

Paper H1

General report

Ministries Committee

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Paul Whittle moderator@urcscotland.org.uk
Action required	For information.
Draft resolution(s)	None.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	Main area of focus since General Assembly 2020 and sub-committee reports.
Main points	
Previous relevant documents	Ministries Report to General Assembly 2020.
Consultation has taken place with...	None.

Summary of impact

Financial	None.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	None.

Ministries Committee

The committee is responsible for the ministry of Word and Sacraments, Church-Related Community Work, Lay Preaching and Eldership. It is concerned with central care and conditions of service, chaplaincies in industry, higher and further education, prisons, and in the armed forces and 'special category' ministry. It has concern for the pastoral support of ministers, Church-Related Community Workers and Lay Preachers, including pastoral supervision, self-evaluation and counselling. It oversees the Assessment Board, and is assisted by four sub-committees.

Convenor: Paul Whittle
Secretary: Nicola Furley-Smith

Members: Gill Bates, Lesley Moseley, Chris Kellert, Stuart Scott, Sally Willett, Jamie Kissack (Synod Moderator) from 2020), Bill Gould (convenor of the assessment board), David Coote (convenor of the maintenance of the ministry sub-committee), Paul Dean (convenor of the accreditations sub-committee).

1. Resourcing ministry

1.1 As Christ's people, we seek to serve God, who is the source, guide and goal of all that we do and are. We are all called to participate in God's work in the world,

through a variety of different ministries.

- 1.2 Ministries Committee has been working closely with other committees across the discipleship team, as well as with the Mission team, to see how we might best shape and resource ministry in and through as many healthy and sustainable churches as possible.
- 1.3 To this end, since the last report in 2020, Ministries has been working with others to develop:
 - a) The new course for Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers, which is reaching the end of its first year. Testimonials from current students attest to the benefit of both online and in-person opportunities as stimulating, thought-provoking, supportive and inspiring. To grow is to learn, and to learn is to teach others.
 - b) Non-Stipendiary Ministry Model 4 training. This is now well-established, with five students in training, and a further four students to begin training in September.
 - c) NS CRCW locally trained, locally commissioned. This has proved harder to establish, which is largely down to meeting the criteria set by the English Standards Board. Ministries is working with Northern College to see how this ministry might be addressed.
 - d) An induction 'pack' for ministers on Certificates of Eligibility and Certificates for Limited Service including a revamped *You're Welcome: Ethos and History of the URC Course*. Ministries is grateful to the Secretary for Education and Learning and Westminster College for running the course. There has been a good take-up of this course, particularly from new staff in Synods and ministers of other denominations. There is an induction day for October at Church House, with the opportunity to meet with Church House staff.

2. Assembly Accredited Lay Pioneers

In 2020, Ministries Committee reported that, through close working with the Mission Committee and the Education and Learning and Children's and Youth Work Committees, the Fresh Expression Enabling Group was exploring a ministry of lay pioneering that was accredited and accountable. In the light of the pandemic, Ministries Committee considered the pilot scheme of funding other ministries, and concluded that many of the projects had not started or had faltered because of lockdown. It concluded that the monies spent on this could be wisely used to fund a ministry of lay pioneering, given that many of the projects could be identified as pioneering projects. While Ministries Committee realises that some may be disappointed in this decision, the committee hopes that those reading the paper on Assembly Accredited Lay pioneers will be excited by this new and innovative partnership with the Church Mission Society, Seedbeds, and the Congregational Federation during our 50th year.

3. New pieces of work

Ministries Committee continues to look at ways in which the denomination can support ministries in their widest sense, and has been working on a call and the withdrawal of call, the Roll of Ministers Policy and Elders in Local Leadership Policy, amongst other work. Along with the policy for Safer Election of Elders

(Assembly Executive November 2021), the committee has been looking at Marks of Ministry for an Elder and an Elders Meeting. A paper will come to Assembly Executive in November.

