

Minutes of a meeting of
the United Reformed Church
General Assembly on Friday 12 July 2024

1 Constitution of Assembly

The Assembly met through at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire and by video conferencing. The General Secretary, the Revd Dr John Bradbury, welcomed members, laid the Roll of Assembly on the table, and invited the Moderator to constitute the Assembly with prayer.

2 The Roll of Assembly 2024

Moderator	1. The Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson
Clerk	2. The Revd Dr Michael Hopkins
Assistant Clerk	3. The Revd Sarah Moore
General Secretary	4. The Revd Dr John Bradbury
Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship)	5. The Revd Adrian Bulley
Deputy General Secretary (Mission)	6. The Revd Philip Brooks
Chief Operating Officer	7. Mrs Victoria James

Convenors of General Assembly Standing Committees, except the Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee

8. Business Committee – The Revd Mark Robinson
9. Children and Youth Work – The Revd Paul Robinson
10. Communications – The Revd Lucy Brierley
11. Education and Learning – Ms Pippa Hodgson
12. Equalities – The Revd Jo Clare-Young
13. Worship, Faith and Order – The Revd Dr Robert Pope
14. Finance – Mr Alan Yates (Treasurer)
15. The Deputy Treasurer – Mr Vaughan Griffiths
16. Ministries – The Revd Mary Thomas
17. Mission – Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte
18. Nominations – Mrs Helen Lidgett
19. Safeguarding – The Revd Roger Jones

Convenor of the United Reformed Church Trust

20. Ms Catriona Wheeler

Immediate Past Moderator

21. The Revd Fiona Bennett

Former Moderators (4 places)

22. The Revd David Grosch-Miller
23. The Revd John Marsh
24. The Revd Professor David Thompson
25. The Revd Dr Elizabeth Welch

Resource Centres for Learning

26. Northern College Staff – The Revd Dr Adam Scott
27. Northern College Student – Mr Ed Lyne
28. Scottish College Staff – The Revd Dr John McNeil Scott
29. Scottish College Student – Mrs Margaret Higton
30. Westminster College Staff – The Revd Dr Robert Pope
31. Westminster College Student – Ms Tina Wilson

United Reformed Church Youth (3 places)

32. Youth Assembly Moderator – Miss Heather Moore
33. Immediate Past Youth Assembly Moderator – Miss Philippa Osei
34. Youth Assembly GA/AE rep – Miss Jadan Turner

United Reformed Church Chaplain to HM Forces (1 place)

35. The Revd Kevin Jones

Northern Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

36. The Synod Moderator – The Revd Kim Plumpton
37. The Synod Clerk - The Revd Dr Trevor Jamison
38. The Revd Sally Bateman
39. The Revd Louise Sanders
40. Mrs Lucy Cooke
41. Mrs Sheila Duncan
42. Mr Willie Duncan
43. Ms Lisa McAvoy
44. Mrs Elizabeth Morrell
45. Mrs Catherine Ramsay
46. Mrs Susan Rand
47. Dr Elizabeth Ann Sinclair
48. Mrs Yvonne Hamilton+
49. Vacant
50. Vacant
51. Vacant

North Western Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

52. The Synod Moderator – The Revd Clare Downing
53. The Synod Clerk – Mr Tim Hopley
54. The Revd Gilbert Esambe
55. The Revd Daniel Harris
56. The Revd Dr Robert Hoch (Yidokodiltona)
57. The Revd Katherine Hunt
58. The Revd Kurauone Mutimwii
59. The Revd Michael Walsh
60. The Revd Ruth Watson
61. Ms Gina Gibson
62. Mrs Hilary Grierson
63. Ms Elizabeth Hall
64. Mr Lawrence Heath-Moore
65. Ms Blessed Mutimwii*
66. Mr John Skipworth
67. Vacant

