before the submission of new quotas to the 1979 Assembly.
 2. Approval has been given to 33 special ministries. (Equivalent to 30 full-time appointments). These are in New Towns (10), Inner City (2½), Industrial (3¾), University (4½), Ecumenical Team (8½), and Social Service (1) settings. The Committee does not feel able to give approval to any more special ministries unless vacancies within the number occur or until further discussions have been held with representatives of the Provinces.
 3. Recognising the need for more ministers, the Committee supports the proposals submitted to the General Assembly for the introduction of an Auxiliary Ministry.
 4. The Committee has been asked by the Executive Committee to review different forms of ministry within the Church.
 5. The Revd Peter McCall, our first chairman, retired from office in 1977 and the Revd J. Norman Beard, our first secretary, has indicated his intention to resign after this Assembly. The Committee wishes to record its gratitude for the services and experienced leadership of these two officers.
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE : APPENDIX 2

COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE MANSE SYSTEM

Chairman: Mr. J. A. Cumming

Secretary: The Revd G. E. Roper

1. The committee has begun its work but before reaching conclusions wishes to ascertain
 - (a) the number of manses in the denomination and the proportion of ministers already having their own accommodation;
 - (b) the views of ministers and their families, and of those responsible for the manse in each pastorate, and of other interested parties. It is possible that these views will not always coincide.

Separate questionnaires are being sent with this book of reports to church secretaries and ministers in pastoral charge. Replies, and information or comments from other interested parties, should be sent to the secretary of the committee (the Revd G. E. Roper, 42 Sutton Park Road, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 1RP) by May 31st 1978.

2. The final report of the committee should recommend a policy for Assembly to adopt for many years to come. It is therefore important that everyone who can contribute data for this inquiry should do so in time.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Chairman: Mr. Ronald S. Martin

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

1. In a letter to *Reform* one of our Moderators wrote — ‘At the risk of offending ecumenicals, I think it is important to get things in perspective. The Ten Propositions are important but they are not the most important item that the 1977 General Assembly commended for discussion. What about Christian Stewardship? Isn’t this the most important matter before local churches, districts and synods? We are being challenged and helped to lead members to a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ through the Church’.

2. The 1977 General Assembly increased the membership of the Stewardship Group so as to include representatives from all the Provinces, and the Executive Committee emphasised the importance of Christian Stewardship to the Church by appointing the Revd Charles K. Meachin as Secretary for Stewardship.

3. The British Council of Churches have firmly placed Christian Stewardship within their structure. The BCC Stewardship Committee underlines the value of self appraisal programmes as a means of encouraging the leaders of local congregations to look at their work critically and constructively, making them more willing to seek help in achieving their objects. The BCC also stresses the importance of presenting the teaching and practice of Christian Stewardship to ministers and officers in training. It emphasises the value of ecumenical co-operation in visitation programmes and similar ventures in towns and communities.

4. We share these concerns and have continued our efforts to promote Christian Stewardship in our churches. During the year we asked ourselves three questions:—

4.1 Where do our churches find themselves in their stewardship work?

We are encouraged by the fact that well over 1450 copies of the Church of Scotland Study Kit ‘Membership in the Church’ have been sold through our offices. Members of the Christian Stewardship group have been invited to lead Training Programmes in many parts of the country. Provinces and districts have arranged various training conferences and we believe that an increasing number of churches are preparing stewardship programmes.

4.2 What has been discovered which should be a continuing feature of our work?

The experience of members of the group in leading Training Programmes has resulted in the preparation of study notes particularly linked to our own churchmanship. We have therefore decided to produce our own *Christian Stewardship Study/Action Pack* which whilst still based on the five essentials of membership — WORSHIP — PRAYER — INVOLVEMENT — GIVING — LEARNING — has been written specially for United Reformed churches and closely linked with our Basis of Union.

The Study/Action Pack will contain:

A handbook to introduce Stewardship in the URC.

Worksheets with Bible studies based upon the five essentials of membership.

Background papers setting out:

(a) The Biblical basis of Stewardship

(b) An introduction to each of the five essentials of membership and other Practical papers e.g. Methods of Bible Study, Planning a Programme, Visiting etc.

The pack will be available in the autumn of this year.

4.3 How can the work be developed?

We are convinced that development of the URC Christian Stewardship Programme must be through training. Our hope is that all our ministers and many elders and members will attend training conferences arranged in districts and provinces of our Church, and having attended such conferences will return to their churches refreshed, encouraged and challenged to mount a Christian Stewardship programme in their local church. Such training conferences generate enthusiasm for the Stewardship programme and we are immensely encouraged by the response of those who have already attended.

We are convinced that through such training conferences, based upon the Christian Stewardship Study/Action Pack it will be clearly shown that Christian Stewardship relates to the whole life of every church member. Any lesser emphasis is failing to understand the meaning of Christian Stewardship.

RESOLUTIONS

- 1.** The Assembly urges provinces and/or districts to set up a Christian Stewardship Training Group.
 - 2.** The Assembly requests provinces and/or districts to make provision in their budgets for Christian Stewardship Training conferences.
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APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Harold Springbett

Secretary: The Revd Arthur L. Macarthur

The Committee met twice during the year and reports the following:

1. ADMISSIONS:

By Ordination: The Revds James Breslin, Cedric William Carr, Phyllis Mary Cordon, Brian Coward, Percy Joseph Cullum, Paul Anthony Frampton, John Michael William Graver, Elwyn James John, David Lawrence, Jean McCallum, Ivy Beamish Morrill, Vernon Eric Openshaw, Gordon Palmer, David Stec, Simon Anthony Swailes, Ronald Ernest Wright.

By transfer from other Churches: The Revd Dr William Sydney Campbell, the Revds Richard S. Bruesake, Robert Hamilton, D.C. Lloyd Jones, John Kenneth Main, John Parry, John Robinson, J. Angus Roderick, John Rutherford, Alan Seager, Derek Wales.

2. DELETIONS:

By transfer to other Churches: The Revd Dr Raymond Abba, The Revds (Mrs) H. M. Abba, J. K. Bufton, W. Cornford, R. Ellis-Gruffydd, Douglas Galbraith, David A. Harries, Neville Jarrett, Arthur W. Robinson, James Schofield.

By resignation from the Ministry: The Revds E. N. Bangay, J. Dodwell, David Tegwyn Francis, Ian N. McPherson, G. A. Stinchcombe.

3. LOCAL PASTORS The addition of B. J. Angell, A. Aston, P. Blezard, E. C. Crewes, R. J. Gill, A. Kenworthy and M. Marshall to the Register of Local Pastors was reported to have been made by the Supplementary Ministries Committee.

4. CHURCHES The Committee passed an application from the church at Bursledon to secede from the URC to the Executive Committee with the recommendation that it be granted. The Executive Committee referred the matter back pending clarification of the way in which the property can be made available for the use of such independent churches. The advice of the Charity Commission is awaited and progress will be the subject of verbal report to the Assembly. If the matter has been clarified appropriate resolutions will be submitted in respect of Bursledon and of Cockfield and Worral which have submitted similar applications.

The church at Chollerton was received as a local church of the URC by the Executive Committee in February, since this was a matter of internal URC adjustment.

5. MINISTERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY A further personal paper on this subject was prepared and considered by the Committee and circulated to the Provincial Moderators. It is not proposed to give it further circulation.

6. LOCAL PASTORS AND AUXILIARY MINISTERS The Committee was consulted concerning proposals to be submitted to the Assembly by the Church Life Department for the ordination of Local Pastors and the establishment of an auxiliary ministry.

PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Edmund Banyard

Secretary: Percy W. Bush

1. The Committee welcomed the appointment of the Revd Edmund Banyard as Chairman. During the year the Revd Philip Schofield was co-opted as Chairman of the Publicity Group to relieve Mr Banyard of that responsibility. The Revd T. A. Chadwick is resigning as from this Assembly because of other commitments. Mr Chadwick has been Chairman of the General Publications and Services Sub-Committee since 1972, and prior to that was Chairman of the CCEW Publicity Committee. We record our deep appreciation for this valuable service.
2. At the request of the General Secretary, the secretary participated in the formation of the Religious Book Foundation, an ecumenical corporate project by publishers and booksellers to extend the ministry of the printed word.
3. In view of changes in personnel in 1979 under the 'Six Year Rule', the committee is reviewing its pattern of work in the light of current and future requirements. The ongoing work falls under the present four sub-committees.

General Publications and Services and Sub-Committee *Chairman:* The Revd T. A. Chadwick

4. Considerably more publications have been handled in the house. 1977 was the year of 'Kits' and other new material. The total output included the Year Book and Diary (sold out by early December), 4 kits, 18 other resale items and 33 leaflets, posters etc. for free distribution.
5. During 1977 departments were charged for materials and time for major jobs and resale items produced in the house. Nearly £2,800 has been credited to P & P on this basis. Total sales to Tavistock Bookshop at wholesale prices were nearly £8,000. Nearly £2,500 of that sum is credited to other departments which initiated some of the publications. The work involved in any requirements concerning VAT, in addition to these costing exercises, could cause some strain on P & P staff resources.
6. Mrs. Janet Loveitt has had to resign on medical advice. We express our thanks for her service. Mrs. Mary Mathie who contributed so much skill and expertise in this field has resigned because she is moving away from London.

Publicity Group *Chairman:* The Revd Philip Schofield

7. Media coverage is not easy to achieve, especially when editors and producers expect a massive flow of material and have a preference for off-beat items. Even so, through the group, the young people who visited India were interviewed on radio outside London and local papers took up relevant material. 1977's General Assembly won eight radio broadcasts.
8. The success of the Communications Day for Eastern Province led Thames North Province to ask the group to organise a similar event for their churches.
9. Some 'Guidelines' for setting up regional publicity groups have been prepared and are being followed up by North West Province.

Tavistock Bookshop Sub-Committee *Chairman:* The Revd D. W. Ager

10. The Bookshop continued to serve the churches and further the important work of encouraging the distribution of Christian Literature in spite of the inevitable strains for any commercial enterprise in an inflationary situation. Sales for 1977 were £86,000 (approx.) (1976 £82,000). Details will be found in the accounts section.
11. The sub-committee is examining the functions of the Bookshop with a view to improving its service while remaining commercially viable.
12. Mr. Robert Caffyn, who has served as secretary of the committee since the formation of the URC resigned because of other commitments and his business experience will be greatly missed. Mr Mark Rogers was appointed manager in June 1977, and Miss Betty Ewen retired at the end of the year.

13. The committee are indebted to the new manager and his staff for the way they have carried out their duties, especially for the initiative in new sales drives in the period under review. They record their thanks to Miss Ewen for her seven years of valuable service.

Reform (Management and Promotion) Sub-Committee *Chairman:* The Revd Dr Robert Bruce

14 Some 24,000 people were subscribing to Reform in 1977 — a substantial circulation in view of the membership of the Church, but nearly 2,000 fewer than in 1976. Although subscription income was £300 below the budget figure, printing costs were held in check by containing the use of colour, and advertising income was once again above expectations. (Response by readers to advertisements in Reform is a useful indirect support to the magazine). The net result was a credit balance on Reform for the benefit of the Church.

15 The Revd Dr John Gregory's resignation came after the printing of last year's Reports to Assembly. Tributes to his work, made at the 1977 General Assembly, are fully endorsed by this committee. We regard ourselves as very fortunate in securing the services of Mr Norman Hart, who resigned from the United Bible Societies to head up Reform in September. We record also our deep appreciation of the work of the temporary editor, the Revd Colin Evans and the support of the (then) Assistant Editor, Mrs. Audrey Costley, to bridge the gap.

16. We urge local churches, as well as District Councils and Synods, to commend Reform as widely as possible to ensure the continuation of this valued means of inter-communication. Details of various promotion schemes are brought to the notice of local distributors who deserve support and encouragement from Assembly members.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report of the Publications and Publicity Committee.
 2. The Assembly notes the satisfactory information mentioned in this report and believing that communication is an important aspect of the Church's total ministry urges the Finance Committee to ensure that this work is adequately supported.
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JOINT COMMITTEE FOR NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CHURCHES OF CHRIST AND THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Report for 1978

1. At our meeting in January the Joint Committee heard with great regret that the majorities obtained in the voting of local congregations among Churches of Christ had fallen short of those required in the Proposals for Unification. 45 Churches of Christ (58.5%), representing 69.6% of the total membership, voted in favour of the Proposals by majorities of 75% or more. 5 churches (6.5%), representing 4.8% of the membership, voted in favour by less than 75%. 27 churches (35%), representing 25.6% of the membership, voted against. Although this result must mean the end of the Committee's work, we are anxious to see if there are any ways in which the great gains in theological understanding and deepened experience of the Gospel which have come from these negotiations can be preserved and developed.

2. The Churches of Christ Central Council has indicated its wish to continue the various kinds of cooperation which already exist between the two communions and to extend them where possible. In particular the Council has encouraged local congregations and districts of Churches of Christ to develop and build on relationships with local URC congregations and district councils.

It has supported the continuation and development of joint youth activities. It has indicated its wish to continue joint ministerial training at the Congregational College, Manchester; and has encouraged the development of joint ministry projects in addition to those already in operation. In view of the fact that in three English Churches of Christ districts all the churches voted in favour of the Proposals and that the total majority in favour was significant, even if legally insufficient, the Joint Committee believe that all opportunities for continuing cooperation between the two Churches should be seized. We therefore recommend that a Joint Liaison Committee be set up, consisting of not more than seven members from each side, whose responsibility would be to look after existing areas of cooperation and foster their future development. We further recommend that cross-representation on national committees of the two Churches be continued where appropriate. The Churches of Christ Central Council has also asked its Home Missions Committee to explore with the appropriate committees of the URC the possibility of establishing a relationship of mutual recognition and, if possible, mutual eligibility in ministry between the two Churches: we recommend that this be referred to the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee of the URC and thence to the Applications Committee, which could report to the Joint Liaison Committee.

3. Although the outcome of these negotiations is a disappointment to members on both sides of the Joint Committee, we remain convinced that our work has led to a significant growth in understanding of the ministry and sacraments of the Church. Our fellowship together has widened and deepened our experience of Christ, and we know that others locally have shared a similar experience. We look forward to the day when this may be expressed in a further measure of visible union among Christ's people.

Norman Goodall, *Chairman*
David M. Thompson, *Secretary*
Arthur Macarthur, *General Secretaries*
Philip Morgan,

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives with regret the news that the result of the voting in the Churches of Christ makes it impossible to proceed with the Proposals for Unification approved by the Assembly of 1977, and therefore resolves to take no further action upon them.
2. The Assembly sends greetings in Christian fellowship to the Annual Conference of Churches of Christ, to their representatives who have served on the Joint Committee, and to all the members of the churches; and it expresses the earnest wish, that the close relationship hoped for in the resolutions of the Churches of Christ Central Council can be established.
3. The Assembly resolves to appoint a group of not more than seven people, to serve with a similar number from the Churches of Christ, should their Annual Conference also agree, to work in a consultative and liaison capacity, enabling the two Churches to cooperate in all those things which they can properly do together.
4. It further resolves that the existing representation on each other's Committees shall continue.
5. The Assembly discharges the Joint Committee with thanks for its efforts, for the good relationships achieved and for the enrichment of understanding brought about by the discussions and encourages the appropriate Committees of the Assembly to consider whether, and if so how, aspects of the Proposals for Unification should be harvested for the immediate ongoing life of the United Reformed Church.

CHURCH LIFE DEPARTMENT

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Kenneth Slack

Secretary: The Revd Robert O. Latham

INTRODUCTION

1. In this sixth annual report to Assembly the Church Life Department wishes to emphasize two aspects of the life of the Church which we notice in the work of the committees. The first is a deeper sense of belonging one to the other and of being enriched through our union five years ago. This has manifested itself in the triumphant celebration which our young people, the Fellowship of United Reformed Youth, mounted in October 1977, on the fifth anniversary of the union. It is also a marked feature of all our committee work, which we notice too in the work of Synods and District Councils. We now know we belong together, and our previous denominational allegiances have been superseded to the benefit of all.

2. The second emphasis is more challenging. Our union was hailed as the beginning of a movement towards both the deeper unity and mission of the Church. The high hopes for unification with the Churches of Christ have been disappointed, but we hope to achieve an intimate working arrangement with them in ministerial training, youth work and Christian education. On 'mission' however we have achieved very little in the last five years. One 'working paper' which we will share with Provincial Committees, has begun to examine this area and makes the following observation — 'A presupposition of much Departmental and Church material is that our churches are already motivated to communicate the gospel'. The group doubts whether this is true, and sees motivation as related to an awakening faith. It urges that the emphasis be less on 'in-church education', and more on 'the communication of the faith to others'.

3. We are aware that other departments of the Church are also concerned about mission and evangelism, but it is a vital consideration in all Christian education, ministerial training, youth work, and doctrine and worship. Our hope is that the working paper will open up a creative examination of our presuppositions, programmes, policies and practices.

DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. John Huxtable

Secretary: The Revd Donald McIlhagga

4. **Reconsideration of 'Affirmations to be made by ministers at Ordinations and Inductions'.** (Schedule C). (See Resolution 1). The General Assembly of 1977 instructed the Doctrine and Worship Committee to consider the above Schedule with a view to its revision to avoid unnecessary repetition. This the Committee has done, and after further revision by The Department Committee the following revision is now submitted:

5. *Note:* The revision set out below for use in Ordination and Induction services, will follow immediately the reading of the Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church (Schedule B), and must be considered in that context. At some other point in the service provision will also be made for a statement concerning the circumstances of the call. The minister may also make a personal statement of his own call to that office.

6. The presiding minister shall say immediately after the reading of the statement:

Do you undertake to exercise your ministry in conformity with this statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church?
I do.

He shall then ask:

1. Do you confess anew your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
I do.
 2. Do you believe that the Church is God's people gathered by his love to serve him in reconciling the world to himself?
I do.
 3. Do you recognize the summons of God himself in the call to serve here, and do you mean to be, above all else, his minister?
I do.
 4. Will you faithfully proclaim the good news of forgiveness, renewal and eternal life for all who put their trust in Jesus as Lord?
I do.
I will.
 5. Will you strive to be faithful in all the duties of your ministry, and to live a holy life, conducive to the harmony and unity of all God's people?
I will.
 6. And all these things do you profess and promise as the Lord Jesus Christ shall give you grace and strength to fulfil the same?
I do.
7. **Service Book** The committee has now compiled a final list of the contents of a proposed Service Book. The list includes items that it was thought might have been published separately in an Ordinal. It asks the Church now to publish one book only, if possible, by May 1979. The items below are to be revised versions of services published heretofore in temporary format.

