

# Sunday 5 July

## Session Eight

The Moderator invited the chaplain to lead worship and the Revd Dr Peter Green to lead Assembly in Bible Study.

### **31 Nominations Committee Update**

The Moderator, the Revd Nigel Uden, took the Chair and invited Victoria Blunt, Convenor of the Nominations Committee to address Assembly. Ms Blunt highlighted parts of G1 (passed en bloc) before moving additional resolutions.

#### [Resolution 106](#)

**General Assembly appoints the Revd Darren Holland as a member of the Faith in Action Committee.**

**/carried**

#### [Resolution 107](#)

**General Assembly appoints Catriona Wheeler to serve as a director of the United Reformed Church Trust from 7th July 2026 to 6th July 2030.**

**/carried**

### **32 Remaindered Business**

The Moderator, Ms Catriona Wheeler, resumed the chair.

#### **a A2-Towards a Fitness to Practice Process (continued)**

The Moderator invited Dr Bradbury and Assembly to return to paper A2 and Resolution 1

#### [Resolution 1](#)

**General Assembly welcomes the report of the Ministerial Disciplinary Working Group and affirms the direction of travel towards a 'Fitness to Practice' process.**

**/carried**

#### **b I2 Synod Safeguarding Reviews**

The Moderator invited the Revd Roger Jones, Convenor Safeguarding Committee, Kerry Baker, Policy Development Officer, Safeguarding and Sharon Barr, Designated Safeguarding Lead, to present paper I2.

### Resolution 39

**General Assembly instructs the denominational Safeguarding Team and Synods to implement a programme of regular reviews of Synods' safeguarding practice.**

/carried

### Resolution 40

**Assembly adopts an addition to the Rules of Procedure which will read under Synod responsibilities: 10.3.4 — To participate in a triennial safeguarding review conducted by the General Assembly Safeguarding Team.**

/carried

The Chaplain led Assembly in Worship.

## **Session Nine**

### **33 AB1 – Business/Faith in Action Committees - URC/Methodist Liaison**

The Moderator invited Dr Bradbury on behalf of the Business Committee, Ms Sarah Lane Cawte, Convenor of Faith in Action Committee, and Ms Lindsay Brown, Head of Ecumenism and Evangelism to present the paper and resolution.

#### Resolution 4

**General Assembly welcomes the proposed consultative meeting between District Chairs and Synod Moderators, and in the light of that directs the Business Committee in consultation with the Liaison Group to report to the 2027 General Assembly with proposals concerning the vision and shape of future possible collaboration.**

/carried

### **34 P5 – West Midlands Synod - Clarifying "pastoral necessity" for lay presidency at the Sacraments**

The Moderator invited the Revd Steve Faber, Synod Moderator of West Midlands Synod and the Revd Melanie Smith, Training and Development Officer and Pastoral Consultant West Midlands Synod to present the paper and resolution.

#### Resolution 60

**In light of increasingly complex pastorates and the decrease in the number of available Ministers of Word and Sacraments, General Assembly instructs the Ministries and the Worship, Faith and Order Committees to review the question of what it means for there to be 'pastoral necessity' for Lay Presidency at the Sacraments and provide guidance accordingly.**

/carried

## 35 **Remaindered Business: A3 Resource Centres for Learning EM1 Review**

The Moderator invited Assembly and Dr Bradbury to return to questions for clarification and discussion on Paper A3 and Resolutions 2 and 3.

Following questions for clarification, the Moderator invited those who had declared direct conflicts of interest (e.g governors/trustees of the 3 RCLs, paid academic staff etc) in this matter to participate in the discussion session first, if desired, before recusing themselves and physically leaving the meeting.

An amendment was proposed and seconded to change clause G in Resolution 2 to read

“Assembly instructs the Business committee and Resources Committee to work with Westminster College Governors to bring forward a clear transitional plan that ensures a fair financial settlement and enables Westminster College to continue fulfilling its charitable purposes, including through agreed areas of ministerial training and development, and to continue a play a full part in the Cambridge Theological Federation”

Following advice from the Assistant Clerk, the Moderator ruled the amendment out of Order under Standing Order 7.6.2. as it sought to commit the church to expenditure without prior consultation with the appropriate Committees.