Mersey Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

68. The Revd Murray George
69. The Synod Clerk – Ms Rita Griffiths
70. The Revd Louise Franklin
71. The Revd Malcolm Garforth-Fife
72. The Revd Kathleen Gartside
73. The Revd Dr Nicholas Jones
74. The Revd Catherine McFie
75. The Revd Dr Ronald John Reid
76. The Revd Hilary Smith
77. The Revd Ruth Wilson
78. Mrs Patricia Cansfield
79. Mr Christopher Garforth-Fife
80. Mr David Gartside
81. Mrs Pauline Green
82. Ms Emma Jackson*
83. Ms Charlotte Samson*

Yorkshire Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

84. The Synod Moderator - The Revd Jamie Kissack
85. The Synod Clerk - Mr Tim Crossley
86. The Revd Simon Copley
87. The Revd Sarah Fitton
88. The Revd Frances Kissack
89. The Revd Samantha Sheehan
90. The Revd Christopher Wood
91. Miss Katherine Buckland
92. Mr John Eveleigh
93. Miss Kacie Hodgson*
94. Mrs Claire Nutt
95. Mr Daniel Raddings*
96. Mr Hedley Siddall
97. Mrs Claire Westgarth
98. Miss Megan Westgarth*
99. Vacant

East Midlands Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

100. The Synod Moderator – The Revd Geoffrey Clarke
101. The Synod Clerk – Dr Graham Jennings
102. The Synod Treasurer – David John Greatorex
103. The Revd Carole Marsden
104. The Revd Andrew Mudharara
105. The Revd Craig Muir
106. The Revd Jane Wade
107. The Revd Dr Bachelard Yemtsa

- 108. Mr Sam Goodman
- 109. Mr Billy Logan*
- 110. Mrs Victoria Longbone
- 111. Mrs Ann Lockett
- 112. Mrs Isabel Plaatjies
- 113. Mr Marcelle Plaatjies
- 114. Mrs Eileen Williams
- 115. Vacant

West Midlands Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

- 116. The Synod Moderator – The Revd Steve Faber
- 117. The Synod Clerk – Mrs Rachel Wakeman
- 118. The Synod Treasurer – Mr Steve Powell
- 119. The Revd Debbie Brown
- 120. The Revd Elaine Hutchinson
- 121. The Revd Karen Jones
- 122. The Revd Mark Rodgers
- 123. The Revd Graham Sweeney
- 124. The Revd Christine Watson
- 125. Mr Celvon Binns
- 126. Miss Claire Kerrigan*
- 127. Ms Kirsty Mabbott
- 128. Mr Nathanael Paul
- 129. Mrs Michelle Richardson
- 130. Vacant
- 131. Vacant

Eastern Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

- 132. The Synod Moderator – The Revd Lythan Nevard
- 133. The Synod Clerk – The Revd David Coaker
- 134. The Revd Sohail Ejaz
- 135. The Revd Anne Sardeson
- 136. The Revd Susan Fender
- 137. The Revd Kathryn Taylor
- 138. The Revd Nigel Uden
- 139. Mrs Claire Coster
- 140. Mrs Machrina Ejaz
- 141. Ms Chloe Elmer
- 142. Mr William McVey
- 143. Mr Richard Lewney
- 144. Mr Charles Palin*
- 145. Mrs Faith Paulding
- 146. Mr John White
- 147. Vacant

South Western Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

148. The Synod Clerk – Mrs Rachel Leach
149. The Synod Treasurer – The Revd Richard Gray
150. The Revd Tracey Lewis
151. The Revd Robert Jennings
152. The Revd Iain McDonald
153. The Revd Stephen Newell
154. The Revd Jayne Taylor
155. The Revd Neil Thorogood
156. Miss Jessica Gough*
157. Mrs Janet Gray
158. Mr Alex Mabbott
159. Mrs Jeannie MacMeekin
160. Ms Ann Marie Trubic
161. Vacant
162. Vacant
163. Vacant