1. Introduction including the notes on 'The Lord's Supper'
2. The Lord's Supper together with seasonal sentences, prefaces and dismissals and with two additional Thanksgiving prayers:
 - a) due to be published by the Joint Liturgical Group;
 - b) that used at the Nairobi Assembly of the World Council of Churches.
3. Baptism and Confirmation
4. Thanksgiving after childbirth, Dedication of parents, and Blessing of children
5. Wedding service
6. Funeral service; Service for the funeral of a child; Service before a funeral; the Burial or Scattering of ashes
7. Service for Healing
8. Dedication of Property; Laying of a Foundation Stone, The Dedication of items of Church Furnishing
9. A Lectionary including a set of Psalm references
10. The Ordination and Induction of Ministers
11. The Ordination and Induction of a Deaconess
12. The Ordination and Induction of Elders
13. (The Commissioning of an accredited Local Pastor)
14. The Commissioning of an accredited Lay Preacher
15. The Induction of a Provincial Moderator
16. Items as revised by International Consultation on English Texts:
Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, Agnus Dei, Gloria Patri, Benedictus, Te Deum, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis.

THE REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL MODERATORS 1978

1. Since the 1977 Assembly the Church has been looking back over five years and we have shared in that review in relation to the life of the URC today and tomorrow. We realise that from year to year our work as moderators changes, and that while we are recognisably as we were, new emphases and possibilities have come about. From September this year only two of us will have served as moderators before union. In preparing this report we have therefore been looking at comments and recommendations we have made in the past five years and asking ourselves again what is our function.

Pastors rather than administrators

2. In our first report we said: "Though the office of provincial moderator has been given new emphases . . . we see ourselves as pastors rather than administrators". That conviction grows, and we are grateful to the URC for making it possible for us to give more time to getting to know and caring for ministers and churches. We acknowledge our debt to our Assistants, and to Synod Clerks, Treasurers, District officers and others for the help they give in freeing us from too much administration. Good administration is necessary, but it must be shared.

It is the personal relationship that we value as moderators. In many respects we are still seeking to know exactly the nature of our work, (as are all ministers) and in each province it varies, but a concern for people is the thread that links together all our activities.

Belonging to a wider fellowship

3. Yet we are also concerned about structures. In 1975 we pleaded for a minimum of structure with an economic programme of meetings in District and Province. We have not yet found a final answer to the question behind that comment: "To what extent must we organise and at what levels?" The interest and the many different views following the sending to the churches and councils of the Report of the Working Party on Structures show that we still seek satisfactory answers. Many feel that we have lost or failed to develop the fellowship we knew in presbyteries and county unions. The emphasis has often been on committee structures, and while there has been an outstanding contribution in the pastoral care of churches by the District Councils, we sometimes fail to give people a sense of belonging to a wider fellowship. This has been improved through Provincial Days and in 1975 we referred to them. In some provinces there has been something of a halt here and in others new ways of sharing are being explored. The bringing together of members of the churches in Forum and CWM Swanwick, in provincial and District week-end conferences, in Youth conferences and Elders' Stewardship consultations are all helping us to see our work together. The Christian is often lonely and we have not yet developed all the possibilities of strengthening him for his witness. This also should be a concern in ecumenical Councils of Churches.

Forms of Ministry

4. It is the loneliness of many of our ministers that naturally comes home to us as moderators. To some extent it is inevitable, but it is often worse than it need be. We urge the value of fraternals and summer schools and the importance of the full sharing particularly by elders in the work of the ministry. We wish to encourage the holding of Training courses and conferences for elders since in many churches little progress has been made in developing the pastoral office of the elder.

5. We have often referred to the decline in the number of ministers and candidates. The grouping of churches and the lack of funds to pay ministers adequately tend to make the decline less apparent. We have also spoken of the change in the forms of ministry. Special ministries, particularly in the provision of chaplaincies in industry and the forces, and the ecumenical and more free-lance possibilities, together with a few team ministries, have opened up new possibilities, to which we add the need for ministers in multi-racial areas. It is however not always easy to find ministers willing to take advantage of these openings. We share the hope that there will be a scheme for Auxiliary Ministries, but it will be necessary to help the churches to discover candidates. Too easily it is assumed that if we agree to have them they will just come.

6. While encouraging more imaginative approaches to the work of the ministry we also believe in what is often called the "traditional ministry" of preaching, teaching, and caring for

people, especially within families; this affords a satisfying and needed call to Christian service. Last year we referred to the anxiety felt by some that the deployment of ministers would take away the element of "call". We do not share that fear, provided there is a sufficiently generous sense of the call to serve wherever we are needed. Yet the difficulties in the free movement of ministers that are associated with the rightful importance of a minister's wife's occupation and the education of children remain, and as moderators we try to share understandingly with ministers and their wives as they face these problems.

7. We find that in spite of the fears that moderators might seek to control the movements of all ministers, churches are seeking nominations from us more than ever. In part this comes from a decreasing knowledge by local churches of other ministers. The cost of travel makes the visits to churches at a distance difficult; but are ministers and churches less willing to arrange "exchange of pulpits"? We are also continually aware of the unreadiness of churches to accept that a minister who is over 60 has a good contribution to make.

Provision for Retirement

8. In past references to retired ministers the problems of housing have been foremost. We are happy to report that the generosity in some of the provinces and of the Memorial Hall Trust is already showing that the provision of retirement homes is much less of a problem than it was. At the same time we stress that when ministers retire they still have much to contribute, and we are grateful for all the help they give as interim moderators, senior counsellors, oversight ministers and occasional preachers. In some cases churches seem unable to distinguish between a part-time oversight ministry and full-time service. Moreover we hope, that the better provision of houses for retired ministers will help them not to act in an oversight capacity when they are no longer able to do so effectively.

Personalia

9. During the past year we have welcomed Michael Hubbard and John Morgans into our fellowship and have come to appreciate their friendship and their fresh contributions. Three of our number, Ronald Taylor, Hugh Jones and Richard Hall, will be retiring this August. With their colleagues, they express their gratitude to the Assembly, the provinces, the churches and the ministers for the privilege and joy which they have found in their service as moderators and for all the hospitality they have received in innumerable homes, and they add a special "thank you" to their fellow-moderators for years of cheerful, stimulating fellowship. They will be cheering from the side, as they continue to discover the meaning of ministry. We who continue would record our thanks to God for those who retire after a combined moderatorial service of 27 years. We are particularly grateful for those contributions arising from that experience, understanding and pastoral care by which our fellowship has been enriched.

7.1 It is intended to publish the following services in temporary format for the General Assembly of 1978:

Funerals

- A service for use before a funeral
- A service for the funeral of a child
- A service for the burial or scattering of ashes

Supplementary Ministries

- A service for the Commissioning of a Lay Preacher
- (A service for the Commissioning of a Local Pastor)
- A service for the Ordination and Induction of a Deaconess

Property

- Prayers for the Laying of a Foundation Stone
- Service for the Dedication of a Church
- Prayers for the Dedication of Church Property

7.2 The committee is continuing to work on items of corporate material for congregational use. It is hoped to be able to publish a selection possibly in loose-leaf format. It is including work on a possible 'Covenant Service'.

7.3 A Hymnody Group has been set up which is 'monitoring' new material submitted to it, and considering how some of it can be circulated for use in churches.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Lesslie Newbigin

Secretary: The Revd Robert O. Latham

8. During the year the committee has lost by sudden death two valued members — The Revd Eric Hull, MA, BD, recently appointed Principal of the Congregational College, Manchester, and the Revd John E. Newport, MA, BLitt, for 12 years President of Cheshunt College, Cambridge and from 1967 also Professor of Applied Theology, Westminster and Cheshunt Colleges, and recently joint minister with United Reformed and Methodist Church in Winchester. We thank God for them both and for their distinctive contributions in the realm of ministerial training.

9. **Ministerial Training Fund** The major concern during the year has been financial, to find the extra money needed for student bursaries. The 'extra' amounted to £40,000 for the academic year 1977/78 and is estimated at £50,000 for 1978/79. These figures have been carefully examined, and are proving to be all too accurate. The hope has been that certain new Trust Funds would be available and have sufficient resources to meet this increased demand. That is still the hope, but no firm date can be given when fresh money will be available. The committee has therefore set up a special group to review the whole situation both in the short term and the long term, in consultation with the Finance Department. In the meantime the Committee asks for the underwriting of the extra expenditure in the current financial year 1978 and asks for additional budgetary provision for 1979. (Resolution No. 2)

10. **Ordination of Local Pastors** The Assembly of 1977 requested the Ministerial Training Committee to 'investigate the conditions under which ordination may be offered to local pastors on the official register', and having consulted various committees, the Ministerial Training Committee submits the following report and recommendations:

10.1 There are 42 local pastors on the official register. These local pastors are exercising a ministry of Word and Sacraments but they are not ordained, and their position is anomalous in the URC.

Some are part time, others are retired from secular employment and are for all practical purposes full time. Some live in manses, some receive an honorarium. There are various permutations of these arrangements.

Many of these local pastors are recognized in their communities as ministers of the URC, and they, and their churches, are embarrassed ecumenically by their non-ordination. Following the debate in the Assembly 1977, the various committees consulted, recommend that this anomaly be ended by offering them ordination.

10.2 There is another group of local pastors who are not on the official register, but who are recognized by their District Councils and Provincial Synods. Some of these have been serving in this capacity for many years, and they are in the same anomalous state as the registered pastors.

10.3 Further there are 44 persons not at present exercising a ministry as local pastors, but who are qualified by having taken the Lay Preachers course, plus the Pastoralia course. Their names are recorded by the Supplementary Ministries Committee. Some have served in the past but are temporarily out of charge. Others have never so served.

10.4 Finally there are four Lay Preachers now taking the Pastoralia course, and they may have the intention of becoming local pastors.

11. The committee recognises the positive contribution which Local Pastors have made, and are making, to the life of the URC and makes its recommendations with a view to resolving the anomalies created.

12. It is conscious that Assembly will be considering the introduction of Auxiliary Ministers along the lines proposed in the 'Proposals for the Unification with the Churches of Christ', and therefore at this time restricts its recommendations to categories 10.1 and 10.2 above, namely those men and women in pastoral charge at this time, i.e. May 1978. The other categories will be considered in the recommendations concerning the selection, training and ordination of auxiliary ministers in due course.
(Resolution 3)

13. **Auxiliary Ministers** The proposals for Unification with the Churches of Christ envisaged the introduction of a category of non-stipendary ministers, described as 'Auxiliary Ministers'. This recommendation had been widely studied and discussed, and there is reason to believe it attracted widespread support. The Ministerial Training Committee deeply regrets that the proposals for Unification of the URC and Churches of Christ cannot now be implemented but recommends that the URC proceeds with arrangements for the introduction of 'auxiliary ministers' and reaffirms its willingness to continue its preparatory work on their role, selection and training.
(Resolution 4)

14. **Enquirers and Assessment Conferences** During the year two Enquirers Conferences have been held and a total of 41 church members of varying ages have been helped to understand more clearly the nature of the calling and training, and roles of ministers in our Church.

15. Four Assessment conferences have been held at which 36 candidates have been interviewed. In general we have noted an increase in the number of potentially very good candidates and this has been encouraging.

16. **Recruitment leaflet** The enquirers conferences are proving to be an effective stimulus to recruitment. The committee has also issued a new leaflet entitled *Tell me about the ministry*, and a follow-up insert, entitled *More about the Ministry*.

17. **Westminster and Cheshunt Colleges** In 1968 a Scheme was drawn up and sanctioned by the Department of Education and Science for the future administration of the resources held under the aegis of Cheshunt College and under the direction of its Governors. This scheme was based on the legal continuity of Cheshunt College, but provided for most of its work to be done in conjunction with Westminster College. The functions of the Department of Education and Science in this regard have since passed to the Charity Commissioners. An application to the Charity Commissioners for an amended Scheme was refused on the grounds that the existing Scheme is still operable. A further application for the substitution of the title (Cheshunt) 'Foundation' for 'College' has been granted.

18. In 1967 the then Presbyterian Assembly entered into agreements for the operation of the two Colleges and set up machinery for its oversight. These need to be brought up to date to take account both of the union of the Churches and of developments in the work of the Cheshunt Governors.

19. In May 1977 the General Assembly granted the request of the Cheshunt Governors that the Revd Dr. Stephen Mayor be recognised by the Assembly as the Cheshunt Professor of Pastoral Studies in Westminster College, and that the guarantee of his salary and allowances for an initial period of five years be accepted with thanks to Cheshunt Governors.

It is now further requested that the Assembly of 1978:

1. gives an assurance to the Cheshunt Governors, in order that they may remain faithful to their Foundation, that Westminster College will accept as students "suitable persons of either sex being members of the URC or other Christian Churches, as candidates for the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ at home or abroad".
 2. notes that the Cheshunt Foundation will continue its financial support of Westminster College including bursarial grants for URC students, and the College will continue to provide facilities by agreement for the use of the Cheshunt Foundation.
 3. agrees that candidates from Churches not in membership of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches who are admitted by agreement of the Westminster College and the Cheshunt Foundation shall be the financial responsibility of the Cheshunt Foundation. The College shall not be committed to admitting any particular individuals or any particular number of such students.
 4. approves that the powers formally vested in the College Committee of the Presbyterian Church of England shall be vested in the Ministerial Training Committee of the United Reformed Church which shall be responsible to the Assembly for the affairs of the College and that changes in the number of teaching staff and new appointments shall be subject to the decision of the Assembly:
 5. resolves that the Joint Westminster-Cheshunt Committee shall be dissolved;
 6. resolves that two Governors of Cheshunt shall be appointed by the General Assembly;
 7. resolves that Cheshunt Foundation shall cease to be represented as such on the committees and Councils of the URC;
 8. resolves that the Senatus shall consist of all the members of the teaching Staff (including the Cheshunt Professor) and be responsible for the curriculum, the oversight of students and for the general direction of the academic work of the College and for relationships with the Cambridge Federation of Theological Colleges.
 9. resolves that a Board of Studies which shall be responsible with the Senatus for student admissions, courses and assessments, shall consist of the Senatus and eight members appointed by the Ministerial Training Committee, two of whom shall be nominated by the Governors of Cheshunt. The Board may appoint examiners to assist in its work;
 10. resolves that the Westminster College Management Committee, of which one member shall be appointed by the Cheshunt Governors, shall be appointed by the Ministerial Training Committee and shall be responsible for the financial affairs and general maintenance of the College;
 11. resolves that a House Committee appointed by and reporting to the Management Committee shall be responsible through the Principal for all domestic arrangements connected with the College.
- (Resolution 6)

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

20. **Students** At the end of the year 1976-7 five URC and one Congregational Federation students completed the College course and were ordained and inducted into their first charges.

21. The new session opened with a pre-theological course for the new entrants, held during the three weeks in September before full term, when the entrants were given intensive tuition in the Biblical languages and an introduction to Theological studies.

22. There are 40 students of Theology on the College roll, comprising 20 URC ordinands (14 of whom are married) four URC ministers on sabbatical leave (supported by the Cheshunt Foundation), four from overseas churches, seven Senior Associates (all from the USA) and five

Course III candidates (one of whom spent a term in residence). 20 undergraduates from University colleges fill our vacant rooms, bringing the total College roll up to 60.

23. **Staff** On September 28th Dr. Stephen H. Mayor was inducted as Professor of Pastoral Studies, in succession to the Revd J. E. Newport, a responsibility he has taken in addition to his work as Director of the Cheshunt Foundation. Professor J. O'Neill, having served 12 years as librarian, asked to be released. We are indebted to him for careful maintenance of the library and for the work of re-cataloguing which is nearing completion. Professor Martin H. Cressey has taken over as Librarian.

24. **Federation** This has been the College's second year of participation in the Cambridge Federation of Theological Colleges, and the fact that we are now part of a much wider theological community than before gives an added dimension to our training. All members of the teaching staff are involved in inter-collegiate teaching, in classes and in supervision. The joint colleges are in process of drafting an examination in theology which we hope may provide a common course of training for the ministry acceptable to the three denominations involved in the Federation, Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Church.

25. **Conferences** The college buildings have been used for the usual variety of meetings and conferences, including a Lay Conference at Easter, two Ministerial Summer Schools, training conferences for elders and youth workers, meetings of church groups, etc., and in the summer we provided accommodation for a group of Swedish church musicians. The URC conferences do no more than pay their way. Outside bodies using the college for their own purposes bring us in some welcome extra income.

26. **Buildings** The two new architect-designed flats for use by married students have been constructed out of two large sheds at the back of the main building. They are now occupied and will be an on-going asset to the College. Regular maintenance and redecoration has been carried on, and with the completion of the restoration work on the tower and rebuilding chimney stacks in Nos. 1 and 2 The Bounds, the buildings are in good repair.

27. **Congratulations** We offer congratulations to the Rt. Revd J. E. Lesslie Newbigin, on his appointment as Moderator of the General Assembly 1978-9, and to Revds Peter Chesney and Michael Davies on their appointments as Provincial Moderators. All three are former students of the college.

28. **Commemoration** The 1978 commemoration lecture on 7th June will be Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall, and his subject: 'The heart of the Pilgrim's Progress'.

29 Students of the College

Third Year	E. Freeman R. Lowes B.Ed Janet Sowerbutts J. Titlow D. L. Williams, B.Sc.	Second Year	D. Bradburn D. R. Brett Sheila Dickson I. G. Jones, BA N. Setchell
First Year	Jennie Austen, B.Sc. Mary Davies, B.Sc. Robin Hine, BA. Kate McIlhagga, MA. T. MacMeekin, MA. J. Paul, BA. D. J. Williams, B.Sc.	One Year students	P. Hartley D. Vincent, MA.
	Kate McIlhagga, MA. T. MacMeekin, MA. J. Paul, BA. D. J. Williams, B.Sc.	Course III Special Course	Mrs. J. Clarke Mrs. S. Daldorph E. T. Wells R. Wiggins A. Lorimer

THE CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE, MANCHESTER

30. **Students** The College roll at present numbers 115 of whom 102 are in residence: thirty are in training for the ministry of the URC, three for that of the Churches of Christ and one for the Moravian Church. There are also seven, who are taking the college-based, non-residential course as their preparation for entry into the URC ministry. The Chairman of the Student House is Mr. Garry McGowan, whilst the Senior Theological Student is Mr. Brian

Acty. Mr. Dafydd Jones and Mr. John Humphries are continuing their studies at S. Andrews and Princeton Theological Seminary respectively.

31. Staff At the end of the 1976/77 academic session, the College said a reluctant farewell to the Revd Dr. Edgar Jones, who has served us with such academic distinction and kindly ability as lecturer and principal for twenty-one years. On the same occasion we said good-bye to the Revd A. G. Burnham who had worked at the College with such vigour and dedication as full-time and part-time lecturer since 1969. Just as the College was beginning to detect the distinctive qualities of the Revd J. H. E. Hull as Principal, he died suddenly on November 29th, to very great sorrow and loss of all who had been privileged to know him. His enthusiastic teaching of the New Testament and pastoral openness will be missed in the College for a long time to come. The Revd Roger Tomes joined the staff at the beginning of the academic session, and his enthusiasm, learning and general dependability have been a very great support during this anxious period. In the interim the Revd Dr. S. H. Russell is serving as lecturer-in-charge. The College owes a great deal to the willingness and adaptability of its part-time staff, the Revd David Jenkins, Mr. David Goodbourn and to the Revd John Francis, who was so generously seconded to us at the beginning of the session by the Churches of Christ.

