

**The
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY
1981**

27th April - 1st May
RICHMOND HILL URC (Monday)
THE PAVILION (Tuesday - Friday)
Bournemouth

**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 BOURNEMOUTH, 27th APRIL – 1st MAY, 1981

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee met on the first Thursday of July, November and February, with the Moderator presiding. He spoke to the Committee of his visits to the Waldensian Church, the Reformed Church in Roumania, and sister churches in Scotland and Ireland.

2. **Standing Orders** It was agreed that as in 1981 the early date of the Assembly made it difficult to fulfil the requirement for notice of Synod Resolutions, Rule 2A(i) be amended for this year only to read 'not less than five weeks', and Rule 111/3/3 to read '24 March'. On the advice of the Business Committee it was agreed to amend Standing Order 4 as follows:

Speeches made in presentation of the report and motions of any Department and its committees shall not in aggregate exceed one hour, and those in presentation of a Committee outside the Departments shall not exceed 30 minutes, save by prior agreement of the Business Committee. (Remainder not altered.)

3. **Future Assemblies** On the proposal of the Business Committee invitations to the General Assembly were confirmed and new invitations accepted as follows:

1981	The Central Hall, Birmingham	26th September
1982	The Colston Hall, Bristol	17th – 21st May
1983	The Dome, Brighton	23rd – 27th May
1984	Newcastle-on-Tyne	
1985	Crowstone, Westcliff-on-Sea	

4. **URC/Churches of Christ Parliamentary Bill** The Executive has given close attention to the preparation and presentation of this Bill, with advice from the Applications Committee and a Parliamentary Bill Committee which the Executive appointed. The Bill was laid before Parliament in January and began its progress in the House of Lords on February 9th.

The major difficulty has been to agree clauses dealing with seceding churches, since the hope that such churches would have new trusts drawn by the Charity Commission proved unacceptable to that body. The Executive gave approval to the following resolution:

The Executive Committee welcomes the report of progress in the work of the Parliamentary Bill Committee, notes the information given by the Revd Principal M.H. Cressey and in particular approves the principles adopted in drafting the clause concerning churches, permitted by the General Assembly to secede; namely that, in general, mutatis mutandis, such schemes should revert to their trusts as they were before they became local churches of the URC, provided that in the case of 'daughter' or 'mission' churches of local churches, formerly Congregational, property should be held on the Congregational Model Trust; and that, in the case of former Presbyterian congregations, the procedure should be followed which was laid down in the URC Act of 1972 for any non-uniting congregation.

The clauses so drawn were agreed by the legal advisers of the Churches of Christ and the Congregational Federation.

5. **North West Provincial Moderator** The Executive received the report of the nominating group that the Revd A.G. Burnham be appointed by the General Assembly to succeed the Revd Douglas Stewart.

6. **Proposed Methodist/URC Hymn Book** The Executive in November 1980 received reports from those sharing in the work of the joint committee, and considered at length the resolutions of the 1980 Methodist Conference in respect of the title and contents of the book. The following resolution was agreed:

The Executive Committee, having received reports regarding progress on the proposed hymnbook, deeply regrets that the resolutions of the 1980 Methodist Conference have changed the character of the project, so that the book will have a denominational emphasis rather than be a fully joint production as had been proposed by the 1979 Conference; and therefore indicates to the Methodist Church that it is no longer appropriate for the URC to continue as a formal participant. The Committee thanks the URC representatives who have served on the Joint Committee and formally discharges them from this obligation. The General Secretary be authorised to inform the Secretary of Conference of this resolution, and offer to share in a meeting if the Methodists should regard this as helpful.

The Secretary of Conference responded to that possibility and discussions took place in which the grounds for the URC withdrawal were fully explained. The President's Council of the Methodist Church took note of the problems created by the 1980 Conference resolutions and resolved to ask the 1981 Conference to re-examine the question of the title, to seek a clear financial commitment from the URC, to take note of any URC comments on the draft list of hymns, and to give Conference and General Assembly equal responsibility for final approval. In the light of this action the General Secretary made a distribution of the draft list of hymns to District Councils for comment by Easter, so that if the Executive decided to go ahead with the scheme there could be a URC response. The Doctrine and Worship Committee of URC had expressed the hope that the joint production might continue. Discussion between financial officers of the two churches showed that a capital investment by the URC of £50,000 (one quarter of the total) would be required.

In February the Executive examined the developments, taking into account the need for a firm decision to be reached no later than the 1981 General Assembly. A resolution, proposed by the Revd Principal M.H. Cressey, was put:

The Executive Committee

(i) takes note of the resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly by the Church Life Department, concerning the proposals for an inter-denominational hymn book, of which the appended text (in draft form) indicates conditions upon which, in the judgement of the Executive Committee, a positive decision by the Assembly depends: (the draft resolution of the Church Life Department being:- "The General Assembly reaffirms its hope that the URC and Methodist Churches will be able to continue in full partnership in production of a joint hymn book; that its title will be equally acceptable to both churches, and the decision to publish will be taken by the Methodist Conference and URC".)

(ii) rescinds its resolution of November 1980 on this subject.

(iii) re-appoints the URC representatives to the Joint Committee on the hymn book.

(iv) requests the Joint Committee to ensure continuing consultation with members of the churches during the process of revising the contents of the book.

This resolution was defeated by 24 votes to 20 with 4 abstentions. The Executive therefore stands on its November resolution and so reports to the General Assembly. In the light of the discussion and the vote, the draft resolution of the Church Life Department to Assembly was then withdrawn.

Thanks were expressed to those in both churches who had worked to find a way forward together, and to the President of the Methodist Conference for the helpful part he had taken in the discussions.

7. **Zimbabwe** Following the transition to independence the World Church and Mission Department reported its concern regarding the British support and aid programme to Zimbabwe, and the following resolution was passed:

The Executive Committee, conscious of the need for reconstruction and redevelopment in Zimbabwe following the years of conflict and their disastrous effect on that country, urges H.M. Government to make available considerably more than the £75 million already announced as a contribution more in keeping with Britain's historic ties with the people of Zimbabwe; and authorises its officers to co-operate with the BCC in any further approach which may emerge from current deliberations.

8. **Ministers Emeriti** Following requests for guidance on the appointment of Ministers Emeriti the Executive approved the following minute:

that wherever a Minister is in full standing and hopes to continue within the conciliar life of the URC, then the required 'merit' is there and it would be perfectly proper for the District to recommend that the Provincial Synod grant him that title at the point of his retirement from the active ministry.

9. **Long Range Policy Group** Since the resolution of the 1980 Assembly "to set up a Long Range Policy Group" there has been discussion in the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee and the Nominations Committee about the functions of this body and the nature of its membership. The Executive Committee agreed that

A. The Long Range Policy Group be appointed with the specific task of ensuring that the URC, at all levels and in all its departments, is able to plan realistically, radically and hopefully for future development.

B. This Group should be constituted with four URC members plus one from another BCC member church suggested by the BCC.

C. The Group should be asked to report to the 1982 Assembly, in the first place, and its recommendations, if approved by Assembly, would then be carried forward by others within the general structures of the church.

D. The Group would have servicing by the General Secretariat and its expenses would come through the General Secretariat budget. It should report to the Executive Committee and the Executive should ensure that at least one member of the Group was present at Executive and General Assembly meetings.

10. **Life of 'Special' Committees** The Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee reported on the need every three years to review the life of those Committees set up by the Assembly for special work outside the departmental structure. The Executive asked the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee to carry out such a review. It noted that a review of the Publications and Publicity section was already being undertaken. Recommendations were brought to the Executive regarding the Budget, Deployment and Stewardship Committees. The Executive asked that consultation be undertaken with each Committee and authorised the General Secretary to bring appropriate resolutions to the Assembly when this had been completed.

11. **Length of Service of Staff Secretaries** The Executive asked the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee to consider whether there should be a time limit on the extensions of service of staff secretaries. The Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee reported that in view of the variety of service and professional tasks it was not appropriate to make a general rule, but that the Nominations Committee should continue to recommend the re-appointment of Staff Secretaries for such periods as it considers wise, and to this the Executive agreed.

12. **New College Foundation** The proposed Scheme was found satisfactory and would provide approximately 81 per cent of the income of the Foundation to the URC for ministerial training. The Executive appointed the Revd R.O. Latham, Mr J.C. Smethers, J.P., and the Revd John Taylor as Governors.

13. **Review Group on Ministerial Training** At the request of the Church Life Department it was agreed to receive the Report on this Review at the 1982 Assembly and not in 1981 as previously authorised.

14. Christian Education Secretary The acceptance of a call to the Revd Keith Forecast from the Palmers Green Church was noted and arrangements for the appropriate nominating procedure for his successor were approved.

15. Central Trust Bodies These two bodies, now termed the URC (C) Trust Ltd and the URC (P) Trust Ltd sought a common list of Directors, so that they may meet and work together. The Executive approved appointments to effect this. The Chairman of the URC (C) Trust Ltd is Mr K.M. Kirby and its Assistant Secretary is Mr F.A.W. Lodde. The Chairman of the URC (P) Trust Ltd is Mr J.A. Cumming and its Assistant Secretary is Mr R.V. MacFadyen. The General Secretary is Secretary of both bodies.

16. Provincial Trust Bodies The Executive gave approval to the establishment of the Trust Bodies to be named the URC (Yorkshire Province) Trust Ltd and the URC (North Western Province) Trust Ltd. The Executive, at the request of Provinces, appointed Directors to several Provincial Trust Bodies.

17. Change in District Boundaries The Executive confirmed the changes made in the East Midland Province, creating separate Districts in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

18. Legacies and Trusts On recommendations from the Finance and Administration Department the Executive agreed to the appropriate use of apportioned income from the Bicester Highfield Trust Fund and the Dr S.M. Berry Legacy and distribution according to the terms set down of the Mr H.M.F. Barnes Legacy.

19. Admission of local churches On the recommendation of the Applications Committee the following local churches were received into the URC:

The Chinese Christian Fellowship, Bayswater
The Bordon Ecumenical Project.

20. Channel 4 Television The Executive agreed to a recommendation of the Publications and Publicity Committee that the URC should appoint two representatives to the Churches' Consultative body on the Fourth Channel.

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

B.G. Thorogood, *Clerk.*

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly appoints the Revd Anthony Gerald Burnham as Moderator of the North Western Province for a period of seven years from 1st September, 1981.
2. The Assembly expresses appreciation of the service of the Revd Douglas Stewart as Secretary of the Lancashire Congregational Union and Moderator of the North West Province CCEW 1970-72 and as URC Moderator of the North Western Province since 1972.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: APPENDIX 1.

DEPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd A.G. Burnham

Secretary: The Revd G.H. Roper

1. **Whole-time pastorates** This Committee's main task is to ensure that each Province has a fair share of the denomination's ministers. We keep in frequent contact with the Provinces and in September 1980 consulted with the moderators and other representatives of each Province, sharing with them the problems created by the continuing reduction in the number of ministers available to serve in local churches. The Quotas already set for achievement by the end of 1981 now seem too large because there will not be enough ministers to fill them: the proportion of vacancies will be considerably more than the 10% we reckon as normal. Quotas proposed at the consultation and subsequently confirmed by the committee for achievement by the end of 1983 will, we believe, provide a more realistic share of the whole-time ministry for each Province:

<i>Province</i>	<i>1981 Quota</i>	<i>1983 Quota</i>
Northern	71	66
North Western	84	78
Mersey	58	53
Yorkshire	69	63
East Midland	60	55
West Midland	77	73
Eastern	66	62
South West	62	57
Wessex	77	73
Thames North	88	80
Southern	108	102
Wales	56	56

No one in the United Reformed Church is happy with a policy which will take ministers away from 58 places in England in the course of two years. One possible alternative being explored is to invite ministers from overseas to help make up our shortfall. Another suggestion is to 'recruit' actively for the ministry but — leaving aside the implications for our understanding of the Call to the ministry — new candidates would not be trained before 1983 and we should be faced with a temporary shortfall in any event. In every District Council we ought to ask afresh how stipendiary ministers ought to be deployed.

2. **Special Ministries** Some of the places where it will be felt stipendiary ministers should be located do not constitute viable pastorates with elders meetings and membership rolls in the conventional style. These situations should be studied carefully and reviewed periodically by the Provinces concerned, and may be submitted to the Deployment Committee for recognition as 'special' ministries. At present we recognise outside the Quotas 18 ministers in new housing developments, 11 chaplaincies and one social work post. Three additional special ministries are available for ministers coming through CWM.

3. **Churches of Christ** Later this year we hope to welcome the ministers and congregations of the Churches of Christ, strengthening our whole-time stipendiary ministry to the extent of some 15 pastorates and adding 30 local churches to the United Reformed Church in England and 9 in Scotland. We hope to learn from their pattern of ministry and to integrate gradually with their pastoral coverage. For the time being Provinces may count unifying Churches of Christ pastorates as a bonus to be added to their 1981 and 1983 Quotas.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd John B. Simpson

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

1. A good definition of Stewardship is, "Stewardship is what I do after I say, 'I believe' " — it is the living of the life of faith encompassing our whole lives. Stewardship is not aimed at the avoidance of bankruptcy but at the conversion of souls and the extension of the Kingdom of God. If that is understood then people will see the Church's budget sheet more as a Theological Statement, for it will faithfully reflect the depth or shallowness of our love for Christ. The crisis some churches face may not be a cash crisis so much as a crisis of faith. Some would see the Church as entering into one of its periods of ebb-tide in its long history. The potential of the Church however is never in question; and that is not the issue which disturbs Christian people. Anxiety is caused when one sees the disparity between the potential and the impact on Society at large, and this disparity is seen at a time strangely enough when the Church's machinery has never been in better working order, more active and more widespread. It may be that our impact is less effective than it should be because our members are less sure of the Faith and more uncertain as to the ways in which the unsearchable riches of the Gospel may be revealed to modern society. Christian Stewardship should never be triggered off by financial necessity but by the need to communicate the Gospel of Christ in a convincing and relevant manner.

2. The Christian Stewardship Committee have during the past year:

1. with the Christian Education Committee produced a Christian Education Course and Festival Service. The course, available in the autumn of 1981, entitled *Together We Live*, provides material for a six week period culminating in a Festival Service.

2. provided material for use in Christian Stewardship programmes to compliment the Christian Stewardship Study Action pack, Filmstrip and commentary. The committee hopes to produce video tapes to promote Christian Stewardship and is investigating developments in the use of video tapes for use in house/discussion groups.

3. with the Finance and Administration Department produced a leaflet *CHRISTIAN GIVING* and a discussion paper *CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP AND PROPORTIONATE GIVING*. This material was produced to help commend the two resolutions on *Giving* and *Tithing* agreed at the 1980 Assembly (Record of Assembly 1980 page 12 Nos. 9 and 10).

4. taken a full part in the work of the British Council of Churches Stewardship Committee and produced a paper to help local churches use the BCC report *Christian Stewardship in the 1980s* in discussion groups and Day/Weekend conferences. The report — an attempt by the BCC Stewardship Committee to think about the contribution which the teaching and practice of Christian Stewardship could make to the life and mission of the churches in the 1980s — was well received by the BCC Assembly and 'commended to Churches for study and action'. The BCC 'encourages the Churches at each level to review their present stewardship policies and practices in the light of the wider context presented in the paper'.

5. shared the committee thinking about the Stewardship of Ministerial Resources with the Deployment Committee, the Moderators' Meeting and the review group on Ministerial Training.

6. shared in the Working Party charged by the Assembly 1980 to 'suggest ways in which members of the URC can be made more sure of their faith in Jesus Christ and better able to relate it to contemporary life and share it with others'. The committee commend the Working Party report for study and action. The committee was represented at the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism National Assembly and on receiving a report of the Assembly accept that their part in the follow-up to the Assembly is to help encourage local churches in their life and mission.

7. prepared a report *Christian Stewardship in the Structures of the URC* recommending that 'some/one person or group must be enabled to ask all Departments of the Church to give account of their Stewardship of People, Plant and Pounds'.

8. continued, in consultation with the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee, to consider the important area of Stewardship in Rural Churches. A pilot consultation of representatives from rural churches in the South Western/Wessex Provinces has been arranged for 13/15th November 1981.

9. arranged for Revd R.J. Rodisch, General Director, Support Agency and Revd W. Stackhouse of the Support Agency Mission Funding Unit of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, to visit the URC in June/July 1980 as Stewardship consultants. They visited the URC Central Office, met the staff, the Provincial Moderators and attended several committees. They spent two four-day weekends in local churches at Otley, Yorkshire and Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex and visited churches in Birmingham. In their report on church life, the visitors spoke of active congregations, good lay leadership and participation, a high level of commitment and ability amongst the ministers they met and a concern for youth and the aged. They observed that in the URC Christian Unity seems to rate well above Christian Outreach with concern for the 'outsider' not very noticeable, and no mention of the single adult other than the aged.

The visitors suggest that the *programs* of the URC need better co-ordination and note that the organisation designed to focus attention on Stewardship concerns appears to be incomplete or completely missing in many Provinces and Districts; the personnel assigned to work in the area of Stewardship is insufficient. Active promotion at every level is essential, materials are useful, but there is no substitute for face to face training; members and congregations need to be challenged and provided with guidance in practical ways of responding. The visitors observed that there is reluctance, even opposition, to talking about money in the URC and suggest that no dramatic change in giving patterns will occur without a more direct approach to money. They suggest that the current methods of supporting the Church need to be clarified; reliance on bazaars, sales and other fund raising methods interfere with the development of the stewardship of money. Mr. Rodisch and Mr. Stackhouse hope that the relationship begun by their visit can continue in a manner beneficial to both our Churches.

10. received encouraging reports from churches engaged in Christian Stewardship programmes with its five themes of *WORSHIP – PRAYER – INVOLVEMENT – GIVING – LEARNING*. 900 churches have purchased the Study/Action packs; this suggests that 46% of our congregations have begun to consider embarking upon a Christian Stewardship programme.

COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

The committee in its desire to keep Christian Stewardship issues constantly before the Church seeks to help maintain a realistic and ongoing stewardship programme. Among the committee priorities are:-

- a) to encourage local churches to embark upon Stewardship programmes
- b) to help service such programmes with material and secretarial time
- c) prepare and produce helpful material for use in stewardship programmes
- d) encourage Provinces to appoint a full-time person, freed from other duties, to help in training, renewal and mission.

APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Harold Springbett

Secretary: The Revd Bernard G. Thorogood

The Committee met three times during the year and reports as follows:

1. ADMISSIONS

By Ordination following normal courses: The Revds Jenny Austen, Rosemary Patricia Barrett, John Hopkins Burgess, Hazel Catton, Stephen Collinson, Roger Edward Cornish, Elizabeth Mary Davies, Hazel Mollie Day, Harold Leslie Dixon, John Filsak, Malcolm E. Ford,

David Greenwood, Brian Harris, Robin Ross Hine, John Frederick Hopkins, Brian Alan Hunt, Jean Margaret Jamieson, Catherine Anne McIlhagga, David John Morgan, Margaret Gray Plenderleith Nuttall, John Charles Paul, Peter Stewart Rand, Colin Vaughan Skinner, David Lindsay Smyth, John William Steele, David Stanley Webb, David Williams, Justine Sheila Wyatt, Edith Wynn Young.

By Ordination following the Assembly Resolution with regard to Local Pastors: The Revds Jack Burgess, Kenneth Frank Davies, Andrew Fraser, Thomas Cornelis John Holst, Alice Laura Wright.

By Transfer from other Churches: The Revds Frank Kenneth Balchin, Eric Alexander Cowan, William Reid Findlay, Frank P. Garvey, David Gordon Glenn, Alistair J. Goss, Albert F. Lock, Henry Roy Martin, Malcolm H. Ryland-Jones, Faitala Talapusi, Morgan W. Williams, Mark Wilson.

2. DELETIONS

By Transfer to other Churches: The Revds Duncan Forrester, Margaret Forrester, Donald Miller, T.R. Willis.

By Resignation from the Ministry: The Revd F. Dudley Blades.

3. **CERTIFICATES OF ELIGIBILITY** Certificates of Eligibility were issued in accordance with the revised rules to ten ministers, several of whom are in process of settlement.

4. **RECEPTION OF LOCAL CHURCHES** The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee the reception of the Chinese congregation in Bayswater, Thames North Province, and the Bordon Ecumenical Project, Wessex Province, as local churches within the URC.

5. **SECEDING CHURCHES** Close attention was given by the Committee to the section of the URC Bill dealing with seceding churches. While every effort had to be made to do justice to those who leave the URC after full consultation, so that there is a possibility of transferring their property out of the URC, it was necessary to guard against any easy acceptance of this route, which might be taken without due discretion. The clauses now standing in the Bill enable the various categories of United Reformed Churches to transfer property in appropriate ways to other trust deeds, always provided that the General Assembly agrees to the secession. In view of this action pending in Parliament, the Committee decided not to deal with the four outstanding cases until the Bill is enacted.

6. **MEDICAL FORMS** It was agreed that in future all ministers applying for transfer into the URC ministry would be asked to complete medical examination forms, and the forms of the Ministerial Training Committee will be used.

7. **REVIEW OF MINISTERS LISTED 'D' IN YEAR BOOK** The Committee has not received information from District Councils in respect of any changes to the list. One District Council has enquired about the criteria for making a judgment on this matter. The Committee has agreed to a guide which is available to any District Council which requests it. This indicates that the spirit of such review is like that of a local church reviewing its membership roll, and suggests that the individual's association with a local church is a primary factor for consideration.

8. The Committee has much delicate and confidential work to do in arriving at decisions regarding admission to or deletion from the Roll of Ministers, and much of it cannot be reported. The Committee is grateful for the confidence placed in it.

PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Edmund Banyard

Secretary: Percy W. Bush

1. Since Union we have tried to develop and adjust the section's role and areas of service to meet changing requirements by the churches and Church House.
2. This report includes the outline of a proposed re-orientation of the section, including Tavistock Bookshop upon which we seek the Assembly's comments.
3. During the year, the Revd James Dey resigned from the Committee to take up his new appointment as Director of The Netherbow Centre with the Church of Scotland. The Revd Caryl Micklem completed his full six years of service on the Committee. Our grateful thanks to both. We are nominating the Revd John Taylor as a full member of the Committee.

Administrative Services to Central Office

4. A recent survey showed that most churches valued the Information Service, the preparation is done by the departments, but its production and dispatch falls to P & P. A good deal of other behind the scenes work also comes within our role — including the essential facilities for duplicating committee papers, the supply of stationery and maintaining the records of ministers and church secretaries.

Ecumenical Services

5. Through the Secretary, we take an active part in running the Religious Film and Film-strip Reviewing Panel and the publication of AVA Magazine. The Secretary is co-secretary of one, and manager of the other. Recently, an ecumenical group drawn from these organisations persuaded the CFWM/BCC to stage a special consultation on *Communication in the 80s*, from which may emerge a new concern within the BCC and its member bodies.

Printing and Publishing Services

6. The flow of printing requirements does not abate and in-house printing increased by a further 17% during 1980. New major items during 1980 have included *Being a Member, Plan for Partnership, Community Health Folder, Negotiations for Unification with Churches of Christ*, CWM Visitors' Report *Seeking Truth in Love, With People of Other Faiths, Book of Services* and a reprint of *In Hospital*. In addition, Reform, the Year Book and the URC Diary have been published as usual. The diary was sold out before Christmas.

