



The
United
Methodist
Church.

General Assembly
The United Methodist Church
86 Tavistock Place, London W1P 1HJ, UK

6. All bedrooms are en-suite. To comply with the venue's health and safety regulations, please do not bring food from outside into the Centre, nor take food from the dining room to your room.

7. Below are the papers enclosed in this mailing listed according to the ways we mean to address them:

Category A: En Bloc

A1 Assembly Arrangements
B1 Children's and Youth Work Committee: report on work
G2, G3 The URC Ministers' Pension Trust Ltd: two changes to rules and procedure
I1 Mission: update on work
J1 Nominations
M1 Clerk: Standing Orders
M2 Clerk: Appeals Procedure
O1 Human Resources Advisory Group: report on work
R1 Safeguarding Advisory Group: Past Case Review

Category B: Majority Voting

C1 Funding for Reform
G1 Finance: budget for 2018
N1 General Assembly Task Group: where to hold General Assembly in 2020

Category C: Consensus decision making

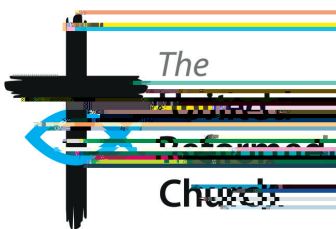
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Mission Council

The Hayes Conference Centre
Swanwick, Derbyshire
7 to 9 November 2017



The
United



www.urc.org.uk

Set and published by communications team, Church House, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT
on behalf of Mission Council.



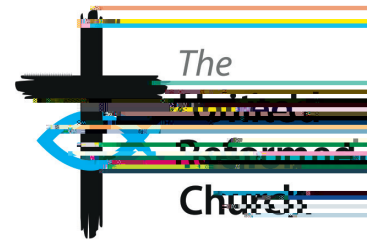
The first named person in each Group is asked to act as group Leader and the second named person in each group as Reporter

	Leader
	Reporter
Susan	
Elizabeth	



General Assembly 2018 and 2020

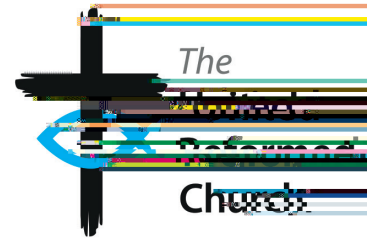






Update November 2017





Update November 2017

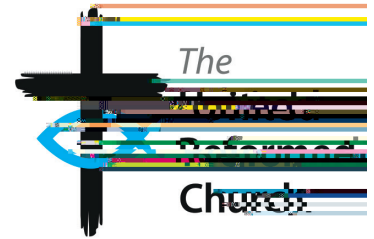
	The Revd Jenny Mills (committee convenor) revdjmill@btinternet.com
	None

	To inform Mission Council of the appointment of a Head of Children's and Youth Work Development and the thinking of the Children's and Youth Work Committee on current and future developments.
	Appointment of Dr Sam Richards. Future of Review of Children's and Youth Work in the URC. Possibilities and potential of Children's and Youth Work Committee.
	Head of Children's and Youth Work Development Review Report, December 2016. Children's and Youth Work Committee Minutes February and June 2017. Mission Council Report from May 2017 relating to Children's and Youth Work Committee resolution. The General Secretary. The Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship). The Children's and Youth Work Committee. Education and Learning (the Revd Fiona Thomas).

1. It is with delight that we are able to report that, following interviews on 19 July 2017, we were able to appoint Dr Sam Richards as Head of Children's and Youth Work Development. Dr Sam Richards is a founder of the Institute for Children Youth & Mission, and as director of Oxford Youth Works, and Oxford CYM has been involved in training Christian youth and children's workers for more than 25 years. She is a member of mayBe community (an all-age fresh expression of church), and lives near Oxford with her husband, daughter and two cats. Her ministry brings a passion for enabling children and young people to experience, explore and express the Way of Jesus. We look forward to welcoming Sam into the Church House staff team and to all that she will bring to ministry among children and young people within the United Reformed Church.
2. We are pleased for our current Programme Officer, Simon Peters, as he has been appointed to the role of Walking the Way Project Manager and will start in this role in January 2018. However, we are sad that he is moving on as this is another change in the CYW department.
3. Often times of great change bring opportunities for new ideas and thinking. We pray this will be so in the CYW department.
4. As we move into this next phase of change and we welcome Sam into her new role, her first priority is to get to know the URC and the CYW structures and people involved.
5. Once she is settled into the post, the CYW committee are keen for Sam to begin the full review, as recommended by the review into the post of HCYWD from December 2017. This latest review, as agreed at Mission Council in May 2017, will be a wide ranging review and one that is regarded as necessary. The main reasons for the necessity of the review relate to the massive budget cuts agreed by Mission Council and the restructure of the CYW department which were implemented 2013. The CYW programme was not reviewed or altered as a response at that time. The effects of these things have had an impact on the CYW department since then and now we need to develop a clear process for moving forward with this vital area of work within the Church, aware of the limitations all these changes have had.
6. Children and youth have so much to offer the wider URC, and the CYW committee are concerned that there is not as effective communication between committees and departments as there could be. We will be encouraging Sam to identify ways we can optimise our engagement with others to enable the voices of children and young people to be heard throughout the URC and as an integral part of all the initiatives being developed within the structures of the Church.
7. The current Children's and Youth Work committee have expressed concern about the use of the word 'Work' and are looking at how we can emphasise that we are

need to make in response to this. We believe that children and young people are equal partners in the church and have so much to offer and just seeing what we do as 'work' implies a one way process.