32. Open Courses The College continues to work alongside the Baptist, Methodist and Unitarian Colleges in providing courses to support the Churches in the work of continuing Christian education. In particular, the staff have been responsible for series on the Parables of Jesus, Isaiah 40-55 and the history of Christian worship, as well as travelling to conduct a Lenten course at Sheffield. Furthermore, the College has been involved in the initial planning of the Manchester Christian Institute.

33. Settlements Paul Frampton has been called to Hatherlow and Woodley; Norman George to Porthcawl; Michael Gudgeon to Trinity, Cardiff; Vernon Openshaw to the Halifax Group; Paul Quilter to the Lincoln Team Ministry; Simon Swales to the South Leeds Team Ministry; and Ronald Wright to Perivale Park.

34. URC Ordinands

<i>Final Year</i>	1971	T. J. Harwood, BA. BD.	Bradford
	1974	B. W. Acty	Southport
	1974	J. L. Humphreys, BA. BD.	Cobham
	1974	D. J. Jones, BA. BD.	Swansea
	1974	D. Spence, B.Sc.	Blackpool
	1974	C. Warner	Aylesbury
	1975	S. Fisher, BA.	Lindfield
	1975	Christina Flashman, BA	Harrogate
	1975	R. Pagan, BA.	Great Malvern
	1975	Thelma Robinson	Morecambe
<i>Third Year</i>	1975	G. McGowan	Rochdale
<i>Second Year</i>	1976	Christine Craven	Wilmslow
	1976	R. Cornish	Portsmouth
	1976	R. J. Fowler	Petworth
	1976	J. Filzak	Desborough
	1976	R. S. Hayward	Chatham
	1976	R. Mortimer, BA.	Wimborne
	1976	Eileen Sambrooks, BA.	Bradford
	1976	C. V. Skinner	Leatherhead
	1976	J. W. Steele	Halifax
	1976	D. S. Webb	Southport
<i>First Year</i>	1977	S. Collinson, BA.	Ossett
	1977	R. House	Woking
	1977	R. Jones	Swansea
	1977	S. Larkin	Morecambe
	1977	M. Piper, BA.	Chelmsford
	1977	P. Rand, B.Sc.	High Wycombe
	1977	P. Snell	Guildford
	1977	C. Weddle	Gateshead
	1977	Christine Wright	Beaconsfield

College-based courses

Hazel Catton, MA. BD.	Middlesbrough
W. Ford	Harrogate
D. Greenwood	Stockport
B. Harris	Newcastle
J. Jolliffe	Kington
K. Sheldon	Buckley
Edith Wynn Young	Thornaby

MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

35. **Students** There are 9 students studying for the ministry:

<i>Third Year</i>	Gillian Jones, BA. (Sussex)	— URC
<i>Second Year</i>	David Chapman, BA. (Manchester)	— Northern Ireland Presbyterian
	Peter Flint, B.Sc. (London)	— URC
	David Skitt, BA. (London)	— URC
	Janet Wootton, BA. (Oxon)	— Congregational Federation
	David Cornick, BA. (Oxon)	— URC
<i>First Year</i>	John Burgess, B.Sc. (Wales)	— URC
	Justine Wyatt, BA. (York)	— URC
<i>Course III</i>	Ivy Halden, BA. (London)	— URC

36. **Staff** The College has welcomed Dr. W. R. Telford as Research Fellow in Biblical Studies, Dr. Janet Dyson as Lecturer in Mathematics, Mr. R. Marshall as Lecturer in Economics and Mr. W. Swan as Lecturer in Philosophy.

The theological staff consist of:

- Dr. D. A. Sykes, Principal and Tutor in Church History
- The Revd C. Brock, Chaplain and Tutor in Pastoral Theology
- The Revd Dr. M. E. Satrom, Lutheran World Federation Fellow and Tutor in Systematic Theology
- Dr. W. R. Telford, Research Fellow in Biblical Studies (New Testament)
- The Revd G. W. Trowell, Librarian.

Tuition in Old Testament is given by the Revd Dr. Rex Mason of Regent's Park College. Other teaching is arranged through members of the University Faculty of Theology and of the other theological colleges in and around Oxford. Local URC churches are fully involved in pastoral training.

37. This year we have first students taking the Oxford University Certificates in Theology which has recently been assumed by the University from the theological colleges. Students at Mansfield now have the choice of the BA in Theology (2 years) and one year of more directly pastoral work, or the three year Certificate which includes such practical work within it.

38. The College welcomes as Treasurer Mr. Emrys Evans and it is already benefitting from his advice.

39. We record with regret the death of Dr. W. G. Moore, a former Chairman of the College Council who always retained a concern for the welfare of the College and who will be remembered with gratitude and respect.

The College was glad that the dinner to honour the Revd Dr. G. F. Nuttall on the presentation of a *Festschrift* was held there. We congratulate two members of the College who have been appointed Provincial Moderators, the Revd M. F. Hubbard and the Revd J. I. Morgans.

MEMORIAL COLLEGE, SWANSEA

40. Students Our students this session (1977-78) are 28 in number, including six already ordained (one URC, two Anglican, one Unitarian, one Presbyterian Church of Wales, one Union of Welsh Independents). Of the remaining 22, seven are candidates for the ministry in UWI, two in the Congregational Federation, one in the Evangelical Congregational Fellowship, one with the Welsh Baptists and one with the Unitarians. The rest are committed Christians who seek other vocations. 20 of our students are pursuing the B.D. scheme of the University of Wales, seven the Diploma courses and one the initial Arts degree course at St. Andrews. We have also six research students contemplating the M.Th. degree.

41. Settlements In 1977 there were eight ordinations, one of them in the URC, Elwyn J. John at Templeton, Reynalton and Tabernacle, Narberth. He hopes to complete his B.D. in 1978.

42. Former students at Swansea are the new Moderator of the Welsh Province of the URC, the Revd Dr. John I. Morgans; the Revd John S. Roberts, head of Religious broadcasting in Wales, and also one of his assistants, the Revd Meurwyn Williams.

43. Academic Record All of our candidates were successful in their external examinations. Six completed the B.D. degree in 1977, one with first class honours.

44. Staff The Revd Dewi Eirug Davies has been appointed editor of *Diwinyddiaeth*, the Welsh periodical devoted to theology. Dr. Elwyn Davies continues to edit *Yr Ymofynnnyd*. The Revd Treffor Evans is Chairman of the Theological Section of the University of Wales Guild of Graduates.

45. Library The pre-1800 books have been professionally catalogued by Mrs. Rhiannon Brown and a valuable report on them prepared by Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall.

46. Discussions of a practical nature are proceeding with regard to co-operation with other colleges in Wales in theological education.

47. URC Ministerial Students The Revd Elwyn James John, now ordained, is in his fourth year at College.

48. COLLEGE STATISTICS

	October 1976 Total No. in training for URC	New Candidates for URC October 1976	Estimated Nos. for URC Ministry 78, 79, 80	Actual No. entered URC 1976	Total No. of Theol. students (incl.) Post. Grads)	Total No. of places available;
Westminster	25	14	8, 6, 11	5	40	61
Manchester	37	17	11, 12, 14	7	41	104
Mansfield	9	3	2, 5, 2	—	15	36
Swansea	1	—	— — —	1	28	40
Bala Bangor	—	—	— — —	—	—	—
Queen's	1	—	1	—	—	—
Totals	73	34	21 24 27	13	124	241

SUPPLEMENTARY MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd John W. P. Williamson

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

49. Local Pastors Members of the Supplementary Ministries Committee have been fully involved in the working party set up by the Ministerial Training Committee to investigate the

conditions under which ordination may be offered to Local Pastors on the official Register, and the full committee supports Resolution 7 in the Ministerial Training Committee report.

50. The Register of Local Pastors contains 42 names. There are a further 44 names of those qualified but not in pastoral charge, on the list kept by the Supplementary Ministries Committee.

51. **Lay Preachers** The third expository sermon competition was held in 1977 and members of the Congregational Federation shared in the adjudication. There were 26 entrants and the prizewinners were:

1. Mrs. G. Gemmell (St. John's URC, Northwood)
2. Mr. H. G. B. Toobe (Prenton URC, Birkenhead)
3. Mrs. E. M. Crabtree (Bingley URC, Yorkshire)

The 1978 competition will have the theme 'an Old Testament character' and lay preachers are invited to submit a sermon by 30th June 1978.

52. 233 members are working through the course Exploring the Faith, our 16 study unit course designed primarily for those seeking to qualify as lay preachers. The course is also used by other church members wishing to explore their faith more fully. Students work with a tutor having their work assessed both by the tutor and by an independent assessor. It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain tutors and the committee is encouraging the formation of groups of students guided by one tutor. The committee is discontinuing the former Lay Preachers' Course in December 1979.

53. The following accredited lay preachers have completed the Pastoralia course during the year:

- Mrs. S. Shepherd (Yorkshire Province)
Mr. M. T. Bond (East Midlands Province)
Mrs. G. Duncalf (Mersey Province)
Mr. K. Brooks (Southern Province)
Mr. L. Wilkinson (North West Province)
Mr. B. Angell (Eastern Province)

54. Realising the important service exercised by lay preachers as Sunday by Sunday they lead worship in our churches and remembering its responsibility for the recruitment and training of Lay Preachers, the committee is seeking to discover the extent to which lay preachers are used in Sunday Worship. An analysis of a survey conducted in the Chelmsford District showed that only 42% of worship services are conducted by URC ministers. The picture varies from area to area. We need some idea of the total requirement for lay leadership, and hope that the questionnaire sent in January will provide this.

55. Along with the Anglican and Methodist Churches a Lay Preachers' Conference was held in April 1978.

56. The Committee has re-examined the role of Lay preaching Commissioners and produced a paper setting out their functions and responsibilities, linking them with District Councils. The Committee arranged a consultation for all lay preaching Commissioners in April 1978 to consider with them, recruitment training and the role of lay preachers in the URC.

57. **Deaconesses** Miss Audrey Langdown, after four years' leave of absence for domestic reasons, accepted an invitation to serve at Loftus URC on Teesside. The other Deaconesses continue to serve in the following churches:

- Durham St., Hartlepool (Miss Lilian Blythin)
Harlow Group (Miss Eileen Gooding)
Sherwood, Arnold and Burton Joyce (Miss Mollie Fletcher)
Openshaw, Manchester (Miss Pat F. Parrish)
Crossway Central Mission, London (Miss Kay J. Salvage)

Their annual summer conference proved once again to be most successful.

58. Church Community Workers The committee is exploring the possibility of introducing a scheme for the training and appointing of Church Community Workers. Such workers would lead and strengthen the local church's mission to the community through caring service, or the promotion of community development, in an area where an additional lay member of a team would provide specialist help to meet unusual needs. The Supplementary Ministries Committee encourage District Councils to explore the possibilities of appointing church community workers. A leaflet setting out the concepts of the scheme and the training available can be obtained from the Church Life Department.

(Resolution 7)

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd J. E. Mather

Secretary: The Revd Michael J. Davies

59. "Celebration '77", the FURY weekend October 7-9, where 1200 young people from all over England and Wales took part in a series of special events and services in London, was a fitting climax to the first five years' youth work in the URC. From slow and rather chaotic beginnings, FURY has gradually gained momentum and developed a sense of purpose and identity.

60. Static Statistics The annual statistical returns indicate that the number of young people in youth organisations has remained static at about 80,000 throughout the period. A recent survey of District questionnaires (86% return) indicates that 82% of Districts have a Youth Secretary or Officer and another 12% have someone responsible — and 92% of Districts have a Youth Committee or some other Committee responsible for youth work. 66% of those replying have one or more Youth Forums (and some of the others hold youth activities of one sort or another). About half of the Districts have residential youth conferences or events. Although there is a long way to go before the URC is providing a really comprehensive service for its young people (particularly for those in isolated situations, where the need is greatest) and there are still some Districts where no one is prepared to invest some time and effort in youth work, there has been a most encouraging improvement since 1972.

61. Youth Leadership Training A major priority of the Youth Committee has been the training and support of youth workers. The URC training course has so far been used in 17 Districts. We now have a team of four Youth Leadership Training Officers (three full-time serving two Provinces each, one part-time serving ONE Province) so that seven out of the 12 Provinces have the services of a YLTO. In the other Provinces some provision is made for training, but we are desperately anxious to complete our YLTO team. The Church must be extremely grateful to the Department of Education and Science, the King George's Jubilee Trust and a number of Local Education Authorities and Trust Funds for substantial grants towards the development of the training programme, although recent financial cut-backs and inflation have proved a major problem and this vital work will be in peril unless new funds can be obtained speedily.

62. Publications The Committee has continued to publish its Youth Leaflet series and GOAD. The new style activities posters are attractive and popular. A new series of **On the Job** papers, offering practical advice to Ministers, Elders and youth workers, is now available from Youth Office and Training Officers. It is hoped to produce a FURY poster and an audio-visual aid on youth work in the URC. Fish Pendants (40p) and Fish Badges (now 15p) are available and a FURY T-shirt is to be marketed shortly. Most activities and publications are now undertaken jointly with the Christian Education Department of the Churches of Christ.

63. Activities The national activities programme has expanded greatly since Union. 1977 saw two major events — the "Celebration '77" weekend already referred to and the BCC "day-spring" camp at St. Davids. Our regular programme included the Zambia Journey, a young adult conference "Expressing Easter" and a second work camp "Mission to Bowerham" in addition to the regular pattern of camps and conferences. The "Time for God" voluntary Service scheme, shared with the Baptists and Churches of Christ, has now been expanded to include the Methodists and funds are urgently being sought to appoint a part-time Administrator. The Youth Committee is under some pressure to hold an annual national FURY weekend following the success of the Celebration event, although limited resources may make this

impossible. The "Fending for Life" project has run throughout the past year and, despite legal problems about the Church's ability to invest in the Ecumenical Development Co-operative Society, it has remitted a sum of £4,000 on account. The project closes on July 15 when the balance will be forwarded. FURY expresses the strong hope that legal difficulties will soon be overcome and that the Church itself will then be able to make a substantial investment in the work of the Society.

(Resolution 8)

64. We often underestimate the major role of the Uniformed Organisations in URC work. Statistically five eighths of FURY are in Guides, Scouts or the Brigades. Although these are mostly within the lower age ranges, every opportunity must be taken of helping them to feel part of FURY and of the Church family and, as they grow older, to join the Youth Fellowships and to become Church Members. We commend the work of the Boys' Brigade, the Council of URC Companies and the URC Guide and Scout Fellowship.

65. **Youth Representatives** The Youth Committee and FURY Assembly have been encouraged at the number of Districts which have included a young person amongst their delegates at General Assembly and hope that this will increase until all Districts are so represented and young people are taking a full part in the work of the Church at local, District, Provincial and National levels. We are particularly delighted that last year's FURY Chairman, Susan Stevenson, has been appointed as a URC representative on the BCC Assembly. During the past year FURY has become a member of the British Youth Council and has taken a lead in the setting up of an English Churches Youth Assembly which will meet for the first time in the Autumn.

66. During this sixth year of the life of the URC and of FURY the Committee is now seeking to re-assess its priorities in the light of the needs of young people and the resources available.

67. The Department and the Youth Committee wish to record their thanks and deep appreciation of the fine contribution made to the life of the URC, and its young people, by the competent, energetic, unsparing and devoted work of the Youth Secretary, the Revd Michael Davies. Their prayers and good wishes go with him to his new ministry, as Moderator of the Thames North Province.

(Resolution 9)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd C. C. Franks

Secretary: The Revd C. Keith Forecast

CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Glyn Jenkins

Secretary: The Revd C. Keith Forecast

68. **The Revd H. A. Hamilton** Though he ceased to be General Secretary of the Congregational Youth and Education Department in 1945, the influence of Bert Hamilton upon the educational work of the Church has been felt increasingly over the years, both within our own tradition and far beyond it. He died in November 1977 when he was still actively in consultation with the officers of the Christian Education Committee concerning its work. The Committee wishes to record their gratitude to God for his long life and ministry and their indebtedness to him in so many ways.

69. **Children in the Church** Following the 1976 Assembly, working parties have examined the situation in the Birmingham, Dorset and Chelmsford Districts. There has been a marked fall in numbers, but that is not the pattern everywhere. Some situations show considerable growth. The committee is collating information, and intends to make a full report next year.

70. **Teacher Training** During the year the Committees have lost the services of Mr. Michael Woolnough, Teacher Training Officer for the past five years. No replacement is currently

envisioned, so alternative plans are being laid. It is hoped to provide for Teacher Training in Districts and Provinces. Each District has been invited to nominate at least one 'Teacher Training Consultant' who will be responsible for ensuring that teachers receive training, either through existing inter-denominational or educational channels or where necessary by conducting training sessions personally. These Consultants will be gathered together by the Youth Leadership Training Officers in the seven provinces they serve, to plan a programme and to receive some training themselves. Other provinces are asked to provide what organisation and training they can. The Committee Secretary is willing to help where possible. We also draw attention to the excellent training programme organised by the National Christian Education Council, who have recently appointed a URC minister, the Revd Helen Pullin as Training Officer.

(Resolution 10)

71. Training for Elders Ever since the inauguration of the URC there has been a demand for training for Elders. We believe this reflects a sustained concern to exercise this ministry worthily. The Committee asked Dr. Stephen Mayor to prepare a book which might be used as a basis for such training. *Being an Elder in the United Reformed Church* was published in December 1977, price 60p. It can be used by individual elders working alone, but is designed primarily to be used by groups of elders — either within a local Elders' Meeting or in conference or training days organised by Districts. The book is supported by two leaflets: '*Some are called to be Elders*' (designed to be put into the hands of would-be elders and others concerned to discover a little of what it means to be an elder) and '*Organising an Elders Training Day*', price 10p each. These three publications are commended to the churches.

72. Help for Adult Groups Many requests are received for assistance in planning programmes for adult learning — house groups etc — including the many women's meetings throughout the Church. The committee feels that there is at present no need for material to be provided other than what already exists. Leaders, however, need to be made aware of the wealth of existing material and also need help in putting it to use to meet their local needs. A resource box is therefore being prepared. It is hoped that every District will purchase at least one, and those who lead District or local church activities for adults, including leaders of Women's meetings will be made aware of it and encouraged to use it. The Christian Education Secretary will provide details.

73. Holiday Clubs Many churches organise clubs for children during the school holidays. They are a proven method of strengthening the existing children's work of the church and of developing its outreach. The Children's Committee, jointly with the Methodist Division of Education and Youth and the Churches of Christ Education Department has published a book, giving guidance in the complex matters associated with this exercise. We commend both the book and the Holiday Club idea itself to the churches.