7. On-going demand for *Congregational Praise* and *New Church Praise* necessitated substantial reprints during 1980.

8. Among the unrecorded services is the work of the Reform Editorial Advisory Board. Under the Chairmanship of the Revd John Taylor this small group gives considerable help to the Editor, Norman Hart, in maintaining Reform's high interest and professional standards. John Taylor's period of service has been extended a further three years. Our thanks for all he is doing.

9. The Revd E.W. Todd now has the Year Book well under control, fitting it in (now) with his associate pastorate at Cheam.

10. The total expenditure for printing and related costs excluding the above reprints and the Book of Services amounted to £82,600 (1979: £68,500). Much of this is covered by internal charges to Departments. A yet further substantial portion, including Reform, the Year Book and the URC Diary, is covered by sales income.

11. The Committee's Chairman and Secretary have shared in the thinking about the publication of a joint hymn book with the Methodist Church. The present situation is reported in the Executive Committee's Report.

Distribution Services

12. Under the Manager, Donald Finnan, Tavistock Bookshop has continued the policy of providing a service for church members and adherents, as well as for ministers. Specialist books are obtainable on request, but are not kept in stock. Details of the income and expenditure account will be found in the Accounts Booklet. Income during 1980 amounted to £99,281 (1979: £86,247).

13. Our 1500 voluntary Reform secretaries in local churches play an important part in sustaining Reform. We would like churches to take positive action to support them and share in their task of helping keep members informed through Reform.

Public Relations and Publicity

14. For the first time ever the URC has made a (modest) allocation for this important sphere. When some members express their regret that the URC is not a 'household word' — even in church circles — our reluctance to spend money in this way should be noted. Even now, the allocation is only £1,000 for 1981. Any measurable benefit from that can be obtained only if the staff squeeze the extra work into their present work time.

15. The first year's programme will include grants to Districts and Synods which set up Communication (Training) Days, information material for students upon request, occasional PR/Communications leaflets, essential expenses for honorary press and media contact persons, part cost of tape-recorder for radio interviews and some good quality display equipment.

16. A great deal needs to be done regarding public relations, bringing Christian work and service to the notice of the general public and winning sympathetic publicity for the URC. This is not a status building exercise, but is an important contribution to building the Kingdom and restoring morale in today's world.

17. This must be a corporate exercise involving the whole church and must relate to work and witness in various spheres, evangelism and renewal, resources and manpower.

18. Ideally, there should be a network of groups consisting of concerned persons, including some with skills in communication and the media. They should be vigilant and active in promoting better communications at all levels and make better use of the media. Thames North Province has recently established a Communications Panel. Other provinces have set up similar groups. More are needed, and possibly those already established will need to enlarge their roles. Whether all that is required can be done by voluntary service remains to be tested.

19. It is hoped that these groups, or other interested persons in Provinces and Districts would be able and willing to set up communication training workshops for key people (and others) in local churches. Recently, a one-day exercise in effective writing for URC staff secretaries was set up and led by the Editor of Reform.

20. On the wider scene, breakfast T.V. and the Fourth Channel (November 1982) will soon be with us. The group has shared in some early thinking by the British Churches Provisional Committee for the Fourth Channel.

21. Another relevant concern at this stage is whether extra resources can (should) be used for publications which, in content and design, would project a less utilitarian image of the URC, and thereby restore confidence among its members. Perhaps fewer, but better, publications?

22. Thanks are due to the Revd Philip Schofield (Chairman of the Publicity Group) and Mrs Mary Schofield who give considerable voluntary service in this sphere.

Future Organisation of Section

23. Arising from submissions to the P & P Committee by the Secretary and the Manager of Tavistock Bookshop, the General Secretary has engaged in many consultations and prepared a paper setting out new criteria and patterns for the section, including Tavistock Bookshop. The main emphasis is to reassess the total requirements for an effective communications and supplies service within a church of our size, and to re-cast the budget so that an acceptable level of service can be sustained without over-riding constraints that major services must be

24. Within the proposed arrangements there will be some trading operations, but without the present financial separation of 'retailing' and 'production'. Direct services to departments will be costed and allowed for in the budget, with a simplified costing operation when publications are offered for sale to the benefit of the initiating department.

25. The purpose of the proposed arrangement is to offer a more unified service to local churches by eliminating former separation of operations and at the same time transferring some dispatch operations from the departments to the proposed Communications and Supplies Services.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report of the Publications and Publicity Committee.
 2. The Assembly endorses the proposals to restructure the P & P Section and Tavistock Bookshop so that Church House can provide a more unified service to the churches within an agreed revised budget.
 3. The Assembly requests Central and Provincial Committees to give urgent and careful attention to the need for improved public relations, increased publicity, and better communications at all levels, and to make resources available for these important services.
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THE REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL MODERATORS 1981

The World Matters

1. We make our report to the General Assembly against a background of world-wide uncertainty and change. At home, continuing technological advance, world recession and government policy have together resulted in a seemingly inexorable rise in unemployment, and many communities have experienced a radical change in the basis of their existence. In contrast with the majority of the world, where half the population consists of children and young people, the average age in this country is rising, with consequent changes in the pattern of education for the young and equally in the provision of welfare for the elderly. Economic stringency has come at a time when there has been a continuing need for expenditure to prevent further decline in both urban and rural communities. In the same period, the publication of the Brandt Report has sought to draw the attention of the world to the injustice inherent in the disparity between rich and poor nations and the dangers posed by that gap. Tensions have increased in various parts of the world, and the human family is made to wonder for how long major military confrontation can be avoided.

The Gospel Matters

2. It is against such a background that the Church has the challenge and the privilege to make known by word and life the Good News of the Kingdom of God. Ours is a faith rooted in history, but it is the Christ who lives now who gives validity to the Church's message and ministry, and it is vital that Christians should find their inspiration and strength in their living Lord rather than in traditions, however precious. Some churches and some people need to acquire the courage to let go of prejudices against fellow Christians inherited from previous generations, if they stand in the way of an effective witness to the reconciling and redemptive love of God. The changed circumstances of the 1980s call for appropriate philosophies, patterns in living and peace-making activities, and the Church has its part to play in devising these, along with politicians, economists, educationists, and so on. We have been excited by some experiments in collaborative ministry — involving team work with the service professions and also co-operation with statutory agencies and national charities. We see such experiments as a sign of hope for the future mission of the Church, particularly in inner city and rural areas.

The Church Matters

3. It is in this context of mission that we see the relevance of the proposal for a Covenant between Churches in England. We write our report before any of the denominations has had the opportunity to make a formal response to the proposal, but we hope that all the potential parties to the Covenant will give urgent consideration to the possibility of such a partnership. The United Reformed Church is heir to a great tradition of theology and churchmanship, but it is difficult to see the rightness of maintaining that tradition for long in separation from Christians of other communions. This Church has distinctive emphases in its life, notably the concept of the Church Meeting and an ordained eldership, which we believe could enrich the whole Church — but it is difficult to see how that could be achieved without some shift in the relationships between the denominations, and in default of some such shift, we find it hard to see how the United Reformed Church would be able to share in imaginative use of its resources and in strategic planning for future mission in partnership with other Christians.

4. We could have wished that the Covenant proposals had been elaborated in greater detail at various points — for example, the need to develop means of decision-making in common, for without this the Covenant would have little impact upon the society in which we live. However, our experience of relationships with leaders in other denominations encourages us to think that it would not be an impossible task to devise such means. Many of us are involved already in ecumenical decision-making in relation to local ecumenical projects, and we would like to be able to envisage a time when such co-operation covered all areas of the Church's strategy.

5. We hope there will be serious discussion within the URC about the Covenant proposals, but we must keep a proper sense of priority. Our first priority is with the world — a world which at present contains so much injustice, so much hunger, so much hatred, so much suspicion between East and West and between North and South, and so great a potential for mass destruction. This world needs the message of Jesus — "good news to the poor. . . . release

to the captives. . . . sight to the blind. . . . liberty (to) those who are oppressed. . . ." Anything which makes more visible the unity we have in Christ, anything which makes the Church a more effective sign and instrument of the Gospel should be welcomed.

Churches of Christ

6. In the meantime, we in the United Reformed Church look forward to the consummation of our talks with Churches of Christ. The number of churches and of members is not large, but this will be the first visible consequence of that openness contained in the 1972 Basis of Union in which the original partners in the URC declared that they saw their union "as a part of what God is doing to make his people one". We look forward to the enrichment of the denomination which will come as we grapple with the implications of containing within our corporate life two parallel forms of Christian initiation, and also as we receive that particular expression of auxiliary ministry represented by the collegial leadership of Churches of Christ elders.

Ministry Matters

7. The helping of ministerial settlements continues to be one of the major tasks of our ministry. We have observed the continuing change from the single **pastorate** pattern of ministry towards teams and groups of various types — we have to say that it is still harder to fill a vacancy in a team or group than one in a single pastorate. In a Church which has always emphasised the divine call to the ministry, and which has upheld the right of local pastorates to receive ministry from those whom they have deliberately called to that office, it is disappointing to see what prior limitations many ministers place upon the possibilities of a move to another part of the country.

8. While we have been glad in the last two years to see an increased number of ordinands for the stipendiary ministry, and while we look forward to the first ordination of auxiliary ministers, we believe that there is still room for further recruitment of full-time ministers. It seems to us that the rationalisation of pastorates made necessary by the decrease in the number of ministers available has gone as far as it can without seriously damaging the leadership which ministers can give. We recognise that a recruitment policy has financial implications, but hitherto the Church has usually risen to the financial challenges placed before it, and we wonder whether there is really any reason to doubt that the challenges will continue to be met if the members are convinced of the need. We believe, that there are potential candidates within the URC who could be challenged to offer themselves for training; and there are related Churches in other parts of the world (notably the United States) which have a surplus of ministers. This Church has benefited over the past few years by the service of a number of ministers from such Churches, and we have little doubt that such an arrangement could be extended.

One Church

9. Having reached the ninth year of life and work in the United Reformed Church, it is noticeable that fewer people speak of it as a 'new' Church. The denomination has found its corporate identity, and we believe that the Church is truly united, although there are still times when we could wish that the freedom to differ within the fellowship did not issue in quite so independent an attitude of mind in some churches. There is still room for strengthening the fellowship of local churches so that they feel that they belong together in a single enterprise of faith and mission, and we are sure that this can be done without compromising the integrity of the local fellowship. The Councils of the Church, including Elders and Church Meetings, will do well to put into practice the principle enshrined in paragraph 10 of the Scheme of Union, on "Consultation".

People

10. We say farewell this year to Douglas Stewart, whose eleven-year period of service is the last to link the meeting of Moderators with the days before the formation of the URC — we thank him for his wise counsel, deep pastoral concern and unflinching graciousness, and wish him and his wife a happy retirement.

11. Finally, we wish to pay tribute to the work of all the staff at 86 Tavistock Place, without whose dedicated support the ministry of the whole Church would be seriously impoverished, and we have been glad to welcome Bernard Thorogood to our meetings in this his first year of office as General Secretary. The staff meet for prayers on three mornings each week, and we have been glad to join them from time to time; we commend them and ourselves to the prayers of the whole Church.

CHURCH LIFE DEPARTMENT

Chairman: The Revd Richard F. Taylor

Secretary: The Revd Michael G. Dunford

INTRODUCTION

1. The Department has now had a year under new management. The opportunities for developing the life of the URC are enormously challenging, and it has been vital to identify the two main thrusts of the work, in the midst of the great variety of needs. The one is about the education of the whole laos of the Church. The other is about enabling a pattern of ministries to flourish.

2. The Department is now committed explicitly to the aim of **servng the URC by discovering and releasing resources particularly for use in local churches so that people of all ages may worship God, engage in God's mission in the world and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.**

3. Each committee in the Department is being asked to define its particular aim in terms of its contribution to the whole. Already the committees are gaining experience of sharing concerns with other committees, and this practice of 'GETTING IT TOGETHER' will be a great stimulus for making things happen. It should also lead to much more coherence in the work of Church life in Provinces and Districts.

4. Proposals are being discussed for a co-ordinated Christian Training Programme for the URC, and also for encouraging Christian Education Teams in Districts. This may lead on to interesting possibilities for drawing together the tutorial and supportive resources for the pattern of ministries in Districts.

5. In this year of transition we have particularly appreciated the commitment of our colleagues in Church House. Keith Forecast, Doreen Gallant, Grace Main, Charles Meachin, Tina Munday, John Oldershaw, Eileen Pelling, Howard Spencer, Frank Symes and Betty Taylor.

6. We look forward with great confidence to further exploration of the tasks in the coming year. There are times when spirituality will be tested in the growing crises in society; when religious activity which does not lead to engagement will have to be left behind; when people will have to find power to overcome the stereotypes of sex, age, class and education: when the Church will be drawn into solidarity with the poor and the powerless in our world.

Richard F. Taylor

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Margaret T. Taylor

Secretary: The Revd C. Keith Forecast

CHILDREN'S WORK COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Glyn Jenkins

Secretary: The Revd C. Keith Forecast

7. **A combined report** The two above committees share so many concerns that they meet together more often than separately. They therefore present a combined report.

8. **Together** In 1979 the two committees successfully urged the General Assembly to support them in a three year project designed to help local churches to become worshipping and learning communities of all ages. The basis of this concept was spelled out in an advocacy pack, published in January 1980. Districts were asked to appoint advocates to move systematically from church to church, armed with the pack, to help elders, leaders, teachers and

members of all ages to see the vision and to explore its possibilities and implications. We are glad to report that 30 districts have so far appointed advocates and a number of others have plans to do so or to make other arrangements for commending the idea. The project runs until 1982.

9. The project began as an attempt to help churches to take children more seriously as members of the church community. We are glad to discover that there are many churches where this is already the case — where children participate at many levels of church life, where worship and learning are designed for people of all ages, where children and adults share a wide range of activities, and children are **accepted** not only for what they can **receive** from the church but also for what they can **contribute**. In such churches the old structural divisions between Church and Junior Church or Sunday School are breaking down and the church is coming to life as a community of nurture and growth for all who belong. There are also many places, however, where the message seems scarcely to have been heard — where children are kept at a distance from the centre of church life, where they are regarded as entirely the responsibility of a small group of members who are set apart to teach them, where all kinds of barriers arise between the church and the children, and where children are regarded as the Church of tomorrow. It is to such churches that the *Together* project is addressed. The question is: how can the church become such a community of people of all ages that children, both those born and brought up in Christian families and others less closely attached, may feel a real sense of belonging and an increasing sense of commitment?

10. At the same time, it has become increasingly apparent that there are other, more far-reaching, implications of this vision. The four visitors who came to this country in 1980 and reported on the life of the United Reformed Church as they saw it, said this: "A number of gaps in the URC require some scrutiny. The local congregation does not seem to live up to the family image of the Church. No family would divide its members into departments". (*Seeking the truth in love* — reflections by the CWM visitors to the URC). These departments, we suggest, are not only concerned with children and adults; they divide a church fellowship in all kinds of ways. When a church takes **children** seriously, however, it begins to see the **whole** life of the church with new eyes. Relationships among adults begin to change too. Many cherished convictions and attitudes are challenged. The superficiality of much that passes for Christian discipleship is exposed. The meaning of **church membership** itself is opened for reconsideration. Nor does such a church turn in on itself, but finds itself opening to the world and its life in new ways. The New Testament picture of the Church as the People of God in each locality come to life in contemporary ways. Taking children seriously revolutionises the Church.

11. To some of these wider implications of *Together* the committees plan to give attention in the next twelve months. Opportunities are being sought to discuss them with other committees within the Department and more widely. We hope to consult with the Ministerial Training Review Group concerning the effect of such thinking upon the training of ministers. The Children's Work Committee is planning an investigation and analysis of the attitudes of children to worship and church life, in connexion with the course of theological training one of its members is pursuing. In such ways the committees plan to develop the project for the remainder of the period allotted to it. Ways will also be sought both to support those advocates who are already at work in the districts and to encourage those districts which have not yet been able to respond to do so.

12. Meanwhile, the following literature is available:

Together slides and commentary

Leaflets: 'Being together' — what it's all about
'Getting together' — what to do about it
'Advocating together' — putting it across
'Together for worship' — looking at worship for all ages
'Together for Communion' — implications for observing the Sacrament
'Communion — what children say' — authentic comments by children
'Together in learning' — how to be a learning community
'Together in service' — ways of being a serving community.

Other titles are in the course of production:

'Together with the uniformed organisations'
'Together in Mission'

'Together with those on the fringe of church life'
'Together when opinions differ'
'Together in the Spirit'

We also draw attention to John Sutcliffe's book *Learning and Teaching together* published by Chester House Publications.

13. **Together for Stewardship** The committees continue to commend *Partners in Learning* as an education programme which is based upon the concept of a local church being a community of people of all ages. At the same time they propose to provide from time to time undated courses which churches can use as alternatives to whatever curriculum material they normally follow. In this connexion an invitation was received from the Stewardship Committee to co-operate with them in the preparation of such a course on the stewardship theme. Responding to this, the all-age six week course *Together we live* will be published in the summer. We commend this course to churches wishing to explore this matter at all levels of church life.

14. **Toward Renewed Confidence** The 1980 General Assembly passed a resolution proposed by the Priorities and Resources Group, asking the Christian Education Committee to convene a working party, representing the World Church and Mission Department, the Church and Society Department, the Stewardship Committee, and its own interests, to investigate 'the need for church members to be made more sure of their faith and better able to relate it to contemporary life and to share it with others.' In response, the committee has convened a working party which now presents its report. This is published separately under the title *Towards Renewed Confidence* and is commended for action to local churches, districts, Provinces and certain Assembly committees. We believe that the recommendations with which the report concludes should enable our members to respond imaginatively and creatively to a situation which is far from hopeless but which certainly needs attention. [Resolution 1]

15. **Equipped to Teach** For many years, the United Reformed Church, in collaboration with the Baptist Union and the Congregational Federation, has sponsored a home study course for those who teach children in the church, entitled *Equipped to Teach*. The Children's Work Committee has taken the initiative to revise this course and has convened a working party which has arranged for the material to be completely rewritten and presented in a new form. This has been available to the churches since January 1981 and is already proving popular. The course is designed to be carried out on a local tutorial basis. It is arranged in three parts with a logical progression from one to another, though each is self-contained. Students may enrol for all three parts or only for one part, according to their need. The Children's Work Committee commends the course to teachers of all ages and varieties of experience, but particularly urges those who are new to teaching to undertake it as a way of equipping themselves for their vital ministry among the children of the church. [Resolution 2]

Other forms of training

16. **Equipped to Teach** is not the only training scheme available for those who work with children in the church.

17. **Tapes for Training** is a novel scheme published by the Methodists in the North East, depending entirely upon the use of cassettes (details can be obtained from MDEY, 2 Chester House, Pages Lane, London N10 1PR).

18. **The National Christian Education Council**, in whose service a number of members of the United Reformed Church work, now has a new training officer, Mrs. Angela Eibner, who is available for consultation and locally organised training events. She may be contacted at NCEC, Robert Denholm House, Nutfield, Redhill, Surrey.

19. **The Secretary to the Committees** also carries out a large number of training events as part of his ministry to the churches. In many districts, Anglican diocesan children's workers are willing to put their expertise at our disposal, while our own spare-time District Christian Education and Children's Work Secretaries are frequently people of expertise and experience, and we are very grateful to those who willingly put their time at the disposal of the Church. We urge teachers everywhere to regard training as essential and to avail themselves of opportunities which come their way. In these days of changing attitudes to R.E. in schools it was never more

urgent that teachers in the Church should be as well qualified as possible.

Churches of Christ

20. For three years the two committees have included representatives of the Churches of Christ and have sought to serve both denominations. Our comradeship has shown us how much we have to share with one another and we look forward eagerly to unification in September 1981. The Churches of Christ have published *Adult Study programmes* in duplicated form annually, for use in adult groups of all kinds including women's meetings. These will continue to be published and are commended to local churches. Details may be obtained from Miss May Segain, 63 Crombie Road, Sidcup, Kent, or from the Secretary.

Priorities

21. Both committees have given attention to the need to plan the work over the next few years and to establish priorities.

22. **The Christian Education Committee** will continue to develop the *Together* project and will respond to the implications of the working party report *Towards Renewed Confidence*. It will seek to work closely with other committees, departments and agencies who are also involved with adult Christian education. At the same time, on behalf of the Department, it is considering a scheme to co-ordinate all forms of training the church provides into a unit-based church training programme which, it hopes, would meet the varied needs of youth leaders, teachers, elders, preachers and members.

23. **The Children's Work Committee** will continue to share with the Christian Education Committee in the *Together* project and will play its part in the setting up of the co-ordinated training programme. It will seek also to extend the training of teachers, will look for new ways of developing and supporting mid-week work among children (including the advocacy of Pilots) and will follow through the project on children's attitudes to worship. It will attempt to strengthen its existing links with the Methodist Children's Work Committee.

SUPPLEMENTARY MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: Dr. Richard D. Jurd

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

24. The Supplementary Ministries Committee records its gratitude for the devoted and conscientious service given by those Lay Preachers who week by week lead worship in our churches. These men and women conduct at least one third of the services of worship held in our churches, giving a great deal of time to training and preparation.

25. The committee continues to give care and support to Lay Preachers and Church Related Community Workers, together with those Local Pastors and Deaconesses who have not been ordained to the ministry of word and sacraments.

LAY PREACHERS

26. 50 District Councils have responded to the 1979 Assembly resolution and prepared lists of Lay Preachers for inclusion on the Register of Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers, giving a total of 780 nationally accredited Lay Preachers. The committee is concerned that 14 Districts have not yet provided the required information.

27. The qualifying course for the URC Lay Preachers' Certificate *Exploring the Faith* has been completely revised and 8 of the 17 Units have been printed. Unit 1 *Worship and Preaching* has been rewritten in two parts based on the new text book *Groundwork and Worship and Preaching* (R.G. Jones — Epworth Press). An optional unit on the art of speaking in church, with accompanying cassette, is in preparation. 400 students are working through the *Exploring the Faith* course; during the year 20 students have completed the course.

28. The committee is grateful for the help of Ministers and Lay Preachers who act as Tutors and Assessors for the *Exploring the Faith* course.

29. Three new leaflets in the series *Lay Preaching Matters* were produced during the year, *Choosing Hymns*, *Accreditation*, *Planning Together*, and further leaflets are in active preparation. The committee wishes to draw particular attention to the leaflet *Planning Together*, and urges Ministers, Lay Preachers and churches to facilitate and encourage the establishment of preaching teams as a way to help and enrich the worship of churches, large and small.

30. The committee has planned a **National Weekend Conference for Lay Preachers** at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire, **May 29–31, 1981**. The Revd Alan MacLeod, Principal Emeritus of Westminster College, Cambridge, will be the main speaker on the theme — ‘God’s rule in the World — The Old Testament Witness’.

31. The committee liaises with those responsible for lay ministries in other denominations, and is actively involved in the planning of the annual ‘King’s College Conference’ for Anglican Lay Readers, Methodist local preachers, URC and Baptist lay preachers. The committee maintains contact with the Interim Association of Lay Preachers and Local Pastors of the URC, and Continuing Congregational Churches.

32. The sixth **Shergold Expository Sermon Competition** was held in 1980. There were 18 entrants, and the prize-winners were (1) Miss J. Sadler (Ilford), (2) Miss D. Topple (Streatham), (3) Dr. A. Jones (Cardiff).

The 1981 Competition will be based on the Bible passage Ephesians 4 vv 3-6. Lay Preachers are invited to submit a sermon by June 30th, 1981. The committee hopes that lay preachers will feel encouraged to enter this competition, each sermon entered is returned with helpful comments from the assessors.

