



Contents

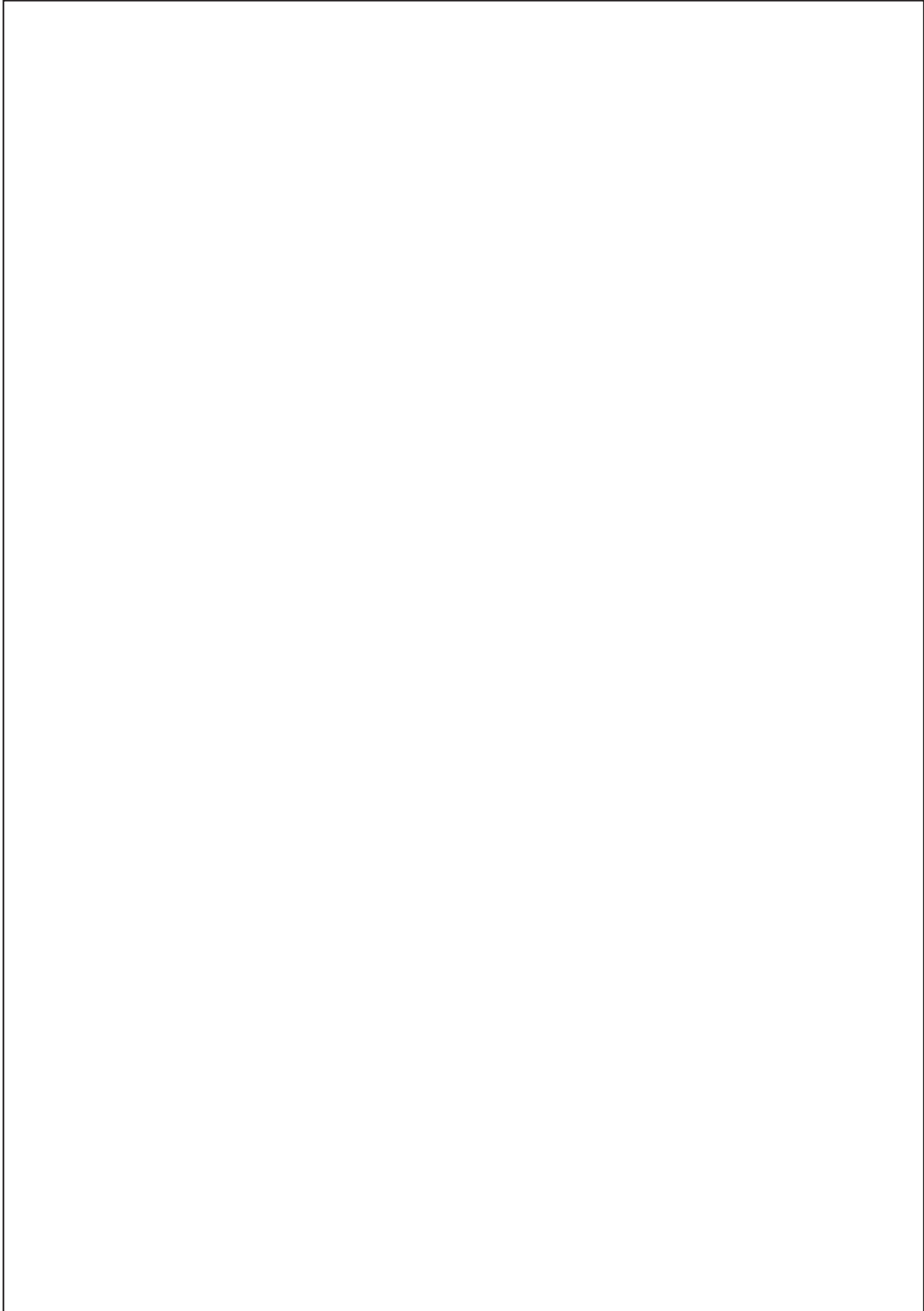
STANDING ORDERS	1
SYNOD REPORTS	7
Yorkshire	8
East Midlands	10
Eastern	12
Thames North	14
SYNOD RESOLUTIONS	16
North Western	16
Northern & North Western	16
Yorkshire	17
CHURCHES - CHANGES	19
SYNOD MODERATORS' REPORT	25
MISSION COUNCIL	29
REPORTS and RESOLUTIONS	30
COMMITTEE REPORTS & RESOLUTIONS	41
Assembly Arrangements	42
Church & Society	44
My	

NOTE The General Assembly in 2000 decided that from 2001, committees will report in alternate years, except where for legal or administrative reasons annual reports are required.

Resolutions Index

No	Title	Page Number
1	North Western Synod	16
2	Northern & North Western Synods	16
3	Yorkshire Synod	17
4	New Church & Mission Projects	20
5	Closure of Local Churches	21
6	Non-Stipendiary Church Related Community Workers	34
7	Basis of Union	34
8	Racial Justice & Multicultural Ministry	35
9	Budget for the Year 2005	35
10	Ratification of Section O Part I Changes	36
11	New Changes to Section O Part I	38
12	New Changes to Section O Part II	38
13	Changes to Structure regarding Resignation of Ministers	39
14	Ratification of Westminster College Bursar	40
15	General Assembly 2006	43
16	General Assembly Representation	43
17	2005 Campaign to Double Aid and Make Trade Just	49
18	Commitment for Life	50
19	The Environment	50
20	Israeli Separation Barrier	53
21	Communication	56
22	Get Noticed	57
23	Accounts	60
24	Auditors	61
25	Ministry & Mission Fund	61
26	Windermere Centre	65
27	Equipping the Saints	73
28	Entry Qualifications	74
29	Reinstatement of Ministers	75
30	Plan for Partnership	76
31	Nominations	84
32	Appointment of Synod Moderators 1	84
33	Appointment of Synod Moderators 2	87
34	Review of Training Needs	97
35	Revd D A L Jenkins	100
36	Sabbaticals	107
37	Education for Ministry	107
38	Youth & Children's Work Committee	116

Standing Orders



Standing Orders of the Assembly

1. The Agenda of the Assembly

1a. At its meetings the Assembly shall consider reports and draft motions prepared by its Committees which include the Mission Council or by synods, and motions and amendments of which due notice has been given submitted by individual members of the Assembly.

1b. The Assembly Arrangements 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.

1c. Motions arising from a report which have been duly seconded and submitted by individual members of Assembly under rule 3b shall be taken at a point in the business determined by the Moderator on the advice of the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee.

1d. If notice has been given of two or more motions on the same subject, or two or more amendments to the same motion, these shall be taken in the order decided by the Moderator on the advice of the Clerk.

1e. The Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee may, during the meeting of the Assembly, propose that the order of business be changed.

2. Presentation of Business

2a. All reports of Committees, together with the draft motions 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 synod may deliver to the General Secretary not less than twelve weeks before the commencement of the annual meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion for consideration at the Assembly. This notice shall include the names of those appointed to propose and second the motion at the Assembly.

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 synod for consideration and, if the synod so decides, 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

4c. When a speech is made on behalf of a Committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by giving name and accreditation to the Assembly.

4d. Secretaries of Committees and full-time Executive Secretaries who are not members of Assembly may speak on the report of a Committee for which they have responsibility at the request of the Convener concerned. They may speak on other reports with the consent of the Moderator.

4e. 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 to reply, but must strictly confine the reply to answering previous speakers and must not introduce new matters. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or the amendment.

4f. The foregoing Standing Order (4e) 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

7. Questions

7a. A member may, if two days' notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary, ask the Moderator or the Convener of any 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

Yorkshire Synod

**1. Stories of hope and resurrection from
the Yorkshire Synod**

1.1 It is easy to be carried along on the repeated story of decline and in Yorkshire, just like everyone

Mission-Shaped Synod

1. Mission purpose

1. Centred upon the Gospel ...

1.1 A major focus has been under the heading of Mission, Ministry and Money. It began by asking the local churches to dream dreams, and moved on to a Synod meeting that considered worship, spiritual growth, understanding of ministry, changes to being Church, and what a mission-structured church might look like.

A subsequent one-day conference was followed by nine resolutions at the October 2003 Synod. We now have the exciting task of relating these to the *Catch the Vision* Statement.

1.2 Synod Celebration brought se

Development work in the Synod. We have also said farewell to Sue Easton who has been replaced by Penelope Davies-Brown as Moderator's PA and Revd Richard Church has replaced Lawrence Moore as Training & Development Officer, following Lawrence's departure to Windermere.

3.1.5 A very sad loss was through the death of John Pugh, who had given much devoted service to his churches in and around Stowmarket, and to District, Synod and Assembly Committees. The congregation's over-flowing beyond the sanctuary at his funeral says much for the extent of love for John.

3.2 The above-mentioned Mission, Ministry and Money resolutions contained much that was aimed at better structures. Team ministries, encouraging more lay preachers, and interim and specialist ministries are to be pursued. Ecumenical partnership is a priority. Slicker decision-making – e.g. by avoiding repetition

1. Open All Hours

1.1 Life in Thames North Synod has been challenged and shaped over the last three years by a list of qualities of openness. This list first appeared in the middle of a Mission Council report on small churches under the title, "Marks of Viability", offered to districts and synods questioning the future of some of their smaller congregations. We were not asking that question in Thames North, but we were concerned for the vitality of all our churches in their various settings, and we welcomed this list as containing the right challenges for us all:

Open to the Spirit
Open to one another
Open to people
Open to change
Open to the community around
Open to receiving help
Open to developing local leadership
Open to learning and nurturing
Open to listen

1.2 In October 2002 we launched a book of resource materials called *Open All Hours?! – Bible studies, articles, discussion starters and worship materials to help each of our congregations explore new and relevant ways of living the gospel and being church in the 21st century.* To the nine qualities above, we added a tenth, *Open to the workplace*, to encourage churches to support their members in living out their Christian calling at work.

2. Strategy

2.1 In the autumn of 2002 we undertook an intensive process to identify a strategy for the synod. We began with a one-day meeting for the ministers and Church Related Community Workers, describing the changing culture that is our context and reflecting together on how we as a Church should adapt and respond. It was felt strongly that the United Reformed Church has one too many layers of structure, and various alternatives were proposed. Conscious of the responsibility for the United Reformed Church's witness in London and the difficulties several of our districts face combining inner London and "shires" communities, we explored the possibility of a boundary change, perhaps along the lines of the three English regions in our area, and the creation of a "London Synod". We have had informal conversations with Southern Synod officers and ecumenical partners, particularly the Methodists, who have already agreed the formation of a "London District" with effect from 2006. We have suggested the idea to the "Catch the Vision" review group.

2.2 Following this meeting we held a residential meeting for the leadership of the synod, and agreed the outline for a Vision Statement and set of Goals. These are now in the hands of our synod committees to be turned into concrete aims and objectives. They are also highlighted on our synod website (www.urch10.org), where we have created an interactive space for reflections and contributions.

3. World Church connections

3.1 Our relationship with the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren continues, with Thames North members regularly represented at their national Synod and a steady stream of Czech ministers and lay workers coming to the UK to improve their English. After the terrible floods in Prague in the summer of 2002 we asked all of the churches to take a special collection for the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren's flood relief work. This was followed in 2003 by further fund-raising towards a new church plant in a growing suburb of Prague. An enthusiastic Czech minister took part in the 2004-2005 (te)-6(r)-6(r)-4724 63(b)-7 co ec

5. Personnel

Martin Hazell was appointed Synod Clerk in October 2002, and we have benefited enormously from the clear and visionary thinking he has brought to the business of the synod. In March 2004 we paid tribute to Valerie Ham, our long-serving Synod Treasurer, and appointed Michael Gould and Emmanuel Osae in her

place. We have also welcomed new members of staff: David Skipp, our Properties Officer; Cristine Smalligan, our Mission Projects Support Worker; and Meryl Court, appointed to serve as Pastoral Consultant when Bert Baker retired. Sue Russell has joined the office team, and we said good-bye to Mike Philpott who left the office at the end of 2003.

Vision Statement

Through confidence in the Gospel, with excitement about the United Reformed Church's expression of Christian faith, and by our belonging to one another, the Thames North Synod envisions a future of courageous discipleship leading to growth.

Our vision is founded on the following values:

commitment to the big picture of God's purposes for the whole created order;
a living Reformed inheritance, characterised by the centrality of scripture, courageous discipleship, freedom of conscience, openness to change, liturgical freedom, and conciliarity;
abundant life expressed in affirmation of diversity, inclusion of people of all ages and backgrounds, deep reflection, confident sharing of faith, reconciliation and healing, vitality and enthusiasm, and cherishing of the gifts of the whole people of God.

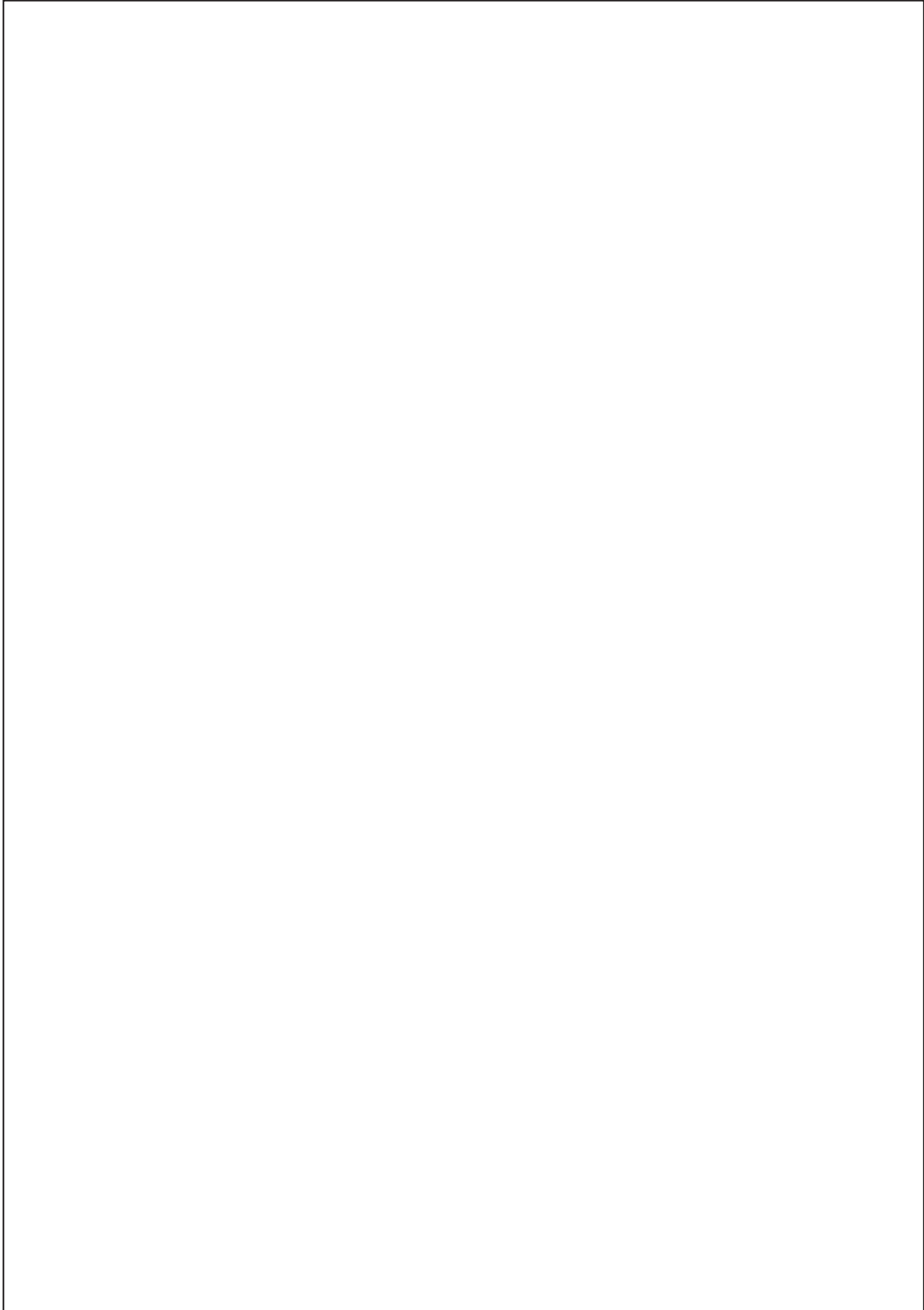
Synod Goals (2003 – 2007)

Encourage confidence in engaging with scripture and our changing society to nurture growth in Christian faith and life;
Explore alternatives to familiar patterns of church life, witness, structure and support so as to discern appropriate models for the future;
Strengthen existing ministries and extend the diversity of ministries, among the whole people of God;
Foster a greater sense of covenantal belonging to the Synod by the local churches;
Ensure that the structures and leadership of the Synod are truly representative of the diversity of local congregations and their communities.

1. Widespread public concern has been expressed, both nationally and in the North West,

2. Discussion at Cumberland and Lancaster District Councils, with the comments from local churches, indicated general support for such a District,

Churches - Changes and Synod Moderators' Report



1. Mission Project

The closure of Claypath Church in Durham City is probably unique in that it chose to close with a non-elderly membership of more than twenty, a worshipping congregation – in term-time – often approaching two hundred.

The history of the church goes back to 1662 when dissenting preachers gathered in Durham. The first church, Presbyterian, was established in 1689 and called its first minister, Jonas Blamire, in 1697. Throughout the 18th

4. Lower Chapel Darwen 1687 – 2003

North Western

One of Lancashire's oldest Congregational/United Reformed churches, Lower Chapel has been standing on the same site since 1719 and has played a great part in the development of Darwen from a group of hamlets to a thriving industrial town in the nineteenth century. With its nearby primary school which opened in the 1850s, Lower Chapel has provided a powerful witness for over 300 years and at its zenith served over 1200 worshippers on a Sunday. In the 1930s it was discovered that the buildings were in desperate need of repairs and extensive renovations were carried out. These included the removal of the gallery, the re-siting of the organ and complete re-roofing. The work was carried out almost entirely by the members of the church.

When the school closed in 1974 the church lost its link with the local children and despite adaptation to a dual purpose building membership declined, the Sunday School closed and in early 2001 the members reluctantly decided that, should things not improve, the building should close in 2003.

The final service was held on the morning of Sunday 27 March 2003 led by Revd Tamas Sugar. The majority of members transferred and were welcomed into to local churches. Thanks be to God for 300 years' witness and for the thousands of people whose lives have been influenced by the fellowship.

St Edith's United Reformed/Methodist Church, Wilton, Wiltshire closed on 4 January 2004 after a number of years of gradual decline.