PILOT PANEL

Chairman: Mr. Graham Burnett

Master Pilot: The Revd C. Keith Forecast

74. For 42 years Pilots has offered the Church a non-uniformed organisation whereby children of seven and over may grow in their discipleship of Christ, and in their understanding of, and commitment to, the world-wide Church. It provides a frame-work of activities and ideas which can be adapted to local needs. In recent years many local churches have discovered its value as a weeknight complement to their Sunday children's work. At present there are 121 companies catering for 2,000 children. In addition to the continuing programme of working for a variety of "crests", Pilots have this year enjoyed a winter study project entitled "Voyage into Freedom". Four regional camps are held each year, offering a week's holiday with a purpose to about 400 children.

75. The movement is undergoing a period of self-examination and is revising its image and a good deal of its basic material at the present time. In particular, the Badge, which has hitherto carried the picture of the missionary ship "John Williams V", now includes the World Council of Churches boat symbol and the fish design of FURY, thus indicating the movement's aim to help children "learn, pray and serve all they can in the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ".

76. The Church Life Department commends Pilots to the churches who, perhaps with limited leadership, wish to develop their work among boys and girls beyond what can be done on Sundays.

CHAPLAINS AND STUDENT WORKING PARTY

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Leslie Green

Secretary: The Revd Bruce Stuart

77. **National Student Christian Congress** The aim of this recently found Congress is to make available to students in higher education a more broadly based students' movement than has been available to Christian students in the past.

78. One of the main forces behind the setting up of the National Student Christian Congress has been the rise, and the extension of denominational chaplaincies, over the past ten years. Contributing factors also include the decline in denominational societies, and the rise of ecumenical societies. Specifically, however, the call for what has now become the National Student Christian Congress came out of the 1976 Student Christian Movement congress, "New Heaven, New Earth".

79. Accordingly, the Congress reflects support both from denominational chaplaincy support groups, as well as a variety of other Christian groups. The Congress Planning Committee comprises representatives of the URC, Anglican, Methodist, and Roman Catholic chaplaincy committees, the Young Christian Students, the British Council of Churches, the Frontier Youth Trust, the Student Christian Movement, and the Catholic Students' Council. The University colleges Christian Fellowship sends an observer.

80. We urge the support of URC ministers, and URC members by drawing the attention of students in higher education to the National Student Christian Congress forthcoming conference, April 2nd-9th, 1979, to be held at the University of Aston, in Birmingham.

Further information is available from Dave Snowden, Student Christian Movement, Wick Court, Wick, Bristol.

81. **URC Chaplains** While not giving statistics of all institutions of higher education in England and Wales, the working party would draw attention of representatives to the General Assembly to the contrasting figures of 45 universities and 30 polytechnics with over 700,000 full time students alone and the 66 URC chaplains, many of whom are church based. We feel these figures indicate the continuing need to increase the number of full time, and church-based chaplains from within the URC. We remind representatives that communication about Chinese or Ghanaian students should be sent to the Revd Kah Geh Chong, 17 Northumberland Avenue, Isleworth, TW7 5HZ, and the Revd Ben Tettey, 44 Cautley Avenue, London SW4 9HU, respectively. A chaplaincy centre has been opened at the American Church in London (meeting in Whitefields Memorial Church), Tottenham Court Road, London.

82. **Provincial Link Men** To assist Synods in their task of appointing chaplains within their provinces, the working party now has the assistance of provincial link men as follows:

I	Northern	Revd Malcolm Hanson, 5 Towers Avenue, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon Tyne NE2 3QE (814676)
II	North Western	Revd David Jenkins, 6 South Drive, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 2DX (061-861-9468)
III	Mersey	Revd George Walker, 4 Belvoir Road, Liverpool LL8 9SS (051-427-4721)
IV	Yorkshire	Revd H. E. Colman, 14 Wheatlands Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8AZ (4310)
V	East Midlands	Revd L. Paxton, The Central URC, Becket Well Lane, Derby DE1 1JW (57108)
VI	West Midlands	Revd Bernard Moss, 3 Sneyd Avenue, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 2QA (615775)

VII	Eastern	Revd Tony Coates, 8 Hurst Park Avenue, Cambridge, CB4 2AE (0223 54725)
VIII	South West	Revd Cyril Grant, 3 Chapel Green Lane, Redland, Bristol BS6 6UA (34434)
IX	Wessex	Revd Colin Baxter, 39 Collingwood Crescent, Guildford GU1 2NU (0483 76987)
X	Thames North	Revd Geoffrey Satchell, The City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, London EC1A 2DE (583-8701)
XI	Southern	Revd Duncan Forrester University of Sussex, Meeting House, Falmer Brighton, Sussex BN1 9QN (0273 500544)
XII	Wales	Revd John Lewis, 15 Southward Lane, Langland, Mumbles, Swansea, Glam. (66918)

83. **Student Link-up Scheme** We are discontinuing the link-up scheme, whereby names of students going up to higher education are sent to Church House, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1. Instead, you will find an up to date list of URC chaplains included in the Information Packet, to be sent out in June 1978. This will give ministers the chance not only to write directly to chaplains, regarding members of their congregation going up for higher education, but to provide chaplains with more information about individual students than the link-up form allowed. In light of the fewer numbers of students coming up to higher education with Christian commitment, it is all the more valuable for chaplains to hear directly from ministers concerning new students.

(Resolution 11)

MINISTRY OF HEALING GROUP

Chairman: The Revd David H. Dale

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

84. In our last report to Assembly promise was given that whilst continuing to encourage and develop the sacramental aspects of Christian healing it would also be our concern to see that understanding of this theme was broadened to include medical, sociological and psychological factors in sickness and health. This debate has continued throughout the year.

85. The Christian Healing Fellowship ceased to exist as from 30th April 1978. This Fellowship, which developed out of the Congregational Healing and Psychology Group, has served the United Reformed, Baptist and Congregational Churches by arranging Quiet Days and a residential Summer School. The CHF recognised with thanksgiving to God that many of the initial purposes of the Fellowship have been realised and affirmed that further development of the Healing Ministry can now be achieved through our own URC Ministry of Healing Group and the corresponding Group in the Baptist Union.

86. It has been encouraging to note the way in which the Study Kit *Health and Healing* has been taken up by our churches. It has been widely hailed as a timely and valuable production. There has been particular commendation from the Churches' Council for Health and Healing. We now require comments from our churches as to their use of it and any way in which the group can further discussion and practice of Christian healing in our churches.

87. During the year we have commissioned and examined papers on Charismatic Renewal and the Ministry of Healing, and the Medical Aspects of Healing with special reference to the doctor/minister relationship. We have also responded to the plea for a small booklet to be used by patients and others in hospital. This is now in process of preparation.

88. The group is arranging a National Consultation for ministers and elders on 18th November 1978 in London to consider the development of the Ministry of Healing within our church.

89. The Group commends the Christian Medical Commission of the World Council of Churches magazine *Contact* which deals with varied aspects of the Christian communities involvement in health, reporting innovative and courageous approaches to the promotion of health care (free from the WCC).

Work is also proceeding on a Study Action Pack on the *Role of the Church in Community Health*. This will be on similar lines to the *Health and Healing* kit and will contain three main sections:

- i) Church and Community (Basic Paper)
- ii) Healing and Human Nature
- iii) Corporate Aspects of Health

90. There is now a fairly general acceptance of the fact that health is to be seen in terms of the successful co-ordination of the various elements, bodily/mental systems within the individual, but not always between the individual and society. This study pack will provide an opportunity to examine the role of the churches, the voluntary organisations and the statutory services in the community and recognise the opportunities available to us today to share with others who are making a major contribution to healing and pastoral care in our so 'in our society. (Resolution 12)

CHAPLAINS TO THE FORCES

91. During the past year the continued contribution of the URC to full time chaplaincy in the Services has been through the Revds S. L. Williams and F. A. Beattie in the Royal Navy and the Revd C. G. Prenton in the RAF. In the summer Revd Kenneth Derbyshire retired after distinguished service as Principal Chaplain (RAF) Free Churches and Church of Scotland. The Revd Hamish B. MacLagan of Thames Ditton offered and was appointed to a short-service commission in the Army and commenced his work in February. Vacancies for URC Chaplains in the Army and the Navy remained unfilled when this report was written.

92. In addition to the work of our full-time chaplains much valuable service is given by a considerable number of officiating chaplains on stations throughout the country.

93. The work is demanding and the Church needs to give its prayerful service to those who serve in this way on our behalf in places of conflict and amongst a community of younger people separated from their homes and from normal civilian life. The chaplains justly complain that they seldom receive word from the churches of those enlisting for the first time with whom to make pastoral contact at the formative stage of their service life. Such names sent to the General Secretary will always be forwarded to the appropriate quarter.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the revision of the Affirmations to be made by ministers at Ordinations and Inductions, as set out in the report of the Doctrine and Worship Committee, be approved.

2. Ministerial Training Fund

The Assembly notes with concern the report of the Ministerial Training Committee regarding the steeply rising costs of ministerial training; re-affirms its conviction that a well-trained ministry will continue to be a vital need of the Church; welcomes the decision of the Treasureship Committee to set money aside from the accumulated funds of the Church to underwrite the immediate deficit and to reduce the burden on the Unified Appeal in 1978 and 1979; aware that the reserves cannot meet the need in the long term urges the Committee to continue its appeal for help from appropriate Trusts; notes with satisfaction that a group has been appointed to review the whole situation and asks that its work be undertaken urgently with a view to a report to the Assembly of 1979.

3. Ordination of Local Pastors

It is recommended that:

1) The Assembly recognising that the action by which the Church has traditionally set aside men and women for the ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral oversight is ordination; and recognising that there are some in the URC who are now exercising this ministry without ordination; accepts the principle that it is appropriate

for such persons to be ordained and therefore gives discretion to District Councils to offer ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments to those presently serving as Local Pastors in charge of local churches within the District, and to ordain them. Any cases of difficulty should be referred for the advice of the Applications Committee.

- 2) All such ordinations shall not alter previously agreed terms of service, and such ministers shall be designated with the letter AR (Assembly Resolution) in Year Book, appearing where other ministers have their mode of entry indicated, e.g. College, Roll of Ministers, indicating the way in which they have come to ordination.
- 3) that local pastors on the official Register not wishing to accept ordination be permitted to continue as at present. The offer of ordination shall remain open for 5 years from this Assembly, i.e. to the Assembly of 1983.
- 4) that the list of local pastors be closed from May 1978 and no new candidates be accepted for the Pastoralia Course.

4. Auxiliary Ministers

The Assembly resolves:

that the Basis of Union be amended, as in the Proposals for Unification with the Churches of Christ, in order that an auxiliary ministry may be formed in the URC; that the amendment be to para 7 (21) page 22: ". . . others serve as auxiliary ministers, under the same oversight but continuing in other occupations, earning their livelihood within them, and sharing in all the circumstances of a 'secular' calling*. Auxiliary ministers shall normally serve under the leadership of a full-time minister.

The preparation and training for the full-time ministry shall be of a more extended and developed nature than that for the auxiliary ministry. If auxiliary ministers offer themselves for the full-time ministry, and are recognised as candidates for it, they shall undertake such further preparation and training as is required under rules decided by the General Assembly. Full-time ministers whose place and form of service become dependent upon an agency not under the discipline of the General Assembly become, for such time as this is the case, auxiliary ministers, except where the General Assembly agrees, either for specific categories or individuals, to their continued recognition as full-time ministers".

5. that the Ministerial Training Committee be asked to continue its planning for the selection, training, and detailed consideration of the proposals and suggestions concerning Auxiliary Ministers in the Proposals for Unification with the Churches of Christ, and to submit proposals to the Assembly of 1979 for implementation.

6. Westminster and Cheshunt Colleges

that the Assembly approves the resolutions relating to Westminster and Cheshunt Colleges.

7. Church Community Workers

The Assembly draws the attention of District Councils which contain areas of urban stress, to the leaflet on the training and employment of Church Community workers, which is available from the Church Life Department.

8. Youth Committee – £ending for Life

The Assembly notes with concern the decision of the Charity Commissioners that Churches cannot invest in the Ecumenical Development Co-operative Society and urges the appropriate committee to take energetic action to ensure that investment by the URC and other Churches becomes possible at the earliest opportunity;

The Assembly welcomes the interest of FURY in the work of EDCS and the contribution already made through the "£ending for Life" project.

9. Thanks to the Revd Michael J. Davies

The Assembly associates itself with the thanks and good wishes expressed by the Youth Committee for the excellent service of the Revd Michael Davies as Youth Secretary.

- 10.** *The Assembly*, recognising the urgent need for training among those who lead the children's work of the Church, requests Districts and Provinces to appoint Teacher Training Consultants, to work with the YLTO's wherever possible, and to send the names of those appointed to the Christian Education Secretary, if they have not already done so, by September 1978.

11. Chaplains and Students

The Assembly recognizes the importance of the work among students and chaplains in places of Higher Education and authorizes the formation within the Church Life Department of a Student and Chaplains Committee, as distinct from a permanent working party.

The committee to comprise:

4 chaplains — full time or church based;
4 students
3 members of teaching staff
2 overseas chaplains
plus a Chairman and Secretary.

12. Ministry of Healing Group

It is recommended that Assembly authorizes the formation of a Ministry of Healing Committee, within the Department, as distinct from a permanent working party in recognition of the valuable service which has been rendered by this group.

The committee to comprise 12 persons, including doctors, ministers, and at least one non-medical lay person.

13. *The Assembly Agrees*

that this report be received.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY DEPARTMENT

Chairman: The Revd John Johansen-Berg, MA, BD

Secretary: The Revd John P. Reardon, BA

1. Introduction We might call our Report this year "a message of reconciliation", taking our cue from 2 Corinthians 5 : 19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation." That theme of reconciliation runs through our Report. We are speaking of one world, one people, yet recognising that there is much in our world which makes for division. To work against the world's divisions, whether they be domestic, economic, racial or international, is part of the Christian vocation. The divisions are part of our human failure; reconciliation is God's gracious gift in Christ, but he calls us to share in the ministry of reconciliation in costly action.

2. Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage One frequent use of the word 'reconciliation' in modern terms is in relation to breakdown of marriage. The Department has been concerned for some time with the question of stress in marriage and the related issue of the remarriage of divorced people. At an earlier stage, we suggested to the British Council of Churches that the whole subject should be studied ecumenically. As a result some material has been produced on marriage preparation, but the BCC felt that policy with regard to remarriage was for the denominations to determine themselves.

3. Work done in our own North Western Province and questions raised by the Cheshire District brought the subject before our Department again and, after last Assembly, we set up a working party to examine the biblical background to marriage and divorce, the changing social patterns which point in the direction of changed attitudes to remarriage, and any resulting need for change in the practice of the United Reformed Church with regard to the remarriage of people who have been divorced.

4. Our present practice leaves to individual ministers to decide whether to agree to remarry divorced people. Some ministers refuse all such requests basing their refusal usually on their understanding of biblical teaching. Most examine each individual application and agree in some cases but refuse in others. Some would agree to any application provided there was no legal bar to such a wedding taking place, leaving it to the couple to decide whether URC teaching on marriage is applicable to them. In some cases local churches have their own policy with regard to remarriage, and in these cases the ministers may consult their elders about individual requests for remarriage.

5. The Department has no wish to suggest changes in this policy of respect for individual conscience which it believes to be right, but it is aware of some difficulties which arise from our present practice and changed social patterns. In the first place there are differing interpretations of the biblical passages on this subject, and there is the added problem of relating our Lord's teaching on divorce to the social background of his day so that we can understand more clearly his basic intentions. Secondly there is the immense difference in the place of women and the relationship between men and women at the time of Jesus and the present day. We cannot avoid the difficulty of relating the spiritual and social meaning of our Lord's teaching to the world in which we live. Thirdly there are practical difficulties which arise through diversity of practice. A couple who wish to be married in a United Reformed church may be able to have their wish granted in one locality but not another. This may not appear a problem to some, but with an increasing number of requests and in a church that has a national and regional structure, it often confuses outsiders and makes us appear to be inconsistent. Fourthly there is the problem of ecumenical relationships, since many requests for remarriage come from divorcees belonging to other churches, pre-eminently the Church of England.

6. Last, but by no means least, there are the whole range of pastoral concerns which arise from the breaking down of a marriage and the gradual dawning of a new hope of happiness in another relationship. These can be particularly acute in cases where the divorcee has taken very seriously the church's teaching on the life-long nature of the marriage vow and feels a

sense of failure or guilt because of the breakdown of their marriage. In some instances an individual may regard his or her own marriage as continuing, in spite of a divorce granted by the State, because of the nature of vows exchanged before God.

7. Faced with these problems we feel it would be helpful to state the Christian view of marriage. In so doing we seek to be faithful to the teaching of our Lord and the high view of marriage which he sets forth, but also to be faithful to the compassion which our Lord constantly offered in his dealing with people.

8. Although the conscientious views of individual ministers and congregations should be respected, it would prove helpful to have a more regional approach to such a complex issue. This could well operate on a Provincial or District basis. In general this might involve some discussion between Moderator and ministers on the number of cases involved, the pastoral problems arising and ways in which help could be given. Each Province would develop this basic pattern in ways found helpful to all concerned. When an individual minister cannot agree to conduct any remarriages but is approached by a divorcee seeking marriage in a United Reformed church, the application could be referred to the Moderator or to another URC minister in the area on a agreed basis of Provincial pastoral care. It would be helpful if there were some record of services of remarriage in United Reformed churches.

9. Some divorcees would undoubtedly be helped if there were a service involving recognition of the breakdown of their marriage and release from the vows made. In some cases they would be helped by an expression of penitence for any part they may have played, consciously or unconsciously, in the breakdown. An added factor in the provision of such services is that it may help some ministers to conduct services of marriage for divorcees, since it would make explicit the church's recognition of the breakdown of the previous marriage. An Order of Service of Prayer for Release from Vows was produced in the working party with this in mind, but it was clearly understood that this would be made available for individuals or ministers to use if they so wished, rather than being offered as a precondition of any service of remarriage.

10. Since pastoral guidance is so important when stress is encountered in marriage and when a marriage has broken down, the working party also decided that it would be helpful to produce a pastoral paper for ministers to help them with preparation for marriage and with their task in times of marital stress.

11. As the biblical background plays an important part in the Church's teaching on this subject, we decided to provide some biblical notes. Major pieces of biblical commentary on marriage and divorce have been done already by others much better equipped to do so than we are. We felt that what was required from us was a direct relation of some of the key passages to our changed situation today and some attempt to distil the essence of the spiritual and social significance of the passages seen against the broader teaching of Jesus and his actions with regard to people needing pastoral help. Our references to commentaries and our own comments show the complexity of the biblical background and the diversity of opinion in interpretation. We hope that the notes we provide will help those concerned to study the biblical background and appreciate the base it provides for our Church's practice.

12. All these factors led us to the production of a collection of papers on The Christian View of Marriage, A Preamble To The Marriage Service (which would state the Christian View more briefly in an appropriate form for a public ceremony), Biblical Teaching On Marriage And Divorce, A Pastoral Approach To Marriage Preparation and help in marriage stress, An Order Of Service Of Prayer For Release From Vows.

13. We hope that this collection of papers will be available to be read alongside this Report, but since the Christian View of Marriage and Remarriage After Divorce: United Reformed Church Practice summarise the thinking of the working party they are set out here.