LOCAL PASTORS

33. During the year 8 Local Pastors in charge of local churches have been ordained to the ministry of word and sacraments.

CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORKERS

34. Through the centuries, the Christian Church has provided many types of community service — in education, medicine, welfare etc. The BCC 1976 Report on *Community Work in the Churches* drew attention to a new way in which churches can make an important contribution to a growing need. There are churches where there is need and opportunity for ‘community work’, and the appointment of a trained community worker desirable. Such CRCW’s will help lead and strengthen the local church’s mission through community development in an area where an additional lay member of a team would provide specialist help to meet unusual needs. CRCW’s work with people rather than for people encouraging them to act collectively in order to identify their own needs and help meet those needs.

35. The committee has negotiated with St. Andrew’s Hall/Westhill College to provide a suitable training course for Church Related Community Workers and seeks funds to assist student Church Related Community Workers who are not in receipt of mandatory local education authority awards during their periods of training.

36. Miss Gillian Robinson completed her final year of training at St. Andrew’s Hall/Westhill College and will be commissioned as the first United Reformed Church Related Community Worker. Miss Gillian Cressey, an undergraduate student at Westhill College, continues her training as a CRCW.

37. A procedure for the placement of CRCW’s has been agreed with the Moderators’ Meeting.

38. A commissioning service for CRCW’s prepared by the Doctrine and Worship Committee has been agreed with the committee.

DEACONESSES

39. Miss Kay Salvage has been re-appointed for a further year’s service at The Crossway Central Mission, Elephant and Castle, London.

40. The committee maintains contact with four retired Deaconesses and has had the pleasure of making them a small gift at Christmas.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Lesslie Newbigin

Secretary: The Revd Michael G. Dunford

41. The committee has had a busy year, supporting the ministerial training programme, dealing with new situations, and sharing the exploration of new ideas. We have met twice to do ordinary business, and on one special occasion to consider the remit of the Review Group on Ministerial Training, whilst our sub-committees have been particularly active.

42. **Personalia** We note with sadness the passing of **Dr. H.H. Farmer**, M.A. who served Westminster College from 1935–60 as Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics, and of **Dr. Charles Duthie**, MA.BD.DD who was Principal of New College, London from 1964–1977 and a former member of our committee. Both were greatly honoured amongst us all and many students particularly were indebted to them.

43. **Review of Ministerial Training** We are playing our part in the overall review of our training through the Review Group set up by the Assembly last year, and its thinking is set against the background of the Review Group in the Congregational College, Manchester; the ecumenical visitation to the Cambridge Federation of Theological Colleges; and the debates on similar lines taking place in the British Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. Because we are called upon to take a hard look at the way we train ministers, which includes pre-College training as well as Post-Ordination and In-Service Training, the use of the Colleges and contextual work, there is a need to take the necessary time. We have therefore sought and gained the agreement of the Executive Committee of the Church to delay our report till 1982. We have been pleased with the response already to our request in the Reform for ideas to be shared with us by the whole membership of the URC. In this way we can draw together the many complex threads of the debate which is taking place throughout the whole Church, and offer to Assembly a clear pattern for the future which takes proper account both of our needs and our resources.

44. **Enquirers' and Assessment Conference** Once again we have engaged in a full programme of Enquirers' and Assessment Conferences, which have been greatly increased by the needs of the Auxiliary Ministry. As part of our Review we are considering any improvements necessary to the running of the events themselves and the way in which final decisions about appropriate training are made. We shall endeavour to use various centres for our Enquirers' Conferences to encourage people in different parts of the country.

45. **Medical examinations** It has been felt for some time that the Church should call for some standard procedure for medical examinations to be undertaken by those who offer for both full-time and auxiliary ministry. We have now prepared the necessary forms for a short and a full medical so that we can, if necessary, seek further information.

46. **Ministerial Training Fund** A sub-committee has now been formally set up to administer the Fund and to consider the great demands made upon us for training grants. This is financed by the Unified Appeal; through significant grants from Trust Funds, including the Memorial Hall Trust and the Coward Trust; and grants from the Provinces and other sources. There has now been a request by the Budget Committee that all special monies be directed towards the Unified Appeal, but we still encourage District Councils to consider denoting the offertory at an Ordination or Induction Service to the Fund. A new factor will be income we shall soon receive from the New College Trust, though it will by no means solve all our problems at a time of escalating costs. In various ways, therefore, the whole Church takes proper responsibility for supporting ministers in their training.

47. **Theological Colleges** Throughout the year the relationships between the Church and the three Theological Colleges in England has continued and been strengthened both at a committee and a personal level. It is hoped that we shall be able to arrange an informal

visitation to both the Bala-Bangor College, and the Memorial College, Aberystwyth, and we shall continue to bear in mind the training opportunities offered by the Queen's College, Birmingham. It is particularly encouraging to note that the number of students has reached a new peak this year with a total of 89 students following the various residential and non-residential courses.

48. Recruitment We have very much in mind the need to recruit more ministers. This is necessary to counteract the number of retirements, deaths and withdrawals that we normally expect and also to meet the new needs of a Church on the move. The Assembly will recall that a resolution to this effect was withdrawn in 1979 and we are now looking at this again most seriously so that we can sound the note again in 1982. In no way do we anticipate that Auxiliary ministry will replace the full-time ministry. They will supplement and extend in new directions what is always to be done. We therefore continue to make known our leaflets, entitled *Tell me about the Ministry* and *More about the Ministry*.

49. Local Pastors A special sub-committee has been charged with the task of recommending the appropriate training required of those Local Pastors ordained according to the Assembly Resolution who seek now to enter the full-time stipendiary ministry. A number of Pastors have expressed such a desire and we have endeavoured to suggest ways in which they can develop the necessary skills so they can take their place in the wider work. In each case we have sought to take fully into account their age, previous experience and ability to benefit from study, and generally have seen it helpful to link them with the resources of one of our colleges. In certain circumstances there have been difficulties in getting it right, but we believe that their calling has demanded of them nothing less than the best that can be offered, within the practical limitations of a personal situation.

50. Auxiliary Ministry The *Working Guidelines for an Auxiliary Ministry* were adopted in the General Assembly 1979 and amended in 1980, and the last twelve months have enabled us to start putting the theory into practice. There was much that could only be initiated once the decision had been made, and almost immediately there were requests for advice and training from a large number of members throughout the URC. All this has been truly encouraging and much progress has been made in the administration and the setting up of the appropriate courses.

51. Each of the students enrolled so far will be guided by a Provincial Director of Training and will be helped by a Personal Tutor in training provided either by ourselves or by an Anglican or Ecumenical Ministry Training Course. We have spent much time in fashioning a programme of study that will make appropriate academic demands on our students, but also take firmly into account the practical and local aspects of the ministry they will undertake. Care has been taken at assessment conferences and in Provincial and District Committees to see that this is so. We have had an excellent spirit of co-operation when we have enrolled students elsewhere in other groups, and we feel that this both reflects and stimulates ecumenical relationships.

52. The Revd Michael Dunford, as National Training Officer, has been greatly helped by many people in these busy and formative months, particularly the members of the Board of Studies for the Auxiliary Ministry, together with the Provincial Directors on whom the burden of responsibility ultimately rest.

53. One area of concern has been the question of the cost of some courses operated by Anglican Ordination schemes, and it is to be made clear that this is not a burden that will fall solely on the candidates. This will be a responsibility shared both locally and nationally, and no one should be dissuaded through financial difficulty. Incidentally, a clear examination of the costs in such cases, indicated that it will be money well spent, in the interests of the future ministry envisaged, and thus the whole Church.

54. The demand for places at Assessment Conferences has been very high. By January this year alone over 30 men and women had been enrolled, but we believe we must take great care even if it means that some will have to be patient with us a little longer. A significant step forward has been taken by our Church, and we must now see where it will lead us.

55. Ecumenical Co-operation As in previous years we have taken our part in ecumenical debate on matters concerning the ministry. In particular we have shared in the thinking of the World Council of Churches' Programme on Theological Education, and the appropriate

Standing Committee of the British Council of Churches. We are also engaged on the production of Open University type projects which are to be developed ecumenically and offered to those running various ordination courses.

56. Training Theologians of the future We have played our part across the years as a denomination in providing theologians and theological teachers and we are conscious that this must not be forgotten in any future pattern of training and discussion about the future of our colleges. We will see to it that appropriate provision is made as part of the recommendations of the Review Group.

57. Priorities and Resources Group We have responded to the challenges presented by the Priorities and Resources Group. In particular we have shared in the early discussions about new initiatives in mission outreach and its implication for the ministry, and have begun to explore in the Review Group possibilities of In-Service Training for all ministers. We feel that both are significant pieces of research at this time.

COLLEGE REPORTS

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

58. The Federation of Cambridge Theological Colleges For a week in November 1980 nine distinguished representatives of the Advisory Council for the Churches Ministry (Church of England), the Division of Ministries (Methodist) and the Ministerial Training Committee (URC) visited Cambridge to consider the present working of the Federation and to advise upon its future development. Their report is a significant contribution to the documents before the Review Group on Ministerial Training and staff and students have been encouraged by their visit. New members of staff have been welcomed at Ridley Hall, Wesley House and Westcott House; Brian Beck has been greeted in his new role as Principal of Wesley House; and farewell has been said to Mark Santer as he moved from Principalship of Westcott House to be Bishop of Kensington and to Professor Charlie Moule as he retired for a second time after some very fruitful years of service to the Federation by return to the staff of Ridley Hall, where he first took up the teaching ministry which eventually brought him to the Lady Margaret Chair in Cambridge.

59. Membership 1980-81 Twelve new candidates for the URC Ministry have joined us this year including one with earlier ministry, in the Reformed Church of Basel, Switzerland. Two students, one from the regional church of Westphalia and one from the Presbyterian Church in the United States, are taking a year of their regular training for the ministry here. Just over one third of the students are women. Sabbatical terms here have been taken by five URC ministers, one from the Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches and one from the United African Methodist Church of Nigeria. Senior associates have come from Australia and the USA. Dr. Mayor has been on Sabbatical leave for the Lent Term at Columbia Seminary, Georgia.

60. Administration of the College The staff team, academic and domestic, has continued to work harmoniously. The Cheshunt Foundation has maintained its financial support. Considerable work has been done on routine renewals in the electrical and plumbing systems and on decoration and furnishing of staff houses and the residential wing.

61. Commemoration The 1981 Commemoration celebrations are to be held on June 10th. The preacher will be the Revd Arthur Macarthur and the Lecturer Professor Richard Hanson of the University of Manchester.

62. Settlements Settlements during 1980 were as follows: Jenny Austen, Wilton Road, Birmingham; Rose Barrett, Mitcham Road and St. Peter's, Tooting; Alec Cowan, East Howe and Throop, Bournemouth; Mary Davies, Blakenall and Hatherton Road, Walsall; Hazel Day, Twyford and Woodley, Reading; Malcolm Ford, Gowerton and Park Mill, W. Glamorgan; Robin Hine, Headingley, St. Columba's, Leeds; Jean Jamieson, Shaftesbury, and Mere with Birdbush and Maiden Bradley, Wiltshire; David Morgan, Sittingbourne and Milton Regis, Kent; Margaret Nuttall, Mevagissey and Newquay, Cornwall; John Paul, West Denton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; David Williams, Hook, Neyland and Rosemarket, Dyfed. Kate McIlhagga has been called to a community ministry in St. Ives, Cambridgeshire.

63. **URC Ordinands** (arranged according to their year of anticipated entry into ministry).

1981	1982	1983+
Susan Daldorph	Chris Baillie, B.Ed	Martin Ambler
Drummond Gillespie	Irene Bligh, MA	Stephen Brown, BA
Richard Helmn BA	Lysbeth Carrol	Eileen Davies
Daphne Lloyd	Jean Hall	Derek Gardiner
Revd Jurg Maurer	Lindsay Hassall, BA	Ruth Mealand, BA
Tom MacMeekin, B.Sc	Rhona Jones, BA	Alan Pickles, BA
Susan Nuttall	James Ryan	Edward Symmons
Sheila Thorpe	(and external)	Clive Thomson
Peter Trow, BA	Kenneth Knight	Chris Wood
Richard Wiggins	Pat Wardle (ROM)	(and external)
		Ann Cole
		Frank Hall
		David Jones
		Timothy Poh, BSc
		Victor Ridgewell

THE CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE, MANCHESTER

64. Seven students undertook student pastorates during the summer – fewer than usual. Five others participated in the Sheffield Industrial Mission course, and eight did a two-week placement in the Probation and After-Care Service.

65. The new Internship Training programme is now under way. Five students are in training. One is a Baptist. The Northern Baptist College likes our scheme and is co-operating fully in it. Evaluation is being undertaken throughout the session and we hope to benefit from experience in this new field of training.

66. **Practical Training** With the planning in regard to Internship Training finalized (for the time being), the Staff has given its attention to practical training in the earlier years of the students' training. The introduction of I.T. has enabled us to broaden the base of our practical training. This means that in the summer vacations we are making greater use of industrial mission and hospital chaplaincy courses instead of encouraging students to do only summer pastorates. The popular placement with the probationary service has been taken out of term time and is now done as a fortnight's block placement in September in the student's second summer vacation. The City of Manchester Youth Training department runs an excellent youth leadership training programme and we are making use of this in the student's second year. A course in hospital work which leads to a period of Clinical Pastoral Education on wards has been set up in a local hospital.

67. **Local churches** The staff has not been happy that some students do not form a meaningful link with a local church during their time at College. While recognizing the practical difficulties due to the heavy preaching demands made on our students, we are anxious that students find a home in a local church. We now link first year students to a local church as soon as they arrive and ask them to observe and learn while attending worship, and Church and other meetings. Their observations are discussed in tutorials and in the worship and preaching class.

68. **Students in training** Of the 21 new students we admitted this year: 17 are from the URC; 2 are from the Churches of Christ; 1 is a Congregationalist; 1 a Moravian. Of the 45 students at the College this session: 40 are full-time; 5 are Courses 3 and 4. Of the 40 full-time students: 23 are residential; 17 are married and living out. The academic breakdown is as follows:

BA (Theology) 11; BD 7; Certificate 25; Special 1 year: 2.

Students due to complete in June 1981

William Burgess	Roger Jones	David McK. Taylor
Christine Fowler	Sean Larkin, BA	Christopher Weddle
Ron Fowler	Michael Mewis	Brenda Willis, B.Ed.
Ian Fosten, BA	Mark Piper, BA.BD.	
Ronald Gates	Paul Snell	

Third Year:

Jane Dawson	Brian Jolly	Norman Whitaker
Mark Fisher	Clive Sutcliffe	

Second Year:

David Bedford	Harold H. Lanham, BA	Peter Noble
Nigel Goodfellow	Hilary Mansbridge	Timothy Royds

First Year:

Susan Apps, BA	John Hardaker	John Roche
Robert Barthram	Martin Hazell	Robert Shallcross
Robert Bushby	David Herbert, BSc.	Geoffrey Sharp, BA
Christopher Ford	Alex Jacob	Nigel Uden
Richard Goddard	David Charles Phillips	Philip Woods

Course 3:

Beryl Lyde	Derek Morrill, BSc. Ph.D	Alan Williamson
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69. **Co-operation with other Colleges** Co-operation with the other theological Colleges continues to increase. Thanks to the generosity of the Methodist Missionary Society we have been able to appoint a Third World Lecturer for a three-year period.

70. **Review Group** The Group appointed by the Governors to undertake an intensive review of the life and work of the College has completed its work. The Governors responded positively to the directions recommended by the Group for exploration and have instructed a working party to discuss matters with representatives of the other theological Colleges of Manchester and other parties concerned and formulate definite and detailed proposals.

MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

71. There are 18 ordinands out of 28 engaged in the study of Theology.

<i>Final year:</i>	Richard Church, BA David Fowles, BA	David Medow, BA (Lutheran) Richard Wolff, BSc.
<i>Second year:</i>	Ronald Ewart, BA Kim Fabricius, BA	Kevin Watson, BA
<i>First year:</i>	Lesley Beale, BSc., MSc. David Fox, BSc. James Gould Lesley Hughes, BA	Molly Kenyon, BA Sheila Maxey, MA (Joint Course with King's College, London) Patrick Taylor, BA
<i>Course 3:</i>	David Bending, Cert.Ed. Geoffrey Bending, BA	Marie Roe, BA Alan Wise, MSc., D.Tech.

72. **Staff** The College is grateful for the year of teaching in New Testament by Mr. L.D. Hurst. The Revd Dr. John Muddiman has now been welcomed as Lecturer in New Testament, as has Dr. David Owen as Lecturer in Philosophy. The Revd Charles Brock has become Chairman of the Central Courses Committee which is responsible for co-ordinating on an ecumenical basis the teaching of the various theological colleges.

73. We record with deep regret the death of Lord Armstrong who served the College with great wisdom and devotion as Chairman of the College Council.

74. The Revd Dr. Norman Goodall has resigned as Chairman of the Board of Education. As some partial recognition of his many services the College has elected him to an Honorary Fellowship. We are glad that the Revd Dr. John Huxtable has agreed to succeed Dr. Goodall as Chairman.

75. **Ordinations** John Burgess to Gleadless, Sheffield; Brian Hunt to Wyke and Wibsey; Justine Burgess to Abingdon and as Assistant Chaplain of the College.

76. The Commemoration preacher was the Revd Bishop Leslie Newbiggin. Preachers at other Chapel services include the Revds Michael Green, Peter Jupp, Gorgon Kendal, Allen Porter, MacDonald Ramm, John Slow, Rod Strange, Brian Walker and John Young.

77. The College has been experimenting with one day refresher courses for ministers in the vicinity. A Consultation on the *Confessio Augustana* was organized in September by the Lutheran Fellow, the Revd Dr. Meryl Sätrom. This was an ecumenical gathering with lively lectures and discussions, with 30 participants from 7 denominations.

MEMORIAL COLLEGE, ABERYSTWYTH

78. **Staff** D.L. Trefor Evans has now retired after forty-six years of ministerial and professional service. Guto Prys Ap Gwynfor, Ll.B., B.D., has been appointed lecturer in Church History. Dewi Eirug Davies has been associated in the Principalship with Pennar Davies. D. Elwyn Davies, in addition to his work in the College and the Aberystwyth-Lampeter School of Theology, has been invited to lecture in the Religious Studies department of the University College at Aberystwyth. Dewi Eirug Davies continues to edit *Diwinyddiaeth* and D. Elwyn Davies *Yr Ymofynnydd*. Pennar Davies serves on the New Welsh Bible Board and an Editorial Board of the Welsh Academy.

79. **Students** There are sixteen names on the College roll exclusive of post-graduate students engaged in active research in the fields of New Testament, recent Welsh theology and Welsh Church History. One of our B.D. students is Mark P. Healy, a ministerial candidate of the URC. Altogether there are 12 of our number pursuing the B.D. courses and 2 of those the University Diploma in Theology. 12 of our students are ministerial.

80. **Relationship with the Aberystwyth-Lampeter School of Theology** There is happy co-operation between the College and the United Theological College of the Presbyterian Church of Wales as well as with the Department of Religious Studies in the University College at Aberystwyth. Closer co-operation with Lampeter will develop as students there turn to the B.D. scheme. Pennar Davies has been appointed Dean of the School of Theology.

81. **Library** Arrangements are being made for the re-cataloguing of our working library in accordance with the system obtaining in the other academic libraries of Aberystwyth. The bulk of our library, including the older books, has been entrusted to the National Library of Wales.

82. **Dr. Williams's Lecture** The Lecture (on *Relevance*) was delivered by Sir Goronwy Daniel in the Michaelmas Term of the 1980-81 session.

83. STATISTICS

College	Total Nos. URC in Training	New Candidates for 80-81	Estimated No. for URC Ministry 81,82,83,84	Actual number entered URC 1980	Total No. of places available.
Westminster	33	12	10 9 13 1	13	61
Manchester	38	21	13 7 9 13	15	103
Mansfield	17	6	3 6 6 3	3	36
Aberystwyth	1	—	— — 1 —	—	—
Bala Bangor	—	—	—	—	—
Queen's Birmingham	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	89	39	26 22 29 17	31	200

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Duncan Wilson

Secretary: The Revd John Oldershaw

84. The Youth Committee has once more tackled a large amount of work in the last year, both in its main committee meetings and various sub-committees and working groups. It would be impossible to report on all of this activity in full and so some high-lights have been selected.

PRIORITIES

85. With the wide variety of work undertaken the Youth Committee has felt it important to establish a clearly defined policy for its work to give direction and to provide some means of assessing the effectiveness of its work. Discussions have taken place within the youth committee and the FURY Assembly, as a result of which three major thrusts have been outlined:-

- (i) the promotion and encouragement of local youth work;
- (ii) the training and education of youth workers and young people in their own abilities and in awareness of the Christian Faith;
- (iii) responding to the needs of young people.

These thrusts are set within the context that all of our work is Christian, and is carried out in an international and ecumenical setting.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

86. Visits to India and Zambia have become a feature of our activities programme and have been of value in deepening young people's awareness of the world Church in its variety and inter-dependence. After much discussion and consultation the Youth Committee has decided to plan a visit to Britain in 1982 by a group of young people from Zambia and a group of young people from India. Discussions have taken place with the United Church of Zambia and the Church of South India about this project, and they will continue to be consulted. The outline scheme is for about 10 young people and 2 leaders from India and Zambia, to visit Britain, and share in a study project with 10 British young people and accompanying staff. The visit will last approximately 4 weeks with time spent in London, the West Midlands, the North of England and the North East of England.

87. The aims of this project have been defined as:

To enable a group of young visitors from the Church of South India and the United Church of Zambia, in company with a group of similar size and age from the United Reformed Church:

- (a) to be made welcome in British Churches and homes, in response to the hospitality received by young members of the URC in India and Zambia;
- (b) to meet members of British Churches, of all ages, and share with them in worship, ecumenical fellowship and community projects;
- (c) to reflect on their own experience and culture in the light of their reaction to the U.K.;
- (d) to consider ways in which their contribution to the life of their own churches might be enriched;
- (e) to see part of Britain's historical heritage and places of industrial and cultural interest, in which the Christian Church is set and to enable British Christians to learn from the visitors' insight into Christian life and worship.

88. The visit would be financed by a joint fund open for contributions from all participating churches. Overseas churches would be expected to meet the costs of the visitors up to the time of their departure from their home country and after arrival on their return. The remainder of the costs would be sought from:

- (a) The Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council
- (b) The Council for World Mission
- (c) Trust Bodies
- (d) A FURY project to raise £5,000
- (e) Local fund raising in those areas to be visited.

89. The General Assembly is asked to issue an official invitation to the United Church of Zambia and the Church of South India.

The FURY Assembly agreed to promote an educational and fund raising project which would hope to raise at least £5,000. [Resolution 3]

90. In 1980 a very successful visit to the Mission Covenant Church in Sweden carried out jointly by the Youth Committee and the West Midland Province has led to a return visit being planned for 1981, and it is hoped, a continuing relationship. Plans to establish youth exchange links in other Provinces have not yet been successful.

91. An ecumenical visit to the USSR was serviced by the Youth Office. This proved to be a very rewarding venture and planning is proceeding for a further visit in 1982.

