Minutes of the

United Reformed Church

Extraordinary General Assembly

14th to 16th November 2025

The United Reformed Church General Assembly

Friday 14th November 2025

1. Constitution of Assembly

The Assembly met at Kents Hill Park Conference Centre, Milton Keynes. Members were welcomed by the General Secretary, the Revd Dr John Bradbury. The Roll of Assembly (as of General Assembly July 2025) was laid on the table. The Moderator, Ms Catriona Wheeler, welcomed all and Assembly was constituted with prayer.

Opening worship was led by the Moderator's Chaplain, Revd Jane Wade. Bible Study was led by Revd Richard Byass of the Methodist Church on the theme of Growing Glory. Assembly joined in prayer, remembering specifically those affected by abuse (in light of recent reports of abuse at Medomsley Detention Centre, Durham in the 1960s, 70s and 80s.)

Session 1

2. Setting the Scene

The General Secretary set the scene for this EGA, and reminded Assembly of the Church Life Review Background, the journey thus far and the issues that had been identified. He emphasised that the proposed Resolutions at this EGA sought to provide a response and proposals for ways forward.

3. Administrative Resolutions

Resolution 51

General Assembly notes that the holders of several offices and roles, which are members of General Assembly ex officios, have changed since the General Assembly last met in July 2025. General Assembly confirms the consequent changes to the July 2025 Roll of Assembly.

This resolution was proposed by the Clerk, seconded by the Assistant Clerk and passed without dissent.

Resolution 49

General Assembly appoints Nneoma Chima, Susan Durber, Geoff Felton, and Martha McInnes to serve as members of the Facilitation Group for its meeting between 14-16 November 2025 in accordance with Standing Order 7.7.

This resolution was proposed by the Clerk, seconded by the Assistant Clerk and passed without dissent

Resolution 50

General Assembly authorises the Officers of the Assembly to check the accuracy of the minutes, and to arrange for their publication in a supplementary Record of Assembly.

This resolution was proposed by the Clerk, seconded by the Assistant Clerk and was carried without dissent

4. Paper A1 Church Life Review Phase Two Proposals

Myles Dunnett presented the paper and Resolutions 1a-4

Resolution 1a

General Assembly receives the package of Church Life Review (CLR) proposals and notes that they are the product of extensive consultation across the councils of the Church. Assembly extends its thanks to the wide range of people who have engaged and contributed to the process

The resolution was carried without dissent and without discussion

Resolution 1b

Assembly acknowledges the extraordinary and different nature of this Assembly, and its place in the wider process of change. Assembly commits to consider the proposals in light of this significant Kairos moment.

The resolution was carried without dissent and without discussion

Resolution 2

Based on learnings from the Church Life Review's methodology, General Assembly commits to a denominational intention to continue ad hoc consultations, to allow relevant people from across the councils of the Church to collaborate and discern the future of the denomination together, addressing challenging strategic questions in well-facilitated, safe, honest spaces.

Revd Dr Susan Durber proposed an amendment that the word "relevant" be removed from the published resolution.

This was seconded by Revd. Roger Jones and accepted by the resolution proposers. Others expressed their opposition to it.

The amendment was carried by majority.

The revised resolution 2

Based on learnings from the Church Life Review's methodology, General Assembly commits to a denominational intention to continue ad hoc consultations, to allow people from across the councils of the Church to collaborate and discern the future of the denomination together, addressing challenging strategic questions in well-facilitated, safe, honest spaces.

was carried without dissent and without discussion

Resolution 3

Based on learnings from the Church Life Review process and beyond, General Assembly commits to a way of working where resources and services are denominationally developed and locally delivered.

Following discussion, the resolution was carried by majority.

Resolution 4

General Assembly instructs the Business, Faith in Action, Ministries, and Resources Committees to consider their collection, analysis, and usage of data, and to reflect on how data could enhance their decision-making.

Following questions for clarification and discussion, the resolution was carried without dissent

Assembly adjourned

Session 2

The Moderator formally welcomed the Ecumenical Guests.

5. The Rev Steve Faber and Myles Dunnett presented papers A2 Proposal to Establish a Church Life Fund and A11 Size of the Church Life Fund and Resolutions 5-11 and Resolution 48.