14. The Christian View of Marriage.

14.1 Marriage is a gift and calling of God and is not to be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly, but reverently, responsibly and joyfully, in obedience to the gospel of Christ.

14.2 Marriage is a holy relationship since we can rightly seek God's blessing and help in it and we discover God through it.
God has given us in marriage a rich and varied gift.

14.3 God gives it as a creative relationship, in which husband and wife help each other to be more complete persons and care for each other.

14.4 God gives it as a life-long relationship, since the vows of the partners are intended to reflect Christ's teaching and to enable their love to grow and deepen, and they have a sincere intention to remain in a relationship of love throughout life.

14.5 God gives it as a sharing relationship, in which all responsibilities, talents and possessions are shared in love.

14.6 God gives it as a relationship of loyalty; each should be the marriage partner of one person to whom is owed faithfulness and love.

14.7 God gives it as a relationship within community; the married partners seek to make a stable family home and actively attempt to meet their responsibilities to society as a whole. They accept, as part of their marriage, all the responsibilities that a legal contract, recognised by the state, implies.

14.8 God gives it as a sexual relationship; each partner finds joy and fulfilment in the other.

14.9 God gives it as a family relationship; each recognises the privileges and responsibilities of sharing in the other's family life, and together they share the privilege and responsibility for the unbringing of any children they may have.

14.10 It is recognised that some marriages cease to be a creative relationship; when this happens and all attempts at reconciliation have failed, the legal contract may be terminated by the state and the church may recognise that the marriage relationship is ended.

15. Remarriage After Divorce: United Reformed Church Practice.

15.1 When a Christian marriage takes place, it is not a relationship entered into lightly but with a deep sense of love, lifelong commitment, holiness and joy. If such a marriage breaks down, it is after much agonising and with a feeling that the relationship has ceased to be creative.

15.2 In such circumstances the Church will be concerned to seek a reconciliation because Christian marriage is ideally a life-long relationship which can overcome difficulties. When reconciliation proves impossible and the marriage ends in divorce, the Church has a pastoral role in relation to the former marriage partners. They often feel a deep sense of failure and experience loneliness. Church members sometimes add to these burdens by lack of understanding and concern.

15.3 Christ taught the ideal in all aspects of human life but he had a deep compassion for those who failed to attain the ideal and who recognised and regretted their failure. The Church also needs to show compassion for those who fail to maintain the ideal in a marriage relationship but who will still hold a Christian view of marriage.

15.4 Since the Church upholds the ideal of Christian marriage as a life-long relationship, it follows that any request for remarriage after divorce must be given a careful and prayerful consideration.

Some ministers and churches refuse on grounds of their interpretations of scriptural teaching to conduct any remarriage service after divorce, and their consciences ought to be respected.

15.5 In general, within the United Reformed Church, such marriages are allowed in certain circumstances.

In the first place, the previous marriage must be dissolved. In all cases the legal contract must have been terminated by the state.

Secondly, the minister will wish usually to discuss the circumstances surrounding the breakdown of the previous marriage and the satisfactory resulting problems, particularly the care of children.

Thirdly, some divorcees and some ministers and churches may wish to have a service in which penitence can be expressed for the failure of the previous marriage, recognition be given that the relationship is now ended and the desire to seek a new beginning made explicit. The service of "Prayer For Release From Vows" is available for those who wish to make use of it.

15.6 When the minister and the church are satisfied that the circumstances are right, a divorcee may be married in church. It will be made clear that the service is a Christian marriage service and therefore the ideal of a life-long union is involved. The service will differ little, if at all, from the normal marriage service. This underlines the necessity, as for a first marriage, of careful preparation before the service and a continuing pastoral relationship, when possible, after the service.

15.7 When the circumstances seem right for a marriage involving a divorcee, but where the local minister or church cannot consider it on grounds of conscience, arrangements should be made within the Province to enable the couple to be interviewed and to be married within the United Reformed Church, if that is possible.

16. In commanding this collection of papers we believe that it would be helpful for discussion to be held with other denominations to see if ecumenical agreement can be reached concerning the remarriage of divorced people. We also believe that it would be useful to make a survey of the incidence of services of remarriage within the Church.

17. **Nuclear Energy** A different kind of reconciliation needs to be found between the need for energy on the one hand and the need to protect the environment on the other, between visionary action to meet future human needs and a sensible safe-guarding of future generations from the harmful effects of contemporary technology. It was to the credit of environmental groups and some within the churches, amongst others, that the Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr. Peter Shore, ordered the Public Inquiry into the proposed extensions at Windscale by British Nuclear Fuels Limited. The Inquiry lasted from June 14, 1977 to November 4, 1977. The conclusions of the appointed inspector, Mr. Justice Parker, are awaited at the time of writing this Report. Whatever the conclusion might be, several advantages have emerged from the Inquiry.

18. The public is reassured by the fact that evidence has been called for and dangers are being assessed before any final decision is taken for or against the proposed extension. The firm has presented its case and objectors to the proposal have had the opportunity to state their case. It has been announced that there will be a fast Fast Breeder Inquiry, so that wider questions concerning the viability and inherent dangers in the fast breeder development will be explored further.

19. We are grateful to David R. Weaver, a lecturer at Birmingham University and a member of one of our churches, for preparing a summary of the evidence for our Department. Considering that the documentation for the Inquiry reached a height of over fourteen feet, you will appreciate the need for such a summary.

20. We are glad to note that the British Council of Churches is continuing to keep a watching brief on this subject and we as a Department will await with interest the Inquiry on the Fast Breeder Reactor. We recognise that the case for nuclear development is a weighty one, but we feel that responsible decisions can be taken only with the help of thorough research into possible dangers, with the exploration of collaborative development as well as of alternative sources of energy, and, in particular, with the finding of a safe method of waste disposal. These are matters of technical complexity but they have also an ethical dimension.

21. **Racism** Reconciliation between the varied races which make up the population of this Kingdom is one essential element in our "message of reconciliation". The Autumn Assembly of the British Council of Churches, meeting together with people who had been engaged in the production of material for the Britain Today and Tomorrow programme, had presented to it during one of its business sessions a Statement on "Racism In Britain . . . A Time For Decision", and there was a sign-in by those present to condemn racism in all its forms and

those bodies, including the National Front, which have racist policies. It was felt that the time had come for the Churches to make a stand on this vital issue.

22. We ask our membership to study the Statement and to make their own public stand against racism in order that we might commit ourselves firmly to working for reconciliation in our community. We welcome the fact that several of our Provinces have already issued a pastoral letter on this subject.

23. The Affirmation of the BCC Statement is as follows:

23.1 "The Gospel of Jesus Christ sets forth the unity of the human race: the acceptance in love of all within the human family.

23.2 "We assert again the claims of love and justice: to seek the good of others and to work for the human rights of all.

23.3 "We recognise that Britain is now a pluralist society of varied races, cultures and religions; we must respect those who practice different religions and adhere to different styles of life; a more varied society offers new opportunities to us all.

23.4. "We believe that the racial policies and racial activities of the National Front, and other similar bodies, are entirely contrary to the truth of the Gospel and contrary to the true interest of this nation.

23.5 "We believe that racial attitudes will not be defeated by violence on our streets, but by an open and unyielding commitment to freedom and justice for all.

23.6 "We therefore urge Christians and non-Christians to act in ways which are free from racial discrimination and to support those values which are the foundations of our democratic society.

23.7 A Commitment

"As a witness to this stand against racism we sign this statement as a clear commitment to a tolerant and just society, freed from racism of all kinds".

24. **The EEC Code of Conduct for European Firms in South Africa** The need for reconciliation is seen in many situations beyond our own country, and we are conscious of the need for constant vigilance if human rights are to be recognised in many countries where they have been under attack. We have been concerned about many such international situations, but none has concerned us more consistently over the last few years than the need for reconciliation in South Africa. Any lingering doubts about the urgency of the situation and the imperative need for action there must have been dispelled by the banning of organisations such as the Christian Institute and those involved in the black consciousness movement. We feel it all the more important to give encouragement to our own Foreign Secretary, Dr. Owen, and others in seeking change in the South African scene by positive and peaceful measures.

25. One area where urgent change is needed is in the realm of industrial affairs. The European Economic Community Code of Conduct for European firms operating in South Africa replaces the former British Code as the practical guide to British firms. CCSA (Christian Concern for Southern Africa) has welcomed the Code with its stress on seeking change in South Africa, but it makes the following points:

- the application of the Code should be at least as wide as its predecessor;
- the requirements should be made more specific;
- the disclosure provisions should be mandatory;
- the monitoring of company performance should be by a Parliamentary Committee;
- the threat of commercial sanctions should be real and immediate for companies that do not comply with the provisions of the Code.

26. The Department endorsed CCSA's welcome for the Code but was particularly concerned that there should be effective monitoring. We await with interest the recommendations of the Government White Paper and hope that the Government will make the necessary provisions for implementing the Code effectively. Britain has a large stake economically in the South African

scene and a particular responsibility historically. We need to take very seriously the attempt by those who framed the Code to bring about much needed change swiftly and effectively.

27. Black Trade Unions in South Africa CCSA has also produced a major report, "Black Trade Unions In South Africa; The Responsibility of British Companies". This lists some of the priorities for action by firms operating in South Africa; it sets out the responsibilities of parent companies and of the Churches; these are given in summary form at the beginning of the Report as follows:

28.1 "In order that adequate overall policy guidance and supervision is exercised, parent companies should take action in five areas:—

- * appoint a senior executive with responsibility for the programme;
- * consult the relevant UK unions on the subject;
- * ensure that policy makers have access to independent sources of information about the South African labour scene;
- * disseminate widely information about initiatives the company is taking;
- * engage where appropriate with other UK companies in joint actions or representations on questions affecting the development of genuine collective bargaining with black trade unions.

28.2 "If the Churches and concerned shareholders wish to contribute towards the development of greater black self-determination in the economic sphere then they should use the influence at their disposal to further the cause of black trade unionism.

28.3 "To act responsibly in this field requires a coherent programme. Four elements in such a programme can be identified:

- * to acquaint themselves with the basic data and arguments;
- * to make their commitments to the furtherance of black trade unions public and unambiguous;
- * to communicate with the principal companies involved;
- * to exchange information and coordinate activities with other concerned investors and groups".

The body of the Report gives these responsibilities in greater detail and also gives the historical and legal background, a description of the present management approaches, the positive case for black trade unionism and some case histories.

29. As a Church we have some special links with South Africa and a number of our Church officers have visited there in recent years; our contacts are being constantly renewed as we receive visitors here. No-one who is studying South African affairs can fail to realise that the polarisation within the country points more and more in the direction of violent confrontation. The tragedy of Steve Biko's death in detention and the following events, including the bannings, underline that realisation. The time for peaceful solutions is running out. Undoubtedly a vital factor in bringing about needed change economically and socially is the introduction of genuine bargaining powers for black workers. That is why this report is of vital significance at this stage. It should be studied and acted upon by Christians who would like to see a peaceful solution to the problems besetting South Africa.

30. As a Church, we are directly involved through our investment portfolio. We as a Department, in cooperation with the Finance Department, have acted on some of these issues directly, by making representations to firms either by private contact or through questions at an Annual Meeting. We hope that this continuing dialogue with firms, part of a wider ecumenical strategy in which we share, will help to lead to more effective action being taken by British firms operating in South Africa. We would be glad to know of local churches and individuals who are making similar representations to firms in which they have an interest.

31. These are not merely business and financial matters. They express our concern for brothers and sisters in the family of mankind, many of whom are also fellow Christians. The

attempts to bring about reconciliation by people living on the scene are proving very costly to them. It is an encouragement to them, as we know by personal contact, that we should take the trouble to do what we can to assist them in the search for just solutions to deep problems. This too is part of our discipleship, our "ministry of reconciliation" from Christ.

32. Common Fund Negotiations In preparation for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 1976 the Third World countries reached agreement on proposals for a Common Fund to stabilise commodity prices. Ever since then the Western nations have refused to accept those proposals and the negotiating conference which met in November 1977 in Geneva ended in frustration and deadlock. During that meeting the British Council of Churches Assembly unanimously agreed to press the British Government to accept the Third World proposals. Britain, West Germany and the USA are known to be the leaders of Western opposition to the Common Fund, and the BCC has urged the Churches in Germany and the USA to support the Common Fund.

33. It is clear that Third World countries regard the Common Fund as the first step in the search for a new international economic order. They regard the solemn declarations of the United Nations about a new world order as empty promises until the industrialised nations are prepared to accept the Common Fund. When the Geneva conference is reconvened it is hoped that British representatives will play a more constructive role in ensuring that it does not end in further deadlock. This looks inevitable unless the Western nations are prepared to accept the Common Fund proposal and work out its details and implications in cooperation with the Third World.

34. One World Week All the major Churches in England, Wales and Scotland are supporting plans for the development education programme One World Week organised by the World Development Movement Churches Committee and financed largely by Christian Aid and the Development Education Fund of the Ministry of Overseas Development. Several other national organisations like the United Nations Association are supporting the programme, and many local Councils of Churches have already made detailed plans for the Autumn period within which the Week will be observed. The preferred dates are October 22nd - 29th which is already observed by many as the Week of Prayer for World Peace and includes United Nations Day and a Vigil of Prayer for Racial Harmony.

35. The theme of the Week will be Just Living, and will focus particularly on basic needs for development and human rights. The latter has been chosen because 1978 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Week will provide an opportunity to celebrate the unity of the human family and to become more aware of the way in which that unity is broken by economic, racial and political tensions. The programme is not part of any fund-raising or political campaigns although many taking part may see their response in those terms. Local arrangements should help Christians and other members of the community to deepen their understanding of world issues and their relationship to some of the local and national problems facing us today. It is hoped that Christians, through this programme, will see more clearly the challenge of world development and the possibilities for corporate and personal action.

36. World Development Appeal The World Development Appeal has been supported during the past year by a quarter of our local churches and at the time of preparing this report the total amount raised was £83,000. A report on the programmes and projects supported by the Appeal will be circulated to the churches through the Information Service. Plans are in hand for the 1978 Appeal and order forms for literature and Appeal envelopes will also be circulated. We hope that all churches will make it possible for the Appeal to be made to their members. From time to time we get requests for information and contributions from individuals whose Church Meetings have ignored the Appeal.

37. A working party has been appointed to review the World Development Appeal and the other aspects of world development in which the Department is involved and it is hoped that a fuller report will be brought to next year's Assembly.

38. Britain Today and Tomorrow The study-action programme organised by the British Council of Churches, Britain Today and Tomorrow, presents a whole range of issues which are concerned with reconciliations in divided communities, the quest for justice in an unjust world. Many Provinces, Districts and local churches have been involved in this in a number of

ways. The Department shared in the programme by servicing the working party "Violence, Non-Violence and Social Change" which produced a report for the hearings at the November Assembly. The membership of the groups was selected with a view to summarising some of the work done by the earlier URC report ("Non-Violent Action"), the Irish Report ("Violence In Ireland"), theological work on the background of non-violence currently being undertaken in Scotland and the perspectives given by the Welsh scene. You may think this a rather explosive mixture and we certainly put much time into producing material on "violence". We hope that groups working in local settings might follow up with study-action projects to produce social change. This is the hope expressed in the earlier reports and the BTT impetus might help to achieve this.

39. Several members of the Department took part in other working groups producing material. We are glad that one aspect of the programme was "Education and Society". This is a vital topic currently, particularly in view of the Green Paper, "Education In Schools: A Consultative Document". Some of our membership may wonder why we are not engaged in any work directly on education in our Department. The reason is found in the ecumenical dimension. The Free Church Federal Council and the British Council of Churches have been engaged in a range of work on education and it is the product of one of the BCC working parties which has been the basis for the BTT study on the subject.

40. **Children of West Indian Origin** Another aspect of education is the report of the House of Commons Select Committee on the West Indian community, since eight of its twenty recommendations concerned education.

41. The Free Churches were asked to make a response to this report, and we played a major part in framing that response. We welcomed the enquiry into under-achievement by children of West Indian origin but hoped this would be examined in wider context and some account taken of language difficulties.

42. We requested more pre-school provision, more remedial teaching facilities in normal schools, and funding by resources other than the urban programme. Other points were made including the main contention of support for an amendment of the Education Act to include "the recognition of the equal dignity of each individual irrespective of colour, race, creed or sex".

43. **Churches' Council on Gambling** The Revd Gordon Moody, Secretary of the Churches' Council on Gambling, will retire later this year and it is clear that the Churches will not be able to appoint a successor. The Council's income has been declining in real terms and several denominations, including ours, have only been giving token donations.

44. The contribution of the Council to national thinking about gambling has been out of all proportion to its size, and those who shaped the present legislation on gambling pay tribute to the significant influence of the Council and in particular its secretary. Gordon Moody was instrumental in the formation of Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon, the organisation which helps the families of compulsive gamblers. The Council has submitted a lengthy and well-researched submission to the Royal Commission on Gambling which is currently considering the future of gambling and our Departmental Secretary accompanied Gordon Moody to give verbal evidence to the Royal Commission.

45. Proposals are being considered for the formation of a Council on Gambling which will be wider in its support than the Churches but will continue the excellent work that the Churches' Council has done. We are involved in the planning of the new body and will give it our support when it is formed.