4. Deployment

- 4.1 In recent years, complex debates about ministerial deployment have become even more complicated by there being different sets of data in use in different contexts and words like 'predicted numbers' and 'target numbers' being used to mean different things in different documents. Ministries has been working on a single set of key data that is as accurate and easy to understand as possible, and can be kept up to date by Ministries for the benefit of the work of the Ministries Committee, the Moderators Meeting and the individual Synods.
- 4.2 One of the sets of data previously produced by Ministries, mainly for the Moderators, was based on data supporting the GA 2016 deployment resolution and showed 'target' figures plus 10% (being a notional vacancy rate), but with target figures being what the URC could afford (rather than the predicted figures of the available ministers to deploy). The basic data rested on a formula about 'affordability'.
- 4.3 However, GA 2021 recognised that the Church should no longer use this affordability formula to determine ministry figures because its original assumptions (from 2012) no longer apply. It therefore generates misleading data. In addition, some other Ministries numbers have continued to rely indirectly on estimates made in 2016, which are now not the best estimates we can produce. As a result, Ministries will, in future, base all its calculations on the latest predicted figures of available ministers, which can be updated annually. These predicted figures of available ministers will now drive the target figures for deployment use.
- 4.4 Once there is a single, clear basis for calculations of minister numbers, the division of the total between Synods will continue to be made on the basis of the formula agreed by GA 2016 as amended by Mission Council in 2017: a 60% weighting for membership and a 40% weighting for number of churches. However, there is a question of what vacancy rate is added to decide the target number of pastorates in each Synod at any particular time. Hitherto, this has been a 10% rate, but it is clear from the small number of available pastorates on the Vacancy List that using predicted numbers of available ministers plus 10% does not allow for sufficient flexibility in the movement of ministers, especially given the reduced total number of ministers and the time-consuming challenges of organising calls to pastorates that now rarely involve only one congregation. The result is a frustration for Synods, and disillusionment from ministers, some of whom are looking outside the denomination for ministry. Therefore, upon taking advice from Finance, Ministries target figures for 2022 and beyond will become predicted figures of available ministers plus 20%, thereafter known as target figures. This would give a vacancy list which allows for the movement of ministers, as well as a positive message to ministers who are disillusioned by the lack of available pastorates that there is movement.
- 4.5 Ministries will continue to use the best latest available data to make predictions about likely future target numbers for Synods to assist forward planning. It is very clear that it only takes one crisis (the pandemic) to make data fluctuate very quickly. Therefore, any attempt to predict beyond a four-year point becomes meaningless when issues such as pensions and early retirements are beyond

our control. Therefore, upon taking advice from Finance, Ministries target figures produced from 2022 onwards will have a rolling four-year planning horizon. To avoid decisions being based on unreliable data, the Ministries Office will no longer attempt to suggest numbers more than four years ahead.

4.6 The Ministries Office will monitor the new figures closely.

5. Ministry in post-pandemic times

5.1 Post-pandemic, churches have emerged to find themselves with an even bigger role in helping people to move forward to 'normal'. Community hubs have always been, and will always be, key places of comfort and refuge in times of crisis. In the midst of change are our dedicated ministers of Word and Sacraments, Church-Related Community Workers, Locally Recognised Worship Leaders and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers, Elders and lay folk, who have risen to the challenge and embraced new ways of being church as we tackle the current crisis.

5.2 Ministries does not underestimate the toll this has taken on many in our churches, acknowledging they will need to find further support and resources to maximise what they can offer communities at this critical time of recovery. Ministries Committee therefore urges those involved in ministry to take advantage of the resources available to them through the denomination.

5.3 Pastoral Supervision has been a lifeline for many ministers who have engaged in it. A light touch review has taken place, with a new and updated policy coming for information to General Assembly.

5.4 Inflation has been at an unprecedented level in 2022, with food and heating costs rising at an alarming rate. Ministries, through the MOM Committee, has been working with Finance and the General Secretariat to find ways of alleviating any hardship.

5.5 Ministries commends the Churches Ministerial Counselling Service support to ministers and their families: **www.cmincs.net**

6. Thank you

The work of Ministries could not be achieved without the expertise and commitment of the volunteers who make up the Ministries Committee and its sub-committees. Our thanks go to those who will have retired from our committee since General Assembly last met: Martin Camroux, Sam Elliot and Jenny Sheehan. This is the last General Assembly with Paul Whittle as Convenor. Paul's commitment to the Ministries Committee over the past six years, in shaping and supporting the variety of ministries within the United Reformed Church and all the policies and processes that entails, has been unstinting, and we are indebted to him for his care and wisdom in guiding the Ministries Committee in its valuable work.