Discussion continued and an amendment to Resolution 2 was proposed, and seconded, to add a clause H namely

**The General Assembly, mindful of the need for our RCLs to have a strong complement of URC staff, encourages the relevant General Assembly Committees and the RCLs to work together to ensure a flourishing URC presence in staff teams and thus a continuing URC contribution to theological education.**

Dr Bradbury indicated the working group were minded to accept the proposed additional clause H. It was noted that the Resources Committee would be one of the relevant committees, mentioned in the proposed H, to be worked with.

The amendment was thereafter accepted by Assembly and the proposed clause H formed part of the substantive resolution.

In response to a suggestion, the Moderator ruled, under Standing Order 13.4, that the length of speeches be restricted to 3 minutes.

After a lively and lengthy discussion session, Assembly indicated it was ready to vote and did so, after a time of prayer, in favour, by majority, for Resolutions 2 and 3.

### **Resolution 2**

**The General Assembly:**

- A. **determines that the Luther King Theological College become the primary Resource Centre for Learning for the United Reformed Church, and provider of Education for Ministry Phase One (EM1).**

- B. **determines that the Scottish College becomes the complementary Resource Centre for Learning for the United Reformed Church, and provider of Education for Ministry Phase One.**
- C. **invites Luther King Theological College and the Scottish College to seek the closest possible collaboration in the delivery of Education for Ministry phase one and in other areas of work.**
- D. **determines to cease using Westminster College, Cambridge, for Education for Ministry One.**
- E. **instructs the Business Committee, in collaboration with the Ministries Committee, Resources Committee and Faith in Action Committee, to agree with Luther King Theological College and the Scottish College new Memoranda of Understanding and Service Level Agreements to effect the outcomes sought in A-D, and to ensure the appropriate financial agreements are in place to enable their successful delivery.**
- F. **instructs the Resources Committee to work with the three existing RCLs to provide appropriate financial support through a transitional period through to the full implementation of A-D.**
- G. **instructs the Business Committee and Resources Committee to work with Westminster College Governors as they discern the future for the College and to enable the General Assembly to support this through appropriate governance and transitional financial arrangements when appropriately developed proposals have been made.**
- H. **The General Assembly, mindful of the need for our RCLs to have a strong complement of URC staff, encourages the Resources Committee and the RCLs to work together to ensure a flourishing URC presence in staff teams and thus a continuing URC contribution to theological education.**

**/Carried**

### **Resolution 3**

**General Assembly receives the observations of the Working Group and instructs the Ministries Committee to review these recommendations and return to the General Assembly or Assembly Executive with any appropriate proposals.**

**/Carried**

## **Session Ten**

### **36 Memorial for Deceased Ministers and CRCWs**

The Moderator invited the Revd Nicola Furley-Smith, Deputy General Secretary Ministries to lead Assembly in remembering, before God, the following Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers who had died in the last 12 months giving thanks for their lives and ministry:

Peter Digby Ball  
Robert John Blows  
Colin George Bones  
Elizabeth Jean Brown  
Janet Calderley  
John Mackenzie Chisholm  
Malcolm Bernard Clarke  
John Cranley Cohen  
Kenneth Mervyn Coles  
Meryl Court  
Peter Charles Cruchley  
Graham Herbert Dadd  
Robert Francis Damer  
Lillian Evangeline Dean  
Myra D Dillistone  
John Colbeck Durell  
Richard Eastman  
Alan Frederick Theodore Evans  
Mary Elaine Elizabeth Frost  
James Ronald Garfitt  
Richard Hambly  
Kenneth Harris  
Keith Leonard Havers  
Geoffrey Herickx  
Malcolm Hill  
Alwyn John Knight  
Michael John Lay  
Lesley Anne McNeil  
Elizabeth Denise Megson  
David John Netherwood  
Robert Freeland Philip  
Barbara Plenderleith  
Derek Charles Redfern  
Michael James Rigney  
Anthony Tony Ritchie  
Geoffrey Smith  
Michael John Bemrose Spencer  
John Alan Stanyon  
Brian Sadler Stone  
Harold Robert Tonks  
Valerie Ann Towler  
John Wadhams  
James Norman Walker  
Robert John Way  
Stephen Alexander Wilkins  
Alan Frederick Edward Wise  
Ambrose David Wright

The Chaplain led Assembly in prayers of commendation.

### **37 Giving Thanks for the Life of Churches that have Closed**

The Moderator invited the Revd Nicola Furley Smith, Deputy General Secretary Ministries to lead General Assembly in noting the Churches which have closed since last they were reported to General Assembly. Assembly gave thanks to God for the worship and witness offered by these fellowships across the years.