ACTIVITIES

92. British based activities have continued to recruit well. The former Churches of Christ activities have now been integrated into the programme and such has been the success of Adventure Camp and the Work Camp that in 1981 it is planned to hold two of each of these. A Christian Youth Festival, being promoted by the British and Irish Churches seeks to attract 4,000 young people and is planned for August 8-15.

The FURY '80 weekend did not draw together as many young people as had been hoped, but 400 people attended and for a considerable number of those it was their first encounter with the URC as a national entity.

TRAINING

93. The URC Training course for part-time voluntary youth leaders has been rewritten, and has been well received by other denominations and youth work agencies, as well as giving a new impetus to our own training programme. The Baptist Union has decided to adopt the course for the training of their youth leaders.

94. The Youth Leadership Training Officers continue to carry out valuable work, and the youth committee is seeking adequate financing of the scheme so that all Provinces may share in the service provided by the YLTO's.

95. Participation by young people in decision making, and in the structures of the Church has been stressed within URC youth work. A further step was taken at the 1980 General Assembly when resolutions were passed which, if ratified in 1981, will enable two young people to be members of each District Council and Synod. The Youth committee is concerned that these should not be *token* young people, asked to speak only on youth related matters, but full participants in the work of these bodies. There are two aspects to this. The first is that of training young people in the skills of participating in Councils, committees and large gatherings. A training programme is being established in the autumn which will begin this process. The second aspect is that of discovering ways in which more people of whatever age can participate in the large decision making bodies of the URC. This is outside of the scope of the Youth Committee's particular area of work.

96. **Time for God**, the voluntary service scheme for young people has continued to grow and in 1981 the Church of England General Synod Board of Education became a sponsoring body. By working in a Church or Christian organisation for a period of time from three months to a year, young people gain new insight into Christian Mission and their own faith is revitalised. An increase in the number of young people has not been matched by an increase in the number of placements offered by churches. **Time for God** does provide a way in which churches can receive additional help either for on-going work or special projects.

FURY ASSEMBLY

97. The 1981 FURY Assembly included a District and Provincial Youth Secretaries consultation. The theme co-ordinators provided input sessions and learning experiences on the theme *Communication* and acted as consultants within the business sessions. In its business sessions the Assembly re-emphasised its belief in the value of the Youth Leadership Training Officer scheme; stressed the importance of worship and spiritual growth within FURY and the youth work programme; and expressed a concern that, during this International Year of Disabled People, churches should make a special effort to ensure that their premises and facilities are accessible to disabled people.

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

98. A large part of local church youth work is carried out by Uniformed groups, and it is important that churches fully integrate these groups into their life. Three new publications will shortly be available to assist churches in this. One will be on Parade services, another, in the *Together* series, on the integration of Uniformed Organisations into the educational and worship life of the Church, and the third will be for ministers and church secretaries on the responsibilities of the church and Uniformed Organisations one to another.

99. A revised youth leaflet on the work of the Brigades has been published. The new Sponsorship document from the Scout Association stresses the importance of the sponsoring authority in the life of the Scout group, and a new discussion document from the Scout Association on *Spiritual Development* is commended. The United Reformed Church Guide and Scout Fellowship hopes that approval will soon be given to the FURY fish symbol being an official part of Scout uniform for all URC Scouts who wish to wear it.

PUBLICATIONS

100. The *On the Job* series of practical papers for youth workers has been revised and re-printed. A youth leaflet to help small churches appreciate the contribution which they can make to youth work has been distributed in the Information Service. The Youth Committee also produces, on behalf of the Department, the Training Bulletin which contains reviews, training methods and resource materials for all those involved in leadership training in the Church.

THANKS

101. The committee is greatly encouraged by the life and vitality within FURY and is grateful for the support given to youth work at every level of the Church's life.

CHAPLAINS AND STUDENTS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd Dr. Leslie Green

Secretary: Revd Peter Jupp

102. **The Contemporary Scene** Higher Education has entered a period of great uncertainty. On the one hand, the number of 18 year olds applying for courses in universities and polytechnics is greater than ever before, and well qualified applicants are having to be turned away from popular courses. On the other hand, institutions are being forced to consider redundancies among staff who teach less popular courses because of cuts imposed by the Government on overall budgets. Applications from overseas students are down as a result of fee increases which make it more expensive to study in the United Kingdom than in most other countries. The committee was concerned to learn from the Churches Commission on Overseas Students that the Government is considering charging overseas students full cost for any N.H.S. treatment. The appropriate representation has been made through C.C.O.S.

103. **Chaplains** During 1980–1981 the Revds Robin Hine (Leeds), John Geyer (Birmingham), Andrew Taggart (Torquay), Wesley Workman (London) and Justine Wyatt (Mansfield College Assistant) were added to the roll of URC Chaplains. Overall, 62 URC ministers now have part-time responsibilities as Chaplains in Institutions of Higher Education. 10 URC ministers are full-time Chaplains, two of these being Overseas Chaplains. Of the remaining 8 appointments, all save one are *ecumenical* and while URC applicants may be successful in future "open competition" posts, this is not at all certain. The committee therefore has paid particular attention to the one specifically URC appointment, that to the University of London.

104. The committee has met officially three times this year, including visits to the Universities of Leicester, Birmingham and Warwick where it met with the local URC Chaplains to learn of their work. The committee was pleased by the success of two national student events: the Sixth National URC Students Conference at Carr's Lane URC, Birmingham, organised by Miss Bethan Davies in February 1981, and the National Students Christian Congress, Alpha and Omega, at Coventry in April. We are grateful to the Church Life Department for making grants to the Congress and also to the Student Christian Movement.

105. The Committee has this year published four policy papers. These are entitled *The Religious Formation of Students; Students with no recent Church connection; The Development of URC Chaplains Work;* and *Guidelines for the appointment of URC Chaplains*. They are available from Church House.

106. **Chaplains and their relation with students.** In the first of these papers, the Revd Caryl Micklem has written that the period of further education "offers the student an opportunity for religious exploration, which should not be discouraged, and equally a chance to drift away, by mistake or half on purpose. A prime need is to find a congenial Christian community which is accepting without being grasping. Chaplains, whether full-time or ministers of local churches, need to understand the importance of *choice* for the student, and must be content to do all the work of discovering and following up names without bringing proprietorial pressure to bear! It is a time when friendship (not mere acquaintanceship) is of paramount importance. Therefore the Chaplain must be tireless in effecting, without seeming to contrive, introduction after introduction. The Chaplain himself may never see the result of this painstaking labour.

107. The second paper reports: "The Chaplain's prior concern is to make contact with students. For this to happen, it is vital that more URC Chaplains make regular visits to their campus." The Chaplain who has only part of his time to offer faces the choice of whether he should encourage his students to participate in Christian activities on the campus or in the activities of his own church. He must also balance two opposed concerns. Where, for example, the Anglican Chaplaincy or Christian Union is well-organised and active, the new URC student may well on arrival throw in his lot with them. While we have little hesitation that this will lead to his continued religious fulfilment, we are anxious that "for the future strength of the Dissenting and Reformed traditions it is necessary to encourage students to train for future leadership roles in their own denominations" (see our paper *What Is Chaplaincy?*)

108 **Student Link-up** In this respect, the committee draws the attention of the Assembly to the considerable decrease in the number of students commended to Chaplains by local churches. This was the subject of a question to Assembly in 1980. The pre-1978 Link-up system asked all ministers to send the names of new students from their churches to Church House. Thence these were passed on to the appropriate Chaplains. The disadvantages of this system were two-fold (1) The paucity of information about the student, e.g. was he active in the Church, or last seen at Sunday School five years ago. (2) The fact that names were so often submitted late. Contact is *best* made between Chaplains and Students in the *first* week of term. The new system asked local ministers to write directly to Chaplains about individual students. While this imparted valuable information, far fewer names have been submitted and many Chaplains have expressed concern about this.

109. We have therefore decided to return to the previous system. This committee calls upon Assembly to ask all churches to facilitate the work of Chaplains by ensuring that the names of new students are sent to Church House as soon as the students' destinations are known.

[Resolution 4]

110. **Encouragement of Chaplains** The committee has sought to encourage Chaplains in their work by promoting opportunities for review and assessment of their work. The first luncheon for Chaplains and staff in Higher Education was held at the 1980 Assembly. A second will be held at this year's Assembly. The biennial and ecumenical conference of Chaplains at Swanwick was attended by a record number of URC participants including three members of staff as official contributors and the four student members of this committee. Four Chaplains took part in the now annual Training Session organised by the Churches Higher Education Liaison Group. The Revd Dr. Colin Thompson took the responsibility to enable himself to attend the European Student Chaplains Conference at Barcelona. A "simultaneous consultation" is planned for Baptist and URC Chaplains this summer at Oxford.

111. **Personalia** From the wider field of Chaplaincy, Sister Mary Magdalen SM (Catholic), the Revd David Harper (Baptist) and the Revd Humphrey Taylor (Anglican) have this year been succeeded respectively by Dom Raphael Appleby, Revd Simon Oxley and the Revd Kennedy Thom. We look forward to the continued high level of ecumenical co-operation in Chaplaincy to Higher Education.

MINISTRY OF HEALING COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd David H. Dale

Secretary: The Revd Charles K. Meachin

112. The committee was greatly encouraged by the spontaneous display of interest in the work of Christian Healing at the last Assembly. Since then there has been abundant evidence that here we have 'an idea whose time has come.' Provincial consultations on the Ministry of Healing have continued to draw remarkably good support.

113. One of the urgent pleas of the last Assembly was that a **National Conference on the Ministry of Healing** should be held before the next Assembly in order that the results might be fully discussed. This did not prove possible but we are to hold a National Conference at The Hayes, Swanwick from 18th–20th September 1981. The aims will be:

- (a) to assess the variety of experience of healing ministry already developing in the URC.
- (b) to consider the possible developments and how we may encourage and support one another in this area of the total ministry of the Church.

This will be an important conference in that what proceeds from it and what we learn from it is likely to determine the main thrust and direction of the work of this committee for the next few years.

[Resolutions 5 and 6]

114. We also take note of the fact that the Churches' Council for Health and Healing, now centred on St. Marylebone Parish Church, is to hold a National Conference *Health for the 80's* at Swanwick 6th–9th July 1981. This hopes to draw together the different threads in

the area of health and healing in society as a whole but also in relation to our churches. Two members of the committee are being sponsored by the URC and one other will represent the Free Church Federal Council.

115. The Free Church Federal Council Hospital Chaplaincy Board last year called together representatives from the constituent churches to consider co-operation between the Free Churches in the Ministry of Healing. It has been agreed to exchange publications, share information about particular pieces of work being undertaken and invite representatives from other denominations to attend selected meetings of the appropriate committees. It is hoped that these links may be developed also with the Church of England, Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church.

116. In response to the increasing calls for assistance to enable the local churches to find their way in matters of health and healing, we have prepared a list of speakers who might open up these matters to local churches or groups of churches. It is also hoped to have ready in time for Assembly a film strip which illustrates the various ways in which the local church can exercise a ministry of healing: *Healing in the Local Church*.

117. After consideration of various documents on the subject of the Homosexual Relationship, the committee agreed to ask the Church Life Department, in consultation with the Church and Society Department, to find some means to help local congregations and individual church members examine their attitudes to human sexuality. We do not feel that public statements on this subject are particularly helpful at the moment.

118. A number of members of the committee were pleased to be able to share in the very worthwhile GEAR Conference on Healing last year and to see it drawing a record number of people to Swanwick.

119. The committee continues to provide resource material for individuals and local churches. The study/action packs *Health & Healing* and *The Role of the Church in Community Health* are best sellers in the URC and other denominations, as is the booklet *In Hospital*. Individual pages of *In Hospital* are now available. A series of leaflets dealing with fundamental questions have been distributed through the INFORMATION SERVICE: *Why Has This Happened to Me?*; *Death and the Christian*; *Response to Grief and Loss*; *The URC and the Ministry of Healing*; *The Role of the Congregation in the work of Healing*.

120 Further titles are in preparation: *Mental and Emotional Suffering*; *20 Questions about Healing*; *Sick with Fear*; *Visiting the sick at home and in Hospital*; *Places of retreat and refreshment*; *The Church's role in caring for the sick and elderly*; *Spirituality and Health*; *The Church's role in preventive health care*; *Smoking and Health*.

121. As part of our 'care for the carers' we have asked the Ministerial Training Committee to give some urgent consideration to the question of recognised sabbaticals being offered to our ministers as an opportunity for further study and in-service training. We have also urged that ordinands and ministers should be encouraged to have specific training in counselling both in pre-ordination and in-service training.

122. We recognise that the question of Christian healing has for long been both a neglected and contentious issue in the Church. As with any neglected element in the Christian Faith, when it eventually rises to the surface, it does so with disturbing force. This is where distortion and danger may begin to creep in. We are constantly concerned to deal with misconceptions and try to avoid malpractices but we are even more concerned to help the Church to a deeper understanding of God's purposes and power. There are demonic forces to be overcome, both social and personal; there are memories to be healed; there are human beings deprived of their dignity; there are diseases to be overcome; but the greatest need is for man to discover the grace, goodness and liberating power of God, and to be constantly amazed and thankful at the discovery. Our hope as a committee is that by an honest, sensitive and expectant searching out of these important areas of human life and ministry, the Church may be enabled with one voice to praise God that in Jesus Christ we have been *ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven*. This, after all, is the ultimate healing on this side of death, and one to which we are all committed.

URC FORUM

Director: The Revd Keith Forecast

Secretary: Mrs. Betty Taylor

123. Every year since the war members of what is now the United Reformed Church have gathered at the Swanwick Conference Centre in Derbyshire in August for a holiday conference. For many years this has been an event for all ages, affording an opportunity for a holiday in excellent surroundings combined with an experience of Christian worship, fellowship and learning.

124. **FORUM** is an activity of the whole Church. It is organised by a small committee representing all departments under the direction and administration of members of the Church Life Department staff. It therefore reports and is accountable to the Church through that Department.

125. In 1980 the theme was *What good news?* John Reardon of the Church and Society Department introduced thought and discussion about the kind of world into which we are moving and the Church's evangelistic task within it. Stephen Orchard of Welwyn Garden City was leader of worship, Richard Jenkinson of Sanderstead, director of music and Rosalind Goodfellow of Esher, chairman. As usual, groups were organised for children and young people, following the theme of the week. Activities, sports, competitions, outings, dancing, concerts are perennial features of the programme. A capacity crowd of 360 people came, including nearly 100 under the age of 20.

126 The theme leader for 1981 will be Bernard Thorogood, and the theme *Church Expectant*. He will seek to direct our thought towards the style and task of the Church in the 1980s, helping us to see it in the context of the Call of God, the world scene, the ecumenical dimension and the life of the United Reformed Church. Worship will be led by Brenda Stephenson of Charlton, music will be directed by Stan Burnicle of Middlesbrough, and Cyril and Joan Franks of the Southern Province will be host and hostess. Bookings opened in January and by the 20th of the month 150 people had enrolled.

127. The cost is kept as low as possible, on the understanding that the Department will subsidise if necessary. In 1980, however, the event broke even financially. In 1981 the charge for adults will be £50, with reductions for children.

PILOTS PANEL

Chairman: The Revd Gordon Thompson

Secretary and Master Pilot: The Revd Keith Forecast

128 Pilots is a non-uniformed children's movement sponsored by the United Reformed Church, Churches of Christ and the Congregational Federation. There are also a number of *Associated Companies* in churches of other denominations. It seeks to provide a weekday opportunity for the Church's children in the 7-14 age-range to 'learn, pray and serve in the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ'. It has a marked world-church dimension. An attractive programme is offered, adaptable to meet the needs of a wide variety of congregations, consisting of activities of all kinds for which *crests* are awarded, worship, project work, games and camps, all designed to foster physical, mental and spiritual growth.

129. Since 1978 when the movement was completely revised, considerable growth has been experienced. In February 1981 there were 156 companies of which 74 have been formed during the last three years. This reflects a noticeable growth in all kinds of mid-week work among children. It is heartening to see Pilots taking its place among those agencies seeking to meet this growing opportunity.

130. Most provinces have a Pilot Officer responsible for supporting and providing resources for existing companies and for assisting churches wishing to consider forming a company. The Province office will be able to put churches in touch with this officer. The movement is

organised by a panel responsible to the Church Life Department and administered by the Christian Education Secretary as Master Pilot. A booklet describing the formation of a company and a pack of sample materials may be obtained from the office.

DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman: Revd Dr. Brian Johanson

Secretary: Revd Donald McIlhagga

131 **Worship Publications** In co-operation with the Churches of Christ we have produced *Scripture Readings 1981* based on the lectionary in the URC Service Book. In co-operation with the Supplementary Ministries Committee we have prepared for publication an order of service for the commissioning of a Church Related Community Worker. We have arranged for a number of the services in the URC Service Book to be published separately in pamphlet form. Leather-bound copies of the *Book of Services* will be available.

132. We have prepared a list of *Devotional Aids* which, when revised, will be offered to the Information Service, or to REFORM.

133. We continue to participate in the work of the Joint Liturgical Group which is at present revising its Holy Week Services.

134. **Guidelines on Baptism** The General Assembly 1980 instructed us to produce *Guidelines on Baptism*. Considerable discussion has taken place on this and related topics, and we have begun the preparatory work involved. However, since we are within a few months of union with the Re-formed Association of the Churches of Christ, it seemed proper to us to take discussion further after that event, and therefore ask that the remit to the committee be extended. [Resolution 7]

135. **Church Discipline** The subject of discipline within the church was continued from the previous year. Christian life is under the discipline of the Gospel, and our discussion has turned on the ways in which, in our context of mutual episcopate, we ought to respond to requests for church membership, baptism, marriage, re-marriage, etc. We plan to incorporate the substance of our work in a series of pamphlets, and in some suggestions for various kinds of services for Covenant renewal, Re-dedication etc. The proposed pamphlets envisaged thus far will be on: *Baptism; The Lord's Supper; The Devotional Life; The Church Meeting and Christian Discipline; The Use of the Bible*. These will be no longer than 20 pages each.

Other matters considered:

136. **Human sexuality** has been debated at some length, and will be considered further in joint deliberations with representatives from other departments and committees that have had occasion to deal with it. A most interesting and exciting discussion took place on a paper entitled **A tentative approach towards a theology of Art**. This has opened up into three lines of enquiry: Art in the Bible and in the Reformed Tradition; The Imagination in Christian theology; Symbolism in Reformed Worship.

137. **Documents received** The committee has received three sets of documents on which it has been asked to comment on behalf of the URC:

From the French Reformed Church, on their practice of *Ordination*. A detailed reply has been prepared and sent.

From the Conference of European Churches, October 1979: *Open to God and the World and Bishops — 12 Theses*. The committee noted the first, and will consider the second along with further consideration of the report of The Churches' Council for Covenanting *Towards Visible Unity*.

The document on Covenanting for Union in Wales will be studied and commented on, in response to a request for this.

138. **New Main Hymn Book** The committee has continued to be informed of the work of the Main Hymn Book Committee, and had hoped that the proposed ecumenical project would come to a successful conclusion. However it appears that this is now unlikely, at least as at present conceived. Even though this project is not materialising, we shall still welcome specimens of new words and tunes.

GUILD OF ORGANISTS AND CHOIRMASTERS

139. Since this is our first report to be submitted to Assembly we should first like to set out the aims of the Guild, which are:—

- (1) to improve the music used in worship in our churches;
- (2) to give members at meetings an opportunity for free and undistracted worship;
- (3) to pool experience and foster discussion of common problems by means of regular meetings, recitals and conferences;
- (4) to foster fellowship between members;
- (5) to promote better co-operation between Ministers, Organists and Choirmasters;
- (6) to provide a society which can be consulted by all United Reformed Churches in all matters concerned with their music.

140. The Guild, at present, has 200 members and they are linked by the *Guild Review* which is published three times a year. In addition to news of members activities, the Review has articles on practical matters for Organists and Choirmasters, and reviews music and records.

141. At present there are four branches of the Guild which meet periodically in different churches in that particular area. These branches are London, Sussex and South Coast, Merseyside and the North East.

142. Membership of the Guild is open to Ministers of the URC and all those concerned with music in the URC. The Guild is affiliated to the Royal School of Church Music.

CHAPLAINS TO THE FORCES

143. At present the following URC ministers serve as Chaplain to the Forces:

Revd Frank Beattie	Plymouth	Royal Navy
Revd Alan Finch	Colchester	Army
Revd Hamish Maclagan	Catterick	Army
Revd Clifford Prenton	Cyprus	Royal Air Force
Revd Samuel Williams	Portsmouth	Royal Navy

They value the support and comradeship of the URC in their ministry.

144. The United Board now holds a register of church members from the two denominations who join the services so that they may be appropriately linked, and also of those in the services who make a profession of faith and wish to be associated with the URC. The commendation of those joining the services is important and advice should be sent as quickly as possible to the Revd George Mann, 5 Gresham Close, Eastbourne, E.Sussex BN21 1VW.

145. The Army has a vacancy for a new URC chaplain. Any enquiry about this challenge should be made in the first place to Provincial Moderators.

APPRECIATION

146. The department wishes to place on record its thanks to all those who have shared in our work and now retire from a committee. Their contribution has been greatly valued.

