



United
Reformed
Church

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1985

April 29 ~ May 3
CROWSTONE
ST GEORGE'S URC

ASSEMBLY REPORTS

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MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

Convener: Revd A G Burnham
Secretary: Revd Michael G Dunford

1. This new Department began work in September 1984, being responsible for a wide range of concerns relating to ministry. The work carried out by the Committees reporting below has continued throughout this period of change. Proposals for a new committee structure, in accordance with the wishes of the Assembly, were agreed by the Executive in February. It is our hope to give effect to these changes and to complete the reorganisation not later than the end of this year. The Departmental Committee is grateful to Michael Dunford, Charles Meachin and their secretarial staff for their patience and continued hard work during this period.
2. With the end of the Deployment Committee, the Department believes that now is the time to review the policy concerning the use of ministerial resources. A Consultation has therefore been arranged for 4 June 1985 when representatives of the Provincial Synods and of the Departmental Committee will meet. It should be noted that if the number of ministers who could retire in the next few years do so, then the number of full-time stipendiary ministers available to the Church will continue to decline.
3. Nevertheless, we believe that this new Department has been created at a time when there are great opportunities for the Church and new developments possible in our thinking about ministry. We look forward to working with lay preachers, Church Related Community Workers and all our ministers in the service of the Church.

APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Michael B Stolton
Secretary: Revd Michael G Dunford

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

ADMISSIONS TO THE ROLL OF MINISTERS

5. **By Ordination:-**

The Revd Hazel H M Addy, William F Austin, Robert A Barthram, Frederick J Bates, Robert J Bushby, Beryl A Chatfield, Stanley W Crane, Paul Bruce Dean, Joan Duncan, William Ellerby, Edmund Fallows, Ruth W Farnworth, Christopher J Ford, John Forrest, Richard A W Goddard, Robert Good, Bernard Grimsey, John A Hardaker, Janet Dukes Hargis, Martin T Hazell, G Trevor Holborn, Derek M Hopkins, Alex Jacob, A Alan Johnston, Robert Vaughan Jones, Pamela Lewis, Robert Maitland, Hazel E Martell, Catherine Middleton, Glyn Millington, Jennifer Millington, J E Wilson Morris, David E Murphy, Roger Newell, David Pennells, David C Phillips, Mary Eleanor Piggott, Timothy P Poh, Martyn Poole, J J Roche, Timothy J Roffe, Basil Rogers, John Rooke, Marjorie Rowlands, Timothy W Royds, Robert G Shallcross, Jacqueline Skibniewski-Woods, Alan E Taylor, Nigel P Uden, Henry Walter J Smith, Anthony Kevin Waters, Barbara M Williams, David J Williams, E Glyn Williams, Margery Woodland, Philip J Woods, Stuart A Yeates.

6. **By Induction to the Auxiliary Ministry:-**

The Revd Peter Arthur.

7. **By transfer from other Churches:-**

Revd Ronald Brierley	<i>Methodist Church</i>
Revd John McBride Dean	<i>Church of Scotland</i>
Revd R K Hall	<i>Baptist Union</i>
Revd Kenneth Harris	<i>Baptist Union</i>
Revd Howard John	<i>Baptist Union</i>
Revd Cynthia Livingstone	<i>Methodist Church</i>
Revd Kenneth Lynch	<i>Presbyterian Church in Ireland</i>
Revd John Martin	<i>Uniting Church in Australia</i>
Revd Ward Murray	<i>United Presbyterian Church, United States</i>
Revd Robert F Pitt	<i>Baptist Union in Australia</i>
Revd Lance Stone	<i>Church of Scotland</i>

Revd F B Stow
Revd Janet Weller
Revd Roy Wheatcroft

Uniting Church in Australia
Baptist Union
Baptist Union

8. By reinstatement to The Roll in Category D

Revd Ian McPherson

DELETIONS FROM THE ROLL OF MINISTERS

9. By transfer to other Churches:-

Revd Brian Bailey	<i>Congregational Union of Scotland</i>
Revd James S Black	<i>Church of Scotland</i>
Revd Dr Brian Johanson	<i>Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa</i>
Revd T Graeme Longmuir	<i>Church of Scotland</i>
Revd Alfred V J Nash	<i>Congregational Federation</i>
Revd Donald Richter	<i>United Church of Christ, USA</i>
Revd John Rooke	<i>Uniting Church in Australia</i>

10. By resignation:-

Revd Nigel J W Appleton
Revd Gillian Jones

11. On District Council advice:-

Revd Eric O A Brampton
Revd Dennis R Pidcock

CERTIFICATES OF ELIGIBILITY

12. Certificates were issued to 12 ministers, some of whom are already inducted to a pastorate or in process of seeking a call. We stress that the certificate does not indicate suitability for ministry in the URC, which properly belongs elsewhere in Province, District Council and ultimately the local church, but that the person applying has the necessary qualifications. Attention is drawn to this in a re-wording of the certificate itself.

URC PERSONNEL SERVING OVERSEAS

13. A new list has been prepared for the Year Book, thus ensuring that they are known to be in the service of the wider Church and yet part of our ministry.

RESIGNATION FROM THE MINISTRY

14. We have referred to the Doctrine and Worship Committee the question of resignation from the ministry, whether of the Eldership or of Word and Sacraments. It falls properly within discussion taking place on the nature of ordination itself.

MEDICAL REPORTS

15. It has been drawn to our attention that the procedures for obtaining medical information are more stringent for those candidating for our ministry than for those seeking to transfer in to our Roll. Whilst we can properly assume that the sending church has taken this up at an earlier stage, and we also have the benefit of full reports on actual service in the ministry of that church, we consider more ought to be done in this respect. We shall therefore follow the standard procedure and thus be alerted to any problems by our own Medical Advisers.

INDUCTION COURSES

16. We see a need to help those who have ministered in other churches in this country or overseas by introducing them to the Nature, Faith and Order of the URC. We have therefore given guidance to Provinces, on whom that responsibility rests and drawn attention to the course at Selly Oak "An Introduction to the UK".

NEW DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURES

17. Following the decision of the Assembly last year, that part of our work which has been concerned with churches entering or leaving the URC is now the responsibility of the URC Executive Committee. In relinquishing this concern, we offered suggestions relating to churches

applying for membership of the URC, and, in particular, those informal fellowships that have not yet been established as local churches. We have expressed concern that as much care should be taken with new applications as is given to those who apply to secede from the URC. We are now within the structure of the Ministries Department and sharing in plans for our work to be integrated into a wider pattern.

Thanks are expressed for the considerable amount of work undertaken on our behalf over the years by our outgoing secretary, the Revd Bernard Thorogood.

CHAPLAINS & STUDENTS COMMITTEE

Convener: Mrs Sally Abbott

Secretary: Revd Peter Peirce

Personalia

18. Sadly we report the death of one of our full-time Chaplains, the Revd John Fail, during the past year. John was a Methodist serving as Free Church Chaplain at Bristol University, where he had been since September 1983. Dr David Cornick has taken up the post of Chaplain at James Robinson College, Cambridge.

New Departmental Structure

19. The formation of the Ministries Department has given the Committee the opportunity to review its role within the life of the Church, particularly with reference to the work of other 'chaplains'. Some chaplains work with settled constituencies (e.g. industrial and forces chaplains) while others are concerned with those that are more transient (e.g. hospitals and education). Some chaplains tend to work in semi-isolation and some in teams. Some enjoy close links with supportive churches; others are in more exposed situations. The ministry exercised by forces chaplains, industrial chaplains, and those working in Higher Education are particularly concerned to represent Christ's love and mission among people as they work.

20. The work of forces chaplains is relatively well established and supported. The 'job description' of industrial and education chaplaincy is less well defined, and each minister has to use his or her own initiative to pioneer new forms of ministry. It is in this area that the committee endeavours to give support and encouragement, within the limitations of resources. It is of great value that the Committee comprises full and part-time chaplains, staff and students.

Conferences

21. The Committee sees the organisation of regular conferences for chaplains in higher education as a vital element of this support. In September a number of 'our' chaplains (i.e. both URC and those of other denominations engaged on our behalf) took part in the biennial Ecumenical Chaplains Conference at Swanwick, 'By hook or by crook' — engaging in discussion and study of some of the pastoral and mission concerns of chaplaincy in education. It was a lively conference arousing some controversy, which enhanced the value of the meeting. Next September we will be meeting for our URC Chaplains Consultation, with especial reference to the concerns of part-time chaplains.

22. The Committee is also concerned to facilitate student conferences as an annual event. Last year this was organised by students and chaplains at Nottingham, on the theme 'Witness at Work', with Richard Taylor providing the main input, with valuable support from the seminar leaders. This year London will be the venue, and the theme 'Learning through Encounter — enriching our faith through others' promises to provide a stimulating arena. Incidentally we are writing to all students referred through the 'link-up' this year with details of the conference.

23. In addition there will this summer take place a major ecumenical conference organised in Edinburgh to celebrate the 75 years since the great Edinburgh Missionary Conference, calling for a new vision of ecumenical action for mission in the world.

24. Clearly it is of great value to the Church to bring together young people in this way, not only for the fellowship of the occasion, but also to identify with the work of the Church in other fields.

Ecumenical Concerns

25. It is part of the Committee's vision to share in the development of ecumenical chaplaincy

posts, where possible, on a full-time basis. There are many places where it is impossible to have a team of chaplains called to serve by the various denominations. It seems to us more important to have the presence of one full-time ecumenical chaplain than perhaps three half-time denominational ones. There are problems in funding some of these ecumenical schemes, and we do clearly depend upon resources being made available both provincially and centrally.

Current issues

26. Deep anxiety continues to be felt by many members of staff in our institutions of Higher and Further Education, because of the economic strictures being placed upon them and their work. Enoch Powell wrote recently in the Guardian of his concern that education no longer appears to be important for its own sake. Further Education remains the Cinderella of the education world, even though it involves more students than Higher Education. We continue to be concerned at the shortage of effective chaplaincy in this area.

Student Link-up

27. We are grateful for the increased response from local churches to the link-up with increased numbers of referrals centrally and direct to chaplains. It would help in future if churches commending students direct to chaplains could also send the information through the scheme centrally.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COMMITTEE

Convener: Mrs Joan Boulind
Secretary: Revd Michael G Dunford

INTRODUCTION

28. With the considerable help of representatives from the theological colleges, and those concerned with training our auxiliary ministers, the Committee has continued to give oversight to a complex and comprehensive programme. We care for our students, support the trainers and have an ear to the needs of the church as we prepare today for tomorrow's ministry. As a team, we have been represented at a number of conferences to do with ministry, and have continued to share in theological work going on around the world. We have had particularly useful exchanges of information in the past year with New Zealand, Australia, Latin America, East Germany and India, the latter through an extended visit to a number of theological colleges by the Departmental Secretary. We are playing a full part in the early days of the Association of Centres of Adult Theological Education in this country.

RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT

29. We need more ministers if the Church is to expand its work. The Recruitment Programme has continued, with an emphasis on Provincial initiatives, and it appears that we have begun to arrest the decline in the number of new candidates. However, these are early days and there is no cause whatever for complacency or relaxing of our efforts. There are two Vocational Conferences planned for 1985, and in January 1986 a repeat of the successful 'Ministry Experience Week' arranged this year by the Thames North Province. We think the need should be continually placed before the churches, and in particular we would urge all ministers to encourage others to hear God's call. (Resolution 2)

30. Reports from the colleges provide the current statistics, but it is also helpful to note the variety of applicants for the Auxiliary Ministry. Of the 64 students in training last November 26 were women, 38 men, 4 in their 20s, 7 in their 30s, 24 in 40s, 21 in 50s, and 8 in the 60s. (9 were retired, 16 in the teaching profession, 25 in commerce and industry, 13 in public service, and 1 a housewife). We believe in a ministry that represents different facets of the community, which is wide in age range and skills and able to share a ministry containing a variety of styles.

31. An effective pattern of assessment is vital to the operation, and careful consultations take place between all those engaged in District, Province and national selection interviews. With the help of the Nominations Committee, the Assessment Panel has been revised and increased to give it a proper range of skills and experience. A Manual of Advice is being prepared to guide ministry committees in Districts and Provinces as part of this whole process.

NEW PATTERNS OF TRAINING

32. We have followed up Assembly decisions to increase the effectiveness of those elements in college training which are to do with the context, through a new pattern of Placements, and the introduction of the fourth Internship Year throughout the colleges. We are preparing to help Districts and Provinces as they receive the newly ordained and take them through the new Post-Ordination Support programme. We are in process of revising the Training Course for the Auxiliary Ministry to ensure that it represents the best we can offer to those who will exercise a particular ministry partly in and partly outside the structures of the Church.

COLLEGE-BASED TRAINING

33. In 1984 we advised the General Assembly that we were reviewing the various forms of training now available to ministers, against the background of the current practice whereby those preparing for stipendiary ministry are required to spend a residential period at one of the colleges. Considerable investigation and discussion has taken place and we are now in a position to advise the Church.

34. We must first be aware of new and fast developing situations, and judgements made now will not necessarily hold beyond the next five years or so. The two major new factors are the growth of non-residential courses for ministerial training being used by all the main denominations, and the arrival in our Church of the Auxiliary Ministry. Alongside the tested worth of college training we can now add the experience of diocesan and ecumenical courses with their acceptable academic and practical standards and a highly developed sense of corporate fellowship.

35. The Church is rightly demanding that we provide a wide range of training courses to meet the needs of a diverse ministry. Clearly preparation for some styles of ministry can only be provided alongside a close identification with a specific context and this is now made available to our auxiliary candidates. We can go on to observe that there is much in these courses which could be of value to those preparing for service in a wider context. No longer do we see the training of the two types of ministry to be mutually exclusive, but rather complementary and we ought to encourage development along these lines.

36. The Committee is aware that the term 'residential' can be misleading, because many students live out and, in the case of some married students, at a considerable distance from college. Significant parts of the course are also undertaken outside the church or community base. It will therefore be more correct to refer to "*college-based training*". Again we draw attention to the fact that we are aware of the difficulties experienced by mature students and especially of those with family responsibilities and take account of this in the length and style of training provided.

37. We wish to continue to assert the value of a college-based training for stipendiary candidates and for a number of reasons: 1. Whilst there is nothing 'magical' about training in a college, the opportunity to be free from other responsibilities for full-time study in a "collegiate" situation is something we recognise as valuable. We would not wish to reverse the decision that led to the replacement of the Roll of Ministers examinations with Course III which calls for a period of an academic year at one of the colleges. Experience has clearly shown it to have been the right one. 2. We consider that training locally has its limitations and we wish to prepare men and women to go anywhere and serve in a wide variety of ministerial situations. We see great value in giving our students the opportunity to avail themselves of the universities, with their faculties of theology. Also we note there is always the temptation for those who seek to circumvent the system and avoid the disciplined study arranged in a college, and for those who are so conscientious that they would attempt far more than they ought. 3. As a small denomination we are unable to provide training centres all round the country, with enough staff, students and financial support to make them viable, and we are not in such a close ecumenical relationship with other churches as to wish to hand over the responsibility of training our ministers entirely to others. 4. We are assuming that it is properly acknowledged that all our colleges provide courses ecumenically based which use a variety of training situations, and none these days are closed and blinkered seminaries, if ever they could have been so described. Training has moved on and developed in significant ways since the major review by the Commission on the Ministry in 1975. By the use of placements and internships, students come into contact with a variety of local situations and can engage in practical ministry whilst preparing for ordination.

38. For all these reasons we do not seek a radical change in the guidance given to the Assembly.

However, we do consider that new developments should not be hindered, but positively encouraged. We also believe that the advantages of college-based training should be made available to those preparing for the auxiliary ministry. There are resources to be shared, and a chance to operate collaborative learning situations which will be of value not only in the training stage, but in later shared ministry. Developments therefore can take place along the following lines:-

1. College Placements shall be arranged with particular attention being paid to the needs of the inner city and rural Britain where our witness needs strengthening. This implies continuous reflection within the situation and in the college where it can be fully related to the more academic aspects of the training.
2. The Internship Year, now mandatory for all stipendiary students on basic courses, should take account of regional centres in a variety of contexts.
3. Courses III and IV, which already provide non-residential elements of training, should make use of the various ecumenical and diocesan courses now being used for our auxiliary ministers, for the home-based part of their training.
4. The Training Programme for Auxiliary Ministry should utilize library and staff resources of the colleges, and include the possibility of short courses taken alongside those preparing for stipendiary ministry.
5. We would encourage co-operation between colleges and local diocesan and ecumenical courses and the sharing of insights and resources.

39. In these ways, the mind of the Assembly, following the reception of the Report of the Review Group on Ministerial Training "*Preparing Today for Tomorrow's Ministry*" will be acknowledged. We began by indicating that we are in a new and developing situation, and therefore consider it wise to keep the matter under careful and constant review. In this exercise we see a process of evolutionary change, and welcome debate throughout the church. This is necessary if we are to provide ministers of quality able to cope with the great demands of leadership and pastoral care.

TRANSFERS

40. We are aware that our Committee has to decide what additional training is necessary for those transferring from one type of ministry in the URC to another and we consider it desirable to formulate some guidelines, based on our limited experience so far. We have to help on an individual basis, those who move from stipendiary to auxiliary ministry, and vice versa, and those who move from one model of auxiliary ministry which is limited in scope to one which brings with it wider responsibilities. This we are doing with care, and with a proper concern for the whole ministry, and welcome comments from churches and individuals.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

41. An increasing number of ministers are taking seriously the need to take time to stand back from daily pressures and involve themselves in some form in in-service training. Provincial Summer Schools, Reading Retreats, various Courses over longer periods and Sabbatical terms are some of the ways in which ministers are taking the opportunities provide through the In-Service Training programme.

42. Central Funds have been made available to help with the costs of in-service training. The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee have agreed to reimburse preaching fees (where applicable) and travel expenses to churches paying fees and expenses when a minister is absent on a Sabbatical term which lasts for a period of more than four weeks. During 1984 about 400 ministers took part in some form of in-service training with our financial support.

43. Every Province has appointed an In-Service Training Officer. ISTOs have details of courses and training opportunities offered by many and varied organisations. A list of organisations offering courses is available from the Ministries Department. ACCM produce an annual comprehensive *Directory of Training Opportunities for Clergy* (£2 per copy).

44. The Department is in the process of producing suggestions for induction courses to help ministers moving from one type of situation to a totally different environment e.g. Urban to Rural, Solo to Team, Pastoral to Administration, Wales to England, etc. A booklet giving details of '*How to arrange a Sabbatical*' is also in the process of preparation.

YEAR BOOK LISTING OF DEGREES

45. The Ministerial Training Committee was asked to consider the question of the recording of academic awards in Part 3 of the Year Book. Realizing that it would be impractical and indeed invidious for the Church to become a validating body itself, the URC, along with other British Churches, will accept the standard required by the appropriate academic authorities. For the purpose of the Year Book our advice is that we recognise only those degrees awarded by a British University (with a Royal Charter) or, recognised by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) or, in the case of degrees from Colleges or Universities in other countries, those from institutions accepted by the recognised accreditation agency of that country or region.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

46. Following the appointment of the Nivison Chair in Church History, a vacancy occurs in the teaching of Pastoral Studies. The committee, in consultation with the staff and the Board of Studies at the college, together with the Governors of the Cheshunt Foundation, have taken careful note of advice given by the Assembly about such an appointment, following the report of the Review Group on Ministerial Training. In the light of this, and as the result of the work of the Nominations to Teaching Staff Committee, we are happy to bring forward the name of the Revd Janet Elise Sowerbutts to occupy the Cheshunt Chair in Pastoral Studies with effect from the autumn term of 1985. (Resolution 3)

47. We wish to take this opportunity to express thanks to the Revd Dr Buick Knox who retires this year from the Nivison Chair in Church History. He has given long and distinguished service not only to generations of students but to the whole Church through his eminent scholarship.

PUBLICATIONS

48. Most of our publications are of an informative nature, for the recruitment of new ministers and for the interest of the churches. They also provide useful material for discussion groups. In the current year we have produced an Occasional Paper about the system of placements arranged in our colleges entitled "*Training Ministers in the Community*", up to date and attractive material on the Auxiliary Ministry, and a book list for those considering the ministry.

FUNDING

49. As demands for new and better training support for our students grow, so do the demands on central funds. We can advise the Church that we now provide a Mature Students' Grant for those training in a college where applicable along the lines of the LEA awards, we are ready to fund the new system of Placements and the Internship Year, accept more demands from the training programme for the Auxiliary Ministry, and from In-Service courses, including sabbatical terms. We are currently considering how we can support students whilst they are engaged in summer vacation training of various kinds. Whilst we do wish to curb any proper enthusiasm we are careful to monitor all our expenditure to ensure that nothing is wasted or misdirected.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Development of Courses

50. The Cambridge Federation of Theological Colleges has continued to develop common teaching in all aspects of the courses. This makes available to Westminster College students the whole range of skills represented in the sixteen-strong staff of the four colleges. Plans are now well advanced for introducing to the Westminster College course an internship year; this is currently an option, to be taken up by three students next year, and becomes mandatory for entrants in and after September 1985.

Staff Changes

51. Dr Knox retires from the Nivison Chair of Church History at the end of August 1985, and by decision of the 1984 General Assembly will be succeeded by Dr Mayor. The vacancy thus created in the field of Pastoral Studies is to be filled by the 1985 General Assembly, on the lines for termed appointments proposed by the recent Review Group on Ministerial Training.

Contacts with Churches overseas

52. Students from the USA, and ministers on study leave from the German Democratic Republic and Hungary have kept up the succession of contacts with churches overseas. Scholars from many

colleges and universities value the Senior Associate scheme offered for use of the library and meeting with the college community.

MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

Students

53. The total number of Theology Students registered in the College is 33, of whom 17 are preparing for ordination in the United Reformed Church.

Staff

54. The Assistant Chaplain, the Revd Justine Wyatt, began ¾th-time work at the College in January 1985, combining her work with the pastorate of the Longworth Group of Churches. Her main responsibilities are for the Internship Year, Pastoralia and Spirituality.

55. This year's College Pastor is Genevieve Chevalley, a former missionary in South Africa and Tahiti, currently a pastor of the *Eglise Reforme*. The College welcomes as Bursar, Mr D J Kinnersley, MA.

56. The Commemoration preacher was the Revd Dr John Morgans, Moderator of the Province of Wales, while the Valedictory sermon was preached by the Revd Paul Edwards, SJ, formerly Master of Campion Hall. At Wednesday evening services preachers have included the Revd Professor Colin Gunton and the Revd Dr Rex Mason, Lecturer in Old Testament at Mansfield. In the event, the C H Dodd Centenary Sermon, originally to have been given by Dr G B Caird was preached by Dodd's son-in-law, the Very Revd Eric Heaton, Dean of Christ Church.

57. The College has suffered grievous loss through the deaths of the Revd Professor G B Caird, formerly Principal, and the Revd Dr Norman Goodall, for a number of years Chairman of the Board of Education. Each in his own way contributed to that pool of experience and scholarship from which so many have been able to draw, and we express our thanks to God for them both.

The Centenary Appeal

58. The total now exceeds £600,000.

NORTHERN COLLEGE (United Reformed & Congregational) MANCHESTER

Northern Federation for Training in Ministry

59. The College is now part of the NORTHERN FEDERATION FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY. The service to mark the inauguration of the Federation was held at the beginning of the session. It was conducted by the Federation's first President, Dr R J McKelvey, and the preacher was Bishop Lesslie Newbigin. The heads of the five institutions which have come together to form the Federation signed the "Declaration of Intent", and the senior students of each institution presented gifts symbolizing their commitment of the institutions to the Lund principle "to do everything together except when conscience requires them to do it separately".

60. Northern College is now on the market for sale and plans are in hand for integrating the libraries and the accommodation of students and staff at Luther King House (presently Northern Baptist College) once the College is sold and we are in a position to move to our new home.

New Course

61. The College is developing its contextual training. Building upon the experience of internship training it has planned a new course which aims to make training more contextual. Known as the 4C course (Community — Church — College Course) it is a fully integrated programme of training in which academic work is done in tandem with work undertaken in the community and the church. It provides for a method of learning by which contemporary situations are questioned in the light of the Christian tradition and Christian tradition in turn is questioned in the light of today's situation. It aims to relate the gospel to the life of the world as well as the church and helps students choose the most appropriate response to the gospel in a given situation.

62. The new course, which will run alongside existing courses, is at this stage intended for a limited number of students. Arrangements will be made for two or three students to begin in a given year.

Mission 1985

63. This year's Mission is in Burnage. The Principal and a group of twelve students met during the winter with the minister and members of Christ Church, Burnage, to plan the Mission which will be held during the Easter vacation.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM

64. Following the Ecumenical visitation in which we shared during 1983, we have sought to play our part in the life of the college bearing in mind the limited nature of our contribution to the student body. We can report that we have two students training for stipendiary ministry, Stuart Scott in his second year of the full course, and Jean Wileman undertaking a one-year course.

65. Members of the URC serve on the Council, and report that the college community is in good heart, and responding well to all the fresh thinking surrounding theological training.

66. STUDENTS IN TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY 1984/85

NORTHERN PROVINCE

Auxiliary

Gordon Connacher (*NEOC*), Tom Ellison (*NEOC*), Margaret Smith (*URC*).

Stipendiary

Michael Armstrong (*Mansfield*), Ron Forster (*Northern*), Colin Marsh (*Mansfield*), Peter J Meek (*Northern*), Robert Ogilvie (*Westminster*), Martin P Ross (*Northern*).

NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE

Auxiliary

Alan Batterbee (*CLC*), Sarah Brewerton (*CLC*), Tony Cottam (*CLC*), Tony Grand (*CLC*), John Hetherington (*CDTI*), Denise Megson (*CLC*), Yvonne Oldfield (*CLC*), Helen Pike (*CLC*), John Piper (*CLC*), Betty Roe (*CLC*), Tom Taylor (*CLC*).

Stipendiary

Joseph Clemson (*Westminster*), Arthur F Climpson (*Northern*), David J Legge (*Northern*), John E Mallas (*Northern*), Ian H Ring (*Northern*), Noel J Stancliff (*Northern*), Gwen Thomas (*Mansfield*), Revd Harold E Ward (*Northern*), Eric P M Wollaston (*Northern*).

MERSEY PROVINCE

Auxiliary

Katherine Stocks (*CLC*), Robert Thomson (*URC*).

Stipendiary

Wendy P Baskett (*Northern*), David Brown (*Westminster*), Revd Kenneth Cox (*Northern*), Andrew Fairchild (*Northern*), Terry Hinks (*Mansfield*), Graham Sweeney (*Westminster*), Philip E Tiplady (*Northern*), James Whateley (*Westminster*).

YORKSHIRE PROVINCE

Auxiliary

Stuart Brearley (*CLC*), Catherine Evans (*URC*), Michael Moss (*CLC*), George Perrott (*CLC*), Eric Rogers (*Sheffield and URC*).

Stipendiary

Jeffrey Armitstead (*Westminster*), Christopher Elliott (*Northern*), Gregory Thompson (*Mansfield*).

EAST MIDLANDS PROVINCE

Auxiliary

Rodger Charlton (*URC*), Jean Cook (*EMMTC*), Malcolm Deacon (*URC*), Graham Maskery (*URC*), William Spurling (*EMMTC*), Leslie Watson (*URC*).

Stipendiary

Chris Ball (*Mansfield*), Revd Michael Bond (*Mansfield*), Martin J Whiffen (*Northern*), Cecil White (*Westminster*), Celia A Whitman (*Northern*).

WEST MIDLANDS PROVINCE**Auxiliary**

Jill Paget (*URC*), Ronald Webb (*URC*).

Stipendiary

David Hamblin (*Westminster*).

EASTERN PROVINCE**Auxiliary**

Joyce Benfield (*URC*), Robert Canham (*URC*), Michael Powell (*URC*), Lydia Rapkin (*URC*), Julia Stone (*URC*), David Robertson (*EAMTC*), James Tarrant (*URC*).

Stipendiary

James Bolton (*Westminster*), Colin Bones (*Westminster*), Adrian Bulley (*Westminster*), Peter Elliott (*Mansfield*), Edward Martens (*Westminster*), Martin J Nicholls (*Northern*), W N J Stanyon (*Northern*).

SOUTH WESTERN PROVINCE**Auxiliary**

Tom Bush (*SWMTS*), Henry Dickenson (*URC*), Sandra Lloyd Langston (*URC*), Leslie Phillips (*URC*), Evelyn Ridout (*URC*), Sheila Scarr (*BDSM*), Phyllis Trace (*SWMTS*), John Woolley (*URC*).

Stipendiary

Pat Lowans (*Mansfield*), Pat Sessions (*Mansfield*), Peter Southcombe (*Westminster*).

WESSEX PROVINCE**Auxiliary**

Jean Christie (*SDMTS*), Griselda Langdon (*URC*), Anita West (*URC*).

Stipendiary

Susan Durber (*Mansfield*), Stephen Wilkins (*Mansfield*), Darren K Wimbleton (*Northern*).

THAMES NORTH PROVINCE**Auxiliary**

Pat Carpenter (*URC*), Laurence Dixon (*Oak Hill*), Gordon Hearne (*SOC*), David Jenkins (*URC*), Doris Knee (*URC*), Michael Potter (*SOC*), Audrey Proffitt (*SOC*), Philip Stewart (*URC*), Martin Truscott (*SADMTS*).

Stipendiary

Helen M Drummond (*Northern*), Derek Galloway (*Westminster*), Michael A Hodgson (*Northern*), Nicola J Lowen (*Northern*), Martin Manley (*Mansfield*), Nigel Rogers (*Westminster*), John Vickers (*Westminster*), John Wadhams (*Westminster*), Chikako White (*Westminster*), David Whiting (*Westminster*), Yvonne Workman (*Mansfield*).

SOUTHERN PROVINCE**Auxiliary**

David Allonby (*SOC*), Geoffrey Finch (*URC*), John Hall (*SOC*), Peter Lovett (*URC*), Helena McKinnon (*URC*).

Stipendiary

Kwadwo Amaning (*Westminster*), Paul J Breeze (*Westminster*), Mitchell Bunting (*Mansfield*), David Dunster (*Westminster*), Colin E Foreman (*Northern*), David Jones

(*Westminster*), Marie Roe (*Westminster*), Elizabeth Scopes (*Westminster*), Stuart Scott (*Queen's*), Raymond S Singh (*Northern*).

PROVINCE OF WALES

Auxiliary

Marina Kennard (*URC*), Kirsty Lehnert (*URC*).

Stipendiary

Grenville S Fisher (*Northern*), Julian P Thomas (*Northern*), Kenneth C Jones (*Northern*), Philip Jones (*Northern*), Tracey A Jones (*Northern*), John Rees (*Mansfield*).

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION

Elizabeth Brown (*Westminster*), Janet Flawn (*Westminster*).

Auxiliary Courses

BDSM	=	<i>Bristol Diocesan School of Ministry</i>
CDTI	=	<i>Carlisle Diocesan Training Institute</i>
CLC	=	<i>Manchester Christian Leadership Course</i>
EMMTC	=	<i>East Midlands Ministry Training Course</i>
NEOC	=	<i>North East Ordination Course</i>
SADMTS	=	<i>St Albans Diocese Ministerial Training Scheme</i>
SDMTS	=	<i>Southern Dioceses Ministerial Training Scheme</i>
SOC	=	<i>Southwark Ordination Course</i>
SWMTS	=	<i>South West Ministry Training Scheme</i>
URC	=	<i>URC Auxiliary Ministry Training Programme</i>
Oak Hill	=	<i>Oak Hill Non-Stipendiary Ministry Course</i>

Stipendiary Courses

Mansfield	:	<i>Mansfield College, Oxford</i>
Northern	:	<i>Northern College, Manchester</i>
Westminster	:	<i>Westminster College, Cambridge</i>
Queen's	:	<i>Queen's College, Birmingham</i>

67. TRAINING STATISTICS

College	Total Nos. URC in training	Entry into URC Ministry				Actual Nos entered 1984
		1985	1986	1987	1988	
Mansfield	17	6	9	2	—	3
Westminster	27	13	9	2	3	4
Northern	32	9	4	9	10	15
Queen's	2	1	1	—	—	—
Totals	78	29	23	13	13	22
Auxiliary Ministry	63	32	9	16	6	36
Grand Total	141	61	32	29	19	58

N.B.: It should be noted that the anticipated entry in the years 1986 onwards will be increased by those as yet unknown who will be directed to shorter courses.

SUPPLEMENTARY MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Convener: Dr Richard D Jurd
Secretary: The Revd Charles K Meachin

INTRODUCTION

68. The principal tasks of the Supplementary Ministries Committee are to care for Lay preachers and for Church Related Community Workers.

69. The Committee is ceaselessly grateful for the quiet but effective ministry of the denomination's thousand-strong lay preaching force which, week by week, leads public worship and proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ at over one third of our services. The Committee feels a very real sense of privilege in working with Lay Preachers.

70. The Committee also feels privileged to be involved in the pioneer work associated with Church Related Community Workers, and it shares with the whole United Reformed Church the excitement of this new Ministry.

LAY PREACHERS

71. **Statistics.** District Councils submitted 35 names for inclusion in the Register of Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers, 1090 are on the register.

72. **The Exploring the Faith Course.** The Exploring the Faith Course (a qualifying course for the URC Lay Preachers Certificate) continues to attract new students; 528 students are working through the Course and the Committee records its deep appreciation to local Tutors and National Assessors who give willingly of their time and expertise to help students complete the Course. The Presbyterian Church of Wales sought the permission of the Committee to use the Exploring the Faith Course for training lay preachers. The Secretary shared in the launching of the training course at Coleg Trefeca (the units are being translated into Welsh).

73. **Publications.** During the year the Committee produced three new leaflets in the series 'Lay Preaching Matters': 'Children in Church' (14); 'The Conduct of the Sacrament of Holy Communion' (15); 'The Christian Year' (using a Lectionary) (16). Leaflet No.5 'Accreditation' has been revised to take into account the 1984 Assembly decision. A 'unit' with audio cassette 'Speaking Out' concerned with public speaking and elocution; a booklet suggesting how the book 'Our Father's House' might be used in house-groups, conferences etc, and a paper with questions for discussion for use with the book 'Getting the Liturgy Right' have been produced during the year. A new series of leaflets is being planned with the overall title 'Aids to Preaching'. The leaflets will concentrate on a biblical book (or part of a book) giving factual information about the book, and then suggesting a number of service or sermon themes.

74. For details of Committee Publications consult the URC Catalogue.

75. **Shergold Memorial Fund.** Having decided to discontinue the Shergold Expository Sermon Competition, and use the income of the memorial fund to enable a lay preacher to attend a study conference, the Committee invited Ms Maggie Hindley of Claremont URC London, who completed the Exploring the Faith Course in 1983 with the highest overall mark, and Dr Neil Pitcher of Johnstone, Renfrewshire (formerly of Kingston, Surrey) who completed the course in 1984 with the highest overall mark, to attend conferences.

76. **Conferences.** A most successful students' study weekend for Exploring the Faith students was held in June 1984, a second conference is planned for 1986. The URC national conference for lay preachers will be held 31 May-2 June 1985 at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick. The Committee encourages lay preachers to attend the Joint Anglican/Methodist/Congregational/URC/Baptist conference held each Spring at St. Andrew's Hall, Birmingham (12/14 April 1985).

77. **Lay Preaching Commissioners.** Each district of the URC has a Lay Preaching Commissioner who is a representative of all lay preachers on the District Council. The LPC is an Adviser; linking lay preachers to the SMC and giving pastoral care and friendship; a Director of Studies for candidates training to be lay preachers, appointing tutors and monitoring the students progress and an Organiser, setting up conferences and training courses, promoting recruitment and so on. The Committee wishes to record its gratitude to Commissioners for their continued devoted service.

DEACONESSES

78. There is one serving Deaconess, Miss Kay Salvage, at St. Andrew's URC in Brockley.

79. The Committee maintains contact with four retired Deaconesses and has had the pleasure of making them a gift of £50 each at Christmas. They are Miss Jean Anderson who lives in Ireland, Miss Nan Purdie in Scotland, Miss Catherine Egdell in Northumberland and Miss Lilian Blythin, now ordained to the Ministry who works as Associate Minister in Stockton-on-Tees.

CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORKERS

80.

a) **Personnel.** Mrs Daphne Beale was commissioned at Radford/Hyson Green by the Nottinghamshire District Council of East Midlands Province on 21 October 1984. Ms Maggie Hindley was commissioned at Marsh Street and Trinity, Walthamstow, by East District Council of Thames North Province on 16 December 1984. The Committee has four CRCWs serving in local churches and three CRCWs in training, and continues to seek suitably trained personnel to fill some of the vacancies for CRCWs.

b) **Grant Application Policy.** The Committee were grateful for the Assembly approval of the budget for 1985 which included a sum of £20,000 as a topping-up reserve for local resources, plus £5,000 for training grants for the support of Church Related Community Workers. The Committee's stated policy is that grants will be made for salary support of qualified Church Related Community Workers in URC-approved projects. Such workers will normally be United Reformed Church Related Community Workers.

c) **Allocation of funds to local projects.** The Committee examined applications from six local church projects and made grants to five of them: South West Manchester group of churches, £4,000 per year for 3 years; Radford/Hyson Green project £750 per year for 2 years; Walthamstow, up to £3,000 per year for 3 years; Clifton Estate, Nottingham, up to £5,000 per year for 3 years; St Mark's Greenwich, up to £4,000 per year for 3 years.

UNITED NAVY, ARMY & AIR FORCE BOARD

81. During the year there have been several changes in URC Chaplains to the Forces. The Revd Norman Setchell has ended his short-service commission and has settled at Harrogate. Revd Hamish B Maclagen has been transferred to Sennelager as Padre to the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. Revd Michael B Spencer ministers to the 22 Engineer Regiment and Tidworth Garrison (serving troops 'walking the wire' at Greenham Common) and will be transferred to Cyprus during 1985. Revd Alan F Finch serves the 22 AD Regiment and the 5 HY Regiment RA in Dortmund and ministers to the Dortmund Garrison and is due to be transferred to the Tidworth Garrison during 1985. Revd Samuel L Williams RN continues to serve at HMS Cochrane, Rosyth and Revd Frank A Beattie RN has been appointed Staff Chaplain, Naval Home Command, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth.

82. The United Board seeks to encourage ministers to look seriously at the challenge and opportunity of chaplaincy service, particularly because of the need in the RAF to maintain a United Board presence. The United Board strength is now — Royal Navy 4 (2 Baptist and 2 URC), Army 7 (4 Baptist and 3 URC), RAF 4 plus Chaplains' Assistant (all Baptist). Five chaplains serve in the TA and many ministers serve as Officiating Chaplains and chaplains to pre-service units. The United Board is always interested to hear from ministers who are prepared to consider offering for service with the Armed Forces.

83. A common Certificate of Confirmation/Church Membership, which has the support of the Doctrine and Worship Committee, has been agreed by the Board and should be in use by chaplains during 1985. The certificate will state that an individual, having been baptised, has been received as a communicant member of the Church on profession of faith in Jesus Christ. The certificate of membership is acknowledged by the Methodist Church, the Congregational Federation, the United Reformed Church and the Church of Scotland.

84. Ministers and Church Secretaries are asked to send names of individuals entering the Services to the Secretary of the United Board, Revd E Philip Schofield (3 Hazel Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 8PD).

85. The United Reformed Church continues to be grateful for the ministry of those chaplains who serve in the Armed Forces. Our chaplains often having the opportunity of presenting the Christian Faith to those who have little or no contact with the Church. The pastoral care given to service men and women in the 'field' or in the 'barracks' calls for special skills along with the calls made upon their time ministering to Service families. One padre writes about his Garrison Church, "It is a real tonic to see members of all denominations, and drawn from all ranks, worshipping together. Numbers attending are excellent and I certainly see signs, in the community at large, that the pendulum is swinging back, as regards attitudes to the Church and its worship."

PERSONALIA

86. The Department wishes to place on record its very warm appreciation and thanks to Dr Richard D Jurd for his service to the Supplementary Ministries Committee. We are grateful not only for the personal contribution he has made to its life as a member since 1973 but also for the dedication, enthusiasm, and friendly way in which he has served Lay Preachers, Deaconesses and Church Related Community Workers for the past 6 years as Chairman.

87. We place on record our thanks to all those who complete their service on our Committees in May 1985.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the Report of the Ministries Department for debate.
 2. The Assembly, noting with pleasure the increase in recruitment for the Ministry resulting from the Vocations Sunday in November 1983, and from the recruitment programme in general, urges local churches to present the challenge of the Ministry regularly to members, and calls upon the URC to observe Sunday 17 November 1985 as Vocations Sunday.
 3. The Assembly
 - (a) resolves that the Revd Janet Sowerbutts be appointed to the Cheshunt Chair in Pastoral Studies at Westminster College, Cambridge, as from 1 September 1985 for a period of five years, renewable for a further two years, and
 - (b) instruct the Cambridge District Council to arrange, in consultation with the Senatus, for the necessary induction to take place.
-

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Convener: The Rt Revd Dr Philip Morgan
Secretary: The Revd Bernard Thorogood

1. **Meetings.** The Committee met at Church House with the Moderator in the Chair on 5 July, 1 November 1984, 7 February and 15 March 1985. The Committee had the pleasure of welcoming the Revd Albert To Borua (Moderator of the United Church of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands) and the Most Revd Bishop Jesudasan (Moderator of the Church of South India).

2.1 **Applications of Churches to enter URC.** The Committee dealt with the application from the Sidemoor Independent Methodist Church which was given encouragement at last year's Assembly. Legal difficulties still stand in the way of final acceptance since the Charity Commission has not yet been prepared to issue a scheme for the variation of trusts. The matter is being pressed.

2.2 The Committee has prepared a note on the matters to be taken up by Synods when investigating any application from a local church, so that there is some uniformity of treatment. The Committee has begun a discussion on relationships with informal congregations (such as house churches) and has sent a draft statement to the Synod Executive Committees for comment by June 1985. It is hoped to bring forward proposals for the 1986 General Assembly.

2.3 *New Applications.* The Committee considered the applications from Toothill, Swindon, South Western Province; Watling Valley, Milton Keynes, East Midlands; Stantonbury, Milton Keynes, East Midlands, together with supporting material provided by the Provinces, and recommends that they be received as local churches, subject to Synod resolutions.

3. **General Assembly meetings.** On the recommendation of the Business Committee, the following dates and locations were agreed:-

1986 Winter Gardens, Blackpool — 6 to 9 May
1987 St David's Hall, Cardiff — 11 to 15 May

4. **Forward Policy Group.** On the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, the following membership was agreed:-

Professor Robert W. Steel (Convener), Mr Stephen Brown, Mrs Margaret Carrick Smith, Revd Elizabeth Caswell, Revd Arnold Harrison, Professor Malcolm Johnson, Mr Ian Maxwell.

The Committee has held its first two meetings and is beginning to map out its initial tasks. Mrs Sheila Tull has undertaken secretarial assistance.

5. **Wessex Province Moderator.** At its meeting on 1 November the Committee recorded the sad news of the death of the Revd Peter Chesney.

The Executive Committee expresses the sorrow of the whole Church at the death of Peter Sutherland Chesney on 26 October, and sends its respect, affection and support to Janet Chesney. The URC has been blessed by Peter's gifts, as a pastor in the Presbyterian Church of England and as its Church Extension officer, in his last pastorate at Welwyn Garden City during which URC was formed, and for the last eight years as Provincial Moderator in Wessex. In all this activity Peter gave himself, his energy and insight, for the Kingdom. His many enthusiasms and outgoing personality warmed us all. So with the churches of the Province we experience a sense of loss, with the ecumenical movement we respect a fine servant, and with the family we thank God from whom all true parenthood comes.

At its meeting on 7 February the Committee approved the arrangements made by the Synod Executive to carry forward all the essential work during the vacancy.

6. **Mrs Indira Gandhi.** The Executive Committee sent messages of sympathy to our sister Churches in India on the assassination of Mrs Gandhi, assuring them of the prayerful fellowship which binds us together.

7. **Bishop Desmond Tutu.** The URC was one of the bodies which nominated Bishop Tutu for the Nobel Peace Prize, and the Executive Committee sent a message of loving congratulations when the award was announced.

8. **Brighton Bombing.** The Moderator and General Secretary had sent a message to the Prime Minister stating the Church's sympathy and total commitment to the democratic process.

9. **Secession of Churches.**

9.1 *Ramsey Isle of Man.* Following the decision of the 1984 Assembly not to agree to the secession of this local church, the Moderator and General Secretary visited the congregation and explained the course of the Assembly debate, indicating possible ways of helping relationships. The Executive Committee then received a letter from the Minister and Elders rejecting the Assembly decision and asking for a further hearing, on the grounds that the real issues had not been debated. The Committee declined this request, pointing out that a "decision by the General Assembly on matters brought before it on reference or appeal shall be final and binding." (*Manual p.24*). Help has been offered to the District Council of Liverpool to hold a Council meeting on the island and so help to overcome the sense of isolation.

9.2 *St Andrew's, Bournemouth.* The Committee, at a special meeting in March considered the material forwarded by the Wessex Province Synod. The material and the Executive resolution is reproduced in the special report to Assembly.

9.3 *Trinity, Slough.* The Committee, at a special meeting in March considered the material forwarded by the Thames North Province Synod. The material and the Executive resolution is reproduced in the special report to Assembly.

9.4 *Wells-next-the-Sea.* At its February meeting the Committee considered a report by two assessors on the material presented by the Eastern Province Synod. The material with the Executive resolution is reproduced in a special Report to Assembly.

10. **Appeals for Funds.** In order to help local churches consider a variety of appeals for funds, the Committee prepared a note setting out the present position, that the General Assembly has so far authorised only one national appeal; and that this should be regarded as an exceptional procedure since the Unified Appeal and the Maintenance of the Ministry would probably be damaged by frequent extra requests carrying the Assembly's approval.

11. **Windermere.** The Committee received reports of the Windermere Policy and Planning Committee and approved the appointment of the Revd Graham Cook, BA, as the first Director of the Centre.

12. **Group on Leadership in URC.** During the 1984 General Assembly a request was made that the Church should examine the role of Provincial Moderators and other persons in leadership positions. The Executive Committee agreed that such an examination could be helpful and approved the following terms of reference:-

To study corporate and personal leadership in the URC, both theologically within the Reformed tradition and practically as experienced since 1972;

To evaluate that leadership in the pastoral and ecumenical contexts of our common life;

To suggest what developments should be encouraged and whether amendments to the Structure are needed;

and to provide an initial report for the Executive Committee and thus to the Assembly in 1986.

The Executive agreed to the following membership of the Group:-

The Revd Principal Martin Cressey (Convener), Mr A. J. Cumming, the Revd R. J. Hall, Mrs Jill Jenkins, the Revd Dr David Owen, Miss Janet Turner, Mrs Marion Weedon.

13. **Industrial Strife.** Following discussion in the Assembly Moderator's Advisory Committee a paper was prepared for the Executive Committee on some of the basic issues which lay behind the miners' strike. There was considerable discussion and amendments were suggested. The Executive Committee then agreed that the Moderator and the General Secretary should issue a paper, within the Information Service, reflecting the discussion, and to make available a summary for the media. In February the Committee heard a report of further efforts being made by the Churches to seek an end to the dispute.

14. **Constitution Review Group.** The Resolutions of this Group were approved by Assembly 1984 and are submitted again for ratification.

15. **Moderator Review Groups.**

15.1 Thames North Review Group recommended the reappointment of the Revd Michael John Davies, MA, FCIS, for five years from 1 September 1985.

15.2 Eastern Province Review Group recommended the appointment of the Revd Wilfred Kieville Gathercole, MA, BD, for seven years from 1 September 1985.

15.3 West Midlands and Wessex Review Groups had not reported at the time of preparing this report.

16. **Church House.** The Executive Committee agreed that a report by the General Secretary on the life and work of Church House should occasionally be submitted to the Assembly, and it is attached as an Appendix.

17. **Departmental Committees.** Following the resolution of the 1984 Assembly the two new Departments began their work in September and have now expressed their views on the committee structure.

17.1 The Faith and Life Department does not consider that any changes are needed now but the committee structure will be kept under review.

17.2 The Ministries Department recommends that its committee structure be changed to the following, with implementation by 1 January 1986.

a. **Central Committee**

To be responsible for departmental policy and co-ordination; co-operation between departments; communication with the General Assembly, Provincial Synods and where necessary District Councils.

Membership: Convener, Departmental Secretary, 12 persons appointed by Provincial Synods, 5 persons appointed by the Nominations Committee to provide special experience or expertise, the conveners of the other standing committees, and a representative from the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee.

b. **Vocations Committee**

To assess the needs of the church for ministry (including lay preachers, Church Related Community Workers) and to be responsible for recruitment, selection, assessment (using the Assessment Panel) and applications.

Membership: Convener, Secretary and 8 others. The Nominations Committee should be asked to ensure continuity from the Applications, Recruitment and Supplementary Ministries Committee.

c. **Training Committee**

To oversee all foundation and in-service training. The Committee would be able to establish Boards of Studies with specialist responsibilities (eg Lay Preachers). The functions related to Westminster-Cheshunt and the Ministries Training Fund may be dealt with by sub-committees.

Membership: Convener, Secretary, 12 persons and representation from Boards of Studies, etc. The Nominations Committee should be asked to ensure continuity from the Ministerial Training Committee and the Supplementary Ministries Committee.

d. **Support Committee**

To have oversight of the use of ministerial resources; and to represent nationally and support as necessary, all ministers, including the retired, and widows, lay preachers, CRCWs and ministers in sector pastorates, including Chaplains to the Forces, Chaplains in Higher Education and Hospitals, Industrial and Prison Chaplains. (The Committee will not duplicate the work of other Councils and committees and such other bodies as the United Navy, Army and Air Force Board, the Chaplaincy Board of the Free Church Federal Council.) The Committee would be able to establish specialist sub-committees.

Membership: Convener, Secretary, 8 persons and representatives of sub-committees.

The Executive Committee commends this pattern to the Assembly.

18. **Crisis in Africa.** The Executive instructed the General Secretary to write to the Prime Minister expressing the Committee's deep concern that Government aid programmes to Africa are too slow and too small, and urging that a re-ordering of national priorities is needed, with, if necessary, increased taxation if we are to be faithful to God's purpose of good for every member of the human family.

APPENDIX

REPORT ON CHURCH HOUSE

1. Those of us who work at Church House try to keep before us the main purposes of the office. As the staff have discussed this we have seen three main functions. First, we have a link with the 1898 local churches and the 1080 ministers and seek to serve them in many ways, providing opportunities for learning and inspiration, a stipend and pension system, a place for consultation on property and legal matters, an encouragement for local training and preaching and so on. We are conscious of the weakness of our link with local churches because paper is always a second rank communication system, but several members of staff pay many visits to churches over a year. So we hope not to be a faceless bureaucracy. Second, we are the servant of the General Assembly, arranging its meetings, preparing its business and carrying on its programmes through the departments which it authorises. The annual Assembly sets a calendar for the office, with intense periods of work leading up to each meeting. Third, we are a channel for relationships. It is through Church House that the URC relates to the national officers of other UK churches, to the major ecumenical agencies, and to our sister churches overseas. This means much consultation, very frequent meetings with BCC and CWM and the whole complex process of sending personnel to serve with other churches. All three functions are undergirded by the office administration and the publishing and distribution services.

2. But we also try to remember that Church House is not simply an office. It is also a Christian fellowship. This does not mean that we only recruit staff who are church people; that would be an unacceptable restriction. But most of us are in our work with Christian convictions and there is very good mutual care, and a readiness to work extra hours for such important purposes. Three days each week we have brief prayers together. During the past year we have invited the national representatives of other churches to lead our prayers and it was a pleasure to welcome the Revd Brian Beck, Cardinal Hume and Archbishop Robert Runcie. There is also an informal Fellowship Group once a week. We are glad that the Revd John Miller from Regent Square Church joins us regularly and so is a link with the fellowship next door.

3. We are grateful for a stable, thoughtful and skilled staff. As well as those employed in regular contracts we are blessed by the number of friends who give voluntary service of very high quality, often travelling long journeys to be with us. We could not manage without them. In such a small office it is not easy to arrange any ladder of promotion and therefore job satisfaction becomes all the more important. We encourage all those who seek further training and qualifications, particularly as the computer is increasingly used. A list of the staff is appended.

4. The building is now approaching 30 years old and it wears well. We have a fine caretaker and maintenance service. But we also have to record the snags. The absence of a lift and the impossibility of installing one is a matter of embarrassment when handicapped people are with us. We also find that space is tight. At times the committees overflow. We feel the lack of any pleasant reception area where we can entertain the many guests from other churches who visit us. Some of the staff and many committee members would value an in-house canteen facility, which is not possible in the present building. We have consulted the elders of Regent Square Church about joint development of the whole property, but on our side we have had no financial resources to contribute to such an exercise and no major development is at present in view.

5. In 1984, the total salaries, including employer's contributions to superannuation funds and National Insurance, paid to staff working from Church House amounted to £374,000, compared with £347,000 in 1983. Expenditure on office costs, eg. rates, heat and light, stationery, maintenance of the building, etc. amounted to £95,000 in 1984, and £90,000 in 1983.

6. Those of us who are ministers of the church are not always born with skills of administration. Therefore it is important to be alert to the views of people with expertise in office management. We have sought to improve inter-departmental understanding through regular staff meetings and so contribute to one another. We always need to listen to those who are critical of the work of the office so that we can improve efficiency. The Forward Policy Group is to be invited to consider

the role and effectiveness of the office. It is that balance between business efficiency and the spiritual strength of a team ministry which makes our work both demanding and a privilege.

STAFF LIST

(Part time staff: Figures denote hours per week worked. P, denotes varied hours, mainly working from home. V, denotes voluntary service).

General Secretariat and Services

General Secretary: Bernard Thorogood *Administrative Secretary:* Sheila Tull
Personal Assistants: Jean Rolls and Winifred Weddell (24)
Secretarial Assistant: Sheila Robinson (V) *Receptionist:* Trisha Jones
Caretakers: Alan and Rhoda Pollard
URC History Society Library: Fred Keay (V), Jean Smith (V), Winifred and Phyllis Cary (V).
Office cleaners: Rose Ruse (10) and Dorothy James (10)

Communication and Supplies Section

Secretary: Alma Wade *Designer:* Maureen Sporle
Personal Assistant: Janet Longden *Printer:* Gordon Murrell
Distribution Manager: Vacant (Feb 85) *Personal Assistant:* Julie Hillary
Clerical Assistants: David Gossington and Rhoda Pollard (20)
Postal sales and Packing: Jackie Hughes and Alex Beckford
Reform Editor: Norman Hart *Assistant:* Margery MacNaught (P)
Reform Subscriptions: Joyce Kimmens (21) *Stationery and Records:* David Lea (21)
Year Book Editors: Sheila and Cyril Lowden (P) *Collating:* Winnie Brett (6)
Information Service volunteer packers

Church and Society Department

Departmental Secretary: John Reardon *Personal Assistant:* Wendy Cooper
Assistant Secretary: Ann Sutcliffe (21)

Faith and Life Department

Departmental Secretary: Margaret Taylor *Youth Secretary:* Paul Quilter
Ministry of Healing Secretary: Charles Meachin
Administrative Assistant: Betty Taylor (28) *Personal Assistant:* Linda Oostenrijk
Junior Secretary: Caroline Eveleigh *Pilots:* John Robinson (P)
Youth Activities Officer: Frank Symes (7)

Finance and Administration Department

Departmental Secretary and Chief Accountant: Clem Frank
Personal Assistant: Kathryn Rees *Assistant Accountant:* Norman Cliff
Accounts Assistant: David Ramsay *Cashier:* Carol Dean
Assistant: Peter Learner (4)
Secretarial Assistants: Tina House (28) and Jane Draddy
Payroll Supervisor, MoM: Judy Stockings *Accounts Assistant:* Andrew Kelly
Computer Operator: Diane Teale
Retired Ministers' Housing Society: Bob Carruthers (V)
Trust Officers: Fred Lodde (V) Ian Neilson (V)
Secretarial Assistant: Brenda Flynn (28)
Maintenance of the Ministry Secretary: George Hooper (P)

Ministries Department

Departmental Secretary: Michael Dunford *Assistant Secretary:* Charles Meachin
Personal Assistant: Doreen Gallant
Administrative Assistant: Roger Scopes (P)
Personal Assistants: Grace Main (28) and Eileen Pelling (28)

World Church and Mission

Departmental Secretary: Donald Elliott

Personnel Secretary: Sheila Rudofsky

Personal Assistant: Joy Button

Personal Assistant: Pat Bolton

Communication Secretary: Helen Lidgett (21) *Personal Assistant:* Chris Fairbrother (28)

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the Executive Committee Report and Supplementary Report for debate.
2. The Assembly agrees to meet at Blackpool from 6 to 9 May 1986 and at Cardiff from 11 to 15 May 1987, subject to any variation approved by the Executive Committee.
3. The Assembly re-appoints the Revd Michael John Davies, MA, FCIS, Moderator of the Thames North Province for a period of five years from 1 September 1985.
4. The Assembly appoints the Revd Wilfred Kievill Gathercole, MA, BD, Moderator of the Eastern Province for a period of seven years from 1 September 1985.
5. The Assembly receives the Report on Church House for debate.
6. The Assembly approves the plan for Committees within the Ministries Department.
7. The Assembly requests the Ministries Department to review the Committee structure within three years and report to the Executive Committee.
8. The Assembly receives and welcomes the churches known as:-
Toothill, Swindon
Watling Valley, Milton Keynes
Stantonbury, Milton Keynes

as local churches within the URC.

9. The Assembly ratifies the following amendments to the Structures of the URC:-

9.1 Concerning District Councils and Synods

New 9.3.g

A Minister Emeritus, who has been appointed by the District Council as an Officer of the Council, or as an Interim Moderator, for the period of the appointment shall be a full member of the District Council.

Re-number 9.3.g to 9.3.h

All Ministers Emeriti not covered by clause 9.3. g. residing in . . .

Re-number 9.3.h to 9.3.i

New 9.4.g

A Minister Emeritus who has been appointed by the Synod as an officer of the Synod for the period of the appointment shall be a full member of the Synod.

Re-number 9.4.g to 9.4.h

All Ministers Emeriti not covered by clause 9.4.g residing in . . .

Re-number 9.4.h to 9.4.i

9.2. Concerning Representatives from other Churches

New 9(3)j

Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the District as the Council may from time to time determine.

New 9(4)j

Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the Province as the Synod may from time to time determine.

New 9(5)i

Representatives, not exceeding the number approved by the General Assembly, of other denominations in the United Kingdom as the Assembly on the advice of the Executive Committee may from time to time determine.

9.3 Concerning Constitutional Change

9.5.xi to read as follows:-

To alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the URC.

New Section 10 of the Structure to be inserted as follows:-

- 10(1)** No exercise by the General Assembly of the function of constitutional amendment contained in 9.5.xi shall have effect unless the following procedure has been followed:
- 10(1)a** The proposal for the amendment shall be made in accordance with the Standing Orders of the General Assembly.
- 10(1)b** The General Assembly shall vote on a motion to approve the proposal which shall require a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting to pass.
- 10(1)c** The General Assembly shall, if such motion to approve the proposal is passed, refer the proposal to Provincial Synods and may, if it deems appropriate, refer the proposal also to District Councils and in exceptional cases also to local churches.
- 10(1)d** The General Assembly shall in making any such reference set a final date for responses to be made, which shall normally be at an appropriate time before the next annual Assembly.
- 10(1)e** If by such date notice has been received by the General Secretary from more than one third of Provincial Synods (or, if it has been so referred, more than one third of District Councils or more than one third of local churches) that a motion 'that the proposal be not proceeded with' has been passed by a majority of members present and voting at a duly convened meeting of such body, then the Assembly in its concern for the unity of the church shall not proceed to ratify the proposal.
- 10(1)f** If by such date such notice has not been received, the General Assembly shall at its next meeting vote on a motion to agree the amendment which shall require a simple majority of the members present and voting to pass.
- 10(1)g** If such a motion is passed by such a majority the amendment shall have effect.
- 10(2)** In the case of motions which would have the effect of terminating the separate existence of the URC, or of a Province within it, by union with other churches, the voting process to be used shall be not less stringent than in 10(1) and that process shall be determined by a single vote of the General Assembly which shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to pass.

Sections 10 and 11 of the Structure to be re-numbered 11 and 12.

The Assembly agrees to amend Standing Orders, Section 2 as follows:-

Proposals for amendments to the Basis and Structure of the URC, which may be made by the Executive Committee or a Department or Committee of the General Assembly or a Provincial Synod, shall be in the hands of the General Secretary not later than 12 weeks before the opening of the Assembly.

The General Secretary, in addition to the normal advice to members of the Assembly, shall, as quickly as possible, inform all Synod Clerks of the proposed amendment.

PROVINCIAL MODERATORS' REPORT

"The right time has come, and the Kingdom of God is near!" Mark 1, 15.

1. **A Sense of Expectancy.** Throughout life we experience an intertwining of the expected and the unexpected. For many people a living faith has enabled routine to be transformed into shape and rhythm, and the fearfully unexpected has become test and opportunity. This transformation is a consequence of a conviction that "the right time has come, and the Kingdom of God is near!" This is how Jesus proclaimed and lived the Good News; this is how the Church seeks to follow his example and to preach and live the Good News in Christ.

The rhythm of life for moderators has a familiar and expected pattern as we respond to the changing calendar with its different needs and functions. We help in introducing ministers and students to pastorates and we assist in the ongoing work of supporting and stimulating the churches. With the District Council we encourage the churches particularly when they are seeking ministry, that point when prayer and reflection about the future is so critical. We are privileged to minister to and with our friends and colleagues, and in sharing hopes and fears as we seek together the mind of Christ. There is a rhythm to this work which rarely becomes routine. This is because no two ministers are alike; no two congregations or pastorates are the same; no two situations are identical.

How do we as members of the Church develop and discern the mind of Christ in our ministry? How do we recognise the signs of the presence of the Kingdom? We are all ministered to by word and sacrament and pastoral care, and these gifts of the Spirit mould us in the image of Christ. As moderators we are grateful that our ministry within the Church is challenged and comforted by our common experience as God's people. The Church develops an awareness that the right time has come, and consequently begins to perceive a pattern in the apparently haphazard, and to recognise a shape within the seemingly chaotic. This recognition and the consequent hope is Christ's gift to us within the Church.

2. **The Privilege of Pressure.** We are, as moderators, acutely aware of the pressure of events upon our ministries, and are grateful of the ways our spirits have been challenged and lifted during this past year.

(a) **Africa.** The whole Church has been humbled and grieved by the experience of our sisters and brothers in Ethiopia and throughout North Africa. At the same time we have been encouraged by the response of individuals, congregations and communities to this terrible crisis. The power of the media in enabling us to see the flesh behind the word has been creating a remarkable response among the people. The crisis has forced us to recognise the obvious fact that this disaster is no accident, but is characteristic of a world society which is unjust. We acknowledge that this gross injustice will not be solved by the compassion of individuals unless that compassion produces a determination to change the structures of society. God has a purpose for his world wide family (the ecumene); it involves profound social and economic changes. An emotional response to tragedy must be made credible by a change of will and a determination to work for a more just world order. This new alertness within the Church is a sign of the Kingdom. As moderators we urge the Church to be fully involved in the struggle that lies ahead.

(b) **Hungary.** We visited Hungary last year with inquisitive and enquiring minds, some of us uncertain of what we might discover. We returned, aware of the life of a great Sister Church in the Reformed faith, and of the obvious recognition that in Hungary the majority of people are yearning for a more peaceful and stable society. We experienced a lifting of the spirit. We urge the Church to learn more about the Church in Socialist countries, and to seek to develop relationships particularly with our sister Reformed Churches. We are saddened by the fact that almost all information that is received in a popular fashion in this country is about the underground Church; whereas we do not deny the validity of this information, it is also essential to grasp the work of the mainline Churches in Eastern Europe. This sharing of information and building of bridges is particularly crucial in the light of the East/West divide and the increasing militarism and nuclear fears. The Church should be in the frontline of creating understanding and friendship, and involved much more firmly and courageously in the work for world peace.

(c) **National Issues.** In our ministry as moderators, we soon discover that our service is not only to the congregations of the United Reformed Church within the Province, but also to the other parts of the Body of Christ. Our work with those who exercise a wider ministry within the other Churches results in deeper relationships on personal and ecclesiological dimensions. Similarly within our Provinces, we discover a concern for life at its widest level. We see the needs of our communities and our 'regions' although for some of us it is extremely difficult to define the 'geographical region' for which we have a concern. This does at times put us at the sharp edge where Church body and secular body touch. This opportunity produces privileges and tensions of adventurous service. Some of us have been involved deeply in the issues of Northern Ireland, of the abolition of the Greater London Council and the Metropolitan Counties, while others have been engrossed in the dispute in the coal industry. Sometimes we seem to be dragged into these issues reluctantly, for we know that for many of our people these are divisive issues and they would feel happier for the Church not to get involved. There are many others within the Church who wish us to take initiatives and urge us to 'dirty our hands' with these tough and delicate situations. Here are important questions which all of us within the Church have to answer. What does the Church have to say in these issues? Ought we to be temperate or muted or balanced? Ought we to express the divisions within society? How are we to discern the mind of Christ in such complex controversies? For us as moderators it is clear that we cannot separate faith from politics because we understand the Kingdom to be about human relationships and the ordering of society in the now and in the eternity.

We feel that all these areas of acute pressure are signs of the Kingdom impinging upon us as persons and as communities. They challenge our lifestyles and our mode of mission. Will they give opportunities for the Church to evangelise, or will they frighten us into ghettos less and less relevant to the wholeness of life? These are decisions which we within the Church must make soon, but we must all make them together.

3. **Personalia.** Our Church has lost in the death of Peter Chesney, a leader and a friend. His gifts of catholicity of mind and spirit, grasp of the essentials of the faith, his love of music and his personal wit will all be deeply missed.

We also express our thanks to Colin Evans and Fred Kaan for their gifts to us and to the Church. Fred has reminded us and re-introduced us to the World Church, has led us to Geneva and to Hungary and to even more exciting worlds of prayers and praise. Colin has taught us so much about the importance of the clarity of language and of expressing what we mean. He has shared with us the gifts of drama and of communication. We wish our colleagues well in their different spheres of ministry.

RESOLUTION

That this Report be received for debate.

COMMUNICATION & SUPPLIES COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd David Netherwood
Secretary: Miss Alma Wade

PUBLICATIONS

Annual Publication

1. We expect to launch at Assembly Colin Evans's book *Communicate or Die*. Adapted from lectures enjoyed by summer schools, elders' meetings, conferences, etc, the book points out that we are all communicators. Ways of improving communication are examined — and some of the pitfalls described. The author will be available to sign copies at Assembly on Tuesday, 30 April, during the lunch and tea breaks.

'Reform'

2. *Reform's* glossy cover — which allows better colour reproduction — and whiter pages have been the subject of a good many letters of appreciation. The editor continues to receive far more material than the magazine can carry, but he is always grateful for lively and informed writing on topics where the URC needs to be dealing with the world. Readers' letters reflect very wide interest in these topics, and an even wider diversity of views. Local church news is selected in order to be of interest and value to other churches.

3. Circulation does not grow and it is apparent that in some churches *Reform* does not come quickly to the notice of new worshippers, and that many who reject it have not looked at it lately. It is good that we have an energetic, professional advertising representative who is also a URC auxiliary minister. We need to increase the circulation of *Reform*, to draw more advertising but — even more important — to ensure that the whole URC continues to have a monthly meeting place for information and discussion available to it.

4. The Preliminary Accounts for 1984 show a modest profit despite considerable increases in the cost of printing, materials and postage during the year. We shall do our best to retain the current cover price for 1986.

Year Book

5. The 1984/85 Year Book was generally well received, and users appreciate the new format which causes the book to lie flat when open. The inclusion of church addresses was welcomed and we plan to add church telephone numbers in the 1985/86 issue.

Congregational Praise

6. The final stock of pre-printed sheets (Small Words edition) is now being bound and the decision as to whether a re-print of the other editions is justified rests upon Assembly's reaction to the Faith and Life Department's Resolution No.5 proposing a new URC hymn-book. Re-printing would involve trying to trace copyright holders and, where applicable, re-negotiating fees. If it is decided not to re-print the Large Words and Music editions, there would be a period when current stocks were exhausted and the proposed new hymn-book not yet available. We are at present in touch with Remploy with a view to offering our churches their hymn-book re-binding service at very reasonable rates.

Assembly Publications

7. Following complaints that the print of both *Reports to Assembly* and *Record of Assembly* was difficult to read, we experimented with different size pages and different type styles and sizes. We hope readers of the Reports will find the new format to their liking. The Record will be typed in-house on the Word Processor but will be produced to the same format as the Reports.

General

8. The constantly improving standard of visual material produced by the commercial world presents us with the temptation to use better quality paper for URC publications and the services of external printers with more sophisticated equipment. Nonetheless our full-time in-house printer is kept fully occupied. We seek to meet the requirements of Departments, keeping a balance between requests to improve the visual quality and pressure to reduce costs.

DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLIES

9. Distribution and Supplies Officer Evelyn Vaughan left at the end of January and we hope to announce the name of her successor soon.

Catalogue

10. A new section listing a selection of book titles in stock was introduced during the year and has created interest. We stock many of the books reviewed in *Reform* and the Departments are asked for recommendations from time to time.

Postage and Packing

11. As postal charges rise, they become a more significant proportion of the total cost of orders. The Committee put forward various suggestions at the last meeting and we hope to introduce soon a more equitable system of charging 'P&P'.

General

12. Disposal of old stock was completed during this year and we hope to see an increase in general book trading during 1985. We continue to aim to give the best possible service to our churches whilst remaining within budget.

PUBLICITY GROUP

URC Logotype

13. During the year the Publicity Group again considered designs for a URC logotype and selected one which is now being used on our headed paper, Reports to Assembly and other publications. We suggest churches adopt the logotype for their own paper and publications, bearing in mind that the lower right-hand corner may be varied to include a design having local interest or significance, and that the cross and fish design may be used separately.

14. Sheets showing variations of the logo in different sizes, printed on good quality paper for artwork purposes, are available at 50p. Photocopies or single designs will be sent on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

15. Ties bearing the cross and fish design will be available at Assembly, together with medallions, stick pins and car stickers.

Photographic Display Material

16. The set of A4 pictures showing various aspects of the URC at work has been borrowed by a number of churches and is still available subject to prior booking.

Communications Leaflets

17. A leaflet on *Posters* was mailed with the June Information Service and one on *Special Sundays* in the November pack. The leaflet currently in preparation, for the June 1985 Information Service, suggests ways in which churches can make details of their services and other activities known in local hotels, guest-houses, libraries, etc.

MEDIA

Video

18. Whilst we have always hoped to have a selection of video programmes to offer to our churches, in-house discussions had led to the view that as most of the titles we would recommend were produced elsewhere and are offered in the producers' own catalogues, we should not buy programmes for loan but merely issue a list giving details of where they could be obtained. Following discussion at the recent meeting, however, the Committee took the view that as video is considered superior to film as a training medium, we should invest in video programmes in order to be able to offer them from Church House, making a charge only to cover postage and packing. (See Resolution No.3.)

19. The Chairman visited the Church of Scotland in January this year and has brought back valuable information on production costs, hiring procedure and costs, etc.

Cable Television

20. In some areas where licences are being granted, ecumenical groups have been formed under

the auspices of the local Council of Churches to train — usually on video equipment — with a view to making programmes for the Cable TV 'Community' slot reflecting the Christian faith. It is thought that even if Cable Television should fail to materialise, it will be useful to the local churches to have a team trained in video techniques and able to introduce the medium to their own congregations.