46. **Ecumenical Links** We have continued to work wherever possible in cooperation with other denominations, especially through the divisions of the BCC. Much of our concern in international issues is expressed through the Division of International Affairs. On community affairs and social responsibility we work through the Division of Community Affairs. Recently we participated in a day conference when the possibilities of closer cooperation on social responsibility were discussed. As a Department we have pressed for this quite strongly. It is not evident that there is yet the will to go as far as we would wish in further ecumenical cooperation in this field, but there are healthy signs of a greater willingness to avoid duplication and pool resources. The day may not be far distant when the denominational social re-

sponsibility departments will allow one or more staff members to undertake a special responsibility on behalf of all the denominations while continuing to serve their own in a more general way. The range of human need and the areas of injustice are so wide and compelling that Christ's followers should see as an urgent priority the need to find more effective ways of working together to make a response to those needs. We shall more effectively preach a "message of reconciliation" when we do so together.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly approves the statement on "The Christian View of Marriage" and the summary of United Reformed Church Practice in regard to remarriage after divorce, as set out in the Report.
 2. The Assembly requests Synods, either directly or through Districts, to initiate discussions concerning the Report on "Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage" in order to determine in what ways the Province can assist those charged with pastoral responsibility in this field.
 3. The Assembly welcomes the decision of Her Majesty's Government to hold an Inquiry concerning the Fast Breeder Reactor and urges H.M. Government to ensure that there are safe methods of waste disposal agreed before there is further expansion of this programme.
 4. The Assembly endorses the Affirmation in the British Council of Churches Statement on Racism and urges all members to make a public stand against racism in all its forms and in support of the reconciliation which is so integral a part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 5. The Assembly welcomes the EEC Code of Conduct for European Firms operating in South Africa and urges H.M. Government to ensure that there is effective monitoring of British Company performance by a Parliamentary Committee.
 6. The Assembly, while accepting that there is a case for continued British economic participation in South Africa, recognises that there are influential and responsible people in South Africa calling for withdrawal of investments, and therefore believes it to be imperative that British firms in South Africa should do all in their power to grant genuine bargaining powers to black workers. The Assembly encourages representations on this subject to firms in which we have direct interest, at national and local level, by committees or individual shareholders.
 7. The Assembly urges H.M. Government to accept the proposals of Third World countries in the UNCTAD negotiations for a Common Fund to stabilise commodity prices.
 8. The Assembly commends the One World Week to all local congregations and urges them to take initiatives to ensure that the programme receives full ecumenical support in their areas.
 9. The Assembly records its appreciation for the work of the Churches' Council on Gambling and in particular for the distinguished service of its Secretary, The Revd Gordon Moody, and welcomes the proposal to form a Council on Gambling to include a wider membership than the Churches.
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WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. The themes of the Department's work which the Central Committee has had before it this year can be summed up in the one word '*Sharing*'. It is a word perhaps over used among Christians, sometimes in too emotional a sense: but it does point to essential aspects of Christian life and work.
2. First then the Department has begun to explore what it means to *share the partnership* of the restructured Council for World Mission. The exhilaration of the opening service in July for the first meeting of the new Council has been followed by the first months of activity by the new staff teams, both at Livingstone House for the whole partnership of Churches and at Church House for our own Department's expanded share of the task. Iorwerth Thomas and Janet Booth as Personnel and Communication Secretaries have brought new dimensions to the Department's service in the URC. Iorwerth helps to process the *sharing of people*, both to and from the churches abroad; Janet's work is to enable the *sharing of information and insight*, from CWM, from other partner Churches abroad (this year especially the Church of the Palatinate in Germany) and from all the Department's activities. In this Janet has the help of a *Communication Group*, which consists of one member from each of the Departmental Committees.
3. The Communication Group has three main aims—
 - to help members of local churches
 - (a) to feel they belong to the World Church;
 - (b) to understand something of the dynamic of the World Church;
 - (c) to find ways of participating in the World Church.
- In order to do this the Group has begun writing short programmes to stimulate interest and develop new ideas in four main areas, which reflect the work of the four Departmental Committees. These are 'CWM' 'Service' (in personal commitment), 'the Christian Scene in Britain' and 'Relationships with those of other faiths'. These programmes will be adaptable for use in worship, Christian education, youth activities and adult meetings. They are to be introduced through Provincial and District representatives and all ministers.
4. *The URC shared financially* in the work of CWM last year to the amount of £331,650 — the £1650 above the promised figure of £330,000 being the appropriate share of the amount by which URC members' generosity passed the total requested for the Unified Appeal as a whole.
5. The Ten Propositions have continued to occupy the attention of the Churches in England. The basic concern of the Churches' Unity Commission is the *sharing of life and mission*; the same aim is before the churches which have covenanted together in Wales. The detailed response to the Ten Propositions and particularly the response to Proposition VI, with all its problems about ministry, should be read and evaluated with this in mind — that all is for the sake of life and mission together.
6. The Other Faiths committee is part of the widest sharing of all, *the sharing of a common humanity* with all the people of our own land and beyond. To share the gospel not only imparts it to others: it also enriches our own understanding of it.
7. With four new chairmen of committees as well as new staff members the Department needs to have all its members and all who are in touch with it actively sharing in its study and work, by encouragement — and correction.

Martin H. Cressey, *Chairman*

Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK AT HOME COMMITTEE

8. **The Ten Propositions** have appeared on every committee agenda this year. The report on the responses of churches, Districts and Synods to the questions asked on the URC's provisional response to the Churches' Unity Commission, especially upon Proposition VI, forms an appendix to the Report. The Committee felt a heavy responsibility in advising the General Assembly in the light of the great variety shown in the churches' responses.

9. **The Methodist/URC Liaison Group** has been officially constituted as resolved by last year's General Assembly. A booklet on Local Co-operation Between United Reformed and Methodist Churches has been issued and this will be supplemented with a draft Sharing Agreement appropriate to situations where URC property is being shared. This booklet is commended to all contemplating local joint ventures with Methodists. It gives encouragement as well as guides as to what pitfalls to avoid.

10. **Evangelism** has been the continual concern of the committee. We have been encouraged to learn that the seven papers on follow-up on evangelism prepared at the request of the committee are proving useful in local churches. The next step in the task is seen to be the provision of material to help smaller churches to see themselves as growth points.

The National Initiative in Evangelism is setting up a framework of structures to advance the debate about how and what might be done. The General Secretary represents the United Reformed Church on the Council of Reference for this operation and the Revd Roger Whitehead on the Initiative Committee. The Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee is keeping this matter under review.

11. **Rural Churches** opportunities and problems have been kept before us by continued work stimulated by the Revd Roger Whitehead.

12. **Decision Making in Common** The Committee has considered two reports on this subject, "Ecumenical Co-operation at the County/Regional Level", prepared for the Churches' Unity Commission, and "Moving into Unity" which was commended to member churches by the Seventh Assembly of the British Council of Churches. This topic is being discussed with Synod World Church and Mission representatives at the Spring Consultation and the Committee is urging Synods to appoint URC Ecumenical Officers in each Province and encouraging Provincial World Church and Mission Committees to stimulate the establishment of County Ecumenical Committees in their regions.

The Committee was encouraged to learn also that the URC had been consulted in the process of soundings leading up to the appointment of a new Bishop of Oxford, and believes that this gesture in decision-making in common points to the need for our own Church to realise that there is an ecumenical implication in the appointments which we ourselves make.

13. **Council for World Mission** has come on the Home Committee's agenda subsequent to the inauguration of the new Council. We have forwarded the first request for help for a project in Britain — the Youth Scheme — Time for God. The full implications of the new Council for World Mission for mission in Britain will be examined at a consultation called by the Central Committee. Papers presented at two recent meetings of the Home Committee will be submitted to this consultation. We believe that the Applications Committee should be involved at an early date in consideration of the implications of new CWM for the URC.

14. **The Churches of Christ** The fact that the Churches of Christ did not have a sufficient majority to implement the scheme for unification with the URC has left the need to establish a means of conducting the special relationship that has been achieved between our churches during the period of negotiations. The committee welcome the proposal for a Liaison Group of both Churches, but urges that this group be related to the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee within the World Church and Mission Department, with freedom of access to other departments as the life and work of the Churches require. The Report of the Theological Conversations between the Baptist World Alliance and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches proposes for consideration the policy of the exercise of both believers and infant baptism in the life of the Church that has already been endorsed by the URC in the proposal for unification with the Churches of Christ. The committee asks the Assembly to request its Doctrine and Worship Committee to consider the implementation of this policy

within the life of the URC in the light of the Report of the Baptist World Alliance and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

David E. Marsden, *Chairman*
Arthur L. Macarthur, *Secretary*

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK ABROAD COMMITTEE

15. **Council for World Mission** The work of the last few years culminated on 18th July 1977 in the inauguration of the new CWM. The splendid inaugural service at the City Temple was followed by four days of Council business at Selly Oak, Birmingham, at which delegates from all 22 member Churches were present. Much of the time was given to policy guidelines and practical procedures. A number of important appointments were also made. Mrs. Daisy Gopal Ratnam, M.A., General Secretary of the Church of South India, was elected chairman and Dr. Peter Wong of Hongkong and the Revd John Thorne of South Africa vice chairmen. Five executive secretaries were appointed, including the Revd. Bernard Thorogood as General Secretary. Applications for membership of the Council received from the Presbyterian Church of Burma and the Presbyterian Church of Wales were approved and one from the Churches of Christ was agreed in principle in the event of their proposed union with URC failing.
16. **An Executive Committee** representing the six regions of CWM was appointed by the Council and has since met in Nairobi (December 1977), where, among other business, grants were allocated and a further Church (the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands — Gereformeerde Kerken) was admitted to Council membership. The Executive next meets in Swansea in July 1978.
17. **UK Regional Consultation** An innovation resulting from the new shape of CWM has been the establishment of a UK region Consultation between representatives of CWM member bodies in Britain (and now in Holland too) dealing with items of common interest and responsibility. The World Church and Mission Department is assisting the Irish CWM Association, which may send an observer/consultant to the Committee at its discretion.
18. **Contribution of CWM to URC** It is hoped that the contribution which CWM itself may make to the life of the URC will be explored in depth.
19. **The Revd Paul Rakotoarivony** One aspect of this is provided by the arrival in the UK in February of the Revd Paul Rakotoarivony, the minister of a large church in Tananarive, Madagascar. He is to spend six months in the URC Church at Upton by Chester.
20. **Membership of CFWM** The URC has been received into membership of the Conference for World Mission (the body which succeeds the Conference of British Missionary Societies).
21. **Chaplains** The committee were glad to learn that the Presbyterian Church of Malaysia has agreed to the Revd Chong Kah Geh remaining in this country as Chinese Chaplain until 1980. The committee has followed with interest the work of the Chinese and Ghanaian Chaplains, the creation of the Whitefield International Student Chaplaincy Centre in Tottenham Court Road, the development of Seva Sadan (House of Friendship) in Birmingham and work linked with it in South Aston, Birmingham.
22. **Continental Consultation** A Continental Consultation was arranged on November 28th at which existing relationships with Churches in Europe were reviewed, and the viewpoint of continental pastors heard from the Revd Maarten den Dulk (of the Dutch Church in London) and the Revd R. J. Patkai (Chairman of the Lutheran Council of Great Britain). The possibilities of relationships at national and local level were discussed and, taking into account limited resources in time, money and people, certain priorities were singled out and the next steps in these continuing relationships laid down. The URC shares in the work of ecumenical bodies and organisations such as the Conference of European Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches which cover both parts of the continent.

23. The United Protestant Church of the Palatinate 1978 will mark the twenty first anniversary of the close relationship between the Congregational Church in England and Wales (subsequently the URC) and the Church of the Palatinate. Special services are being planned both for Speyer and London. A consultation will also be taking place in June between representatives of the two Churches to consider the future development of this relationship.

24. Other Areas Future relationships with North American Churches are being studied and news has been received of the Church in China from the Revd Bob Whyte.

25. Opportunities 1977 was a year in which relationships between URC and CWM, and through CWM with its member Churches, changed fundamentally. In working out the consequences of that change, and in looking more closely at relationships with Churches in other areas, two things have been brought home time and again to the committee:

- the number of opportunities which exist for close and more sensitive relationships with residents and visitors to this country who are anxious to relate to the churches but find openings rather lacking.
- the extent to which such relationships, whether with those on our doorsteps, or others far away, may be mutually enriching to all concerned.

John E. M. Gilbey, *Chairman*

Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

COMMITTEE ON MISSION AND OTHER FAITHS

26. The Committee has concentrated its attention this year upon the shaping of policy and definition of initial objectives, under the new Chairmanship agreed by the last Assembly.

27. Members are agreed that the committee's function is essentially **pastoral**: to help our local churches to wrestle with the exciting challenges of Christian encounter with people of other faiths in Britain today. It is recognised that these challenges face some churches more directly than others, but the committee feels that it is responsible for an issue of national importance; therefore, as well as helping local churches in particular situations, it will be concerned to keep the national implications of a multi-faith society before the attention of the Church as a whole, particularly at a time when elements within our national society seek to sow contention between different ethnic and religious groups.

28. Inherent in this pastoral role the committee sees itself to have a **theological** task: to seek to understand the significance of peoples of other faiths in the activity of God in history, and to ask how God is speaking to us in the multi-faith situation of contemporary Britain — calling us to a genuine "out-giving" of Christian love and a genuine "in-taking" of experience from other faiths which may lead to a deeper sharing of the Gospel. Opinions will be varied within the Church as within the Committee. We should remind ourselves, therefore, that we ask these questions not in theory, but in terms of what God is doing with our lives as Christians, and with the lives of thousands of other men and women in Britain of other religious persuasions. The context of theological enquiry must be personal and practical, rooted in concrete experiences and aspiring to pastoral ends.

29. Within this framework the committee intends to act as a **listening post** — attentive to the experiences of local churches in their meeting with people of other faiths, and attentive also to the experiences of the many Christians with whom we are linked in other parts of the world who may be more familiar with the issues than ourselves. This will provide concrete context — domestic and international — for the rest of the committee's work.

30. The committee intends also to provide **information**: to keep the local churches, and regional and central offices, apprised of the experiences of Christians in Britain and abroad, and, as appropriate, to make available the resources of the committee to assist in concrete experiences of encounter.

31. Without arrogating to itself the role of theological arbiter, the committee will seek also to **promote theological discussions** within the Church as a whole, and will, on occasions, bring theological issues to the debate of the General Assembly.

32. Four channels of activity have been agreed by the Committee:

- (i) To make full use of the "Other Faith" sheet in the **Information Service** to provide a continuous source of information and exchange of ideas, under the supervision of a special editor.
- (ii) To increase the number of "**consultants**" within the committee so as to give each member responsibility for a particular faith or concern, on the model of the long-standing and much appreciated consultancy on Judaism.
- (iii) To prepare a handbook to replace the 1974 manual on **The Local Churches Approach** to those of other Faiths, probably to take the form of
 - (a) practical advice and information;
 - (b) personal testimonies;
 - (c) lucid Biblical and theological discussion of the issues;
 - (d) guidance for the use of the handbook as a study document.
- (iv) To co-operate fully with the newly-created BCC Committee on Other Faiths.

David A. Kerr, *Chairman*

Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

33. The Committee was set up by the 1977 General Assembly to enable the URC to discharge its new responsibilities for its missionaries following the reorganisation of CWM. Much of its time has been spent elaborating application procedures and regulations for missionary service. The URC (together with all other member Churches of CWM) took over financial responsibilities for its missionaries from CWM on 1st January 1978.

34. The committee's first concern is for people: people testing and discovering their vocation to serve Christ through other member Churches of CWM, their training and commissioning, their support during leaves, their resettlement on return; people from Churches overseas serving Christ within the URC. The committee sees its role as enabling and encouraging the whole Church, at national, provincial, district and local church levels, to express their concern, and is exploring ways in which it may best fulfil that role.

35. **St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak** The URC is one of three sponsoring bodies of the College (The Council for World Mission and the Baptist Missionary Society) and with the restructuring of the CWM has undertaken a larger share in its support. Those accepted as missionaries of the URC spend some time in training at the College, studying in the Department of Mission. Each year the URC provides scholarships for students from Churches overseas with which it is associated either through the CWM or in other ways. The students become members of the College and take one of the courses offered by the Selly Oak Colleges. With the transformation this year of the Training in Mission Committee into the Department of Mission its work is fully integrated into the total programme of the Selly Oak Colleges. The Department's courses are designed not only for those going to serve overseas but also for those engaged in mission in Britain.

36. The following have been accepted as missionaries of the URC to serve overseas:

The Revd Raymond Adams
The Revd Derek Lindfield
Mr. David Vincent

The following are in training at St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak, Birmingham:

Miss Jean Fisher
The Revd Gil Dong Na from the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

The following have been commissioned to serve with other member Churches of the Council for World Mission.

- (i) The Revd Robin Sleigh to serve with the Church of South India, in the North Karnataka Diocese (left for India January 1978).
- (ii) Mr. Simon and Mrs. Adelaide Knight to serve with the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar in the school at Ambatomanga (left for Madagascar January 1978).
- (iii) Mr. Ian Knowles to serve with the Church of Christ in Hong Kong and on the staff of Lingnan College, Hong Kong (commissioned at Exeter 18th August 1977).

The following have completed their service:

The Revd John and Mrs. Yvonne Parry, after four years service with the Church of Bangladesh. Inducted into the pastorate at St. Aidan's, Ealing on 4th February 1978.

The Revd Alan and Mrs. Catherin Willcocks from the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa in Botswana, after six years service — to return to the pastoral ministry.

The Revd Robert and Mrs. Susan Hamilton from the Church of South India, in Theological Education for a year at the Kerala United Theological College, to the pastorate at Heaton, Newcastle. Inducted 10th December 1977.

Mrs. Vivien McKenzie from the headquarters of the Church of Bangladesh after four years service in Papua New Guinea and Bangladesh. On resignation.

Miss Joyce Lovell on retirement in December 1977 after thirty-one years service in China and Malaysia.

A full list of URC missionaries appears in the Year Book.

Anthony J. Coates, *Chairman*
Iorwerth L. Thomas, *Secretary*

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly resolves to affirm Proposition VI of the Ten Propositions in the terms set out in paragraphs 5.65 to 5.68 of the Draft Definitive Response in Appendix 2 of the Report of the World Church and Mission Department.
2. The Assembly receives the definitive response to the Ten Propositions prepared by the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee and authorises its transmission to the Churches' Unity Commission on behalf of the United Reformed Church.
3. The Assembly instructs the Doctrine and Worship Committee to consider in the light of the Report of the Theological Conversations between the World Alliance of Reformed Church and the Baptist World Alliance, the implementation of the practice of both believers and infant baptism within the life of the United Reformed Church, as already agreed in the proposed Scheme of Unification with the Churches of Christ.
4. The Assembly gives thanks for the covenant relationship with the United Church of the Palatinate which it inherited from the Congregational Church in England and Wales and for what this has contributed to the life of the URC. It sends greetings to the Palatinate Church on the twenty-first anniversary of the original covenant and looks forward to hearing any proposals for further development of the relationship which may arise from discussions to be held during the coming year.
5. The Assembly sends greetings and good wishes to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana on the 150th anniversary of its foundation and gives thanks for the fellowship which it enjoys with Presbyterian churches in Ghana, particularly through the work of the Ghanaian chaplaincy in London.

WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT
APPENDIX 1

DIGEST OF RESPONSES RECEIVED TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEN PROPOSITIONS

1. The following digest of responses received from Synods, Districts, Churches and Elders' Meetings reduces to bare figures a great variety of comment. In several cases no clear decision was recorded which is why the percentages do not total. An additional paper will be available for members of the Assembly giving a fuller account of the responses.

	Synods	Districts	Churches	Elders				
Total number of replies	12	42	403	25				
Yes to either A or B	10	30	229	13				
Percentage of 'Yes' returns	83%	71%	57%	52%				
'No' to both	2	10	158	8				
Percentage of 'No' returns	17%	26%	39%	32%				
	For	Against	For	Against	For	Against		
Willing for Method A	4	7	15	25	131	256	4	17
Percentage	33%	58%	36%	60%	32%	63%	16%	68%
Willing for Method B	9	2	28	12	178	211	12	10
Percentage	83%	17%	67%	31%	44%	52%	48%	40%
Preference where both accepted	A 3	B 2	A 4	B 8	A 34	B 27	A 1	B 2

2. The Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee felt a very great sense of responsibility resting upon it when it came to consider those responses and to decide how to advise the Assembly. Its task was greater than simply the statistical interpretations of the figures above: many and varied comments had to be weighed and acknowledged. The Committee was sensitive to:—

- (i) The United Reformed Church's commitment in the Basis of Union to 'take, wherever possible and with all speed, further steps towards the unity of God's people'.
- (ii) The fact that a United Reformed Church initiative had brought the Churches' Unity Commission into existence and that our Church had given it its Executive Officer.

reception of the ministry of bishops and asks the Churches' Unity Commission to plan for the continued exploration, after the Commission's own termination, of both methods and any other possible methods that may emerge from ecumenical experiments (e.g. the proposal for an ecumenical bishop at Swindon).