147. In particular, we would want to mention two of their number. The REVD DONALD MCILHAGGA has served with distinction as Secretary of our Doctrine and Worship Committee since the inauguration of the URC. He has given to the whole Church the benefit of his knowledge and experience, together with a meticulous care for important detail. We thank him for all he has done and are glad to note that he will continue to represent us in the wider Church. [Resolution 8]

148. The REVD C. KEITH FORECAST was appointed as our Secretary for Christian Education and Children's Work in 1976. He has played a notable part in the concerns of the whole department as a member of the full-time staff, and in connection with these particular committees. We have valued his conscientious labours and infectious enthusiasm, and will miss him in Church House and around the country, but wish him well as he returns to the pastoral ministry. [Resolution 9]

RESOLUTIONS

- 1.1. The Assembly receives the report *Towards Renewed Confidence*;
- 1.2. The Assembly urges local churches, District Councils, Synods and its own Departments and committees to give careful consideration to the recommendations contained in the report *Towards Renewed Confidence* and to take appropriate steps to implement them.
2. The Assembly draws the attention of local churches to the importance of equipping leaders and teachers for the work of Christian Education and commends, in particular, the revised home-study course *Equipped to teach children in the church* as one means to this end.
3. The Assembly resolves to invite the Church of South India and the United Church of Zambia to send a group of young people to visit Britain in 1982 to share in a joint study/action project with a group of young people from the URC, the number of young people participating being dependent upon the amount of finance available.
4. The Assembly calls upon the churches to facilitate the work of Chaplains by ensuring that the names of new students are sent to Church House as soon as the students' destinations are known.
5. The Assembly commends the National Conference on Health & Healing to be held 18–20 September 1981, requesting that the aims of the conference, namely 'to assess the variety of experience of healing ministry developing in the URC and the possible developments in this area of the total ministry of the Church', be made known to the whole Church.
6. The Assembly, aware of the limited number of places available at the National Conference on Health & Healing (18–20 September 1981), urges Province to arrange regional conferences, particularly where these have not yet been held, and instructs the Healing Committee to offer help with organising such conferences.
7. The Assembly extends its remit of 1980 to the Doctrine and Worship committee concerning *Guidelines on Baptism*, so that due consultation may take place with members of the Re-formed Association of the Churches of Christ.
8. The Assembly wishes to place on record its gratitude to those members who are retiring from committees of the Department for their co-operation and service, and in particular to offer thanks to Revd Donald McIlhagga for his fine service as Secretary of the Doctrine and Worship Committee since the inauguration of the URC, and before that on the former committee of the Presbyterian Church of England.
9. The Assembly records its deep appreciation of the service rendered to the Church by the Revd C. Keith Forecast as Secretary for Christian Education and Children's work, including work for Pilots, for the annual Forum at Swanwick, and on other committees of Church House, and wishes him well as he prepares to take up his new ministry at Palmers Green.
10. The Assembly agrees

that this report be received.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY DEPARTMENT

Chairman: Mr Raymond T. Clarke

Secretary: The Revd John P. Reardon

1. In a year when the focus of the Churches has been "Towards Visible Unity" and upon the proposals for covenant, the society of which the British Churches are a part has shown more signs of disunity and insecurity than have been apparent for more than forty years. Assumptions about economic growth, full employment and the value of money have been revealed as untenable. Expectations about the competence and responsiveness of the welfare society have been opened to doubt. The dependence of social priorities, and therefore of personal well-being, upon economic performance have been revealed in a stark manner.
2. If the defeat of inflation remains the primary objective some of the consequences are self-evident: those people who, for the past decade, have become accustomed to rises in personal income may have to accept fixed if not reduced incomes, in real terms; those who seek to maintain or improve the quality of education, health services, environmental control or transport will find, instead, that they have to accept lower standards of public services and amenities. Changes within the structure of our society will also bring their consequences. It will be a diminishing proportion of the total population which earns or generates enough money to pay for the services and the social security which are needed and deserved. The growing proportion of old people will represent both a social resource and then, in the fullness of old age, a social responsibility which the nation is barely equipped to fulfil.
3. Already we recognise that some of the social and political consequences of economic policies may be indirectly harmful if not directly destructive of relationships within local and national communities. Several political commentators have drawn attention to the likelihood that as common interests within the nation become less attainable, or are less desired, self-interested factions will increasingly engage in pressure-group politics, to the detriment of the democratic means of agreeing priorities.
4. But the society of which we are a part is also an international one. In the year which has seen growing insecurity within the national community there has also been a growing interest, especially among young people, in the issues of disarmament, development and the North-South debate, a reminder of the global approach which is necessary in both economic and social affairs and in which the sharp contrast between defence expenditure and development expenditure is exposed.
5. Christians and their organisations are confronted with the same questions as other members of their communities and nations. Are we prepared to leave matters as they are and to accept a social evolution based on economic and political imperatives? Are we deterred by the organisational complexities which confront us? Are there any initiatives to be taken? The issues are certainly daunting. They appear to call for a degree of understanding which eludes even those who have access to all the machinery of government, the resources of the business world or the disciplines of academic life. A small department within a small Church does not have the capacity to deal effectively, in any one year, with all of those matters which claim the attention of the Church nationally and its local congregations. Yet it cannot ignore issues which, so directly, are affecting the context of Christian witness and the expression of personal faith.
6. The Churches are being challenged to find ways of showing their solidarity with the poor and the disadvantaged. While the Gospel is for all people it contains a special message of hope for the poor and the powerless. Churches must not ignore that divine bias and must go on searching for ways of proclaiming the love of God for all who are ignored or oppressed or dispossessed in a world where the affluent and the powerful control and enjoy the resources which God has provided for all to share. Our Department, in choosing its priorities in the vast range of social and international concerns, must always give a special place to the poor, believing that in them Christ presents himself to us as Lord and Saviour.
7. So, a Church and Society Department must sustain the kind of links and resources that are needed if it is to offer appropriate support, comment, advice or information when these are called for. More than that, a department must take initiatives. It does, in various ways.

It seeks to relate to the interests of Provinces, Districts and Churches; it works through the Assembly and Executive Committee on matters where specifically URC action is required: it collaborates consistently with other Christians through an active involvement in the programmes of the British Council of Churches and Free Church Federal Council; it is engaged regularly in international affairs, often through the United Nations, the World Council of Churches or the EEC; and it negotiates directly with governmental and other national institutions. Such varied methods are employed continuously throughout the Church's year. This report focuses upon five main streams of work which have occupied the department, its advisory groups and its secretariat. They are: Unemployment and poverty; Social strategies; Human and legal rights; World development; Disarmament. None of these can be regarded in a way which accords only with UK interests. All of them offer Christians a route to service and to mission in today's society.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY

8. Last year the Department's report contained a section on the world of work, urging churches to engage in study and action to understand and influence current trends. Since then the number of people in Britain who are unemployed has continued to rise and whole industries are threatened. Many factors combine to create the present conditions, including the world-wide recession, government policies, international competition, technological change and lack of imaginative strategies in management and trades unions.

9. The churches have shown themselves relatively powerless to influence the spiral of unemployment which even begins to affect people remote from the traditional areas of poverty and depression. There are no simple solutions to the present crisis and forecasts suggest that levels of unemployment will increase and will remain high for years to come. Many people will experience long periods of unemployment and many young people throughout the country will find it increasingly difficult to get work when they leave school. Several Provinces and Districts have begun to explore some of the aspects of the present situation by arranging study days on the theme of work. The department is producing a study pack on this theme focusing on the current situation, the traditional attitudes to work, the causes of unemployment and possible responses by the churches.

10. Several churches have offered opportunities for work experience and training courses for young people, under Government schemes. Many more churches could offer premises and community experience to create job opportunities. Those churches which have gained experience in such work testify to the change in attitude towards the unemployed by their own members. Even where church premises and resources may not be used to help create job opportunities the churches should consider other ways in which they could contribute to those who are unemployed by offering leisure facilities, counselling or pastoral care and by working with unemployed people to channel and develop their skills into forms of community involvement which will benefit everyone. Many industrial mission teams have published advice and guidelines in counselling and pastoral needs in such conditions of strain.

11. Women have been even more severely affected than men by the rise in unemployment. Many part-time jobs which provide a necessary source of family income have disappeared altogether and many more are threatened. At the same time the differentials between the pay received by men and women remain wide and this is a specially serious matter for those women who are single parents. This is an open example of the discrimination against women and the lack of full equality accorded to them in our society. The churches could be more vocal in their challenge to the hidden and "accepted" discrimination which becomes more apparent in times of social hardship. People who are fortunate enough to have full-time employment and who have never experienced redundancy and unemployment often reveal a lack of understanding towards those who have. Present trends in society are therefore potentially extremely divisive. It is vitally important that the churches should engage in trying to change attitudes which are based on a false assumption that people's worth as human beings is measured only by their work and its usefulness to the community. Such an assumption contributes to the false judgement that unemployed people are victims of their own folly or laziness.

12. It has become more clear, now that many people have to endure long periods of unemployment, that the unemployment benefits are inadequate. There is a strong case for reviewing the levels and conditions of benefit for those who are unemployed for long periods, or even permanently, so that they do not suffer long term decline into poverty. If we are facing a future in which unemployment for many will be a permanent feature then it is vital for the cohesion

and integrity of society that the employed and the unemployed should share more equitably in the material prosperity of the nation. Those who are employed must be willing to contribute adequately through taxation to those who are unemployed. The health of society depends on the sharing of burdens and resources so that hardships do not unduly affect any single section of the community.

13. It is important to recognise that production methods are continually changing so that fewer people are required to produce and distribute the necessities of life. It is imperative that ways are found so that all people may receive an adequate share of the earth's resources but also that everyone may have the opportunity to employ their time and abilities in a fulfilling way.

SOCIAL STRATEGIES

14. Within our church we must reflect the values displayed by Christ which remain, irrespective of the economic climate of our land. These values include the unselfish stewardship of wealth, a concern for the disadvantaged and the sharing of the resources of those who are healthy so as to relieve the pain and hardship of those who suffer. If we are to sustain these values there is no room for short-term solutions which do not give serious regard to longer-term needs. Hence the importance, to Christians, of influencing the social strategies and the priorities within these strategies. It is essential that Christians should challenge priorities if certain groups, already disadvantaged, can be seen to be bearing the burden of current difficulties which we experience as a nation. The Government has chosen to tackle the recession through policies which, in their implementation, have often hit the disadvantaged more heavily than the more favoured sections of the community.

15. In 1980 the Church and Society officers of several religious denominations wrote to "The Times" drawing attention to the worsening plight of many children in poor families as a result of the low level of child benefits in this country. The Secretary of State for Social Services, in an interview on television, criticised the Churches for challenging the government on one aspect of its policies without entering into a full scale examination of the overall policy. It is precisely in the effects of overall policies on particular sections of the community, however, that the Churches have to remain vigilant, and if necessary, vocal. In the end the success of government policies cannot be judged merely in economic terms but by their social and human consequences. In this respect the government has shown itself to be single-minded in its economic policies but often lacking in sensitivity towards those sections of the community whose social and family needs are directly and adversely affected by these policies.

16. Even in a time of world-wide recession and continuing inflation it is necessary for governments to consider the long-term as well as the short-term effects of their decisions. In this respect it is important to anticipate the long-term cost of some of the decisions that are now being made. In health provision, for example, the reduction of many domiciliary services for sick and disabled people merely makes it likely that more residential care will be needed when the families themselves can no longer shoulder the burdens of nursing and supervision. Residential care is both costly and in short supply. Similarly the present housing policies of national and local government make the plight of the homeless more pressing in the short-term and more hopeless in the long-term. Yet the homeless should be a primary focus of government policy and the community as a whole should regard their need as a priority. It is being widely suggested that it would make economic sense to create sixth form and tertiary colleges throughout the country. The Department believes that the educational and social effects must weigh at least as heavily before changes are made in this direction. A change as radical as that would affect the whole educational system. Churches, therefore, should study the proposals and engage in the public debate, examining all the arguments for and against. There are advantages and disadvantages and it is not immediately evident which should prevail in the final decision.

17. This year is being observed as the International Year of Disabled People and it has brought into focus the failure of successive Governments to ensure the full implementation of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. The Year is meant to focus attention not only on the care and needs of disabled people but also to find ways in which disabled people can participate more effectively and easily in daily life and can contribute to the community. For this to happen there will have to be considerable changes of attitude among the public and much more emphasis on improvements in access to public buildings and transportation for disabled people.

18. The Department has sought to draw the attention of the Churches to the opportunities given by the International Year of Disabled People by the production and circulation of a leaflet for study and action. In producing the leaflet the Department acted on behalf of all the Christian denominations and the leaflet is being publicised and used extensively in other churches. Individual churches should examine such practical matters as the access to and use of their own premises. It is hoped that our churches will participate in local observance of the Year to ensure that disabled people become partners with the rest of the community rather than merely objects of charity. Like all people, those who are handicapped are unique and irreplaceable human beings loved and cherished by God.

HUMAN AND LEGAL RIGHTS

19. A Bill is currently passing through Parliament aimed at redefining British nationality. The proposals are similar to those outlined in the Labour Government's Green Paper 1977 and last year's White Paper. The intention is to create three kinds of British citizenship: (a) British citizen; (b) citizen of the British Dependent Territories and (c) British Overseas citizen.

20. While this proposed legislation attempts to offer a new and more coherent basis of British nationality many believe that it will become a means of immigration control. It does not establish the rights and obligations of British nationality. While it has long been recognised that legislation on nationality would be desirable, the Bill shows no commitment to the multi-racial character of British society, and could even worsen community relations by creating anxieties about citizenship. In future Commonwealth citizens settled in the UK would lose their automatic right to register as British citizens and would, two years from the date the new law comes into force, have to apply for naturalisation instead. Naturalisation is expensive and can be refused at the Home Secretary's discretion and the applicant has no right of appeal against a refusal.

21. The current debate on nationality is not restricted to legislative matters. The Catholic Commission for Racial Justice has produced a filmstrip with taped commentary to help the churches to understand and take part in debate. These filmstrips can be borrowed locally free of charge but in case of difficulty churches may borrow one from the Department.

22. In 1980 the Department commended the Projects Fund of the Community and Race Relations Unit as a way of demonstrating a desire for a genuine multi-racial society. In the Autumn every church received a leaflet explaining the purpose of the Projects Fund and urging local churches to make a contribution towards its work. So far the response has been negligible and the money raised does not even cover the costs of printing the leaflet.

23. The Department continues to believe that the churches, together with the State and its institutions, must play an important role in the creation of a multi-racial community in Britain by opposing all forms of racism and by taking part in positive actions to promote the well-being and participation of minority groups in society. The Department therefore welcomes the decision of the Home Secretary, announced in February 1981, to instigate enquiries into the scale and influence of extreme racist groups.

24. The Department welcomes the intention of the Government to abolish the so-called "Sus" law because of its undoubted contribution to community friction and suspicion. For some years representatives of ethnic minority groups in Britain have been campaigning against "Sus" and many church groups have joined the campaign. However, there is some disquiet about the introduction in the Criminal Attempts Bill of a clause relating to interference with motor vehicles. This could have the effect of damaging relations between the police and young people because it will be difficult to defend oneself against the accusation of intention to commit a crime.

25. One of the major factors to be taken into account by the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure was the relations between the police and community. The British Council of Churches' Working Party which prepared evidence for submission to the Royal Commission was well pleased that some of its recommendations were taken up in the published Report. When the Report was first published there was some strong adverse reaction from some spokesmen for campaigning groups on civil liberties. At the same time it was widely recognised that the police were also unhappy that many of their recommendations strengthening police powers had not found support in the Report. It is to be hoped that all sections of the community will

see the advantages in developing criminal procedures which are carefully defined in law and scrupulously observed by the police. It is not in society's interest that there should be a loss of trust between the police and large sections of the community.

26. At a more personal level it is tragic that so many marriages end in breakdown and eventual divorce. In spite of the fact that the divorce proceedings themselves are now less fraught and traumatic than they once were, the apparent ease of the court procedures should not allow the impression that divorce itself is without its damaging and disruptive aspects. Many people face untold personal grief and distress as their marriages disintegrate while large numbers of children are emotionally and sometimes physically damaged by their parents' marital breakdown.

27. In the Home Office Report, *Marriage Matters*, there was much emphasis on preparation for marriage and for adequate support for couples facing marital difficulties. The cost to the nation of so much marital breakdown is incalculable because the ramifications in terms of health costs, community services, child care and legal expenses are impossible to quantify. It is false economy to plead lack of cash to implement the modest proposals in the Report for a strengthening of the counselling services. Yet the Report seems to have been forgotten in government circles.

28. It is all the more welcome that marriage preparation and support for marriage have been features in recent publications and debates in the British Council of Churches. *Preparing for Marriage*, available at £1.00 from the Department, is designed to give practical and basic help to ministers and others involved in marriage preparation. *An Open Letter to the Churches on Marriage* suggests some of the ways in which churches can provide a caring environment for married couples. Both documents are meant to stimulate the churches to place a greater emphasis on supporting those who are married.

29. The Department welcomes the establishment of a Family Forum in which many secular and religious groups will be involved in focusing on the role of the family in our society. The Department will report on its progress from time to time and will represent the denomination as the Forum develops, nationally and locally.

WORLD DEVELOPMENT

30. In August/September 1980 the United Nations Special Session on Development took place in New York to consider the adoption of a plan of action for the Third Development Decade to begin in January 1981 and to reach agreement on a round of Global Negotiations on some of the most important issues in the field of development. The Special Session ended considerably later than originally scheduled with agreement on the plan of action but with no agreement on the Global Negotiations. The three countries responsible for the deadlock were the USA, West Germany and the United Kingdom.

31. During the past year, largely because of the publication of *North-South, a Programme for Survival*, normally referred to as the Brandt Report, large audiences all over the country have attended meetings on world development. One World Week, on the theme "One World — Just Possible", focused on the possibilities for international co-operation and the problems to be overcome by the world community. As it happened the climate of interest, stimulated by the Brandt Report, and the fact that One World Week is gradually establishing itself in the church calendar, meant that the Week was widely observed, particularly in England. For 1981 the theme for One World Week, from 18th to 25th October, will be "One World — Let's Get it Together". It will offer opportunity to consider some of the most pressing issues raised by the Brandt Report, viz. food, aid, trade, monetary reform and disarmament. Two days before the Week begins, the 16th October, the United Nations has urged all peoples to observe World Food Day to draw attention to the looming crisis of widespread food shortages.

32. The Government's first response to the Brandt Commission Report, in a Foreign Office Memorandum in July 1980, had been lukewarm. It was the subject of considerable press criticism. The pressure of public opinion through the press and through direct approaches to Members of Parliament seems to have had some effect and the early coolness of the Government towards the summit of selected world leaders proposed by the Brandt Commission has now changed to a willingness to attend if invited.

33. During 1980 the Government twice cut its overseas aid budget in spite of strong public

pressure to the contrary, and the acceptance in principle of the UN target for aid is still not matched by a timetable by which Britain will reach it. Meanwhile the 1% World Development Appeal continues to provide a tangible way in which our members can show their willingness for positive improvements in Britain's world development policies. In June 1980 we were able to report an income of £134,000 for the Appeal and we confidently expect a considerable increase for the 1980/81 Appeal. The number of churches taking part in the Appeal is growing and a large number of individuals, unable to take part in the Appeal locally because of the unwillingness of their churches to present it to their members, sent in their contributions direct to the Department.

34. Our Churches thus provide considerable funding to basic development programmes through contributions to Christian Aid. In 1980 some of this help was concentrated in localities where land reform is a primary concern; a paper has also been produced to assist those who wish to discover more about land reform. In 1981 there will be a comparable emphasis, as part of the 1% Appeal, linking the development projects which we support and our understanding about the aims and methods in world development.

35. The Department has used some of the Appeal proceeds, in accordance with the Assembly decision of 1979, to support development education in this country, both by organising conferences to deepen awareness among URC members of world poverty and the possible solutions to it, and by supporting organisations like Third World Publications, the Fourth Channel Development Education Group and the One World Week which are all trying to influence public opinion.

36. We also support the work of the World Development Movement campaigning for more generous policies by the British Government. It is WDM which is organising, with the help of the Churches and Aid agencies, a mass lobby of Parliament on May 5th to try to influence the Government's position at the Summit of World Leaders to take place in June. It would make a difference to the mass lobby if all URC members who have shown their commitment to the world's poor could either go to the House of Commons that day to see their M.P.'s or at least write to them urging positive action at the world summit.

37. The Department Secretary, as convener of the BCC's Advisory Committee on World Development, has shared in a delegation to the Foreign Secretary to press for more positive development policies and took part in the Foreign Office's UN Advisory Council where Government participation in the UN was reviewed.

38. One aspect of Britain's involvement in the search for a more just relationship between the industrialised and developing countries is in the trading and business policies of British-based companies and their subsidiaries. Some years ago the URC committed itself to the policy of constructive engagement, monitoring the policies of companies in which the Church holds investments and discussing with them the implications of policies which may have adverse repercussions on workers and communities in developing countries. This commitment shared by many denominations, to constructive engagement, demands much time and the small resources of the Department have meant that only a little has been attempted in this sphere.

39. The primary focus for concern in the business practices of British-based companies over the years has been South Africa where the position of black and coloured people gets steadily worse under the pursuance of the apartheid policies of the South African Government. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin's report on his visit to South Africa in August 1980 serves to underline the demonic power of policies which deny the human worth and dignity of so many South African citizens. The Department, therefore, was pleased to encourage its Secretary to accept a generous invitation by a Christian trust fund to spend six weeks in South Africa with all expenses paid, early in 1981, to meet with church people and to see the effects of apartheid.

40. The persistence of apartheid and the apparent failure of companies, and international codes of conduct for business practice, to improve the situation in South Africa has led to a growing call for progressive disengagement by British companies from the economy of South Africa. The Department believes that the time draws near when this call for progressive disengagement must be seriously debated within the URC. We hope that the location of the office of Christian Concern for Southern Africa within the same building as the British Council of Churches, and changes in staff, will help to identify the implications of such a policy and ways of pursuing it. Meanwhile the Department will continue to play its part in ecumenical discussions on the responsibility of corporate investors.

DISARMAMENT

41. The Department welcomed the initiative of the Moderator of the General Assembly in the early Autumn in sending to our ministers the newspaper reporting on the launching meeting of the World Disarmament Campaign which took place in April 1980. Since then there has been a marked increase in church involvement in the Campaign and much discussion of disarmament in churches and Province Synods.

42. In January the Information Service enabled us to circulate the petition and the explanatory letter from the World Disarmament Campaign. The aim of the petition is to impress on governments the strength of support for progress towards disarmament among the peoples of the world. It is hoped that the same petition will be presented to many governments as the result of similar campaigns in other countries. The next Special Session of the UN on Disarmament will be in 1982 and it is hoped that the support for the petition will influence the preparations of governments for it.

43. The escalation in nuclear arms poses a dangerous threat to world peace and eminent military leaders have joined in the attempt to persuade the governments and people of the world that the possibilities of nuclear war grow as the number of nuclear weapons increases. There is a deep concern among many people about the siting of Cruise missiles in the UK and about the replacement of the Polaris system. The worsening relations between East and West should spur the nations to find new initiatives for peaceful co-operation rather than for threatening stances. Statesmanship of high calibre is required and many British people look for imaginative and peace-making initiatives from their leaders. The World Disarmament Campaign provides a starting point for discussion and action on disarmament questions, based as it is on a multi-lateral approach in line with United Nations resolutions. Some Christians will want to press for a unilateralist stance by Britain while others will find it difficult to support any pressure for disarmament while the nations remain so far apart in their ambitions and policies. Because the issue of disarmament is so controversial many churches will shy away from discussing it, but the Department believes it to be vitally important for the churches to be urgently engaged in debating the ethical issues involved and the consequences for personal and community action, and for government policy.

44. Quite apart from the questions about the strategic importance of nuclear and conventional weapons and their escalation, there are issues raised by the cost of the arms expenditure by the world's nations and by the superpowers in particular. In any consideration of the British Government's public expenditure the priority and high cost of the defence budget must be examined. The Brandt Commission Report, already referred to, has given some clear comparisons between the current spending on armaments and the peaceful and developmental uses to which such money could be devoted.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly requests the Government to review the levels and conditions of the unemployment benefits for long-term unemployed people, believing these benefits to be inadequate in their present form.
2. The Assembly, in this International Year of Disabled People, calls upon:
 - a. Church members to examine their own attitudes and responses to disabled people;
 - b. Local churches to consider their provision for and partnership with disabled people and to share in study and action programmes with disabled people and their organisations to effect long-term improvements in community life, in access to public buildings, in transportation systems and in public education on the needs and aspirations of disabled people.
3. The Assembly urges the Churches to monitor the progress through Parliament of the British Nationality Bill, making their views known to their Members of Parliament; to work actively to combat racism; to contribute to the project fund of the Community and Race Relations Unit of the British Council of Churches.

4. The Assembly commends the mass lobby of Parliament on May 5th 1981 to all the members of the churches and urges Her Majesty's Government to play a constructive and positive part in the preparation and outcome of the Mexico Summit of world leaders.
5. The Assembly welcomes the growing support for the World Development 1% Appeal and asks all local churches to commend it to their members.
6. The Assembly believes that
 - the continuing escalation of nuclear arms threatens the very security which the weapons are held to guarantee;
 - the development and deployment of nuclear weapons has raised new ethical questions for Christians;
 - the resources devoted to military expenditure of all kinds are desperately needed to tackle the world-wide problems of poverty, hunger, ignorance and disease;
 - the time has come for a more resolute involvement of Christians in taking new initiatives for peace.

Therefore the Assembly calls upon all Christians, and every local Church, to support the World Disarmament Campaign as one way of advocating the multi-lateral or uni-lateral approach towards disarmament, by signing the petition and encouraging others to do so.

WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. At the rough count of the resolutions submitted to the Assembly by this department over the eight and half years of the URC's life, it is clear that well over half have come from the Missionary and Ecumenical Work at Home Committee. If one adds the resolutions submitted in the process of unification with Churches of Christ, nearly two-thirds of the decisions have been about ecumenism and mission at home. This points not to a neglect of overseas relationships or of those with people of other faiths but to the fact that it is about the partnership of British churches that the URC is most often and in most detail called to decide what to do next.
2. This year's Assembly is no different in this respect. The resolutions concern both the detail and the general direction of ecumenism in England and Wales, pointing the way to new experiments in Joint Areas and to the further exploration of covenanting. Such decisions are for the Assembly to make; they also depend upon the decisions of partner churches on similar resolutions before their national bodies.
3. Yet as the URC decides on these matters, it must be aware of the challenges that come from other areas of the department's remit. Will changed relationships here improve or hinder relationships elsewhere? Will new initiatives in evangelism help or damage relationships with those of other faiths? Will the movements of personnel across national boundaries, in the service of Christ as universal Lord, bring some uncomfortable reminders of British insularity?
4. The appended report from the Council for World Mission is a reminder of a wider context for all that is attempted here. The fact that the changing financial pattern of CWM work makes it possible to increase other items of the department's budget for 1982 by a higher percentage than has been applied to the promised direct contribution to CWM does not mean any lessened commitment to partnership but rather the development of that partnership towards a broader distribution of monetary power — with a long way to go yet on that road!
5. The URC affirms that mission and unity belong together, yet some of its members clearly feel that particular approaches to unity may hinder mission or that particular emphases in mission may deepen divisions in the life of humankind.
6. On the world scene the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1982 and the World Council of Churches in 1983 will be meeting in full assembly to face similar issues. Both bodies have already announced programmes for involving their member churches in the planning and follow-up of these gatherings and the Nominations Committee will bring names of proposed URC representatives to the Assembly. Participation has already taken place or is assured in a number of other more specialised conferences. One is in connection with the Conference of European Churches, — on Ecumenism and Peace (Cardiff, March 1981). Four are preparatory to the WCC Assembly, — on World Mission and Evangelism (Melbourne, May 1980), on the Community of Women and Men in the Church (Sheffield, July 1981), of United Churches and church unity committees (Colombo, November 1981) and of the Faith and Order Commission (Lima, January 1982). The Sheffield meeting is being assisted by a reference group of the British churches on which the URC is represented; it marks the culmination of a world-wide study of the relationships of women and men in the common service of Christ, a theme with a strong bearing on some aspects of covenanting.
7. The Central Committee of the department, as the 'review body' of its work, has to discuss all these matters and more. It is in a full awareness of their importance that the particular reports and resolutions that follow are presented to the Assembly.

Martin H. Cressey, *Chairman*
Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK AT HOME COMMITTEE

8. Publicising the good news of Jesus Christ and letting it be seen that His Church is one are the objectives of the Committee's work.
9. We have introduced consideration of the proposals of **The Churches' Council on Covenanting**, in every Provincial Synod by the visit either of a member of the Committee or of one of the URC members on the Council. In many Provinces we have been able to help in preparing others to introduce the subject in Districts. Comments by the URC members of the Council on issues of particular concern to the URC were circulated to all churches through their representatives to Provincial Synods. Further comments and guidelines to help churches in their consideration of the Covenant are now available. The Committee believes that the proposed Covenant could open up new opportunities for mission and for growth in understanding and trust between the churches. We see the Report of the Churches' Council for Covenanting *Towards Visible Unity: Proposals for a Covenant* as an outcome of the process set in motion by the Churches' Unity Commission's Ten Propositions. Assembly voted on these in 1978, declining at that time to accept either Method A or Method B then proposed and calling for further exploration of methods for the reception of the ministry of bishops. At the same time Assembly asked our Committee to produce a discussion paper on *Personal Episcopacy — a URC View*. We believe that this exploration has led to an appreciation of many of the insights of the URC's understanding of episcopacy set out in that paper. We now hope that by the steps proposed in the resolutions the URC will be able to go forward to covenant.
10. At the **Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism Assembly** the URC representation exceeded the proportionate strength of our church. The Committee applauds the NIE emphasis on stimulating and facilitating local endeavours in co-operative evangelism. Therefore we believe that the URC should support the continuation of the Initiative at least until the end of 1982.
11. The June residential meeting of the Committee will be largely devoted to evangelism. In a study of the CWM Visitors' Report, the Priorities and Resources Report, contributions by GEAR, the NIE Report *Prospects for the Eighties*, and a survey of experiments in mission already being conducted by local churches of the URC, we hope to identify insights and possibilities to be shared throughout the Church.
12. **The Methodist/URC Liaison Committee** has published a third edition of the booklet *Local Co-operation between United Reformed and Methodist Churches*. Copies have been circulated in all Districts and Joint Churches. We commend it to the study of all who contemplate closer working with Methodists in their own locality.
13. A proposal to form **Joint Areas** in Mid Wiltshire and West Wiltshire which would function simultaneously as Methodist Circuits and URC Districts has been welcomed by the Committee as a signpost to further possible advances in local ecumenical co-operation. In order to facilitate the development of such local experiments, perhaps even with other denominations as well, amendments to the structure of the URC are proposed by resolutions to be brought to this Assembly. If the Assembly agrees, Provincial Synods would be able to determine the details of the constitutions of Joint Areas within the framework of the amended Structure.
14. The Methodist/URC Liaison Committee has begun to experiment in ways of **assessing the experience gained in joint local churches** over more than a decade. Five of the longer established joint churches have been visited in the past year to discover and to test means of evaluation. This study also has a wide relevance. The committee on Local Ecumenical Projects and the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism are both interested in the evaluation of local ecumenical projects in terms of mission.
15. The Committee has continued to see that the URC has been represented at consultations on **Rural Ministry and Mission**.
16. The quest for a **Rural Consultant** continues. The link between the consultancy and the pastorate at Llanidloes has been released. We record our appreciation of the generous offer and endeavours of the Province of Wales and the church in Llanidloes to help in the search for a Rural Consultant. We are considering lay as well as ordained persons to fulfil the part-time duties of Rural Consultant. At the time of writing the possibility of an appointment is being explored which would bring the URC into more direct contact with the J. Arthur Rank Centre at Stoneleigh.

17. **Recruitment of Ministers from Overseas** There is a wide gap between the number of full-time pastorates in the URC and the number of full-time ministries. Even allowing for indications in growth in the number of candidates studying for the ministry, and changing patterns of ministry like the Auxiliary Ministry Scheme, the gap is likely to widen even more from the present extent of 90 to 110, on account of an increasing rate of retirement in the next few years.

Full-time ministry is not the only form of leadership in the Church, nor is it necessarily an essential form, but it is a demonstrable element in church growth. There are situations where good pastoral and evangelistic opportunities are being lost, where churches are being discouraged by long vacancies and where the need to reduce the number of pastorates engenders an atmosphere of retreat. The Committee believes that a plan should be explored for the recruitment of ministers from overseas during this period of heavy retirement. This recruitment would be in addition to the reception of ministers already begun through CWM. An appeal could be addressed to churches with whom we have close connection, even though they are not members of CWM, like the Church of the Palatinate, the United Church of Canada, the United Church of Christ USA, the United Presbyterian Church USA and the Presbyterian Church US. The impact of four or five persons a year over the next four years or so, coming for limited periods, renewable by mutual consent could have considerable effect on the whole of our Church's life by the fresh vision and different approach to church life that they would bring.

18. **New Initiative in Mission** In response to the request of the Assembly resolution of last year on Priorities and Resources Group Report, that the WCM Department prepare a pilot project with a view to developing a new mission outreach throughout the country, a consultation with other Departments produced the following thinking –

- i. There are major areas of our society with which the URC is almost entirely out of touch, e.g. the disadvantaged in industrial and urban poverty; the minority racial and cultural groups such as gypsies, Asians, blacks.
- ii. New outreach undertaken by the URC nationally should be towards one or more of three areas.
- iii. Such outreach will mean setting aside one or more people for several years so that there may be identification, involvement and fully shared experience.
- iv. The outreach will have as one aim making known the love of God in Christ for people in the very realities of their hard-pressed lives.
- v. Secondly, the aim would be to help a community to take fresh responsibility for their lives.
- vi. Thirdly, the aim would be that through the presence of Christians, the nucleus of a Christian fellowship would be born in a new context and develop in a fresh way.
- vii. The significance of such an attempt sponsored nationally, would be to encourage all our congregations to see the frontiers of their Christian community and how they might cross them.

This general approach has been endorsed by the Committee which has appointed a working party of the Revd John Johansen-Berg and Henry Gordon and Mr. Philip Woods to draw up the detailed scheme to be presented to the other Departments by the end of this year, so that a budget can be prepared for 1983 and other churches be consulted and alternative sources of funding sought if necessary.

19. We look forward to the consummation of the union with the Re-formed Association of the **Churches of Christ** on 26th September 1981 in Birmingham. The Liaison Committee and officers of our two churches continue their painstaking work in preparing all the detailed practical arrangements that even a union like ours demands.

The resolution proposed calls on the Assembly to re-affirm the decision of last year to make the necessary amendments to the Basis of Union and the Structure of the URC as defined in the revised Proposals for Unification. The text of the Churches of Christ/URC Bill amending the URC Act 1972, as authorised by Assembly last year, can be obtained from the Church

MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL WORK ABROAD COMMITTEE

20. The impact of the CWM visitors on last year's Assembly and their assessment of our Church is indicative of the value of partnership in mission and of those inter-church relationships through which we are able to share insights, initiatives and experience.

Relationships are the chief concern of the Abroad Committee, and the past year has seen consolidation in this area.

21. Our long standing link with the **Waldensian Church** in Italy has been strengthened not only by the regular visit of the Moderator to Italy but by separate visits from two committee members which have led to further plans for the sharing of information and the exchange of personnel.

A party of fifty members of the North-Western Province will be going to the Waldensian valleys and will visit the Church there in May 1981.

We expect to see a developing relationship with this Church, possibly through a theological student coming to England for part of his study and through other, including ministerial, exchanges.

22. Arrangements are in hand to strengthen our links with the **Swedish Covenant Church**. A URC team of four persons will visit this Church during October.

23. The European Council of the **World Alliance of Reformed Churches** met in Romania in September and opportunities were taken by our delegates to visit the Reformed Church in that country and also to exchange views with representatives of other European Churches.

The URC has many links with Churches in Europe, at different levels of participation, local, regional and national. We believe there is scope for extension of these links, and thought is being given to the possibility of short term visits between ministers, a European minister working with a URC colleague and vice versa.

24. We have been represented at theological consultations of the **Leuenberg Concordat** and the United Church of the Palatinate, also in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, in Hungary and at the annual Synod of the Evangelisches Missionswerk in South-West Germany.

25. In East Germany the URC delegation to the **Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Church of the Union** has reported on the common ground between that Church and ours. The Ecumenical Officer of the Synod will be spending some time in this country later this year and we also expect a visit from other members of the Church.

26. Following a private visit by one of our ministers to **Czechoslovakia** we have been alerted to an urgent need for certain theological literature by the Comenius (Theological) Faculty in Prague and are looking at possible ways in which we might assist.

We continue to welcome any opportunities, formal or informal, of contact with Christians in Czechoslovakia.

27. The Presbyterian Church in **Taiwan** and the Presbyterian Church in **Korea** maintain their integrity and faith in the face of Government provocation. Our prayers continue for Dr. C.M. Kao, imprisoned for seven years in Taiwan, for his wife and family and for other members of the Church in both countries at present in prison.

28. The **United Congregational Church in Southern Africa** has many difficulties as it looks for basic human rights, particularly under Apartheid in South Africa. Our prayers are with its leaders and its people.

29. The Committee maintains close contact with the **China Study Project** of the BCC which keeps in touch with the rapidly developing and hopeful situation of the Church in China.

30. The reports of visitors to churches abroad together with news sent by leaders of those churches greatly extend our knowledge and understanding of Christians in other parts of the world. This is shared as far as possible with the congregations of the URC by articles in the Information Service and in *Reform*. Groups wishing to study a particular church can obtain more detailed information from the **Secretary for Communication**. Through such information we can begin to pray for others and to learn from them.

31. The Committee values its close links, through its Secretary, with the **CWM Executive** and has been considering a number of matters referred by that body including the use which the URC might make of CWM personnel and resources.

We commend to our churches the use of the Study Kit *Seeking the Truth in Love*, containing the bracing and challenging message of last year's CWM visit to the URC.

32. In the London Area the **Ghanaian and Chinese chaplaincies** continue to meet the needs of students and other nationals.

The withdrawal of Overseas Students Grants, along with other aspects of Government Immigration Policies pose particular difficulties at the present time and increase the burdens (and opportunities) of the chaplains.

The Chinese Chaplaincy in London, begun in 1974, has burgeoned to become the basis of the recently inaugurated Chinese Church in London, Chong Kah Geh, the chaplain, being its minister.

There is now also a Nigerian Chaplain in London working under the auspices of the Church of England but in close co-operation with the other chaplaincies.

Derek Cole, *Chairman*
Boris Anderson, *Secretary*

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

33. **European Churches** Our closest links with Churches overseas are often with Churches in Asia, Africa and the Pacific through CWM: our relations with Churches in Europe are generally less developed. We are investigating the possibility of ministerial exchanges between the URC and continental Churches, whereby ministers from one country will serve alongside a local minister in another country for a short period. Positive responses to our proposals have already been received from Sweden and Spain.

34. **Missionaries serving in the URC** This year two missionaries recruited through CWM have arrived to serve in the URC. The Revd and Mrs. M. Gunabalan (of the Church of South India) have spent six months at St. John's, Orpington, and in the Bromley District. We commend St. John's and the Bromley District for this imaginative initiative. We have met Mr. Gunabalan, and valuable lessons have been learned. The Revd and Mrs. F. Talapusi (of the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa) are in Sheffield where Mr. Talapusi is appointed for three years as minister of St. James's, Pitsmoor.

35. **Care of Missionary Personnel** Concern has been expressed to us about the occasional unsatisfactory level of care for URC missionaries serving in other CWM-related Churches. CWM shares that concern and has asked receiving Churches to ensure that certain standards are met in the arrangements for the care of missionaries. For ourselves, we are now a receiving as well as a sending Church. We brief missionaries as fully as possible before their departure and place them in contact earlier with the Church where they will serve. But we affirm with total conviction the policy of CWM that missionaries are in the pastoral care of the Church where they are serving. This is a new and developing situation in which we are all still learning.

36. **People** The following have been accepted as missionaries to serve overseas:

Miss Katie Head : Presbyterian Church in Taiwan : Education at Tainan Theological College
Miss Judith Rogers : Congregational Christian Church in Samoa : Education
The Revd Kenneth and Mrs. Marion Strachan : Congregational Christian Church in Samoa : Pastoral Ministry in Apia
Miss Frances Williams : United Church in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands : Education
(Re-appointed) The Revd Donald and Mrs Haro Horsfield : United Church in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands : Christian Education

The following have completed their service:

Drs David and Jean Landsborough : Taiwan
The Revd Roy and Mrs Joy Martin : South India
Mr Christopher and Mrs Mary Wright : South Africa
The Revd Bernard and Mrs Margot Spong : South Africa
The Revd Norman and Mrs Olive Kemp : Samoa
Mr Colin and Mrs Gillian Potts : Samoa
Miss Sally Kingsley : Tuvalu
Mr Anthony and Mrs Dr Helen Harries : Bangladesh
Miss Margaret McCulloch : Bangladesh

The following overseas students are sponsored by the URC:

The Revd Charles and Mrs Victoria Ahwiring (Ghana) at St Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak.
Miss Paulina Dankwa (Ghana) at Westminster College
Mr Edward Maliki (Ghana) at the Institute of Education, London
The Revd Lee Jong Hun (Korea) at St Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak
Miss Mary Chinkwita (Malawi) at the City of Liverpool College of Higher Education

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

Tony Coates, *Chairman*
Iorwerth Thomas, *Secretary*

MISSION AND OTHER FAITHS COMMITTEE

37. One of the priority aims of the Committee over the last three years has been to stimulate interest and discussion in local churches about Christian relationships of presence with, and outreach to, people of other Faiths in Britain. Significant impact has been achieved over the last twelve months through the publication of the study Handbook *With People of Other Faiths in Britain* which, unique of its kind, has found an eager market in this country and abroad among Christians of several Churches ranging from our own tradition to that of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Lebanon. More recently the Communication Group has produced, in consultation with the Committee, a PUB Pack (No 3) on *Exploring relations with people of other Faiths*, and we are appreciative of the BCC support in promoting both publications as recommended resource material for local churches.

38. In the light of early reactions to these publications the Committee has decided to pursue three distinct, yet related emphases in its educational objective:

- i. to continue to provide **information** about the living traditions of other Faith communities in Britain. The Committee is currently preparing a sister Handbook, *With Jews in Britain*, which will be of similar form and style to the existing Handbook, but different in the important respect of being written jointly by Jewish and Christian participants at the Annual September Conference organised by the Committee. Publication, in the name of the Committee, is expected in May 1982.
- ii. to grasp the complex and controversial issue of **ideologies**, with the aim, in cooperation with other Departments, to draw their significance into the Church's understanding of itself and its witness in contemporary British society. As a start the Committee intends to extend the successful model of the September Jewish-Christian Conference by holding a residential meeting with interested people — Trade Unionists and people experienced in Christian-Marxist dialogue. To assist this initiative the Committee intends to exercise its power of co-optation.

- iii. to promote sharper **theological reflection** upon the kernel of Christian faith — the Lordship of Christ — in the church's understanding and practice of its witness in the ethnic, religious and ideological pluralism of contemporary Britain. This task will be rooted in four spheres of concern:
- a. the sphere of the experience of local churches, regionally as much as individually; (pilot projects)
 - b. the sphere of the training of lay and ordained Christian leadership; (theological colleges)
 - c. the sphere of the Church as a caring community;
 - d. the sphere of organised dialogue with people of other Faiths and ideologies. In this manner it is hoped that the Committee will make a special study of "mission" and "conversion".

39. Recognising the importance of these tasks which the Committee foresees to be of immediacy as the Church moves into the 21st century, the Committee regrets that the challenging issues of inter-religious encounter figured so insignificantly in the Priorities and Resources Report. On the other hand, it appreciates the alertness of the CWM report *Seeking the Truth in Love* to this very issue and in continuing close collaboration with the BCC Committee on Relations with People of Other Faiths will strive to bring the insights of the World Church to bear upon the Church in Britain.

David A Kerr, *Chairman*
Iorwerth L Thomas, *Secretary*

RESOLUTIONS

Churches of Christ/URC Unification

1. The Assembly resolves to ratify the resolution of the 1980 Assembly to make the amendments defined in the revised Proposals for Unification as amendments to the Basis of Union and the Structure of the United Reformed Church to become effective on the date of unification as defined in the revised Proposals for Unification.
2. The Assembly approves the action of the Executive Committee authorising the presentation of the Churches of Christ/URC Bill before Parliament.
3. The Assembly resolves to meet at 1.00 p.m. on Saturday 26th September 1981 within the Central Hall, Birmingham, as the unifying assembly required in the proposals for Unification of the United Reformed Church and Churches of Christ as agreed by Assembly 1980.

Joint Areas

4. The Assembly resolves to make the following amendments to the Structure of the United Reformed Church —

paragraph 8. (2) (Manual p.21 lines 1 and 2) after the words "and Provinces into Districts" the addition of the words "or Joint Areas of ecumenical co-operation".

paragraph 8. (3)(b) (Manual p.21 line 8) add the words to the end of the sentence before the full-stop — "and of each Joint Area to be known as an Area Meeting."

paragraph 9.(3) (Manual p.23) the addition of the following sentence before the list of functions — "The Area Meeting of each Joint Area of ecumenical co-operation shall consist of the Provincial Moderator for the time being, all ministers and deaconesses engaged directly in the service of the URC within that Joint Area, representatives of local churches within the Joint Area and such other persons as determined by the constitution of each Area Meeting as approved by resolution of the Provincial Synod."

At the bottom of p.24 of the Manual after the list of functions of District Councils, the following sentence be added — "(i) to (xviii) above describe also the functions of Joint Area Meetings, always understanding that such functions as relate solely to the

work of the URC may be discharged by the UR Committee of each Joint Area Meeting.

paragraph 9.(5)(a) (Manual p.27 line 6) the insertion between “. . . . District Councils” and “. . . . (Ministerial and lay. . . .)” of the words “and Joint Area Meetings”.

Subject to ratification by the Assembly in 1982.

Recruitment of ministers from overseas

5. The Assembly authorises the WCM department to begin negotiations with churches overseas with whom we enjoy close fraternal relations for the recruitment of ministers for short-term appointments on the basis outlined in the report of the MEW at Home Committee.

Covenanting (to be submitted to Assembly at the close of special session on covenanting)

6. The Assembly welcomes the Report of the Churches Council for Covenanting as an important step in the search for visible unity in this country and regards this as an opportunity for a decisive development in church relationships.
7. The Assembly requests Church Meetings, District Councils and Synods to consider the report in the light of the United Reformed Church's commitment to the unity of all God's people and to missionary witness and service in this country, and to send any comments to the General Secretary by 31st December 1981; so that a definitive response to the proposal for a Covenant may be made by the Assembly of 1982.

WORLD CHURCH AND MISSION DEPARTMENT: APPENDIX 1

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION 1980-81

1. Since its re-formation in 1977 the Council for World Mission has been trying to help all its member Churches to spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ. This has involved each Church becoming both a 'sending Church' and a 'receiving Church', and means learning new roles and taking on new responsibilities. How can Churches learn to use effectively the Christian experience of those who come from another country and culture? How can Churches which have not had responsibility for the pastoral care of expatriate missionaries learn to look after them and enable them to use their gifts for mission? Such problems and opportunities have been challenging the CWM Churches.

2. We have come to see that the missionary calling belongs to all Christians. If all Christians are called to a life-time of involvement in mission how can they be trained for such service, and how can a sense of belonging to the world Church and of sharing in world mission affect their service in local situations? A pilot scheme, called 'Training in Mission', is being started from September 1981 to train ten young people from ten different Churches by sharing a year together in learning, work, fellowship and spiritual growth so that they can take new insights and a deeper understanding of mission to the work of the Church in their home situations. After spending two terms based at St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak, Birmingham, learning through lectures, seminars and practical involvement, these ten young people will go in pairs to various places around the world to spend three to four months working before coming together for a final time of sharing, reflection and evaluation.

3. One response that is being made to the 1980 CWME Melbourne conference's call to emphasise the bringing of the Gospel as good news to the poor is a project 'Ministry with the Urban Poor' which CWM has begun. Miss José Robins has been appointed to help CWM Churches focus attention on this kind of ministry and to share ideas and experience. She has been visiting churches in U.K. and plans more extended visits to Jamaica and South Africa this year.

4. Events in Taiwan and South Africa caused the CWM Executive Committee in August 1980 to prepare a statement on *Churches in Places of Political Tension*. This was circulated in order to encourage those who are under stress because of their Christian convictions, and to challenge others to a greater awareness of and commitment to the implications of the Gospel. Christians know that following Christ can involve suffering and sacrifice, but they share a

resurrection hope — new life comes through those who are obedient unto death.