Wessex Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

164. The Synod Moderator - The Revd Dr Michael Hopkins
165. The Synod Clerk – Miss Karen Bell
166. The Revd Helen Everard
167. The Revd Dr Sarah Hall
168. The Revd Dr Romilly Micklem
169. The Revd Wendy White
170. Ms Chrissie Chevasutt
171. Ms Sheilagh Courtnage
172. Miss Laura Everard*
173. Mx Sorrel Eyres*
174. Mr George Faris
175. Mrs Maggie Larkin
176. Dr Phebe Mann
177. Ms Patricia Oliver
178. Mr Clive Snashall
179. Dr David Wong

Thames North Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

180. The Synod Clerk – Ms Nneoma Chima
181. The Revd Margaret Ali
182. The Revd Alison Davis
183. The Revd Ruth Dewis
184. The Revd Shahbaz Javed
185. The Revd Sujeeth Kumar
186. The Revd Noble Samuel
187. The Revd Sally Thomas

188. Ms Lorraine Downer
189. Mrs Jane Fredjohn
190. Mr Malon John*
191. Mrs Muna Levan-Harris
192. Miss Christine Ntim*
193. Mr Jake Penny*
194. Mrs Darnette Whitby-Reid
195. Mrs Jean Wyber

Southern Synod

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

196. The Synod Moderator – The Revd Bridget Banks
197. The Synod Treasurer –John Denison
198. The Revd David George Cumbers
199. The Revd Bernard Fidler
200. The Revd Russell Furley-Smith
201. The Revd John Grundy
202. The Revd Martin Knight
203. The Revd Angela Rigby
204. Mrs Rita Brown
205. Mr Alan Kirby
206. Ms Mercy Nimako
207. Mrs Joanne Patterson
208. Miss Zara Shahbaz*
209. Mr Zeerak Shahbaz*
210. Miss Pamela Tolhurst
211. Mr Reuben Watt

National Synod of Wales

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

212. The Synod Moderator – The Revd David Salisbury
213. The Synod Clerk –Ms Megan Price
214. The Synod Treasurer – Mr Chris Atherton
215. The Revd Ian Kirby
216. The Revd Julie Kirby
217. The Revd Martha McInnes
218. The Revd John O'Hanlon
219. Miss Joanna Harris*
220. Ms Maggie Kirkbride
221. Mrs Wendy Marston-Phipps
222. Mrs Adella Pritchard
223. Mrs Bethan Trott
224. Mrs Kate Wolsey
225. Vacant
226. Vacant
227. Vacant

National Synod of Scotland

(16 places – at least 5 of which shall be Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Workers, and at least 5 of which shall be Elders or “lay”. Any 2 within the 16 places are reserved for representatives aged under 26 at the time of appointment)

- 228. The Synod Moderator – The Revd Lindsey Sanderson
- 229. The Synod Clerk – The Revd Jan Adamson
- 230. The Revd Susan Henderson
- 231. The Revd Nicholas Mark
- 232. The Revd Derek McDonald
- 233. The Revd Lesley Thomson
- 234. Mrs Yvonne Coulter
- 235. Ms Morag McLintock
- 236. Miss Alice Gilbert
- 237. Dr Ewen Harley
- 238. Mrs Linda Harrison
- 239. Mr Douglas Maxwell
- 240. Mrs Lorna McDonald
- 241. Miss Myra Rose
- 242. Vacant
- 243. Vacant

British and Irish Ecumenical representatives (5 places)

- 244. Mrs Yvonne Campbell (*Congregational Federation*)
- 245. The Revd Chantal Noppen (*Church of England*)
- 246. The Rt Revd Dr Shaw Paterson (*Church of Scotland*)
- 247. The Revd Gale Richards (*Baptist Union of Great Britain*)
- 248. The Revd Tom Osborne (*Methodist Church of Great Britain*)

International Ecumenical representatives (5 places)

- 249. The Revd Dr Gordon Cowans (*The United Church in Jamaica & Cayman Islands*)
- 250. Pfarrer Markus Jäckle (*Evangelische Kirche der Pfalz*)
- 251. Vacant
- 252. Vacant
- 253. Vacant

Council for World Mission (1 place)

- 254. The Revd Dr Graham McGeoch

**indicates those Synod representatives aged 25 or under at the time of their appointment.*

+indicates those appointed to a vacant place from another Synod under Rule 1.5.