An active local congregation flourished for many years, and children's work alongside creative worship was always a top priority. Although the demand for children's work remained strong, as did the interest in new ways of worshipping, the declining adult congregation could not sustain the work.

It is possible that nonconformist worship began in

There have been Nonconformists in Wingrave

1.1 Together with the whole United Reformed Church the Synod Moderators have been reflecting on the calling of the Church at this stage in its life and in this context in the Great Britain of the early 21st century. Our reflections have arisen from our regular task of working alongside local churches and ministers, in preaching and teaching and in sharing ecumenically in thinking and planning for the future. We have also had opportunities through the Belonging to the World Church programme and the synod twinning arrangements to make overseas journeys and to learn from the Church's experience in other contexts. We share a desire that the quest to catch a vision of God's tomorrow should shape our agenda at every level of the Church.

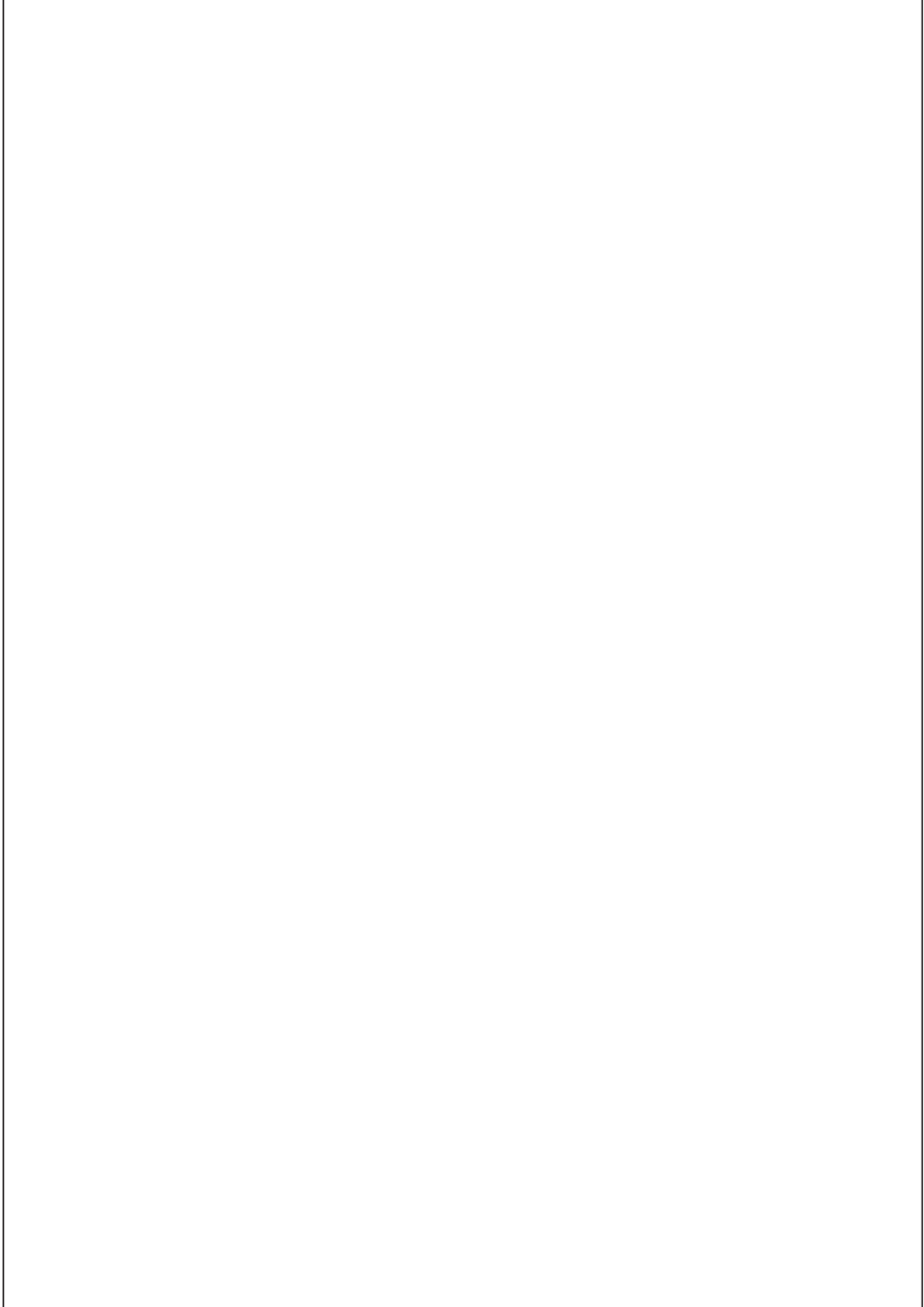
1.2 We believe that the Church is called to critique the prevailing culture, but that in order for this to be more than rhetoric we need to understand the situation in which we live and the nature of the contemporary church as being itself a sub-culture, or cluster of sub-cultures.

1.3 It has been said that 'culture is ordinary', it is the way we do things. It is why we feel at home in some places and alien in others; stimulated by some differences, threatened by others. Christendom gave a dominance to Christian culture across the western world which has given a particular tone to our experience of being Christian, even though that virtually mono-cultural phase has long since passed away. It leaves its after-glow as the sun sets on that era, and maybe we still hanker for the relative blandness and easiness of the days when the church was the hub of spiritual and community life; but we do well to remember that the centuries of dominance saw major division and persecution, as our

enough to live by and then spend one's time in making music or art. The Friday night binge-drinker, drugged-

4.8 We can be those who relinquish

Mission Council



1. Our meetings

1.1 During the year Mission Council has met residentially at Ushaw College, Durham; The Hayes, Conference Centre at Swanwick; and for a one-day meeting at the Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh.

1.2 The Moderator has guided Mission Council to reflect on the biblical themes of freedom and hope, set in the context of worship led by the Moderator's chaplain, the Revd Carolyn Smith.

1.3 Theological reflection at the October meeting was offered by the Revd Dr Des van der Water (General Secretary of the Council for World Mission); and at the March meeting by the Revd Dr John Campbell, minister of South Aston United Reformed Church, Birmingham. Both theological reflectors reminded Mission Council of its primary task of discerning priorities for the whole Church, and focussing resources on those priorities.

1.4 Three headline themes emerge from the work of Mission Council: vision and review (3.1; 3.2); safeguarding (3.4; 3.5; 3.6); and the increasing recognition of being a multi-cultural church in a multi-cultural society (2.1; 2.2; 3.7)

2. Actions on behalf of General Assembly

2.1

2.2 Mission Council also agreed, on behalf of General Assembly, that the Moderator sign a Joint

protection issues, to maintain an overview of the policy offered to local churches regarding Criminal Records Bureau disclosures, and to help synods when they support local churches respond to child protection concerns as they implement Good Practice.

3.7 Proposed Change of name of Racial Justice

4.3.6 When the relevant functions of the District,

(ii) The minimum age for the commencement of

General Assembly agrees to ratify its decision of July 2003 to make the following changes to Part I of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline:

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 1.2. Insert 'disciplinary' after the opening words 'Once the'

Paragraph 2

Insert '(whether or not on appeal)' after the words 'particular case'.

Paragraph 3

Insert the following additional definitions in their correct alphabetical positions and amend the sub-numbering of the other definitions as required:

'Initial Enquiry' shall mean the enquiry conducted by the Mandated Group in conjunction with the Moderator of the Synod during the period beginning when it is called in by the Moderator and ending when it serves either a Notice of Non-Continuance or a Referral Notice in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. 'Notice of Non-Continuance' shall mean a Notice served on the Moderator of the Synod by the Mandated Group at the conclusion of the Initial Enquiry to indicate that it does not intend to proceed further with the disciplinary case against the Minister.

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 4.1 Delete the current paragraph and replace with:

'Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph 4.4, appointment to the Commission Panel shall be by Resolution of the General Assembly on the advice of the Nominations Committee (or such other committee as may in the future perform the functions of the Nominations Committee), who shall in considering persons for appointment take into account (i) the need for balance and for a variety of skills and specialisations, particularly in the following areas – experience in ministerial oversight, theology and doctrine, law, counselling, psychology, mental health, experience in conduct of meetings and tribunals, and (ii) the advantages of including on the Commission Panel persons from a variety of ethnic minority backgrounds.

Paragraph 4.2 Insert the words 'Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph 4.4,' before the words 'Members of the Commission Panel'

Paragraph 4.4 Insert a new Paragraph 4.4 'When any member of the Commission Panel reaches the age of seventy, s/he must forthwith resign from the Commission Panel and shall no longer be eligible to serve on any new Assembly Commission, but any person who reaches his/her seventieth birthday whilst serving on an Assembly Commission in a case in progress may continue so to serve until the conclusion of that case.

Paragraph 6

Paragraph 6.4 Delete all and replace with: 'Those charged under this Paragraph 6 with the appointment of the Assembly Commission shall (so far as possible) (i) appoint at least one man and at least one woman onto the Assembly Commission, and (ii) have regard to the nature of the case, the need for balance and the skills, specialisation and cultural understanding of the members of the Commission Panel.'

Paragraph 7

Paragraph 7.1.1 Delete all.

Paragraph 7.1.2 Re-number as 7.1.

Paragraph 8

Delete all and insert 'Procedural matters arising under the Section O Process shall in every case be dealt with in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.'

Paragraph 11

Paragraph 11.3 Add a new Paragraph 11.3 'No-one other than the Parties has any right of appeal from a decision of the Assembly Commission.'

Paragraph 12

Delete all and insert:

12.1 'The Appeals Commission for the hearing of each such appeal shall consist of the following five persons:

- (a) a Convener who shall be a member of The United Reformed Church (but not necessarily a member of the General Assembly) with legal and/or tribunal experience to be selected by the officers of the General Assembly and
- (b) the Moderator of the General Assembly or if for any reason he/she should be unable to serve, a former Moderator of the General Assembly to be selected by the officers of the General Assembly and
- (c) three other members of the General Assembly to be selected by the officers of the General Assembly.

12.2 'The relevant date for ascertaining whether persons qualify for appointment under Paragraph 12.1 is the date on which under the Rules of Procedure the Secretary of the Assembly Commission notifies the General Secretary that an appeal has been lodged against the decision of the Assembly Commission.'

12.3 'In selecting persons for appointment to the Appeals Commission in accordance with Paragraph 12.1(c) the officers of the General Assembly shall, so far as possible, apply the same criteria as are set out in Part I, Paragraphs 4.1 and 6.4, in relation to appointments to the Commission Panel and to Assembly Commissions.'

12.4 'All persons proposed for appointment to an Appeals Commission, in any capacity, are subject to Part I, Paragraph 7.1.'

Paragraph 18

Delete 'shall, if requested to do so, appoint a representative to attend any hearing conducted under the Section O Process for such purpose' and insert 'shall appoint a representative to attend the Hearing for such purpose, unless his/her attendance has been expressly dispensed with by the Assembly Commission or the Appeals Commission as the case may be.'

Paragraphs 21 & 22

Delete all and insert a new Paragraph 21

Save only as provided in Paragraph 21.2, this Part I of the Section O Process is subject to Paragraph 3(1) of the Structure.

21.2 Mission Council acting in the name of General Assembly has authority by single resolution of that

Resolution 11

New changes to Section O Part I

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to Part I of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline:

Paragraph 4.2

Add the following words at the end of this Paragraph: '...but any person who reaches the end of the term of his/her appointment on the Commission Panel whilst serving as a member of an Assembly Commission in a case in progress may continue so to serve until the conclusion of that case.'

Paragraph 9

The existing Paragraph 9 to become 9.1 and a new paragraph to be added as 9.2:

'9.2 As part of such consideration, the Assembly Commission or Appeals Commission shall be entitled to have regard to any conduct on the part of a Minister occurring prior to his/her ordination to the ministry which, in the Commission's view and when viewed in the light of Schedule E to the Basis of Union, would have prevented, or was likely to have prevented, him/her from becoming ordained, where such conduct was not disclosed by the Minister to those responsible for assessing his/her candidacy for ordination.'

[This resolution, if passed, will be subject to the constitutional rule for reference to Synods and ratification next year]

Resolution 12

New changes to Section O Part II

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to Part II of the Section O Process for Ministerial Discipline:

Section A

Change the heading of Section A from 'Introduction' to 'General' to avoid confusion with the Introduction to the whole of Section O, which is being re-instated.

Paragraph B.6.2

Alter the wording in the brackets at the end of the paragraph to '(see also Paragraphs B.8.2 and B.11)'.

Paragraph B.8.1

At the end of the paragraph, add the following words: '(as to the contents of the written notice of suspension, see also Paragraph B.11)'.

Paragraph B.11

Add a new B.11 as follows:

'The Notice of Suspension, whether issued under Paragraph B.6.2 or Paragraph B.8.1, shall inform the Minister that, in accordance with these Rules of Procedure, any conduct on his/her part which breaches or contravenes Paragraph 4 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union may be taken into account by the Assembly Commission in reaching its decision under Paragraph 10 of Part I.'

Paragraph B.12

The existing B.11 to become B.12

Paragraph C.1.6

Add a new Paragraph C.1.6 as follows:

'On receipt of the Minister's response under Paragraph C.1.2 and any documents which may accompany it, provide the Mandated Group with copies thereof.'

Paragraph C.1.7

Add a new Paragraph C.1.7 as follows:

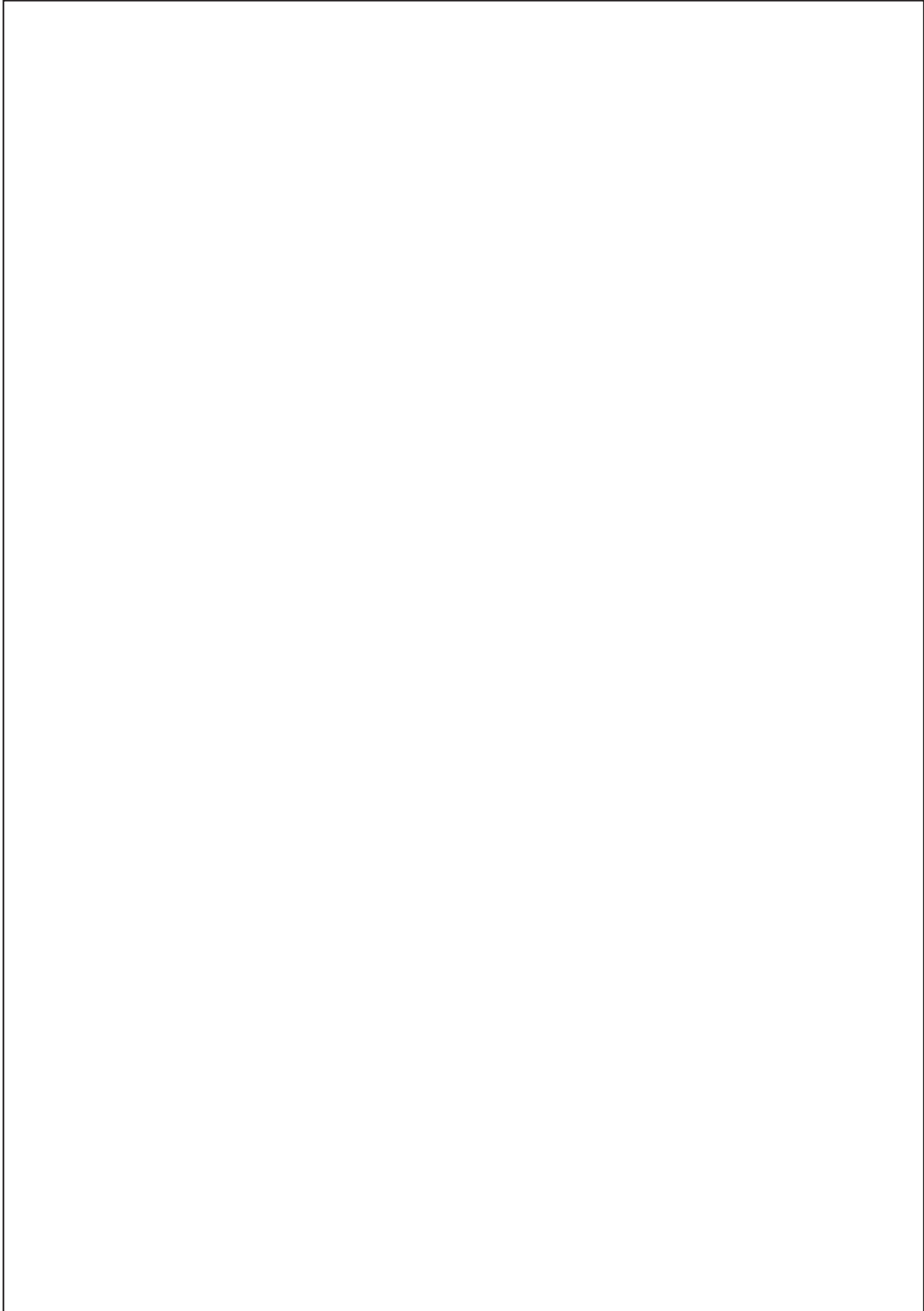
'In any case arising as a consequence of a Notice of Reference back, where comments are received from either of the parties as a result of the invitation contained in Paragraph C.1.3, provide the other party with copies thereof.'

Paragraph E.3.1

B.1 ‘

[This resolution will be subject to the constitutional rule for reference to Synods and ratification next year]

Committees



1. General Assembly 2006

The Committee brings a resolution that the Assembly of 2006 should be held at the University of Exeter from Friday 7th to Monday 10th July. **[Resolution 15]**

2. Mr Hilary Gunn – Secretary to the Assembly Arrangements Committee

Soon after the end of this Assembly, Hilary retires from the employment of the United Reformed Church following some 17 years of service. Others will want to pay tribute to his contribution to their particular area of responsibility. We note that four conveners of this committee, three General Secretaries, three Clerks of Assembly, numerous Moderators of Assembly, and about 11,000 members and guests of Assembly have – over the years – benefited from Hilary's contribution to the organisation of Assembly. In the main, Assembly runs smoothly; that it does so without too much apparent effort is a tribute to Hilary's accumulated knowledge and his steady hand on the details of the event. The committee, past and present, is very grateful for his service. We wish him well in his retirement.

3. The form of future General Assemblies

The committee has continued to address the form and cost of General Assembly. As the committee has stated before, we believe that any different arrangements for General Assembly should reflect a radical and comprehensive view of the governance of the church. Consequently the convener-6(n)5ittee has stated

4.4 At the time of writing this report, we do not

1. Following up on Assembly 2003

1.1 Millennium Development Goals

1.1.1 The idea of a world without poverty has always seemed utopian, yet it is spoken of today as a serious possibility. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals, which have informed our campaigning work for several years and to which we pledged our support as a Church at Assembly last year, set a target date for freeing the world from extreme poverty and hunger: 2015. They also commit signatories – most of the major global organisations and many governments, development agencies, faith movements and other bodies – to work to increase access to education (particularly for girls), reduce infant and maternal mortality rates, and combat AIDS, malaria and other diseases by, if not before, that date.