5. With many Churches finding an increased share of missionary staff salaries there has been a reduction in the amount required for recurring grants and Churches are now seeking more help with the initial support of new outreaches in mission. The continued generous support of the Council's work, assisted by high interest rates and a strong pound, has made it possible to respond to most of the requests.

6. At the third meeting of CWM's Council which is to be held in Cambridge from July 28 until August 6 the Council will be wishing God-speed to Revd Lee Ching Chee and to Revd Elia Ta'ase, and will be welcoming Revd Yvette Rabemila from Madagascar and Revd Maitland Evans from Jamaica as Secretaries of the Council. Miss Lee is returning to Hong Kong to become Associate Secretary of the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China. Mr. Ta'ase is continuing some research into the history of the Church in Samoa before returning to his home country.

Barrie D. Scopes, *General Secretary*

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 1980

1. The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Exeter Road, The Square, Bournemouth at 1 p.m. on Monday, 27th April 1981, followed at 1.30 p.m. by the Annual Lecture, to be given by Dr Michael Watts of the University of Nottingham, under the title "The hateful mystery — Hell and the Nonconformists".

2. A very successful week-end Summer School was held at the Baptist College, Bristol in September. All the places were booked and many different parts of the country were represented. Visits were paid to some of the historic churches and chapels of the Bristol area and the majority of papers were centred on the Evangelical Awakening. The officers were particularly glad of the opportunity to consult informally with members.

3. With great regret we accept the resignation through illness of Mr Gordon Esslemont as co-Secretary of the Society. We are glad that his expertise will still be available to us on consultation. His thoroughness and enthusiasm will be greatly missed at the Library and Council Meetings.

4. It is becoming increasingly difficult to staff the Library and the Society is grateful to the volunteers who have kept pace with the growing numbers of enquiries. Those travelling any distance to consult the Library are advised to check whether it will be open when they arrive.

5. The costs of the Society increase alarmingly and the subscription was doubled this year to meet these. Further increases seem inevitable.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Chairman: Mr F. H. Brooman

Secretary: Mr C.M. Frank

1. **Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1979** Appendix 1 gives a broad analysis of the receipts and payments of those Churches which completed forms MM1 for 1977, 1978 and 1979. Since the figures do not cover the same Churches or the same proportion of the membership, they have been expressed in annual amounts per member so that comparisons can be made and trends noted.
2. It will be seen that total giving increased by 20% from 1977 to 1978 and by 16% from 1978 to 1979. Members and local treasurers are to be congratulated on this excellent response at a time of high inflation.
3. A breakdown of the 1979 figures Province by Province is given in Appendix 2. Similar figures for 1978 are to be found on page 89 of the Reports to Assembly 1980.
4. **Unified Appeal 1980** The Unified Appeal target for 1980 was £770,000. Receipts amounted to almost £760,000 so, as in 1979, we fell just short of the target. The figures are given in Appendix 3. We are grateful to all who contributed to this sterling effort and thank particularly the seven Provinces which met or exceeded their targets both in 1979 and 1980.
5. **Expenditure on Central Activities** The cost of the Church's central activities increases like everything else. The accounts for 1980 had not been finalised at the time of writing this report but we expect the expenditure to be about £982,000. This is an increase of some £161,000 on 1979 but, as the figures in Appendix 4 show, a comparable amount in real terms.
6. **Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally** The customary information about the stipends and other conditions of service of Ministers employed centrally is given in Appendix 5.
7. Accounts for 1980. The accounts for 1980 will be published separately when the audit has been completed. They will be carried into the Record of Assembly in the usual way.

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr R. C. N. Tinsley

Secretary: Revd G. E. Hooper

8. **The New Plan** Adoption of the 'Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration, by the General Assembly was followed by important preparation work before its implementation from 1 January 1981. The smooth and rapid transition owes much to the hard work of the Provincial representatives and local Maintenance of the Ministry Committees together with the skill of the administration team at the centre. The new plan has got off to a good start and the absence of some of the tensions created by the old assessment and relief system is already noticeable. It is expected that the central MoM Committee will be able gradually to concentrate more on longer term policy and guidance to Provinces whenever needed.
9. **Progress of the Fund** The year 1980 was a period of welcome recovery for the Fund. A package of emergency measures had been brought to the 1979 Assembly which was hard for Assembly to adopt and the Church to accept. The budget for 1980 was therefore constructed at a time when the Committee could take no chances with the financial viability of the Fund.
10. In 1980 we expected the Church to produce £3.73M; in the event £3.91M was raised. No allowance was made for dividends as there had been a real possibility that most investments would by then have had to be sold. Overall income exceeded budget by £235,000.
11. Expenditure was also significantly lower than forecast. We expected to pay 850 full-time and 120 part-time ministers throughout 1980, but the averages were only 805 and 105

respectively. This and other smaller savings reduced outgoings to £145,000 less than expected. Together with extra income this produced a surplus on the MoM account for the year of £380,000. With the balance brought forward and minor adjustments, there was a balance at the end of 1980 of £630,000.

12. The MoM Committee has monitored this situation as it developed and has considered very carefully what was appropriate in these much improved circumstances. In addition to much tighter budgeting, which has already been adopted for 1981, the Committee recommend:

- (i) An increase in stipend from 1 July 1981 above that budgeted and without any extra cash requirement from churches.
- (ii) Retention of £360,000, being approximately one month's expenditure of the Fund as a stipend payment reserve. This is only prudent and has been an objective for some years, so far unfulfilled.
- (iii) Division of the remaining surplus equally between the Pension Fund and a new general reserve. The strengthening of the Pension Fund has been a concern of the Committee for several years and this will reduce the calls on the MoM Fund in the future. The general reserve will enable the Committee to deal with sudden, unexpected costs without having to return to the Church for extra contributions. The difficulties of 1979 have been cleared through the hard work and dedicated giving of members of the Church and the Committee above all wants to avoid that situation arising again. The general reserve, even though it may only represent 3% of annual expenditure, will be a helpful buffer in this.

13. **Stipends from mid-1981** Specific proposals will be presented to Assembly but present indications are that with the income already promised from churches, a stipend increase of about 20% could be afforded, including the necessary support to the Pension Fund, from 1 July 1981. The Committee expects to bring to Assembly a package of recommendations including a single level of stipend of £4,000, abolition of service increments and a gradual phasing out of children's allowances. Neither the increments nor children's allowances have been fully adjusted over the years for inflation and they have reached the stage where they should be substantially increased to be effective, or alternatively abolished. The Committee recommend the latter course.

14. These recommendations represent a significant increase in stipends over the earlier thinking for 1981 and at a time when many pay increases are in single figures this policy deserves some explanation. A comparison of the increase in stipends since 1974 shows that even *after* the 20% increase last year, stipends were about 4% behind increases in the Retail Price Index over that period and 11% behind increases in average earnings in the whole country. It should be remembered that the expected stipend increase in 1979 of 15% had to be cut to 10% in the economy package; had the larger increase been paid, stipends would just have kept pace with the RPI since 1974.

15. Stipends are thus marginally worse in real terms now than in 1974. At successive Assemblies the MoM Committee has been encouraged to improve on this and it has been the Committee's objective to do so. The new 'Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration' was described in last year's Reports to Assembly as "a most important step in generating a new commitment in churches to greater Maintenance of the Ministry contributions, which is the only way real stipend increases can be achieved." With the present falling trend in the rate of inflation, it is likely that the opportunity will arise for the first time this year of a real increase in stipends. It is the view of the Committee that this opportunity should be grasped. The churches which have worked hard in producing the necessary money have a right to expect it to be used in this way.

16. **Future Stipend Policy** With an improvement in the health of the Fund and at present a falling rate of inflation, two key policy questions have been considered by the Committee: what level of stipend is 'right' and whether linkage to an external salary scale or index would be helpful.

17. **What level of stipend is 'right'?** It is widely recognised that a minister's stipend is only part of a total remuneration package which also includes a manse, rates, insurance and maintenance paid in full, heating (possibly) in full, and ideally (but by no means always), a car

provided. Behind the question is usually the assumption that if a value could be put on these, it would be possible to make a reasonable comparison with other occupations to decide what the appropriate level of pay should be for a minister.

18. In fact this package does not have any single value. Apart from the uncertainties already indicated, which highlight differences in treatment of ministers by different churches within the URC, the value of the manse and its associated costs varies widely depending on size, age, north or south, town or country. All the differences taken together can produce, not just a marginal effect, but very substantial variations between one minister's package and another's.

19. Of course a middle of the road figure could be arbitrarily chosen. Apart from having to be regularly updated for inflation, it would be regularly open to criticism, supported by well documented cases, that it was either too high or too low. It would however provide some basis for comparisons with salaries in other professions.

20. There is a considerable amount of experience available on how to do such comparisons. They are done regularly by professional institutions, by groups of companies with common interests, by specialist consultants, by the Civil Service Pay Unit, and occasionally by specially convened bodies like the Clegg Commission. They have a common philosophy that to get meaningful results a great deal of work must be put into examining:

- (i) The content of jobs to see like is being compared with like. This prompts the question whether all ministers' jobs are alike in terms of workload, travel, pressures etc.
- (ii) The terms of service — holidays, hours, pensions, as well as pay.
- (iii) Career structure and promotion prospects. More recently security of employment has become a factor to be considered.

21. Unfortunately experience shows that even this degree of investigation does not guarantee the results are accepted by all parties without controversy. With the resources we have available there is no possibility that we could get and maintain a trustworthy comparison with other jobs and their salaries.

22. A comparison was however completed in November 1980 between four other denominations and our own. Here at least a basic similarity in jobs and the provision of a house could be assumed. The results can be summarised by saying that payments to ministers in the United Reformed Church, whilst being 15—25% less than in the Anglican Church, are not less than those to ministers in the Baptist Union, the Congregational Federation and the Methodist Church. In all cases the exact relationship was obscured by differences in service increments, allowances, manse arrangements and pensions. This illustrates how difficult these comparisons really are.

23. **Linkage to external scales or indices** At first sight linkage to some other organisation's system is an attractive idea. It does not require acceptance of any particular level of pay, only the changes. It can also be a way of apparently getting the benefit of other people's expertise in the pay field.

24. However, major problems could arise because stipends would cease to be predictable sufficiently far in advance. On our present system we need to forecast to churches (through Provinces) a year ahead in order to obtain their commitment to a certain level of giving. A guaranteed linkage to an external body would either require the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund to carry a very high reserve, or equally unacceptably, raise the possibility of having to go back to churches in mid-year to ask for more money.

25. Linkage to an index like the cost of living or the national average wage (and there are several different versions of these types of index) would introduce similar problems because the trend would have to be forecast over a year ahead. Bearing in mind the marked changes in inflation rate over recent years, being committed to following them without freedom to act independently could cause great anxiety, especially if the effect on the Pension Fund is also taken into account.

26. The risk of being forced to break a linkage soon after it had been established with the consequent dissatisfaction and loss of confidence in the financial management of the Fund, is too high for this to be an acceptable procedure.

27. Taking all these points into account the Committee has concluded that:
- (i) Comparisons between denominations which have now been started should be continued and improved. Other comparisons are beyond our resources.
 - (ii) Direct linkage with outside bodies or indices would introduce new problems bigger than those they cured.
 - (iii) The URC has a responsibility, like any employer, to decide at regular intervals what ministers should be paid, taking into account needs and expectations of ministers and their families, cost of living, what is happening generally in the country on levels of pay, and equally important, what resources are judged to be available.
 - (iv) A study should be undertaken with the help of a small number of ministers in different Provinces to establish to what extent the present levels of stipends cause problems or even hardship to ministers, especially where there is no other income in the family. Confidentiality would of course be guaranteed but the overall results should be helpful in deciding what the size and make up of the total payment package would be. This work has started and will be completed in 1981.
 - (v) Openness in declaring what has been taken into account and in presenting information from time to time on past stipend comparisons with the cost of living, for example, is essential.
28. **United Reformed and Methodist Churches** Detailed discussions were held with the Methodist Church to try to establish a basis for the fair division of financial responsibility in the increasing number of joint churches. The result of the deliberations has been published in the booklet 'Local co-operation between United Reformed and Methodist Churches, 3rd Edition 1980 – Appendix C.'
29. **Pension Funds** Following the 1980 Assembly, all necessary steps were taken by the Trustees so that the appropriate assets and liabilities were transferred to the new fund (The URC Ministers' Pension Fund) which is now in being.
30. Two matters have arisen which require amendments to Rule to be passed by Assembly. The precise wording of the amendments will be issued to delegates later, after clearance by our professional advisers. The objects of the amendments will be:
- (a) Benefits on the death of a deferred pensioner prior to age 65. This provision was inadvertently omitted from the Draft Rules, and it is intended to restore the arrangement for a refund of contributions with interest from the outset of the new fund. Also, it is intended to introduce a new benefit from 1st May 1981 to provide a pension to a dependent spouse in appropriate circumstances where more than five years contributory membership of the fund had preceded the acceptance of the deferred pension.
 - (b) It is intended that the pension rate to former Congregational ministers in respect of service prior to 1971, which was increased from £6 p.a. to £12 p.a. from January 1980, should be kept reasonably up-to-date in value by making appropriate increases at the same time as any increase in basic stipend with effect from July 1981. Appropriate figures would apply to widows' pensions.
31. Increases have been made, where possible, in grants payable from the Pastors Superannuation Fund and from the Pastors Widows Fund, after advancing the permitted income limits.
32. The dissolution of the Congregational Ministers Friendly Society is proceeding, but it proved impossible to find a suitable insurance company to take over the payment of these small annuities at a reasonable cost to the fund. It is, therefore, now intended to distribute the fund to members wholly in cash, having regard to their individual shares.

CHURCH BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd M. J. Husselbee

Secretary: Mr D. Banwell

33. The property Report of this Committee approved and accepted by the General Assembly in 1980 has now been distributed to all Church Secretaries and it can be stated that the Report has been very well received in the light of the many favourable comments that have been made. More important than this however is the action which is being taken in the Provinces as a result of the recommendations which it is hoped will have a beneficial effect upon the general standard of care and maintenance of Church buildings.

34. The care and management of manses has proved to be a very difficult subject and it was not possible to include a section on this matter in the original property report. However the Committee has kept its promise to produce a report for this General Assembly, but because of the complexities of the subject our recommendations could not be as clear cut as we would have liked, nevertheless it is hoped that the report, which is attached as Appendix 7 will be of help to those who have the task of sorting out their own policy with regard to their own particular case.

35. Insurance of Church buildings continues to be a matter of concern and we are most grateful to the Thames North and Southern Provinces for allowing us to participate in the discussions that they are having on this matter. In the meantime this Committee has produced an information sheet on the matter which it is hoped will be of help. However, it seems likely when all the discussions have been completed that it will be necessary for further information to be circulated.

36. During the course of the year the Secretary has been invited to visit a number of churches to discuss their problems with them; we welcome this opportunity for a closer relationship with the churches and our Secretary will always make himself available for such consultations if possible. Similarly the Secretary has participated, by invitation, at some Provincial meetings and we also welcome this as a means of strengthening our ties with the Provinces.

37. During the course of the year the Committee has continued to make grants and loans to churches for a wide variety of building projects. In this connection members might like to know that on the 1st January 1980 the balance of outstanding loans was £121,783.24 which by the 31st December 1980 had risen to £220,023.08 meaning that, after taking into account repayments of £97,186.87 and other items, there was a net outflow of £98,239.84. Despite this the unexpended income increased to £464,423.98 from £445,232.89 over the same period.

38. The Committee is not sure that churches realise that financial help is available for a wide variety of capital works including major maintenance, repairs and modifications to all types of church buildings. The Committee feels that it could give more help than it does and wishes to encourage churches to make enquiries whenever they are considering undertaking work on their property and would like to seek financial assistance.

RETIRED MINISTERS HOUSING COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr H. Greening

Secretary: Mr F. A. W. Lodde

39. The Housing Society continued to meet the housing needs of retiring ministers, and the widows of ministers, during 1980. However, it was only with difficulty it was able to do so and for most of the year a considerable sum had to be borrowed from central funds to enable the Society to function. 19 houses were purchased and 5 houses not required by retired ministers were sold. Due to the depressed state of the property market 6 houses, not required by ministers, were unsold at the end of the year.

40. We were disappointed with the response to the Appeal for £500,000 launched at the

beginning of the year. By the end of the year £69,000 had been received, with a further £48,000 expected from instalments and tax recovered under deed of covenant. A letter has been sent to all Church Secretaries asking them to stress the urgency of the Appeal in their congregations.

41. We were grateful indeed for the gifts of houses by Miss Daisy Pearce and the Worthing Congregational Housing Society (Shelley Road URC, Worthing) and the bequest of a house by the late Miss W. E. Hall.

42. After much deliberation during the year, the Society decided that rents charged to retired ministers and widows would have to be increased from £3, to £5 per week, with effect from the 1st February 1981.

43. It was further decided that it would be fairer and more sensible to adopt a basis of fair rents, determined by local Rent Officers, so soon as this could be implemented, the Society retaining its discretion in case of hardship. It is likely that most, if not all of our retired ministers and widows would qualify for rent and rate rebates, which would meet a large part of any increase which might arise. The additional income would then be available for repairs and maintenance to our properties, many of which have tended to suffer neglect in recent years. It might also be possible to accumulate some funds for the purchase of a house in due course to assist in our problem of raising funds for the housing of our retired ministers. Accordingly a Resolution is being brought to the General Assembly seeking approval to the proposal to institute a system of fair rents.

WELFARE AND EMERGENCIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd D. A. Smith

Secretary: The Revd B. G. Thorogood

44. The Welfare and Emergencies Committee continues to enjoy the privilege of making gifts rather than seeking them. Interest from invested Trust Funds, together with finance made available by the Church, constitute the major part of money available for distribution. For this largesse we are constantly grateful.

45. During the year the Committee received the assets of the Widows' Supplementary Fund and the Ministers Friend or Associate Fund, whose activities are very similar to those undertaken by the Committee. We are grateful to those who entrust these additional responsibilities to us.

46. Last year's Report drew particular attention to the Fowler Scholarship Fund. This attracted an increased number of applications. The Committee has been able to assist a number of applicants during the year.

47. Assistance has been provided in a number of situations commended to us, and in addition, grants continue to be paid to those newly widowed.

48. An early charitable response to emergencies and hardship is one way of ensuring that the love and concern of the Church is practical and ready. Frequently it is reported that the recognition of a need, and response to it, is counted as great a joy and encouragement as the gift itself.

49. The Committee gratefully presents this Report.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Chairman: The Revd B. G. Thorogood

Secretary: Mr C. M. Frank

50. Report of the Budget Committee is included at this point for the convenience of members of Assembly. Although this is not a Committee within the Finance and Administration Department, the budget will be presented by the Honorary Treasurer.

51. The preparation of a budget is an exercise in endeavouring to unravel unknowns, and for 1982 these seem to have been more difficult. At the time of writing this report inflation rates are falling, but the Committee is by no means sure that this is a permanent feature of the country's economic life. In particular, costs in the public sector (e.g. transport, postage, etc.) continue to escalate at a higher rate than inflation generally.

52. As always, ministerial training costs continue to make a large demand on our resources. At the time this report is being written, it is not known how many students will be in our colleges for the academic year starting in September 1981, nor how many of the students will obtain local authority grants and how many will require bursarial assistance from the Church. In proposing an allocation of £55,000 for ministerial training, the Committee is conscious that this is in many ways "a shot in the dark" because the budget of the Ministerial Training Fund includes, in addition to the unknown costs of training the full-time ministry, provision for the training of the new auxiliary ministry.

53. In contemplation of our expected union with the Churches of Christ later in 1981 we have provided for ecumenical and other grants formerly paid by the Churches of Christ.

54. In formulating the budget, which will be circulated to members of Assembly with the Accounts, the Committee have assumed the same level of activity within the central departments of the Church as in 1980. Due largely to the changing pattern of operation of the Council for World Mission, the contribution towards the Council shows a smaller increase than the general rate of inflation, but the Committee feel that it is necessary to provide for training costs for Church Related Community Workers and increased depreciation for much needed replacement of office equipment. As a result of these estimates, the budget seeks an increase in the Unified Appeal of 13% over 1981.

55. The Committee has given consideration to the problems that arise when spending departments with the Church find themselves overspending, and have accepted the following statement:-

- (i) Because of the approval and consultation process, the Budget has to be prepared a long time in advance. Therefore, many contingencies will arise in the life of the Church and in the national economy which make strict adherence to the details of the budget very difficult.
- (ii) It has been agreed that within a departmental budget there can be a measure of overspending on one item if there is underspending on others.
- (iii) Problems do arise if there is unforeseen expenditure which takes the department over its budget. It is suggested that these be handled as follows;—

Staff costs. Since salaries are fixed by the Salaries Sub Committee for Church House, they are not under the control of each department and will, if exceeding the budget, be written off from the general reserves of the Church.

Programme and Activity Costs. The Chief Accountant will advise the Budget Holder if overspending appears likely. The Budget Holder will then provide the data to the Treasurer, asking that he authorise the overspending. The Treasurer, if he is satisfied, may authorise the expenditure. When the question is unresolved, or the request is rejected, the Budget Holder may ask the Budget Committee for a decision, with a report to the Executive.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Assembly receives and adopts the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1980.
2. Assembly notes the result of the Unified Appeal for 1980 and thanks all those who contributed, especially the seven Provinces which met or exceeded their targets both in 1979 and 1980.
3. Assembly gives approval to the Maintenance of the Ministry Budget for 1982 noting that it allows for an increase of 10% in ministers' stipend payable from 1st July 1982.

4. Assembly resolves that from 1st July 1981 there shall be only one level of ministerial basic stipend.
5. Assembly resolves that from 1st July 1981 the whole time ministerial basic stipend shall be £4,000 per annum.
6. Assembly resolves that from 1st January 1982 no new children's allowances shall be paid, but existing children's allowances shall be frozen at their present monetary values and continued for each child until his/her 19th birthday whilst continuing at school.
7. Assembly resolves that from 1st July 1981:
 - a) stipends in all cases of part-time ministry shall be a direct proportion of the whole-time basic stipend;
 - b) the present maximum oversight rate shall be abolished;
 - c) and the maximum part-time stipend shall be 75% of whole-time.
8. Assembly resolves that Pulpit Supply Fees as described in paragraph 7 of Appendix B of the 'Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration' be amended as follows:

Pulpit Supply Fees (maximum refund per service)	
per service:-	
where the Church contribution is up to £1,500	£4.00*
where the contribution is in the range £1,500 – £3,000	£8.00*
where the contribution exceeds £3,000	£12.00*
* plus reasonable travelling expenses.	
9. A Resolution altering the Rules of the Pension Fund will be made available at the Assembly.
10. Assembly refers the Report on Manses to Provinces, Districts and Churches for discussion and requests also that each Synod be asked to inform the Secretary of the Church Buildings Committee of their response to the suggestions contained in the Report by the 30th November 1982 in order that a further report on the subject can be submitted to the Assembly in 1983.
11. Assembly approves the URC Retired Ministers' Housing Society adopting a basis of fair rents for the houses under its control.
12. Assembly receives the report of the Budget Committee and endorses the statement with regard to overspending.
13. Assembly approves the Budget for 1982 presented with the Accounts.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 1

Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1979, expressed as £s per annum per member.