The Moderator, the Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, duly constituted Assembly and the Chaplains led Assembly in worship during which the Revd Jenny Mills was inducted as Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship).

The Assembly adjourned for a brief break.

Session One

3 Introductions

The Moderator invited the Revd Philip Brooks, Deputy General Secretary (Mission), to introduce international and ecumenical guests. The Moderator then greeted the guests.

The Moderator invited Pfarrer Markus Jäckle from the Evangelische Kirche der Pfalz and the Revd Dr Gale Richards from the Baptist Union of Great Britain to address Assembly.

The platform party were introduced to Assembly.

4 Mock Resolution

The Moderator invited the Assistant Clerk to lead a discussion on a Mock Resolution.

5 Tellers & Facilitation Resolutions & Information

The Moderator invited the Clerk to introduce the following Resolutions:

Resolution 55

General Assembly appoints Morag M McLintock as convener of Tellers for General Assembly 2024.

Agreed

Resolution 56

General Assembly appoints the following as members of a Facilitation Group:

**Fiona Bennett
Muna Levan-Harris
Adam Scott**

**Nneoma Chima
Derek McDonald
John McNeil Scott**

**Clare Downing
Craig Muir
Darnette Whitby-Reid**

General Assembly also resolves that if there are not enough facilitators available at any point, the Moderator may appoint anyone they deem appropriate, on the advice of the Clerk or General Secretary, in an emergency.

Agreed

Resolution 57

General Assembly appoints the Revd Margaret Ali, the Revd Dr Trevor Jamison, and Mx Sorrel Eyres as Tellers for the Election of the Moderator of General Assembly 2025-26, with the Revd Margaret Ali to act as Convener.

Agreed

The Clerk also informed Assembly that no items had been removed from en bloc.

6 Synod Moderators' Report

The Moderator invited the Revd Jamie Kissack, Moderator, Yorkshire Synod, to introduce the Synod Moderators' Report. Mr Kissack invited the four most recently appointed Synod Moderators, the Revd Kim Plumpton, the Revd Dr Michael Hopkins, the Revd David Salisbury and the Revd Lindsey Sanderson to reflect with Assembly on the concept of God's calling.

Mr Kissack invited members of Assembly to discuss various aspects of vocation amongst themselves.

7 Closed Session

The Assembly met in closed session, and a separate record is held *in retenetis* by the Clerk.

Session Two

8 Ministries

The Moderator, the Revd Professor David Thompson, took the chair, and invited the Revd Mary Thomas, Convenor, Ministries Committee, to introduce paper H3 *Process for Reconfiguring Pastorates and Scopings*.

The Revd Nicola Furley-Smith, Secretary for Ministries, answered various questions from members of Assembly. In response to questions from those concerned about the material and pastoral care of ministers caught up in a rescoping process, Ms Furley-Smith assured that pastoral care was at the heart of the policy. She pointed out that the standard practice is financial support and housing is for 6 months but that the policy noted that the Synod Moderator can ask for stipend support from the Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee for a longer period if necessary. The General Secretary explained to Assembly the role and work of the Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee and the care it takes in supporting ministers.

In response to discussion the Ministries Committee sought to add the following words to 9.2 “where the minister is actively engaging in the call process a further 6 months’ stipend support would be granted.

The Moderator remaindered this item of business.

The Moderator invited the Revd Mary Thomas, Convenor, Ministries Committee to introduce paper H11 *Guidelines on the safer recruitment of those who lead worship in our churches*.

After discussion, the resolution was out to the vote:

Resolution 35

General Assembly adopts the Guidelines for those who Lead Worship in our Churches.

Agreed

The Moderator invited the Chaplain to lead Assembly in evening prayer, and the Moderator adjourned Assembly until the morning.