1.1.2 These Goals should give us renewed zeal as we work, through Commitment for Life and in other ways, to see God's kingdom reflected in our world. The God to whom both the Hebrew and Christian scriptures attest manifestly calls for justice rather than charity – for societies, not where the poor rely on the good will of the better off for their survival, but in which there *are* no poor to seek our charity [cf. Deuteronomy 15:4]. So to seek to make the Goals a reality is entirely consistent with our calling as people of God, as is our commitment to see poverty overcome in our country.

1.1.3 But 'making the Goals a reality' is easier said than done: what can a church, small in size and resources, do practically toward that end? One important task is to monitor progress towards the

1.2 Ethics of the new warfare

1.2.1

4.1.5 A World Church solidarity visit to Zimbabwe in April included a visit to Silveira House. A group of six Advocates are due to visit the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC) and Christian Aid's other partners in April. These are dark and difficult times for both places but the sense of sharing with them is deeper. Our Bangladeshi partners visited the Synod of Scotland in September 2003 and toured churches. This October we shall have visitors from PARC to speak at two Synods. We are glad to have this opportunity to help people gain a deeper understanding of our partners.

4.1.6 During the year, Fairtrade gained an ever-higher profile amongst the general public and in our churches. We co-ordinated the Church Action Guide for Fairtrade Fortnight which was used by all the churches and agencies and helped to establish the criteria for being a Fairtrade Church as well as a Fairtrade Synod.

5. Peace and Peacemaking

5.1 Members of the United Reformed Church

Peace

particular continent. Furthermore as churches we need to recognise our own complicity with the existing systems, being for the most part beneficiaries (Northern churches through their investments and Southern churches in receipt of funding derived from these investments – member bodies of the Council

The Facility would move the developed world closer towards the international target of spending 0.7% of national income on aid and help to improve the way aid works. Aid is needed to build the infrastructure, create an educated and healthy workforce, develop systems to deter corruption, and to create an environmente

An Environmental Policy for the United Reformed Church

1 Introduction

1.1 For the past five or more years the United Reformed Church has been engaged in a thorough examination of its ideas of mission and the degree to which ideas are turned into reality in the life of the Church. One of the tools used has been *The Five Marks of Mission*, first formulated by the Lambeth Conference of 1988 and then endorsed in their present form in 1997 by the Forum of Churches Together in England:

- ' · to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom;
- ' · to teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
- ' · to respond to human need by loving service;
- ' · to seek to transform unjust structures of society;
- ' · to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation;

- encouraging United Reformed Churches in their activities to comply with all relevant environmental recommendations for good practice.

3.3

1.1 Background The building of a barrier was originally proposed by the Labour Party in 1989/90 and opposed by Ariel Sharon, then in opposition. The idea was for a barrier to follow the Green Line, thus demarcating the border, and for settlements to be dismantled. In April 2002, the Israeli Cabinet approved a plan to 'improve and reinforce the readiness and operational capability to cope with terrorism'.¹ Significantly, Prime Minister Sharon approved construction providing the barrier did not follow the Green Line, so as to avoid legitimising the border. Many Palestinians see the Barrier as creating a *de facto* border between Israel and a future Palestinian state.

1.2 The route of the barrier The barrier rarely follows the Green Line demarcating the West Bank from Israel. By deviating from the Green Line, the barrier has cut off communities from their land and Palestinians from their villages, even snaking into Palestinian territory to encompass Israeli settlements. Of the proposed 350km, 140km has been completed. The mainstream Israeli press has revealed plans to

1. Introduction

1.1 Communication is at the heart of the Gospel and without communication the Church will die. We communicate with one another within the church to encourage, share, and revitalize. We communicate with the world, challenging it, changing it and sharing the love of God with it. The world communicates with us, challenging us and changing us, too. We communicate with God and God communicates with us.

1.2

A Gift Box : a box of resources to develop Christian Faith and enlarge understanding of the United Reformed Church is now available.

2.3 The design and production of material continues to be of a very high standard, thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication shown by the two staff members in this area, who continue to produce excellent results despite others constantly missing deadlines and severe difficulties of limited space for equipment and storage.

3. Bookshop and Distribution

3.1 The Bookshop must be seen as an asset to the church. The Books-on-Line operation has increased sales and it is encouraging that many of these are from overseas. The Assembly Bookstall is always well received. Material has been provided for many events including CTE Forum, and following General Assembly, the Bookshop at the World Convention of the Churches of Christ will be provided by the United Reformed Church.

3.2 The range of stock carried and the speed of turn round of orders is favourably commented upon

Ensuring that the Church's point of view is heard clearly and unambiguously is often not easy and the Committee has been encouraged by the increased willingness of both synod moderators and others who may find themselves in the media spotlight to seek advice and support from the press officer. Equally encouraging has been the positive feedback from those who have sought such support.

6.4 In January the Committee arranged for a one-day course on crisis management and the media for synod moderators. Feedback from the course, which was run by the Church of England Broadcast Training Unit together with the United Reformed Church Press Office, has been favourable.

7. CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION

The United Reformed Church will no longer have a denominational presence at these exhibitions, but will share in a publishing stand with other Church publishers.

8. COPYRIGHT

In co-operation with Christian Copyright Licensing International work continues to help local churches to understand and work within copyright regulations.

9. ECUMENICAL WORK

Churches' Media Council

The United Reformed Church through the Revd Martin Hazell continues to support the work of the Council.

Church Publishers Network

The Secretary continues to serve as a member of the Church Publishers Network. Her period of service as Convener ended in March 2004.

ROOTS: Worship and Learning for the Whole Church

Now in its second year, Roots continues to thrive and grow. The Secretary serves as a member of the Board of Management.

10. THANKS:

Since the Committee last reported in 2002, the following people have completed their service with the Committee: Graham Cook, Convener, John East, and Richard Lathaen, and in July 2004, Mel Frew, Elizabeth Bruce-Whitehorn and Peter Moth will also complete their service. We are grateful for all that these people have given to the Church through their work with the Communications and Editorial Committee.

Thanks is due too to the staff of Communications, all of whom work with dedication and interest.

General Assembly recognising that Communication is at the heart of the Gospel reaffirms the

c) A shared system of email addresses, allowing churches, officers and individuals to participate in the 'urc.org.uk' domain would not only enhance our sense of identity as a national

community but would, in many cases, smooth the transition when responsibilities are transferred from one individual to another.

Resolution 22

Get Noticed

General Assembly recommends to the churches the leaflet "Get Noticed" as a basis of enhancing their visibility in the community.

1. The first stage of the rolling Communications Strategy resulted in the leaflet "**Get Smart**" which highlighted the importance of the appearance of buildings and notice boards. The second stage produced a leaflet "**GET TALKING – LOUD AND CLEAR**" which emphasised the need to communicate with each other within the church. The leaflet for

the third stage "**GET NOTICED**" is available at this Assembly. This stage concentrates on getting the name of the United Reformed Church recognised, locally, regionally and nationally to make the fullest possible use of the opportunities available in the media especially at a local level.

1. Programme

1.1 The work of the Committee to monitor the implementation of the Church's Equal Opportunities Policy continues by carrying out regular surveys on General Assembly attendance and Church membership together with others requested by Mission Council.

1.2 During the last two years the challenges to ensure equal opportunities within the Church and our communities have increased considerably. Some

3. Equal Opportunities Policy for Local Churches

This Policy document has been updated at the annual review and is now available on the United Reformed Church web site. Included with this document are some useful addresses for enquiries and for the provision of up to date information.

4. Recommendations from the report of the Task Group on Personal and Conciliar Leadership and Authority to Mission Council

Two of the recommendations from this Task Group were referred to the Equal Opportunities Committee.

4.1 The first was to 'arrange for an audit to be taken of those exercising personal leadership throughout the United Reformed Church with a view to discovering if any imbalances exists in the type of people appointed to particular roles.'

To carry out this audit, the Committee is producing a proforma in consultation with Synod Clerks.

It is envisaged that the information on people in Synod and District leadership roles will provide details for this audit through their Synod Clerk. We are grateful for the help, constructive and useful comments, and agreement to assist in this survey from Synod Clerks. Details on Synod Moderators, Conveners of Assembly committees and staff holding Assembly appointments have been obtained from the relevant sections at Church House.

4.2 The second area for investigation was to 'take account of imbalances that are found to exist in the membership of our councils or in the range of people appointed to leadership roles and consider how procedures, patterns of meetings, job descriptions and advertisements can be altered to help us achieve our declared ideas of inclusivity.'

A method to gather the information and to analyse the results is being discussed in Committee. Work is being undertaken to assess the areas for investigation and the most effective way of collecting and presenting information on membership of the different councils of the Church.

This survey needs to be carried out at every level within the Church and we are looking at these areas with a view to suggesting specific areas from which Mission Council may be able to guide us in prioritising the start.

5. Placement of Ordinands

Some investigations were carried out into this subject in 1998. However a letter from the Convener of the Westminster College Board of Governors, forwarded to the Committee by the General Secretary, raised some current concerns on this matter. A limited survey has been carried out, for the past two years, with the help of the Synod Moderators Meeting and the committee is investigating setting up a system to monitor the process for the Ordinands leaving College in 2005. We are aware that discussions are taking place on the movement of ministers and that any change in the process may affect Ordinands.

6. Representation at and working with other Committees

6.1 A member of the Committee continues to be present at the Annual National Assessment Conference Training at Windermere to give advice and guidance to ensure that all applicants are treated in the same manner and given the same opportunities to present to the Interviewing Panel their sense of 'call' to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

6.2 T

1. Our remit

1.1 We have reviewed our role and, in particular, its implications for our working arrangements with the Resource Planning Advisory Group of Mission Council and the Review Group. We believe a better understanding has been reached on our respective roles and this should improve the management and planning of our financial affairs.

2. The budget process

2.1 Further guidance has been given to budget holders on the preparation and management of budgets. This was well received and this has already led to better management and control of our expenditure.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1

1. Appointment of auditors

1.1 The United Reformed Church is required to appoint auditors at each General Assembly at which accounts are laid before the members. The auditors are appointed from the conclusion of the forthcoming General Assembly until the conclusion of next year's General Assembly.

1.2

1. The Paper ...

1.1 At the request of the Life & Witness Committee (which has oversight of the Windermere Centre), Mission Council commissioned the first review of the Centre since its opening in 1984 under the convenership of the Reverend Tony Coates. The Windermere Centre Review Group reported to Mission Council in March 2003 and the recommendations that were received by Mission Council came to General Assembly 2003 as part of the Mission Council Report. Members of General Assembly are referred page 34 of the General Assembly 2003 Reports (where the recommendations are listed) and in particular to recommendations 2, 3, 7 and 8.

1.2 The United Reformed Church has a vision of becoming 'a vibrant and sustainable Church within the next ten years'. The Life & Witness Committee sees the Windermere Centre as crucial to this process because it is the place 'where the future pattern of life and witness of the United Reformed Church can be explored' (recommendation 3). To this end, the Committee has been taking forward the recommendations to develop the Centre building into a place that can adequately accommodate and provide conference space for its 33 guests. The existing conference room cannot accommodate more than 20-25 in comfortable, creative layouts.

1.3 The Life & Witness Committee seeks the permission of General Assembly to launch an appeal throughout the United Reformed Church for money to develop a Conference Centre in the existing Carver Church hall complex. Stringent planning constraints mean that the existing Centre buildings cannot be developed and extended to meet these needs and the development of the hall complex represents the only viable option open to the Committee. An appeal will be made to the Synods, Districts, churches and individuals of the United Reformed Church. At the same time, appeals and applications will be made for community, government and charitable funding elsewhere.

2. The Place ...

2.1 The Windermere Centre is the United Reformed Church's own residential training centre in the heart of the Lake District. Founded in 1984, it was to equip the whole Church to develop a faith and life relevant to its context. The Centre has assumed a pivotal place in the life of the United Reformed Church. It provides an imaginative and wide-ranging programme of approximately 100 courses and events annually. An average of 2000 members of the United Reformed Church from across England, Scotland and Wales, together with international visitors, come to the Centre each year to develop their life-in-mission, both as individuals and communities of faith.

- iv) encourage ecumenical thinking and engagement
- v) be exposed to leading thinkers and practitioners in different fields
- vi) develop spirituality that will nourish and sustain life-in-mission
- vii) be refreshed, renewed, encouraged and

Windermere Centre Alterations	Convert existing lounge into 2 single en-suite rooms; convert Director's Office into single en-suite room; reduce existing ground-floor rooms from 4 to 2 fully-equipped disabled rooms; provide egress to link corridor; convert existing Conference Room into lounge with bar; build extension to lounge.	£ 149,000
Conference Centre	Link existing church and halls with open plan reception, bookshop, refreshment & entrance building; construct new Conference Room and library above existing hall; construct office and meeting rooms; install new toilet facilities; install lift from basement to first floor; modify existing cellar.	£ 645,000
Link corridor	Link Centre and conference facilities via a covered walkway; install a wheelchair lift in Centre.	£ 196,000
APPEAL TOTAL		£ 990,000

8. The Plan ...

8.1 An appeal committee will be responsible for raising money. There are 3 sources of funding:

- i) The United Reformed Church – individuals, local churches, districts and synods
- ii) Community and specially designated funding for the public buildings
- iii) Carver Church, which is redeveloping their sanctuary to be a more flexible worship space and more suitable for use by the wider community and the Centre. The Carver-funded development will facilitate the total development of the Conference Centre.

8.2 The development will be phased so as to minimise disruption to the Centre's programme. The final phase of the building will include the conversion of the present lounge into 2 single bedrooms and the Conference Room into the Centre's lounge. This will ensure that the Centre does not have to close in order

No. The opposite is the case. Carver is funding the redevelopment and refurbishment of their church building, but doing so as a contribution to the overall plan. They have already contributed nearly £61 000 to the project and are raising further funds towards it.

vi) Is this a sound investment?

Yes. The capital value of the buildings – Centre and Church – increases by more than the money spent. It not only increases their resale value, but their desirability as a saleable property. And

an opportunity to join in the annual training conference for their Methodist counterparts. We will continue to keep the question of support under review.

6. One of the many responsibilities of the Secretary for Ministries is to represent the United Reformed Church on the United Board. The Board brings together senior armed forces chaplains with representatives of the Baptist Union, the Congregational Federation and ourselves. The Board offers support to forces Chaplains through a prayer letter and an annual conference. The 2003 and 2004 conferences were salutary experiences as several of our Chaplains have been on duty with their units in Iraq.

7. Members of Assembly are encouraged to attend the fringe meeting where some of our Chaplains' stories will be unpacked.

Special Category Ministry

8. Ten of our full-time Chaplains are supported

1. Since the report to General Assembly 2002 there have been several changes in the membership of the Assessment Board and the Ministries Committee wishes to record appreciation of the commitment of all who serve on the Assessment Board.

2. Six Assessment Conferences and four Re-Assessment days were held between September 2001 and June 2003.

2.1 72 candidates attended the Assessment Conferences in this period:

- 36 for stipendiary service
- 18 for non-stipendiary service.
- 4 for Church Related Community Workers
- 4 Re-Assessment (transfer from non-stipendiary to stipendiary service)

2.2 61 were finally accepted for training or transfer as a result of Assessment Conference recommendations and Synod decisions:

- 30 for stipendiary service
- 15 for non-stipendiary service
- 3 Church Related Community Workers
- 3 for transfer from non-stipendiary to stipendiary service

3. Criminal Record Bureau disclosures are now a requirement at the start of training and at the point of call to a church or other post. This is in line with Government directives and the process now works smoothly.

4.

1. Church Related Community Work Programme

1.1 In the past two years, the number of Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs) in post has risen from fifteen to eighteen. However unless four students start this year, we shall have difficulty in achieving the target of two CRCWs in each Synod by 2008. Transfers via Certificates of Eligibility may solve the problem. Four accredited posts are currently vacant. For the first time an application for accreditation came from a District Council rather than a local church for what is an innovative

1.1 Following the survey carried out to help understand the depth of involvement of Lay Preachers in the worship of our Church, a strategy to develop the lay preaching ministry and recruit new Lay Preachers was accepted by Assembly 2002 and is now under the responsibility of the Synods to implement. Each Synod will develop its own ideas and those that are implemented successfully will be shared. To recruit eight hundred people for training by the end of the decade is a tremendous challenge.

1.2 The annual consultation meetings of the Synod and District Commissioners have covered topics affecting the support and development of individual lay preachers and their ministries.

- a) In-service training is important but has not necessarily been emphasised in the past and should be carried out so that it encourages, affirms and supports.
- b) Co-operation in teams and worship groups is vital and needs to become something to look forward to, not viewed with reluctance.
- c) Being able to carry out an appraisal of one's ministry also aids development. Not everyone is comfortable with this, but it brings greater self-understanding, rather than self-criticism.

1.3 A range of guidelines to support the lay preaching ministry have been developed and published:

- a) Guidelines to help the individual and the District/Area test and affirm a call to lead worship.
- b) Guidelines to help Districts/Areas to search out, train and recognise Lay Preachers.
- c) Self-Reflection Guidelines: this process enables Lay Preachers to reflect on their ministry and their own spiritual journey with the goal of enriching them, affirming their gifts and identifying areas for further development.

1.4 The use of modern methods of communication has been discussed and information about Lay Preaching is now available on the United Reformed Church web site. It is hoped to make these pages available from Synod web sites as well.

1.5 Following close co-operation between the Sub-Committee and the Training Committee we were delighted to see the publication of Training for

1. This Sub-Committee continues to be responsible for policy in matters of the provision of retirement housing for ministers and their spouses. It uses the United Reformed Church Retired Ministers Housing Society Limited as its agent for the implementation of policy and the practical steps

1. Level of the minister's stipend

1. After full discussions at its 1996 and 1997 meetings, Assembly agreed age limits for candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments. The minimum age for training for stipendiary service was set at 18 while for non-stipendiary service it was decided it should normally be 25. The maximum ages for ordination were set at 55 for stipendiary service and at 60 for non-stipendiary service.

2. Given these maximum ages, and the normal length of time taken from first candidating to the completion of training, Assembly also set the maximum ages for candidating at 50 for stipendiary service and 55 for non-stipendiary service. In practice a few candidates with qualifications and experience which could shorten their training have come forward after the maximum age set by Assembly for candidating and there has been uncertainty about their treatment.