Local Radio

21. The Revd David Netherwood is the URC representative on the Churches' Advisory Committee for Local Radio (CACLB). He reports that Local Radio continues to expand, especially on the ILR (Independent Local Radio) side; many new opportunities are being created for Churches and individual Christians to be involved in many different ways including religious broadcasting. Communication and Supplies Committee is always willing to support the training of both lay persons and ministers in this important field — although we must candidly admit we are not as well-placed as some denominations in being able to find finance and personnel for permanent appointments yet. Even more opportunities will be open to us as Community Radio gets under way, according to Government proposals — at the end of this year.

Press

22. Mrs Mary Schofield has served for several years as honorary Press Officer and is again acting in that capacity for Assembly. It is important that we look out for a successor as she will not be able to continue in this role beyond 1985.

ECUMENICAL INVOLVEMENT

23. The Association for Christian Communication, to which the URC is affiliated, is considered the body best able to co-ordinate the various denominational and other organisations with an interest in Christian communication. It was AFCC who wrote to Councils of Churches in areas selected for Cable Television, pointing out the tremendous opportunity which Cable TV would present, and offering training to church groups.

24. The Revd Philip Schofield has reported through the Publicity Group on a meeting in September sponsored jointly by the URC and the RC Church to which media persons were invited. At this meeting AFCC was seen to be the group through which mainstream churches could relate to each other and together make representation when necessary. The following suggestions are also made:-

- 1) Christian Resource Exchange, a BCC initiative for 'religious programme makers within the cable television framework' was discussed. AFCC to take this to its next stage and, in consultation with the BCC, to do pilot projects.
- 2) Small 'Task Force' to look at media awareness training and probably produce a lesson guide.
- 3) AFCC hoped to develop decentralised media training which, with the help of Peter Brooks and David Beer, had already started. Cable Franchise and Cable Legislation being monitored by BCC.

25. Another meeting in September was that of the informal association of church communication officers from the mainstream churches in England, Scotland and Ireland. Finding the opportunity for exchange of views very helpful, they have made provisional arrangements to meet again in September 1985.

GENERAL

Copyright

26. Knowing that some churches have been uncertain about copyright requirements when wishing to reproduce hymns for orders of service or supplementary hymn-books, and being aware of the amount of work sometimes involved in tracing copyright holders, we welcomed the news last year that some music publishers were meeting to try to set up a 'blanket' licence arrangement. The Committee agreed that the Secretary should write to the publishers concerned, encouraging them to pursue this idea. Eight publishing companies have now agreed a scale of charges and conditions of reproduction for the use of words material for which they hold the copyright in booklets, service sheets and overhead projection viewfoils or transparencies. We shall be happy to pass on to churches the names and addresses of participating publishers and copyright holders,

together with details of charges and copies of the application form.

Future

27. We are concerned that, in view of the 'communications explosion' we are told is about to occur, we do not at present have any staff who could benefit long-term from some of the courses on offer. For example, London University's Department of Extra-Mural Studies recently advertised a 2-day course on 'Using the New Media'. We plan to bear this in mind when seeking staff in the future.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Assembly receives this report for debate.
 2. Assembly welcomes the development of the URC logotype.
 3. Believing Video to be a more useful medium for educational purposes than film or slides, Assembly encourages Communication and Supplies to purchase video programmes for loan to churches and to give as much help as possible to churches introducing the medium.
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WORLD CHURCH & MISSION DEPARTMENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. **Dialogue and witness.** 'Dialogue is conversation. One both listens and talks. One listens not to argue, but to understand; one talks not to score points but to illuminate, to clarify, even to know oneself better'. (Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon, Director-designate of the Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations at Selly Oak, Birmingham, in the inaugural lecture). It is in that sense that the Mission and Other Faiths Committee held a first Sikh-Christian Consultation in August 1984 and plans another one. Dr Solomon continues 'Dialogue involves risk. The pursuit of truth is a risk-fraught enterprise. The alternative to truth is falsehood. Falsehood is not a risk but a certainty — the certainty of error and disaster.' It is against that background of risk and the search for understanding that a meeting with the Unification Church, known to many as 'the Moonies', took place. For it is only where there is mutual understanding that dialogue can become a means of Christian witness.

2. **The visit of the six women** from Congregational and Presbyterian Churches in South Africa to Great Britain in December and January last has been a great success in stimulating interest in the churches and people who have to witness last in a State which separates everyone on grounds of colour. The visit was made possible through the financial support of CWM and others, by the initiative of Dr Jack McKelvey and Mrs Helen Lidgett, and by the hospitality offered by individuals and churches.

3. The Reports of the Mission and Ecumenical Work Abroad Committee and the Personnel Committee demonstrate the **world-wide relationships** that the URC has with other Churches through CWM, through the men and women who minister in this country from Churches overseas and through URC ministers now serving in the Reformed Church in Hungary and the Waldensian Church in Italy. This forms a growing part of Sheila Rudofsky's work.

4. Meetings of the Department have been enlivened and informed by the reports given by the Moderator of the General Assembly and by the Departmental Secretary (Donald Elliott) on their journeys to China, India, East Germany, Burma and South Africa.

5. **In the British ecumenical context**, where no schemes for union are in prospect, a series of meetings has been held by representatives of a wide range of denominations, following resolutions of the BCC Assembly and the RC Bishops' Conference. As a result, a concerted programme of prayer, study and discussion is proposed over the next three years with the theme:-

The nature and purpose of the Church in the light of its calling in and for the world

The aim is that we should all learn from each other, from the inter-confessional conversations, from the various local ecumenical projects, from the Welsh and Scottish processes, from the overseas Churches and from the Word of God, in order to re-fashion our relationships with each other. Local churches and ecumenical councils will have the opportunity to take a full part, particularly through Lent '86, when among other possibilities many local radio stations will have a special course for house groups, responses to which will be carefully monitored. Each denomination is to be invited to prepare an expression of its understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church as it relates to other communions and shares in God's mission to the world. The material, with critical issues highlighted, would be studied at a series of regional and national meetings in 1987 which, it is hoped, would prepare recommendations to the Churches and the ecumenical bodies. The exciting dimension of this process is the breadth of participation, from Roman Catholic to Pentecostal. The World Church and Mission Department has welcomed the proposal, and sees it as a piece of groundwork in ecumenism that is needed before any new plans or negotiations can begin.

6. **Communication** is most effective when people meet those about whom they wish to learn. The families who entertained one of the women from South Africa at Christmas or who worshipped with local congregations while on holiday in Europe discovered the joys of belonging to the World Church. People who joined local interfaith groups learned the meaning of dialogue. Churches united in local ecumenical projects found renewed commitment to ecumenism and mission. These examples are a reminder that the real work of developing understanding of the World Church and of mission is done in local churches, Districts and Provinces. The Communication Section supports and encourages them with ideas, information and by creating opportunities for meeting.

7. The **'World Church and Mission Handbook'** (1984) provides information covering the full range of the Department's work. It includes ideas for action by local congregations and extensive lists of resources available locally and nationally. Every church has received a free copy via their Province and is encouraged to make full use of it.

8. There are opportunities for meeting and learning at **Conferences**. The 1984 Swanwick World Mission Conference considered ways of witnessing. The 1985 Conference will be held on 10-16 August, led by the Revd Bernard Thorogood on the theme 'Living Way'. The Departmental Conference drew together young people to think about mission and the church. Young people also met together with representatives of the Congregational Federation to consider forming a joint CWM 'Action Reflection Group'. Departmental representatives participated fully in the 9th Annual Consultation of the CWM European Region.

9. Meeting requires people to describe themselves, often in another language. The publication of German translations of 'Tell me about the URC' and 'What is the URC?' will help this. Translations into other languages will follow.

10. Learning about others leads to **prayer** for them. The Department co-operated in the production of 'Praying with the URC', the insert to the 1985 Prayer Handbook. The Secretary for Communication is Secretary to the group responsible for producing the 1986 Prayer Handbook 'The Word and the World'.

11. **Two new publications** of study and worship material for local churches became available over the last year. 'Blessed are the Poor' was produced by the CWM European Region and 'Mission and Evangelism' by the British Council of Churches, using the WCC statement of that title. The publishers are keen to know the response of local churches so they can evaluate the material. Please send your comments to the Secretary for Communication, Mrs Helen Lidgett, at the URC office.

12. **Women and Men**. The Department has begun to study the report of the BCC Working Group on the Community of Women and Men in the Church and to consider its relevance for the URC. This study will continue during the coming year, giving particular attention to the report's concern for mission and unity.

Rosalind Goodfellow, *Convener*
Donald Elliott, *Secretary*
Helen Lidgett, *Secretary for Communication*

MISSIONARY & ECUMENICAL WORK AT HOME COMMITTEE

13. **Ecumenical Initiatives**. The Committee welcomes some significant new developments.

13.1 *BCC Initiative*. Many Churches, including the Roman Catholic Church and several black-led Churches, have been asked to respond to the invitation to share over the next three years in a 'process of prayer, reflection and debate on the nature and purpose of the Church in the light of its calling in and for the world.'

13.2 *Shared Ordination Service*. A double ordination took place in Bristol Cathedral when ordinands from the URC and the Church of England were presented together, following training together in the Bristol Diocesan School of Ministry. The appropriate authorities presided in ordaining their own candidates; and the liturgy was prepared by both Churches.

13.3 *Shared oversight*. The Committee has responded encouragingly to the report which proposes an ecumenical bishop for Swindon. We are also observing with interest different models of shared oversight in Milton Keynes and Merseyside.

14. **Ecumenical Documents**. Some important documents are commended for discussion.

14.1 *'A Pattern for Local Ecumenism'* from CCLEPE (Consultative Committee for Local Ecumenical Projects in England).

14.2 *'Local Ecumenical Development'*. The Bishop of Derby's Working Party Report, approved by the General Synod of the Church of England in November 1984.

14.3 '*God's Reign and Our Unity*' the result of several years of Anglican/Reformed dialogue.

14.4 '*Finance in LEPs*' the report of CCLEPE Consultation.

15. **Consultation on City Ministry and Mission.** The Committee planned a successful consultation attended by 40 Provincial and Departmental representatives. The programme included presentations by ministers working in inner-city areas and a major contribution by Mr Raymond Fung, Evangelism Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Group discussion highlighted four major areas; ministry, support and resources, ecumenism and poverty. Some issues have been referred subsequently to the appropriate Departments and Committees. It is hoped to re-convene the consultation in one or two years' time. The consultation felt it not right to proceed at this stage with the appointment of an urban consultant.

16. **Rural Mission.** There is a growing number of invitations to the Reverend John Clarke to visit Provincial Synods, District Councils and local churches. A leaflet on the work of the Rural Consultant has been prepared by the Department to give wider publicity.

16.1 A conference of members and ministers from rural churches in the East and West Midlands was held in December 1984.

16.2 URC ministers are invited to attend one of the 48-hour ecumenical consultations at the National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh.

17. **Mission England/Mission London.** Reports from different parts of the country point to signs of new Christian life. While recognising that mass evangelism is not the only way in which we share in missionary outreach, we have been impressed by the need to give people an opportunity to respond clearly to the Gospel and believe that this has something to say to all who lead public worship.

18. **Partnership of Black and White.** Francis Hall, representing the Committee at the annual meeting in Birmingham, gave an encouraging report on this creative partnership. The Committee, noting the critical shortage of money which was severely hampering the work, increased its grant in 1984.

19. **Representatives of other Churches to URC Councils.** The Assembly is being invited to ratify the changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church to make possible the full membership of representatives from other Churches in the Councils of the URC. The detail in **Appendix A** is offered to the Assembly both to summarise the thinking behind the proposal and the method of carrying it out. Resolutions numbered 3 and 4 are presented.

20. **Methodist-URC Liaison Committee**

20.1 *URC-Methodist Draft Sharing Agreement.* This URC document has been approved by the Methodist Church and by this Committee, aware that local amendments may be made where necessary, and approved by Provinces. This draft agreement should spare churches much legal expense.

20.2 '*New Shapes of Ecumenical Growth*', with its emphasis on local response to ecumenical opportunity, has been commended to Provinces and Districts for their consideration.

20.3 *Wider Co-operation.* In addition to local co-operation, discussion is continuing about joint action in such areas as mission alongside the poor, other faiths and world development.

21. **Lutheran Council of Great Britain.** Following representation at the Synod of the German-speaking churches, the Committee has become aware of some of the difficulties facing these congregations — e.g. provision of ministry and declining numbers. In the light of the Leuenberg Agreement, the Committee has written to District Councils where there are such congregations, suggesting that, wherever possible, links might be strengthened.

22. **Scotland — Church relationships.** The group of Reformed Churches in Scotland, after a series of meetings, has prepared a statement on the mutual recognition of members and ministers. This is attached as **Appendix B**. The Committee considers that the acceptance of this statement will help forward local ecumenical co-operation in Scotland, and therefore seeks Assembly approval.

23. **Wales.** We commend the booklet 'The United Reformed Church in Wales — Its Heritage and Formation', published by the Province of Wales, and note that proposals for greater national involvement in Welsh ecumenism are likely.

24. **New Initiatives in Mission.** The Committee has made grants, totalling £16,425 to 13 projects submitted by local churches, with support of District Councils and Synods. Guidelines for grant application may be obtained from the Department.

25. **Ecumenical File.** Four issues, circulated to ecumenical officers in Provinces and Districts, have been well received. The editor, the Revd Murdoch MacKenzie, will be pleased to consider items, especially those reporting local developments, for inclusion in the pack.

John F Slow, *Convener*
Bernard Thorogood, *Secretary*

MISSIONARY & ECUMENICAL WORK ABROAD COMMITTEE

PARTNERSHIP IN MISSION

26. **The Whole Church**

26.1 How can the resources of the whole Church be fully shared ecumenically so that every Church gives and every Church receives, and genuine partnership in mission become a reality?

26.2 This question has been on the World Council of Churches' agenda for some time and in the last year we have been invited by the Conference For World Mission of the BCC to participate in the discussion about the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources programme. The call from the WCC to its member Churches is for "a renewed commitment to the sharing of resources ecumenically".

26.3 In response we have cited the CWM model which is transforming the traditional donor/receiver relationship between regional Churches around the world into a creative partnership in which there is mutual giving and receiving.

26.4 It is important, and we have made the point strongly, that Resource Sharing implies more than the sharing of money and, whilst it is necessary for the "haves" to be generous in sharing with the "have-nots", the discussion should begin not with money but with how we might share, for example, theological insights, ideas and experience in such a way that we all receive.

26.5 CWM itself is soon to withdraw from full membership of the Conference For World Mission, as was always envisaged. The latter represents British mission bodies, so the URC is a member, but CWM is withdrawing because it has a global, not a British, base.

27. **Our Own Church**

27.1 Meantime the year has seen further fruitful development of our own partnership with others,
(a) **through CWM**

27.2 *South Africa.* The Departmental Secretary visited South Africa for the Assemblies of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa and the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa. Unfortunately the proposed union between the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches failed to materialise, insufficient majorities having been obtained in the voting of presbyteries. Meantime the politics of Apartheid continue to oppress the black and coloured citizens of South Africa and recent constitutional changes are cosmetic rather than real. The visit of six South African women to the URC for a four-week period had a considerable impact on all the churches who received them and contributed much to our understanding of the injustices under which the majority of people in their country have to exist.

27.3 The URC was among the Churches which nominated Bishop Tutu for the Nobel Peace Prize. We share the hope which his award and subsequent appointment as Bishop of Johannesburg has brought to his people and we also hear his call to us to boycott the proponents of Apartheid by supporting economic sanctions against that country.

27.4 *South Asia.* In his report to the Committee following his visit to South and North India and Burma the Departmental Secretary notes that in South Asia the Churches have a more mature approach to *evangelism and development* than those in the West, perceiving them as complementary, proceeding hand in hand.

27.5 The Assembly Moderator and his wife included the Church of North India in their Moderatorial itinerary. They had a strenuous programme of travel and official engagements, one of which was sharing in the consecration of the Bishop of Nagpur where the Moderator read the Gospel and participated in the laying-on of hands.

27.6 *Taiwan.* We rejoice with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan that Dr C. M. Kao was released on parole from prison during the year, although others remain in prison.

27.7 The Tainan Theological College, which was threatened with closure, has now received reassurance from the Government and is functioning normally.

27.8 The Deputy Moderator of the Church, Dr Chen Po Cheng, visited us during the year and we shall be represented by the Departmental Secretary at the 1985 Inter-Church Consultation when the agenda will include consideration of the relationship of Taiwanese Churches with Christians in mainland China.

(b) Friends of the Church in China

27.9 This is an ecumenical fellowship of Christians formed in the Autumn of 1984 with George Hood as Chairman and Bernard Thorogood as Treasurer. It aims to deepen the understanding already in existence between Christians in Britain and in China. Most of the activities of the Friends will be organised regionally and will include meetings, study and fellowship groups.

27.10 It is open to congregations and individuals to join the Group, for which there is a membership fee. The Department has taken up membership.

(c) Europe

27.11 Our close and increasingly valuable links with Churches in East and West Europe have been well maintained with numerous exchange visits being made, including an official visit by the Assembly Moderator to the Evangelical Church of the Union in the German Democratic Republic.

28. **The Practice of Partnership.** As well as containing full information about the Department and CWM the World Church and Mission Handbook includes ideas on the possibility of YOUR congregation or District or Province strengthening the concept of Partnership through the twinning of congregations and through Provincial and District relationships with a regional Church in another country. We commend it for your consideration.

Derek Cole, *Convener*
Donald Elliott, *Secretary*

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION

29. **Changes in CWM Secretariat.** In August 1984 Revd Brian Bailey accepted a call to become minister of Augustine Congregational Church, Edinburgh. The Executive Committee obtained the approval of Council members to strengthen CWM's Communication Unit by appointing two Secretaries in his place. So Mr Dick Perera, a Sri Lankan with extensive experience of the print medium and of broadcasting, has become Secretary for Communication. He is backed up by Miss Eileen Thompson as Associate Secretary for Communication; her experience has been in the Bible Society and with Lutterworth Press and she will concentrate on audio-visual aids and on possible expansion into video work.

30. Mr Barrie Scopes is now Secretary for Administration, and the search is continuing for a General Secretary, preferably from outside the European Region who will be responsible for Education in Mission, and will be freed from routine office work to read, reflect, write, and visit CWM's member Churches, speaking and consulting and cultivating ecumenical links.

31. **Team Visit to Scotland.** Mr Prechard Basaiawmoit from North East India, Mrs Meleta Faaalo from Tuvalu, Dr Pat Munroe from Guyana and Miss Elizabeth Streefland from the Netherlands formed a team to visit the Congregational Union of Scotland in September/October 1984. This was in line with the 1980 Team Visit to the URC. The CUS is now making use of their report which was entitled 'Partners in the Struggle for a Better Tomorrow'.

32. **Consultations.** In May 1984 a Consultation which focussed on Ministry with the Urban Poor

was held in Calcutta for CWM's three member Churches in India. Other Regional Consultations for the Africa, European and Pacific Regions have been reflecting on priorities for mission in their Regions and on ways of strengthening partnership in mission.

33. Also a series of Youth Consultations have been held — in Britain, Taiwan, Malawi and Fiji — to enable young people to learn about and participate in CWM's activities. Action/Reflection Groups are being set up and an International Youth Event is planned for June 1985 for about thirty-five people, including one from each of CWM's 28 member Churches. This will be held in the Netherlands in June 1985 at the same time as CWM's biennial Council meeting, and there will be some sharing of activities between the two gatherings. It has been decided to appoint an Associate Secretary for Education in Mission to carry on work in this field after Miss Jet den Hollander's term of service ends in August 1985.

34. Financial Outlook. As CWM guarantees its block grants and Special Grants to its member Churches in their own currencies, the falling value of sterling means an increased cost to CWM. This is off-set, to some extent, by devaluation in a few countries, but in those countries, such as Jamaica, people face a very high rate of inflation. Latterly CWM has not been able to approve all the requests received for Special Grants, so the promised increase in URC's contribution in line with British inflation is greatly valued.

Barrie Scopes, *Acting General Secretary*

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

35. Much of the work of the Personnel Committee is to arrange care for a variety of people coming to this country or going from this country in many differing situations; to work; to study; on an exploratory visit; to share fellowship and learn from one another.

36. Within CWM the URC is sending and receiving missionaries, but URC is now also sending people to Europe and receiving people from Europe and the USA. The nature of the CWM partnership and other experience continually ask us to think about what we mean by 'mission' and being a 'missionary' and the committee is at present studying missionary motives. We are learning all the time about receiving people here and the committee has now produced some 'Guidelines' for any congregation hoping to welcome a minister from overseas.

37. We are being challenged by CWM to explore new types of exchange of personnel: various forms of short-term exchange; church-to-church contacts; team visits and youth involvement. One such scheme is the one-month experience within the URC of a full-time church worker from Papua New Guinea in completion of his graduate study programme at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey. Similarly outside CWM a three-month work placement has been arranged for a 'vikar' from the Palatinate as part of his training for the ministry.

38. This year URC has two out of the sixteen participants in the CWM Training in Mission Programme — Marlene Brown and Anne Walkling.

39. This year the URC has supported three scholarship holders at St Andrew's Hall, two from Korea and one from Ghana.

40. People appointed to serve overseas:-

- (a) through CWM — Miss Alison Gibbs: *Papua New Guinea*
Mr Michael Hall: *Papua New Guinea*
Mr Keith and Mrs Gillian Peace-Brown: *Zambia*
Miss Judith Rogers: *Papua New Guinea (re-appointment)*
- (b) Others — Miss Marie Auld (URC/MCOD): *United Mission to Nepal*
The Revd John Humphreys: *Reformed Church in Hungary*

41. Candidates in training at St Andrew's Hall for service overseas:

The Revd John and Mrs Mary Burgess: *Gleadless URC, Sheffield*

42. Missionaries who have completed their service with Churches through CWM:-

Miss Rose Chue: *Papua New Guinea*
Miss Isabel Hathaway: *Papua New Guinea*

Miss Katie Head: *Taiwan*

Miss Frances Williams: *Papua New Guinea*

43. People serving the URC, recruited through the World Church and Mission Department from overseas churches:-

The Revd Anthony and Mrs Beatrice Beeko: Presbyterian Church of Ghana:-
London Ghanaian Chaplaincy

The Revd Chong Kah Geh and Mrs Shirley Chong: Presbyterian Church in Malaysia:-
London Chinese Chaplaincy and minister of the London Chinese URC

The Revd Roderick and Mrs Wilhelmina Hewitt: United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman:-
Pastoral ministry at South Aston, Birmingham

The Revd Dr Ferenc Kenez: Reformed Church in Hungary:-
Pastoral ministry in Central London District

The Revd Ward and Mrs Ruth Murray: Presbyterian Church USA:-
Pastoral ministry at Saffron Walden and Great Chishill, with Barley, Essex

The Revd Hakim B Singh Rahi and Mrs Annie Rahi: Church of North India:-
Pastoral ministry at Winson Green, Birmingham

44. Students from overseas supported by the URC:-

Mrs Lee Hyun Sook: Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea:-
St Andrew's Hall

The Revd Su Su-Jen: Presbyterian Church in Taiwan:-
St Andrew's Hall

The Revd Symon Atsu Toppar: Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana:-
St Andrew's Hall

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

Mary Marsden, *Convener*
Sheila Rudofsky, *Secretary*

ST. ANDREW'S HALL: REPORT FOR 1983/84

46. During the Academic year 1983/1984 the College was full. Major repairs to the roof were carried out, our financial reserve and major repair fund were both increased and the books were balanced.

47. The present year began with a student overflow; some students had to spend their first few weeks in digs before College rooms became available. In 1983/1984 the community included people from 28 countries taking a variety of courses in the Federation. Over half of them were from our three sponsoring bodies and were mainly involved in the Training in Mission programme or Church-related Westhill courses. A few were doing English and Development as well as the occasional University programme.

48. During the year a number of Baptist and URC ministers on sabbatical leave from their churches spent time in the College and made significant contributions to the life of the community. In the Summer term there were twenty participants taking part in weekly study modules, amongst them were Baptist and URC ministers and Christian Aid Area Secretaries.

49. Very slowly St Andrew's and the Federation resources are being built into the youth and the community training programmes of the URC. One day I hope that the same will be said about URC ministerial training. The future home ministry would be strengthened by exposure to the international, ecumenical and missiological mix that St Andrew's in Selly Oak provides.

HD Beeby, *Principal*

MISSION & OTHER FAITHS COMMITTEE

50. Part of the Committee's work this year has been to keep a watchful eye on moves towards legislation which might affect religious freedom. In May 1984 the European Parliament accepted

a report which proposed a voluntary code of conduct for New Religious Movements, and in September a Private Member's Bill was introduced into the Commons with the same aim of controlling their activities. No legislation is in prospect at the moment, but further moves may be made. While the right of individuals to leave a movement and to maintain contact with their families should certainly be safeguarded, legislation directed specifically at religious organisations would be disturbing, and any which singled out New Religious Movements would be discriminatory.

51. An attempt to amend the Slaughter of Animals Act by means of a Private Member's Bill was unsuccessful. Again, the concern for animal rights and welfare is important, but any reform which outlawed slaughter according to Jewish or Muslim law would have serious implications for those communities.

52. Last August the Committee arranged the first Sikh-Christian consultation to be held in this country, and a second, on the theme 'Spirituality and its practical implications', will be held at the same time this year. By the time Assembly meets a further Jewish-Christian consultation will have been held, on the theme 'The limits of religious freedom'. Members of the URC has asked whether the Committee 'preaches the gospel' at these consultations. The answer is that they are conducted according to the principles of dialogue set out in the BCC publication *Guidelines for Dialogue in Britain*, as Assembly agreed in 1982. There is greater opportunity for Christians to witness to their faith than there is in most company, but it comes as the result of patiently seeking understanding and trust. The Committee however is glad to hear from members of the URC who do not share its approach but would like to have it explained more fully.

53. Four members of the Committee have had a conversation with representatives of the Unification Church ('the Moonies'). It was an opportunity to hear what members of the movement themselves had to say about their reasons for joining, the accusations of brainwashing, the place of the Revd Sun Myung Moon in their beliefs, the significance of marriage to chosen partners and their attitude towards family ties. The conversation was undertaken in the belief that no movement should be judged on hearsay but that whenever possible both sides of a story should be heard.

54. The booklet which the Committee has prepared in conjunction with the Communications Group to assist Provinces and Districts to develop their relations with people of other faiths is now available. It is called *Journey of Discovery*, and it encourages the URC to make fuller use of the services of members of the Committee. The demand for *Christian and Jews in Britain* has been such that it has been necessary to reprint it.

55. The Committee draws attention to the publication by the Church of England Board of Mission and Unity of *Towards a Theology for Inter-Faith Dialogue*. This goes more fully into the theological issues raised by dialogue than the Committee's own publications have been able to do hitherto.

56. For some time past, the Committee has wondered whether Christian-Marxist dialogue should be part of its concern. Having discovered that no other committee either of the URC or the BCC had it on their agenda, the Committee decided to seek a consultant who might discover what was being done in this field and suggest what action might be taken by the URC. We are happy to report that Mr Gethin Rhys, of Nuffield College, Oxford, has agreed to do this for us and has begun work.

57. At the 1984 Assembly the Committee undertook to see whether it could offer the URC some guidance on Freemasonry. Shortly afterwards it became known that the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church had been asked by Conference to give similar guidance. The Mission and Other Faiths Committee therefore asked whether it might send an observer to the Methodist working party. The Methodists generously agreed, and the Committee's representative has been fully involved in the preparation of the report. If it is adopted by the Methodist Conference in 1985, the Committee will decide whether to commend it to the URC and, if so, will make arrangements for it to be made available.

Roger Tomes, *Convener*
John Parry, *Secretary*

APPENDIX A

REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS FROM OTHER CHURCHES IN URC COUNCILS

1. As the Assembly votes to ratify proposals brought to the 1984 Assembly, the World Church and Mission Department offers suggestions on implementation.
2. The Department recalls the nature and aim of the proposal. There is a distinction between visitors from other Churches whom we have always welcomed and will continue to do, and this proposed category of voting membership. The aim of the proposal is **not** to ensure that every sister denomination has a vote in every URC council. That would produce a very unproportionate voting element in our District Councils. The aim is to give fresh reality to our mutual responsibility within the one Church of God. It is a symbol, but an effective symbol, of the unity already given to us by the Holy Spirit and a pledge that we shall not drift farther apart.
3. In all cases, invitations are made entirely at the discretion of the council concerned, are issued in its name and for such duration as it decides. When a council decides to begin this implementation, there should be a planned rotation so that all main sister churches are included over a period of years.
4. In the invitations for General Assembly membership there will be overlap with existing visitor lists. It is suggested that in such cases one person in the visiting delegation would be invited to be a voting member, but the delegation would continue as before.
5. Those who come to URC councils as members in this way should be treated as all other members as regards expenses.
6. Bearing in mind the size of each council and the geographical area covered, with the spread of denominations, it is recommended that initially the maximum numbers should be District Council 4, Provincial Synod 8, General Assembly 12.
7. The World Church and Mission Department recommends that General Assembly invitations be made as follows:-

Baptist Union, Church of England, Church of Scotland, Congregational Federation, Congregational Union of Scotland, Methodist Church, Moravian Church, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Presbyterian Church of Wales, Roman Catholic Church, Union of Welsh Independents, one black-led Church.

It is also suggested that these invitations be for the two years 1986 and 1987 after which a fresh list be brought forward to secure a measure of rotation.

APPENDIX B

Joint Statement by representatives of the Church of Scotland, the Congregational Union of Scotland, the Synod of the Methodist Church in Scotland, the United Free Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom.

on

MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS AND MINISTRIES, AND RELATED MATTERS IN SCOTLAND

Without prejudice to the agreed aim of the Multilateral Church Conversation in Scotland to formulate a basis and plan of union which could be accepted by all the churches participating in it, and without questioning the existing mutual arrangements for the transference of ministers between churches, we declare that there exists between our churches such mutual trust and consensus on essentials that we are able:-

- (a) to recognise all members of these churches who are in good standing with their own church to be true members of the body of Christ, welcome to holy communion in any of the churches, and eligible for transference of membership to the roll of any of the churches solely by certificate,
- (b) to recognise that those within these churches who have been duly ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, or to other ministries which the churches hold in common, exercise those preaching, pastoral and sacramental ministries within

the Holy Catholic Church of which all these churches are part,

- (c) to recognise that ministers of all these churches may exercise all aspects of their ministries, including the celebration of the sacraments, in any of these churches, when invited to do so and in accordance with the recognised procedures of these churches.

We therefore propose:-

to agree and recognise a common membership certificate

1. to urge the ministers of our churches always to work closely with one another, supporting and co-operating with one another in the conduct of worship, proclamation of the gospel, meeting of pastoral needs and Christian service to the world,
2. to urge the members, ministers and local governing bodies of our churches to implement as fully as possible the commitment of our churches nationally to the development of local ecumenical structures of church life and to seek new forms of ecumenical partnership in worship, work and witness,
3. to explore at national level new ways of working together and growing together, whether bilaterally or multilaterally, and using fully the opportunities provided by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Multilateral Church Conversation in Scotland, the Scottish Churches Council and the British Council of Churches.

Finally, we ask members of all Christian churches and of the wider community to take note of this open declaration of our commitment to one another within the larger endeavour of the whole church of Jesus Christ to 'attain to the unity inherent in our faith' (Ephesians 4:13).

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report of the World Church and Mission Department for debate.
2. The Assembly confirms URC participation in the inter-church programme on the nature and purpose of the Church, encourages our members to share in it at all levels of church life, wherever possible through ecumenical groups, and notes that Lent '86 will provide widespread opportunity for study and prayer together.
3. The Assembly agrees that the maximum number of representatives of other Churches who may be invited to become voting members of URC councils be as follows:-

District Council	4
Provincial Synod	8
General Assembly	12
4. The Assembly authorises the World Church and Mission Department to issue invitations to other Churches as set out in Appendix A, and to vary that list in the event of Churches declining the invitation and to secure a measure of rotation in future years.
5. The Assembly endorses the statement on the mutual recognition of members and ministers prepared by the Reformed Churches in Scotland.
6. The Assembly notes with pleasure the appointment of several URC ministers and lay people recently to positions with Churches overseas, and requests local churches to make better known the staffing needs of our partner Churches as advertised in CWM's 'NewShare' and from time to time in 'Reform'.
7. The Assembly rejoices in the visit made to the URC by six women from three sister Churches in South Africa, thanks those in South Africa who made the arrangements there and those who welcomed them into homes and congregations here.
8. The Assembly encourages local churches, Provinces and especially Districts, to create opportunities for personal exchange within the ecumenical fellowship, drawing on suggestions contained in the new World Church and Mission Handbook.

9. The Assembly endorses the principle of the WCC Ecumenical Sharing of Resources programme, and charges the World Church and Mission Department with working out, with the Council for World Mission and others, how local ideas and experience in mission and spirituality can be so shared by partner Churches across the world that all may give and all receive.
 10. The Assembly records its appreciation for the convenership of the Missionary and Ecumenical Work Abroad Committee by the Revd Derek Cole from 1979 to 1985 in helping the United Reformed Church deepen its commitment to world-wide outreach and fellowship.
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FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Convener: Mr Fred Brooman

Secretary: Mr Clem Frank

1. **Receipts and Payments of Local Churches.** For several years, we have published with our report to Assembly an analysis of the receipts and payments of local churches. This was derived from the financial information sheets which were completed by Church Treasurers primarily for the purpose of arriving at the amount of each local church's contribution to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund. In many Provinces and Districts, this method of fixing Maintenance of the Ministry contributions is not now used and we have decided that we are no longer justified in asking all local Treasurers to do this work or in spending money on the central processing of the information. Those Provinces and Districts which still need financial information sheets will continue to call for them but there will be no annual request from the central office and consequently it is not possible to provide a countrywide analysis of the receipts and payments of local churches such as has appeared in Appendices 1 and 2 of the recent reports of the Department.
2. **Contributions to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and the Unified Appeal 1984.** The budgets for 1984 approved by Assembly 1983 (Record pages 72 and 73) provided for expenditure which was to be financed by contributions of £5,590,000 to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and £1,157,000 to the Unified Appeal. The contributions received are shown in Appendix 1. They fall short of the budgetted figures by £5,000 for MoM and £15,310 for the Unified Appeal but these are not large amounts in relation to the total budgets and we are again very grateful to local Churches for their loyal support and to Provincial and District offices for all their work. (Resolution 3.)
3. **Expenditure on Central Activities 1984 — The General Fund.** The accounts for 1984 had not been finalised at the time of writing this report, but we expect the expenditure on the General Fund to be about £1,300,000, an increase of £121,000 over 1983. The comparative figures adjusted for inflation are shown in Appendix 2.
4. **Stipends of Ministers Employed Centrally.** Information about the stipends and other conditions of service of Ministers employed centrally is given in Appendix 3.
5. **Accounts for 1984.** The accounts for 1984 will be published separately when the audit has been completed and will be carried to the Record of Assembly in the usual way.

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd John Waller

Secretary: The Revd George Hooper

6. Mr Donald McMurdie resigned in April 1984 and the Committee placed on record thanks for his service during his two year tenure in the Chair. The Committee welcomed the Revd John Waller to succeed him.
7. **Progress of the Fund.** The Committee continues to be grateful to local churches, and to District Council and Synod committees, for the generous and hopeful way in which they support the work of the Maintenance of the Ministry. This is reflected not only in a satisfactory financial situation but also in good personal relationships. Our income for 1984 was almost exactly the amount budgetted. Expenditure was £66,000 less than budgetted, this sum being approximately 1% of total income.
8. From the balance for 1984 and the balance brought forward from the previous year we have allocated £100,000 to the Ministers' Pension Fund, to reduce the actuarial deficit and the cost of future funding, and added £30,000 to the Stipend Payments Reserve and £7,000 to the General Reserve, in order to maintain our reserves at the same real value in relation to the total budget of the Fund.
9. **Procedure on Stipends.** Last year, on the resolution of the Eastern Province, Assembly agreed to change its procedure on stipends (Record of Assembly 1984, page 20). Following this procedure the Committee has decided to raise the basic stipend by approximately 6% to £5,316 p.a. from 1 July 1985.