Accreditations sub-committee

Maintaining the roll of ministers, this sub-committee accredits those applying for inclusion after training, and those coming from other denominations. It is concerned with numbers and recruitment. It also deals with applications for special category ministries. It is responsible for supporting the Church-Related Community Work ministry and programme

under the terms agreed in the Church-Related Community Work covenant. This includes the accreditation of churches-in-community.

Convenor: Paul Dean

Joint Secretaries: Nicola Furley-Smith, Steve Summers

Members: Tim Clarke, Ann Honey, Marie Trubic, Bill Gould (convenor of the assessment board from 2019), Rob Moverley, Dave Herbert (Synod Moderator), Paul Whittle (convenor of Ministries Committee)

1. Introduction

This is the first report of Accreditation sub-committee (CRCW and SCM).

The bringing of the two committees together has not been without its challenges, but it has allowed a pattern of closer working practice between the ministries of CRCW and Special Category Ministries.

2. Certificates of Eligibility

2.1 Ministries Committee is responsible to General Assembly for oversight of the projected number of ministers for future years, and for deciding each year, on the basis of those projections, whether certificates of eligibility for both stipendiary and non-stipendiary service may be issued to ministers of other denominations. Such a certificate grants eligibility to receive a call to service in a pastorate or post.

2.2 During the period since last General Assembly there were 19 applications. Six Certificates of Eligibility have been issued in the past 12 months to ministers from the Presbyterian Church of Korea (1), Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (1), United Church of Christ (1), Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (3), and one certificate has been cancelled.

3. Certificates for Limited Service

3.1 Certificates of Limited Service allow a minister of another denomination to serve in, and be paid by, the URC, in a specified post only and for a limited period of time. They provide a flexible way of responding to particular local ministry needs and opportunities.

3.2 One new certificate has been issued in the last year (Richard James Wood), and three have been renewed or extended (Duhyun Joshua Han, Ian Bloomfield, Julia Elizabeth Bartholomew), and one certificate has been closed because of retirement (Julia Elizabeth Bartholomew).

3.3 For a period of three years (2021-2023), part-time certificates of limited service will not be counted against a Synod's deployment target.

4. Special Category Ministries

4.1 The number of special category ministry (SCM) posts currently stands at 18, with only one post as yet unfilled. Since last General Assembly, there has been one application, which is currently being considered. The Korean Bridge Ministry, Brighthelm, Bristol Korean Church and Saltaire Community Chaplain posts ended. Three SCM posts have been approved for a further term. The committee recognises that Synods are under pressure regarding deployment, which may have resulted in some initial enquiries not meeting the SCM criteria.

4.2 It was agreed by Mission Council in 2014 that the number of SCM posts (full-time equivalent) should not exceed 8% of the total number of stipendiary ministers available. This means, at the moment, that there is a limit of 19 FTE SCM posts.

4.3 As mentioned by the Church Life Review report to Assembly Executive in November 2021, the SCM scheme will be reviewed, and Terms of Reference are being drawn up.

5. CRCW

5.1 The number of accredited church-in-communities currently stands at 17, with three posts in vacancy. Since last General Assembly, there has been one application which was approved. Four churches-in-communities have been approved for a further term. The Sheffield Manor accredited post has ended.

6. The Roll of Ministers of Word and Sacraments Admission to the roll of Ministers of Word and Sacraments (from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

6.1 By ordination and induction: Jonathan David Hill, Adam Mark Woodhouse.

6.2 By transfer from other churches: Margaret Nilanajana Ali (Church of North India), Angela Barker (Churches of Christ, Australia), Sujeeth Sampath Kumar (Church of South India) and Ryan Paul Sirmons (UCC).

6.3 By changes within the Roll of Ministers: None

6.4 Deletions from the roll by resignation and/or transfer to another denomination or by the disciplinary process: None

6.5 Re-admission to the Roll: None

7. Jubilee Ministers

Celebrating 70 years of ordained ministry in 2022: None

Celebrating 60 years of ordained ministry in 2022: John William Stewart Clark, Michael Graham Dunford, Donald Wakefield Elliott, Robert James Ellis, Geoffrey Herickx, John Johansen-Berg, Peter Stanley Killick, John William McCrum Miller, Donald L Pines, John Patrick Reardon, John Robinson, Malcolm Shapland, Dorothy Constance Spence.