3. The Ministries Committee believes that th3 Td[(h)-3(a)4(526 Td[(h)-5(-6(e)-6(n)5(t)-1j0.519 -0)-1)Tj0.5.me9d t9 -05u499(a 0

General Assembly approves the following procedure regarding applications for reinstatement to the Roll of Ministers of the United Reformed Church.

- a) **Ministers who have been removed from the Roll of Ministers by resignation or by Assembly decision, and who wish to apply for re-instatement, shall in the first place consult the Moderator of the Synod of the area where they reside. The application procedure may not normally commence until five years have elapsed from the date their name was removed from the Roll.**
- b) **The Secretary for Ministries shall be informed by the applicant, who will be advised of the procedure to be followed.**
- c) **The Secretary for Ministries will notify the relevant Synod officer where the applicant resides of the application, and will ask the Synod and District/Area Council to arrange an interview with the applicant. The Secretary for Ministries will ask the Synod that the following documents be obtained by them:**
 - i) **A personal statement from the applicant which covers :**
 - I the reason(s) for the deletion or resignation, and a reflection on the circumstances surrounding it**
 - I an outline of the applicant's personal development and journey of faith since the deletion or resignation**
 - I current employment**
 - I the reasons for seeking reinstatement, including their current conviction of call to the ministry.**
 - ii) **At least two personal references in support of the applicant**
 - ii) **A commendation from the applicant's local church**
 - iv) **A statement from the Moderator of the Synod where the applicant resides, or an equivalent officer in an overseas church, where appropriate**
 - v) **A medical report**
- d) **The Synod will forward these papers (except the medical report) to the District or Area Council where the applicant now resides, and ask them to interview him/her and report their observation as to his/her suitability for re-instatement.**
- e) **It should be noted that where the applicant has moved into a different Synod or Area/District since their name was removed from the Roll, the Synod handling the application will seek the observations of the present Moderator of their previous Synod, and of their previous District. The purpose of this enquiry is to place the present application in the context of the exercise of the applicant's last ministry.**
- f) **All these papers (except the medical report) will be sent to the Ministries Committee of the Synod where the applicant now resides, who will interview him/her, and report to the Secretary for Ministries.**
- g) **All these documents, including the medical report at this stage, will be made available to the Accreditation Sub-Committee, which will interview the applicant. Following this final interview the Sub-Committee will decide whether or not to re-instate. The Secretary for Ministries will inform the applicant and his/her Synod of the decision as soon as possible.**
- h) **On receipt of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee, it shall be open both to the applicant and to the Synod to request a further hearing by the Ministries Committee. This hearing will be**

be I be I bSuST*[(h)-6(e)-bt6(e 020(b)-10(o)-7(t)-16(h)-40(t)-6(o)-40(t)-16(h)-6(e))]-6(i)--6(i)6 Td

1. A small number of ministers are removed from

1. ASSEMBLY STAFF APPOINTMENTS

1.1

2.3 COMMUNICATIONS and EDITORIAL

Convener: Revd Martin Hazell [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for Communications

Revd Bob Maitland [2005]

Mr Peter Knowles [2005]

Revd Martin Truscott [2005]

Ms Eleri Evans [2005]

Mr Philip George [2006]

Revd Martin Whiffen [2007]

Revd Paul Snell **[2008]

Revd Janet Sutton **[2008]

Ms Julia Wills **[2008]

2.4 DOCTRINE, PRAYER and WORSHIP

Convener: Revd John Young [2005]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Revd Dr Robert Pope [2005]

Revd Alistair Smeaton [2005]

Revd Prof Alan Sell [2007]

Revd Geoffrey Clarke [2007]

Revd Hilary Collinson [2007]

Revd Dr Susan Durber #[2009]

Miss Sarah Lane [2007]

Dr John Turner [2007]

Mrs Chris Eddowes **[2008]

Revd Jason McCullagh **[2008]

Revd Peter Trow **[2008]

2.5 ECUMENICAL

Convener: Revd Elizabeth Nash** [2009]

Secretary: Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and Faith & Order

Revd Bryan Shirley [2005]

Revd Cecil White [2005]

Revd Rowena Francis [2006]

Mr Malcolm Porter [2006]

Revd Lindsey Sanderson [2006]

Mrs Ann Shillaker [2007]

Mrs Pat Gurr **[2008]

Revd Stuart Jackson representing the National Synod of Wales

Revd Mary Buchanan representing National Synod of Scotland

2.5.1 ECUMENICAL – INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Chris Baillie [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for International Relations

Revd Birgit Ewald [2005]

Mrs Heather Barnes [2006]

Revd Nigel Uden [2006]

Mrs Eileen McIlveen [2007]

Revd Michael Thomason [2007]

2.6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Convener: Revd Wilf Bahadur [2006]

Secretary: Revd Derek Hopkins [2008]

Ms Gloria Bujan [2005]

Mr Derek Estill [2006]

Mr Alan Hart [2006]

Revd Sue MacBeth [2007]

Dr Ruth Shepherd **[2008]

Mrs Louise Sanders **[2008]

2.7 FINANCE

Convener: The Treasurer

Secretary: Financial Secretary

Mr John Woodman [2005]

Ms Alison Holt [2006]

Revd David Dones [2007]

Mrs Marie Whitman [2007]

Mr Errol Martin **[2008]

Mr Graham Law **[2008]

Convener of the URC Trust

2.8 INTER-FAITH RELATIONS

Convener: Revd Dr John Parry [2007]

Secretary: Mrs JeaGrn

Revd Martin Hazell [10], Mrs Christine Meekison [11], Dr Jean Silvan Evans [12],
Revd John Arthur [13], with the Immediate Past Moderator and the General Secretary.

2.12 PASTORAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Convener: Revd Keith Forecast [2007]

Secretary: Deputy General Secretary

Mrs Irene Brunskill [2005]

Revd David Grosch Miller [2007]

Revd Meryl Court **[2008]

Mrs Sharn Waldron **[2008]

Convener of Welfare Sub-Committee

The Treasurer

The General Secretary

2.12.1 PASTORAL WELFARE Sub-Committee

Convener: Revd Alan Wharton [2007]

Secretary: Mrs Judy Stockings

[*ex officio* Financial Secretary, The Treasurer, Convener Pastoral Reference Committee]

2.13 RACIAL JUSTICE

Convener: Revd Andrew Prasad [2007]

Secretary: Secretary for Racial Justice

Revd John Campbell [2005]

Mrs Sandra Ackroyd [2007]

Mrs Elaine Patrick [2007]

Revd Norman Setchell [2007]

Revd Carla Grosch Miller *[2007]

*another** [2008]*

*another**[2008]*

2.14 TRAINING

Convener: Revd John Humphreys [2007]

Secretary: The Secretary for Training

Revd Principal John Dyce [2005] Mrs Susan Brown [2006]

Revd Sue Henderson [2006]

Revd Malachie Munyaneza [2006] Mrs Valerie Burnham [2007]

Dr Ian Morrison [2007]

Revd Rachel Poolman **[2008] Mrs Kate Breeze **[2008]

Revd Richard Church **[2008]

2.15 YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

Convener: Revd Kathryn Price [2006]

Secretary: Revd Steven Faber **[2008]

Mrs Daphne Clarke [2005]

Ms Lorraine Downer [2005]

Revd John Sanderson [2005]

Mrs Elaine Thomas [2005]

Mr Huw Morrison [2006]

Mrs Hannah Middleton [2007]

Mrs Doreen Watson [2007]

Mr Augustus Webbe [2007]

Revd Tim Meachin **[2008]

FURY Chair

FURY Council Member

2.16

3 MISSION COUNCIL

Mission Council acts on behalf of General Assembly. It consists of the Officers of Assembly, the Provincial Moderators and three representatives from each Synod together with the Conveners of Assembly Committees.

Northern Synod

North Western Synod

Mersey Synod

Revd John Durell, Revd Colin Offor, Mrs Susan Rand

Miss Kathleen Cross, Mrs Janet Eccles, Revd Chris Vermeulen

Revd Martin Hardy, Mrs Wilmer Prentice, Mr Donald Swift

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|---|
| 9.4 | Milton Mount Foundation | Revd George Thomas [2006]
Mrs Clare Meachin [2006]
Revd David Cuckson [2006]
Mr Graham Rolfe **[2008]
<i>another **[2010]</i> |
| 9.5 | Silcoates School | Dr Peter Clarke [2005]
Revd Arnold Harrison [2005]
Revd Brenda Hill [2006]
Dr Clyde Binfield [2007]
Mr David Figures [2007] |
| 9.6 | Taunton School | Revd David Grosch-Miller |
| 9.7 | Wentworth College | Revd Brian Rawling |
| 9.8 | Bishops Stortford College | Revd Nigel Rogers |

10. Miscellaneous

The United Reformed Church is represented hot TJ/T10_1 Tf-21.6 -1.263 Td[(9)27(.)-e6(e)-1 h8121.6s0PresrTJ/T1-113Kou(e)-(.7)-1977fd-

1.

and will only meet to consider these documents when the Convenor judges there is a serious disagreement. The Synod Clerk will advertise the vacancy in *Reform* and within the synod. The advertisement should also be posted on appropriate web sites. The advertisement will make it clear that both applications and nominations will be welcomed. The Synod Clerk will oversee the process of issuing details to enquirers. Where the Synod Clerk is advised of a nomination the nominee will be contacted by letter and invited, if willing to be considered, to supply appropriate documentation. All nominees shall receive what is essentially the same letter and be advised who has made the nomination. The closing date for applications will allow details to be circulated to members of the Nominating Group before the short-listing meeting.

2. The meetings of the Nominating Group

2.1 The Nominating Group will agree a short list of applicants to be interviewed. If, in the judgment of the Group, there are no suitable applicants, the Group may re-advertise the post and invite applications from people, or nominations of people, who have not yet been considered.

2.2 The second meeting will carry out interviews with the short-listed candidates and arrive at a name for nomination to the General Assembly. In the event of failure to reach unanimous agreement the support of three Synod and three General Assembly members of the Group is an acceptable basis for a nomination but a simple majority decision is not.

2.3 The Nominating Group will normally bring its recommendation to the Nominations Committee for presentation to the Mission Council in March, there to be confirmed or not. This will enable the General Secretary to arrange preparation for the Moderator-elect and a formal reception at the July General Assembly. However, circumstances may require a different time-table.

B. The re-appointment of a serving Synod Moderator

3. Preparing for meeting

3.1 Before a Review Group is appointed the General Secretary will ascertain from the Moderator concerned whether she/he wishes to be considered for a further period of service. This consultation should take place in time for a Review Group to be formed, consider the matter and reach a conclusion no later than eight months before the end of the current appointment. The Review Group, appointed by the Nominations Committee, will consist of five people from outside the synod concerned. The General Secretary or, in his/her

Assembly resolves that the Rules of Procedure governing the appointment of Moderators of Synod be amended to read:

7.4 All appointments by the General Assembly to the office of moderator of a synod shall be made on the nomination of a committee consisting of four members appointed by the synod concerned and four members appointed by the Nominations Committee from a panel elected by the General Assembly. The Nominations Committee shall also name the Convener.

7.5 In selecting this representation the synod and Nominations Committee shall have regard to the need to make their selection both widely representative and possessing the necessary skills.

Note: For the procedure to be followed in the appointment and reappointment of moderators of synod see Minutes of Assembly 2004 [page reference].

1. OUR ASSEMBLY REMIT – RECENT HISTORY AND CURRENT WORK

1.1 Our remit given by General Assembly when the Committee took its present form in 1994 was amended by Mission Council in March 2003.

1.2 Since the mid 1990s the Training Committee has been engaged in three phases of activity.

1.2.1 In the mid to late 1990s a number of creative

3. TRAINING REVIEW

3.1.1 The Training Committee is engaged on a major review with the intention of bringing resolutions to General Assembly in 2005. The Committee submits this interim review paper to Assembly 2004 after considerable reflection over the last year and more, for discussion and comment. It hopes that reactions will help to inform our presentation in 2005. The committee is also engaged in other avenues of communication. A consultation with representatives of training institutions, synods and ecumenical partners was held in February 2004 and another is planned for the autumn.

3.1.2 This paper, therefore, is presented in three parts:

1. **Pressures and opportunities** – current issues and demands.
2. **Theological Principles** – the big vision.
3. **Possible Pathways**

(Please note: in this paper, our use of the term 'theological

3.2.4.2

4 · Does the United Reformed Church take on

- B. The ecumenical vision has transformed inter-church perceptions and relations (of which the United Reformed Church is the major British example), but this has also thrown up its own problems of change, identity and confusion. We also now find ourselves at a point where across the churches there is little consensus on ecumenical direction.
- C. Reflecting political and social change there has been a re-visioning of mission both internationally and locally. There have been pioneering developments in ordination education, pastoral structures, community work and now the need to come to terms with the sexual/gender issues and youth culture.
- D. As part of the end of an assumed Christian culture, the churches have rediscovered the understanding of the 'whole people of God'

3.4.5 Flexibility

Theological education will be flexible as the church learns to rejoice that people offer for training and seek theological education from a variety of contexts and a variety of life experience as well as for a variety of motives. It cannot be a matter of 'one size fits all'.

3.4.6 Intellectual

Theological education should always promote the development of intellectual skills. Each person should be helped to fulfill her or his own potential and should be valued as part of the learning landscape of the church. The United Reformed Church needs to encourage future teachers and academics as well as to equip people with the whole range of skills needed by the church. The United Reformed Church has a history of introducing individuals to the world of academia and to ecumenical pilgrimage. The present review should ensure that this valuable contribution continues and that these people and all people are affirmed in their vital ministries. But it should also resist any pressure to concentrate on 'academic' achievement as an end in itself rather than as a fulfillment of God given potential for service in the church.

We wish to promote the ethos of the United Reformed Church as a Learning Church, learning to be disciples in an increasingly complex world, learning together, learning with and from each other and learning in

3.5.5 Status Quo versus Change

3.5.5.1 The stark choice before us is either for the United Reformed Church to continue with the present patterns for the provision of training or to change. The decision to change cannot be simply for change's sake. If there is to be change then the Training Committee seeks to work towards a model for the provision of theological education suited to the requirements of the principles in section 2 of our paper and taking account of the context outlined in section 1.

3.5.5.2 At present there are colleges, courses, synod programmes and Assembly generated programmes such as Training for Learning and Serving, what is at the time of writing called Continuing Ministerial Education and within that Post Ordination Commissioning Education and Training as well as district and local initiatives. All of these make up a large part of the total picture of training within the United Reformed Church. We are being challenged from within and without the church to make radical responses to the realities of church and religious life. The church's traditional approach is 'nothing changes here' and we have a history of retreating from thorny issues. But we hope that the range of pressures and opportunities indicated in the first section above has shown clearly that to do nothing is to risk our current provision creaking under the pressures and to miss the creative opportunities that presently abound to equip the church for its missionary task. If the church continues its previous patterns of not grasping nettles then we could be stung far more than we might be by reaching out to new possibilities – however sharp they seem.

3.5.5.3 What is more, fractures in theological education

3.6.B Pathway B

Maintain Assembly and synod programmes much as they are, perhaps continue to use ecumenical courses for part time ordination training (however these are reconfigured by the Church of England – but see below) and reduce the number of colleges from 5 to 1 institution

3.6.B.1 A logical extension of Pathway A would be to accept that now is the time for the United Reformed Church to operate with one college only. This one college would be responsible for the oversight and provision of all the training currently undertaken by the five colleges and possibly all/some of the courses. A denomination of our size could easily place all its theological education eggs into the one basket and expect that the one institution would carry the burden and be the beacon of Reformed theology in England and contribute to the Reformed scene in both Scotland and Wales. The National Synods of Scotland and Wales would be asked to develop the partnerships necessary to operate ecumenically. General Assembly could decide on this route based on the number of students that are to be available for full time theological training. This would carry and extermem/ ThW2(e)-nThi

Training Committee does not expect either D or E to increase the amount spent on training and education, rather we expect that, by bringing together the whole variety of ways in which training and education is financed there would be more than enough human and financial resource to promote either pathway. We do however recognise that there is much to examine, not least the financial implications and staffing of pathways.

The School would be of and for the denomination.

3.6.D Pathway D

United Reformed Church School for Theological Education working in 11 local areas (nine regions in England plus Scotland and Wales)

3.6.D.1 The School would oversee the provision of all theological education and training in the United Reformed Church offered in the name of the whole denomination, including those aspects of education and training that are deemed necessary for Assembly recognised ministries (elders, Church Related Community Workers and 'ministers'). It would also provide education and training for other areas of service and commitment in the work of the people of God as otherwise is identified.

3.6.D.2 All those undertaking or delivering training and educational opportunities under the auspices or for the United Reformed Church would be members / students of the School. This would mean some cross committee negotiation and reflection by Assembly/Mission Council, given that some areas of education are the proper responsibility of other committees. Nevertheless the School's responsibilities could include ministers, Church Related Community Workers, elders, worship leaders, youth workers, junior church leaders, evangelists, church membership classes and so on. Students' membership of the School would be expressed in regional gatherings, integrated learning opportunities (including residential learning opportunities) and would concentrate on exploring both the joys and trials of both the Reformed heritage and its contribution to the future of the church catholic. Students would receive localised education and training delivered as ecumenically as is possible, depending on the particular facilities and relationships in the region in which they are resident. The Scottish College provides a useful, but by no means prescriptive model for how the School might operate.

3.6.D.3 The School would:

- ' ' be a human and educational resource in the broadest sense;
- ' ' localise education and training delivered ecumenically whenever possible;
- ' ' be disciplined in preparing people for a variety of ministry for a church witnessing across the

British Isles. The larger part of the School's workload would be generated within England, and it would therefore be vital for the School to be sensitive and responsive to the needs and distinctiveness of Scotland and Wales;

- ' ' foster the vast range of teaching and training skills needed within the United Reformed Church;
- ' ' be at the centre of the provision of training such as Training for Learning and Serving and TLS LITE (Local Introductory Training Experiences) and thereby be committed to addressing those fractures in theological education that are not necessary;
- ' ' seek to develop a relationship between all those engaged in denominational education and training within the School. All those appointed by synods and those recognised as providing 'Assembly' training and education would be members of the School faculty and be supported and nurtured by it;
- ' ' oversee all ministerial and other training, including the Reformed input to the regional training partnerships;
- ' ' The relationship of the school and Assembly and Training Committee would need examining.

3.6.D.4 This pathway would seek to deal with many of the pressures and opportunities developed in paper 1 but it has yet to be tested in terms of feasibility, how it would relate to existing institutions, developing ecumenical partnerships or how effective it would be.