10. In reaching this conclusion the Committee has been furnished with information on earnings, prices, and the State retirement pension. We have been able to make comparisons with amounts paid to ministers of other denominations. It has also seemed important to us to consider the financial consequences of our decision on the contributions required from local churches. These different factors led us quite clearly to our decision.

11. **Budget.** We have prepared a budget for 1986 in full awareness of the problems of planning so far ahead. At the moment we envisage a further increase in the basic stipend in July 1986 of 5% but we shall keep that under careful review in the next twelve months (Resolution 4). The detailed budget is included in the Book of Accounts.

12. **Review of the Basic Stipend.** The Eastern Province has recently furnished the Committee with the results of a confidential survey it conducted into the financial affairs of ministers. It is difficult to evaluate the conclusions of any such survey as the circumstances of ministers vary so widely. However we shall continue to try to assess the general adequacy of the stipend level as well as seeing what increase is necessary because of inflation.

13. **Heat and Light.** During the year the Committee has given lengthy and serious consideration to the resolution of the 1984 General Assembly concerning the heating and lighting allowance at present paid to ministers (Record page 21):-

“Assembly, noting that heating and lighting allowances were introduced during a pay freeze period, and that such allowances do create problems in ecumenical situations, make the use of ministers in new or missionary situations more difficult, reduce the pensions payable to ministers and tend to cause difficulties in local pastorates, requests the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee to examine such allowances and to bring to the Assembly its opinion as to whether such allowances should remain a permanent part of ministerial remuneration or whether they should be replaced by an increase in stipend.”

14. The opinion of the Committee is that such allowances should remain a permanent part of ministerial remuneration and should not be replaced by any increase in stipend.

15. In reaching this opinion the Committee benefitted greatly from the knowledge and experience of its Provincial representatives. They were able to assess the problems in ecumenical situations, the difficulty in using ministers in new or missionary situations, and difficulties that can arise in local pastorates. Experience has shown that these problems and difficulties can be overcome, and indeed our discussion across Provinces may well have helped that process.

16. The financial consequence of a change, on local churches, would be severe and not uniform. Contributions would have to be increased to cover (a) the heat and light element added to the stipend, (b) an increased contribution to the Pension Fund, and (c) an increased subvention to meet the actuarial deficit in the Pension Fund. In the year the change was made local church contributions might have to increase by 20% in addition to the inflation increase. Whilst churches would no longer pay manse heating and lighting bills, this would only partly offset the contribution increase. Other churches would have nothing to set against this major increase.

17. **Pensions.** The Committee is concerned about the effect of the present system on pensions. On retirement a minister has to pay heat and light bills, as well as other housing costs whilst the pension is related only to the basic stipend. However, we feel that the best way to deal with this is to have a general review of our present pension arrangements.

18. An actuarial valuation of the URC Ministers Pension Fund as at 31 December 1984 has been put in hand and the results are awaited. In addition to the general position of the fund, investigations have been requested to determine whether:-

- a. pensions in respect of service by ex-Congregational ministers prior to 1971 can be increased to a more realistic level;
- b. the general level of pensions now emerging, and to emerge in the future, is satisfactory.

19. The Committee has noted with concern some reports of Governmental enquiries into pension matters, and will need to study carefully any tax changes introduced in the Budget or by subsequent legislation, as they may well affect the costs of providing pensions.

20. For many years ministers leaving pastoral charge to serve in authorised participating bodies have been enabled to continue as full members of the Fund. When, as in recent years, the deficiency in the Fund has been met by large additional annual payments from the MoM Fund (at present £426,000 p.a.) there has been no provision in the Rules to require the participating bodies to meet a proper portion of the deficiency. A new rule will be brought to Assembly (Resolution 5) to correct this position.

21. Discussions have commenced with the Charity Commissioners regarding the possible division of the Pastors Superannuation Fund and the Pastors Widows Fund between the URC, the Congregational Federation and other interested parties. The object would be to settle more appropriate schemes for all ministers and widows, whilst having full regard to the charitable objects for which the money was provided.

22. **Links with Ministries' Department.** The Committee is aware that decisions it has to take do from time to time raise major matters of principle. We therefore suggested to the Assembly Executive that there should be cross-representation between the Committee and Ministries' Department and this was agreed.

CHURCH BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Maurice Husselbee
Secretary: Mr Derick Banwell

23. Last year's report was concerned primarily with the policy then being introduced to counter the financial problems which faced us. The scale of grants and loans made to churches from 1978 to 1983 had led to a serious depletion of reserves and the Committee was compelled to curtail its activities. It was agreed however that all promises of grants and loans made during the period prior to the introduction of the new policy would be honoured.

24. Very few applications for financial assistance were received during 1984. All Provinces have received details of the present policy with regard to loans for building works and consultants' fees.

25. The Assembly is advised of the following figures of cash flow:-

ALL FIGURES REPRESENT £'000s

Year	Advance made			Receipts			Total	Net Outflow
	Grants	Loans	Total	Loans	Interest	Other		
1979	48	97	145	81	5	56	142	3
1980	68	185	253	87	10	78	175	78
1981	97	138	235	35	16	61	112	123
1982	126	128	254	77	21	57	155	99
1983	113	373	486	129	31	145	305	181
1984	20	48	68	124	38	71	233	(165)
Total	472	969	1441	533	121	468	1122	319

Already in January 1985 applications have been received and dealt with for loans for building works amounting to £120,000 and loans for professional fees amounting to £32,600.

26. A recent survey revealed that about 60%-70% of our church buildings were 90 years old or more. Even when repairs and maintenance have been carried out on a regular and thorough basis the task facing a local church may well be very great as repairs or replacements become more costly and extensive. In a number of cases the present building may be ill suited for current needs and DoE "listing" may well make the situation more complex. Careful consultation and long term planning is called for in such cases.

27. The advisory services of the Committee have continued and these have been used by the Provinces and individual churches during the year.

28. Following a recommendation made in last year's report a Special Property Conference was held in September 1984. It was the general consensus that it was a very useful occasion and allowed for the exchange of valuable information and discussion. Similar conferences could be held in future if necessary. Copies of papers and notes relating to the proceedings in September 1984 have been sent to all Provinces and additional copies can be provided if required.

29. In the light of the changes in policy that were necessary in 1983 and 1984, the Committee has considered what its role should be in future, bearing in mind its limited resources and the development of property committees in the Provinces. It requests Assembly to approve the adoption of the following as its terms of reference (Resolution 6):-

- a. Concern for the URC's interests in national issues relating to Church property including action through the Churches' Main Committee.
- b. Advice to Provinces on general matters concerning Church property.
- c. Consultation from time to time with Provincial representatives.
- d. At the request of a Province, advice on how specific problems relating to a local church's property might best be handled.
- e. Management of the Church Buildings Fund including
 - setting guide-lines for the making of grants and loans, for charging interest on loans and for deciding terms of repayment, and
 - dealing with applications for loans and grants by reference to these guide-lines.
- f. Liaison with the National Projects Advisory Group.

30. The initial guide-lines for management of the Church Buildings Fund will be those indicated in our reports to Assembly 1983 and 1984 as follows:-

- a. Assistance will be given to those projects recommended by Provinces which the Committee deems appropriate in all the circumstances.
- b. To encourage churches to employ professional consultants to advise in property matters, loans will be made of 50% of professional fees, subject to a maximum of £10,000. Such loans will be interest free for the first two years. Thereafter the loan will be repayable by quarterly instalments of not less than 4% of the sum advanced and the balance outstanding will bear interest at 7%.
- c. Applications for loans for building work will be considered only if the total cost of the project will not be less than £30,000. Loans will be limited to not more than 50% of the total cost of the project and no loan will exceed £50,000. Repayment will normally be by quarterly instalments of not less than 4% of the sum advanced, and the balance outstanding will bear interest at 7%. The Committee's resources will be sufficient to finance only a few loans each year on this basis.
- d. Current resources will not permit the making of further grants.

31. The Plan of Committees provides that the Committee consists of twelve persons plus the Property Consultant. It is not considered that the new role requires any change in the constitution and steps are being taken to fill existing vacancies.

32. Mr Derick Banwell has served as Honorary Secretary to the Committee for seven years and retires at this Assembly. During his period of office the Committee's functions have changed and expanded remarkably and Mr Banwell himself has visited many local Churches in all parts of the country to advise on property problems. We place on record our deep thanks for his quite outstanding service.

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSING COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd David Skidmore
Secretary: Mr Bob Carruthers

33. At the beginning of the year the Committee received the resignation of the Chairman, Mr Harold Greening. The Committee wishes to place on record its thanks to Mr Greening for his long and willing service during which he made a significant contribution to the cause of retirement housing.

34. Revd David Skidmore was appointed Chairman in succession to Mr Greening and during the year Mr George Yuille (North Western) was appointed to the Committee.

35. The 1982 surveys covering the 10 years to 1992 indicated that in 1984 some 19 retiring ministers would seek assistance with retirement housing, with a further 27 retiring ministers applying in 1985.

36. In 1984 the Committee provided housing for 21 retiring ministers and 2 widows; in addition 2 retired ministers and 1 widow were rehoused in properties more suited to their requirements. Once again the General Assembly Resolution of 1979 has been honoured; there were no delays in the provision of housing and no qualifying applicant was refused assistance.
37. The Committee in consultation with the General Secretary and the Provincial Moderators has reviewed and clarified the “guide-lines” governing the provision of retirement housing for ministers and the widows or widowers of ministers in the light of the resources available and the numbers needing help. These guide-lines, copies of which are to be sent to every Minister and District Council, are set out in Appendix 4.
38. The 1984 housing demand was met by the purchase of 15 houses, 5 bungalows and 4 flats and the allocation of one vacant property and one property received by bequest. Joint purchases were made in the case of 16 of the properties, 11 involving the tenant and 5 involving a Province.
39. During the year 10 properties were sold and at the year end 2 further properties had been sold subject to contract; all these properties were in localities in which there was no current or immediate future demand for Society housing. At the year end the Society owned and/or managed 160 properties of which 2 were vacant and 4 occupied by sitting tenants who have occupied the properties since before they were assigned to the Society on bequest.
40. In 1984 the Society received £83,996 in donations including covenants and £32,211 in bequests. Further assistance was given to the Society by way of loans; that from the General Funds of the Church increasing by £72,000 to £147,000 and in addition £112,500 was loaned from the monies received by the United Reformed Church in Grants from Memorial Hall Trust.
41. It has been possible once again to finance purchases with the help of loans from the funds available to the Treasurership Committee. It is hoped that this form of finance will continue to be available, as necessary, in the years to come, but it is important that the call on these limited resources should be reduced as far as possible, so that they are freed for other purposes.
42. The Committee hopes therefore for increased donations from churches and individuals and looks to Provincial Synods and District Councils to encourage regular giving, wherever possible on a group basis. We are grateful for all those who already make regular contributions and for those who have made generous provision for retirement housing by way of legacies and bequests.
43. There was no increase in rent during 1984. Rental income from Society-owned properties during the year amounted to £38,526, some £9,472 less than expenditure on maintenance, repair, insurance and administration. This reduced the balance in the Property Management Account to £18,126 at the year end. The Committee has decided there will be no increase in rents during 1985 and that the level of rent payable from 1 January 1986 will be decided at their July 1985 meeting in the light of expected expenditure on repairs, maintenance, insurance and administration for the years 1985 and 1986.
44. Contact was maintained with all tenants in retirement properties with visits made under the oversight arrangements in the Provinces. In addition the Principal Officers visited 59 tenants and 6 applicants.

WELFARE & EMERGENCIES COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd Michael Whitehorn
Secretary: The Revd Bernard Thorogood

45. The Committee has again met three times to consider various cases of personal need among ministers, ministers' widows and their families, and we are grateful for the opportunity of helping in most cases through the resources entrusted to us by previous investments in the various funds available.
46. By the nature of our concerns, we cannot report in detail. Most of our grants are made to ministers and their families, as only two of the funds are available for others. We try to give help to ministers' widows at the time of their bereavement; to make a Christmas gift to them and to some retired ministers; to offer other help in times of special crisis in any family, and to help with holidays as required, and in making grants towards school clothing and other educational needs for their children. Many of these requests come to us through the Provincial Moderators to whom

we are grateful for their co-operation, and we suggest that this is usually the best channel for such applications.

47. The Committee will be sorry to lose the Revd Michael Stolton, as well as Mrs J Selwyn Roberts who resigned during the year. We are grateful to them for all their service, and especially to the General Secretary and the Chief Accountant for their work for this Committee as in so many other fields.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Assembly receives the report of the Finance and Administration Department for debate.
2. Assembly adopts the accounts for the year ended 31 December 1984.
3. Assembly notes the contributions made for 1984 to the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund and the Unified Appeal and thanks all those who have provided money, advocacy and administration.
4. Assembly approves the Maintenance of the Ministry Budget for 1986, noting that it allows for an increase of 5% in ministers' stipends payable from 1 July 1986.
5. Assembly approves the following additional wording to Rule 10 of the United Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Fund:-
 "Following such advice and such authority during any period in which the Committee makes special annual contributions to meet a deficiency disclosed by actuarial valuation a participating body shall also make special annual contributions at such rate and for such a period as the Actuary shall deem to be appropriate to the membership of that particular body."
6. Assembly approves the terms of reference of the Church Buildings Committee as set out in paragraph 29 of the Department's Report.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 1

Contributions to the Maintenance of the Ministry and Unified Appeal 1984

Province	Maintenance of the Ministry		Unified Appeal	
	£	% of amount promised	£	% of target
1. Northern	465,000	100	78,714	82
2. North Western	530,000	100	105,080	100
3. Mersey	400,000	100	78,377	92
4. Yorkshire	390,000	100	81,878	95
5. East Midlands	321,000	100	70,744	100
6. West Midlands	445,000	100	93,366	101
7. Eastern	424,000	100	89,125	101
8. South Western	350,000	100	78,529	102
9. Wessex	540,000	100	114,882	103
10. Thames North	650,000	100	135,962	101
11. Southern	810,000	100	178,133	100
12. Wales	<u>260,000</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>35,499</u>	<u>100</u>
Total from Provinces	5,585,000	<u>100</u>	1,140,289	<u>98</u>
Other receipts	—		1,401	
			<u>1,141,690</u>	
Amounts required by Budget	<u>5,590,000</u>		<u>1,157,000</u>	
Shortfall	<u>£5,000</u>		<u>£15,310</u>	

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 2

Expenditure on Central Activities

The expenditure on central activities financed mainly by the Unified Appeal is set out below and in the right-hand column we have shown it in terms of 1980 £s, i.e. adjusted for inflation by reference to the Retail Price Index.

	Expenditure £	At 1980 Prices £
1980	915,000	915,000
1981	985,000	871,000
1982	1,075,000	849,000
1983	1,178,000	887,000
1984 (provisional)	1,300,000	930,000

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 3

Ministers employed centrally — Stipends and Conditions of Service from July 1984

- 1. Provincial Moderators.** The stipend of Provincial Moderators is £6,696 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 cost 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 £6,696 per annum for Assistant Secretaries to £9,936 for the General Secretary (plus any children's allowances). The other arrangements are similar to those for Provincial Moderators but fares between home and Tavistock Place are met by Ministers.
- 3. Preaching Fees and Travelling Expenses.** When Moderators and Staff Secretaries visit a church or attend a meeting in the course of their official duties, any fee or reimbursement of travelling expenses paid to the Officer is accounted for to the central funds of the Church.
- 4. Academic Staff at Westminster College.** Stipends range from £6,696 to £7,332 per annum (plus any children's allowances). The housing provisions are the same as those for Provincial Moderators.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — APPENDIX 4

Retired Ministers' Housing

At the 1979 General Assembly the United Reformed Church accepted a moral obligation to provide housing for retired ministers and ministers' widows who could not otherwise be adequately housed. The relevant clauses of the resolutions read as follows:-

“The United Reformed Church delegates to its Finance and Administration Department the responsibility for providing housing for retired ministers and ministers' widows and this it exercises through the United Reformed Church Retired Ministers' Housing Society Limited, an independent Company operating within the Finance Department.

The Church regards it as a matter of integrity that retired ministers and ministers' widows should be adequately housed and supports the Housing Society in its appeal for funds and its objects.

The Assembly approves the appointment of a “Retired Ministers' Housing Committee” within the Finance and Administration Department to have oversight of matters concerned with the provision of retirement housing for ministers and ministers' widows and to manage the properties held on behalf of the United Reformed Church.”

By this action Assembly did not institute an entitlement to retirement housing as of right. A minister who has the finance necessary to provide for retirement housing may reasonably be

expected to do so. The provision of housing by the Housing Society is for those who would not otherwise be adequately housed. It is provided nevertheless, not as an act of charity but, as the Assembly resolution suggests, in recognition of the Church's obligation to those who have spent many years in its service.

Recently the Retired Ministers' Housing Committee, in consultation with the General Secretary and the Provincial Moderators, has been reviewing and clarifying the guide-lines governing the provision of retirement housing for ministers and the widows or widowers of ministers in the light of the resources available and the numbers needing help. The guide-lines as revised, are set out below.

Exclusions

The Scheme does not provide housing for URC Auxiliary Ministers, Youth Leadership Training Officers, Church Related Community Workers or URC ministers in posts for which housing is not customarily provided.

Ministers

1. Normally an applicant must be a minister of the United Reformed Church, and
 - (1) be in full-time service of the Church
 - a. at the date of retirement at age 65 years or later and have given either
 - (i) 15 years continuous full-time service immediately prior to that date; Or
 - (ii) a total of 25 years full-time service; Or
 - b. at the date of application if retiring before pension age on account of incapacity duly certified by a Medical Practitioner to the satisfaction of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee; Or
 - (2) having satisfied the requirement in (1) above left full-time service at age 65 years or later or on health grounds and continued in part-time service until his final retirement (see paragraphs 6-8 Part-time Pastorates).
2. Service for this purpose includes:-
 - a. Service with the United Reformed Church or the uniting churches and their predecessors;
 - b. Service with an ecumenical body in which the United Reformed Church is directly involved;
 - c. Service as a full-time Chaplain (excluding chaplaincies in the Armed Services of the Crown) in which the conditions of service are comparable with those of ministers of the United Reformed Church and in which the United Reformed Church is involved;
 - d. Service with CWM from 1977 onwards.

Widows and Widowers

3. The widow or widower of a minister who dies in retirement as a tenant of a Society property will be granted the transfer of the tenancy on the same terms as the deceased minister.
4. The widow or widower of a minister who dies in full-time service and whose service meets or could have met the requirements of paragraph 1 above by his 65th birthday will be assisted with housing (except where personal financial resources are sufficient to provide for this).
5. In all other cases the needs of a minister's widow or widower will be considered in the light of the circumstances of each case.

Part-time Pastorates

6. It is not the responsibility of the Society to provide housing for ministers in part-time stipendiary pastorates. Therefore a minister who moves from a full-time to a part-time stipendiary pastorate at age 65 or later can have no expectation of assistance with retirement housing at this stage, but will be considered for retirement housing when finally retiring from pastoral charge, subject to the qualifying service requirements in paragraphs 1 and 2 above being met.

7. Should a retired minister who is already a tenant of the Society Or of a property managed by the Society on behalf of the United Reformed Church be called to a part-time stipendiary pastorate subsequently to retirement, the Society will consider continuation of the tenancy subject to agreement about the amount of rent surcharge to be paid to the Society.
 8. Ministers who are tenants of Society properties (including properties managed by the Society on behalf of the United Reformed Church) and who are currently serving in part-time stipendiary pastorates may continue without payment of a rent surcharge for the unexpired period of their current term of office. Should that term be extended, consideration will be given to continuation of the tenancy subject to agreement about the amount of rent surcharge to be paid during the further period of service.
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INTER-DEPARTMENTAL EVANGELISM WORKING PARTY

Convener: David Marsden

Secretary: Donald Elliott

1. Six Provinces have teams of evangelism enablers in operation. Two training weekends for teams in the six other Provinces are arranged for May and June this year. One Province is considering establishing a second team.
2. We keep contact with the Provincial teams, exchanging amongst them news of mutual interest.
3. Either on our own initiative or at the request of committees or in response to resolutions, we have consulted during the year with the Faith and Life Department (on prayer and training), Church and Society Department (on community development), and Mission and Other Faiths Committee (on principles of dialogue). We have been liaising with the Youth Committee on the establishment of its Ginger group so that its operation and that of the Provincial Teams may be complementary.
4. Contact has been established with the British Council of Churches Standing Committee on Evangelism.
5. 45,000 Bookmarks have been produced thanks to a grant from the James Donald Tract Fund. These are circulating widely through local churches.
6. Material on evangelism and initiatives undertaken in sister churches at home and abroad have been studied by the Working Party.
7. We always seek stories arising in the life of local churches that these may be circulated to offer a possible impetus to others in their own situation.

FAITH AND LIFE DEPARTMENT

Convener: The Revd Richard F Taylor
Secretary: The Revd Margaret T Taylor

1. The new Faith and Life Department began work on 1 September 1984. The 1984 Assembly agreed that this new Department would carry the URC's central responsibility for the growth of the whole membership of all ages in discipleship and effective witness. All of us who have been involved in the work of the Department and its committees and groups during these nine months have become increasingly excited at the job given to us.
2. What is new about the Department is the dynamic for growth which is built in. This is demanding much more interaction between the committees and groups at the national level and also a greater commitment to building effective two-way links between the 'grass roots' in local churches, Districts and Provinces, and the national level. I reported to the Executive Committee in February 1985 that no organisational changes are necessary at present to enable us to work effectively at the new remit. In a year or two, however, it may be sensible to propose alterations.
3. The issues facing the Faith and Life Department are three-fold:-
The *development* of biblical faith, through lively worship, careful reading of the bible, confident prayer and steadfast witness.
The *training* of people in discipleship, and also in leadership skills, through a variety of programmes and courses with particular needs in view.
The *structuring* of life in the local churches in order to deepen understanding and practice of our faith and make witness more effective.
4. This year there is a particular interest in the Elders' Training Programme, the Windermere Centre and the International Youth Year. The common theme running through these plans is the growing up of all our people in spiritual maturity, so that the Church may show forth the life which God is giving, as the new Age breaks in.

Richard F Taylor

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard
Secretary: The Revd Margaret T Taylor

5. The committee has been concerned to look afresh at the whole of the responsibility remitted to it rather than to continue the activities of its two predecessors. This is partly because we do not enjoy all the resources of the two former committees, but partly, and more positively, because there needs to be a new emphasis in our work. We hope this will lead to more effective cooperation with those in the Provinces and Districts who are directly involved in the work of Christian Education and Stewardship. In the meantime we have worked to complete a number of tasks which the previous committees had begun.
6. We are publishing a new pack for membership preparation entitled 'Setting Out'. This is a similar format to the material for new members, 'On The Way', and it is hoped that this will encourage local churches to use both, and all church members to see their training in discipleship as a life-long concern. 'Setting Out' is linked closely to the promises which are asked of those committing themselves to church membership and is aimed at helping people to understand the nature and implications of their commitment. The booklet 'Being a member of the United Reformed Church' will still be produced for those who want other material, but we commend 'Setting Out' for use in all local churches for membership preparation.
7. There is a variety of material from a number of sources available to help church members to develop their own understanding of the faith. We would continue to recommend in particular three sets of material with which we are directly linked. First there is the 'Adult Study Programme'. Subscribers receive material on nine themes, each with suggestions for worship and discussion. Subjects cover a wide range, some being meditative and devotional and others being concerned with Christian action in today's world. Those who have used this material have found it helpful and stimulating and not too difficult for groups without sophisticated leadership. We would strongly encourage its wider use. Details are in the URC catalogue. Second, there is 'Partners in

Learning', not only for children's groups but also for adult and mixed age groups. The adult material can be very useful for house groups and is not limited to the date suggested in the handbook. Thirdly, there are the materials produced by the Stewardship Committee, in particular the study pack 'Christian Stewardship'.

8. The new committee inherited certain concerns which have led us to the conclusion that our main focus in the coming year will be on the training of elders. We believe that the eldership can be the key to the spiritual development and growth in faith of local churches in the URC. The task committed to the elders as outlined in the Manual is a daunting one, yet many people do find themselves called, and respond to that call. The committee is aware of its responsibility to help with the training for which these elders ask. It is also aware that this responsibility cannot be discharged simply through the production of written material, however good. We have therefore begun a process which we hope will lead to effective cooperation between our committee, Provinces and Districts, and thence to the equipping of elders who will lead the URC to renewed discipleship. The first stage remains a written one — the production of two leaflets which we commend for use in all local churches. The first 'Choosing Our Elders', is for church members to help them, when faced with the election of elders, to understand their responsibility and choose wisely. The second, 'An Elder? Who? Me?', is for those who are asked to consider whether or not they are called to the eldership, to help them think through the implications and come to a responsible decision. We hope that these will be widely used.

9. The second more active stage of our work for the effective training of elders is to arrange for consultation with those responsible for this task in Provinces and Districts in order to develop both useful material and an effective structure of support, cooperation and encouragement.

10. We want to see a regular and systematic training programme for all elders at a District level, both gathering elders together in shared events and encouraging individual elders and elders' meetings to adopt a disciplined pattern of learning and renewal for their work. Various schemes are now in hand for the in-service training of ministers. We believe they must be complemented by a similar care for our ordained elders in their ministry. This accords with our conviction that all Christians continue to learn throughout their discipleship. We anticipate producing a support pack of materials on all aspects of the work of the elders, but the nature of this pack will depend very much on the comments and recommendations from people in the Provinces, Districts and local churches.

11. More important than the pack will be the commitment of Provinces and Districts to take action and plan programmes which stimulate and support elders everywhere. We therefore ask for the support of the Assembly for this programme. (See Resolution 2.) We believe that if we can give elders the training they need, and for which many of them ask, they can then work effectively to enable other church members to grow in faith and be more able to relate it to their lives and communicate it to others. We also believe that appropriate ways of facilitating mutual support and cooperation between the committee and the Provinces and Districts for elders' training will be relevant and helpful in other areas of our task. We shall therefore concentrate on elders' training as the major focus of our work at present.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Duncan Wilson
Secretary: Revd Paul H Quilter

12. International Youth Year, will it be a year of opportunity? Much of the Youth Committee's work during the past twelve months has been a preparation for IYY in the hope that the United Reformed Church will want to seize the opportunity of investing in a tangible way for the future by using the strengths of the present.

13. The Youth Committee challenges the belief of many, that young people are simply not interested in Christianity. We do not believe it is inevitable that young people will drift away from the Church if they have been part of it during childhood, or refuse to turn to it if they haven't. Many young people do not find it so difficult to accept Christ and his teachings, but do find it hard to come to terms with the Church, thinking it to be out of touch, irrelevant and damaging for the spirit within them.

14. The Youth Committee tries to keep in touch with the thinking and feelings of young people

and the adults in the church in order that it can produce a programme of education and activities that will assist local churches to challenge young people to respond to the 'Good News' whilst at the same time helping young people to feel their natural place lies within the body of each local United Reformed Church.

15. It is our sincere hope that during International Youth Year every church, District and Province will want to explore the three-fold themes of IYY WITH their young people. We commend to the Church a handbook entitled 'Discover International Youth Year' which has been prepared by a mixed group of young people to assist churches and young people to explore Peace, Participation and Development, the three IYY themes.

16. The Youth Committee is pleased with the response given to 'Touch and Go'. Prepared by a Yorkshire based group, this project has been created to enable young people to explore the Christian Faith and its implications for the social, political and spiritual issues confronting us. It is our hope that, whilst the project is due to be completed in November, churches may wish to use the material beyond 1985.

17. In 1984 the Committee set up a working party, which has produced a study pack suitable for use throughout the denomination regardless of the size and location of individual churches. 'No Longer Strangers' will help churches to explore relationships and involvement with young people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

18. The major URC national IYY celebration is to be called CONNECT 85 and is due to be held in the city of Coventry over the weekend 25-27 October. We hope to draw young people and their leaders from all over the country and from every branch of the Church's youth work.

19. The early autumn of 1984 saw the arrival of two new Youth Leadership Training Officers, Miss Janet Turner (South West and Wales) and Mr John Quilter (East Midlands and Eastern). It is with considerable joy that we are able to report for the first time that every Province of the URC now has the services of a YLTO. A substantial increase in the Department of Education and Science's grant has enabled the Youth Committee to appoint Roger Tolman half-time Team Leader whilst remaining YLTO for the West Midlands Province.

20. The Committee is concerned about the number of churches with no young people or effective youth work, and even more concerned that in many cases there seems to be an apparent lack of concern to change the situation. All the YLTO's are willing to help churches face the challenge of 1985. We appreciate that any changes can only happen given time, patience and support but we firmly believe that the United Reformed Church as a whole is well able to respond to the challenges presented by IYY.

21. The Youth Committee is also concerned about the large number of District Councils who make no financial provision for work to be done with young people. Often District Youth Secretaries' expenses have to met out of the profits of youth events and the Youth Committee receives no financial support, whilst all other Committees of the District Council are adequately supported. The Youth Committee urges every District Council to ensure that there is both appropriate and adequate provision for a Youth Secretary and Committee to function and encourages local churches to support financially young people's attendance at youth events.

22. One of the most exciting developments over the past year has been the launch of the Ginger Group Project. Following a process of wide consultation we were encouraged to launch the project to coincide with International Youth Year and the completion of the Touch and Go Project. We have asked the young people of FURY to raise £28,000 to enable the group to function for three years from 1 September 1985. We hope the project will influence the lives of many young people and also churches as each team of committed young Christians works with churches throughout the denomination. We believe that the Ginger Group will encourage new beginnings in some churches and Districts, whilst in others it will refresh the vision for youth work in the local church and community. The project will bring young people into the centre of the Church's mission by enabling them to challenge their own age group and in doing so we hope will be helping each other to communicate a confident faith. We would like to emphasise that any project undertaken involving the Ginger Group will allow everyone to work together WITH the members of the group in order that all will benefit richly from the experiences. The Youth Committee has been deeply heartened by the response this 'project of faith' has engendered.

23. 1985 is an important year, the Youth Committee through its various sub-committees and working parties, has tried to lay before the Church a full programme. The foundations have been laid but the real development and growth must take place at local church level and move out to influence the life of the Church at District, Provincial and National levels. We cannot over-emphasise our deeply held belief that young people add a rich dimension to the life of the whole Church. We encourage everyone to accept with joy the many gifts young people bring into the life of the Church. We need their freshness, optimism and energy, as we share their hopes and aspirations willingly expressed without which the Church is impoverished. We urge young people to link up with and engage the interest of young people OF ALL AGES. The Youth Committee is sensitive to the need for a greater 'wholeness' in the life of the Church and shares with others the vision of a greater 'togetherness'. We pray that the URC will respond to the challenges International Youth Year presents and in doing so transform the potential found in numerous people of all ages into reality.

CHILDREN'S WORK COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd A Greenslade
Secretary: The Revd Margaret T Taylor

24. Much of the report of the Children's Work Committee this year will be of progress in work which we mentioned in our report to Assembly 1984. We are well aware of the need for more effective nurture of children in the faith and of the difficulties experienced by many of those who serve faithfully in this task in their own families and in local churches. We hope that parents and local churches have found the pack of leaflets 'How Can A Child Choose Faith?' of some help and would again commend this publication, along with the new edition of 'Child in the Church', published by the BCC and including revisions of the reports of 'Child in the Church' (1975) and 'Understanding Christian Nurture' (1981), to those who have not yet considered it.

25. We have continued our efforts to train tutors for the 'Equipped to Teach' course and have held two successful training conferences. In the light of experience, and comments from the tutors, we have prepared new 'Notes for Tutors' which we hope will contribute to more effective use of the course. The biggest problem we face is in encouraging enough students to take the course in any one area to make a viable and effective group. Although students can and do study individually, this is much harder for both students and tutors. We depend on local initiative to encourage people to take the course and to organise groups. In the four years since the revised 'Equipped to Teach' course was completed 102 students have completed Part A, 13 have completed Part B and no-one has yet completed Part C. Part A is simple and basic, planned mainly for young people beginning to help in the children's groups or for older people coming in after some years without any formal study. For those with more experience or a familiarity with study it is an easy introduction. Part B takes people on a little further, and we would like to see the majority of those working with the children having knowledge and skill of the standard reflected in Part B, whether or not they have completed the course. Part C is more advanced, but we would hope that anyone playing a leading role in the local church's work with children would see it as essential training. The nurture of children in the faith is the responsibility of the whole local church, but those to whom particular responsibility is delegated need to develop special knowledge and skills in addition to having those gifts which the church recognises in giving them this task. The Children's Work Committee plays its part in providing and administering the course and appointing and training tutors. We would urge members of Assembly to encourage their children's work leaders in their Districts and local churches to take advantage of this opportunity. It is a challenging course, but one which many people, of differing ability, have found both possible and rewarding. (See Resolution 3.)

26. Another priority for the Children's Work Committee in the coming year is involvement with an ecumenical working party looking at the use of the Bible with children. This group plans to produce guidelines for use by parents, ministers, leaders and those involved in leading worship. It is intended that these guidelines will be practical and at the same time reflect sound theological understanding. Other priorities include the production of a leaflet to enable and encourage the development of creative relationships between local churches and their neighbouring state schools and further involvement with Play Forum (the public body of the National Association of Children's Play) and an exploration of the theology and spirituality of play. We would encourage local participation in Play Forum through Provinces and Districts. We also plan to consult with

those working in the inner city about the materials and support needed for work with children there. This specialised consultation will replace our usual general consultation for District Children's Work Secretaries.

27. The committee has been encouraged to see the developments in the work of Pilots during the year, and in particular the appointment of the Revd John Robinson as Master Pilot.

PILOTS PANEL

Convener: Mrs Alma Kendall
Master Pilot: The Revd John Robinson

28. This has been another year of development and extension of Pilots, the children's non-uniformed organisation of the United Reformed Church and the Congregational Federation. Most of the Pilots' nurture and work is done in the local churches, where the children promise to learn, pray and serve in the worldwide church of Jesus Christ. The study material, called the Voyage, has featured saints this last year. The new material, produced in conjunction with the National Christian Education Council, is 'Waters of Life'.

29. There has always been the opportunity for Pilots to meet with children from other churches, through rallies and camps. These continue to prosper and are enjoyed by many. In addition officers gather together for training periodically, and the Master Pilot remembers with happiness the enthusiasm of 22 officers who gathered in South Western Province for a day's training. A very useful and helpful Consultation for Provincial Pilot Officers was held in November, when every Province was represented.

30. We continue to be convinced of the real worth of Pilots as a church-based organisation for children, and welcome enquiries about formation of a company. In addition to the 139 companies in Congregational and United Reformed Churches there are 15 in churches of several other denominations, and we are glad to include them.

31. Preparations are in hand for the 50th Anniversary on June 14 1986 at Westminster Central Hall, London. This will provide an opportunity for the URC and Congregational Federation to celebrate with Pilots, and look forward with confidence to the future.

DOCTRINE & WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Dr Brian O. Johanson
Secretary: The Revd Dr Colin P. Thompson

32. Inevitably, the greater part of the work over the past year has been the preparation of the URC response to *BEM*, which Assembly asked for in 1983. That response forms a separate report and will be discussed as such. We would like to thank those who sent in material; the Committee's response is based on what it received, and particular attention was given to Provincial submissions, specifically requested in the 1983 resolution. The level of response was disappointingly low, but we believe that wider debate took place than the figures suggest, and that the importance of *BEM* will continue to be felt. In many ways it is a beginning, not an end.

33. Two other ecumenical documents have also appeared on our agenda, and we shall be considering them in greater detail during the coming year. The first is *God's Reign and our Unity*, the report of the Anglican — Reformed International Commission; the second, *Baptists and Reformed in Dialogue* contains documents from the conversations sponsored by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and Baptist World Alliance. Both were published in 1984. We are also exchanging liturgical and doctrinal publications with the Uniting Church in Australia and the United Church of Christ (USA), and remain in close contact with the developing theological work of the World Alliance.