#### **Synod 1 – Northern Synod**

St Cuthbert's Heaton LEP, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 31 August 2025

#### **Synod 2 – North Western Synod**

Edgeley Community Church, Stockport, 14 February 2026

St Peter's Church LEP, Manchester, 14 December 2025

#### **Synod 4 – Yorkshire Synod**

Lowedges, Michael Church, Sheffield, 28 February 2026

Riddlesden United Reformed Church, Keighley, 31 January 2026

#### **Synod 5 – East Midlands Synod**

Trinity United Reformed Church, Lincoln, 31 January 2026

Harrold & Carlton LEP, Bedford, 31 December 2025

Oadby United Reformed Church, Leicester, 29 March 2026

London Road United Reformed Church, Kettering, 31 March 2026

#### **Synod 6 – West Midlands Synod**

Baxter United Reformed Church, Kidderminster, 31 August 2025

#### **Synod 7 – Eastern Synod**

Southchurch Park United Reformed Church, Southend-on-Sea, 28 March 2026

#### **Synod 8 – South Western Synod**

Martock United Reformed Church, Martock, Somerset, 3 August 2025

Curry Rivel United Reformed Church, Curry Rivel, Somerset, 1 June 2025

#### **Synod 9 – Wessex Synod**

Hope United Reformed Church, Weymouth, 22 February 2026

Wonersh United Reformed Church, Wonersh, Surrey, 19 October 2025

#### **Synod 11 – Southern Synod**

Pagham United Reformed Church, Pagham, West Sussex, 29 November 2025

#### **Synod 12 – Wales Synod**

Tabernacle United Reformed Church, Holywell, Flintshire, 30 September 2025

Tabernacle United Reformed Church, Llanvaches, Newport, 7 December 2025

## **Synod 13 – Scotland Synod**

Hamilton United Reformed Church, Hamilton, 28 September 2025

Greenock West United Reformed Church, Greenock, 31 December 2025

### **38 Celebrating Jubilee Ministers**

The Moderator invited Revd Nicola Furley Smith, Deputy General Secretary Ministries to lead Assembly in noting and celebrating the following Jubilee Ministers who had achieved these significant milestones during the past year

*Celebrating 70 years of ordained ministry in 2026:*

Robert William Courtney,  
Charles Knowlson Meachin,  
David Stollery Morris

*Celebrating 60 years of ordained ministry in 2026:*

Clabon James Allen,  
Robert Andrews,  
David Batchelor,  
Michael John Cruchley,  
David Murray Cuckson,  
Lesley Gordon Giller,  
Rosemary Ruth Hartley,  
Glyn Jenkins,  
Kenneth William Marsh,  
Hugh Nixon McKee,  
Donald William Norwood,  
Leonard Rees Phelps,  
David Alistair Pratt,  
Rodney Alan Ward,  
Leonard John Wigg,  
David Wiseman

*Celebrating 50 years of ordained ministry in 2026:*

Derek Corner,  
Jack William Dyce,  
Rosalind Lyle,  
Brian O'Neill,  
David Raymond Peel,  
David Trafford,  
Elizabeth Anne Welch (greeted by the Moderator in person)

### **39 Greeting ministers and CRCWs newly received onto the roll**

The Moderator invited the Revd Nicola Furley Smith, Deputy General Secretary, (Ministries), to lead Assembly in formally noting and welcoming the those who had been ordained and inducted onto the Roll of Ministers this past year, with those in person being greeted.

Margaret Elizabeth Dexter-Brown,  
Susan Ann Knight,  
Clare Nutbrown-Hughes,  
Maurice Philips Omorojie,  
Tina Louise Wilson  
Packiaraj Asirvatham (from the Church of South India),  
Juan Cruz (from the Presbyterian Church in the Philippines),  
Nomaqhawe Marambi (from the United Church of Zimbabwe)

## **Session Eleven**

### **40 (Extra) Ordinary Hope – Presentation and Discussion**

The Moderator invited the Revds Lythan Nevard and Geoff Felton to present the Synod Moderators' Report. Assembly discussed questions posed in informal groups.

### **41: Minutes of Saturday 4th July 2026**

The Clerk presented the minutes (as amended) of Saturday 4th July 2026 for adoption. These were accepted unanimously and with warm approval.

Assembly closed it's day formally together with Evening Prayers.