3.6.E Pathway E

United Reformed Church School, working in 11 local areas (9 Regions in England plus Scotland and Wales) plus Reformed Resources Centre

3.6.E.1

network for those who are or have been engaged in research. It would have a major role to overcome the inevitable variation in training and educational practice across these islands.

3.6.E.3 Whilst not an educational institution per se and thus not able to deliver directly the activities listed under D it would make that task easier and less complex by building on the resources that the denomination has already accrued. It could use and coordinate the skills and experience of United Reformed Church staff living in different parts of the church.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The Training Committee has seen these pathways but as yet 'they look like trees walking' (Mark 8 24). There is much to be clarified, discuss, explore and investigate before any informed proposals can be taken to General Assembly in 2005. The Training Committee anticipates a very full agenda in the coming months. The Committee will need to:

- a) work through what the structures of any future school might be
- b) bear in mind the position of various minorities within those structures
- c) do detailed work on costings – present and future – including the place of volunteers within the structures
- d) work with the synods in England to help them determine their place in the Regional Training Partnerships in that nation
- e) work with the national synods of Scotland and Wales to determine how they operate within those nations for training and educational purposes
- f) work with our training institutions to see how they may be a positive part of ecumenical regional training
- g) work with othehe)

4.1. TLS has gone from strength to strength. Supported by a staff team consisting of Revd David AL Jenkins (TLS Programme Co-ordinator), Revd Hilary Collinson (One-year Course Co-ordinator) and Mrs Heather Skidmore (Course Administrator) the expanding programme reaches into parts of the United Reformed Church other courses cannot reach. Designed as 'open access', its Bible based courses relating to present day contexts stimulate the mind, challenge the heart and enrich the soul of all involved. In its 9 year history in England and Wales it has reached people from all walks of life, ranging in age from late teens to mid eighties and coming from very diverse theological and church backgrounds including ecumenical partner churches. In this period 627 people have enrolled on courses and at least 1,927 and probably closer to 2,500, have acted in a support network capacity for course members. In Scotland, the closure of the Scottish Churches Open College (SCOC) in 2003 is regretted both educationally and ecumenically but it has afforded the TLS Programme an opportunity to offer its resources in Scotland also.

4.1.1 The 2 year Foundation Course which, in common with other courses, includes home study, local groups, regional weekends and optional assessed written work provides a base from which opens the Gateway One Year Courses, although some of these may be accessed directly with the right background knowledge and experience.

- ' · Experiencing Faith – a novel approach to interfaith relations through meeting people rather than simply learning from a book
- ' · Gateways into Care – suitable for anyone acting in a Christian caring role both inside and outside the church
- ' · Gateways into Prayer – an opportunity to widen and deepen our spirituality by learning together and through concentrating on listening and responding to God
- ' · Gateways into Worship – the main United Reformed Church route to Assembly Accreditation as a Lay Preacher but also for anyone interested in worship
- ' · Gods' Jesters – inspiring and promoting the use of Performance Arts in worship

4.1.2. The new TLS LITE (Local Introductory Training

4.2 Learning Standards

A TLS Standards Board has been established and is now operational. This makes completion certificate awards and oversees the quality of material and delivery. To our delight, TLS was nominated for a 2003 New Learning Opportunities Award. Editorial Boards have been set up for each course and have completed their reviews of courses delivered in 2002-3. The Foundation and Gateways into Worship courses have been completely revised and re-written since we bought the copyright from the Scottish Churches Open College in 2000-1. First full deliveries will

course units have been written under United Reformed Church sponsorship. £70,000 worth (price list) of text books have been purchased by course members and David has travelled 183,000 miles in his car on TLS business. His energy, dedication and skill have taken a project, established by the Scottish Churches Open College and rooted it successfully in the United Reformed Church. It has grown and flowered under his care as a dynamic lay training programme and it is provit

6. YOUTH AND CHILDRENS WORK TRAINING PROGRAMME

6.1 The Training Committee's role towards the Youth and Children's Work Programme has changed since the Committee last reported to Assembly. Until Assembly 2003 its role was of oversight of the programme. Since that date the oversight responsibility has passed to the Youth and Children's Work Committee with Training retaining an advisory capacity.

6.2 Assembly 2002 asked the Training Committee to consider and implement the recommendations in the Youth Review which related to ministerial training. The committee has had conversations with Youth & Children's Work committee about these matters and been furnished with the results of a YCW survey of training institutions used by the United Reformed Church. The Committee considered that the results indicated a situation where reasonable attention was being given to these issues in ministerial training. However, the committee has subsequently written to the colleges and courses that we use, quoting the Assembly inspection criteria that were laid down in 1995 and which include reference to youth and children's work in initial ministerial training.

6.3 The Continuing Ministerial Education Sub Committee of the Training Committee has also been pleased to receive a draft CME module on Youth and Children's work that had been written for use with ministers by two of the Youth and Children's Work Training Officers. The committee has been pleased to agree that (with certain suggested amendments or additions) this was a good basis for a Post Ordination

Education and Training weekend. It is intended to schedule this in the programme that begins in the autumn of 2004.

6.4 Prior to Assembly 2003 the Committee had oversight of the processes whereby synods were reviewing or appointing Youth and Children's Work Trainers. The committee has been happy to confirm the re appointment of Mick Maskell as Yorkshire Youth and Children's Work Trainer, to agree the appointment of Andrew Mickelfield in Wessex and to support the Southern and Wessex synods in the review and re-appointment of Howard Nurden and Stephen Collins respectively.

6.5 At Assembly 2003 a consultation was held and chaired by the then Training Committee convenor John Proctor. This involved representatives of the Youth and Children's Work Committee, the Training Committee and representatives of the synods who are not currently part of the YCWT programme.

6.6 One of the final acts of oversight responsibility of the Training Committee has been to re-write the Youth and Children's Work Trainers Staff Development Policy Document. This work was done by John Proctor after extensive consultation. It is a foundational document in the running of the programme and the revised work was published early in 2004. The Committee is grateful to John for the extensive work he did on this revision.

7. PRE ORDINATION OR COMMISSIONING TRAINING FOR MINISTRY

7.1 Church Related Community Workers

7.1.2 It is the policy of the Training Committee to train all CRCWs at Northern College, a member of the Partnership for Theological Education, Manchester. The appointment of Revd Dr Husselbee to Northern College in the summer of 2001 with special responsibility

7.1.7 Professor Paul Ballard, a Training Committee member, has been able to act as the link between the Training Committee and the Course Tutor in Manchester strengthening lines of communication and offering appropriate support.

7.2 Ministers of Word and Sacrament

The Hind Report

7.2.A1 All of the training of ministers which we undertake is ecumenically arranged whether:

- ' · part-time training on ecumenical courses (which are usually strongly Church of England in terms of student and staff numbers);
- ' · at an ecumenical foundation such as at Queen's Birmingham;
- ' · in the Cambridge Theological Federation, of which Westminster College is a part;
- ' · in the Partnership for Theological Education, Manchester of which Northern College is a part;
- ' · in Mansfield College, Oxford where training is in partnership with Regent's Park Baptist College and under the umbrella relationships of the Oxford Partnership for Theological Education;
- ' · through the Scottish College where students are placed in that country's major universities.

For the institutions in England to some degree or another the Church of England is a major player in the relationships that deliver our training.

7.2.A2 It is for these reasons that news that the Church of England is reconfiguring its theological education is more than just information about the work of another church with whom we have close relations. It is rather news of a process which is bound to impact on us considerably. As reported two years ago, the Secretary for Training was invited to join the process (then called the Structure and Funding of Ordination and Training 'SFOT' or more commonly 'Hind' after the surname of its chairman, John Hind) shortly after he had taken up post and as the group was moving towards producing its interim report.

7.2.A3 The process was already ecumenical in that the Methodist Church had had a representative from the outset. The Church of England also wrote to a number of other denominations inviting them to share in the process. The Churches Together in England coordinating group 'Ecumenical Strategy Group for Ministerial Training' which has wide ecumenical membership, was also fully informed of these developments and discussed them, thus keeping other churches in the picture.

7.2.A4 The Training Committee responded to the interim report in 2002. They noted that the report was seeking to deal with many problems that were also problems for the United Reformed Church and whilst

offering various points that reflected some United Reformed Church concerns generally warmed to the developments the Church of England were unfolding.

7.2.A5 In the summer of 2003 the General Synod of the Church of England, with one or two amendments, agreed to adopt this report as policy. It has since then become known as 'Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church'. Anyone interested in it can view it at www.cofe.anglican.org – then click 'papers' and 'ordination training'.

In brief, these are some of the essential points:

- ' · it grew out of a number of previous Church of England publications including 'Managing Planned Growth';
- ' · it was originally grounded in a financial concern for the cost of training but took on a wider brief to consider what is the best possible training the church currently requires;
- ' · originally a Church of England report (and they still are the lead body) it was slow to pick up ecumenical steam but it was never without ecumenical representation and the ecumenical aspect of it.

- the establishment of Regional Training Partnerships (RTPs) – for ordained and lay training. These partnerships are to be of colleges and courses, Church of England Diocese, Methodist Districts and United Reformed Church Synods. They are to be responsible for all the training in a region;
- the establishment of a framework for learning which is flexible and coherent;
- the creation of a programme or framework of learning for lay people generally called Education for Discipleship and developments of Church of England Reader training;
- savings in finance were not targeted directly – but there is rather an aim to keep finances stable whilst money is raised to fund new lay training initiatives. The stability is found by proposed efficiencies and the use of IT in RTPs and some reduction in residential places.

This is a very brief reflection of the report and is intended only as a taster. Readers who want to know more should consult the published documentation. The points above may however help to indicate the direction of the policy.

7.2.A9 After the General Synod of 2003 the Church of England led the way in setting up an implementation process but invited the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church to be full partners in that implementation process. The Training Committee responded to that invitation positively. It is hoped that implementation will be delivered in a rolling process.

inn65(d 2(n)-(n)-5(n65(d e)jd92n)-5(g))p2hT-4(G)-12(e)-6(n)-2(l)-5(4s)-1(s)-14(.)-3)-2(m)48h(a)1((d

process by which candidates and students are cared for and given oversight. The Committee is grateful for the work that John Proctor, convener to summer 2003, put into this process.

7.2.B2 Since last summer further conversations have been held which focus on the situation of those who have completed training but who are not yet in pastoral charge. This is not a Training Committee responsibility but it is a matter about which the Training Committee is concerned. It has been part of the discussions and the paper above has helped to frame the deliberations.

7.2.B3.1 The Training Committee continues to play its part in the ecumenical processes of validating and inspecting the colleges and courses that we use for the training of ministers of Word and Sacrament and church related community work.

7.2.B3.2 At the time of writing an Inspection on the Cambridge Theological Federation Education in Cambridge (which includes Westminster College) is coming to an end and an inspection of the North East Ecumenical Course is in progress. Inspections have recently been completed on the Oxford Partnership for Theological Education and Training (which includes Mansfield College and the St Alban's and Oxford Ministry Course), on St Michael's College, Llandaff, Cardiff (including the South Wales Ordination Course) a follow up report on the East Midlands Ministry Training Course and a validation process on the South East Institute for Theological Education. Many of these have not yet reached the stage of being placed before the Training Committee but where they and earlier ones have been, the committee has been pleased to see the Secretary for Theological Education, the committee on the Educational Validation Panel and the Inspectors Working Party both of which groups, though led by the Church of England, are ecumenical.

.B5 The committee is grateful for the services of those United Reformed Church members who are prepared to serve in inspections and validation processes. It was pleased that the Church of England ran training days for Inspectors earlier in the year at which the United Reformed Church was represented.

7.2.B6 Deemed useful to the national synod

.B7

In the last three years Rachel Poolman has used a United Reformed Church Scholarship to study for a doctorate through Birmingham University, a process which she hopes to complete this year. Doug Gay has taken advantage of the Millennium Bursary Fund offered by the Congregational and General Charitable Trust and is in his second year of study in Edinburgh.

7.2.B9 Meanwhile Suzanne McDonald and Romilly Micklem, both students at Westminster College until last summer have embarked on research at St Andrews and Heythrop College respectively, supported by the Training Committee.

7.2.B10.1 Sarah Hall, completing an internship year at Mansfield, has been awarded her doctorate from Edinburgh University and Kathy White hers from Anglia Polytechnic University. Congratulations to both.

7.2.B10.2 We also wish well others engaged in research with whom the Committee has dealt in recent years and who continue with their studies: John Bradbury, Kirsty Ann Burroughs and Julian Templeton.

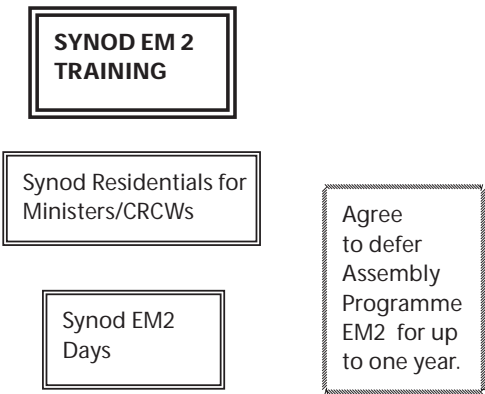
8.1 The Post Ordination Education and Training Review

8.1.1 The Committee had been conscious that the immediate post-ordination or commissioning period in a Minister's (of Word and Sacrament or Church Related Community Work) formation was a critical one. It is a time in which pre-service learning is tested in the practical environment and in which both familiar and new areas are (re-)visited in a significantly new context. It is a testing time, in which the new minister meets a number of challenges and ought to have support for his or her learning, as well as pastoral support.

8.1.2 The programme has been a mixture of URC-wide courses, synod events and support and facilitation by a pastoral adviser. These opportunities for sharing in learning and reflection can play an important role in the person's development. The Committee was aware however of a level of criticism, perhaps most significantly of criticism of the United Reformed Church wide programme.

8.1.3 A review group was established and this section reflects the consideration of its report in CME Sub-Committee and in the full Training Committee. The group's work was conducted with full awareness of ecumenical developments in this field, not least with regard to the 'Formation for Ministry within a Learning
Ced rondu20(w)-2(o)-6(u)

**Education
for Ministry
Phase 2
Flow chart**



**ASSEMBLY
EM 2
PROGRAMME**

8.2 Continuing Ministerial Education grants

8.2.1 It is good that there continues to be an upward movement in uptake of grants and learning opportunities under the CME programme. The level of financial provision that the United Reformed Church makes is an affirmation of the value that the Church places on those in ministry and on the importance of lifelong learning and continuous development. Such evidence as is available points to more participants, to improved guidance in decision-making and to more extensive involvement. The CME Sub-Committee is endeavouring to improve the quality of intelligence available to it about trends in order more effectively to plan for the future. There continues to be discussion of a number of issues, e.g. the balance between personally focused learning programmes and activities of a more corporate nature.

8.2.2 The last two years have seen a change in the way in which grants are provided to more efficiently and effectively enable the church to comply with best financial practices.

8.2.3 The Committee has also kept in touch with synods over its financial support of their ministers schools. Further work will need to be done to produce the best possible system but interim measures are currently ensuring appropriate levels of funding provision.

8.3 Sabbaticals

8.3.1 The CME Sub-Committee considered the resolution of General Assembly 2003 asking that they reconsider the restriction on ministers over the age of 60 undertaking sabbaticals. The Training Committee has agreed with the CME Sub-Committee's recommendation that we rescind this rule bearing in mind the following factors:

- The importance of equal opportunities for serving ministers whatever their age
- The fact that a number of ministers continue to serve the church in retirement
- The fact that both the Training Committee and CME Sub-Committee had earlier considered rescinding this rule. Concern to let the CME programme bed down before making any alterations – and then changes of staff in the Training and CME offices had delayed action.

8.4 Making it work

The Sub-Committee is keen not only to encourage participation in continuing education but also to help

9.1 The budget is dominated by the cost of

11.1 There are many people who in many ways are involved in tutoring and training across the church, many known, many not known to us. We offer here our public debt of gratitude to them for the work that they do to the church's great benefit.

11.2 Most especially though here we offer gratitude for the ministry of John Proctor on the Training Committee. His four years as convener of the Committee came to an end at Assembly 2003 and also marked the end of a period of ten years of committee service. His thorough attention to detail, his grasp of complex issues and ability to communicate them with clarity, his knowledge of and experience in the theological education field and the policy of the committee were harnessed to a care and consideration for people and processes in a way which provided a ministry amongst us of unusual competence, clarity and very real Christian care. We are much relieved that that ministry continues in his work at Westminster College and in other ways in the life of the church. A meal was held during the Committee's September gathering in Cambridge to thank John for his work. John and his wife Elaine were there and the General Secretary spoke and expressed the church's appreciation of John's work.

11.3 It is also a mark of the speed with which *anno domini* proceeds that as well as John Proctor this year we record the completion of service on the committee of Dr Graham Campling and Revd Carole Ellefsen Jones (though the latter has been asked to continue on the committee by invitation until 2004 due to her work as convener of the TLS Management Group), Revd Dr John Parry, Revd Professor Paul Ballard and Mrs Anthea Coates. This amount of experience, gifts and knowledge leaving us feels like something of a cold draft and we thank them all for the work that they have done not only in attending and contributing wisely and effectively to meetings but in various other ways outside of our gatherings.

11.4 The chill of the cold draft referred to above is warmed by the presence of talented and able new committee members whom we have welcomed in the last two years: Mrs Susan Brown, Revd Sue Henderson, Revd Malachie Munyaneza, Mrs Valerie Burnham and Dr Ian Morrison. Most particularly is this true of the

should be grateful to the Children's Advocate, Pilots Development Officer and YCWs for making sure that youth work did not cease altogether. John Brown came into post on 1st January this year and has already made a difference. We cannot overemphasise the strain that the 16 month vacancy put on the whole sphere of youth and children's work.

6. National Youth Resource Centre

6.1 Following the amendment at St Andrew's, which set up a task group, convened by John Humphreys, to review the National Youth Resource Centre and make a recommendation to the 2003 Assembly, we have been concerned with first the hopes of a renewal and then the implications of the closure of the Centre. Through the Centre Management Committee, convened by Bryan Thomas until the end of 2002 and by Bill Mahood until the closure, we tried to ensure that all was done well. Following Liz Byrne's move to pastoral ministry in Birkenhead, Deborah McVey was appointed to be temporary Centre Minister. We are grateful to Bryan and Bill for their leadership and would particularly thank Deborah for the gracious way in which she ministered in a difficult situation and the Deputy General Secretary for guiding us through the legal requirements. Thanks are also due to all the staff and community team, who showed their commitment to the Centre to the end. We also wish Liz Byrne and Ian Smith well in their new pastorates, with gratitude for all they both did for the Centre, particularly through

12. Other work

A report to General Assembly can only give snapshots of the work of a committee over two years, but other significant involvement has been in the Churches' Network for Non-violence and advocating and enabling under-25s engaging in the Catch the Vision process.