34. The meaning of the ordination of elders and ministers has remained on our agenda and will do so for some time to come. Apparently simple problems raise complex and interrelated issues, some of which are fundamental to our understanding of the Church itself. We wrestle on. One small though not insignificant aspect of this, the location of the church membership of ordained ministers, is the subject of a resolution. (See Resolution 4.)

35. We have begun to gather material with the revision of *A Book of Services* in mind, and the

Secretary of the Committee will be pleased to receive further comments and suggestions, whether about details or more general points. Schedule D has now been published in a single leaflet, in its various forms.

36. The Guild of Organists and Choirmasters (renamed at the Annual General Meeting as the 'United Reformed Church Musicians' Guild) has formed two new Branches during 1983/84 in the East and West Midlands Provinces. Training and help to choir leaders, members and organists has been the predominant feature of the year's activities, and will continue during 1985. Training days can be organised anywhere in the United Kingdom and the Guild earnestly requests District Meetings to consider this during 1985. The Guild secretary, Mr Don Gray, will welcome enquiries.

37. Gordon Hawkins has relinquished chairmanship of the Guild and the Revd T Caryl Micklem, MA, is the new chairman. The Chaplain is the Revd A J Beeson who, apart from his pastoral ability, is an accomplished musician.

38. It is hoped churches will encourage their musicians, whether choir leaders, choir members or organists, to join the Guild.

39. The Hymnody Group also has a new chairman, the Revd David Gardner, in succession to Mr Peter Cutts. It has examined all the new main hymn-books of recent years and found that none commends itself with sufficient force to the URC and the theological and spiritual traditions it has inherited, or indeed to the requirements of the age. A majority of members of the Group favoured a recommendation to the Doctrine and Worship Committee that the URC should produce its own hymn-book. The Committee is aware that hymn-books arouse much passion and involve an initial financial commitment; but a decision cannot be put off much longer.

40. *Congregational Praise*, still in use in probably the majority of our congregations, now has a limited life, and it would be unwise to assume that it will be available into the 1990's. The 1973 Assembly report of the Church Life Department stated: 'This is not the time for the URC to produce a new hard cover hymn-book or to investigate . . . the production of an ecumenical hymn-book'. Instead, *New Church Praise* was produced, as a supplement. Since then *Church Hymnary* (3rd Edition) has been used fairly widely and a few congregations have chosen other books. *Hymns and Psalms* has not turned out to be quite the ecumenical book at first envisaged, and we are now in the thirteenth year of the life of the URC. New books take some years to produce and are generally thought to have a useful life of about 30 years. We need to think about the needs of the Church not just for 1990, but for 2000 and beyond. The resolution we have prepared seeks to begin that process. (Resolution 5.)

MINISTRY OF HEALING COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd D Alasdair Pratt
Secretary: The Revd Charles K Meachin

41. The Committee is delighted that its immediate past Chairman, the Revd David Dale, has been called to be Moderator of the General Assembly. Under his leadership the Ministry of Healing has become recognised throughout the denomination as being central to the good news of God's love and reconciliation. His experience and wisdom has been recognised beyond our own Church, and his year of office will provide many with the opportunity of deepening their understanding of this work.

42. **ADVISER on the MINISTRY OF HEALING.** It was reported to the last Assembly that the committee had invited Mr Dale to serve as Part-time honorary Adviser. The terms of reference agreed by the committee were that the Adviser will:-

- (a) be recognised as being available to speak, and to lead conferences;
- (b) relate to the committee, and in particular advise the committee of the mood and interest of churches as he discerns it, and where necessary suggest lines of action and matters for consideration;
- (c) share his own developing thinking with the committee and the Church at large.

43. **Development in local churches.** The growth in interest and involvement in this ministry means that in some places the work is well-established and has become central in the life of the local congregation. Elsewhere development is still at an early stage. The committee is aware that this

creates a broad range of needs. The Health and Healing study kit, first prepared eight years ago, has recently been revised and updated. It continues to provide a basic introduction, and has been very widely used. The committee is preparing further occasional leaflets. Arising from the report 'Preparing the Way' (Assembly 1983), with its challenge for us to refresh our hearts in the Bible, a leaflet will be published in June 1985 on 'The Biblical Foundation of the Ministry of Healing'.

The popular leaflet 'In Hospital' is being revised and enlarged, while a companion, 'For those who remain at home', is planned.

44. **The Third National Conference** arranged by the committee was held at Swanwick, April 19-21. Again, it recognised the diversity of knowledge and experience within the Church. The main address was given by the Revd Denis Duncan, Director of the Churches' Council for Health and Healing. His theme was 'Holy Harmony — the basis for healthy living', helping us to deepen our awareness that as we take responsibility for our own well-being, so God's creative purpose is given greater opportunity to work. Workshops covered the themes of Healing Services, Prayer and Meditation, Healing or Curing?, Relaxation, Living Relationships, Caring for Ourselves.

45. **The Study Guide 'Towards a Christian Understanding of Human Sexuality'** was a 'best-seller' at the 1984 Assembly, and sales have continued at an encouraging level throughout the year. The committee would be interested to hear from churches where groups have studied it together. Our impression is that it has been read, and appreciated, more by individuals than groups.

46. **Grief and Bereavement.**

(i) The committee commends a study pack, 'Looking at Loss' produced by the Lichfield Diocesan Association for Family Care. Costing £8, it contains six studies and is well written, well set-out and very practical.

(ii) Following the question raised at the last Assembly about help for parents of stillborn children, it has been discovered that a good deal of material is already available. The Health Education Council leaflet — 'The loss of your baby' is particularly good. Further supportive leaflets are in preparation by our committee to assist parents expecting a child, and to help ministers, hospital chaplains, doctors and nurses respond to crisis in childbirth.

47. **The Christian Council on Ageing.** Our attention has been drawn to this inter-denominational body that seeks to serve the special needs, both spiritual and material, of older people. With an increasing number of senior citizens in the country, the Council has a number of aims designed to release the resources often under-used among older people, and to develop pastoral care and the quality of life of the aged. We do not feel we need to explore this area ourselves, gladly recognising the existence of an agency whose services many will value. (address: Greens Norton Court, Nr Towcester, Northants NN12 8BS)

48. **Churches' Council for Health and Healing.** After passing through a major crisis two or three years ago, this Council is enjoying a revived life under the imaginative leadership of its Director, The Revd Denis Duncan, and its sympathetic Chairman, Bishop Morris Maddocks. The varied work of the denominations and many of the homes of healing, is finding a useful focus in the work of the Council. The magazine, 'Health and Healing', is published three times a year, providing lively news and comment.

49. **'Burnout'.** The committee has begun consultations with the Ministerial Training Committee, the Moderators and the various colleges, to discover how far ministers and other church leaders are affected adversely by stress and pressure. 'Burnout' is not a word that everyone will like, but it has been defined as 'a progressive loss of idealism, energy and purpose', and is being increasingly recognised in all the 'caring professions'. The Ministry of Healing Committee believes it is very important to raise this matter with all who have responsibility for the care of ministers and their families, and others who bear burdens of leadership in churches. If ministers are showing signs of mismanaged stress, then it is unlikely they can so effectively lead the people of God towards fullness of life. In a paper submitted to the committee it was said, 'Much of the stress experienced by ministers comes from distorted thinking about the pastoral calling, and not taking time to nurture body, mind and spirit. 'Burnout' is not the inevitable outcome of being God's person in the world'.

50. **Rehousing people with a mental handicap within the community.** It is widely recognised that there are many people with a mental handicap who remain in hospital only because there is no

where else for them to go. It is now government policy to move them from large institutions to locally-based hospital units, or to ordinary — suitably adapted — houses in the community. There is, however, serious doubt about the practicality of these proposals since the financial cut-backs in the Health service are causing a shortage of the resources needed. The effect may well be that this already vulnerable section of the community will be at greater risk.

We believe the churches have a special opportunity to provide support. It is important to make contact directly with handicapped people, and where necessary to speak on their behalf. It may also be necessary to urge the different authorities, locally and nationally, to ensure adequate services are provided. Further, because this is an issue about which there can be fiercely prejudiced feelings and hostilities, Christians have a particular role in seeking to create more positive attitudes in the community. Moves at re-location, as are presently being proposed, often meet with stout opposition from members of the general public who are frightened of a decline in the value of their property, or deeply suspicious of, and prejudiced against, people whose problems and personalities they do not understand.

The issue is specifically relevant to the placement of the mentally handicapped, but applies equally well to provision for those recovering from mental illness.

51. **Poverty.** Most people within our Church are able readily to obtain the medical attention that they need, either through the NHS or privately. In some communities, however, many people, being disadvantaged, do not have the same access to adequate health care. The committee recognises that it has a major task awaiting it, to explore the implications that poverty and the recession have for the health of our nation. Health and Healing have political dimensions, which may seem strange to those who think of the Ministry of Healing as being purely concerned with prayer and the laying on of hands.

It is significant that while the study pack on 'Health and Healing' has been re-printed several times, its successor, 'The Church and Community Health', has been largely ignored.

Is the Ministry of Healing purely for the individual?

WINDERMERE POLICY & PLANNING COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Dr Robert O Latham

Secretary: Revd Margaret T Taylor

52. Following the approval by the General Assembly in 1984 of the resolution from the North Western Province concerning the National Training Centre at Windermere, a Policy and Planning Committee was set up. The Revd Robert Latham was appointed by the Executive Committee to act as convener, and other members were appointed to represent departments, the North Western Province and Carver church.

53. As authorised by Assembly, the committee drew up a job description for the Director and advertised this post. On the recommendation of the committee, the Executive Committee approved the appointment of the Revd Graham Cook as Director of the Windermere Centre from 1 February 1985, for a period of three years in the first instance. A house has been purchased and appropriate arrangements made for the payment of expenses. After careful checking of the estimated costs, not only of the additions and alterations to the building and other associated capital costs, but also of the costs of promotion, fund-raising and initial development, a revised target for the appeal was agreed at £350,000. Publicity material and covenant forms have been prepared and distributed and approaches made to individuals, trusts and synods, and to other churches who might be willing and able to give support. So far we have received gifts to a total of £15,700, including a major gift from the Evangelische Kirche der Pfalz. The North Western Province has guaranteed £75,000, from contributions from within the Province and from Province funds. Other provinces have informed us of recommendations to be made by finance committees which they anticipate will receive Synod support, to a total value of £55,000. Others have indicated their intention to give substantial sums but have not yet given firm promises. A number of individuals have promised to give sums of £1,000. The Director has received many invitations from synods, districts and churches to talk about the appeal and has himself made a number of approaches. In the light of this we hope and expect to be able to report to the Assembly in May that we have cash or guarantees for approximately two-thirds of the total amount of the appeal.

54. Plans for the adaptation of the Carver Manse and the necessary permissions and

arrangements are well in hand and tenders can be invited as soon as confirmation of Assembly's approval is obtained.

55. In consultation with the Director, the committee is giving further consideration to the programme and development of the Centre along the lines already outlined in the initial proposal. Terms of reference for the Management Committee are being drawn up.

URC FORUM

Director: The Revd Margaret Taylor
Secretary: Mrs Betty Taylor

56. FORUM affords an opportunity to join with other members of the Church, of all ages, in an experience of Christian worship, fellowship and learning with time to relax and enjoy holiday opportunities also. This one-week holiday conference is held at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire.

57. In 1984 Forum was led by the Revd C Cyril Franks when over 300 people shared his thinking and worship on the theme 'Ebb and Flow — the Rhythm of Worship and Life'. Bookings have started well for Forum 1985 which is to be led by the Revd Dr Jack McKelvey (Principal, Northern College) on the theme 'Visions of Hope — a Liberation Theology for Britain', with the Revd John Taylor (Southern Province Synod Clerk) as Chairman and the Revds Charles and Barbara Meachin leading worship.

58. Affirming our Christian hope in today's world is no easy matter. Yet that is our calling. Under the guidance of Dr McKelvey, we will turn to the experience of Christians in other parts of the world, and to the Bible, to help us see and act upon visions of the Christian hope in Britain now. Workshops will provide an opportunity to share our own hopes, as well as our concerns, and to support each other, rising to the challenge of being a Christian in Britain in 1985. Children and young people also follow the theme in their own ways in their own groups.

59. This is an opportunity to meet and share with Christians from other parts of the country and some from overseas whether you are single, a couple or a family, as one great Christian family of fellowship, with all that goes to make it so — good food, leisure time and activities, lovely surroundings, excellent conference facilities. The cost, which includes a surcharge for the Bank Holiday, is £76, with reductions for children and families.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

60. The women of Sweden prepared the basic draft for the Order of Service 1984; "Living Water from Christ our Hope". It brought home to us, who live in a land where pure water is taken for granted, the necessity of water in everyday living, and the need we all have of the 'Living Water' offered to us by Christ.

61. Many branches dispensed with the Address, using material from the Anthology, or transparencies or other 'visual aids' relevant to the theme. One Branch had Christian Aid posters of 'Life-giving Water' on display, and others used imaginative flower arrangements, which all helped those who came to the services to think about the theme. As usual a children's service was prepared and this is becoming increasingly popular. In a number of places schools used the 'Children's Service', or joined with the local service.

62. The response to the annual publication 'Together in Prayer' has been very enthusiastic. It contains the Anthology, the bible study notes, the annual report and accounts, and other articles of interest.

PRAYER HANDBOOK EDITORIAL GROUP

Secretary: Mrs Helen Lidgett

63. Responsibility for the production of the Prayer Handbook has been undertaken by a group representing the United Reformed Church Departments and the British member churches of Council for World Mission. The Executive Committee approved the appointment of Revd Edmund Banyard as Editor for three years from 1 July 1984 to 31 August 1987. The writer for the 1986 book, 'The Word and the World', is Revd David Jenkins, and publication will be in August

1985. Revd Janet Hargis has agreed to be the writer for 1987. The group encourages members of the URC to use the Prayer Handbook as a source for regular prayer for the URC, the wider church and for the whole of the church in the world. (Resolution 1)

RESOLUTIONS

The Assembly receives the report of the Faith and Life Department for debate.

1. Assembly encourages local churches and members to use the prayer handbook 'The Word and the World'.
2. Assembly, recognising the valuable contribution made by elders to the life and work of the United Reformed Church;
 - (a) asks Provinces and Districts to review their arrangements for training elders,
 - (b) urges those given responsibility for this training to cooperate with the Christian Education and Stewardship Committee to develop effective resources and structures for the training of elders,
 - (c) encourages all elders and prospective elders to take advantage of opportunities for appropriate training.
3. Assembly, realising the importance of the Christian nurture of children and young people, and recognising the need for understanding, knowledge and skill on the part of those with particular responsibility for this nurture,
 - (a) encourages all those who work with children in the church to take advantage of opportunities for training,
 - (b) asks local churches to give their support to those receiving training by paying their expenses and by releasing them from other responsibilities where appropriate,
 - (c) urges District Children's Work Committees, or their equivalent, to develop appropriate training opportunities, and in particular to make arrangements for groups to study the Equipped to Teach course, and to cooperate with the Assembly Children's Work Committee in finding and training suitable tutors.
4. Assembly, taking note of the fact that ministers inducted to URC pastorates are on the one hand under the oversight not of the local church but of the District Council and that on the other hand they are in full fellowship with the local church(es) to which they minister, directs that the names of such ministers be recorded on the roll of members of the church(es) to which they minister.

Where the pastorate includes more than one local church each with its own roll, the name of the minister(s) shall appear on one such roll to be reckoned for statistical purposes, and on the other rolls the name shall appear with the note — "The Revd A. N. is a member in full fellowship of this church but for statistical purposes only his/her membership is reckoned at the "x" United Reformed Church in this pastorate."
5. Since stocks of Congregational Praise will shortly be exhausted, Assembly instructs the Doctrine and Worship Committee to bring proposals for a new main hymn book to Assembly in 1986.
6. Assembly draws to the attention of local churches Government policy of relocating in the community people with a mental handicap. Assembly calls on churches to be aware of the implications of this policy and to respond positively by seeking to overcome deeply felt fears, and by urging the relevant authorities to provide adequate resources to enable the policy to be effective.
7. (a) Assembly, noting the progress of the Windermere Appeal, authorises the Policy and Planning Committee to proceed with the alteration and adaptation of the building and the development of the centre.
(b) Assembly resolves that the appointment of the Revd Graham Cook as Director of the Windermere Centre shall be for 5 years from February 1 1985.
8. Assembly expresses thanks to the Revd Brian Johanson for his service as chairman of the Doctrine and Worship Committee.

CHURCH & SOCIETY

Convener: Mr Raymond T Clarke
Secretary: The Revd John P Reardon

1. In a divided world the Church is called to be a community in which all Christians care for one another and offer their lives for the sake of the world. The work of the Department is a contribution to the caring community of the Church to help it in its own fellowship life and to equip it for its work of overcoming the divisions in the world that arise from human sin and cause hardship, heartache and despair.
2. While the main emphasis of the work may seem to be the controversial public issues, the real focus is the love of God and the quality of life of his people called to discipleship by Jesus Christ and inspired by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Department tries to help the churches in grappling with the public issues so that they may share in shaping the future. That is the case with the two crises which have dominated the news in the past year: the miners' strike and the famine in Ethiopia.
3. **Mining Dispute.** The dispute in the coal mining industry had already begun by last year's General Assembly but as the dispute deepened it revealed how far society had moved away from consensus about industrial, social, economic and political questions. Violence and intimidation on all sides were experienced in some mining areas and there are fears that community life has been damaged almost beyond repair.
4. In the early days of the dispute the Churches at national level were slow to respond largely through fear of appearing to back one side. That is not to say that the churches were uninvolved. Many local churches ministering in mining areas were themselves torn by the dispute and much work of reconciliation and compassion was undertaken. Industrial mission teams in mining areas began the painstaking work of interpreting what the dispute was about and what its implication was for local communities and for the future of the coal industry. Increasingly the churches began to be challenged by the deprivations being suffered by the families of striking miners.
5. The URC Executive Committee and the British Council of Churches Assembly both meeting in November, gave opportunity for considering the wider implications of the dispute. They enabled the churches, many of which had either ignored the strike or had considered it in a partial or partisan way, to see it in the wider context of employment policies, of the future of communities which have grown up around one major industry and of the need to plan for the future in a way that brings hope to such communities and not fear.
6. The need for negotiation and eventual reconciliation led church leaders from many traditions to take initiatives to try to break the intransigence of both sides in the dispute. The Moderator and the General Secretary at national level and many of the Provincial Moderators in their regions have given much time to the dispute and have been welcomed by both sides because of their sensitive and non-judgemental approach. When the dispute is over the wounds will need much healing and it is for the churches to witness to the need for reconciliation and for a return to methods of resolving conflict which do not seek total victory for one side over against the other.
7. The Department welcomes a study project on Forgiveness and Politics which has been established in association with the British Council of Churches and which is already stimulating many Christians to consider how forgiveness operates or can be introduced into political conflicts. While it focuses on the problems of Ireland it has much relevance for other conflicts in the United Kingdom.
8. **Crisis in Africa.** The Ethiopian famine has underlined how necessary long term development is for poor communities. The harrowing pictures of starving children and of devastated countryside came as an unwelcome shock at the very time when the churches were celebrating One World Week. Those pictures and the many since have highlighted the suffering of those who are too poor to withstand disasters of this kind. "Women and Children First?", the theme of One World Week, had challenged many churches to think again about the burden of poverty and the need for a greater emphasis on women and children in development programmes. Ethiopia demonstrated that message in a stark and sickening way.
9. Churches throughout the country have responded imaginatively and with great compassion to the immediate tragedy which is affecting Ethiopia and neighbouring countries. Many have

challenged their Members of Parliament to press a reluctant Government to allocate more aid to Ethiopia in addition to the regular aid budget, instead of merely switching aid within a fixed ceiling. The Executive Committee, at its February meeting, on the prompting of the Department, urged the Government to increase the overall aid budget and deplored the failure of the United Kingdom to contribute to the special emergency fund of the World Bank. The Department is dismayed to note that in Government plans for overseas aid for the next three years there is a net decline of three per cent when planned spending is set alongside forecasts for inflation.

10. **Christain Aid** was one of the agencies which first warned about the tragedy in Ethiopia and which organised the first appeals for emergency aid. While many, perhaps most, of our local churches have responded to the crisis, many have maintained and even increased their support for the 1% World Development Appeal which supports the long-term development programmes of Christian Aid and which also recognises the need for development education and political pressure on behalf of the world's poor.

11. **World Development Appeal.** The 1983/84 Appeal raised £220,000 and it is expected that the 1984/85 Appeal will significantly exceed that total. The Christian Aid Board has again expressed its appreciation of the support for its work which comes through the Appeal and the World Development Movement and One World Week among others have acknowledged the leadership among the Churches which the URC is giving through the Appeal.

12. **Peace.** The Peace Advisory Group, appointed by the Department in the Autumn of 1983, has continued to advise the Department on aspects of peace and disarmament. Its leaflet "You and Your Peacemaking" has been widely used in local churches to stimulate discussion and action on peace issues. The Group has studied the history of superpower rivalry since World War II and believes that local churches should forge links of friendship with churches in Eastern Europe and Russia to try to break down the stereotypes of enemies which are so often reinforced by the distortions of the mass media.

13. The Peace Advisory Group is now studying the theological understanding of peace and is exploring the Biblical emphases on the roles of prophet, priest and king and what they might reveal for our understanding of the work of Christ in the Church today. It is struck by the way in which the Biblical emphasis on peace with justice somehow fails to mobilise a consistent and universal response with the Church and leads Christians to draw conclusions which are almost diametrically opposed to one another.

14. **Nuclear Freeze.** The 1983 General Assembly passed a resolution in support of a freeze on nuclear weapons. The Scottish Churches Council has decided to try to mobilise support for a nuclear freeze in the Scottish Churches with an endorsement day on 24 October 1985.

15. The British Council of Churches is debating the nuclear freeze at its Assembly in March 1985 and hopes to give support to the Scottish initiative. The Department hopes that our local churches will give this high priority in the Autumn with a programme of study and discussion based on educational and explanatory material being produced by the BCC with a view to endorsement of the nuclear freeze proposals by all churches in an attempt to join hands with freeze supporters in the USA and in Russia and Eastern Europe to put pressure on the nuclear powers to call a halt to the development, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons.

16. **Racism.** The spectre of racism in British society affects us all as individuals and even our churches are infected by its all-pervasive influence. The Department, with the support of other Departments, organised a one-day consultation on racism in the Autumn and has now set up a working party for two years with the following terms of reference:-

As a contribution to ecumenical concern about racism in Britain and in cooperation with ecumenical bodies working on this issue, the working party will help the URC in its national and Provincial structures and in its local churches, to understand racism and to recognise the manifestations of racism in society and in the churches; to encourage racism awareness programmes in the churches; to stimulate theological and biblical reflection on racism; to make recommendations about ways in which the churches can combat racism within themselves and within society as a whole, and to recognise and encourage the participation in the URC of all its ethnic groups, particularly those which are in a minority.

17. **Poverty in Britain.** The divisions in Britain have continued to dominate the agenda of the Department. Poverty in Britain was the subject of a major conference in 1984 organised by the British Council of Churches. The persistence of poverty in an affluent society is both a puzzle and an indictment and the conference tried to untangle some of the threads of the puzzle and face up to the questions which poverty poses. By the end of the conference it was clear that there were no easy solutions which all the churches could rally to promote. Rather it was recognised that large sections of the churches do not yet acknowledge or understand the presence of poverty in our midst.

18. Church Action on Poverty, to which many members of the URC now belong, is increasingly calling the churches to recognise the cry of pain of the poor among us and to use its power and influence to change priorities and policies to enable the poor to make their contribution to our local and national community life. In particular material has been produced to help churches to deepen their understanding of present responses to unemployment and to assess the effects of the review of the social security system which the Secretary of State for Social Services has ordered. The Department is cooperating with a wide range of other organisations called together by the Child Poverty Action Group to consider the likely effects of the changes in child benefit provision which may emerge from the government review.

19. The Department welcomes the theme of this year's forthcoming Forum at Swanwick in August, "Visions of Hope". Is it possible to find a way in secularised Britain for the churches to emphasise the challenge of poverty in the Gospel? That is what has been occupying the churches in many poorer countries but churches in the richer part of the world have either watered down the challenge in distance philanthropy or have denied its relevance for their witness today.

20. **Housing.** As a specific example of society's divisions the housing crisis, which was brought to the attention of last year's Assembly, has been a particular priority. The study pack "No certain dwelling place", launched at that Assembly, has not only helped many churches and individuals to become more aware of housing needs and the plight of homeless people, but has won praise from many working professionally in the housing sector.

21. The Department has played an active role in strengthening ecumenical work through Churches Group on Single Homelessness and Church-linked Housing Associations. With experience as diverse as Catholic Housing Aid Society and Salvation Army each denomination is able to listen to and complement or reinforce the work of others at this time when housing is in crisis. The Department continues in membership of CHAR, the National Campaign for Single Homeless People, and has enlisted support for a number of parliamentary lobbies drawing upon the experience of people at local church level.

22. The Department submitted evidence on housing inequalities to the Archbishop's Commission on Urban Priority Areas, and to the Inquiry on British Housing. The submission identified the ways in which the present system of housing finance contributes to the division within society and the criteria which should form the basis of a process which can level up the circumstances of those who have suffered through present housing policy.

23. A series of changes in the housing benefit system and proposals for change in board and lodging payments have sought to place cash limits upon public expenditure as a response to huge increases in the number of claimants. The factors which have led to this position remain largely ignored with the foreseeable effects of intensified personal hardship and escalating housing deprivation. Public expenditure on mortgage interest tax relief continues to rise, benefitting most those households which are well above marginal income level. The Churches expressed alarm that the relationship between tax relief and income support for housing costs was excluded from the discussion of evidence submitted to the Government as part of the social security review already referred to.

24. **Rural Deprivation.** At last year's Assembly the Department also referred to the needs of rural communities where many of the problems experienced in urban areas are also present. Rural deprivation gets less attention than the problems of the inner city, but unemployment, poor housing, lack of investment for the future, declining services and problems of transport, communications and access to services are features of rural life which demand more study and remedy.

25. The Department has commissioned a study by the Revd John Salsbury on the theme of rural

deprivation. It raises important questions about the sharing of resources in the nation and the balance between the urban and rural sectors. In particular it probes the attitudes and perceptions of rural people about themselves and their communities and questions the myths which they and many others have about rural life. The Department hopes that this study will be widely read and used in our local churches, both rural and urban, to help us all to consider the issues of justice and community within one nation.

26. **Family Life Education.** Family Life Education Ecumenical Project (FLEEP) has continued to grow through a number of regional initiatives. Appointment of a second fieldworker is anticipated. A National Consultation looked at some of the present resources for family life education developed by the Churches—for marriage preparation, support of marriage, parenting in the early years and in adolescence, change in middle years, and loss (Report available). For three years the Department was responsible for providing staff servicing of the Project. Although that staff service has now been withdrawn because of other pressures on staff priorities and because of the growth of the Project the Department remains vitally committed to the work of FLEEP.

27. **Consultations.** During 1984 the Department organised another consultation to bring together members of the URC involved in the leadership of community centre churches. These churches are exploring an important form of presence in local areas using all their resources in partnership with the local community. They have much to share with the whole Church about stewardship and evangelism and these annual consultations are for mutual support, sharing and discovery. A consultation with a similar purpose was organised for URC personnel in industrial mission. The Department was represented at the City Ministry Consultation organised by the World Church and Mission Department.

28. **Provincial Work.** Work in some of the Provincial Church and Society Committees has resulted in publications that deserve wider circulation. For example the North West Province has produced a useful discussion starter on the National Health Service, the South West Province has issued a paper on Cable Television, the Province of Wales has produced a study paper on Child Abuse, the Yorkshire Province has begun to circulate a series of leaflets about the community outreach of the church and the Mersey Province has issued a discussion document on the Rites of Passage with special emphasis on the arrangements and cost of funerals and cremations.

29. **Trading Hours.** The Auld Committee has published its report on Trading Hours with recommendations that would sweep away many of the present anomalies and restrictions on trading. In particular the Report proposes the abolition of restrictions on Sunday trading. The Department is cooperating with the British Council of Churches in response to the Auld Committee and is ready to help local churches to consider what action should be taken to ensure that the well-being of the community is not entirely sacrificed to commercial interests and exploitation.

30. **Warnock Report.** The Department issued a study paper on the Warnock Committee's report on "Human Fertilisation and Embryology" which was circulated in the Information Service. The Department realises that in the churches there are conflicting views about the proposals of the Warnock Report, particularly with regard to artificial insemination by donor, surrogate motherhood and embryo experimentation. It had hoped that the various denominations would have attempted to respond to Warnock together, possibly through the reconvening of the Working Party on Childlessness of the Free Church Federal Council and British Council of Churches. It soon became clear, however, that each denomination intended to make its own response. The Department, therefore, wrote to the Secretary of State for Social Services urging the Government to act with some urgency to establish a licensing authority to control and regulate the research and infertility services. It pressed for a substantial proportion of lay members on the authority and a proper balance between the sexes. It also underlined the need for adequate counselling services to be provided at all stages of infertility treatment and enquiry. The Department believes that these measures deserve priority consideration by the Government in response to the Warnock Report.

Convener. The Department Convener, Raymond Clarke, completes his term of office at this Assembly. He has given unstintingly of his time in the service of the Department guiding its meetings and its work with vision and carefulness. He has brought to the Department great gifts

of leadership and wisdom and his wide experience in public service in many fields has enriched the whole Church. The Department records its gratitude to him as he comes to the end of this piece of service.

John Reardon

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report of the Church and Society Department for debate.
2. The Assembly, recalling its resolution of 1983 supporting a nuclear freeze, urges the churches to study proposals for an international nuclear freeze and to present these proposals for endorsement by their members between 24 October 1985 and Ash Wednesday, 12 February 1986.

ASSEMBLY PASTORAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd A L Macarthur
Secretary: Revd B G Thorogood

1. The Committee has met three times since last Assembly and has had 14 cases to consider. All these cases have been referred to it by the appropriate bodies in the Church. They include four which were current at the time of our last report.
2. The Committee has had the co-operation of Moderators, Councils and Committees of the Church and is grateful for the help and understanding that it has received.
3. It is not yet time for a full review of the work of the Committee, but at one point we have to report that the regulations set out by the Assembly in 1983 have been found to be impracticable. It was there laid down that authorisations for special payments from the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund or through the Treasurership Committee should not exceed a period of six months in the first instance. While it might be possible to comply with the letter of that instruction by relying heavily on the last clause, it is clear that in reality in dealing with human situations the time limit is too short. When it proves desirable to establish a minister in a sphere where support and understanding can give opportunity for re-training and therapy, arrangements have to be made concerning accommodation, deployment, and have to be such as to give a sufficient sense of secure standing. These involve decisions covering periods longer than six months. While the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee and the Treasurership Committee have so far raised no question about decisions that have included a longer time scale, we believe that the position should be made explicit. We are well aware that such decisions impose burdens on local churches in the size of their contributions, and we are particularly anxious that the Committee shall not become a soft option for Moderators, Councils, local churches or ministers where problems need to be firmly resolved and not just shelved. However, pending the review which was part of the brief governing the establishment of the Committee, we now ask the Assembly to grant the Committee authority to make arrangements, in a strictly limited number of cases, for payments to be made for a period not exceeding three years. The Committee would intend that in the first instance the number of such cases will not exceed three at any one time.
4. Meanwhile, the Committee will consult with others concerned in handling the issues that arise from its work, with a view to any further revisions of its mandate that may prove wise as it seeks to carry out the delicate and important work assigned to it. Strict confidentiality has been and will continue to be observed in respect of all particular cases.

RESOLUTIONS

1. The Assembly receives the report.
2. The Assembly notes the difficulty encountered by its Pastoral Reference Committee in respect of the periods for which it may authorise special payments from Assembly Funds, and agrees to the limited extension of these powers asked for in the report.

BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY

The following pages contain the full text of the World Council of Churches Faith and Order paper 111 which was published by WCC in 1982 and is here reprinted by permission of the Publications Department, WCC, Geneva.

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PREFACE

The World Council of Churches is “a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (Constitution).

The World Council is here clearly defined. It is not a universal authority controlling what Christians should believe and do. After only three decades, however, it has already become a remarkable community of some three hundred members. These churches represent a rich diversity of cultural backgrounds and traditions, worship in dozens of languages, and live under every kind of political system. Yet they are all committed to close collaboration in Christian witness and service. At the same time, they are also striving together to realize the goal of visible Church unity.

To assist the churches towards this goal, the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council provides theological support for the efforts the churches are making towards unity. Indeed the Commission has been charged by the Council members to keep always before them their accepted obligation to work towards manifesting more visibly God’s gift of Church unity.

So it is that the stated aim of the Commission is “to proclaim the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ and to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, in order that the world might believe” (By-Laws).

If the divided churches are to achieve the visible unity they seek, one of the essential prerequisites is that they should be in basic agreement on baptism, eucharist and ministry. Naturally, therefore, the Faith and Order Commission has devoted a good deal of attention to overcoming doctrinal division on these three. During the last fifty years, most of its conferences have had one or another of these subjects at the centre of discussion.

The three statements are the fruit of a 50-year process of study stretching back to the first Faith and Order Conference at Lausanne in 1927. The material has been discussed and revised by the Faith and Order Commission at Accra (1974), Bangalore (1978) and Lima (1982). Between the Plenary Commission meetings, a steering group on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry has worked further on the drafting, especially after September 1979 under the presidency of Frère Max Thurian of the Taizé Community.

The ecumenical documents also reflect ongoing consultation and collaboration between the Commission members (approved by the churches) and with the local churches themselves. The World Council’s Fifth Assembly (Nairobi 1975) authorized the distribution for the churches’ study of an earlier draft text (Faith and Order Paper No. 73). Most significantly, over a hundred churches from virtually every geographical area and ecclesiastical tradition returned detailed comments. These were carefully analyzed at a 1977 consultation in Crêt-Bérard (Faith and Order Paper No. 84).

Meanwhile particularly difficult problems were also analyzed at special ecumenical consultations held on the themes of infant and believers’ baptism in Louisville, 1978 (Faith and Order Paper No. 97), on episkopé (oversight) and the episcopate in Geneva, 1979 (Faith and Order Paper No. 102). The draft text was also reviewed by representatives of Orthodox Churches in Chambésy, 1979. In conclusion, the Faith and Order Commission was again authorized by the World Council’s Central Committee (Dresden, 1981) to transmit its finally revised document (the “Lima text” of 1982) to the churches, along with the request for their official response as a vital step in the ecumenical process of reception.

This work has not been achieved by the Faith and Order Commission alone. Baptism, eucharist and ministry have been investigated in many ecumenical dialogues. The two main types of interchurch conversations, the bilateral and multilateral, have proved to be complementary and mutually beneficial. This is clearly demonstrated in the three reports of the Forum on Bilateral Conversations: “Concepts of Unity” (1978), “Consensus on Agreed Statements” (1979), and “Authority and Reception” (1980), subsequently published in Faith and Order Paper No. 107. Consequently, the Faith and Order Commission in its own multilateral consideration of the three themes has tried to build as much as possible on the specific findings of the bilateral conversations. Indeed, one of the tasks of the Commission is to evaluate the net result of all these particular efforts for the ecumenical movement as a whole.

Also important for the development of this text has been the witness of local churches which have already gone through the process of uniting across confessional division. It is important to ac-

knowledge that the search for local church union and the search for universal consensus are intimately linked.

Perhaps even more influential than the official studies are the changes which are taking place within the life of the churches themselves. We live in a crucial moment in the history of humankind. As the churches grow into unity, they are asking how their understandings and practices of baptism, eucharist and ministry relate to their mission in and for the renewal of human community as they seek to promote justice, peace and reconciliation. Therefore our understanding of these cannot be divorced from the redemptive and liberating mission of Christ through the churches in the modern world.