Celebrating 50 years of ordained ministry in 2021: Susan Kathleen Armitage, Peter Chave, Kathryn M Compston, Jonathan George Dean, Lionel G Jameson, Charles Stephen Martin, Anthony Ronald Ruffell, Brenda Kay Stephenson, John Alexander Stewart, Kevin Patrick Swaine, Pamela Ward.

8. Retired Ministers

Ministers who have retired from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022:

Bryan Michael Alderson, Mark Ambrose, David Robert Bedford, Richard Adam Bittleston, Peter Graham Blackband, Colin George Bones, John Miller Campbell, Peter Thomas Clark, James Frederick Coleman, Siân Elizabeth Collins, Samuel Cyuma, Graham Herbert Dadd, Christine Mary Davies, Ruth Dillon, Helen Margaret Drummond, Derrick Dzandu-Hedidor, Richard Eastman, Malcolm Fife, Lynn Fowkes, Roy John Fowler, David Carey Harkison, Elizabeth Anne Kemp, Steven Rowland Knapton, Pauline Frances Main, Gary Stuart McGowan, Colin

Phipps, Kathryn Margaret Price, Raymond Sewananda Singh, Alan John Spence, Colin Peter Thompson, Caroline Helen Vodden, Elizabeth Jane Weedon, Martin Wheadon, David Edwin George Whiting.

9. Church-Related Community workers
Roll of Church-Related Community Workers Admissions to the roll of Church-Related Community Workers (from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

- 9.1 By commissioning: None
- 9.2 Deletions from the roll by resignation and/or transfer to another denomination or by the disciplinary process: None

10. Roll of Assembly-Accredited Lay Preachers

- 10.1 The following have received Assembly accreditation between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2021 as a result of having completed a URC course of study or having prior accreditation from another denomination.

04 Yorkshire	Chris Mannall
05 East Midlands	Maggie Kirkbride
07 Eastern	Tina Wilson, Alison Jiggins

- 10.2 Deletions from the Roll of Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers by resignation, removal and / or transfer to other Churches from 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022: Derek Roger Marsh, Kenneth Ousbey, Helen May Pengelly, John Frederick Shaw, Elizabeth Warrington.

- 10.3 Lay Preachers Retired from 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022: Roger James Allen, Elizabeth Barnes, Reginald Brian Richard Cockerell, James Reiach Fells, Elizabeth Patricia Fletcher, Philip John Fowles, Constance Mildred E Garrett, Doreen Margaret Hampson, Elaine Harrison, Kathryn Hodkinson, Gordon Campbell McCallum, Guy Stuart Morfett, Jeffrey Newall, Margaret Judith Nicholson, Pauline Jane Oakley, Magnus Ramage, Stephen Geoffrey Smith, Peter Vince, Lindsay Williamson.

Assessment board

Convenor: Bill Gould (3)

Secretary: Nicola Furley-Smith

Members: Liz Mullen (2), Keith Reading (3), Jamie Kissack (4), Dan Morrell (4), Samuel Silungwe (5), Mark Tubby (7), Gerald England (8), John Danso (10), Mercy Namako (10), Bridget Akinyombo (10), Jan Adamson (13), Liz Sharples

1. The flow of candidates

Since the 2021 report, two Assessment Conferences have been held (November 2021, March 2022). After a period of virtual conferences, these were in-person Assessment Conferences in the traditional format. Overall, 14 candidates were considered by the Board, of whom 13 were accepted. Most of these candidates will begin their EM1 training programme in September 2022. However, because of the portfolio nature of their training format, the NSM4 candidates in November were able to formally enter the training programme in January 2022.