Questions and discussion ensued on the papers and resolutions as a whole.

Resolution 5

General Assembly endorses the proposal to establish a Church Life Fund (CLF) and invites the URC Trust (URCT) to make necessary arrangements to implement the fund. Assembly directs relevant URC staff to support this process as required

The resolution was carried without dissent and without discussion

Resolution 6

Assembly instructs Business Committee to initiate a review of the Church Life Fund after three years of operation, with outputs brought before Assembly in 2029 or later.

Revd Dr Romilly Micklem proposed an amendment on behalf of the steering group to the published resolution seeking a review after “two” years rather than “three” years and requesting that the review take place before Assembly in “2028” rather than “2029”.

This was seconded by Muna Levan Harris and accepted by the proposers. Following discussion, the amendment was carried by majority.

Discussed ensued.

Stephen Powell moved that the words "or later" be deleted from the published resolution. This amendment was seconded by Alison Jiggins. It was not accepted by the Proposers. Following discussion, the amendment was defeated by majority.

Vikki Longbone moved a rewording of resolution 6 as below

Assembly instructs Business Committee to initiate a review of the Church Life Fund after two years of operation, with outputs brought before the first available Assembly.

This was seconded by Revd Dave Coaker and accepted by the proposers. The amendment was carried by majority.

The amended Resolution 6 namely

Assembly instructs Business Committee to initiate a review of the Church Life Fund after two years of operation, with outputs brought before the first available Assembly

was carried without dissent

Resolution 7

General Assembly invites synods, trusts, and others to make contributions to URCT to create a fund known as the Church Life Fund. It is proposed that any such funds will be donated by synods, trusts, and others and received by URCT on the following terms: - The donations will form a restricted fund known as the Church Life Fund whose purposes will be funding new shared services, making grants for lay workers in local churches, and new communities of discipleship and worship. - If the Church Life Fund shall be dissolved at any time in the future any remaining funds after settlement of all liabilities will be returned to the synods, trusts, and other contributors in the proportions to which they contributed to the Church Life Fund

Revd Craig Muir moved an amendment, seconded by Revd Liz Adams, to delete the words "in local churches". This was strongly opposed by the proposers who advised that offers to contribute to the fund, had been made on the basis of the wording of the original resolution . Following the explanation, the amendment was withdrawn.

After discussion, the resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 8

General Assembly resolves that a Church Life Fund Committee is established, with a representative from every synod. URCT is invited to take advice from the Committee on the expenditure of the Church Life Fund and on request the Committee is authorised to provide such advice.

Following questions of clarification, Assembly adjourned for dinner.

Session 3

Assembly returned to Resolution 8

Following discussion and clarification re the representative process, the resolution was carried by majority.

Resolution 9

General Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to publish criteria, which synods should use to make judgements about which applications to send to the Church Life Fund

After brief discussion, the resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 10

General Assembly notes the draft Terms of Reference laid out in Appendix Three, and instructs that relevant committees undertake the necessary work and bring back final Terms of Reference and proposed members to Assembly/Assembly Executive in 2026

Following no discussion, the resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 11

General Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to make arrangements so that local churches and individuals can also contribute to the Church Life Fund. Assembly recommends that the Committee explores options for grants from external funding bodies

Following no discussion, the resolution was carried without dissent

Resolution 48

General Assembly gratefully acknowledges the indicative offers of donations to the Church Life Fund from synods and synod trust companies

After brief discussion, the resolution was carried without dissent

6. Muna Levan Harris and Myles Dunnett presented paper A3 Denominational Shared Resources Hub and moved Resolutions 12 to 15

The paper was discussed as a whole.

It was agreed that IT support will be included.

On hearing concerns from the floor of Assembly regarding the proposed name of the resource hub, assurances were provided that the suggestion that it be called “myURC” would be provisional and that it would be kept under review.

Resolution 12

General Assembly resolves that the URC shared resource hub will be known as myURC, and instructs Resources Committee and relevant staff to implement the URC shared resource hub, as soon as feasible.

The resolution was passed by majority.