Indeed, as a result of biblical and patristic studies, together with the liturgical revival and the need for common witness, an ecumenical fellowship has come into being which often cuts across confessional boundaries and within which former differences are now seen in a new light. Hence, although the language of the text is still largely classical in reconciling historical controversies, the driving force is frequently contextual and contemporary. This spirit will likely stimulate many reformulations of the text into the varied language(s) of our time.

Where have these efforts brought us? As demonstrated in the Lima text, we have already achieved a remarkable degree of agreement. Certainly we have not yet fully reached "consensus" (*consentire*), understood here as that experience of life and articulation of faith necessary to realize and maintain the Church's visible unity. Such consensus is rooted in the communion built on Jesus Christ and the witness of the apostles. As a gift of the Spirit it is realized as a communal experience before it can be articulated by common efforts into words. Full consensus can only be proclaimed after the churches reach the point of living and acting together in unity.

On the way towards their goals of visible unity, however, the churches will have to pass through various stages. They have been blessed anew through listening to each other and jointly returning to the primary sources, namely "the Tradition of the Gospel testified in Scripture, transmitted in and by the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit" (Faith and Order World Conference, 1963).

In leaving behind the hostilities of the past, the churches have begun to discover many promising convergences in their shared convictions and perspectives. These convergences give assurance that despite much diversity in theological expression the churches have much in common in their understanding of the faith. The resultant text aims to become part of a faithful and sufficient reflection of the common Christian Tradition on essential elements of Christian communion. In the process of growing together in mutual trust, the churches must develop these doctrinal convergences step by step, until they are finally able to declare together that they are living in communion with one another in continuity with the apostles and the teaching of the universal Church.

This Lima text represents the significant theological convergence which Faith and Order has discerned and formulated. Those who know how widely the churches have differed in doctrine and practice on baptism, eucharist and ministry, will appreciate the importance of the large measure of agreement registered here. Virtually all the confessional traditions are included in the Commission's membership. That theologians of such widely different traditions should be able to speak so harmoniously about baptism, eucharist and ministry is unprecedented in the modern ecumenical movement. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Commission also includes among its full members theologians of the Roman Catholic and other churches which do not belong to the World Council of Churches itself.

In the course of critical evaluation the primary purpose of this ecumenical text must be kept in mind. Readers should not expect to find a complete theological treatment of baptism, eucharist and ministry. That would be neither appropriate nor desirable here. The agreed text purposely concentrates on those aspects of the theme that have been directly or indirectly related to the problems of mutual recognition leading to unity. The main text demonstrates the major areas of theological convergence; the added commentaries either indicate historical differences that have been overcome or identify disputed issues still in need of further research and reconciliation.

In the light of all these developments, the Faith and Order Commission now presents this Lima text (1982) to the churches. We do so with deep conviction, for we have become increasingly aware of our unity in the body of Christ. We have found reason to rejoice in the rediscovery of the richness of our common inheritance in the Gospel. We believe that the Holy Spirit has led us to this time, a *kairos* of the ecumenical movement when sadly divided churches have been enabled to arrive at substantial theological agreements. We believe that many significant advances are possi-

ble if in our churches we are sufficiently courageous and imaginative to embrace God's gift of Church unity.

As concrete evidence of their ecumenical commitment, the churches are being asked to enable the widest possible involvement of the whole people of God at all levels of church life in the spiritual process of receiving this text. Specific suggestions relating to its use in the worship, witness and study of men and women in churches are included as an appendix to this document.

The Faith and Order Commission now respectfully invites all churches to prepare an official response to this text at the highest appropriate level of authority, whether it be a council, synod, conference, assembly or other body. In support of this process of reception, the Commission would be pleased to know as precisely as possible

- *the extent to which your church can recognize in this text the faith of the Church through the ages;*
- *the consequences your church can draw from this text for its relations and dialogues with other churches, particularly with those churches which also recognize the text as an expression of the apostolic faith;*
- *the guidance your church can take from this text for its worship, educational, ethical, and spiritual life and witness;*
- *the suggestions your church can make for the ongoing work of Faith and Order as it relates the material of this text on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry to its long-range research project "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today".*

It is our intention to compare all the official replies received, to publish the results, and to analyze the ecumenical implications for the churches at a future World Conference on Faith and Order.

All responses to these questions should be sent by 31 December 1984 to the Faith and Order Secretariat, World Council of Churches, 150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

William H. Lazareth

Nikos Nissiotis

Director of the Secretariat on Faith and Order Moderator of the Commission on Faith and Order

BAPTISM

I. THE INSTITUTION OF BAPTISM

1. Christian baptism is rooted in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, in his death and in his resurrection. It is incorporation into Christ, who is the crucified and risen Lord; it is entry into the New Covenant between God and God's people. Baptism is a gift of God, and is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. St Matthew records that the risen Lord, when sending his disciples into the world, commanded them to baptize (Matt. 28:18-20). The universal practice of baptism by the apostolic Church from its earliest days is attested in letters of the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, and the writings of the Fathers. The churches today continue this practice as a rite commitment to the Lord who bestows his grace upon his people.

II. THE MEANING OF BAPTISM

2. Baptism is the sign of new life through Jesus Christ. It unites the one baptized with Christ and with his people. The New Testament scriptures and the liturgy of the Church unfold the meaning of baptism in various images which express the riches of Christ and the gifts of his salvation. These images are sometimes linked with the symbolic uses of water in the Old Testament. Baptism is participation in Christ's death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12); a washing away of sin (I Cor. 6:11); a new birth (John 3:5); an enlightenment by Christ (Eph. 5:14); a reclothing in Christ (Gal. 3:27); a renewal by the Spirit (Titus 3:5); the experience of salvation from the flood (I Peter 3:20-21); an exodus from bondage (I Cor. 10:1-2) and a liberation into a new humanity in which barriers of division whether of sex or race or social status are transcended (Gal. 3:27-28; I Cor. 12:13). The images are many but the reality is one.

A. *Participation in Christ's Death and Resurrection*

3. Baptism means participating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus went down into the river Jordan and was baptized in solidarity with sinners in order to fulfil all righteousness (Matt. 3:15). This baptism led Jesus along the way of the Suffering Servant, made manifest in his sufferings, death and resurrection (Mark 10:38-40, 45). By baptism, Christians are immersed

in the liberating death of Christ where their sins are buried, where the “Old Adam” is crucified with Christ, and where the power of sin is broken. Thus those baptized are no longer slaves to sin, but free. Fully identified with the death of Christ, they are buried with him and are raised here and now to a new life in the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, confident that they will also ultimately be one with him in a resurrection like his (Rom. 6:3-11; Col. 2:13, 3:1; Eph. 2:5-6).

B. Conversion, Pardoning and Cleansing

4. The baptism which makes Christians partakers of the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection implies confession of sin and conversion of heart. The baptism administered by John was itself a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:4). The New Testament underlines the ethical implications of baptism by representing it as an ablution which washes the body with pure water, a cleansing of the heart of all sin, and an act of justification (Heb. 10:22; I Peter 3:21; Acts 22:16; I Cor. 6:11). Thus those baptized are pardoned, cleansed and sanctified by Christ, and are given as part of their baptismal experience a new ethical orientation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

C. The Gift of the Spirit

5. The Holy Spirit is at work in the lives of people before, in and after their baptism. It is the same Spirit who revealed Jesus as the Son (Mark 1:10-11) and who empowered and united the disciples at Pentecost (Acts 2). God bestows upon all baptized persons the anointing and the promise of the Holy Spirit, marks them with a seal and implants in their hearts the first instalment of their inheritance as sons and daughters of God. The Holy Spirit nurtures the life of faith in their hearts until the final deliverance when they will enter into its full possession, to the praise of the glory of God (II Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14).

D. Incorporation into the Body of Christ

6. Administered in obedience to our Lord, baptism is a sign and seal of our common discipleship. Through baptism, Christians are brought into union with Christ, with each other and with the Church of every time and place. Our common baptism, which unites us to Christ in faith, is thus a basic bond of unity. We are one people and are called to confess and serve one Lord in each place and in all the world. The union with Christ which we share through baptism has important implications for Christian unity. “There is . . . one baptism, one God and Father of us all . . .” (Eph. 4:4-6). When baptismal unity is realized in one holy, catholic, apostolic Church, a genuine Christian witness can be made to the healing and reconciling love of God. Therefore, our one baptism into Christ constitutes a call to the churches to overcome their divisions and visibly manifest their fellowship.

COMMENTARY (6)

The inability of the churches mutually to recognize their various practices of baptism as sharing in the one baptism, and their actual dividedness in spite of mutual baptismal recognition, have given dramatic visibility to the broken witness of the Church. The readiness of the churches in some places and times to allow differences of sex, race, or social status to divide the body of Christ has further called into question genuine baptismal unity of the Christian community (Gal. 3:27-28) and has seriously compromised its witness. The need to recover baptismal unity is at the heart of the ecumenical task as it is central for the realization of genuine partnership within the Christian communities.

E. The Sign of the Kingdom

7. Baptism initiates the reality of the new life given in the midst of the present world. It gives participation in the community of the Holy Spirit. It is a sign of the Kingdom of God and of the life of the world to come. Through the gifts of faith, hope and love, baptism has a dynamic which embraces the whole of life, extends to all nations, and anticipates the day when every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

III. BAPTISM AND FAITH

8. Baptism is both God’s gift and our human response to that gift. It looks towards a growth into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). The necessity of faith for the reception of the salvation embodied and set forth in baptism is acknowledged by all churches. Personal commitment is necessary for responsible membership in the body of Christ.

9. Baptism is related not only to momentary experience, but to life-long growth into Christ.

Those baptized are called upon to reflect the glory of the Lord as they are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, into his likeness, with ever increasing splendour (II Cor. 3:18). The life of the Christian is necessarily one of continuing struggle yet also of continuing experience of grace. In this new relationship, the baptized live for the sake of Christ, of his Church and of the world which he loves, while they wait in hope for the manifestation of God's new creation and for the time when God will be in all (Rom. 8:18-24; I Cor. 15:22-28; 49-57).

10. As they grow in the Christian life of faith, baptized believers demonstrate that humanity can be regenerated and liberated. They have a common responsibility, here and now, to bear witness together to the Gospel of Christ, the Liberator of all human beings. The context of this common witness is the Church and the world. Within a fellowship of witness and service, Christians discover the full significance of the one baptism as the gift of God to all God's people. Likewise, they acknowledge that baptism, as a baptism into Christ's death, has ethical implications which not only call for personal sanctification, but also motivate Christians to strive for the realization of the will of God in all realms of life (Rom. 6:9ff; Gal. 3:27-28; I Peter 2:21-4:6).

IV. BAPTISMAL PRACTICE

A. *Baptism of Believers and Infants*

11. While the possibility that infant baptism was also practised in the apostolic age cannot be excluded, baptism upon personal profession of faith is the most clearly attested pattern in the New Testament documents.

In the course of history, the practice of baptism has developed in a variety of forms. Some churches baptize infants brought by parents or guardians who are ready, in and with the Church, to bring up the children in the Christian faith. Other churches practise exclusively the baptism of believers who are able to make a personal confession of faith. Some of these churches encourage infants or children to be presented and blessed in a service which usually involves thanksgiving for the gift of the child and also the commitment of the mother and father to Christian parenthood.

All churches baptize believers coming from other religions or from unbelief who accept the Christian faith and participate in catechetical instruction.

12. Both the baptism of believers and the baptism of infants take place in the Church as the community of faith. When one who can answer for himself or herself is baptized, a personal confession of faith will be an integral part of the baptismal service. When an infant is baptized, the personal response will be offered at a later moment in life. In both cases, the baptized person will have to grow in the understanding of faith. For those baptized upon their own confession of faith, there is always the constant requirement of a continuing growth of personal response in faith. In the case of infants, personal confession is expected later, and Christian nurture is directed to the eliciting of this confession. All baptism is rooted in and declares Christ's faithfulness unto death. It has its setting within the life and faith of the Church and, through the witness of the whole Church, points to the faithfulness of God, the ground of all life in faith. At every baptism the whole congregation reaffirms its faith in God and pledges itself to provide an environment of witness and service. Baptism should, therefore, always be celebrated and developed in the setting of the Christian community.

COMMENTARY (12)

When the expressions "infant baptism" and "believers' baptism" are used, it is necessary to keep in mind that the real distinction is between those who baptize people at any age and those who baptize only those able to make a confession of faith for themselves. The differences between infant and believers' baptism become less sharp when it is recognized that both forms of baptism embody God's own initiative in Christ and express a response of faith made within the believing community.

The practice of infant baptism emphasizes the corporate faith and the faith which the child shares with its parents. The infant is born into a broken world and shares in its brokenness. Through baptism, the promise and claim of the Gospel are laid upon the child. The personal faith of the recipient of baptism and faithful participation in the life of the Church are essential for the full fruit of baptism.

The practice of believers' baptism emphasizes the explicit confession of the person who responds to the grace of God in and through the community of faith and who seeks baptism.

Both forms of baptism require a similar and responsible attitude towards Christian nurture. A rediscovery of the continuing character of Christian nurture may facilitate the mutual acceptance of different initiation practices.

In some churches which unite both infant-baptist and believer-baptist traditions, it has been possible to regard as equivalent alternatives for entry into the Church both a pattern whereby baptism in infancy is followed by later profession of faith and a pattern whereby believers' baptism follows upon a presentation and blessing in infancy. This example invites other churches to decide whether they, too, could not recognize equivalent alternatives in their reciprocal relationships and in church union negotiations.

13. Baptism is an unrepeatable act. Any practice which might be interpreted as "re-baptism" must be avoided.

COMMENTARY (13)

Churches which have insisted on a particular form of baptism or which have had serious questions about the authenticity of other churches' sacraments and ministries have at times required persons coming from other church traditions to be baptized before being received into full communicant membership. As the churches come to fuller mutual understanding and acceptance of one another and enter into closer relationships in witness and service, they will want to refrain from any practice which might call into question the sacramental integrity of other churches or which might diminish the unrepeatability of the sacrament of baptism.

B. Baptism—Chrismation—Confirmation

14. In God's work of salvation, the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is inseparably linked with the pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, participation in Christ's death and resurrection is inseparably linked with the receiving of the Spirit. Baptism in its full meaning signifies and effects both.

Christians differ in their understanding as to where the sign of the gift of the Spirit is to be found. Different actions have become associated with the giving of the Spirit. For some it is the water rite itself. For others, it is the anointing with chrism and/or the imposition of hands, which many churches call confirmation. For still others it is all three, as they see the Spirit operative throughout the rite. All agree that Christian baptism is in water and the Holy Spirit.

COMMENTARY (14)

(a) Within some traditions it is explained that as baptism conforms us to Christ crucified, buried and risen, so through chrismation Christians receive the gift of the pentecostal Spirit from the anointed Son.

(b) If baptism, as incorporation into the body of Christ, points by its very nature to the eucharistic sharing of Christ's body and blood, the question arises as to how a further and separate rite can be interposed between baptism and admission to communion. Those churches which baptize children but refuse them a share in the eucharist before such a rite may wish to ponder whether they have fully appreciated and accepted the consequences of baptism.

(c) Baptism needs to be constantly reaffirmed. The most obvious form of such reaffirmation is the celebration of the eucharist. The renewal of baptismal vows may also take place during such occasions as the annual celebration of the paschal mystery or during the baptism of others.

C. Towards Mutual Recognition of Baptism

15. Churches are increasingly recognizing one another's baptism as the one baptism into Christ when Jesus Christ has been confessed as Lord by the candidate or, in the case of infant baptism, when confession has been made by the church (parents, guardians, god-parents and congregation) and affirmed later by personal faith and commitment. Mutual recognition of baptism is acknowledged as an important sign and means of expressing the baptismal unity given in Christ. Wherever possible, mutual recognition should be expressed explicitly by the churches.

16. In order to overcome their differences, believer baptists and those who practise infant baptism should reconsider certain aspects of their practices. The first may seek to express more visibly the fact that children are placed under the protection of God's grace. The latter must guard themselves against the practice of apparently indiscriminate baptism and take more seriously their responsibility for the nurture of baptized children to mature commitment to Christ.

V. THE CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

17. Baptism is administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

18. In the celebration of baptism the symbolic dimension of water should be taken seriously and not minimized. The act of immersion can vividly express the reality that in baptism the Christian participates in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

COMMENTARY (18)

As seen in some theological traditions, the use of water, with all its positive associations with life and blessing, signifies the continuity between the old and the new creation, thus revealing the significance of baptism not only for human beings but also for the whole cosmos. At the same time, the use of water represents a purification of creation, a dying to that which is negative and destructive in the world: those who are baptized into the body of Christ are made partakers of a renewed existence.

19. As was the case in the early centuries, the gift of the Spirit in baptism may be signified in additional ways; for example, by the sign of the laying on of hands, and by anointing or chrismation. The very sign of the cross recalls the promised gift of the Holy Spirit who is the instalment and pledge of what is yet to come when God has fully redeemed those whom he has made his own (Eph. 1:13-14). The recovery of such vivid signs may be expected to enrich the liturgy.

20. Within any comprehensive order of baptism at least the following elements should find a place: the proclamation of the scriptures referring to baptism; an invocation of the Holy Spirit; a renunciation of evil; a profession of faith in Christ and the Holy Trinity; the use of water; a declaration that the persons baptized have acquired a new identity as sons and daughters of God, and as members of the Church, called to be witnesses of the Gospel. Some churches consider that Christian initiation is not complete without the sealing of the baptized with the gift of the Holy Spirit and participation in holy communion.

21. It is appropriate to explain in the context of the baptismal service the meaning of baptism as it appears from scriptures (i.e. the participation in Christ's death and resurrection, conversion, pardoning and cleansing, gift of the Spirit, incorporation into the body of Christ and sign of the Kingdom).

COMMENTARY (21)

Recent discussion indicates that more attention should be given to misunderstandings encouraged by the socio-cultural context in which baptism takes place.

(a) In some parts of the world, the giving of a name in the baptismal liturgy has led to confusion between baptism and customs surrounding name-giving. This confusion is especially harmful if, in cultures predominantly not Christian, the baptized are required to assume Christian names not rooted in their cultural tradition. In making regulations for baptism, churches should be careful to keep the emphasis on the true Christian significance of baptism and to avoid unnecessarily alienating the baptized from their local culture through the imposition of foreign names. A name which is inherited from one's original culture roots the baptized in that culture, and at the same time manifests the universality of baptism, incorporation into the one Church, holy, catholic and apostolic, which stretches over all the nations of the earth.

(b) In many large European and North American majority churches infant baptism is often practised in an apparently indiscriminate way. This contributes to the reluctance of churches which practise believers' baptism to acknowledge the validity of infant baptism; this fact should lead to more critical reflection on the meaning of baptism within those majority churches themselves.

(c) Some African churches practise baptism of the Holy Spirit without water, through the laying on of hands, while recognizing other churches' baptism. A study is required concerning this practice and its relation to baptism with water.

22. Baptism is normally administered by an ordained minister, though in certain circumstances others are allowed to baptize.

23. Since baptism is intimately connected with the corporate life and worship of the Church, it should normally be administered during public worship, so that the members of the congregation may be reminded of their own baptism and may welcome into their fellowship those who are baptized and whom they are committed to nurture in the Christian faith. The sacrament is appropriate to great festival occasions such as Easter, Pentecost and Epiphany, as was the practice in the early Church.

EUCHARIST

I. THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST

1. The Church receives the eucharist as a gift from the Lord. St Paul wrote: "I have received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said: 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance (*anamnesis*) of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'" (I Cor. 11:23-25; cf. Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20).

The meals which Jesus is recorded as sharing during his earthly ministry proclaim and enact the nearness of the Kingdom, of which the feeding of the multitudes is a sign. In his last meal, the fellowship of the Kingdom was connected with the imminence of Jesus' suffering. After his resurrection, the Lord made his presence known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. Thus the eucharist continues these meals of Jesus during his earthly life and after his resurrection, always as a sign of the Kingdom. Christians see the eucharist prefigured in the Passover memorial of Israel's deliverance from the land of bondage and in the meal of the Covenant on Mount Sinai (Ex. 24). It is the new paschal meal of the Church, the meal of the New Covenant, which Christ gave to his disciples as the *anamnesis* of his death and resurrection, as the anticipation of the Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9). Christ commanded his disciples thus to remember and encounter him in this sacramental meal, as the continuing people of God, until his return. The last meal celebrated by Jesus was a liturgical meal employing symbolic words and actions. Consequently the eucharist is a sacramental meal which by visible signs communicates to us God's love in Jesus Christ, the love by which Jesus loved his own "to the end" (John 13:1). It has acquired many names: for example, the Lord's Supper, the breaking of bread, the holy communion, the divine liturgy, the mass. Its celebration continues as the central act of the Church's worship.

II. THE MEANING OF THE EUCHARIST

2. The eucharist is essentially the sacrament of the gift which God makes to us in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian receives this gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ. In the eucharistic meal, in the eating and drinking of the bread and wine, Christ grants communion with himself. God himself acts, giving life to the body of Christ and renewing each member. In accordance with Christ's promise, each baptized member of the body of Christ receives in the eucharist the assurance of the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:28) and the pledge of eternal life (John 6:51-58). Although the eucharist is essentially one complete act, it will be considered here under the following aspects: thanksgiving to the Father, memorial of Christ, invocation of the Spirit, communion of the faithful, meal of the Kingdom.

A. *The Eucharist as Thanksgiving to the Father*

3. The eucharist, which always includes both word and sacrament, is a proclamation and a celebration of the work of God. It is the great thanksgiving to the Father for everything accomplished in creation, redemption and sanctification, for everything accomplished by God now in the Church and in the world in spite of the sins of human beings, for everything that God will accomplish in bringing the Kingdom to fulfilment. Thus the eucharist is the benediction (*berakah*) by which the Church expresses its thankfulness for all God's benefits.

4. The eucharist is the great sacrifice of praise by which the Church speaks on behalf of the whole creation. For the world which God has reconciled is present at every eucharist: in the bread and wine, in the persons of the faithful, and in the prayers they offer for themselves and for all people. Christ unites the faithful with himself and includes their prayers within his own intercession so that the faithful are transfigured and their prayers accepted. This sacrifice of praise is possible only through Christ, with him and in him. The bread and wine, fruits of the earth and of human labour, are presented to the Father in faith and thanksgiving. The eucharist thus signifies what the world is to become: an offering and hymn of praise to the Creator, a universal communion in the body of Christ, a kingdom of justice, love and peace in the Holy Spirit.

B. *The Eucharist as Anamnesis or Memorial of Christ*

5. The eucharist is the memorial of the crucified and risen Christ, i.e. the living and effective sign of his sacrifice, accomplished once and for all on the cross and still operative on behalf of all humankind. The biblical idea of memorial as applied to the eucharist refers to this present efficacy of God's work when it is celebrated by God's people in a liturgy.

6. Christ himself with all that he has accomplished for us and for all creation (in his incarnation, servanthood, ministry, teaching, suffering, sacrifice, resurrection, ascension and sending of the Spirit) is present in this *anamnesis*, granting us communion with himself. The eucharist is also the foretaste of his *parousia* and of the final kingdom.

7. The *anamnesis* in which Christ acts through the joyful celebration of his Church is thus both representation and anticipation. It is not only a calling to mind of what is past and of its significance. It is the Church's effective proclamation of God's mighty acts and promises.

8. Representation and anticipation are expressed in thanksgiving and intercession. The Church, gratefully recalling God's mighty acts of redemption, beseeches God to give the benefits of these acts to every human being. In thanksgiving and intercession, the Church is united with the Son, its great High Priest and Intercessor (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). The eucharist is the sacrament of the unique sacrifice of Christ, who ever lives to make intercession for us. It is the memorial of all that God has done for the salvation of the world. What it was God's will to accomplish in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, God does not repeat. These events are unique and can neither be repeated nor prolonged. In the memorial of the eucharist, however, the Church offers its intercession in communion with Christ, our great High Priest.

COMMENTARY (8)

It is in the light of the significance of the eucharist as intercession that references to the eucharist in Catholic theology as "propitiatory sacrifice" may be understood. The understanding is that there is only one expiation, that of the unique sacrifice of the cross, made actual in the eucharist and presented before the Father in the intercession of Christ and of the Church for all humanity.

In the light of the biblical conception of memorial, all churches might want to review the old controversies about "sacrifice" and deepen their understanding of the reasons why other traditions than their own have either used or rejected this term.

9. The *anamnesis* of Christ is the basis and source of all Christian prayer. So our prayer relies upon and is united with the continual intercession of the risen Lord. In the eucharist, Christ empowers us to live with him, to suffer with him and to pray through him as justified sinners, joyfully and freely fulfilling his will.

10. In Christ we offer ourselves as a living and holy sacrifice in our daily lives (Rom. 12:1; I Peter 2:5); this spiritual worship, acceptable to God, is nourished in the eucharist, in which we are sanctified and reconciled in love, in order to be servants of reconciliation in the world.

11. United to our Lord and in communion with all the saints and martyrs, we are renewed in the covenant sealed by the blood of Christ.

12. Since the *anamnesis* of Christ is the very content of the preached Word as it is of the eucharist meal, each reinforces the other. The celebration of the eucharist properly includes the proclamation of the Word.

13. The words and acts of Christ at the institution of the eucharist stand at the heart of the celebration; the eucharist meal is the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, the sacrament of his real presence. Christ fulfils in a variety of ways his promise to be always with his own even to the end of the world. But Christ's mode of presence in the eucharist is unique. Jesus said over the bread and wine of the eucharist: "This is my body . . . this is my blood . . .". What Christ declared is true, and this truth is fulfilled every time the eucharist is celebrated. The Church confesses Christ's real, living and active presence in the eucharist. While Christ's real presence in the eucharist does not depend on the faith of the individual, all agree that to discern the body and blood of Christ, faith is required.

COMMENTARY (13)

Many churches believe that by the words of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine of the eucharist become, in a real though mysterious manner, the body and blood of the risen Christ, i.e., of the living Christ present in all his fullness. Under the signs of bread and wine, the deepest reality is the total being of Christ who comes to us in order to feed us and transform our entire being. Some other churches, while affirming a real presence of Christ at the eucharist, do not link that presence so definitely with the signs of bread and wine. The decision remains for the churches whether this difference can be accommodated within the convergence formulated in the text itself.

C. *The Eucharist as Invocation of the Spirit*

14. The Spirit makes the crucified and risen Christ really present to us in the eucharistic meal, fulfilling the promise contained in the words of institution. The presence of Christ is clearly the centre of the eucharist, and the promise contained in the words of institution is therefore fundamental to the celebration. Yet it is the Father who is the primary origin and final fulfilment of the eucharistic event. The incarnate Son of God by and in whom it is accomplished is its living centre. The Holy Spirit is the immeasurable strength of love which makes it possible and continues to make it effective. The bond between the eucharistic celebration and the mystery of the Triune God reveals the role of the Holy Spirit as that of the One who makes the historical words of Jesus present and alive. Being assured by Jesus' promise in the words of institution that it will be answered, the Church prays to the Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit in order that the eucharistic event may be a reality: the real presence of the crucified and risen Christ giving his life for all humanity.

COMMENTARY (14)

This is not to spiritualize the eucharistic presence of Christ but to affirm the indissoluble union between the Son and the Spirit. This union makes it clear that the eucharist is not a magical or mechanical action but a prayer addressed to the Father, one which emphasizes the Church's utter dependence. There is an intrinsic relationship between the words of institution, Christ's promise, and the epiclesis, the invocation of the Spirit, in the liturgy. The epiclesis in relation to the words of institution is located differently in various liturgical traditions. In the early liturgies the whole "prayer action" was thought of as bringing about the reality promised by Christ. The invocation of the Spirit was made both on the community and on the elements of bread and wine. Recovery of such an understanding may help us overcome our difficulties concerning a special moment of consecration.

15. It is in virtue of the living word of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit that the bread and wine become the sacramental signs of Christ's body and blood. They remain so for the purpose of communion.

COMMENTARY (15)

In the history of the Church there have been various attempts to understand the mystery of the real and unique presence of Christ in the eucharist. Some are content merely to affirm this presence without seeking to explain it. Others consider it necessary to assert a change wrought by the Holy Spirit and Christ's words, in consequence of which there is no longer just ordinary bread and wine but the body and blood of Christ. Others again have developed an explanation of the real presence which, though not claiming to exhaust the significance of the mystery, seeks to protect it from damaging interpretations.

16. The whole action of the eucharist has an "epikletic" character because it depends upon the work of the Holy Spirit. In the words of the liturgy, this aspect of the eucharist finds varied expression.

17. The Church, as the community of the new covenant, confidently invokes the Spirit, in order that it may be sanctified and renewed, led into all justice, truth and unity, and empowered to fulfil its mission in the world.

18. The Holy Spirit through the eucharist gives a foretaste of the Kingdom of God: the Church receives the life of the new creation and the assurance of the Lord's return.

D. *The Eucharist as Communion of the Faithful*

19. The eucharistic communion with Christ who nourishes the life of the Church is at the same time communion within the body of Christ which is the Church. The sharing in one bread and the common cup in a given place demonstrates and effects the oneness of the sharers with Christ and with their fellow sharers in all times and places. It is in the eucharist that the community of God's people is fully manifested. Eucharistic celebrations always have to do with the whole Church, and the whole Church is involved in each local eucharistic celebration. In so far as a church claims to be a manifestation of the whole Church, it will take care to order its own life in ways which take seriously the interests and concerns of other churches.

COMMENTARY (19)

Since the earliest days, baptism has been understood as the sacrament by which believers are incorporated into the body of Christ and are endowed with the Holy Spirit. As long as the right of the baptized

believers and their ministers to participate in and preside over eucharistic celebration in one church is called into question by those who preside over and are members of other eucharistic congregations, the catholicity of the eucharist is less manifest. There is discussion in many churches today about the inclusion of baptized children as communicants at the Lord's Supper.

20. The eucharist embraces all aspects of life. It is a representative act of thanksgiving and offering on behalf of the whole world. The eucharistic celebration demands reconciliation and sharing among all those regarded as brothers and sisters in the one family of God and is a constant challenge in the search for appropriate relationships in social, economic and political life (Matt. 5:23f; I Cor. 10:16f; I Cor. 11:20-22; Gal. 3:28). All kinds of injustice, racism, separation and lack of freedom are radically challenged when we share in the body and blood of Christ. Through the eucharist the all-renewing grace of God penetrates and restores human personality and dignity. The eucharist involves the believer in the central event of the world's history. As participants in the eucharist, therefore, we prove inconsistent if we are not actively participating in this ongoing restoration of the world's situation and the human condition. The eucharist shows us that our behaviour is inconsistent in face of the reconciling presence of God in human history: we are placed under continual judgment by the persistence of unjust relationships of all kinds in our society, the manifold divisions on account of human pride, material interest and power politics and, above all, the obstinacy of unjustifiable confessional oppositions within the body of Christ.

21. Solidarity in the eucharistic communion of the body of Christ and responsible care of Christians for one another and the world find specific expression in the liturgies: in the mutual forgiveness of sins; the sign of peace; intercession for all; the eating and drinking together; the taking of the elements to the sick and those in prison or the celebration of the eucharist with them. All these manifestations of love in the eucharist are directly related to Christ's own testimony as a servant, in whose servanthood Christians themselves participate. As God in Christ has entered into the human situation, so eucharist liturgy is near to the concrete and particular situations of men and women. In the early Church the ministry of deacons and deaconesses gave expression in a special way to this aspect of the eucharist. The place of such ministry between the table and the needy properly testifies to the redeeming presence of Christ in the world.

E. The Eucharist as meal of the Kingdom

22. The eucharist opens up the vision of the divine rule which has been promised as the final renewal of creation, and is a foretaste of it. Signs of this renewal are present in the world wherever the grace of God is manifest and human beings work for justice, love and peace. The eucharist is the feast at which the Church gives thanks to God for these signs and joyfully celebrates and anticipates the coming of the Kingdom in Christ (I Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:29).

23. The world, to which renewal is promised, is present in the whole eucharistic celebration. The world is present in the thanksgiving to the Father, where the Church speaks on behalf of the whole creation; in the memorial of Christ, where the Church, united with its great High Priest and Intercessor, prays for the world; in the prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, where the Church asks for sanctification and new creation.

24. Reconciled in the eucharist, the members of the body of Christ are called to be servants of reconciliation among men and women and witnesses of the joy of resurrection. As Jesus went out to publicans and sinners and had table-fellowship with them during his earthly ministry, so Christians are called in the eucharist to be in solidarity with the outcast and to become signs of the love of Christ who lived and sacrificed himself for all and now gives himself in the eucharist.

25. The very celebration of the eucharist is an instance of the Church's participation in God's mission to the world. This participation takes everyday form in the proclamation of the Gospel, service of the neighbour, and faithful presence in the world.

26. As it is entirely the gift of God, the eucharist brings into the present age a new reality which transforms Christians into the image of Christ and therefore makes them his effective witnesses. The eucharist is precious food for missionaries, bread and wine for pilgrims on their apostolic journey. The eucharistic community is nourished and strengthened for confessing by word and action the Lord Jesus Christ who gave his life for the salvation of the world. As it becomes one people, sharing the meal of the one Lord, the eucharistic assembly must be concerned for gathering also those who are at present beyond its visible limits, because Christ invited to his feast all for whom he died. Insofar as Christians cannot unite in full fellowship around the same table to eat the same loaf and drink from the same cup, their missionary witness is weakened at both the individual and

the corporate levels.

III. THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

27. The eucharistic liturgy is essentially a single whole, consisting historically of the following elements in varying sequence and of diverse importance:

- hymns of praise;
- act of repentance;
- declaration of pardon;
- proclamation of the Word of God, in various forms;
- confession of faith (creed);
- intercession for the whole Church and for the world;
- preparation of the bread and wine;
- thanksgiving to the Father for the marvels of creation, redemption and sanctification (deriving from the Jewish traditions of the *berakah*);
- the words of Christ's institution of the sacrament according to the New Testament tradition;
- the *anamnesis* or memorial of the great acts of redemption, passion, death, resurrection, ascension and Pentecost, which brought the Church into being;
- the invocation of the Holy Spirit (*epiklesis*) on the community, and the elements of bread and wine (either before the words of institution or after the memorial, or both; or some other reference to the Holy Spirit which adequately expresses the "epikletic" character of the eucharist);
- consecration of the faithful to God;
- reference to the communion of saints;
- prayer for the return of the Lord and the definitive manifestation of his Kingdom;
- the Amen of the whole community;
- the Lord's prayer;
- sign of reconciliation and peace;
- the breaking of the bread;
- eating and drinking in communion with Christ and with each member of the church;
- final act of praise;
- blessing and sending.

28. The best way towards unity in eucharistic celebration and communion is the renewal of the eucharist itself in the different churches in regard to teaching and liturgy. The churches should test their liturgies in the light of the eucharistic agreement now in the process of attainment.

The liturgical reform movement has brought the churches closer together in the manner of celebrating the Lord's supper. However, a certain liturgical diversity compatible with our common eucharistic faith is recognized as a healthy and enriching fact. The affirmation of a common eucharistic faith does not imply uniformity in either liturgy or practice.

COMMENTARY (28)

Since New Testament days, the Church has attached the greatest importance to the continued use of the elements of bread and wine which Jesus used at the Last Supper. In certain parts of the world, where bread and wine are not customary or obtainable, it is now sometimes held that local food and drink serve better to anchor the eucharist in everyday life. Further study is required concerning the question of which features of the Lord's Supper were unchangeably instituted by Jesus, and which features remain within the Church's competence to decide.

29. In the celebration of the eucharist, Christ gathers, teaches and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. He is the shepherd who leads the people of God, the prophet who announces the Word of God, the priest who celebrates the mystery of God. In most churches, this presidency is signified by an ordained minister. The one who presides at the eucharistic celebration in the name of Christ makes clear that the rite is not the assemblies' own creation or possession; the eucharist is received as a gift from Christ living in his Church. The minister of the eucharist is the ambassador who represents the divine initiative and expresses the connection of the local community with other local communities in the universal Church.