5.68 The United Reformed Church asks in particular that in such further exploration the following matters should be developed:—

In relation to Method A (i) a more specific vision of what a personal episcopate constitutionally related to conciliar structures might contribute to the common life of the churches. (ii) how the parallel episcopates might regularly act together in ordinations and together relate their ministry to the conciliar structures and whole life of the covenanting Churches.

In relation to Method B (iii) how clearer expression might be given to the way in which the common ordination by all Churches (quite apart from the question of who should minister such ordination) could heal the defects of ministries presently originating in divided Churches, defects not of succession but of limitation in separatedness.

In relation to both Methods (iv) how the roles of presbyters and laity in ordination might be as fully shared among the covenanting Churches as the role of bishops would be under the proposals so far developed. (v) greater attention to priorities for mission, so that proposed changes in structure and order are seen in relation to the Church's ministry to all mankind.

(vi) how the Consultative Committee on Local Ecumenical Projects in England and the Division of Ecumenical Affairs of the British Council of Churches may fully participate in on-going conversations.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Chairman: Mr. Leslie Palmer

Secretary: The Revd E. W. Todd

1. Uppermost in our minds, as we consider the work of the Finance and Administration Departments, must be a sense of gratitude that in the special circumstances of the first year of the new scheme of ministerial remuneration, both the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and the Unified Appeal have produced such splendid results. Difficult decisions face Assembly but at least they can be approached with confidence.

2. We need to relate our decisions to the best information we can acquire about the pattern of expenditure within the whole of the URC. Once again we have produced an approximation of what has happened in recent years and what is likely to occur in the immediate future. This information is to be found with the accounts and budget proposals. But it is not sufficient to consider one year at a time and the department welcomes the study commitments of the Church. More than 80% of our total expenditure relates to Ministry and Buildings and these two matters will need special study.

3. The Budget Committee is primarily concerned with formulating proposals for central expenditure financed from the Unified Appeal but it needs to take account of the other calls on Local churches and in particular the assessments for the maintenance of the ministry. The arguments for and against combining contributions for the Unified Appeal with assessments will need careful consideration. Comments are welcome.

4. Soon after this year's Assembly we shall be saying goodbye to the Revd Ernest Todd, the URC's first Financial Secretary. Those of us privileged to work with him over the last six difficult years have some idea of the tremendous contribution he has made, not least in producing a unified scheme of ministerial remuneration. There will be opportunity during Assembly to voice our appreciation.

5. The imminence of Mr Todd's retirement was the occasion for a study into the organisation of the Department. The report of the Study Group was approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting in November 1977. Briefly the proposals were:

5.1 Posts of Chief Accountant and Departmental Secretary to be combined in the person of Mr C. M. Frank.

5.2 Vacant post of Deputy Accountant to be filled as soon as possible.

5.3 A minister to be appointed to serve part time as Secretary to the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee (Revd G. Hooper has now been appointed).

5.4 Mr. R. J. Gill to be appointed Manager of Maintenance of the Ministry and to work closely with the Maintenance of the Ministry Secretary. Clerical support to be provided as necessary. Mr. H. P. Doran, voluntary part time officer, to be invited to continue in his present work.

5.5 Committee structure of the Department to be reviewed periodically (see also under Unified Appeal, below).

Reports from the various committees of the department are below:

THE MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. Noel Tinsley

Secretary: The Revd E. W. Todd

6. Up to the time this report was compiled, the Committee has been occupied with two major issues: (i) Increase in the basic stipend; (ii) The pension position arising from the change in status of ministers.

- (iii) The vision granted to us at the moment of our union that what we were doing was 'part of what God is doing to make his people one', and the practical development which has been welcomed as of the Spirit, that increasingly in diverse local situations we are sharing church buildings, worship, ministry, communion tables and membership.
3. The responses from churches show no wavering in the United Reformed Church's resolve to seek the unity of all God's people. But they do show that the focus on episcopacy in the debate on Proposition VI that was sharpened by the Churches' Unity Commission's explication of January 1977 has presented for our churches difficulties which owe as much to the political and social history of England as to any theological understanding of the Church. Many have felt dismayed as though they had been led back to ancient shibboleths when they had begun to feel that the conversation between Churches in England was moving on to new ground determined by concern for the Church's mission to the life of the nation today.
4. The Committee cannot recommend that Assembly express a preference, at this date, for either method of implementing Proposition VI as explicated by the Churches' Unity Commission on 18th January, 1977. Instead we propose that the Assembly affirms Proposition VI in its basic intention, on the condition that the recognition proposed embraces all our ministers, men and women alike, and any ministers who, on terms of mutual eligibility, might be admitted to our Ministry subsequent to covenanting. At the same time we propose that Assembly requests the Churches' Unity Commission not only to explore further Methods A and B but also to strive to discover, from ecumenical experiments, other, perhaps more meaningful methods of sharing the ministry of bishops. Particularly we recommend that those who urge the value and importance of the ministry of bishops be invited to make clear why such ministry is required at this stage of the progress towards unity and to expound the value of a personal rather than a corporate episcopate in the on-going life and mission of the Church; and that there be explored the positive gains promised in Method B apart from the questions of the possession or the lack of, what some call, the 'historic episcopate'.
5. The aim of the Ten Propositions should be borne clearly in mind — to bring existing Churches into a state of mutual recognition. The practical outcome of that recognition would be evident in mutual recognition of members, mutual recognition of ministry and burgeoning projects of local co-operation and sharing. We believe that these are objectives which churches of the United Reformed Church wish to achieve. Therefore we propose that the Assembly express the willingness of the United Reformed Church to enter into a Covenant whilst requesting the Churches' Unity Commission to make possible continuing conversations to achieve Proposition VI's objective of recognition of ministries. We realise that such conversations will need special arrangements to be devised, either to extend the life of the Commission or to facilitate the discussion in other arenas. For this reason we recommend that the Assembly request that the Consultative Committee on Local Ecumenical Projects in England and the Division of Ecumenical Affairs of the British Council of Churches be involved in planning these conversations.
6. Against feelings of disappointment that might be felt at the failure to achieve a sufficient majority vote in the Churches of Christ to unite with the United Reformed Church and our own and other Churches' problems with some of the Ten Propositions, must be set the strength and joy which is experienced in various local situations where the unity of Christians is being discovered in common commitment to one another in the task of mission to the community. Much is being done to make the unity of all Christ's people visible in this land. We must not allow problems in accepting the present explication of Proposition VI to turn our eyes from this progress which we receive as the work of the Spirit. The United Reformed Church by its existence is testimony to the unity which is experienced in mission. In our coming together we invoked pledges from other Churches in the Westminster Abbey service to seek with us the unity of all God's people. In the spirit of this commitment we urge the Assembly to lead the Church forward towards visible unity in this land as far as possible in the direction indicated in the Ten Propositions.

WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT APPENDIX 2

REVISED RESPONSE TO PROPOSITION VI

5.61 The Churches' Unity Commission has stated that 'it should be understood that in Proposition 6 "episcopal" refers not to a general exercise of oversight (episcope) but to the role of ministers specially set apart to a wide, crucial, and peculiarly responsible form of ministry distinguishable from the presbyteral ministry and from corporate and conciliar forms of oversight, though not exercised in separation from these; "presbyteral" refers to the role of those who exercise a ministry of word and sacraments, whether as do the priests of the present episcopally ordered Churches or as do the ministers of those Churches which have a single form of the ministry of word and sacraments; "lay" refers to the role of the laity both in the process leading to ordination (testing of candidature, training, call to a pastorate, decision to ordain) and in the act of ordination itself.'

5.62 The United Reformed Church already in practice says 'yes' to the first half of this Proposition, but in order to avoid confusion we feel it necessary to say that for us this means that we are ready always to receive the ministration of all those ordained in the member Churches of the Churches' Unity Commission (and indeed in a far wider circle of Churches than that) and to receive such ministers into the ministry of the URC without further ordination. It is such a readiness that we look for in the other covenanting Churches. We do not expect the recognition to mean that ministers will be unconditionally transferable from one Church to another, as we acknowledge that every Church has a right to safeguard standards of training and to examine the personal qualities of those admitted to its ministry. The emergence of ecumenical centres of training and other developments may make such transferability automatic in the future, but we do not so understand this present proposal.

5.63 In the URC as at present, ordinations take place in acts of public worship and usually after ordinands have received the call of a local church; they are conducted by the District Council with the Provincial Moderator or his deputy presiding. The episcopal role is thus fulfilled in a conciliar manner and combined with the presbyteral, while the lay role is expressed in the involvement of lay people in the encouragement and oversight of candidature for the ministry, through the making of the call, through the concurrence of the District Council including its lay members and by the responses of the local church at the ordination service. We hold that the episcopal, presbyteral and lay roles are thus already represented in our practice of ordination, and desire that the episcopal churches will seriously consider the values inherent in the conciliar practice of ordination, which we regard as highly as they do the episcopal practice.

5.64 However, we recognise that any advance towards visible church unity in England that is to include the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches must honour the convictions of those Churches concerning the ministry of bishops and must find a basis for harmony between those convictions and the doctrine of the Church as held amongst us.

5.65 The United Reformed Church in its continued endeavour to fulfil its declared purpose to seek further unity, therefore affirms Proposition VI in its basic intention — namely, the mutual recognition of ministries, the future use of a Common Ordinal (not necessarily the one published by the Commission) and the bringing together of bishops, presbyters and laity in ordinations.

5.66 The United Reformed Church affirms the Proposition on the understanding:—

- (a) that recognition will be equally accorded to men and women ministers of the covenanting churches, and
- (b) that when the covenanting Churches in future receive into their ministries ministers of other Churches eligible under their present disciplines, such ministers will be recognised under the covenant without any special action by the other covenanting Churches.

5.67 The United Reformed Church, having consulted its Synods, District Councils and local churches, judges that it would be premature to accept either Method A or Method B for the

7. The basic stipend

7.1 The Assembly in 1977 recognised the urgent need to increase stipends and instructed the Committee to initiate consultation with Provinces, District Councils and local churches with that end in view. The Committee accordingly issued a memorandum setting out the position with estimates of cost, together with a questionnaire designed to collect the necessary information. Over 1300 replies were received which were analysed and tabulated. There can be little doubt that the firm insistence on the "twelve month's rule" and the 10% guide line (despite a protracted strike) and several settlements at this 10% level were reflected in the results and the Committee felt that we must observe these guide lines: this was reported to the February meeting of the Assembly Executive Committee, who gave their approval.

7.2 Numerous replies made specific mention of the difficulties experienced by ministers with families of school age: the Committee accordingly recommended that, as from 1st July 1978, the existing children's allowances should be increased to £60/£100/£140.

7.3 Further, the Committee felt that the lines of future policy must also be laid down. A statement of intent has much to commend it, but, of course, the Committee must be prepared to improve on this if future pay policy permits, as this could change at short notice.

7.4 It is the Committee's intention to make a further increase of 15% in the basic stipend from 1st July 1979 — if this is permissible. In addition, the increments for years of service will be increased. As from 1st July 1980, the Committee intends (subject to any pay policy then prevailing) to make a further increase of 15% and to increase the service increments still further.

7.5 In view of the 10% increase only, from 1st July 1978, the Committee recommended and the Assembly Executive Committee agreed that the rate of assessment should remain throughout 1978 at £5 per member and 48p per pound of net assessable income. The Committee will bring to the Assembly a recommendation regarding the rate of assessment for 1979.

8. The Pension Position

8.1 As from 6th April 1978 ministers will rank as under Class 1 for National Insurance purposes, and will be eligible to come under the new "Earnings Related Pension" Scheme, unless application had been made and approved to "contract out". On the advice of the Pensions Sub-Committee, in consultation with the Actuary, it was agreed that it would be in the interests of our ministers to "contract in" and formal notification of this has been issued. The necessary modification in the rules of the Pension Fund are being made.

8.2 The position of those ministers who cannot benefit from this arrangement and who are less well provided for is receiving careful and urgent attention. We are making as much use as possible of the Pastors' Superannuation Fund within the order of the Charity Commission. The income limit has been raised to £1695 (and any part of the State pension applicable to the wife is ignored in applying this limit).

8.3 Full use continues to be made of the Pastors' Widows' Fund and the income limit here has been raised to £1080.

9. Other Matters

9.1 **Children's Allowances** The Assembly in 1977 passed a resolution (Minutes page 19 No. 9) which, in effect, made certain allowances paid a deductible item for the purpose of the assessment. At the time of the Assembly, the MM1 forms had been issued and it has not been possible to carry this into effect as regards the 1978 assessment. The Committee proposes that, as from 1st July 1978, Children's Allowances shall be paid in all cases irrespective of whether or not a supplement above the basic stipend is paid and shall be a charge on the Fund instead of, in certain cases, the local church. This also was reported to the Assembly Executive Committee and approved.

9.2 There has been over the last few years an initial grant on ordination and induction to a charge of £40 and this the Committee has increased to £100. In addition the interest free loan

as a help towards the furnishing of a manse has been increased from £200 to £500 and the term of repayment extended to 5 years.

9.3 Further, the Assembly asked the Committee to look at the question of what might be called a "disturbance allowance" — a grant on removal from one charge to another towards the cost of new fittings: the Committee recommends that any minister translated from one charge to another on or after 1st July 1978, shall be eligible for a grant not exceeding £100 — the application to be supported by the Provincial Moderator.

9.4 **Removal Expenses** These are normally paid by the local church to which a minister goes: grants towards the cost have been possible on the recommendation of the Provincial Moderators. The Charity Commission Scheme of apportionment made the use for this purpose of certain funds impossible, and the Committee has agreed to take over this responsibility which will involve a slight modification in the Scheme. Further, while in the past a minister on retirement was not eligible for any help in regard to removal expenses the increasing cost is a burden and it is recommended that in the case of a minister retiring on or after 1st July 1978, a grant of up to £150 would be considered.

9.5 **Administration** i) To facilitate the handling of returns of income and the calculation of assessments, use is being made of the computer services offered by Centre-file (Northern) Ltd. This means that, in particular where relief can be claimed because the assessment exceeds the maximum basic stipend, this no longer needs to be dated back to the penultimate year and Section 12 (g) of the Scheme is to be modified accordingly.

9.6 ii) The 5% discount for single payment was originally given in the belief that administration would be reduced. In fact the reverse has been found to be true. It is, therefore, proposed that, as from 1st January 1979 the discount be reduced to 2½% and from 1st January 1980, be discontinued altogether.

TREASURERSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. J. E. Hooper

Secretary: Mr. C. M. Frank

10. The report of last year refers to the progress made in the apportionment of the funds of the former Congregational Church, and in the examination of the funds of the former Presbyterian Church of England with a view to consolidating these where possible. This work, which has continued through the year, is now almost finished and the Accounts for 1977 reflect the consolidations that have taken place in 1977, and show separately as Capital Funds those funds where only the income can be used. The consolidation of the Investment Pool of the former Presbyterian Church of England and the Common Investment Fund of the former Congregational Church is under review but there are various legal problems which have not yet been resolved.

11. The Committee felt it right not to contract out of the Government Pension Scheme but to modify the present pension arrangement for office lay staff to take account of the changing conditions.

12. The Portfolio Management Team has met nearly every month to review the major portfolios of the Church and this group has made such changes in the investments of the Church and Pension Funds as seemed right.

13. The Committee continue to regard the operation of an efficient Covenant Scheme as a prime method of increasing the income of the Church, and in this connection issued an explanatory leaflet in the autumn to all church treasurers. A print of 20,000 copies of the Covenant leaflet for church members was used in a period of three months.

14. With various changes in staff, a number of houses have been bought and sold, and the commencement of regular surveying of all property in the care of the Committee has been instituted.

15. For 1977, the Committee has produced a simplified and consolidated account which covers all the funds administered by the Treasurership Committee. This cannot replace the detailed accounts which are legally required, but it is hoped that they will provide a condensed yet clear view of the source and use of central funds.

16. The Committee have been concerned with the escalating costs of Theological Training and have agreed to make funds available to meet such costs accruing in 1977/79. The Committee wish to make clear to Assembly that these costs cannot be met from the Church's reserves indefinitely and to this end a joint sub committee of the Ministerial Training Committee and the Treasurership Committee has been set up to examine this problem in depth.

17. The Central Income and Expenditure account for 1977 shows a surplus, which has arisen because:—

- a) The Unified Appeal has slightly exceeded its target
- b) Expenditure was kept below budgeted levels
- c) Benefit was obtained through the exceptional circumstances ruling in the Money Market during the year.
- d) Rationalisation of trust funds has led to interest on certain monies being included in interest credited to the Income and Expenditure Account.

18. After making allocation to the Ministerial Training Fund to give the necessary finance for the continuation of the courses of those presently at college, the surplus has been placed to the credit of the General Unexpended Income Fund.

DEVELOPMENT IN NEW AREAS AND CARE OF EXISTING CHURCH BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd R. G. Walker

Secretary: The Revd E. W. Todd

19. The Committee has continued to deal, within the limits of its resources, and the guide lines it has laid down, with applications for assistance. During 1977 it has made grants in sixteen cases and offered loans to seven churches.

20. Following the settlement of the apportionment of funds of the former Congregational Church, the Committee has had a better idea of the resources it can call on and it has accordingly revised the guide lines previously formulated. Provinces have been informed, since all applications must come through them and be accompanied by a Provincial recommendation.

21. In the late summer of 1977, information was received as to the Government's plan for State Aid for listed buildings and Provinces and local churches were informed. Several applications were received but it is too early to say what the outcome of these will be.

22. In the report to the last Assembly, reference was made to the Committee's concern that the very considerable asset in the way of Church property was handled wisely and to the process of consultation with Provinces already begun. This consultation is continuing. In the meantime the Committee has received information from another Committee within the Department of the demands on local church resources to maintain their property: they will do all they can to ensure that this valuable asset is not allowed to deteriorate and is handled with a proper regard for good stewardship.

UNIFIED APPEAL COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. G. Vaughan Davies

Secretary: Mr. C. M. Frank

23. The target for the Unified Appeal in 1977 was £600,000. In a year when the demands of the Maintenance of the Ministry Funds placed a great stress on the resources of many local churches it is indeed gratifying to report that seven provinces exceeded their targets and that the total received for the Unified Appeal amounted to £602,970 as follows:—

<i>Province</i>	1	Northern	£39,705
	2	North Western	48,089
	3	Mersey	39,829
	4	Yorkshire	40,676
	5	E. Midlands	34,818
	6	W. Midlands	47,032
	7	Eastern	50,121
	8	South Western	37,965
	9	Wessex	52,144
	10	Thames North	82,069
	11	Southern	105,517
	12	Wales	21,529
			<hr/>
			599,494
		Non Provincial sources	<hr/> 3,476
			<hr/> <hr/> £602,970

24. The Committee express sincere thanks to all who have helped to make this most satisfactory result.

25. For 1978 the Assembly agreed a target of £648,000 and following discussions with the Provincial Treasurers the target was divided between Provinces, bearing in mind the general proposals agreed at 1977 Assembly.