13. Thanks

13.1 There have been thanks peppered through this report, but some have still been missed out. The staff has been the backbone of Youth and Children's Work these past two years, especially Karen Bulley and Rosemary Johnston, but not excluding the YCWTs, who all carried an extra load most of the time. Because of his previous experience, John Brown has slotted into the work almost seamlessly. The folk associated with the National Youth Resource Centre have been in our prayers for much of the time and we are grateful for their dedication. The office staff support our work in very many ways, for which we thank them.

13.2 We have said goodbye to a number of people – the FURY chair (Emma Pugh 2002, Gareth Marshall Jones & Rosemary Simmons 2003) changes every year, just as we have got to know them a little, Brenda Cheer and Kath Lonsdale finished their committee terms last year and Andrew Willett will finish this year. All have made invaluable contributions to our work. Finally,

1.1 Many things have happened in FURY over the past two years. In January 2004, John Brown was inducted to the post of Secretary for Youth Work. The induction took place at FURY Assembly and FURY welcomed this unique opportunity to witness and promise to support their Secretary for Youth Work.

1.2 The time before John's appointment was a difficult one, with a vacancy lasting 16 months. Ian Smith acted as an interim Secretary for Youth Work for 6 months, but FURY is grateful to all those who stepped in to fill the breach at other times, specifically the Youth and Children's Work Training team, Karen Bulley (Pilots Development Officer), Rosemary Johnston (Children's Advocate) and Ray Adams. All of these did so in addition to their own jobs, which sadly meant that occasionally other areas of work paid the price.

1.3 FURY Council has had a busy two years. As well as fulfilling its usual responsibilities of planning FURY Assembly, FURY Council has also been very involved in organising and supporting FURY Camp 2003. This event was a success, with over 100 participants spending a week in a field in Sussex. This was the first FURY Council organised national youth event for 5 years, and we are pleased that its success has led to the beginning of planning for another camp in 2005. There will also be a reunion for all the 2003 participants in 2004.

1.4 FURY Council is made up of a variety of representatives; one from each Synod as well as three representatives who are elected annually at FURY Assembly to serve a two year term. In addition to these, other groups are represented on FURY Council – the United Reformed Guide and Scout Fellowship (URCGSF), Pilots, Girls' and Boys Brigade. FURY also sends a delegation to British Youth Council and the leader of this delegation also sits on FURY Council. As well as these, there is a Chair and Chair-elect who are also elected at FURY Assembly. One of FURY Council's primary roles is to carry out the work of FURY Assembly throughout the year and so the type of work varies from year to year. FURY Council also differs in its approach to pieces of work; discussing items in small groups before feeding back into a plenary, setting up task groups to look at particular issues or plan events, and even keeps discussing in the gaps between the three meetings in a year by the wonders of email.

1.5 This multiplicity of approaches has a range of benefits. It enables us to make a better use of our time, allows us to use people's strengths and talents to FURY Council's advantage and to make use of the expertise of people outside FURY Council, whilst still retaining an overview.

1.6 FURY has a FURY Communications Group (FCG), which looks after and contributes to many of the more public aspects of our work, from setting up and maintaining the website (www.furyonline.org.uk), to producing FURY's quarterly pull out in Reform, f2. This is designed so that once it has been read, it can be pulled out and passed on to young people in your church – if you do not do this already then please do so!

1.7 FURY Assembly happens annually and every district is invited to send two representatives

1.8 Another annual event is "What Do You Think"

General Assembly notes that after considerable research the Youth and Children's Work Committee

1.1 The Youth and Children's Work Committee met soon after General Assembly 2003 to decide how to proceed with Resolution 12 and identify the issues that needed to be explored. We set up a task group, under the convenership of Stephen Collins, made up of people with a wide range of experiences (ex-Ginger Group member, local church minister, youth worker, FURY rep, etc).

1.2 The group met and produced three different models – an Assembly-level mission team of 12, a team of 6 employed through the Government's New Deal programme, a team of 12 Synod Representatives to work with and through FURY Council. The costs of the programmes ranged from £114,480 to £36,700. These models were used as the basis for wide consultation, including a session at FURY Assembly and written responses.

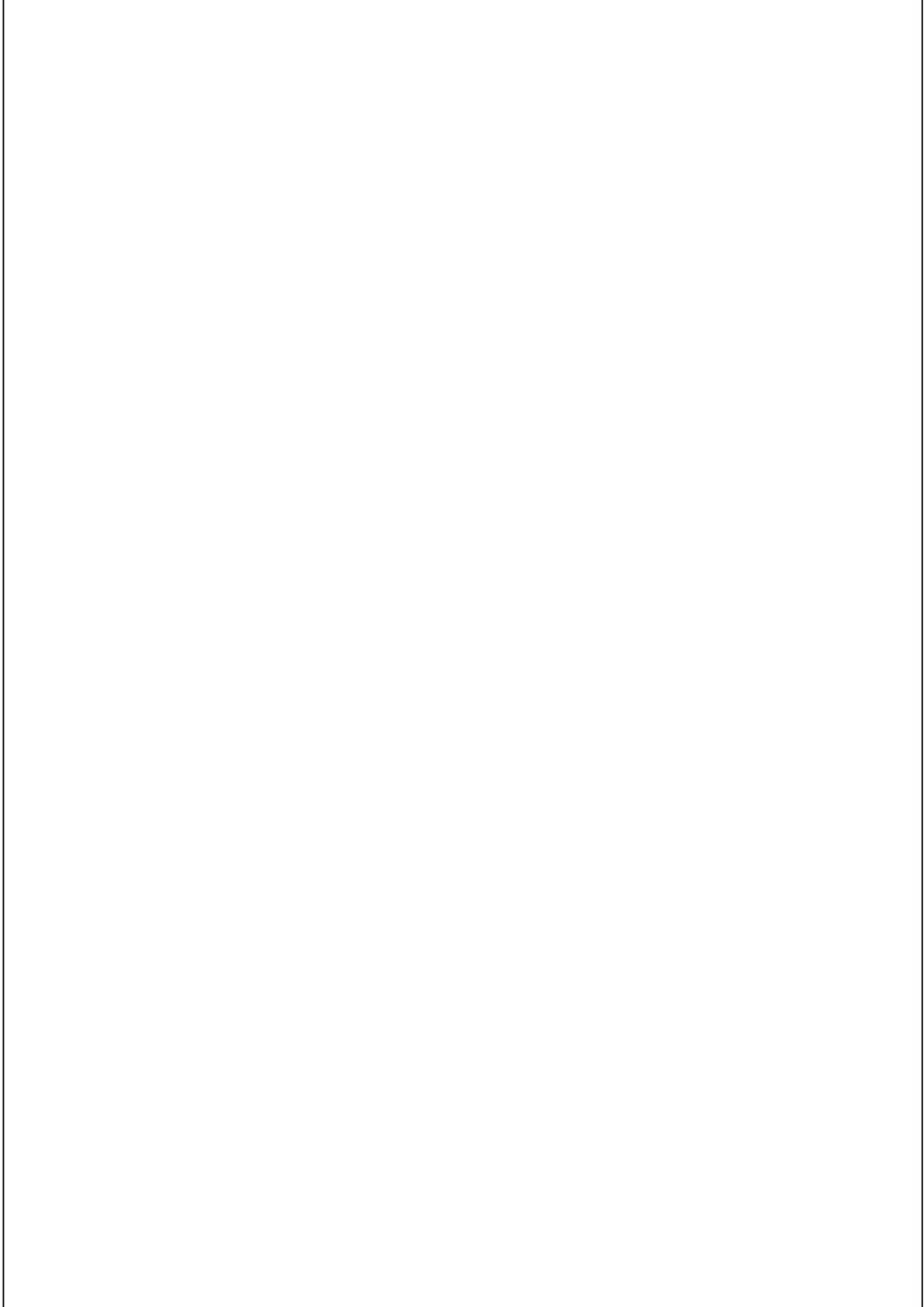
1.3 The evidence from much of the consultation proved to be of a negative nature towards the idea of setting up a new Ginger Group type project. The main concern is the recruitment of young people to the scheme at a time when there are so many similar programmes, many offering the opportunity to travel

abroad. It was also recognised that the needs of local churches have changed in the twenty years since the original Ginger Group programme came to an end, not the least being the development of the YCWT programme. The Committee was also concerned that, whatever the final strategy, the main focus and beneficiary should be work with local churches. We recognised that many of the young people in the Ginger Groups found it to be a life-changing experience, but were not so convinced of the long-term effect in local churches.

1.4 Taking all this into consideration, the task group produced a fourth model. The proposal was to employ a co-ordinator to establish a database as a tool for the sharing of skills and resources. Individuals would be asked to offer time and/or talents and these would be matched with local churches expressing a particular need. The Youth and Children's Work Committee considered this at their meeting in February and raised a number of issues, ranging from practicality to more imaginative use of those already working in the Synods – YCWTs, youth and children's workers, Synod and District youth and children's secretaries.

1.5 At the same meeting we started to develop the skeleton strategy that we had begun to put together – using task groups to take on specific areas of work, these task groups being made of committee members, Church House staff, YCWs and others concerned with work with children and young people. It was clear that many of the ideas coming from these

Appendices



Appendix 1

Guidelines for the Introduction of Stipendiary Ministers to pastorates declared vacant by District/Area Councils

'Mission Council welcomes the following procedure and encourages the Synod Moderators to implement them and make them known to the wider church.'

1. A personal profile on one sheet of A4 to standard format shall be prepared by a minister seeking a move. This will be circulated in advance of the Moderators' meeting. It shall include details of particular geographical or other constraints.
2. A synopsis of its profile on one sheet of A4 to a standard format shall be prepared by a vacant pastorate and tabled at the Moderators' meeting.
3. If more than one minister has expressed an interest in a particular pastorate then the personal profiles of all those interested shall be made available to the pastorate, but they may then choose only one candidate with whom they wish to meet.
4. Pastorates may enquire via the Moderators to see if a particular minister would be willing to meet with them.
5. Ministers seeking a move may be shown more than one profile.
6. On request, ministers may be shown the synopsis of any vacant pastorate not already the subject of a formal introduction.
7. The present system of notifying all ministers monthly of all vacancies shall continue.
8. The Moderators' meeting shall be free to approach ministers to consider urgent needs in particular vacancies.

CONTENTS

1. Summary: What's this all about?
 2. Challenging context
 3. Meeting the challenge: from disciples to apostles
 4. Meeting the challenge: the whole church working together
 5. Meeting the challenge: set apart ministries
 6. Meeting the challenge: further implications
 7. Conclusion, recommendations and resolution: What next?
- Appendix I Background: terms of reference, working party and previous work.
- Appendix II Feedback: responses to the interim report to Assembly 2002.
- Appendix III References: details of important reference documents.

1. SUMMARY: WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

1.1 A fast changing society provides a challenging context (section 2) for the Church. In our interim report to the 2002 Assembly, we suggested that the Church's response would need to recapture a sense of the ministry of the whole people of God (section 4), and our post-bag has supported this view. One way of viewing this key concept is to think of making people more active members of the Church focused outwards into the world – from disciples to apostles (section 3). We challenge every local church to think afresh about its support of its members when they are dispersed in their daily living (sub-section 4.4).

1.2 Fortunately our heritage provides many riches to help us understand and implement ministry that is not restricted to the clergy. We believe that the ministry of the Elders (sub-section 5.3) is central in this and, indeed, that it is a precious gift the United Reformed Church has to offer its ecumenical partners. The Church needs to be more careful and focused in the way it appoints, develops and uses Elders. It also needs to be clearer about the role of Local Church Leaders within the Eldership (sub-section 5.4).

1.3 Ministers of the Word and Sacraments (sub-section 5.7) are a valuable and scarce resource that the Church must use more effectively. As Elders become more confident in their leadership of local churches, the Church can allow itself to think differently about the deployment of Ministers. Spreading Ministers ever more thinly cannot possibly be the best mission strategy. We believe that the assumption that every congregation should have a slice of its own Minister is unsustainable, but every congregation does need effective leadership. The Church needs to be much more imaginative in its development of flexible collaborative leadership patterns (sub-section 5.8).

1.4 If the Church is to develop more diverse leadership patterns then it needs more flexible arrangements for the training, funding and deployment of Ministers and other church leaders (sub-section 5.9).

1.5 More diverse leadership patterns also make it desirable and necessary that the Church should think again about presidency at the sacraments (sub-section 5.11).

1.6 In presenting this report we know that the changes it recommends cannot happen instantly, that some of them require further work, and that they do not address other major issues for the Church (section 6). But we believe that they would contribute to Changing Ministry for the Challenge of Mission.

2. CHALLENGING CONTEXT

2.1 Background and terms of reference

2.1.1 Assembly 2002 received an interim report from the working party on Future Patterns of Ministries. It asked

2.2.3 Many older church members remember when their local church was not only the centre of their life but also the main centre of the life of their community. This was the situation for a relatively short period, in historical terms. There are very few places where this is now the case. There are many more places where the local church behaves as if this is the case – continuing with activities that are not what local people now want or need; struggling to maintain work that would now be done better by others or collaboratively with others in the community; apparently unaware of the multi-cultural elements of society; hoping that people who have no real or recent experience of Church will come into their church as it is rather than looking for new ways of reaching out to those beyond its walls. It is almost a century since William Temple reminded the Church that it is the one institution that exists primarily for the benefit of its non-members.

2.2.4 Yet, surveys repeatedly tell us that people are as spiritually aware as ever. And our eyes and ears tell us that the mission imperative is as urgent today as ever it was. The cries for justice, healing and reconciliation can be heard all around us. The isolation caused by the fragmentation and individualisation of society leaves people desperate for somewhere to belong, somewhere to share their unanswerable questions, somewhere they can feel safe and loved. The local church ought to provide such a place: a worshipping community that enables people to be and to live, where people are drawn into a relationship with the transcendent; a living community that seeks to be a sign, foretaste and instrument of God's kingdom.

2.2.5 A current Government consultation is looking at the application of employment rights to office holders, including ministers of religion. Legislation may follow. There are other Government and Charity Commission initiatives which could have a significant impact on the Church, its ministers and other staff. The Church must remain alert to such developments, influence them when it can and respond to them when it must, but we do not speculate on them further in this report.

2.3 Ministry is for mission – God's unchanging mission to the world

2.3.1 Talk of the mission of the Church, whether local or universal, is shorthand that can be misleading. The Church must keep reminding itself that mission is God's activity in which it is called to participate. The context of God's mission is not only the Church but is primarily the world. Ministry in all its forms should be enabling and enacting this participation in God's mission.

2.3.2 The *Basis of Union* (paragraph 11) states that the purpose of the United Reformed Church is

to make its life a continual offering of itself and the world to God in adoration and worship through Jesus Christ;

to receive and express the renewing life of the Holy Spirit in each place and in its total fellowship, and there to declare the reconciling and saving power of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;

to live out, in joyful and sacrificial service to all in their various physical and spiritual needs, that ministry of caring, forgiving and healing love which Jesus Christ brought to all whom he met;

and to bear witness to Christ's rule over the nations in all the variety of their organised life.

2.3.3 The five marks of mission adopted by the United Reformed Church, as well as by most of its ecumenical partners, are

to proclaim the good news of the kingdom

to teach, baptise and nurture new believers

to respond to human need by loving service

to seek to transform unjust structures of society

to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

2.3.4

the *Theology of Ministry*. This was prepared by the Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee and accepted by Mission Council in 1997 as a resource document of the Church. This statement is available on the Church's web-site.

2.4.3 In 1998, Assembly agreed on guidelines for appointing Local Church Leaders and how they might be recognised, affirmed and developed. Synods, District Councils and local churches were encouraged to experiment. The report to Assembly spoke of every church member having a ministry to exercise within the ministry of the whole people, and of how the Church is enriched as more members are enabled to use their gifts in a creative and satisfying way. There are now some very different models of Local Church Leadership operating in a number of the Synods. In other Synods, there is apparently no opportunity to offer this form of service.

2.4.4 In 1999, Assembly adopted the Growing Up document as the mission strategy of the Church, based on the five marks of mission. This strategy was to be implemented from 1999 to 2001, recognising that any plan is

2.6 The challenge of language – some definitions

2.6.1 Coping with variation

It is clearly important to be as precise as possible with the language that we use. It is also necessary to acknowledge the wide variety of interpretations of many words that are in common use among us including 'minister', 'ministry', 'ministries', 'vocation' and 'discipleship' and that words can have different meanings in different contexts.

The two documents that we have considered most important in this context are the *Basis of Union* and *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. Details of these documents and others are listed in Appendix III.

2.6.2 The ministry of the whole people of God

The section of the *Basis of Union* on ministry proceeds from the ministry of Jesus Christ through the ministry of the whole people of God to particular set apart ministries. It begins with (paragraph 19) 'The Lord Jesus Christ continues his ministry in and through the Church, the whole people of God called and committed to his service and equipped by him for it'. It goes on to say 'This service is given ... by obedient discipleship in the whole of daily life'. We endorse this understanding and have based our work upon it.

The first section of the chapter on ministry in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* is headed 'The calling of the whole people of God'. It includes (section I paragraph 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. ... 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 the service of the world to which the Church is sent.'

Both documents set ministry in the context of the world, the place where the people of God spend their daily lives – the 'dispersed mode' of being the Church described in sub-section 4.3 below.

2.6.3 Ministers and ministries

The *Basis of Union*

4.3 Gathered and dispersed

4.3.1 The United Reformed Church believes in the priesthood of all believers. The emphasis is on the 'all', the community of the baptised. Appendix B of the *Patterns of Ministry* report quoted the following from *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (commentary on section II paragraph 17). 'The priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of the baptised 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 differences between these twoe m1739nd21(a)-3(77-182(o)-8(77-238(p)-11(r)-8(i)-9(e)-6(s)-15(t)-3(h)-9(o)-14(o)-15(77)-15(c)182(a)-639)-6(n-11(o)

5.2 Summary of current situation regarding set apart ministries

5.2.1 'Ministry' may be defined simply as service and set apart ministries might then be understood as various forms of servant leadership based on the model of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is an extensive and varied range of recognised ministries within the United Reformed Church. Some of the most common of these are considered below but there are others including pastoral visitors, Junior Church leaders, training officers, synod moderators and various other Assembly appointments. Some of these are recognised locally and others by the whole Church, some are restricted to Ministers and others are not. They are all in some sense set apart ministries.