30. Christian faith is deepened by the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Hence the eucharist should be celebrated frequently. Many differences of theology, liturgy and practice are connected with the varying frequency with which the Holy Communion is celebrated.

31. As the eucharist celebrates the resurrection of Christ, it is appropriate that it should take

place at least every Sunday. As it is the new sacramental meal of the people of God, every Christian should be encouraged to receive communion frequently.

32. Some churches stress that Christ's presence in the consecrated elements continues after the celebration. Others place the main emphasis on the act of celebration itself and on the consumption of the elements in the act of communion. The way in which the elements are treated requires special attention. Regarding the practice of reserving the elements, each church should respect the practices and piety of the others. Given the diversity in practice among the churches and at the same time taking note of the present situation in the convergence process, it is worthwhile to suggest:

- that, on the one hand, it be remembered, especially in sermons and instruction, that the primary intention of reserving the elements is their distribution among the sick and those who are absent, and
- on the other hand, it be recognized that the best way of showing respect for the elements served in the eucharistic celebration is by their consumption, without excluding their use for communion of the sick.

33. The increased mutual understanding expressed in the present statement may allow some churches to attain a greater measure of eucharistic communion among themselves and so bring closer the day when Christ's divided people will be visibly reunited around the Lord's Table.

MINISTRY

I. THE CALLING OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF GOD

1. In a broken world God calls the whole of humanity to become God's people. For this purpose God chose Israel and then spoke in a unique and decisive way in Jesus Christ, God's Son. Jesus made his own the nature, condition and cause of the whole human race, giving himself as a sacrifice for all. Jesus' life of service, his death and resurrection, are the foundation of a new community which is built up continually by the good news of the Gospel and the gifts of the sacraments. The Holy Spirit unites in a single body those who follow Jesus Christ and sends them as witnesses into the world. Belonging to the Church means living in communion with God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

2. The life of the Church is based on Christ's victory over the powers of evil and death, accomplished once for all. Christ offers forgiveness, invites to repentance and delivers from destruction. Through Christ, people are enabled to turn in praise to God and in service to their neighbours. In Christ they find the source of new life in freedom, mutual forgiveness and love. Through Christ their hearts and minds are directed to the consummation of the Kingdom where Christ's victory will become manifest and all things made new. God's purpose is that, in Jesus Christ, all people should share in this fellowship.

3. The Church lives through the liberating and renewing power of the Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit was upon Jesus is evidenced in his baptism, and after the resurrection that same Spirit was given to those who believed in the Risen Lord in order to recreate them as the body of Christ. The Spirit calls people to faith, sanctifies them through many gifts, gives them strength to witness to the Gospel, and empowers them to serve in hope and love. The Spirit keeps the Church in the truth and guides it despite the frailty of its members.

4. The Church is called to proclaim and prefigure the Kingdom of God. It accomplishes this by announcing the Gospel to the world and by its very existence as the body of Christ. In Jesus the Kingdom of God came among us. He offered salvation to sinners. He preached good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, liberation to the oppressed (Luke 4:18). Christ established a new access to the Father. Living in this communion with God, all members of the Church are called to confess their faith and to give account of their hope. They are to identify with the joys and sufferings of all people as they seek to witness in caring love. The members of Christ's body are to struggle with the oppressed towards that freedom and dignity promised with the coming of the Kingdom. This mission needs to be carried out in varying political, social and cultural contexts. In order to fulfil this mission faithfully, they will seek relevant forms of witness and service in each situation. In so doing they bring to the world a foretaste of the joy and glory of God's Kingdom.

5. The Holy Spirit bestows on the community diverse and complementary gifts. These are for the common good of the whole people and are manifested in acts of service within the community

and to the world. They may be gifts of communicating the Gospel in word and deed, gifts of healing, gifts of praying, gifts of teaching and learning, gifts of serving, gifts of guiding and following, gifts of inspiration and vision. All members are called to discover, with the help of the community, the gifts they have received and to use them for the building up of the Church and for the service of the world to which the Church is sent.

6. Though the churches are agreed in their general understanding of the calling of the people of God, they differ in their understanding of how life of the Church is to be ordered. In particular, there are differences concerning the place and forms of the ordained ministry. As they engage in the effort to overcome these differences, the churches need to work from the perspective of the calling of the whole people of God. A common answer needs to be found to the following question: How, according to the will of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the life of the Church to be understood and ordered, so that the Gospel may be spread and the community built up in love?

II. THE CHURCH AND THE ORDAINED MINISTRY

7. Differences in terminology are part of the matter under debate. In order to avoid confusion in the discussions on the ordained ministry in the Church, it is necessary to delineate clearly how various terms are used in the following paragraphs.

- a) The word *charism* denotes the gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit on any member of the body of Christ for the building up of the community and the fulfilment of its calling.
- b) The word *ministry* in its broadest sense denotes the service to which the whole people of God is called, whether as individuals, as a local community, or as the universal Church. Ministry or ministries can also denote the particular institutional forms which this service may take.
- c) The term *ordained ministry* refers to persons who have received a charism and whom the church appoints for service by ordination through the invocation of the Spirit and the laying on of hands.
- d) Many churches use the word *priest* to denote certain ordained ministers. Because this usage is not universal, this document will discuss the substantive questions in paragraph 17.

A. *The Ordained Ministry*

8. In order to fulfil its mission, the Church needs persons who are publicly and continually responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ, and thereby provide, within a multiplicity of gifts, a focus of its unity. The ministry of such persons, who since very early times have been ordained, is constitutive for the life and witness of the Church.

9. The Church has never been without persons holding specific authority and responsibility. Jesus chose and sent the disciples to be witnesses of the Kingdom (Matt. 10:1-8). The Twelve were promised that they would "sit on thrones judging the tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:30). A particular role is attributed to the Twelve within the communities of the first generation. They are witnesses of the Lord's life and resurrection (Acts 1:21-26). They lead the community in prayer, teaching, the breaking of bread, proclamation and service (Acts 2:42-47; 6:2-6, etc). The very existence of the Twelve and other apostles shows that, from the beginning, there were differentiated roles in the community.

COMMENTARY (9)

In the New Testament the "apostle" is variously employed. It is used for the Twelve but also for a wider circle of disciples. It is applied to Paul and to others as they are sent out by the risen Christ to proclaim the Gospel. The roles of the apostles cover both foundation and mission.

10. Jesus called the Twelve to be representatives of the renewed Israel. At that moment they represent the whole people of God and at the same time exercise a special role in the midst of that community. After the resurrection they are among the leaders of the community. It can be said that the apostles prefigure both the Church as a whole and the persons within it who are entrusted with the specific authority and responsibility. The role of the apostles as witnesses to the resurrection of Christ is unique and unrepeatable. There is therefore a difference between the apostles and the ordained ministers whose ministries are founded on theirs.

11. As Christ chose and sent the apostles, Christ continues through the Holy Spirit to choose and call persons into the ordained ministry. As heralds and ambassadors, ordained ministers are

representatives of Jesus Christ to the community, and proclaim his message of reconciliation. As leaders and teachers they call the community to submit to the authority of Jesus Christ, the teacher and prophet, in whom law and prophets were fulfilled. As pastors, under Jesus Christ the chief shepherd, they assemble and guide the dispersed people of God, in anticipation of the coming Kingdom.

COMMENTARY (11)

The basic reality of an ordained ministry was present from the beginning (cf. para. 8). The actual forms of ordination and of the ordained ministry, however, have evolved in complex historical developments (cf. para. 19). The churches, therefore, need to avoid attributing their particular forms of the ordained ministry directly to the will and institution of Jesus Christ.

12. All members of the believing community, ordained and lay, are interrelated. On the one hand, the community needs ordained ministers. Their presence reminds the community of the divine initiative, and of the dependence of the Church on Jesus Christ, who is the source of its mission and the foundation of its unity. They serve to build up the community in Christ and to strengthen its witness. In them the Church seeks an example of holiness and loving concern. On the other hand, the ordained ministry has no existence apart from the community. Ordained ministers can fulfil their calling only in and for the community. They cannot dispense with the recognition, the support and the encouragement of the community.

13. The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments, and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry.

COMMENTARY (13)

These tasks are not exercised by the ordained ministry in an exclusive way. Since the ordained ministry and the community are inextricably related, all members participate in fulfilling these functions. In fact, every charism serves to assemble and build up the body of Christ. Any member of the body may share in proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, may contribute to the sacramental life of that body. The ordained ministry fulfils these functions in a representative way, providing the focus for the unity of the life and witness of the community.

14. It is especially in the eucharistic celebration that the ordained ministry is the visible focus of the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of his body. In the celebration of the eucharist, Christ gathers, teaches and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. In most churches this presidency is signified and represented by an ordained minister.

COMMENTARY (14)

The New Testament says very little about the ordering of the eucharist. There is no explicit evidence about who presided at the eucharist. Very soon however it is clear that an ordained ministry presides over the celebration. If the ordained ministry is to provide a focus for the unity of the life and witness of the Church, it is appropriate that an ordained minister should be given this task. It is intimately related to the task of guiding the community, i.e. supervising its life (episkopé) and strengthening its vigilance in relation to the truth of the apostolic message and the coming of the Kingdom.

B. Ordained Ministry and Authority

15. The authority of the ordained minister is rooted in Jesus Christ, who has received it from the Father (Matt. 28:18), and who confers it by the Holy Spirit through the act of ordination. This act takes place within a community which accords public recognition to a particular person. Because Jesus came as one who serves (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27), to be set apart means to be consecrated to service. Since ordination is essentially a setting apart with prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, the authority of the ordained ministry is not to be understood as the possession of the ordained person but as a gift for the continuing edification of the body in and for which the minister has been ordained. Authority has the character of responsibility before God and is exercised with the cooperation of the whole community.

16. Therefore, ordained ministers must not be autocrats or impersonal functionaries. Although called to exercise wise and loving leadership on the basis of the Word of God, they are bound to the faithful in interdependence and reciprocity. Only when they seek the response and acknowledgment of the community can their authority be protected from the distortions of isolation and

domination. They manifest and exercise the authority of Christ in the way Christ himself revealed God's authority to the world, by committing their life to the community. Christ's authority is unique. "He spoke as one who has authority (*exousia*), not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:29). This authority is an authority governed by love for the "sheep who have no shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). It is confirmed by his life of service and, supremely, by his death and resurrection. Authority in the Church can only be authentic as it seeks to conform to this model.

COMMENTARY (16)

Here two dangers must be avoided. Authority cannot be exercised without regard for the community. The apostles paid heed to the experience and the judgment of the faithful. On the other hand, the authority of ordained ministers must not be so reduced as to make them dependent on the common opinion of the community. Their authority lies in their responsibility to express the will of God in the community.

C. Ordained Ministry and Priesthood

17. Jesus Christ is the unique priest of the new covenant. Christ's life was given as a sacrifice for all. Derivatively, the Church as a whole can be described as a priesthood. All members are called to offer their being "as a living sacrifice" and to intercede for the Church and the salvation of the world. Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood of Christ, and to the priesthood of the Church. But they may appropriately be called priests because they fulfil a particular priestly service by strengthening and building up the royal and prophetic priesthood of the faithful through word and sacraments, through their prayers of intercession, and through their pastoral guidance of the community.

COMMENTARY (17)

The New Testament never uses the term "priesthood" or "priest" (hiericus) to designate the ordained ministry or the ordained minister. In the New Testament, the term is reserved, on the one hand, for the unique priesthood of Jesus Christ and, on the other hand, for the royal and prophetic priesthood of all baptized. The priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of the baptized have in their respective ways the function of sacrifice and intercession. As Christ has offered himself, Christians offer their whole being "as a living sacrifice". As Christ intercedes before the Father, Christians intercede for the Church and the salvation of the world. Nevertheless, the difference between these two kinds of priesthood cannot be overlooked. While Christ offered himself as a unique sacrifice once and for all for the salvation of the world, believers need to receive continually as a gift of God that which Christ has done for them.

In the early Church the terms "priesthood" and "priest" came to be used to designate the ordained ministry and minister as presiding at the eucharist. They underline the fact that the ordained ministry is related to the priestly reality of Jesus Christ and the whole community. When the terms are used in connection with the ordained ministry, their meaning differs in appropriate ways from the sacrificial priesthood of the Old Testament, from the unique redemptive priesthood of Christ and from the corporate priesthood of the people of God. St Paul could call his ministry "a priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable by the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:16).

D. The Ministry of Men and Women in the Church

18. Where Christ is present, human barriers are being broken. The Church is called to convey to the world the image of a new humanity. There is in Christ no male or female (Gal. 3:28). Both women and men must discover together their contributions to the service of Christ in the Church. The Church must discover the ministry which can be provided by women as well as that which can be provided by men. A deeper understanding of the comprehensiveness of ministry which reflects the interdependence of men and women needs to be more widely manifested in the life of the Church.

Though they agree on this need, the churches draw different conclusions as to the admission of women to the ordained ministry. An increasing number of churches have decided that there is no biblical or theological reason against ordaining women, and many of them have subsequently proceeded to do so. Yet many churches hold that the tradition of the Church in this regard must not be changed.

COMMENTARY (18)

Those churches which practice the ordination of women do so because of their understanding of the Gospel and of the ministry. It rests for them on the deeply held theological conviction that the ordained ministry of the Church lacks fullness when it is limited to one sex. This theological conviction has been reinforced by their experience during the years in which they have included women in their ordained ministries. They have found that women's gifts are as wide and varied as men's and that their ministry is as fully blessed by the Holy Spirit as the ministry of men. None has found reason to reconsider its decision.

Those churches which do not practise the ordination of women consider that the force of nineteen centuries of tradition against the ordination of women must not be set aside. They believe that such a tradition cannot be dismissed as a lack of respect for the participation of women in the Church. They believe that there are theological issues concerning the nature of humanity and concerning Christology which lie at the heart of their convictions and understanding of the role of women in the Church.

The discussion of these practical and theological questions within the various churches and Christian traditions should be complemented by joint study and reflection within the ecumenical fellowship of all churches.

III. THE FORMS OF THE ORDAINED MINISTRY

A. Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons

19. The New Testament does not describe a single pattern of ministry which might serve as a blueprint or continuing norm for all future ministry in the Church. In the New Testament there appears rather a variety of forms which existed at different places and times. As the Holy Spirit continued to lead the Church in life, worship and mission, certain elements from this early variety were further developed and became settled into a more universal pattern of ministry. During the second and third centuries, a threefold pattern of bishop, presbyter and deacon became established as the pattern of ordained ministry throughout the Church. In succeeding centuries, the ministry by bishop, presbyter and deacon underwent considerable changes in its practical exercise. At some points of crisis in the history of the Church, the continuing functions of ministry were in some places and communities distributed according to structures other than the predominant threefold pattern. Sometimes appeal was made to the New Testament in justification of these other patterns. In other cases, the restructuring of ministry was held to lie within the competence of the Church as it adapted to changed circumstances.

20. It is important to be aware of the changes the threefold ministry has undergone in the history of the Church. In the earliest instances, where threefold ministry is mentioned, the reference is to the local eucharistic community. The bishop was the leader of the community. He was ordained and installed to proclaim the Word and preside over the celebration of the eucharist. He was surrounded by a college of presbyters and by deacons who assisted in his tasks. In this context the bishop's ministry was a focus of unity within the whole community.

21. Soon, however, the functions were modified. Bishops began increasingly to exercise *episkopé* over several local communities at the same time. In the first generation, apostles had exercised *episkopé* in the wider Church. Later Timothy and Titus are recorded to have fulfilled a function of *episkopé* in a given area. Later again this apostolic task is carried out in a new way by the bishops. They provide a focus for unity in life and witness within areas comprising several eucharistic communities. As a consequence, presbyters and deacons are assigned new roles. The presbyters become the leaders of the local eucharistic community, and as assistants of the bishops, deacons receive responsibilities in the larger area.

COMMENTARY (21)

*The earliest Church knew both the travelling ministry of such missionaries as Paul and the local ministry of leadership in places where the Gospel was received. At local level, organizational patterns appear to have varied according to circumstances. The Acts of the Apostles mention for Jerusalem the Twelve and the Seven, and later James and the elders; and for Antioch, prophets and teachers (Acts 6:1-6; 15:13-22; 13:1). The letters to Corinth speak of apostles, prophets and teachers (I Cor. 12:28); so too does the letter to the Romans, which also speaks of deacons or assistants (Rom. 16:1). In Philippi, the secular term *episkopoi* and *diakonoi* were together used for Christian ministers (Phil. 1:1). Several of these ministries are ascribed to both women and men. While some were appointed*

by the laying on of hands, there is no indication of this procedure in other cases.

Whatever their names, the purpose of these ministries was to proclaim the Word of God, to transmit and safeguard the original content of the Gospel, to feed and strengthen the faith, discipline and service of the Christian communities, and to protect and foster unity within and among them. These have been the constant duties of ministry throughout the developments and crises of Christian history.

22. Although there is no single New Testament pattern, although the Spirit has many times led the Church to adapt its ministries to contextual needs, and although other forms of the ordained ministry have been blessed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, nevertheless the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it. Historically, it is true to say, the threefold ministry became the generally accepted pattern in the Church of the early centuries and is still retained today by many churches. In the fulfilment of their mission and service the churches need people who in different ways express and perform the tasks of the ordained ministry in its diaconal, presbyteral and episcopal aspects and functions.

23. The Church as the body of Christ and the eschatological people of God is constituted by the Holy Spirit through a diversity of gifts or ministries. Among these gifts a ministry of *episkopé* is necessary to express and safeguard the unity of the body. Every church needs this ministry of unity in some form in order to be the Church of God, the one body of Christ, a sign of the unity of all in the Kingdom.

24. The threefold pattern stands evidently in need of reform. In some churches the collegial dimension of leadership in the eucharistic community has suffered diminution. In others, the function of deacons has been reduced to an assistant role in the celebration of the liturgy: they have ceased to fulfil any function with regard to the diaconal witness of the Church. In general, the relation of the presbyterate to the episcopal ministry has been discussed throughout the centuries, and the degree of the presbyter's participation in the episcopal ministry is still for many an unresolved question of far-reaching ecumenical importance. In some cases, churches which have not formally kept the threefold form have, in fact, maintained certain of its original patterns.

25. The traditional threefold pattern thus raises questions for all the churches. Churches maintaining the threefold pattern will need to ask how its potential can be fully developed for the most effective witness of the Church in this world. In this task churches not having the threefold pattern should also participate. They will further need to ask themselves whether the threefold pattern as developed does not have a powerful claim to be accepted by them.

B. Guiding Principles for the Exercise of the Ordained Ministry in the Church

26. Three considerations are important in this respect. The ordained ministry should be exercised in a personal, collegial and communal way. It should be *personal* because the presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the person ordained to proclaim the Gospel and to call the community to serve the Lord in unity of life and witness. It should also be *collegial*, for there is need for a college of ordained ministers sharing in the common task of representing the concerns of the community. Finally, the intimate relationship between the ordained ministry and the community should find expression in a *communal* dimension where the exercise of the ordained ministry is rooted in the life of the community and requires the community's effective participation in the discovery of God's will and the guidance of the Spirit.

COMMENTARY (26)

These three aspects need to be kept together. In various churches, one or another has been over-emphasized at the expense of the others. In some churches, the personal dimension of the ordained ministry tends to diminish the collegial and communal dimensions. In other churches, the collegial or communal dimension takes so much importance that the ordained ministry loses its personal dimension. Each church needs to ask itself in what way its exercise of the ordained ministry has suffered in the course of history.

An appreciation of these three dimensions lies behind a recommendation made by the first World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne in 1927: "In view of (i) the place which the episcopate, the council of presbyters and the congregation of the faithful, respectively, had in the constitution of the early Church, and (ii) the fact that episcopal, presbyteral and congregational systems of government are each today, and have been for centuries, accepted by great communions in Christendom, and (iii) the fact that episcopal, presbyteral and congregational systems are each believed by

many to be essential to the good order of the Church, we therefore recognize that these several elements must all, under conditions which require further study, have an appropriate place in the order of life of a reunited Church . . .”

27. The ordained ministry needs to be constitutionally or canonically ordered and exercised in the Church in such a way that each of these three dimensions can find adequate expression. At the level of the local eucharistic community there is need for an ordained minister acting within a collegial body. Strong emphasis should be placed on the active participation of all members in the life and the decision-making of the community. At the regional level there is again need for an ordained minister exercising a service of unity. The collegial and communal dimensions will find expression in regular representative synodal gatherings.

C. Functions of Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons

28. What can then be said about the functions and even titles of bishops, presbyters and deacons? A uniform answer to this question is not required for the mutual recognition of the ordained ministry. The following considerations on functions are, however, offered in a tentative way.

29. *Bishops* preach the Word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission. They relate the Christian community in their area to the wider Church, and the universal Church to their community. They, in communion with the presbyters and deacons and the whole community, are responsible for the orderly transfer of ministerial authority in the Church.

30. *Presbyters* serve as pastoral ministers of Word and sacraments in a local eucharistic community. They are preachers and teachers of the faith, exercise pastoral care, and bear responsibility for the discipline of the congregation to the end that the world may believe and that the entire membership of the Church may be renewed, strengthened and equipped in ministry. Presbyters have particular responsibility for the preparation of members for Christian life and ministry.

31. *Deacons* represent to the Church its calling as servant in the world. By struggling in Christ's name with the myriad needs of societies and persons, deacons exemplify the interdependence of worship and service in the Church's life. They exercise responsibility in the worship of the congregation: for example by reading the scriptures, preaching and leading the people in prayer. They help in the teaching of the congregation. They exercise a ministry of love within the community. They fulfil certain administrative tasks and may be elected to responsibilities for governance.

COMMENTARY (31)

In many churches there is today considerable uncertainty about the need, the rationale, the status and the functions of deacons. In what sense can the diaconate be considered part of the ordained ministry? What is it that distinguishes it from other ministries in the Church (catechists, musicians, etc)? Why should deacons be ordained while these other ministries do not receive ordination? If they are ordained, do they receive ordination in the full sense of the word or is their ordination only the first step towards ordination as presbyters? Today, there is a strong tendency in many churches to restore the diaconate as an ordained ministry with its own dignity and meant to be exercised for life. As the churches move closer together there may be united in this office ministries now existing in a variety of forms and under a variety of names. Differences in ordering the diaconal ministry should not be regarded as a hindrance for the mutual recognition of the ordained ministries.

D. Variety of Charisms

32. The community which lives in the power of the Spirit will be characterized by a variety of charisms. The Spirit is the giver of diverse gifts which enrich the life of the community. In order to enhance their effectiveness, the community will recognize publicly certain of these charisms. While some serve permanent needs in the life of the community, others will be temporary. Men and women in the communities of religious orders fulfil a service which is of particular importance for the life of the Church. The ordained ministry, which is itself a charism, must not become a hindrance for the variety of these charisms. On the contrary, it will help the community to discover the gifts bestowed on it by the Holy Spirit and will equip members of the body to serve in a variety of ways.

33. In the history of the Church there have been times when the truth of the Gospel could only

be preserved through prophetic and charismatic leaders. Often new impulses could find their way into the life of the Church only in unusual ways. At times reforms required a special ministry. The ordained ministers and the whole community will need to be attentive to the challenge of such special ministries.

IV. SUCCESSION IN THE APOSTOLIC TRADITION

A. *Apostolic Tradition in the Church*

34. In the Creed, the Church confesses itself to be apostolic. The Church lives in continuity with the apostles and their proclamation. The same Lord who sent the apostles continues to be present in the Church. The Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the Kingdom of God. Apostolic tradition in the Church means continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation and fresh interpretation of the Gospel, celebration of baptism and eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibilities, communion in prayer, love, joy and suffering, service to the sick and the needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each.

COMMENTARY (34)

The apostles, as witnesses of the life and resurrection of Christ and sent by him, are the original transmitters of the Gospels, of the tradition of the saving words and acts of Jesus Christ which constitute the life of the Church. The apostolic tradition continues through history and links the Church to its origins in Christ and in the college of the apostles. Within this apostolic tradition is an apostolic succession of the ministry which serves the continuity of the Church in its life in Christ and its faithfulness to the words and acts of Jesus transmitted by the apostles. The ministers appointed by the apostles, and then the episkopoi of the churches, were the first guardians of this transmission of the apostolic tradition; they testified to the apostolic succession of the ministry which was continued through the bishops of the early Church in collegial communion with the presbyters and deacons within the Christian community. A distinction should be made, therefore, between the apostolic tradition of the whole Church and the succession of the apostolic ministry.

B. *Succession of the Apostolic Ministry*

35. The primary manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole. The succession is an expression of the permanence and, therefore, of the continuity of Christ's own mission in which the Church participates. Within the Church the ordained ministry has a particular task of preserving and actualizing the apostolic faith. The orderly transmission of the ordained ministry is therefore a powerful expression of the continuity of the Church throughout history; it also underlines the calling of the ordained minister as guardian of the faith. Where churches see little importance in orderly transmission, they should ask themselves whether they have not to change their conception of continuity in the apostolic tradition. On the other hand, where the ordained ministry does not adequately serve the proclamation of the apostolic faith, churches must ask themselves whether their ministerial structures are not in need of reform.

36. Under the particular historical circumstances of the growing Church in the early centuries, the succession of bishops became one of the ways, together with the transmission of the Gospel and the life of the community, in which the apostolic tradition of the Church was expressed. This succession was understood as serving, symbolizing and guarding the continuity of the apostolic faith and communion.

COMMENTARY (36)

In the early Church the bond between the episcopate and the apostolic community was understood in two ways. Clement of Rome linked the mission of the bishop with the sending of Christ by the Father and the sending of the apostles by Christ (Cor. 42:44). This made the bishop a successor of the apostles, ensuring the permanence of the apostolic mission in the Church. Clement is primarily interested in the means whereby the historical continuity of Christ's presence is ensured in the Church thanks to the apostolic succession. For Ignatius of Antioch (Magn. 6:1, 3:1-2; Trall. 3:1), it is Christ surrounded by the Twelve who is permanently in the Church in the person of the bishop surrounded by the presbyters. Ignatius regards the Christian community assembled around the bishop in the midst of presbyters and deacons as the actual manifestation in the Spirit of the apostolic community. The sign of apostolic succession thus not only points to historical continuity; it also manifests an actual spiritual reality.

37. In churches which practise the succession through the episcopate, it is increasingly recognized that a continuity in apostolic faith, worship and mission has been preserved in churches which have not retained the form of historic episcopate. This recognition finds additional support in the fact that the reality and function of the episcopal ministry have been preserved in many of these churches, with or without the title "bishop". Ordination, for example, is always done in them by persons in whom the Church recognizes the authority to transmit the ministerial commission.

38. These considerations do not diminish the importance of the episcopal ministry. On the contrary, they enable churches which have not retained the episcopate to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church. Today churches, including those engaged in union negotiations, are expressing willingness to accept episcopal succession as a sign of the apostolicity of the life of the whole Church. Yet, at the same time, they cannot accept any suggestion that the ministry exercised in their own tradition should be invalid until the moment that it enters into an existing line of episcopal succession. Their acceptance of the episcopal succession will best further the unity of the whole Church if it is part of a wider process by which the episcopal churches themselves also regain their lost unity.

V. ORDINATION

A. *The Meaning of Ordination*

39. The Church ordains certain of its members for the ministry in the name of Christ by the invocation of the Spirit and the laying on of hands (I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6); in so doing it seeks to continue the mission of the apostles and to remain faithful to their teaching. The act of ordination by those who are appointed for this ministry attests the bond of the Church with Jesus Christ and the apostolic witness, recalling that it is the risen Lord who is the true ordainer and bestows the gift. In ordaining, the Church, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, provides for the faithful proclamation of the Gospel and humble service in the name of Christ. The laying on of hands is the sign of the gift of the Spirit, rendering visible the fact that the ministry was instituted in the revelation accomplished in Christ, and reminding the Church to look to him as the source of its commission. This ordination, however, can have different intentions according to the specific tasks of bishops, presbyters and deacons as indicated in the liturgies of ordination.

COMMENTARY (39)

It is clear that churches have different practices of ordination, and that it would be wrong to single out one of those as exclusively valid. On the other hand, if churches are willing to recognize each other in the sign of apostolic succession, as described above, it would follow that the old tradition, according to which it is the bishop who ordains, with the participation of the community, will be recognized and respected as well.

40. Properly speaking, then, ordination denotes an action by God and the community by which the ordained are strengthened by the Spirit for their task and are upheld by the acknowledgment and prayers of the congregation.

COMMENTARY (40)

The original New Testament terms for ordination tend to be simple and descriptive. The fact of appointment is recorded. The laying on of hands is described. Prayer is made for the Spirit. Different traditions have built different interpretations on the basis of these data.

It is evident that there is a certain difference between the unspoken cultural setting of the Greek cheirotonein and that of the Latin ordo or ordinare. The New Testament use of the former term borrows its basic secular meaning of "appointment" (Acts 14:23; II Cor. 8:19), which is, in turn, derived from the original meaning of extending the hand, either to designate a person or to cast a vote. Some scholars see in cheirotonein a reference to the act of laying on of hands, in view of the literal description of the action is such seemingly parallel instances as Acts 6:6, 8:17, 13:3, 19:6; I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6. Ordo and ordinare, on the other hand, are terms derived from Roman law where they convey the notion of the special status of a group distinct from the plebs, as in the term ordo clarissimus for the Roman senate. The starting point of any conceptual construction using these terms will strongly influence what is taken for granted in both the thought and action which result.

B. *The Act of Ordination*

41. A long and early Christian tradition places ordination in the context of worship and especially of the eucharist. Such a place for the service of ordination preserves the understanding of ordina-

tion as an act of the whole community, and not of a certain order within it or of the individual ordained. The act of ordination by the laying on of hands of those appointed to do so is at one and the same time invocation of the Holy Spirit (*epiklesis*); sacramental sign; acknowledgment of gifts and commitment.

42. (a) Ordination is an invocation to God that the new minister be given the power of the Holy Spirit in the new relation which is established between this minister and the local Christian community and, by intention, the Church universal. The otherness of God's initiative, of which the ordained ministry is a sign, is here acknowledged in the act of ordination itself. "The Spirit blows where it wills" (John 3:3): the invocation of the Spirit implies the absolute dependence on God for the outcome of the Church's prayer. This means that the Spirit may set new forces in motion and open new possibilities "far more abundantly than all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

43. (b) Ordination is a sign of the granting of this prayer by the Lord who gives the gift of the ordained ministry. Although the outcome of the Church's *epiklesis* depends on the freedom of God, the Church ordains in confidence that God, being faithful to his promise in Christ, enters sacramentally into contingent, historical forms of human relationship and uses them for his purpose. Ordination is a sign performed in faith that the spiritual relationship signified is present in, with and through the words spoken, the gestures made and the forms employed.

44. (c) Ordination is an acknowledgment by the Church of the gifts of the Spirit in the one ordained, and a commitment by both the Church and the ordinand to the new relationship. By receiving the new minister in the act of ordination, the congregation acknowledges the minister's gifts and commits itself to be open towards these gifts. Likewise those ordained offer their gifts to the Church and commit themselves to the burden and opportunity of new authority and responsibility. At the same time, they enter into a collegial relationship with other ordained ministers.

C. *The Conditions for Ordination*

45. People are called in differing ways to the ordained ministry. There is a personal awareness of a call from the Lord to dedicate oneself to the ordained ministry. This call may be discerned through personal prayer and reflection, as well as through suggestion, example, encouragement, guidance coming from family, friends, the congregation, teachers, and other church authorities. This call must be authenticated by the Church's recognition of the gifts and graces of the particular person, both natural and spiritually given, needed for the ministry to be performed. God can use people both celibate and married for the ordained ministry.

46. Ordained persons may be professional ministers in the sense that they receive their salaries from the church. The church may also ordain people who remain in other occupations or employment.

47. Candidates for the ordained ministry need appropriate preparation through study of scripture and theology, prayer and spirituality, and through acquaintance with the social and human realities of the contemporary world. In some situations, this preparation may take a form other than that of prolonged academic study. The period of training will be one in which the candidate's call is tested, fostered and confirmed, or its understanding modified.

48. Initial commitment to ordained ministry ought normally to be made without reserve or time limit. Yet leave of absence from service is not incompatible with ordination. Resumption of ordained ministry requires the assent of the Church, but no re-ordination. In recognition of the God-given charism of ministry, ordination to any one of the particular ordained ministries is never repeated.

49. The discipline with regard to the conditions for ordination in one church need not be seen as universally applicable and used as grounds for not recognizing ministry in others.

50. Churches which refuse to consider candidates for the ordained ministry on the grounds of handicap or because they belong, for example, to one particular race or sociological group should re-evaluate their practices. This re-evaluation is particularly important today in view of the multitude of experiments in new forms of ministry with which the churches are approaching the modern world.

VI. TOWARDS THE MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF THE ORDAINED MINISTRIES

51. In order to advance towards the mutual recognition of ministries, deliberate efforts are required. All churches need to examine the forms of ordained ministry and the degree to which the churches are faithful to its original intentions. Churches must be prepared to renew their under-

standing and their practice of the ordained ministry.

52. Among the issues that need to be worked on as churches move towards mutual recognition of ministries, that of apostolic succession is of particular importance. Churches in ecumenical conversations can recognize their respective ordained ministries if they are mutually assured of their intention to transmit the ministry of Word and sacrament in continuity with the apostolic times. The act of transmission should be performed in accordance with the apostolic tradition, which includes the invocation of the Spirit and the laying on of hands.

53. In order to achieve mutual recognition, different steps are required of different churches. For example:

- a) Churches which have preserved the episcopal succession are asked to recognize both the apostolic content of the ordained ministry which exists in churches which have not maintained such succession and also the existence in these churches of a ministry of *episkopé* in various forms.
- b) Churches without the episcopal succession, and living in faithful continuity with the apostolic faith and mission, have a ministry of Word and sacrament, as is evident from the belief, practice, and life of those churches. These churches are asked to realize that the continuity with the Church of the apostles finds profound expression in the successive laying on of hands by bishops and that, though they may not lack the continuity of the apostolic tradition, this sign will strengthen and deepen that continuity. They may need to recover the sign of the episcopal succession.

54. Some churches ordain both men and women, others ordain only men. Differences on this issue raise obstacles to the mutual recognition of ministries. But those obstacles must not be regarded as substantive hindrance for further efforts towards mutual recognition. Openness to each other holds the possibility that the Spirit may well speak to one church through the insights of another. Ecumenical consideration, therefore, should encourage, not restrain, the facing of this question.

55. The mutual recognition of churches and their ministries implies decision by the appropriate authorities and a liturgical act from which point unity would be publicly manifest. Several forms of such public act have been proposed: mutual laying on of hands, eucharistic concelebration, solemn worship without a particular rite of recognition, the reading of a text of union during the course of a celebration. No one liturgical form would be absolutely required, but in any case it would be necessary to proclaim the accomplishment of mutual recognition publicly. The common celebration of the eucharist would certainly be the place for such an act.

Response to BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY

Prepared by the Doctrine & Worship Committee

(In what follows references are to paragraph numbers, preceded by the letters B, E, or M, as appropriate, and followed by the letter C if the Commentary is intended.)

1. Procedure

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church meeting at Brighton in 1983 passed the following resolution:-

The Assembly welcomes the publication of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, encourages Provinces, Districts and local churches to study the text and consider its implications; and requests each Synod to set up a panel to monitor discussions and forward a Provincial response to the Doctrine and Worship Committee by 30 November 1984; and further requests that wherever possible, debate should take place within an ecumenical context.

The way *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* was handled varied from Province to Province: some approved in general terms a report prepared by their panel; others passed resolutions based on a more general report; some made no provincial response at all. The number of formal responses received both at provincial and national level was disappointingly low. But discussion in the Church was wider than this number suggests, and it was frequently pointed out that the timetable laid down by the General Assembly required a response earlier than was compatible with the request for discussion in an ecumenical context wherever possible. This Response was prepared by the Doctrine and Worship Committee of the General Assembly on the basis of material submitted to it, and was approved by the General Assembly of 1985.