Date of Conference		No. of Candidates	Number accepted
November 2021	CRCW	0	0
	Stipendiary Ministry	2	2
	Non-Stipendiary Ministry	0	0
	Non-Stipendiary Ministry 4	2	2
	Transfer from NSM 1-3 to NSM 4	1	1
TOTAL		5	5
March 2022	CRCW	1	Moved to NSM 4
	Stipendiary Ministry	3	3
	Non-Stipendiary Ministry	3	3
	Non-Stipendiary Ministry 4	2	2
TOTAL		9	8
GRAND TOTAL		14	13

2. Training activities

While much of the ministerial formation in the RCLs was of necessity online during 2020 and 2021, the Board has affirmed that all ordinands must be exposed to, and assessed in, at least some in-person format in the course of their EM1 programme, even if it means some delay in completion of the originally prescribed programme, as direct personal involvements must remain a long-term characteristic of any ministry.

- The Board convened the annual assessment interview training consultation, attended not only by new Assessment Board members (one in 2021), but by synod representatives to satisfy the considerable needs for appropriate training for Synod and local panel members who consider possible candidates earlier in the assessment cycle (18 in 2021). The consultation further strengthens the links between the Board and Synods. This consultation in-person was resumed in November 2021 after a lockdown-necessitated break of one year, again facilitated by the Revd Mary Thomas and, for the final time, the Revd Peter Henderson, to whom many thanks are due. There was also a training session in June for Board members on neurodiversity awareness.

Maintenance of the Ministry sub-committee report

Advises on the level of stipend and ministers' conditions of service through the Plan for Partnership. It is also concerned for pensions through its associated Pensions Committee.

Convenor: David Coote

Members: David Gartside, Jean Wyber, Richard Nunn (convenor of pensions committee), Paul Whittle (convenor of ministries committee), Vaughan Griffiths (assistant treasurer)

1. The MoM subcommittee meets twice a year, but conducts much of its business by email as and when a decision is called for concerning stipends or allowances for individual ministers.
2. **Plan for Partnership**
Our main role is to interpret the Plan for Partnership, and to agree such changes as we consider necessary. When situations are referred to us that do not exactly fit the terms of the Plan, we try to apply the Plan fairly and reasonably. The situation is considered carefully, and can lead to amendments to the Plan; sometimes it is decided that the Plan is adequate, or might need a small clarification to make what is intended clearer. Since our last report, changes have been made to the Fixed Car Allowance to take care of a possible situation where a minister/CRCW is unable drive, and is being driven about. There have also been some small tweaks to wording for clarity.
3. **Stipend Increase**
Our proposed for the stipend increase each year is based on a formula using the consumer price index (CPI). When the formula was applied in 2021, the CPI increase was 1.5%, producing a recommended stipend increase of 3.0%.
4. **Long-term sickness absence**
We continue to monitor and improve our care for ministers who, having been on sick leave for six months, have come to the end of their entitlement to full stipend. We know that these can be stressful times for those involved, and we do sometimes have painful decisions to make, but we strive to bring wisdom and compassion to the judgments that are entrusted to us. The past couple of years have thrown up some interesting dilemmas, including Covid-19, and which sometimes added to those difficult decision we have to make. We are grateful for the work of Mary Steele in the MoM office, who pays the stipends, monitors the sickness cases and brings to our attention when decisions need to be made, organises medical and moderator reports, and deals with all the correspondence.
5. **Committee changes**
The committee has, since its last report, seen a change in membership, and there will be changes this time too, as a number of members finish their period of service. We would record our thanks to those who have completed service previously, or will complete their service this year. The above changes in membership of the committee coincide with the completion of the current convenor's time of service as well. This time of dramatic change caused the Ministries Committee to review the membership of the MoM committee, and in

the light of that review, proposed changes to the Committee's make-up .
The resolution from Ministries Committee covering those changes can be found in
the main Ministries Report.

The Retired Ministers' Housing sub-committee report

Convenor: Paul Whittle

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

1. The new committee continues to be the point of liaison between Ministries and RMHS on behalf of the URC and tenants, ensuring that all eligible members are adequately housed and supported in retirement.
2. To assist with a business plan for the next ten or so years, a survey was sent to 226 ministers aged 54 and over. Of these, 151 responded, and the results will help determine the likely need for RMHS properties.
3. The committee is also considering the formula for assessing contributions towards RMHS properties, especially in light of the new pension arrangements.
4. The seminar to promote good practice amongst ministers in making provision for retirement will not take place until after the pension provision has been agreed.
5. The committee is grateful to individual members, churches and Synods who continue to support our work, and especially those who remember RMHS in their wills.