5.2.2. The United Reformed Church ordains those who are called to be Ministers of the Word and Sacraments and those who are called to be Elders. Ordination is, in each case, to a particular form of ministry. The United Reformed Church is not the only Church that ordains people to ministries that do not include presidency. For example, the Roman Catholic Church ordains its deacons and these people are not authorised to preside at the sacraments. Ordination is important because it represents a life time commitment or, in the words of the *Basis of Union* (paragraph 20), a commitment to serve for 'so long as God wills'. Although ordination continues to be a somewhat controversial matter, we are content with the statement on ordination included in the 1995 *Patterns of Ministry* report and do not repeat its arguments further here.

5.2.3. The United Reformed Church is deliberately diverse as it seeks to respond to God's call to mission in different places and times. We welcome this diversity and look for increased flexibility to enable the Church to become even more effective. Nevertheless, we also recognise the need to be concerned for the good order of the Church and aware of the sensitivities of its ecumenical partners.

5.3 Elders

5.3.1 The *Basis of Union* says (paragraph 22) that Elders are called to 'share with Ministers in the pastoral oversight and leadership of local churches'. Later, it lists the functions of the Elders' meeting. We consider that the *Basis of Union* says all that is necessary about the ministry of Elders. The challenge for the Church is to take what it says more seriously.

5.3.2 Eldership was not invented by the United Reformed Church. Elders were introduced by Reformed Churches after the Reformation in order to provide a group of 'lay' people to share responsibility with the Minister for the ruling of the parish or congregation. It was believed that various references in the New Testament Epistles showed that this was the practice of the early Church. Some writers believed that Elders were equivalent to New Testament Presbyters (Ministers), with a distinction made between ruling and teaching Elders, but this was never a universal view. Later, Elders were given a pastoral role which complemented their responsibility for church governance. Elders were ordained to recognise their commitment to ministry. This was not a case of people taking their turn at doing a job for a period. Elders worked alongside Ministers in all the councils of the Church. This was, in summary, the understanding of Eldership that the Presbyterian Church of England brought into the United Reformed Church.

5.3.3 It is our view that the ministry of the Elders is at the heart of what it means to be the United Reformed Church, both in its function and in its operation. The ministry of the Elders is of the local church, it is locally focussed and it is collaborative in style. The pastoral oversight and leadership of each local congregation is primarily the responsibility of its Elders' meeting supported by its Minister(s), rather than the other way round (which is how many see it). There is considerable evidence that a congregation is more likely to be effective when its members have a shared vision. The Elders' meeting in each congregation needs to foster a vision of what it means to be a community of God's people in that place. Where Ministers are present they are part of the Elders' meeting, with one of their key tasks being to ensure that every Elder and the Elders as a team are properly prepared for and supported in their roles.

See Recommendation 6 following paragraph 5.7.12

5.3.4 The representative ministry of each local congregation in its local community and among its local ecumenical partners should be the responsibility of its Elders, even though these duties may be carried out by a Minister or a Local Church Leader (see sub-section 5.4 below).

5.3.5 The effectiveness of the ministry of Elders is impeded in some congregations because the Elders' meeting acquires a whole range of tasks which, however important, do not need to be performed by the Elders. This can, in turn, lead to an increase in the number of serving Elders beyond what is necessary. It is our view that Elders' meetings will be most effective where they are relatively small and focussed on their core responsibilities of providing pastoral oversight and leadership. Some local churches have benefited greatly from the appointment of councils or committees to assist with some of the pastoral, practical and administrative tasks. Non-ill be

m9(gT*[-6(i)-2)5(m)-10(e2(r)-21((20(r)-15(s)-13(,-)-218)13(a)(u)-0(a)-5a)-3(s

Recommendation 3: The appointment and ordination of Elders should involve a commitment to continuing development, including appropriate local training.

in 2001. No action was taken but the paper is available on the website. Diaconal ministry is being exercised on behalf of the Church by many people including but by no means limited to CRCWs. It is our view that this diaconal ministry needs to be encouraged and developed but that this would not be helped by the creation of a Diaconate.

5.7 Ministers of the Word and Sacraments (Ministers)

5.7.1 The *Basis of Union* says (paragraph 21) 'Some are called to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments'. It goes on to say 'They are commissioned to conduct public worship, to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments, to exercise pastoral care and oversight, and to give leadership to the Church in its mission to the world'.

5.7.2 The title 'Minister of the Word and Sacraments' is not entirely satisfactory in that Ministers are required to do many things in addition to preaching and presiding and much preaching and presiding is done by others. However, the title does emphasise the centrality of worship in the life of the Church and the important contribution that Ministers make to that worship. The Church looks to its Ministers to act, not exclusively but principally, as the guardians of its faith and witness, helping 'keep the community faithful to the teaching and practice of apostolic Christianity' (David Bosch). In this quotation 'apostolic' means being sent; it is not a reference to the first century Church. The question is how should this be done in the context of today's Church and world. As the Church adapts to meet the challenge of God's mission today, so must its use of Ministers adapt to keep the Church effective as well as faithful.

5.7.3 The United Reformed Church, like any human community, needs leadership – locally and as a whole. The effectiveness of the Church is directly dependent on the quality and appropriateness of its leadership. Ministers play a crucial role in the leadership of the Church. The contribution of Ministers to the ministry of the whole Church will, in our view, always be vitally important. The primary model for leadership in the Church is the servanthood of Jesus Christ.

5.7.4 The United Reformed Church, within the Reformed tradition, has a high view of the role of its Ministers. Ordination to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments (and also to the Ministry of the Elders) is once for all and not repeated. The *Basis of Union* says (paragraph 20) 'those who enter on such ministries do so for so long as God wills'. Ordination recognises that this calling is a commitment to a way of being as well as to a way of doing. The most important qualities of people called to this service are the depth of their faith, their commitment to journeying with others, and their willingness to proclaim the gospel within and outside the Church, in words and actions. The demands made on these people make it essential that they are thoroughly prepared and then continually supported and developed in order to sustain them and to keep them effective.

5.7.5 If the membership numbers in the Church continue to decline then there will be further human constraints on the number who offer to serve as Ministers and financial constraints on the number of stipends that can be paid. Ministers will be, as they have always been in our traditions, a scarce as well as a valuable resource. It is the duty of the

whole Church to ensure that these people who are God's gift to the Church are properly cared for and that, as far as possible, their gifts are deployed effectively and realistically. In many cases, we are currently doing neither of these things.

5.7.6 If the vocation of the Church is to participate in God's mission in the world then the main purpose of Ministers must be to equip, empower and lead the members of the Church, the whole people of God, for their ministry in the world in response to God's call. PT Forsyth wrote that Ministers 'act on the church so the church can act on the world'. The Church's expectations of its Ministers must be refocused if they are to be enabled to do this more effectively. It has been said already that the United Reformed Church is mainly made up of small congregations. It is likely to remain so unless the Church takes strategic decisions to withdraw from many of those places where it is currently present but not numerically strong. Although some hard decisions are undoubtedly necessary, they must be taken according to mission priorities not congregation sizes.

5.7.7 The *Basis of Union* says (paragraph 24) that the Church 'shall take steps to ensure that so far as possible ordained ministers ... are readily available to every local church'. The practical meaning of 'so far as possible' has changed significantly over the lifetime of the United Reformed Church. It is unavoidable that the interpretation of 'readily available' must also change. This phrase cannot now mean, if it ever meant, that every congregation can assume a right to be served directly by a slice of 'their own' Minister.

ongoing training in relation not only to developments in theology, doctrine and worship but also to their appreciation of changes in community and culture.

5.7.11 A Minister is a member of a local church. Whatever

the Church. An attractive annual report on how the Ministry and Mission Fund is spent should be made available to local churches.

5.11 Presidency at the Sacraments

5.11.1 Given the changing relationship between Ministers and congregations, and the developing ministry of Elders that we call for in sub-section 5.3 above, we believe that the issue of presidency needs to be re-examined. There is very significant variation of practice around the Church and it is not all in line with what is said in the *Basis of Union*.

5.11.11 In the context of what is said in sub-section 5.3

7.1.3 Since we began our work, Mission Council has launched a thorough and radical review of the life of the United Reformed Church, now described as 'Catch the Vision for God's tomorrow'. This review is expected to make recommendations about the structure of the Church as well as about its ministry. The recommendations in this report are based on the structure as it is. It may disappoint some that this is, in a sense, another interim report. The wording of the recommendations and of

7.3 Resolution

RESOLUTION

General Assembly:

- (i) welcomes the report *Equipping the Saints*;
- (ii) challenges every congregation to respond locally to recommendations 1 and 2;
- (iii) invites comments on recommendations 3 to 13 from churches, Area / District Councils and Synods to be sent to Ministries Committee by 31 December 2004;
- (iv) requests further work to be done by Ministries Committee in co-operation with the *Catch the Vision Review Group* and others so that formal proposals can be brought to the 2005 meeting of General Assembly.

1. Terms of reference

1.1

The Diaconal Ministry and the Diaconate presented to Mission Council in January 2001 and accepted by it as a resource of the Church. Available on the United Reformed Church web-site.

The *Guidelines on Presidency at the Lord's Supper* which were re-affirmed by Assembly in 1980. Available on the United Reformed Church web-site.

2. Other important references

2.1 A bibliography was provided to accompany the interim report of the Future Patterns of Ministries working party to Assembly 2002. These references are also relevant to this report but are not repeated here. In addition, the following publications have been particularly helpful to the working party:

The Elders, seniority within earliest Christianity by RA Campbell published by T & T Clark, Edinburgh in 1994.
ISBN: 0 567 09702 1.

Ministry for Mission by David Peel published by Northern College, Manchester in 2003.

Stating the Gospel by David Thompson published by T & T Clark, Edinburgh in 1990.
ISBN (hardback): 0 567 09508 8.

2.2 Many of the Churches in the United Kingdom have been involved in similar reviews of the future of their ministry. In addition to those referred to in our 2002 bibliography, we note in particular:

Presence and prophecy produced by the Board of Mission for the Archbishops' Council. Published by Church House Publishing and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland in 2002. ISBN: 0-7151-5548-2.

Mission-Shaped Church Report to General Synod of Church

Introduction

Representatives of WARC member churches in Asia, Africa, Caribbean, the Pacific and Latin America met from 23 to 26 April 2003 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We gathered together to reflect and take a faith stance in response to the 23rd WARC General Council's call for a Committed Process of Recognition, Education and Confession (*processus confessionis*) regarding economic injustice and ecological destruction, which was initiated in Debrecen 1997. Our gathering in Buenos Aires acknowledged the present moment in the world's history as a **kairos**, challenging us to decisive action, because the whole of creation faces a crisis of life and immense suffering.

Experience

Through sharing our experiences, we discovered the dramatic convergence of the sufferings and crises of both people and nature in the countries of the South. We were unanimous in our recognition of the negative effects of the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO in their domination and exclusion of the Southern nations and their common experience of the negative and destructive effects of deregulation and speculative investments.

We recognised that creation is in crisis. We understood that nation states and democratically elected governments are weakened. We realised that the colonisation of consciousness, reinforced by the media, makes people believe that there is no alternative. We also recognized the current trends of militarism as a totcndet(F)83(,)227(o)-8as200(ro)-dl8thaxsnc

national and international law, the right to act beyond ethical and moral rules. It claims that God has blessed

- VII. We shall not tolerate the commodification and sexual exploitation of women and children.
- VIII. We shall not allow the manifold robberies of economic and financial actors.
- IX. We shall not misuse the legal system for our personal profit but promote the economic, social and cultural rights of all people.

- X. We shall not follow the greed of limitless accumulation by depriving our neighbours of their means of production and income so that all may live in dignity on God's rich and beautiful earth.

Buenos Aires 26 April 2003

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Church Representative

Revd Ebénézer M Woungly-Massaga
Revd Dr Godfrey P Ngumi
Revd Adamu Manasseh Musa
Revd Dr Elisée Musemakweli
Dr Willem J Botha
Revd Jameson Buys

Revd Wailie C Khongwir
Revd Nicolaas J Gara
Revd Mindawati Perangin-Angin
Prof Dr Samuel Lee

Revd Dr Carlos Camps Cruell
Revd Dr Dale A Bisnauth

Church/Organisation

African Protestant Church, Cameroon
Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya
Reformed Church of Christ in Nigeria
Presbyterian Church in Rwanda
Dutch Reformed Church, South Africa
Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa

Presbyterian Church of India
Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (GMIM), Indonesia
Karo Batak Protestant Church (GBKP), Indonesia
Presbyterian Church of Korea

Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba
Guyana Presbyterian Church

The north-south member churches' forum in London Colney continued the journey begun by the 23rd general council (Debrecen 1997), which invited member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to enter into a process of "recognition, education, and confession" regarding economic injustice and ecological destruction. This forum gathered representatives of 26 member churches from the north and south and developed the following faith stance on the way to the 24th general council (Accra 2004).

Why take a faith stance?

There is a growing recognition that the way in which the capitalist market system works today causes the suffering and death of people and creation on a massive scale. Life is at stake; suffering and destruction abound. Hunger and starvation, diseases such as HIV/Aids, social insecurity, and ecological destruction often become opportunities for further profit. The same market forces that victimize the south are at work in the north. The economic and environmental

The integrity of our faith is at stake

As people who belong to the God of life we have been given a new vision, the biblical vision of the fullness of life for people and the earth. We commit ourselves to this biblical vision, which is opposed to neoliberal capitalism in the following ways:

- a) It is oriented to the fulfilment of basic needs and human flourishing, not to maximum productivity and consumption (Isaiah 65, 1 Timothy 6).
- b) It has care and distribution as its driving force, not accumulation (Luke 12:16-21).
- c) It promotes solidarity, serving living communities, and rejecting individualism (Acts 4-5).
- d) It subjects financial markets to the service of the real economy, not the real economy to the rule of finance (Luke 19).
- e) It corrects systematic indebtedness and the loss of land by jubilee measures and constrains the economy to respect the environment, instead of allowing the search for profits to destroy it (Leviticus 25).
- f) It creates a space where justice and peace will kiss (Psalm 85:10), instead of subjecting every space – physical, mental, and spiritual – to the ends of the market.

We are challenged as churches to make a confession of faith because we have listened to the cries of suffering people and the groaning of creation. This confession of faith will reject the injustices of today's global economy by reaffirming our faith in the triune God who opens up a new creation in Christ and calls us to respond faithfully to God's covenant.

1. We affirm that God is sovereign over all creation (Genesis 2:8-9)

We repent of the belief that the market economy and the power of money will bring about peace, security and freedom from hunger and disease. We repent of the misuse of the doctrine of creation (Genesis 1) to conquer, exploit and destroy life – especially women and the earth – misinterpreting our role as stewards of creation. We repent of the belief that neoliberal capitalism is the solution to the world's problems.

We reject any claim of economic, political and military power that subverts God's sovereignty over life. We reject the cooption by large capital owners of the gifts of God, given to all people, as absolute property for private profit at the expense of the common good, because this denies God's sovereign ownership over all things. We reject the idea that humankind has an unrestricted right to dominate and conquer nature.

We declare that God's design is to sustain all creation. We declare that God's sovereign reign means that all creatures are endowed by God with dignity and are to live in companionship with one another.

2. We affirm that God has made a covenant with all creation (Genesis 9:8-12)

This covenant has been sealed by the gift of God's grace, a gift that is not for sale in the market place (Isaiah 55:1). God's covenant is over and against any contract that is the "law" of domination and exploitation. It is an inclusive covenant in which the poor

We, as the church of Jesus Christ, oppose

Northern

Stipendiary

Liz Jewitt (NEOC), Jan Maxwell (Northern)

Non-stipendiary

Margaret Johnson (NEOC), Stan May (NEOC),
Yvonne Tracey (Synod)

North Western

Stipendiary

Leoni Betts (Mansfield), John Bradbury (Westminster),
Richard Bradley (Westminster), Philip Brooks (Northern),
Ruth Dillon (Northern), Gillian Heald (Northern), Richard
Howard (Mansfield),
Michele Jarman (Northern), John Jarman (Synod), Lena
Talbot (Northern),
Marion Tugwood (Northern), Kerry Wade (Northern)

CRCWs-in-training

Alison Dalton (Northern), Yvonne Hawkins (Northern)

Non-stipendiary

Sheila Coop (Northern), Lindsey Cottam (Northern), Ann
Hufton (Northern)

Mersey

Stipendiary

Peter Lyth (Queens), Stuart Radcliffe (Northern), Carolyn
White (Northern)

Non-stipendiary

Anne Bedford (Northern)

Yorkshire

Stipendiary

Peter Blackband (Northern), Murray George (Northern),
Annette Haigh (Northern)

Non-stipendiary

Geoff Ellis (Northern)

East Midlands

Stipendiary

Marcus Hargis (Northern), Suzanne McDonald (SC&URC)
Jenny Mills (Mansfield), Jenny Morgan (EMMTC),
Alison Termie (EMMTC), Stuart Turner (Northern)

Non-stipendiary

Louise Gee (EMMTC) Victor Webb (Northern)

West Midlands

Stipendiary

Kay Cattell (Westminster), Viv Randles (Northern)
Liz Shaw (Northern), Ann Sheldon (Westminster)

CRCWs-in-training

Rosemary Buxton (Northern), Dennis Neville (Northern)

Non-stipendiary

Robert Maloney (Northern), John Potter Queens

Eastern

Stipendiary

David Coaker (Northern), John Cook (Westminster),
Heather Kent (Westminster), Tim Richards (Westminster),
Jenny Yule (Westminster)

CRCWs-in-training

Liz Kam (Northern)

Non-stipendiary

Donald Nichols (EAMTC), Sam White (Westminster)

South Western

Stipendiary

Ruth Browning (Northern), Paul Ellis (SWMTC),
Viv Henderson (SWMTC)

Non-stipendiary

Jennifer Kilgour (SWMTC)

Wessex

Stipendiary

Bridget Banks (STETS), Lucy Brierley (Westminster),
Sarah Hall (Mansfield), Colin Harley (Westminster),

Southern**Stipendiary**

William Bowman (Westminster), Gordon Brown (Westminster),

Elaine Brown (Westminster), Martin Knight (Northern), Suk In Lee (Queens),

Romilly Micklem (Westminster), Sarah Moore (Westminster),

David Morgan (Mansfield), Martyn Neads (Queens),

Alan Seymour (Mansfield), Caroline Vodden (Mansfield)

Non-stipendiary

Ed Collins (SEITE), Diane Farquhar (STETS)

Sue Powell (Synod), Jenny Snashall (STETS)

Roger Wood (STETS), Malcolm Wright (SEITE),

Ernest Yu (Westminster)

Wales**Non-stipendiary**

Elizabeth Lowder (SWOC)

Scotland**Stipendiary**

Craig Jesson (SC & URC), Jack Muir (SC & URC)



EAMTC

Appendix 6

Reports from Colleges

The Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education

1.1 The Queen's Foundation, comprising the Queen's College, The West Midlands Ministerial Training Course and the Research Centre, continues to operate a unified centre for theological education and ministerial training. As a Foundation we are dedicated to excellence in theological education and formation for ministry in partnership with our sponsoring churches – the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. We believe that our ecumenical and theological diversity, together with our setting within the multi-ethnic and multi-faith city of Birmingham, and our relationship with the University of Birmingham, provides a rich and challenging resource for students to explore the distinctiveness of their own tradition and identity, as well as fostering lively dialogue and deep respect for the traditions of others.