2. A welcome document

There has been a general welcome for *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, many expressions of appreciation for the theological reflections it contains, and support for the continuing work of the Faith and Order Commission which it represents. There have also been some individuals and congregations within the United Reformed Church who have expressed grave reservations about the text. In our Response we have tried to indicate the main areas of concern. Many of us feel that the text can contain the differences of emphasis we might wish to make: others doubt whether their disagreement can be so contained. Nevertheless we receive the text as 'a significant theological convergence', recognizing that it does not represent full consensus, understood 'as that experience of life and articulation of faith necessary to realize and maintain the Church's visible unity' (Preface). This Response has been largely framed in terms of the questions raised in the Preface, rather than as a detailed theological critique of the text; but the United Reformed Church's member of the Faith and Order Commission can comment in more detail on behalf of the Church as need arises.

3. The experience of the United Reformed Church

Our Response draws on our experience as a united Church. The three Churches which came together to form the United Reformed Church in 1972 and 1981 did so on the basis of what they judged to be sufficient, though not total, theological agreement. No single pattern of church life was taken to be normative and elements of the traditions of all three Churches are included in the United Reformed Church, the formation of which involved structural changes for all. On the matters treated in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* the Church contains a variety of belief: some, for example believe that infant baptism is a positive expression of the gospel of grace, whilst others believe that New Testament teaching is most clearly represented by believer's baptism; some believe that Holy Communion should be celebrated weekly, others monthly and others quarterly; there is a variety of views about the role of the ordained minister of word and sacrament within the congregation and the wider councils of the Church. We recognize that the union we have entered is still incomplete and also that it is very recent. But we testify:-

first, that to come together in one Church before reaching total theological agreement has provided both a context for, and a sense of commitment towards, continuing theological reflection which are decisively different from those which existed while we were still separate Churches;

and secondly, that experience so far since union suggests that there will be no rapid move to limit the range of belief and practice which currently exists among us.

4. The nature and extent of the agreement required

We therefore believe that more attention needs to be given to the nature and extent of the agreement required for visible unity. Our discussions of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* show that members of our Church find it relatively easy to agree that a certain position may be held within a range of positions; and also that they are more open to the insights of other Christian traditions than in the past. But they are reluctant to ascribe theological priority to one position within the range rather than another, and are particularly hesitant to agree to changes of practice, for example in the exercise of *episkopé**, which seem to involve such an ascription of priority. Some are prepared to justify the existence of denominations as ways of embodying different theological emphases in practice, but even those who believe that the concept of a denomination is incompatible with the New Testament understanding of the Church, believe that the Church must be comprehensive enough to include a wider variety of belief and practice than is contained in any existing organized Church.

It is necessary to consider also how many need to agree as well as how much needs to be agreed. The task of reaching agreement requires theological knowledge and skill which are not possessed by every church member; and those with such knowledge and skill, speaking representatively, can remove distrust and suspicion of heresy: but such a group cannot by itself decide what everyone in the Church should believe. How can theologians speak in such a way that ordinary members can receive and accept what they say? The answer to this question involves a discussion of authority as well as comprehensibility.

In making this comment we do not minimize the importance of theological agreement, nor underestimate the value of theological training, which has always been prized in our tradition. On the contrary we affirm the importance in the Church of doctrine, which is fashioned as its members join together in prayerful study of 'the Tradition of the Gospel testified in Scripture, transmitted in and by the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit' (Preface), and share their experience of Christian discipleship.

5. Ambiguity in the understanding of the sacraments

One anxiety about the text which frequently emerged was whether the convergence in the understanding of the sacraments depended on ambiguities of language. We accept that no deliberate ambiguity was intended, but we think that at certain points the variety of meaning in the language should be more clearly acknowledged.

For example, the term 'rite of commitment' (B 1) may mean either a rite in which an individual makes a personal commitment to the Lord or a rite in which an individual is committed by the Church to the Lord, or both. The theological implications of the phrase are subtly different according to the meaning understood, and this difference has been historically significant. Both meanings can and should be clearly acknowledged to avoid suspicion that only one is intended.

Or again, the exposition of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist (E 13 and E 15) posed few difficulties for our members. But in saying 'some are content merely to affirm this presence . . .' the use of the word 'merely' in the Commentary on E 15 seems somewhat dismissive of a refusal to attempt human explanations of divine mysteries; and this reluctance to define the relation between the presence of Christ and the signs of bread and wine is crucial for any decision on whether the convergence set out in E 13 is adequate. Attempts to define or explain seem to us likely to limit the variety of ways in which the presence of Christ may be understood.

6. The use of history

There is also some ambiguity in the way history is used in the text. For example, it is not clear what is meant by 'the faith of the Church through the ages' referred to in the Preface. Does it refer to the range of belief seen in history, or to some kind of theological core or norm? Is it a criterion by which those who stand within a particular tradition test that tradition, or is it one which people use to test traditions other than their own?

Or again, it is not clear whether all historical developments are to be regarded as the work of the Holy Spirit, or only some. Whereas in the texts on Baptism and Eucharist an exposition of the

*footnote

'Here, and in paragraph 7a and 9c, Greek words are used because the various possible English translations have been identified with particular theological interpretations. *Episkopé* and *diakonia* are referred to in M 14C and M 21C; *anamnesis* is discussed in E 1, 5-13.'

institution of the sacrament is followed by an exposition of its meaning, largely based on biblical material, in the Ministry text the historical material in M 8-14 is much more closely intertwined with theologically interpretative material. Also paragraphs M 19-25, whilst noting the variety of forms of ministry both in New Testament and more recent times, nevertheless interpret the history and theology of ministry in terms of a threefold pattern of ministry which seems to involve more than noting the historical existence of three orders of ministry. Thus it is not clear why the Spirit might not have been as much at work in the breakdown of the threefold pattern in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as in the creation of it in the second and third. Is not ministry multifold rather than threefold? The question of the criteria for judging which historical developments are to be regarded as theologically significant requires further attention.

7. Implications of Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry for the United Reformed Church

(a) The richness of the meaning of both baptism and eucharist set out in the text has been widely appreciated and needs to become part of our life. It is felt that we often do not adequately appreciate baptism as participation in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, or as a sign of the Kingdom (B 3, 7); nor do we emphasize sufficiently celebration and thanksgiving in the eucharist, or its implications for mission (E 3-4, 24-26). The exposition of *anamnesis* in E 5-13 has been widely welcomed. All this suggests that we should seek to enrich our celebration of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion by drawing on these insights. This will involve revision of our orders of service, but since the use of our Service Book is not binding, the task of renewal is one for every local congregation, and we shall seek to encourage this.

(b) Our experience suggests that different views of baptism can be held together, as suggested in B 12C; but this does require the development of understanding and acceptance of different views, and a willingness to regard neither infant nor believer's baptism as the rule. We accept that baptism is an unrepeatable act (B 13), and also that opportunities need to be provided for baptism to be reaffirmed in the context of worship (B 14C (c)). We further believe that care needs to be taken to ensure that parents bringing infants for baptism accept the implications of what they are doing and that those baptized in infancy are nurtured within the Church (B 16). There is some feeling that the text on Baptism does not sufficiently consider the pastoral opportunity (and problem) presented by requests for baptism of infants made by parents with only a slight connection with the Church's life. (These points are touched on in the *URC Guidelines on Baptism*, 1983, pp 16-17.)

(c) We believe that further careful consideration needs to be given to the principle of children receiving the bread and wine in Communion (B 14C (b), E 19C). Although this is closely tied to the view taken of the relation between baptism, church membership, faith and communion, it cannot be settled by reference to that relation alone. It also raises particular problems in a Church such as ours with a dual practice of baptism, where not all children are baptized.

(d) Many of our members found difficulty in separating the question of the eucharist as 'the central act of the Church's worship' (E 1) from the frequency of its celebration (E 30-31). It was generally agreed both that the question of frequency of celebration needs to be examined afresh by local congregations, and that maintenance of a variety of practice is desirable. The increasing use among us of a completely integrated service of word and sacrament with the elements set out in E 27, replacing an earlier practice of adding on communion at the end of a service of the word, has been welcomed. However, the growing practice of having only one service of public worship on a Sunday makes it more difficult to increase frequency and to retain opportunities for services of the word alone.

(e) The importance attached to the notion of Christian growth in B 8-10 has been welcomed, and it is felt that we need to develop a greater commitment to Christian nurture in relation to both baptism and communion. We also need to enable those who preside at and those who share in the eucharist in the United Reformed Church to participate in the wider experience which comes to us through *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* and through increasing familiarity with the liturgical traditions of other Churches.

(f) It has been suggested that further consideration should be given to setting the ordination of ministers in the context of the eucharist (M 41), now that this is usually the context for the ordination of elders.

8. The ecumenical consequences of Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry

(a) We believe the statement on Baptism does provide a basis for the mutual recognition

of baptism, and testify to the value of the Common Baptismal Certificate which has been used increasingly in Great Britain since 1970.

(b) In celebrating the Eucharist, Churches which stress the sacramental dimension need to learn the richness of the word, and those which stress the word need to learn the richness of the sacramental.

(c) Whilst we welcome the richness of meaning in the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, we feel some unease about the possibility that non-sacramental Christian bodies such as the Society of Friends or the Salvation Army may be, or feel themselves to be, unchurched by this emphasis. This concern may be linked to the anxiety expressed by some about the link between baptism and church membership, or the centrality of the eucharist. It recurs in the question posed by some as to whether the observance of sacraments effects a change in the participants, or declares a change which God effects by his general dealing with us in grace. More work needs to be done here.

(d) We rejoice in the emphasis on the ministry of the whole people of God (M 1-6), and believe this is a growing point for all the Churches.

(e) We regret the omission of any reference to the ministry of the ordained elder in the Reformed Churches. Opinion is divided as to whether this may be helpfully or appropriately described as a way in which the Reformed Churches have developed the ministry of deacons (cf M 31C), partly because this can look like a concern to fit the development of ministry into a threefold pattern. But despite the reference to the gifts exercised by the laity (M 5), there is no suggestion there that lay people may be called by a congregation and ordained to exercise a particular ministry, which is a charism in the same sense as that term is used for the ministry of word and sacraments.

(f) Our Church provides that in certain circumstances particular lay persons may be authorized to preside at baptismal and communion services. This does not minimize the significance of ordination, but asserts the primacy of meeting the pastoral needs of the people of God. This needs to be noted when the ordained ministry is discussed (e.g. M 14), and may assume greater importance if weekly celebration of the eucharist increases, especially in those pastorates where one ordained minister serves several congregations. (This point is made clearly in the Report of the Anglican-Reformed International Commission, *God's Reign and Our Unity*, 1984, pp 52-53.)

(g) The Commission's treatment of the ordination of women was described by one Province as 'evasive and unhelpful'. These words were blunter than most, but the feeling was widespread. It was felt that the comment about discrimination on grounds of handicap, race or sociological grouping (M 50) should be extended to include sex as well. We value the sense of wholeness in ministry experienced as a gift of the Holy Spirit through the ordination of women, which has been practised since 1919 in one of our constituent Churches.

9. Suggestions for the future work of Faith and Order

Many of the comments made so far will themselves suggest future work for the Faith and Order Commission. The following topics have also been raised:

(a) Christian initiation. It is felt that more elucidation of the relation between baptism and salvation (B 3-4, 8), and baptism and church membership (B 6, 12, 14) will expose more sharply the question of the way in which the Church is a people called out by God. Also the question of what is completed and what is begun in baptism has much to say about the nature of the Christian life.

(b) The meaning of ordination. If ordination can have a different intention according to the specific task of the office to which it takes place (M 39), the sense in which the ordained ministry may be spoken of without distinction of office (M 8-18, 26-27) needs further definition. Again the adequacy of the concept of a threefold ministry is thrown into question.

(c) Episcopacy and the threefold ministry. We are convinced that the essential elements of *episkopé* are exercised in a proper and orderly way among us. We note that 'differences in ordering the diaconal ministry should not be regarded as a hindrance for the mutual recognition of the ordained ministries' (M 31C). When therefore we are asked whether 'the threefold pattern as developed does not have a powerful claim to be accepted' (M 25), this seems in practice to be a question about episcopacy rather than the threefold pattern. Why are differences in ordering the ministry of *episkopé* more significant for mutual recognition than differences in ordering the

ministry of *diakonia*?

(d) The nature of episcopacy and apostolic succession. We welcome the recognition that Churches which have not retained the historic episcopate have preserved continuity in apostolic faith, worship and mission, particularly in ordination (M 37). We believe that further work needs to be done on how the sign of episcopal succession can be recovered (M 38) in a way which does not in fact throw the existing continuity with apostolic faith, worship and mission into question.

(e) Diaconal ministries. We agree that further work needs to be done on the way in which diaconal ministries appropriate to contemporary needs may be developed. We believe that this may be best done if such diaconal ministries do not have to be fitted into a single order within a threefold pattern.

(f) The nature of visible church unity. We live in a constant tension between awareness of a unity which transcends our divisions and awareness of a division which mars our unity. Too great an emphasis on either will suggest either that nothing need be done or that everything must be changed. We believe that further work needs to be done here which will set the experience of Churches which have moved into union alongside that of Churches which understand unity in terms of unbroken continuity.

(g) The role of agreement on baptism, eucharist and ministry in achieving visible unity. This task, which could well be linked to the project of reaching a common expression of the apostolic faith today, should pick up the kind of points referred to in paragraph 4 above.

We believe it is important that this further work is linked to the two studies on 'Towards the common expression of the apostolic faith today' and 'The unity of the Church and the renewal of human community'. Both are vital to a proper appreciation of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, which inevitably seems to some to place too great an emphasis on the Ministry and the Sacraments.

10. Conclusion

The publication of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* has provided an opportunity for a large number of our church members to study these matters in a fresh context. The discussions have been stimulating, whether they led to agreement or disagreement with the text. Though many other issues in the world today claim our attention, those raised in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* still concern us because they have divided the Church. In our Basis of Union we said:-

The United Reformed Church has been formed in obedience to the call to repent of what has been amiss in the past and to be reconciled. It sees its formation and growth as a part of what God is doing to make his people one, and as a united Church will take, wherever possible and with all speed, further steps towards the unity of all God's people.

We reaffirm that commitment as we submit this Response to the Faith and Order Commission, with our prayers and good wishes for its future work.

RESOLUTION

Assembly adopts the Response to '*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*' prepared by the Doctrine and Worship Committee and authorizes the Clerk to submit it to the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches as the official response of the United Reformed Church.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Convener: The Revd Dr Robert Latham

Secretary: Mr Clem Frank

1. The primary concern of this report concerns the drafting of the Budget for 1986. In the consideration of that budget we have of necessity taken into account the outworking of the year 1984, and it is with gratitude and some satisfaction that we note that the contributions to the Unified Appeal achieved 98% of the amounts promised by the Provincial Treasurers. This giving is an eloquent testimony of the confidence which our churches have in the many aspects of work which is funded by the Unified Appeal; a glance at the list reveals Mission at home and overseas, Youth and Children's work, Training for the ministries of the Church, Social Concerns, and our ecumenical cooperation through the British and World Council of Churches. This covers some of the areas in which our Church is at work, and all the areas are concerned with the local church, and its life and mission. Some call it administration, but if it is just that, then administration needs to be understood as that which is necessary to enable our Church to function as a responsible and effective part of the whole Body of Christ.

2. Our satisfaction in the financial result for 1984 is tinged with some concern as the surplus of approximately £9,000 arises because interest on money held, dividends, and sundry income exceeded budget by £66,000. The Unified Appeal was £15,000 short of target and expenditure exceeded budget by £42,000. In 1985 and subsequent years the Budget Committee has agreed that the interest figure should be shown at a more realistic level and, whilst it cannot always be avoided, overspending must continue to be closely controlled.

3. The 1986 Budget is before you. It provides for the continuation of our essential services to the churches, with an increase of approximately 11% to cover inflation from 1984 to the year 1986. There is also provision for grants towards both the training and support of Church Related Community Workers. We have examined this item with due consideration for the other demands on the Budget and also the new mission element which it embraces. With the Supplementary Ministries Committee we have agreed that the funds are only granted for salary support, and not to meet the full cost of salaries, and further that they are not for expenses, equipment, etc. So £21,000 is available for this 'topping up' exercise, and £5,000 for training grants. We have also provided £61,000 to cover initial revenue costs of the Windermere Project.

4. Mission is a proper feature of our life and the Evangelism Working Party of World Church and Mission is developing its activities both in this country and in Europe in collaboration with our sister Churches. Other significant developments are contained in the various reports, of which this report assumes the humble role of 'enabler'.

5. The Budget we present for 1986 is included in the Book of Accounts. You will see that £1,516,000 is needed of which £1,359,000 is asked for through the Unified Appeal. This figure has been noted by the Provincial Treasurers who have made appropriate offers towards this target. We look to you, the General Assembly, to approve it, to commend it in your Districts and churches, to explain it and to contribute joyously to it.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Assembly receives the report of the Budget Committee.
 2. Assembly approves the Budget for 1986 which provides for an expenditure of £1,516,000.
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UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY

Annual Report 1984

1. The 1984 Annual Meeting was held at St James's Church, Newcastle upon Tyne, when Dame Muriel Stewart spoke about the history of the church to an appreciative audience of members and friends. The Annual Lecture was given by Dr Sheridan Gilley on the subject of "Newman and the Millenium". The lecture was part of an enjoyable Study Week-end held at Kirkley Hall, Ponteland, from 7th—9th September 1984. We are indebted to the Revd David Hannen and friends in the area for a happy and profitable time of study and relaxation.
2. Plans have been made for an Annual Meeting on 30th April 1985 at Crowstone during the Assembly Week and for a study day at Mansfield College, Oxford, on September 14th, when the Principal, Dr Donald Sykes, will give the Annual Lecture.
3. The work of our volunteers in the Library continues. In addition to routine administration and the answering of queries the collection of communion tokens has been set in order and catalogued. Work proceeds on checking and tidying our other holdings in the muniment room. We continue to meet requests for back numbers of the Journal and that of the former Presbyterian Histroy Society, of which we hold stocks. Single copies are available at the same price as the current issue of the Journal and reductions are negotiated for the purchase of several issues or a series.
4. The membership lists continue to be up-dated. A modest increase in our subscription has meant that we continue to balance our current expenditure and to lay aside a small reserve for the occasional extra publication or Library purchase. Our Journal has a circulation among academic libraries here and in the United States and our membership team in Cambridge keep track of the accounts, exchange rates and items lost in transit. We are most grateful to them for their valuable service.
5. Mr John Ross resigned his office as Vice-Chairman at our 1984 Annual Meeting, to be succeeded by the Revd Dr Stephen Mayor. Mr Ross has given much distinguished service to the country and the Church, and his colleagues in the Society would want to set on record their appreciation of his support and wise counsel over many years.

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Chairman: Mr D. C. F. Haggis
Vice Chairman: The Revd A. J. Knight
General Manager: Mr D. Jones
Secretary: Mr D. J. Rawson

Since the 1984 Assembly and notwithstanding delays directly attributable to the ongoing severe cutback in government funding for the public housing sector, the Association has continued to make progress in implementing its development programme.

A tender in respect of proposed accommodation for the elderly at Chertsey is awaiting Housing Corporation approval, and tenders for 15 flats at Ray Lodge URC, Woodford are returnable before the end of February. Tenders for a scheme of Shared Accommodation for the Elderly in conjunction with the Romford URC, and for six flats for the elderly at Hither Green URC will be obtained during the coming year.

Following extensive consultations with the Housing Corporation the matter of the Association's involvement in Wales was satisfactorily resolved last year, and we are grateful for the unequivocal support which we received from the URC Province of Wales and individual UR Churches in the Principality.

As the Association responds to invitations received from local UR Churches, elsewhere in the country than just the South East, this wider involvement is reflected by an increase in Provincial representation on our Committee of Management.

Until the Association is in receipt of development allowances from the Housing Corporation in respect of projects under construction, we are having increasingly to encroach upon our charitable reserves in order to continue our task of counselling Churches in respect of suitable sites and administering the preparation and submission of scheme proposals. The continuation of these

activities has been greatly supported by short-term interest-free loans which have been made by individuals and churches. Further assistance of this nature would be much appreciated by the Association.

In order to increase awareness of the unmet housing needs of the country the Association, in conjunction with the Church and Society Department, is providing a tape and slide presentation. This will be available during the second half of 1985, and will illustrate how individuals and Churches can make their response.

SCHOOLS LINKED WITH THE URC

1. The Heads and Governors of the Five Schools have met twice during the year, in May and in December. Mrs J. S. Lang, the new Headmistress of Walthamstow Hall has been welcomed to the Joint Committee.
2. In its centenary year Caterham hosted the annual Conference of representatives on the theme "What is a Christian School?" with talks and discussions led by a Governor, Chaplain, Housemaster and University educationist.
3. The Five Schools continue to value the grant, currently of £10,000, allocated annually by the URC from its share of the Memorial Hall Trust. This is used wholly for the education of the children of Ministers and Missionaries.
4. The valuable help given to Ministers' children by the Milton Mount Foundation is also gratefully acknowledged. While the Foundation remains unable for the time being to consider applications for Ministers' sons, the Schools confirm their readiness to make up the loss of Foundation grants for new entrants.
5. The number of Ministers' and Missionaries' children currently benefitting from Memorial Hall Trust and other Bursary Funds are: Caterham 15, Eltham 3, Silcoates 11, Wentworth Milton Mount 13.

CATERHAM SCHOOL

6. The Centenary Finale in December 1984, at which our local MP, Sir Geoffrey Howe, was the Chief Guest, completed a year of outstanding events.
7. The move from Lewisham one hundred years ago was commemorated when frock-coated staff, pupils and descendants travelled on a horse-drawn wagon along the same route. The whole school travelled to Holborn Viaduct by train for a service of Thanksgiving at the City Temple conducted by the Moderator, Dr Philip Morgan, with the address given by the Revd Bernard Thorogood. Together with the Revd Cyril Franks, the Chief Guest, they formed the top table at the O.C. Dinner that evening. A Centenary Concert was held in the Fairfield Hall, Croydon with 250 taking part in choirs and orchestras.
8. At the end of the Summer Term we were pleased to welcome the Minister of Education, Sir Keith Joseph, to open a new Art, Craft, Design and Technology Building and be the Chief Guest at Speech Day. On the last Saturday, a grand Fete with the theme of "100 years past and 100 years in the future" raised over £3,000 for NSPCC and £10,000 for School projects.
9. The year also included sporting attractions with matches against the other URC schools, Internationals, a visit by the President of the RFU; drama — "Return to Victoria"; Art and History Exhibitions.
10. It has been good to have a number of ministers' sons in the 6th Form this year, taking a leading part in the life of the School. The School was delighted to have two Old Boys playing for Cambridge in the Hockey Varsity match in February.
11. The Boarders' Choir sang in the Thiman Memorial Concert organised by Dr D Abbott (also an O.C.) in the City Temple 10 years after Eric Thiman's death. The proceeds of this go towards funds for a new music centre at the School.

ELTHAM COLLEGE

12. The year has been one of above average examination results at GCE 'O' and 'A' levels. In addition there were 6 Open Awards at Cambridge University, while 12 pupils in all gained places at Oxford and Cambridge.
13. The Houseparents of the Eric Liddell House retired after 7 years' service, and were succeeded by Mr and Mrs A. G. Dixon. The House continues to supply the needs of a number of sons of missionaries.
14. The School Chapel is in daily use. Among the special speakers this year have been Mr B. D. Scopes, the General Secretary of the CWM and the Rt Revd J. Thompson, the Bishop of Stepney. The usual services were held on Remembrance Day, and for School Leavers. A special Carol service took place on the last day of the Autumn Term, and was well attended.
15. Speech Day was held on 14 July, when our special speaker was Professor J. P. Stern, Professor of German at London University. The main school play in the Autumn Term was 'The Real Inspector Hound' by Tom Stoppard. It proved popular and was well supported.
16. One feature of the Autumn Term was the large amount collected for needy causes, including Ethiopia. Thanks to the efforts of the Charities Committee and many pupils and members of staff, over £1,000 was collected during the term.
17. We give thanks to God for another happy and successful year.

SILCOATES SCHOOL

18. The number of pupils in the School in the Summer Term was 507, the highest in the School's history. Sunny Hill House School, established in 1982 as a pre-preparatory school for children between the ages of 3½ and 7 has reached its capacity of 80 pupils.
19. The School Chaplain, Revd A. J. L. Jones has introduced mid-week Services of Holy Communion and prepared 14 boys for the ecumenical Service of Confirmation at the local Anglican Church.
20. Pupils between the ages of 7 and 11 now attend classes on only five days per week, while boarders may go home any weekend by arrangement. These more flexible arrangements have been well-received by pupils and parents and in no way discourage the full use of the extensive range of activities available to them. The new edition of the School prospectus showed very clearly how much progress has been made in recent years in extending the facilities and activities that the School provides.
21. The Advanced Level results were the best ever achieved, and enabled a record number of boys and girls to proceed to Universities and Polytechnics. Mr R. I. Mainard who has established Religious Studies as a core subject within the curriculum left to be head of the department at Leeds Grammar School.
22. The Silcoates Summer School is now providing cultural and sporting opportunities to young boys and girls from West Yorkshire during the summer holidays.

WALTHAMSTOW HALL

23. Miss Elfreda Davies, MBE, BA, retired owing to ill-health and was succeeded as headmistress in January 1984 by Mrs Jacqueline Lang, MA, an old girl of the school. Miss Davies returned in June to open the two new squash courts for which she had provided the inspiration: they are now in constant use.
24. Major dramatic presentations this year have been the Boarders' Musical 'The King and I', the Junior School's 'Dandelion Time' and the Senior School's Christmas production of 'Amahl and the Night Visitors' in a local church.
25. Guest of Honour at Open Day in July was Philip Howard, Literary Editor of The Times, who spoke most wittily and instructively and amused us later with a somewhat fanciful report, in his Times column, of the proceedings.

26. The Christian Fellowship continues to flourish in the Senior School and has this year had some offspring in the form of the new Christian Union for Boarders, somewhat misleadingly known as 'Cubs'!

27. Academically, it has been a successful year with excellent public examination results and all our Advanced Level girls gaining the grades they needed for their further education. Six Oxbridge places were gained, and news has just reached us of a Scholarship to St. Hugh's College Oxford awarded to a girl who did her Advanced Levels here two years ago.

WENTWORTH MILTON MOUNT

28. We have lost two valued members of the Board of Governors this year. We record with sorrow the sudden death of the Revd Peter Chesney. Miss Alison Shrubsole has retired, having served the school with distinction.

29. Mr F. W. Brown retired as Bursar in August. He has been outstandingly faithful to the school's Christian Foundation. He continues as Clerk to the Governors. Our new Bursar is Sqn-Ldr D. C. Pettinger, MBIM, RAF (Retd).

30. Members of the school receive a warm welcome from the Minister and congregation each Sunday at Richmond Hill URC. We have contributed to the life of local churches by leading worship, singing, presenting music and drama.

31. It has been a year of sound academic achievement. Our leavers have again gone on to a wide range of courses, including, for the first time, a degree in Sport Administration and Sciences. A Computer Centre has been built and equipped, and the teaching block extended.

32. We are raising money to buy braille kits for blind students overseas and to help disabled people in this country. There was a special collection for the Ethiopian Appeal. About sixty elderly folk have come to Contact tea parties at the school during the year.

33. Extra-curricular activities included for the first time an Inter-House Gymnastics competition. The school play was "She Stoops to Conquer". Our teams have done well in local Public Speaking Competitions, and members of the school have been accepted by the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, the Wessex and the Bournemouth Youth Orchestras.

STANDING ORDERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

1.

The Agenda of the Assembly

At its meetings the Assembly shall consider reports and draft resolutions prepared by its Departments and Committees, resolutions submitted by Provincial Synods, and resolutions and amendments of which due notice has been given submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

The Business Committee shall prepare, before each meeting of the Assembly, a Draft Order of Business, and submit it to the Assembly as early as convenient in the programme.

The resolutions arising from any report or section thereof shall be taken in the following order:

- (i) resolutions of the Department or Committee of which due notice has been given,
- (ii) any relevant Synod resolutions,
- (iii) duly seconded resolutions submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

If notice has been given of two or more resolutions on the same subject, or two or more amendments to the same resolution, these shall be taken in the order decided by the Moderator on the advice of the General Secretary.

2.

Presentation of Business

- 2a. All reports of Departments and Committees, together with the draft resolutions arising therefrom, shall be delivered to the General Secretary by a date to be annually determined, so that they may be printed and circulated to members in time for consideration before the date of the Assembly meeting.
- 2b. 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. This notice should include the names of those appointed to propose and second the motion at the Assembly. If the motion introduces new business to the Assembly, the Synod may, subject to the agreement of the General Secretary and the Chairman of the Business Committee and at its own expense, circulate a statement in support.
- 2c. A local church or District Council wishing to put forward a motion for consideration by the General Assembly shall submit the motion to its Provincial Synod for consideration and, if thought fit, transmission to the Assembly, at such time as will enable the Synod to comply with Standing Order 2b. above. In the case of a local church the motion must be submitted to the Synod through the District Council.
- 2d. 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 a notice in writing of a motion (which notice must include the name of a seconder) to be included in the Assembly agenda. If the subject matter of such a 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 which shall advise the Assembly as to the procedure to be followed.

3.

Resolutions

- 3a. When a report has been presented to the Assembly the first motion on the report shall be "That this Report be received for debate". On this being passed, and before any consequent recommendations are proposed, any member may speak to a matter arising from the report which is not the subject of a motion. It shall not be in order to move an amendment or a reference back motion to this motion. The passing of this motion shall not be deemed to commit the Assembly to the acceptance of any matter contained in the report.
- 3b. During a meeting of the Assembly and on the report of a Department or a Committee, notice

(including the names of proposer and seconder) shall be given to the General Secretary of any new resolutions which arise from the material of the report, and of any amendments which affect the substance of resolutions already presented. The Moderator shall decide whether such resolution or amendment requires to be circulated in writing to members before it is discussed by the Assembly. During the course of a debate a new motion or amendment may be stated orally without supporting speech in order to ascertain whether a member is willing to second it.

- 3c. No motion or amendment shall be spoken to by its proposer, debated, or put to the Assembly unless it is known that there is a seconder, 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.
- 3d. A seconder may, if he/she then declares the intention of doing so, reserve his/her speech until a later period in the debate.
- 3e. It shall not be in order to move a resolution or amendment which:
 - i. contravenes any part of the Basis of Union, or
 - ii. involves the Church in expenditure without prior consideration by the appropriate committee, or
 - iii. pre-empts discussion of a matter to be considered later in the agenda, or
 - iv. infringes a decision reached by the Assembly within the preceding two years, or
 - v. is not related to the report of a Department or Committee and has not been subject of 21 days' notice under 2d.

The decision of the Moderator on the application of this Standing Order shall be final.

- 3f. 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.
- 3g. 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.
- 3h. An amendment which has been moved and seconded shall be disposed of before any further amendment may be moved, but notice may be given of intention to move a further amendment should the one before the Assembly be rejected.
- 3i. The mover may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly, alter a motion or amendment he/she has proposed.
- 3j. 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 to withdraw unless such permission shall have been refused.

4. **Speeches**

- 4a. Speeches made in presentation of the report and resolutions of any Department and its committees shall not in aggregate exceed 45 minutes, and speeches made in support of the report and resolutions of any other non-departmental committee having direct access to the Assembly shall not in aggregate exceed 20 minutes, save by the prior agreement of the Business Committee. The proposers of any other motion of which due notice has been given shall be allowed an aggregate of 10 minutes, unless a longer period be recommended by the Business Committee or determined by the Moderator. Each subsequent speaker in the debate shall be allowed 5 minutes unless the Moderator shall determine otherwise.
- 4b. When a speech is made on behalf of a Department or Committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by stating his name and accreditation to the Assembly.
- 4c. Secretaries of Standing Committees and full-time officers of Departments who are not

members of the 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.

- 4d. 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 or the amendment, as the case may be, shall have the right of reply, but must strictly confine himself/herself to answering previous speakers and must not introduce new matter. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or the amendment.
- 4e. The foregoing Standing Order (4d) shall not prevent the asking or answering of a question which arises from the matter before the Assembly or from a speech made in the debate upon it.

5. **Closure of Debate**

- 5a. In the course of the business any member may move that “The question under consideration be not put”. Sometimes described as “the previous question” or “next business”, this resolution takes precedence of every motion before the Assembly and as soon as the member has explained his/her reasons for proposing it, and it has been seconded, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that such a motion is an unfair use of the rules of the Assembly. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately end and the Assembly proceed to the next business.
- 5b. In the course of any discussion, it is competent for any member to move that the question be now put. This is sometimes described as “the closure motion”. 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 it has been seconded. When an amendment is under discussion, this 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 or amendment as the case may be retains the right of reply before the vote is taken on the motion or amendment.
- 5c. The resolutions described in Standing Orders 5a. and 5b. above are exceptions to Standing Order 3c., in that they may be moved and spoken to without the proposer having first obtained and announced the consent of a seconder. They must, however, be seconded before being put to the vote.

6. **Voting**

- 6a. Voting on any resolution whose effect is to alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, the Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the United Reformed Church, is governed by paragraph 9(5)(xi) of the Basis of Union (cf. The Manual).
- 6b. Unless the Assembly decides that there shall be a ballot, every other question shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members of the Assembly present and voting as indicated by a show of hands.
- 6c. To provide for voting in the case of a paper ballot, and to assist in taking a count of votes when the Moderator decides that is necessary, the Nominations Committee shall appoint Tellers for each Assembly.

7. **Questions**

- 7a. A member may, if two clear days’ notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary, ask the Moderator or the Chairman of any Department or 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.
- 7b. A member may, when given opportunity by the Moderator, ask the presenter of any report before the Assembly a question seeking additional information or explanation relating to matters contained within the report.

- 7c. Questions asked under Standing Orders 7a. and 7b. shall be put and answered without discussion.

8. Points of Order, Personal Explanations, Dissent

- 8a. A member shall have the right to rise in his/her place and call attention to a point of order, and immediately on his/her doing so any other member addressing the Assembly shall cease speaking until the Moderator has determined the question of order. The decision on any point of order rests entirely with the Moderator. Any member calling to order unnecessarily is liable to the censure of the Assembly.
- 8b. A member feeling that some material part of a former speech by him/her at the same meeting has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may rise in his/her place and request the Moderator's permission to make a personal explanation. If the Moderator so permits, a member so rising shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.
- 8c. The right to record in the minutes a dissent from any decision of the Assembly shall only be granted to a member by the Moderator if the reason stated, either verbally at the time or later in writing, appears to him/her to fall within the provisions of paragraph 7(10) of the Basis of Union.
- 8d. The decision of the Moderator on a point of order, or on the admissibility of a personal explanation, or on the right to have a dissent recorded, shall not be open to discussion.

9. Admission of Public and Press

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.

10. Circulation of Documents

Only documents authorised by the General Secretary in consultation with the Chairman of the Business Committee may be distributed within the meeting place of the Assembly.

11. Records of the Assembly

- 11a. A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such manner as the Executive Committee may determine.
- 11b. The minutes of each day's proceedings, in duplicated form, shall be circulated on the following day and normally, after any necessary correction, approved at the opening of the afternoon session. The minutes of the closing day of the Assembly shall normally be submitted at the close of the business and, after any necessary correction, approved.
- 11c. A signed copy of the minutes shall be preserved in the custody of the General Secretary as the official record of the Assembly's proceedings.
- 11d. As soon as possible after the Assembly meeting ends, the substance of the minutes together with any other relevant papers shall be published as a "Record of Assembly" and a copy sent to every member of the Assembly, each Synod, District Council and local church.

12. Suspension and Amendment of Standing Orders

- 12a. In any case of urgency or upon motion made on a notice duly given, any one or more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting so far as regards any business at such a meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of Assembly present and voting shall so decide.
- 12b. Resolutions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Business Committee for report before being voted on by the Assembly (or in case of urgency, by the Executive Committee). The Business Committee may itself from time to time suggest amendments to the Standing Orders, which shall be subject to decision by the Assembly.