Resolution 13

Assembly resolves to establish a myURC helpdesk to receive and respond to emails, chat, and phone calls from myURC users, and instructs Resources Committee to implement the helpdesk as soon as feasible

Following brief discussion, the resolution was passed without dissent.

Resolution 14a

Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to give advice to URCT in relation to providing funding out of the restricted Church Life Fund for the operation of the myURC shared resources hub and helpdesk

It was recognised that the resource hub required to be established as well as to operate and that funding would apply to both.

The resolution was passed without dissent.

Resolution 14b

Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to review the operation of myURC and the helpdesk annually

The resolution passed without dissent and with no discussion

Resolution 14c

Assembly instructs Resources Committee to ensure sufficient staffing for the myURC helpdesk at its inception, and to monitor and review staffing levels to ensure effective staffing levels are maintained.

The resolution passed without dissent

Resolution 15

Assembly affirms the proposed myURC hub and helpdesk, governance model, and apportions operational governance responsibility to Resources Committee, with PLATO to contribute on questions of content

The resolution passed without dissent and with no discussion

Following Evening Prayers, Assembly adjourned for the evening.

MMM/NFS

14th November 2025

Saturday 15th November 2025

Session 4

Assembly opened in worship. Revd Richard Byass continued leading Bible Study (which included a craft activity!), with the theme "Growing Love"

7. Revd Dr Romilly Micklem presented paper A4 An accounting support service for local churches and Resolutions 16 to 19 and Resolutions 20a and 20b thereafter.

General questions for clarification and discussion took place.

Resolution 16

Assembly instructs Resources and Church Life Fund Committees, along with relevant United Reformed Church (URC) staff, to establish an accounting support service, consisting of support for churches who can prepare their own accounts, and support for those who cannot

Following discussion, the resolution was passed without dissent.

Resolution 17

Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to give advice to the URC Trust (URCT) in relation to providing funding out of the restricted Church Life Fund for an accounting support service.

The resolution was carried without dissent

Resolution 18

Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to review the accounting support service annually

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 19

Assembly invites synods to apply to the Church Life Fund to request direct accounting support on behalf of select local churches, in cases where the church could not otherwise manage their accounts. To enable this, Assembly advises that synods maintain a list of those churches who struggle with their accounts, and refer those that require additional support after training and confidence building activities.

The resolution was carried without dissent

Session 5

Resolution 20a

Assembly extends thanks to Small Charity Support for their willingness to support the denomination, and gratefully accepts the offer of support.

In conjunction with the above, General Assembly recognised and noted that other services/ support/partners are available for the denomination to engage with. The Convenor of Resources Committee, Rev Dr Michael Hopkins confirmed that Assembly's view had been heard.

Reuben Watt moved Standing order 12.12 that Resolution 20a be not put. This was seconded by Stephen Powell. Assembly voted against the procedural motion that resolution 20a be not put.

Resolution 20a was thereafter passed by majority.

Resolution 20b

Assembly instructs Resources Committee to liaise with Small Charity Support, to find ways of working together to establish an accounting Adult Learning Model for the denomination

The resolution was passed by majority.

8. Elizabeth Hall presented paper A5 Options for denominational buying support and Resolutions 21 and 22.

Following questions for clarification on both resolutions, Assembly extensively discussed both resolutions.

During said discussion, Rev Dr Michael Hopkins moved a point of order (standing order 12.3) that resolution 21 be now put. This was seconded by Revd Janet Sutton and accepted by Assembly by majority.

Resolution 21

Assembly advises that the URC should actively incorporate more systematic procurement approaches and improved resources in the future

The resolution was carried by majority.

Resolution 22

Assembly instructs Resources Committee to undertake work to further investigate, cost, and propose a preferred procurement model to be adopted by the URC

The resolution was carried by majority.

9. Rev Lythan Nevard presented paper A6 HR, IT, payroll, and property shared services and resolutions 23-29.

Questions for clarification on the resolutions as a whole were taken followed by discussion. Suggestions made by Assembly members, as to additional items that could be included and explored as part of these resolutions, were noted by the Resources Committee.

Resolution 23

General Assembly affirms that, wherever possible, the provision of support services for local churches, provided by synods and General Assembly, is best done in a coordinated and joined up fashion. Assembly encourages the whole church to develop a culture in which we develop resources collectively for the benefit of the whole church, whilst engaging within synods and locally to ensure those resources actively support local congregational life.