Receipts

	1977 £ p	1978 £ p	1979 £ p	Increase %	
				1979 over 1978	1978 over 1977
Offerings & Covenants	25.18	29.82	34.45	16	18
Donations & Legacies	5.91	7.41	8.57	16	25
Special Efforts	6.91	8.35	9.73	17	21
Total giving	38.00	45.58	52.75	16	20
Letting Premises (net)	3.11	3.62	4.28		
Investments & Deposit Accounts	3.38	3.79	5.27		
Trusts	1.61	2.06	2.15		
Loans and Grants	1.38	1.34	2.49		
Sales of Property etc.	1.12	0.40	0.51		
Sundries	5.76	5.35	6.14		
	54.36	62.14	73.59	18	14

Payments

Assessments and Pulpit Supply	17.47	19.41	23.97	23	11
Manse upkeep and heat	4.83	5.31	5.13	-3	10
Car upkeep etc.	2.04	2.75	3.35	22	35
Total for Ministry	24.34	27.47	32.45	18	13
Capital Projects	*	1.52	2.43		
Conduct of Worship	1.46	1.51	1.22		
Church & Halls, upkeep, heat etc.	17.86	18.36	20.88		
Sundries	2.86	3.26	5.41		
Unified Appeal & Benevolent Gifts	5.87	6.72	7.76		
Transfer to reserve	1.97	3.30	3.44		
	54.36	62.14	73.59	18	14

The above figures are taken from forms MM1 (the Annual Finance Information Sheet). The 1977 figures cover 145,000 members, those for 1978, 135,500 members and those for 1979, 127,400 members. The amounts per member enable comparisons to be made.

*Not recorded as a separate item – included in Church and Halls upkeep.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 2

Receipts and Payments of Local Churches in 1979, expressed as £s per annum per member

RECEIPTS	NATIONAL												
	TOTAL	PROVINCE NUMBER											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Offerings & Covenants	34.45	28.66	31.90	33.30	34.84	33.60	34.29	36.30	36.68	36.06	38.80	37.96	28.18
Donations & Legacies	8.57	6.69	7.00	7.09	7.75	7.59	8.15	9.98	9.61	8.94	10.99	11.08	5.56
Special Efforts	9.73	7.79	12.09	9.43	13.88	10.51	9.32	11.34	11.48	9.06	10.09	7.07	6.68
Total giving	52.75	43.14	50.99	49.82	56.47	51.70	51.76	57.62	57.77	54.06	59.88	56.11	40.42
Letting Premises (net)	4.28	1.62	2.59	2.63	3.58	4.70	3.42	5.68	3.66	4.20	9.70	5.69	1.83
Investments & deposit a/cs	5.27	2.80	4.74	3.52	6.80	5.05	5.00	6.55	6.52	5.06	7.09	6.13	3.72
Trusts	2.15	0.70	1.44	0.97	2.19	2.99	1.33	3.60	2.54	1.24	5.41	1.43	2.53
Loans and Grants	2.49	4.63	1.46	1.92	3.89	1.75	4.84	1.03	2.70	1.09	4.49	1.07	0.74
Sales of Property etc.	0.51	3.05	0.01	0.02	0.77	1.06	0.01	0.41	0.30	0.02	0.08	0.15	0.29
Sundries	6.14	2.23	4.52	4.10	6.88	6.64	6.33	5.51	5.40	5.65	13.49	7.34	3.51
	73.59	58.17	65.75	62.98	80.58	73.89	72.69	80.40	78.89	71.32	100.14	77.92	53.04
PAYMENTS													
Assessment & Pulpit Supply	23.97	20.84	23.27	22.96	26.38	24.06	23.57	24.48	25.35	23.48	28.43	23.80	20.72
Manse upkeep & heat	5.13	4.41	3.32	4.31	4.93	5.04	5.07	5.29	4.98	5.55	8.66	5.52	3.19
Car upkeep etc.	3.35	2.45	2.46	2.69	4.39	3.59	3.32	4.19	3.10	3.98	3.75	3.99	2.06
Ministry Total	32.45	27.70	29.05	29.96	35.70	32.69	31.96	33.96	33.43	33.01	40.84	33.31	25.97
Capital Projects	2.43	3.90	4.50	1.15	6.25	1.30	2.87	1.58	3.58	1.98	0.89	0.98	0.71
Conduct of Worship etc.	1.22	0.75	1.05	0.99	0.91	1.07	1.12	1.25	1.63	1.44	1.73	1.49	0.94
Church & Halls upkeep & heat	20.88	12.83	19.78	19.87	27.05	19.39	20.22	23.05	22.33	19.01	30.38	20.71	15.56
Sundries	5.41	5.97	5.54	4.00	5.60	5.71	5.35	5.62	5.46	5.38	7.60	4.44	3.58
Unified Appeal & Benevolent grants	7.76	4.84	5.57	6.85	7.47	7.48	7.39	9.56	8.69	7.85	11.48	9.62	4.67
Transfers to Reserves	3.44	2.18	0.26	0.16	(2.40)	6.25	3.78	5.38	3.77	2.65	7.22	7.37	1.61
1979 Total	73.59	58.17	65.75	62.98	80.58	73.89	72.69	80.40	78.89	71.32	100.14	77.92	53.04
1978 Total	62.14	42.56	57.18	51.84	66.00	61.63	66.51	73.10	66.86	64.37	80.11	65.69	44.61
Increase % 1979 over 1978	18	37	15	21	22	20	9	10	18	11	25	19	19
Increase % 1978 over 1977	14	10	7	17	12	17	21	16	23	14	14	8	13

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 3

Unified Appeal 1980

Province	1979		1980	
	£	% of target	£	% of target
1	42,917	80	56,188	92
2	60,199	96	68,433	94
3	51,096	100	54,399	101
4	55,362	100	64,206	105
5	36,072	90	44,156	98
6	53,786	98	58,593	96
7	53,623	103	57,058	100
8	45,038	101	48,955	102
9	60,664	100	68,062	102
10	90,044	103	96,705	105
11	114,014	108	115,991	103
12	24,006	75	27,108	71
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	£686,821	98	£759,854	99
Other receipts	1,594		1,844	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	£688,415	98	£761,698	99

The percentages relate to the targets agreed in June 1978 (for 1979) and in June 1979 (for 1980). Some Provinces said that, despite all their efforts, they were unlikely to achieve their targets. Other Provinces accepted additional commitments to secure the totals.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 4

Expenditure on Central Activities

Up to 1976, the expenditure on Central Activities shown in the annual accounts included an element for supplementing the stipends and pensions of former Congregational Ministers. From 1977, a contribution from the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund has been deducted from the expenditure. If both the provision and the contribution are taken out, the figures for expenditure are broadly comparable year by year. They are set out below and in the right hand column, we have shown them in terms of 1973 £s, i.e. adjusted for inflation by reference to the Retail Price Index.

	Expenditure	At 1973 prices
1973	£482,000	£482,000
1974	508,000	452,000
1975	537,000	398,000
1976	583,000	351,000
1977	732,000	378,000
1978	773,000	363,000
1979	821,000	354,000
1980 (provisional)	982,000	357,000

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 5

Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally from July 1980

1. **Provincial Moderators** The stipend of Provincial Moderators is £4,524 per annum (plus any children's allowances). They are provided either with a house free of maintenance costs, rates, heating and lighting, or with a house allowance in lieu. Travelling expenses, telephone costs etc., in connection with church business are refunded. A car is provided, maintenance and running costs being met by the Church subject to an adjustment for private use. The Moderator may provide his own car and claim mileage allowances.

2. **Ministers at Tavistock Place** Stipends range from £4,368 per annum for Assistant Secretaries (plus any children's allowances), to £6,600 per annum (plus any children's allowances) for the General Secretary. The other arrangements are as for Provincial Moderators but fares between home and Tavistock Place are met by the Ministers.

3. **Academic Staff at Westminster College** Stipends range from £4,524 to £5,124 per annum (plus any children's allowances). The housing provisions are the same as those for Provincial Moderators.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 6

If the Resolutions proposed by the Finance Committee with regard to changes in the remuneration of ministers are adopted by the Assembly. Appendix "B" to the Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration will be as follows:—

Approved Rates applicable to the Plan

		as at July 1 1981
para. 4.1.1.	Basic Stipend, whole time Maximum Stipend, part time	£4,000 75% of whole time
para. 6.1.	Ordination Grant and Loan Ordination Grant Ordination Loan Loan repayment period	£150 £500 5 years
para. 6.2.1.	Removal assistance to church – allowance available to churches on the mainland allowance available for the Isle of Man and Channel Islands	£ 50 (to be negotiated)
para. 6.2.2.	Disturbance allowance	£150
para. 6.3.	Retirement Removal Maximum allowed for removal cost	£200
para. 7.	Pulpit Supply Fees (maximum refund per service) per service:- where the Church contribution is up to £1,500 p.a. where the contribution is in the range £1,500–£3,000 p.a. where the contribution exceeds £3,000 p.a. * plus reasonable travelling expenses.	£4.00* £8.00* £12.00*
para. 11.4 & 11.5.	Administrative Charge per month	£3.00

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – APPENDIX 7

Church Buildings Committee – Manses

General

1. Paragraph 58 of the Church Buildings Committee Property Report presented to the General Assembly in 1980 said:-

“The retention, sale and general management of manses present a difficult problem. The CBC intends to give further consideration to this matter at a future meeting and hopes to be able to present a report at the next General Assembly.”

2. After consultation and discussion with the Provinces and others concerned with the management of URC buildings it emerges that there are two deeply held points of view about the management of manses. This report sets out the two arguments and then attempts to draw certain conclusions from them.

3. One view is that manses must be retained for the use of ministers and that if not required for occupation by a minister at any particular time should be retained by the church and used temporarily for some other church purpose or for letting for human habitation until such time as it is required once more for occupation by a minister.

4. The other view is that manses not required for immediate occupation by a minister should be sold and the money invested or used for some other church purpose. If at some future date a manse is required a new one should be purchased.

5. It has also been the case that in conversations that the Secretary of the Church Buildings Committee has had with URC ministers that there seems to be an equally deep division of opinion upon the desirability of ministers providing their own accommodation or having manses provided for them.

The Argument for retaining manses

6. It is not possible in the great majority of cases to say that beyond any possible doubt a manse will never again be required for occupation by a minister. A vacant manse may be required eventually even though a succession of ministers may have elected to provide their own accommodation, Churches must accept that they have an obligation to provide in some way or another for their minister if requested to do so.

7. In the present inflationary situation the selling price of a manse is likely to be far less than the price which will have to be paid for a replacement some years later, in which case the Church will have been put to unnecessary expense and may well be in financial difficulties as a result. It is better that the manse be retained and used either for church purposes or let to a tenant and thus earn income.

8. The value of land (including houses) has on the whole risen faster than other investments.

9. The Rent Act 1977 prevents the tenant of a manse becoming a protected tenant provided that the correct steps are taken at the time of the creation of the tenancy.

10. Some churches have had the experience of selling manses and then being in great difficulties when a new one is wanted.

11. Those who would like to see more detailed argument in favour of retaining manses would find it useful to refer to the practice notes issued on this subject, one by the Yorkshire Province and the other by the South West Province. However the Church Buildings Committee wishes to make it quite clear that in drawing attention to these two documents it does not endorse or recommend or wish to comment upon any of the policies referred to therein.

The Argument for selling manses

12. A manse grows older and more expensive to maintain in the same way as any other

property. It is also the case that the domestic and professional requirements of succeeding ministers change and thus have to be matched with changes in their living accommodation. It is a false assumption that a manse can be retained indefinitely without change.

13. Letting residential accommodation is a business for experts and it is not without significance that the private property sector will have little or nothing to do with this aspect of the property market. The obligations of a landlord to the tenant are considerable whereas the return on the investment by way of income is low. A church could easily find itself with a negative balance.

14. Although the Rent Act 1977 can be used to prevent a protected tenancy from arising this does not overcome the practical point that at some time the tenant has to be given notice to quit if the property is to revert to use as a manse. Tenants are not always willing to go and the Church may have to institute proceedings in Court for eviction. Unfortunately this has actually happened in some cases. When the tenant is the parent of a young family, or is a very elderly person, moral issues will arise. In any event the eviction of a tenant will not show the church in a very favourable light. Furthermore the longer a tenant has been in occupation the more likely it will be that serious friction will arise, particularly in the case of eviction.

15. There are members of the Church with professional experience in these matters who maintain that if all the factors are taken into account money invested will accumulate at a rate to match the growth in value of a retained manse.

16. It would seem to be better if it was possible for a minister to be provided with the sort of accommodation best suited to the requirements of his profession and family rather than have to make do with the sort of accommodation which happens by an accident of history to be available.

17. It seems unreasonable to place obstacles in the way of those ministers who wish to provide their own accommodation and it would not appear to be good stewardship if a church retains a manse for an indefinite period just in case the need for one may arise some time in the future. The money represented by the property can usually be put to better use elsewhere.

General Observations

18. Over the URC as a whole the need for manses in terms of number is decreasing. A number of Provinces have stated that there are more buildings than they are likely to need. Manses which are not occupied by a minister and have been let to an ordinary tenant cannot be sold with vacant possession since the tenant is protected until the house is wanted as a manse. The danger therefore is that the church is wasting its assets.

19. A church MUST NEVER LET A PERSON INTO POSSESSION OF A MANSE UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN ADVISED BY THEIR SOLICITOR THAT ALL THE STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO PRESERVE ITS STATUS AS A MANSE.

20. From the information given by Provinces it seems safe to say that if all the houses owned by the URC, not currently wanted for occupation by a minister or other church employee, were sold with vacant possession a very large sum of money indeed would be available for Church use.

Church Buildings Committee's Observations

21. Both sides are wrong if they say either that manses must be retained in all cases or that they must be sold in all cases. Clearly there will be some cases where retention is the correct policy but it is likely that there will be many cases where it will be better to sell. In any event no decision on the question of retaining or selling should be taken without proper professional advice.

22. This view is based on the premise that it is best that a church, whilst not acting in an irresponsible manner, should make the best use it can of the assets it has to meet its basic requirements and mission. To keep a valuable building against the contingency that it may be required at some time may not be the best use of resources.

23. The problems which our denomination is facing with regard to the acquisition and

maintenance of manses are in our opinion very difficult. For this reason we feel that the church as a whole ought to give serious thought about the way in which manses are acquired and maintained by the church. Are our present practices appropriate in the present circumstances and should we be considering some alternative? At present each church or small group of churches is required to stand alone with regard to the provision of accommodation for their minister. We would like to put forward for discussion the idea that it might be better if the organisation of housing accommodation for ministers and church officers was undertaken at Provincial level. Would it not be possible in that event for all houses in the Province to be managed together and the best use made of the combined assets? From what we have been told it would be possible for each Province to build up a large fund from the sale of houses not immediately required for church purposes. Such a fund would be available for any purposes determined in accordance with Part II of Schedule 2 of the United Reformed Church Act 1972, and would also be able to meet from time to time the need to provide money for the purchase of a new manse.

24. Such a fund, if administered with expert advice, could provide each Province with a valuable source of income which would be exploiting fully the assets which the church possess.

25. Apart from the question of creating a Provincial fund from the proceeds of sale of manses we would like to stimulate discussion about a closely related problem, namely the upkeep and management of those manses and houses which are currently occupied. There are some churches which find themselves facing heavy expenses in the upkeep of their manses and it might therefore be of advantage if all houses, whether occupied or not, were managed as a group at Provincial level. In this way it seems likely that there could be much greater flexibility in the use and management of the houses in the ever changing circumstances within a Province. In other organisations the management of a larger number of houses in a pool has proved itself to be a considerable advantage. It might also be worth considering if in some cases it would be advantageous to form a Provincial housing association.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 8

The United Reformed Church Housing Association Ltd

<i>Chairman:</i>	Mr D C F Haggis
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	The Revd M J Davies
<i>General Manager:</i>	Mr D Jones
<i>Secretary:</i>	Mr D J Rawson

1. In 1979 this Assembly welcomed the change of name of the erstwhile Presbyterian Housing Limited to the United Reformed Church Housing Association Limited with the object of opening the way to a mission in housing under a URC banner even though the legal independence of the Housing Association had to be preserved.

2. The Association had then 78 housing units within the Greater London area and it was intended that initially attention should be concentrated in London and the Home Counties thereby being of interest to four of our Provinces (Thames North, Southern, Wessex and Eastern).

3. Action was taken to engage professional Management Staff, now situated at the City Temple, who started immediately on a review of church sites possibly suitable for housing developments. The cost of expansion of staff was made possible by a generous 5-year grant from the income derived from the sale of a particular church site it being assumed that after such a period improved revenue by rentals would enable the Association to operate with a full Management and Administration covered by its own resources.

4. But 1979 and 1980 brought unfortunate and unusual circumstances. Expenses have risen more rapidly than the rent increases permitted before the passing of the Housing Act, 1980 and loans from the Housing Corporation have not continued to be available for new projects. As a result there has not yet been any addition to the housing stock to help spread the overheads. And yet there has been plenty of work to do because around 30 churches have sought help and advice in reviewing the utilisation of their sites — work which otherwise would involve fees. The result has been that the new structure has brought with it new costs which

exceed the special grant mentioned above and yet the work undertaken does not fully qualify towards and entitlement to Revenue Deficit Grant. To counteract this situation it is necessary to use up some reserves, something which needs to be controlled to remain viable.

5. As the Committee of Management see it some financial help will be needed despite the declared intention of 2 years ago calling only for supportive encouragement. It is intended that where funds are available churches will be asked for a contribution towards the cost of work completed on their behalf when they ask for planning advice or for help in disposing of property. Spontaneous offers have already been received from individuals for donations of income from set amounts (virtually interest free loans) and it may be necessary to give some publicity to the need to collect charitable donations if housing projects are to be furthered. Incidentally requests for help have also been received from outside the four Provinces intended as the original action base, which points to the possibility that as soon as assistance is forthcoming from State funds the URC will wish this activity to extend to a national facility.

THREE SCHOOLS AND THE U.R.C.

Caterham, Silcoates and Wentworth Milton Mount

1. It is some years since a report was made to Assembly on the progress of these three Schools, and it is thought that members of the Church as a whole might like to know of the service the Schools give in educating the children of Ministers and of many lay parents who are members of the URC.
2. The Schools wish to maintain and strengthen their traditional links with the United Reformed Church and to be seen as important elements in the wider life of the family of the Church. While nourishing a URC ethos, the Schools maintain an ecumenical spirit which values other Christian traditions and welcomes staff and pupils of other churches and pupils of other faiths.
3. Caterham School, Surrey, and Silcoates School, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, are boarding and day schools for boys but admit girls as day pupils into the Sixth Form. Wentworth Milton Mount, College Road, Bournemouth, is a boarding and day school for girls. They were all founded by Congregationalists, for Ministers children and the URC appoints some members of their Governing Bodies.
4. The numbers of Ministers' children in these Schools in September, 1980 were as follows:—
Caterham 19, Silcoates 20, Wentworth Milton Mount 24.
5. Subject to the availability of funds, Ministers' children are admitted at greatly reduced fees, calculated according to parental income. This is possible partly because of trust funds available for this purpose (including the URC Ministers' Schools Fund, derived from the Forward Movement Fund raised by the Congregational Union in the 1920s) and substantial support by the Milton Mount Foundation.
6. In recent years, each of the three Schools has grown in numbers of pupils and in building development. Academic standards are high and there is a full range of sporting and cultural activities. Primary importance is attached to religious education and worship.

CATERHAM

7. Caterham is beautifully situated in the Harestone Valley in the North Downs, and is only 20 miles from the centre of London. The Preparatory School takes 230 boys, aged 8—13, of whom 60 board in a family atmosphere. The Main School has 420 boys, aged 13—18, divided into four Day, and three Boarding Houses of 50 boys in each. The Sixth Form is 160 strong. The School has been accepted for the Government's Assisted Places Scheme and also offers Open Scholarships on Entrance Examinations. Following a successful Appeal, the first phase of a building development and improvement scheme has been completed.
8. The Headmaster, Mr Stephen Rider Smith, MA, and several members of the Board of Management, belong to the United Reformed Church, as do a substantial number of parents. The School Chaplain, the Revd Roy Robinson, MA, is on the Roll of URC Ministers. Close links are maintained with Caterham URC, whose minister, the Revd Terence Perry, is a member of the Board of Management. At Speech Day, 1980, the guest of honour was the Revd Robert O. Latham and his wife distributed the prizes.
9. At the Founder's Day Service in October, 1980, the address was given by the Revd Dr. John S. Whale (O.C.). That week-end, portraits of the Revd John Townsend, who founded the School in 1811, and of the Revd Josiah Viney, who presided over the move to Caterham in 1884, were unveiled by their descendants. Also in October, the School was pleased to host the Southern Province Synod Meetings.
10. There are 25 School Societies, of which the Computer Club is the latest following the opening of the new Computer Centre. Music and Drama play an important part in School life. The Boarders' Choir visits URC and other Churches and last Easter sang in Sweden.

SILCOATES

11. Silcoates has 480 pupils, of whom 135 are boarders, and provides a continuous education from the age of 7 to 18. Because of this spread of ages, it remains a small two-stream school in which it is possible for a sense of community to be easily and naturally fostered. The Headmaster is Mr John Baggaley, MA.

12. The number of pupils has risen during the past three years by some 75, due largely to vacancies being filled at an earlier age. This expansion in numbers has coincided with an extensive building programme based initially on a successful Development Appeal. By the Autumn Term, 1981, the School will benefit from the construction of a new Laboratory Block for both Sixth Form and Junior Science, a multi-purpose Sports Hall, a Music School, a completely refurbished Changing Room block, new study bedrooms, and a number of Common Rooms. The School grounds which extend to 38 acres now contain a newly constructed nine-hole golf course.

13. This School is now equipped to provide all the activities required in a school which affords both boarding and day education. At the same time the Governors have recognised the need to emphasise the primary importance of high academic standards by providing Entrance Scholarships for boys at the age of 11. They hope this will enable a wider cross-section of boys to take advantage of the opportunities that the School provides.

WENTWORTH MILTON MOUNT

14. The School is situated above Boscombe Cliffs, Bournemouth. There are some 345 girls in the School, of whom 190 are boarders, and ages range from 11 to 19.

15. The Board of Governors include the Revd Peter Chesney, (the Wessex Moderator), the Revd Douglas Smith (Moderator Emeritus) and the Revd Kenneth Colledge.

16. The Headmistress, Miss Nora Hibbert, BA, is an Elder of Richmond Hill Church, where all Non-conformist boarders attend on Sunday. She has regular personal contact with every pupil. There are nine housemistresses, and a resident qualified nurse in the sick quarters. Health is carefully guarded. At least 17 'O' level subjects and 13 'A' level subjects are offered and a very high pass rate is achieved. Candidates are also prepared for the examinations of the Royal Schools of Music and the L.A.M.D.A. (Speech and Drama) with considerable success. There is an orchestra of 65 members.

17. The School aims to provide an environment which will ensure a full and satisfying experience of communal life. While encouraging tolerance and understanding, the Staff endeavour to induce confidence in each individual, so that her full potential may be realised. Training for adult life is based on the Christian faith and girls are prepared for University, Training Colleges and the professions. Advice on careers is given.

18. In the last five years, largely due to the magnificent support of the Milton Mount Foundation, extensions and improvements costing over £500,000 have been completed. They include the Trevor Davies Building, the Milton Mount Sports Hall and the Nora Hibbert Music School and the Attenborough Science Laboratories.

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.

Reports

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 'The 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 paragraphs (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 60 minutes, and speeches made in support of the report and motions of any other non-departmental committee, having direct access to the Assembly, shall not in aggregate exceed thirty minutes, save by the prior agreement 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 negating 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.

N.B Standing Order No. 4 has been amended since 1980.