1.2 The staff and student body have been working hard to develop the unitary and integrated life of the Foundation. There is no doubt that the bringing together of full and part-time study, College and Course mode of delivery, permeated with a research culture, provides for all in the Foundation a rich and stimulating environment. Given the historic separation of these elements in the Churches' training institutions the Foundation has not only blazed a significant trail, but also it has had much to do and learn to make this work well. We believe the fruits are now in evidence and we are looking forward to developing the Foundation further. In particular we are learning how to make best use of our experience of forming and re-forming community as diverse and fluid communities gather and disperse. This feels to be close to the task of most ministers as they seek to build community in their locality and congregation among fluid and mobile communities, and therefore feels highly pertinent in the context of ministerial formation.

2. Students

2.1 This year we have approximately 145 students studying at the Foundation. The proportion of students with each of the three 'departments' is now roughly equal, which represents a considerable development in the life of the Foundation. Of these students, 10 are members of the United Reformed Church, with 5 sponsored for training for ordained ministry, and 5 who are serving ministers undertaking in-service studies and research programmes.

2.2 As in previous years our Foundation life has been enriched by student exchange visits and by the presence

of a g8(f)-111(a Td[(e)-10(n)-6(-11(17(s)-165(a)-6()1(t)-7(o)-11(10(r)-10-6(e)-128(s)-98(i)-6(n 1i)-9(o)-v)-10(i)-d2678(i)-6()3(h v)-10(i)--11(a)-6(r)-34(

6. Future directions

The Foundation is very aware that all our sponsoring churches are undergoing major reviews in terms of their training

Westminster College

1. The Cambridge Theological Federation

1.1 We reported last year that the Federation had asked Westminster's John Proctor to carry out a thorough review of our curriculum and its objectives, with a view to keeping it addressed towards the changing needs of churches and students. As a result of his report a Teaching and Learning Development Group for the Federation, convened by Stephen Orchard, has been established to implement its findings. The first step has been for the Federation to apply to become part of the Regional University of the Anglia Polytechnic University. A new award, with a new flexibility in the way it can be delivered, is being planned, with an eye to those students who cannot meet the residential requirements for graduate courses at Cambridge University, those for whom such courses are not appropriate and those who have no church sponsorship. At the same time the Church of England, in consultation with the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, is setting up regional training partnerships. The new award is one of the resources the Cambridge Theological Federation has to offer in any new regional arrangement. However, Westminster has at the same time to keep an eye on its role as one of the national providers of education within the United Reformed Church.

1.2 The Federation, spurred on by an Inspection, is also considering what it means to offer an ecumenical theological education. Although we have the components of such a course amongst us we wonder how to make the best use of them. Our largest single grouping is of Anglicans, but all the main Christian denominations are represented within the Federation and we also have a significant number of international visitors. Although this provides informal opportunities for ecumenical learning we are not sure that we are fulfilling our potential as a place of ecumenical education within the formal curriculum. Part of our answer has been to plan an international conference on ecumenical theological education for 2005, which we hope will gather a properly representative group where we may learn together what are the conditions in which such education takes place.

2. The wider Church

It is always a delight for us to provide hospitality for Continuing Ministerial Education. Ministers come to us for a short period to draw on the teaching and library resources of the college. This learning is for their own purposes but as a community we all benefit from the experience. We also have at least one minister on sabbatical leave each term, often with his or her spouse. The sabbatical programme extends to international visitors and Westminster is held in high esteem around the world, especially in the growing number of those who come to us from the United States and New Zealand. Last year we received a ministerial student from the Waldensian Church on a year's study programme and a German Protestant student for a term as well as our Columbia University exchange student. Our own students once more took advantage of the programmes and scholarships on offer to see the Church at work in the United States and Fiji.

3. The buildings

3.1 The requirements of the new disability legislation directed us once more to examine our buildings. Remarkably for a Victorian building Westminster can be made very accessible at the ground floor level. The problems come in introducing disabled staff and students to the upper floors of the college. We can find no way consistent with our finances or our listed

building status to bring people into the Library if they cannot manage stairs. For the moment we have worked on ways of bringing the Library to them. It may be that a future extension to the Library will enable us to incorporate a lift. Another problem our disability audit revealed was the poor levels of lighting provided by our listed electrical fittings. We were able to reassure our insurers that wiring was up to modern standards by carrying out remedial work on a few sections that were twenty years old. Nothing can be done to improve the light levels delivered by a system which once seemed bright compared with its rival – gaslight. We are considering other approaches to this problem. What was fascinating was the enormous enthusiasm our disability auditor displayed for our buildings. Our inability to make major alterations over the last hundred years means that we have a wonderful specimen of the work of Henry Hare, a leading architect of his day.

3.2 One piece of brightening we have achieved in the college is the re-painting of the Dining Hall ceiling. We know this has not been attempted for at least thirty years and we suspect longer. The work required the use of oil-based distemper to match the original and great care in cleaning and painting the elaborate plaster work, which incorporates symbols representative of all the Presbyterian churches in the world in 1899. Less obvious to the visitor is the long programme of remedial work in the cellars, where the beams bearing the floors above were deteriorating. The floors are now good for another hundred years. For the future we are exploring the possibility of creating archive storage in the large attics of the residential wing. The continuing work on the United Reformed Church History Society collections has now made it clear what needs to be kept. The work of cataloguing that collection and college books in the Carrie Room is also giving us hard information on what storage we need for historic books and enabling us to project future requirements. In all this we are aware of our responsibilities to the United Reformed Church at large and our sister churches around the world. The collections now at Westminster are a unique resource for the study of our tradition. This is more than antiquarianism. The lessons of Reformed history are significant in shaping our vision of the future of our own denomination but they also have a significance for the whole Church catholic.

4. Celebration

4.1 At our Commemoration of Benefactors in 2003 our preacher was Professor Morna Hooker and the lecture was given by Dr Jolyon Mitchell of New College, Edinburgh. We gave thanks also for the gifts of our leavers, who were:

4.2 Peter Clark (North Kent Group), Richard Eastman (South Leicestershire Group), Stella Hayton (Bingley and Shipley), John Mackerness (Spennings and Calder Enterprise), Susan McKenzie (Wood Street and Chesterfield Road, Barnet), Jay Phelps (Anstey), and Janet Sutton (Alkington and Providence).

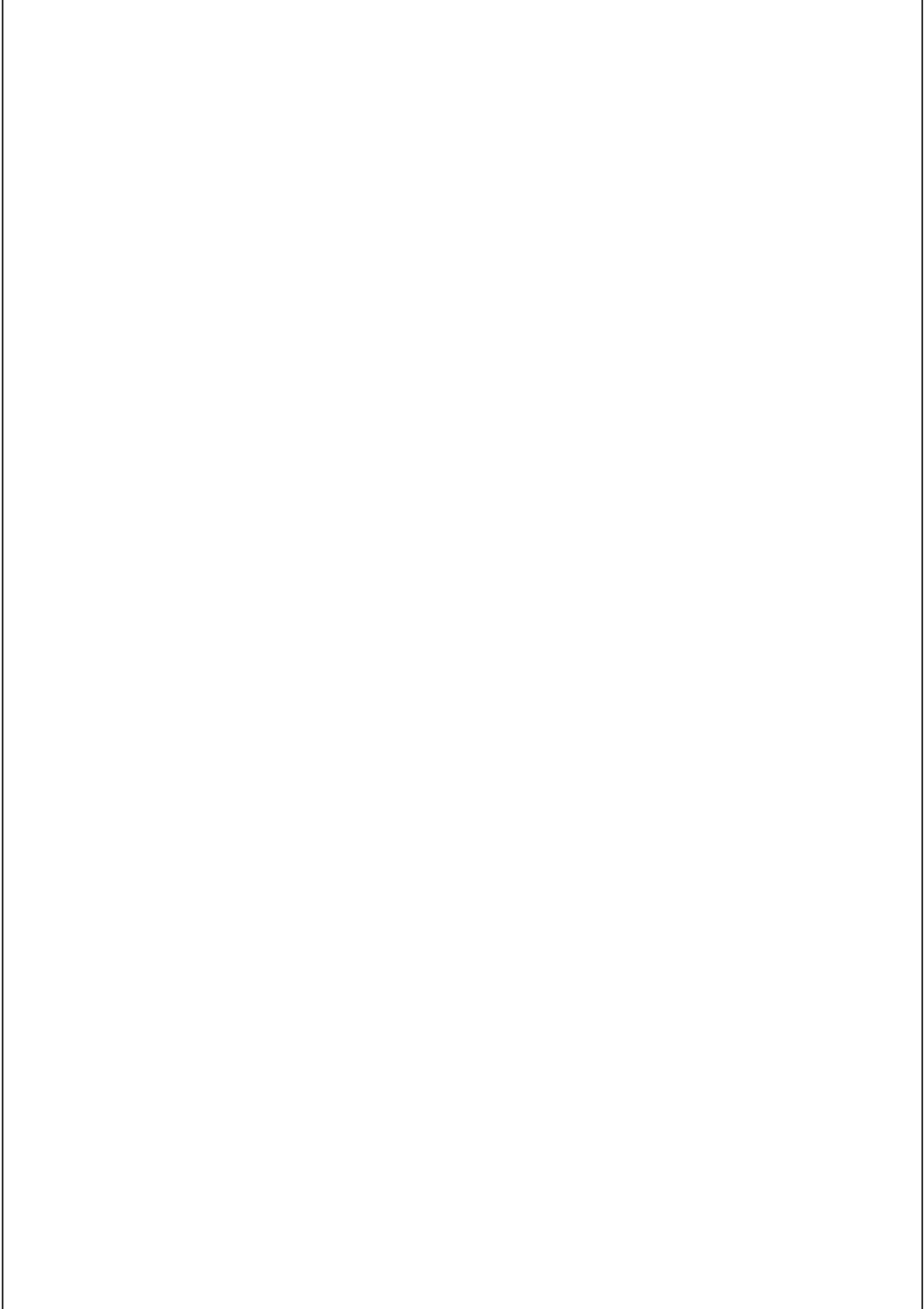
4.3 Suzanne McDonald & Romilly Micklem completed their courses and are continuing their academic studies in St Andrew's and London respectively.

4.4 Finally, we give thanks for the life of John O'Neill, whose teaching inspired a generation of Westminster students between 1964 and 1985 before he moved to Edinburgh. John loved the New Testament and helped others to love it too.

synods of the United Reformed Church and therefore for all
the colleges and courses it recognises... but we are aware

Appendix 7

Information



1. Any opportunity to report on our activities is an opportunity not to be missed! Where to begin? Well, a good place is the Guild's Celebration Day held at Caterham United Reformed Church in October 2003.

1. Representatives of the Schools (Caterham, Eltham, Silcoates, Taunton, Walthamstow Hall and Wentworth) met in London for their annual business meeting on 9 June 2003. There was a particular welcome for Mrs J Milner who has succeeded Mrs J Lang as Headmistress of Walthamstow Hall.

2. In addition to relations with the United Reformed Church and CWM, matters of advocacy and publicity were considered and future meetings of students, staff, and governors at Corrymeela and with the Collegio Valdese, Torre Pellice, were planned.

3. The Schools remain appreciative of support from the Milton Mount Foundation and the Leverhulme Trade Charities Trust.

4. The following reports have been received:

4.1 Caterham School

Caterham has had another successful year with exciting developments in independent learning, -(ma)A0w11-ext

attend the College with financial support from either the Direct Grant or Assisted Places Schemes. Now that the Government has withdrawn this support, a professional approach to fund-raising has been adopted to establish the finances to make education at Eltham open to all who would benefit from it no matter what their financial background. A Development Director has been appointed, a Prospectus produced and circulated, and events including a Gala Dinner and a tele-raising campaign but we hope to raise sufficient funds to ensure that the ethos and Christian character of Eltham College are preserved.

4.3 Silcoates

The three schools of the Silcoates School Foundation are flourishing. Numbers are very healthy and this year's A level students produced the highest average points per candidate in our history.

After a distinguished ten-year tenure, Peter Johnson retired as Chairman of the Governors, passing the torch to Howard Bryan, head boy at Silcoates in 1962

We congratulate David Dinmore on his appointment as a Deputy Lieutenant for West Yorkshire. David has relinquished the Bursarship, but continues as Clerk to the Governors. Our new Bursar is Mr John Dickson, formerly Bursar of Leeds Grammar School. We have also welcomed Mr Robert Lilley as Head of the Junior School; he was previously Head of Fulneck Junior School.

The Chapel has been redecorated throughout and new lighting has been installed. The focus for everyone is inescapably on the cross above the table. Back home from its 10,000-hymn service, the revoiced and reconditioned organ now sounds very fine. In the summer the Chapel witnessed a thanksgiving for the lives of two notable Silcoates masters, Geoffrey Fowler and centenarian Frank Lusted. We also record with sadness the death of Claude Pike, Old Silcoatian and benefactor: he gave us many of the trees which beautify the campus.

Next door to the Chapel, the Hall, a grand old lady of some seventy years, has enjoyed an excellent "makeover". With an increased number of students studying for their A Levels we are building a substantial extension to the Sixth Form Centre. When it is completed in the new year, the construction of a new Music School will begin. Its foundation stone was laid by Paul Crossley, CBE, Old Silcoatian, who was Guest of Honour on Speech Day.

4.4 Walthamstow Hall

The academic year 2002-2003 saw a number of exciting developments. Work started on converting the former boarding accommodation in the main Arts and Crafts school building in September 2002. The

project, which included substantial structural work to redevelop the area into teaching space for Languages and Humanities, was completed in April 2003. The official opening of The Erasmus Centre classrooms, careers, and ICT facilities took place on 1 May 2003, and the school welcomed the Rt Hon Michael Portillo, MP to perform the ceremony.

The Erasmus Centre opening was the first in a programme of planned development to enable the school to maintain its tradition of excellence. The next phase, the refitting of all science facilities, started in August 2003 and is still in progress.

In August 2003, A2 examination candidates achieved 100% pass rate, all at grades A-D; over 68% were at grades A-B, and 43% at grade A. Similarly at GCSE, 100% girls gained 5 grades A*-C, the majority of pupils achieving at least 11 passes; 64.5% passes were at grades A*-A, ensuring us a very favourable placing in published league tables.

Beyond the academic curriculum, girls distinguished

e 2(x)-3e-17(m)1(n)415(r)4(a)15(14)158B(1)8r11(t)1(s)-145(i)1(-)415(r)242315.1710-1.2311(8-7(r)-C.e)-141(r8mJT*[(p)-8(a)13

All these achievements reflect the school's continuing commitment to preparing girls for life beyond the classroom, a sentiment expressed in the recently formulated school mission statement.

Walthamstow Hall educates girls with academic potential to lead challenging and fulfilling lives in the 21st century.

An emphasis on the spiritual development of girls remains at the heart of the school's purpose, and is supported by a vigorous Christian Union and regular parents' Prayer Group meetings. So, the school moves forward, firmly rooted in the Christian principles on which it was founded in 1838.

4.5 Wentworth College

Our GCSE results last summer were very pleasing; 97% of entries achieved grades A* to C. Students in Year 13 completed their final modules in sixteen subjects with an overall pass rate of 97%, and for ten subjects it was 100%. Our sporting teams have also had a successful year, with a number of girls selected for county squads in netball and badminton, and national squads in badminton and sailing. Eighty-five junior members of the school participated in a most entertaining production of "The Sound of Music" last summer, whilst the senior drama production in the autumn was "Sand Castles".

As always, our girls have devoted much time to charitable activities, such as

1. The Silence and Retreats Network has continued making quiet headway. It has been a year of good progress in some fields but slow in others.

2. The Core Group is responsible for oversight of the network and for publishing the newsletter "Windows". The actual organisation of Retreats and Quiet Days is dealt with at Synod level and some Synods have made considerable progress in appointing contacts for each district and in ensuring that opportunities for Quiet Days are included in both CME and ministerial training programmes. Many

Women's World Day of Prayer

The service this year, held on Friday 5th March, was prepared by the women of Panama with the theme 'In faith, Women Shape the Future'. A theme reflected in the prayers and readings as Panama faces the many economic and social changes in their country. This year is especially important for the women of Panama as they celebrate 50 years of their participation in the World Day of Prayer. Panama is a mainly Christian country where 85% of the population are Roman Catholic.

The services were well attended with over 350,000 orders of service used at the many different services held throughout England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Service and information sheets are produced for the Welsh speaking churches. Services were held in cathedrals, churches, halls, hospitals, nursing homes, and schools where the special children's service sheets, along with the teachers' notes are used at assemblies. The children's information is also used in many Junior church groups.

Day conferences and preparation days have continued to increase to the extent that there are now three conference co-ordinators arranging conferences in different areas of the country.

From 26 August to 3 September 2003 the National committee hosted the International Quadrennial conference at Swanwick. Over 200 representatives from the national committees of 90 countries joined together. It was particularly good to greet ladies from the former Eastern block countries. Amongst the many special events was the service held at Derby Cathedral, a truly international service with languages and music from all the continents.

The service for 2005 has been prepared by the women of Poland with the theme 'Let Our Light Shine'.

Scottish Committee Report

On 5 March 2004, the World Day of Prayer Services were held throughout Scotland from Caithness in the north, Orkney and Shetland to Dumfries and Galloway in the south. Throughout the day, over 730 services were held in churches, church halls, sheltered housing, schools, prisons, hospitals and nursing homes. It was estimated that some 26,500 attended, many of whom were men.

During the year the Scottish Committee have been involved in some innovations. Two 'Awareness Days' were arranged in Kirkcaldy and Perth. There was also a 24 hour retreat which resulted in the work on the 2005 Service being mainly completed. Those present also spent time in study and prayer and getting to know other members better. It was a very worthwhile experience which, it is hoped, will be repeated this coming autumn, when our plans for the 75th Anniversary Celebrations in April 2005 will be completed.