The resolution was carried without dissent

Resolution 24

General Assembly tasks the Resources Committee with developing an IT infrastructure that has the potential to serve the General Assembly and the Synods

The resolution was carried by majority

Resolution 25

General Assembly encourages synods to, when possible, move their IT infrastructure provision to that which has been developed for the whole church.

The resolution was carried by majority

Resolution 26a

General Assembly tasks the Resources Committee with bringing together key stakeholders together, to devise a means by which each local church has access to professional HR advice, at a minimum in the form of a helpline.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 26b

General Assembly encourages synods to work constructively and generously with the Resources Committee in working towards HR provision available to each local congregation within the United Reformed Church.

The resolution was carried without dissent

Resolution 27a

General Assembly tasks the Resources Committee with developing a model of payroll services that can be made available to each synod and local church.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 27b

General Assembly tasks the Resources Committee with consulting widely with synods and the members of the Church Life Fund Committee to arrive at a workable, affordable funding model for a shared payroll provision.

The resolution was carried without dissent

Resolution 28

General Assembly tasks the Resources Committee with hosting a consultation with a wide range of stakeholders from synods, General Assembly and the Retired Ministers' Housing Society to explore issues surrounding the existing, and possible future, arrangements for supporting the maintenance and development of buildings held in trust for United Reformed Church purposes.

Following discussion, the resolution was carried without dissent

Resolution 29

Assembly instructs Resources Committee to prioritise this work, starting with more easily attainable shared services, like payroll and HR.

The resolution was passed by majority

10. Myles Dunnett introduced paper A7 Eido report on models of lay worker employment across the URC

Questions for clarification were offered and addressed.

Assembly adjourned for lunch

Session Six

The minutes from Friday 14th November 2025 were adopted by Assembly

Resolution 30

General Assembly receives the findings of the Eido report, and notes and endorses the model and toolkit outlined in the appendices

This was passed without dissent.

10. Tim Hopley presented A8 Employment of lay workers and Resolutions 31 to 35

Points for clarification and general discussion ensued.

Resolution 31

General Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to give advice to the URC Trust in relation to the making of charitable grants out of the restricted Church Life Fund for lay worker roles, in line with the criteria set out in section four.

This was carried without dissent.

Resolution 32

Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to publish relevant templates and application advice via the Resources Hub.

This was carried without dissent.

Resolution 33

Assembly affirms the proposed distinction between lay work and ordained/ commissioned ministry,and instructs Church Life Fund Committee to uphold this distinction and seek advice from the Accreditation sub-committee where necessary.

Following discussion, the resolution was carried by majority.

Resolution 34

Assembly instructs that funding is only given when Church Life Fund Committee have confidence that the liability of individuals will be limited and all legal obligations will be met. Assembly reminds employers that they are personally responsible for ensuring they are compliant with all legal requirements when employing someone, and failure to comply can lead to serious legal consequences

This was carried without dissent.

Resolution 35

Assembly recommends that applicants for lay worker grants carefully consider the appropriate employing entity

This was carried without dissent.

11. Lindsey Brown and Myles Dunnett presented paper A9 New URC communities of discipleship and worship and Resolutions 36 to 41.

General questions for clarification were asked and responded to.

Following discussion and concerns, assurances were provided to Assembly that a named person from the offices of General Assembly would hold the remit for ensuring that equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging practices were adopted by the Church Life Fund Committee and Accreditation Sub Committee in their work.

The General Secretary reminded Assembly that the denomination has learned to and continues to live with diversity as it strives to ensure that all churches are a place where people can flourish and thrive. He emphasised that nothing in the proposals before Assembly, in any way, undermine nor seek to undermine the URC's Commitment on Human Sexualities.

Assembly adjourned for a break and returned in **Session 7** to continue discussion on paper A9.

Resolution 36

General Assembly receives the new communities of Discipleship and Worship proposal, and endorses the values and principles in part two.