26. Two leaflets were issued by the Committee, one in January 1977 "Lets be Personal" and in June "How the pound is divided in 1977 Unified Appeal". Approximately 65,000 of these leaflets were distributed to Churches.

27. As a result of discussions on the organisation and staffing of the Finance and Administration Department the Committee decided to recommend that it be discharged. Its function in regard to the apportionment of the target, monitoring of the income from the Appeal, and publicity, will be continued by regular meetings of Provincial Treasurers and through the Treasurership and Budget Committees.

WELFARE AND EMERGENCIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd D. A. Smith

Secretary: The Revd A. L. Macarthur

28. The URC tries to be a caring Church and as this Committee has continued to discharge its task it has been very conscious of the privilege of being an instrument of that care towards those who, for whatever reason, have been in need of special support. Its major work is done through the resources provided by the Unified Appeal and is shared in the general satisfaction that the Appeal was met in full in 1977. The response of those who receive help is always to be grateful, not only for any gift but for what that gift betokens of the Church's concern.

29. Now that the resources available from trust funds have been clearly identified, the Committee is able to invite Provincial Moderators and others to seek help for ministers and their families in respect of sickness, some holiday expenses, children's training and other special needs.

URC RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING SOCIETY LIMITED

Chairman: Mr. H. E. Greening

Secretary: Mr. F. A. W. Lodde

30. During the year 10 houses and flats were purchased, or acquired by the Society, and 5 were sold. The properties sold were considered no longer suitable for the purposes of the Society, or were in areas where there had been no demand from retired ministers. At the end of the year 38 houses and flats were occupied by retired ministers, or the widows of ministers, and a further 3 houses and flats were owned by the Society but occupied by sitting tenants, who were in occupation when the properties were given, or bequeathed to the Society. In addition the Society continued to manage the 14 houses and flats owned by the CUEW and occupied by retired ministers or their widows.

31. An enquiry of Provinces produced the information that a further 40 houses and flats owned and managed within the Provinces were also occupied in the same way.

32. The Memorial Hall Trust is in process of acquiring some 16 houses in the immediate future, about 13 of which will be available for retired ministers of the URC. While the Society conducted a careful census of need two years ago, the fact that some 46 enquiries were received from URC sources for houses through the Memorial Hall Trust may suggest that the original census did not uncover the real situation. The Society has delayed any renewed national appeal for funds pending clarification with regard to the Memorial Hall Trust. It is now clear that the Trust will be a collateral support to the efforts of the Society but that the need is still far from covered. Another reason for delaying an appeal related to the proposals for a major increase in stipends. Now that the Assembly Executive Committee has accepted a proposal that increases in 1978 should be 10% and that these can be met without any increases in the rate of assessment in 1978, the opportunity and the need for an appeal is clearly there. The appeal for houses and properties made in the February edition of *Reform* will have to be taken further.

33. After long and careful consideration, by the Society and the Assembly Executive the latter at its meeting on the 2nd February decided that Fen Place should be closed as soon as suitable alternative accommodation can be found for the present residents. This decision was conveyed to the residents at Fen Place by the Moderator and the General Secretary, in person, on the 14th February.

34. Since houses will in future be made available through the Society, Memorial Hall Trust and Provincial sources applications must be coordinated. The Society is charged with responsibility for and will seek to carry out this coordinating function but must rely on the advice of Provincial Moderators. Ministers should inform their moderator about a year before they expect to retire indicating their need and any particular wishes about type and area of retirement housing desired. In this way the best use can be made of all available resources.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd A. L. Macarthur

Secretary: Mr. C. M. Frank

35. The report of this Committee of the Assembly Executive is included here for the convenience of the Assembly.

36. In preparing the Budget for 1979 the Committee had to bear in mind the need to keep pace with inflation so that work is not unduly restricted and at the same time was anxious not to ask more of the Church than seems reasonably possible. The figure of 8% overall increase was set as a target and is reflected in the Budget for 1979 now presented.

37. The response of the Church to the 1977 Unified Appeal was a most gratifying excess of about £3,000 over the target. In addition savings in expenditure and unexpected income increased the surplus further. The drastic increase in the cost of Ministerial Training creates difficulties but fortunately the Treasurership Committee has been able to make funds available to relieve these costs in 1978 and 1979. The balanced budget presented for 1979 seeks £700,000 from the Unified Appeal, and the Committee feel that if inflation is kept to single figures, this should mean that work may be maintained at its present level.

RESOLUTIONS

Maintenance of the Ministry

1. The Assembly resolves that the Scope OV maximum shall be £1600 per annum from 1st July 1978.
2. The Assembly resolves that, with effect from 1st July 1978, the salary scale for Deaconesses shall be increased by 10% as follows:

£2123 per annum for the first ten years of service
£2178 per annum for the next ten years of service
£2233 per annum after twenty years.
3. The Assembly authorises the necessary changes in the Scheme of Ministerial Remuneration to cover:
 - i) the adjustment where the assessment exceeds the maximum basic stipend;
 - ii) the payment of grants towards removal expenses;
 - iii) the payment of a grant not exceeding £100 on removal;
 - iv) the revised scale of initial grants and manse furnishing loans;
 - v) the revised discount for single payment of assessment in a group pastorate from 1st January 1979 and its discontinuance from 1st January 1980.

Unified Appeal

4. The Assembly having heard of the proposals for the future division of the Unified Appeal target between the Provinces, monitoring of the income from the Appeal and the necessary publicity, discharges the Unified Appeal Committee with warm thanks to its officers and members for the work they have done to establish the Appeal in the life of the United Reformed Church, and shares their satisfaction that, in the last year of their work, they were able to report a small surplus, despite a time of financial difficulty.

Treasurership

5. The Assembly receives and adopts the accounts for the year ended 31st December 1977.
6. The Assembly resolves that in future years the consolidated Central Accounts and schedule of legacies received for the previous year and the budget for the subsequent year shall be circulated to members of Assembly, and that detailed audited accounts shall be circulated only to members of the Assembly Executive and Provincial Treasurers, and such other persons as may request copies.

The full accounts shall be presented each year to the Executive for adoption.

Budget Committee

7. The Assembly approves the budget for 1979.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT: APPENDIX 1

STIPENDS PAYABLE TO CERTAIN MINISTERS EMPLOYED CENTRALLY AS FROM JULY 1977

- 1. Provincial Moderators** The stipend of provincial moderators is £2992 p.a. In addition provincial moderators are provided with a house, free of maintenance costs and rates, or, if they prefer, a house allowance in lieu. Travelling expenses, telephone costs, etc, in connection with church business are also refunded. A car is provided and maintenance and running expenses met by the Church, subject to an adjustment in respect of private motoring. If preferred, the moderator can provide his own car and claim mileage allowances. A contribution towards home fuel costs is made which is tax free for those in occupation of church houses.
- 2. Ministers at Tavistock Place** The general entitlements are as for provincial moderators, though fares between home and Tavistock Place have to be met by the ministers. Stipends range from £4022 p.a. for the General Secretary to £2625 p.a. for Assistant Secretaries.
- 3. Academic Staff at Westminster College** Stipends range from £2945 to £2705, housing, fuel costs, telephones are as for moderators.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION : APPENDIX 2

The United Reformed Church History Society

ANNUAL REPORT 1977

1. The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in Southport at 1 p.m. on Monday, May 8th, 1978, followed at 1.30 by the Annual Lecture to be given by Dr David M. Thompson of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, on the subject "Scottish Influence on English Churches in the 19th Century".

The next Summer School Week-End will be held at the Congregational College, Manchester, from September 8th to 10th, 1978.

2. The conclusion of five years since the incorporation of two long-established History Societies into one new Society provides an opportunity to look back with satisfaction on how smoothly the transition took place and how quickly an effective combined organisation emerged. Three of those who played a very important part in this took the opportunity at the 1977 Annual Meeting of asking to be allowed to stand down: Dr G. F. Nuttall as President, the Revd W. W. Biggs as Chairman of Council and the Revd J. R. Plowman as one of the Joint Secretaries. Warm thanks were expressed to them for the valued services both before and after 1972 and a warm welcome extended to their successors in office: Dr John Huxtable, the Revd John H. Taylor and the Revd Stephen Orchard.

3. It was with great regret that the Society learned of the death of the Hon Treasurer, Mr J. H. Anderson. We greatly appreciate all the work he did for the Society during his few years of office. The work that he started up in connection with the restructuring of the Society's financial arrangements have since been carried further. The Society's financial position and the need to raise annual subscriptions from 75 pence to £1 is dealt with in the financial report.

4. Dr Nuttall's retirement as President coincided very closely with his retirement from New College. The Society was well-represented at a dinner held in Mansfield College, Oxford, attended by friends representing all the activities with which Dr Nuttall had been connected. At the dinner he was presented with a suitably-inscribed volume of "Reformation, Conformity and Dissent — Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Nuttall". Most of the 12 essays were specially written for the occasion. Included was the Annual Lecture to our Society entitled "Occasional Conformity" given following the Annual Meeting in Birmingham on May 2nd, 1977 by Dr Christopher Hill.

5. During 1977 new members totalled 15 and we lost 10 by death, nine by resignation and six by removal from roll because of our inability to trace addresses. At December 31st the membership

was 576 which included 42 Libraries. In addition there are 58 Libraries which receive or purchase copies of the Journal.

6. Although we have a vacancy for a Librarian, the Library is open from 10.30 on Tuesdays and Fridays, the work being shared by Mr Fred Keay, appointed at the 1977 Annual Meeting as a Research Secretary. Council wishes to express thanks to all who have helped in any aspect of the Society's work during the year.

STANDING ORDERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

Questions

1. (i) A member may:
 - (a) if two clear days' notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary ask the Moderator or the Chairman of any Committee any question on any matter relating to the business of the Assembly to which no reference is made in any report before the Assembly; and
 - (b) with the permission of the Moderator put to him or to the Chairman of any Committee any questions relating to urgent business of which such notice has not been given, but a copy of any such question shall, if possible, be handed to the General Secretary at the beginning of the morning session of the Assembly at which the question is to be asked.
- (ii) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

Notices of Motion

- 2A. By Provincial Synods:
 - (i) A Provincial Synod may deliver to the General Secretary not less than six weeks before the commencement of the annual meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion for consideration at the Assembly. If the motion introduces new business to the Assembly, the Synod may, subject to the agreement of the Clerk of the Assembly and the Chairman of the Business Committee and at its own expense, circulate a statement in support.
 - (ii) Any accepted notice shall first be considered by the appropriate Committee which shall report to the Assembly thereon. The report of the Committee shall appear on the Agenda of the Assembly with the notice of motion.
 - (iii) If the report of a Committee cannot be brought before the Assembly immediately following the receipt of the notice, then the notice and report shall be placed on the agenda for the next following Assembly unless the subject matter is otherwise to be considered by the Assembly but if the Provincial Synod giving the notice considers that the notice raises a question which merits urgent consideration then the notice shall stand referred to the Business Committee.
 - (iv) If a church or a District Council wishes to put forward a motion for consideration by the General Assembly then they shall submit the motion to the Provincial Synod for consideration, and if thought fit for transmission to the General Assembly at such time as will enable the Synod to comply with paragraph 2A (i) above. In the case of a church the motion must be submitted through the District Council.
- 2B. By Members of Assembly.
 - (i) A member of the Assembly may deliver to the General Secretary not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion to appear on the statement of the business to be transacted by the Assembly in accordance with Rule of Procedure 2.1.
 - (ii) If the subject matter of the notice of motion appears to the General Secretary to be an infringement of the rights of a Synod or District Council through which the matter could properly have been raised, the General Secretary shall inform the member accordingly and bring the matter before the Business Committee who shall be required to advise the Assembly as to the procedure to be followed.
- 2C. General
 - (i) No such notice as is referred to in paragraph A (i) and B (i) above shall be accepted if the question raised is the subject of any report to the same Assembly, or is capable of being raised as an amendment to any report before the Assembly, or has been the subject of any decision given to the Assembly within the preceding two years.
3. (i) Every Report shall be delivered to the General Secretary in time for inclusion in the statement of the business to be transacted to be sent to members of the Assembly under Rule of Procedure 2.1.
 - (ii) If a report is for information only and makes no proposal for action, the motion on the report shall be 'That the Assembly takes note of this Report'.

- (iii) If any report makes any proposal for action by the Assembly, then the motion on the report shall be 'That this report be received'. On this being passed, and before the consequent recommendations are proposed, any member may raise a matter arising from the report which is not the subject of a motion.
- (iv) It shall not be in order to move an amendment or a reference back motion to either of the motions set out in paragraph (ii) and (iii) above.
- (v) If either of the motions included in paragraphs (ii) and (iii) above is carried, it shall not be deemed to commit the Assembly to the acceptance of any matter contained in the report.
- (vi) If the motion 'That the Assembly takes note of the Report' be carried, any member may move a further motion for expressing views on the whole or any part of the report or otherwise within the scope of the subject matter of the report.
- (vii) When the recommendations of a report have been disposed of, any member having given due notice, may move a further motion for expressing views on the whole, or any part of the report or otherwise within the scope of the subject matter of the report.
- (viii) Any motion (or amendment) moved under the provisions of this Standing Order shall be submitted in writing to the General Secretary in sufficient time for circulation to all members of the Assembly before debate.
- (ix) This Standing Order shall not apply to the Executive, Business, Applications, or Nominations Committees, or to any other Committee in respect of which the Assembly so decide.

Speeches

4. Speeches made in presentation of the report and motions of any Department and its committees shall not in aggregate exceed 30 minutes, save by the prior agreement of the Assembly on the recommendation of the Business Committee. The proposers of any other motion shall be allotted 10 minutes or such longer period as may be recommended by the Business Committee or determined by the Moderator. Each subsequent speaker shall be allowed five minutes unless the Moderator shall otherwise determine.
5. When a speech is made on behalf of a committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by stating his name and his accreditation to the Assembly.
6. Secretaries of Standing Committees and full-time officers of Departments who are not members of Assembly may speak on the report of the Department when requested by the Chairman concerned. They may speak on other reports with the consent of the Moderator.
7. In each debate, whether on a motion or on an amendment, no one shall address the Assembly more than once, except that at the close of each debate the proposer of the motion shall have the right of reply, but must strictly confine himself to answering previous speakers and not introduce new matter. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or that amendment as the case may be.
8. The foregoing Standing Order shall not prevent the asking or answering of a question which directly arises from the matter before the Assembly or from a speech made in the debate upon it.

Seconding

9. No motion or amendment shall be debated or put to the Assembly unless it has been seconded, except that resolutions presented on behalf of a Department or Standing Committee, of which printed notice has been given, do not need to be seconded. A seconder may, if he then declares his intention of doing so, reserve his speech until a later period in the debate.

Amendments

10. An amendment shall be either to omit words or to insert words or to do both, but no amendment shall be in order which has the effect of introducing an irrelevant proposal or of negativating the motion.

11. No amendment shall be moved unless a written notice of its terms has been (a) submitted to the General Secretary before the Assembly opens, or (b) handed to the General Secretary during the Assembly, unless the Moderator otherwise decides.
12. If the Moderator considers that an amendment is of such a character that it cannot adequately be debated without previous distribution of copies, he may so decide and discussion of the amendment shall be adjourned until copies are available.
13. No motion or amendment which necessitates expenditure additional to that which has been provided for in the estimates for the current or ensuing year shall be put to the meeting unless and until the cost involved and the possibility of providing the additional amount has been considered by the Central Committee of the Finance Department, or in case of emergency by the Assembly Business Committee.
14. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved. If an amendment is rejected a further amendment not to the like effect may be moved.
15. An amendment which has been moved and seconded shall be disposed of before any further amendment may be moved. Notice may be given of intention to move a further amendment should the one before the Assembly be rejected.

Alterations of motion or amendment

16. A member may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly, alter a motion or amendment he has proposed.

Withdrawal of motion or amendment

17. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly. Any such consent shall be signified without discussion. It shall not be competent for any member to speak upon it after the proposer has asked permission for its withdrawal unless such permission shall have been refused.

Closure of debate

18. In the course of the business any member may move that the question under consideration be not put. This resolution takes precedence of every motion before the Assembly, and as soon as the member has explained his reasons for proposing it, and it has been seconded, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that such motion is an unfair use of the rules of the Assembly. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately end.
19. In the course of any discussion, it is competent for any member to move that the question be now put. Unless it appears to the Moderator that this motion is an abuse of the rules of the Assembly, the vote shall be taken upon it immediately. When an amendment is under discussion, the motion shall apply only to that amendment. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. The mover of the original motion retains his right of reply before the question is put.

Voting

20. (i) Every question shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members present and voting as indicated by a show of hands unless the Assembly rules that there shall be a ballot.
- (ii) To provide for voting under this Standing Order Tellers for each Assembly shall be appointed by the Nominations Committee.

Dissent

21. The right to record in the Minutes a dissent from any decision of the Assembly shall only be granted by the Moderator if the reason stated, either verbally or later in writing, appears to him to fall within the provisions of paragraph 7 (10) of the Basis of Union. The decision of the Moderator shall not be open to discussion.

Points of Order

22. A member may rise to a point of order or in personal explanation, but a personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him at the same meeting which may have been misunderstood. A member so rising shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.
23. The ruling of the Moderator on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be open to discussion.
24. A member may raise a point of order, offer a personal explanation or ask a question by standing in his place, in which event his words shall be repeated from the platform. Otherwise, no one shall address the Assembly except from a place indicated by the Moderator.

Suspension of Standing Orders

25. Any one or more of the Standing Orders, in any case of urgency or upon motion made on a notice duly given, may be suspended at any meeting so far as regards any business at such a meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of the Assembly present and voting shall so decide.

Admission of public and press

26. Members of the public and representatives of the press shall be admitted to the Assembly unless the Assembly otherwise decides and they shall occupy such places as are assigned to them.

Minutes

27. The minutes of each day's proceedings shall be circulated on the following morning and, after any necessary correction, sustained at the opening of the afternoon session. The minutes of the closing day of the Assembly shall be submitted at the close of the business and, after any necessary correction, sustained.

The substance of the minutes shall thereafter be published, at the expense of the Church, in the first available issue of the official magazine and a copy of the minutes shall be sent to each Synod, District Council and local church.

Record of attendance

28. A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such manner as the Executive Committee may determine.

Circulation of Documents

29. Only documents authorised by the Clerk of Assembly in consultation with the Chairman of the Business Committee may be distributed within the meeting place of the Assembly.
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NOTE: Changes were made in November 1977 by the Executive Committee to Standing Order 2A(i) and a new Standing Order 29 was approved.

Notes

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