Utilising standing order 10.2.2 Assembly added in the words "of Discipleship and Worship" after "communities" to this resolution.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 37

General Assembly notes the best practice and opportunities in part three, and requests that any new communities established through a Church Life Fund grant follow these recommendations

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 38

General Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to adopt the application and review procedures outlined in part four.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 39

(a) General Assembly instructs Ministries Committee to update the Accreditation sub-committee Terms of Reference to accommodate the proposed application and review model. Assembly requests that updated Terms of Reference are brought before Assembly in 2026.

(b) General Assembly instructs Faith in Action Committee and Ministries Committee to promote new Christian Communities and develop the mechanisms by which they might be recognised as a Mission Project or local church of the URC, in collaboration with Church Life Fund Committee.

(c) General Assembly encourage synods to identify where these communities might be developed, in collaboration with Church Life Fund Committee.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 40

General Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to give advice to URCT in relation to the making of charitable grants out of the restricted Church Life Fund for new communities of discipleship and worship, in line with the detail set out in this proposal

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 41

General Assembly instructs Church Life Fund Committee to publish templates and advice for applicants on the Resources Hub.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

12. Revd Steve Faber presented paper A10 Next steps: closure of the Church Life Review & moving into consultative sessions and resolutions 42 to 44. Myles Dunnet thereafter presented resolutions 45 to 47.

General questions of clarification and general discussion ensued thereafter

Resolution 42

General Assembly endorses the design and commencement of a denominational communication strategy, aimed at raising awareness of the Church Life Fund and the services, lay worker roles, and new communities it can fund. The strategy should raise hopes, generate enthusiasm, and encourage lay worker and new communities applications.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 43

Assembly acknowledges the role Resources Committee will play in implementing the Phase Two outcomes, and thanks them for this. Assembly instructs Resources Committee to bring a clear timeline back to Assembly in 2026, covering work already implemented and work yet to be completed

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 44

General Assembly acknowledges the end of Church Life Review Phase Two, and with it the Church Life Review as a programme. Assembly thanks those involved in phases one and two for their generosity, input, and commitment.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

Resolution 45

General Assembly instructs Business Committee to form a Strategic Reference Group, distinct from the Church Life Fund Committee, which can be drawn on by relevant committees, synods, and others in their ongoing strategic work.

Gordon Woods proposed an amendment that the words “with published terms of reference” be added in after the words “Strategic Reference Group”. This was seconded by Chris Atherton and accepted by Assembly without dissent.

It was noted that the Strategic Reference Group will exist for the implementation phase only and not ad infinitum

The amended Resolution 25

General Assembly instructs Business Committee to form a Strategic Reference Group, with published terms of reference, distinct from the Church Life Fund Committee, which can be drawn on by relevant committees, synods, and others in their ongoing strategic work.

This was passed by majority.

Resolution 46

General Assembly instructs Resources and Ministries Committees to arrange a consultation with synod officers, synod trust company trustees, and other relevant decision-makers, to address underlying theological and other strategic and covenantal questions related to finance and governance, particularly in relation the sustainability of the Ministry and Mission Fund and the ministry provision made possible by that fund.

Following discussion, the resolution was passed without dissent.

Resolution 47

General Assembly instructs relevant committees to return to future Assemblies with the outcomes of strategic investigations, in light of the denominational commitment to collaboration

The General Secretary advised that the CLRG process had resulted in greater and more effective collaboration between the denominational committees and stakeholders than had perhaps occurred previously. He advised Assembly that the intent of Resolution 47 was to seek to continue with this level of collaboration moving forward.

Following discussion, the resolution was passed without dissent.

Assembly adjourned for dinner.

Session 8

13. Assembly met in allocated groups for a Facilitated Discernment Session.

Assembly finished the day with Evening Prayer

MMM/NFS

15th November 2025

Sunday 16th November 2025

Session 9

Assembly opened in worship. Revd Richard Byass continued leading Bible Study, this time with the theme "Growing Joy"

14. Assembly met in allocated groups for a further Facilitated Discernment Session.

15. Thanks were recorded to all those involved in the preparation of and running of this Extraordinary General Assembly.

16. Assembly worshipped together with the theme "Growing Grace" and celebrated Holy Communion.

The General Secretary adjourned Assembly

MMM/NFS

15th Nov 2025