8. At the first ever joint committee meeting (with Ministries and Education and Learning) in June 2017, and following a presentation by Education and Learning, we were encouraged to undertake an audit of the skills and gifts of the current Children's and Youth Work committee members. This information will help us to develop Task and Finish groups in specific areas of CYW and to maximize our ability to work effectively as a committee and to ensure that the CYW department can continue to offer the breadth and depth of CYW plus develop new ideas and thinking in response to the challenge of the world in which we find ourselves as we speak of the kingdom and seek to be Christ to the world.
9. From October 2017, all CYW committee meetings will now follow the pattern of most other committees in that they will have 24 hour meetings (Friday afternoon to Saturday afternoon). This means that agendas need to be very focused but it also means that volunteers and ministers do not have to be away from home or church for a whole weekend. We are grateful to all who serve on the CYW committee.
10. The CYW committee has developed themes for the next three years and offers these to the wider Church. 2018: Pilgrimage, 2019: One Body and 2020: Common G (and dy71 456.u)-1 (



The future for *Reform*

	Peter Knowles peter.knowles@bbc.co.uk
	Decision
	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Reform</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Reform</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Reform</i></p>

Reform

- 1.1 Mission Council discussed the future for *Reform* in November 2014, and before that in May 2011. There was enthusiastic consensus that the magazine makes a valuable contribution to the life of the Church.

2.3 The communications committee believes that the contribution of *Reform* to the mission, ministry and identity of the URC is well worth the annual investment that the denomination makes in it. *Reform* is not a money-making venture or a commercial enterprise, it is a tool for the mission and discipleship of the URC. We should not think of *Reform* simply in terms of its cost to the denomination, but as a part of our mission in which we invest like we would in any other.

3.1 *Reform* continues to stay within the budget extended by Mission Council in 2014, although it comes close. It has not exceeded the £90,000 cap and is not expected to do so this year.

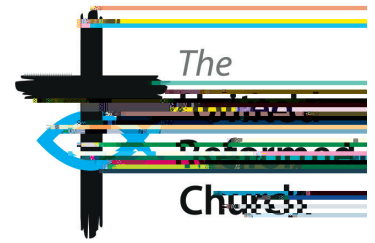


2015

Reform

6.1 While the communications committee is very glad that *Reform* does not need increased investment from the URC in order to be sustainable, we do need increased support of the denomination in other ways. We appeal to members of Mission Council to support *Reform* in the following ways:

6.1.1 Spread the message to your synods and churches: '*Reform* is there for you.' It is a resource for preachers, service leaders and house group leaders. It is M



- v) *Stepwise* contributes to transforming both individuals and the churches to which they belong. Churches need to be prepared for the enhanced ability, skills and vocational outlook of their members as they engage in *Stepwise*.
- vi) Statements of outcomes for participants will refer not only to academic gains but will also contain material that conveys the range and depth of experience explored, and the understanding and growth that has taken place.
- vii)

taking account of people's preferred learning styles, whilst providing opportunities to experience a range of learning styles;
taking account of the family context of the participant and the extent to which it is supportive;
providing 'learning to learn' access programmes;
providing a warm, affirming, welcoming, collaborative, discursive learning environment.

19.4 *Resourcing the church of tomorrow and today*

As well as deepening the discipleship and nurturing the vocation of individuals it is important that *Stepwise* meets the needs of the URC as a whole and of individual churches. The programme will aim to equip people for a range of twenty-first century lay ministries. It will need to be pioneering in stimulating outward-looking, innovative mindsets, as well as providing development experiences for current church roles and functions. *Stepwise* will draw on strengths-based approaches and techniques to help participants to explore the features of their church and communities, and will be undergirded by a contextual understanding of theology.

19.5 *Financial arrangements*

- i) Being aware of the relatively complex financial arrangements with which the TLS programme had to contend, the group sees the importance for *Stepwise* of:

Minimising the cost to participants of engaging in *Stepwise*
Streamlining the process for paying any fees so that there is consistent practice across Synods;
Agreeing a set of principles for financial processes that are clear, consistent, user-friendly, person-

21. The group has identified five main *streams* that would meet these two criteria, and would fulfil the aim to be an innovative programme that is future facing. Within each of these streams will be modules/units called *stepping stones*.¹ These are indicated below and described in greater detail in Table 1 found here: <https://www.unc.org.uk/resources/papers/november-2017.html> Each of the streams will have the common intentions of cathartic conversations; developing discipleship; developing the potential of leaders and teachers; opportunity for experiential learning;

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22. The terms of reference of the Task & Finish group in Appendix 1 include nine areas for The TaCoeachie-1.1 (s)atThCo

27.

Note: pages 34 to 35 are a pullout diagram that will be available online and distributed at Mission Council



- A. To have in place by September 2018 the beginnings of a comprehensive programme of courses through which people can be inspired and equipped for discipleship and mission as part of the United Reformed Church's commitment to *Walking the Way: Living the life of Jesus today*.¹

Secretary/admin support: PA to the Secretary for Education & Learning
Member suggested by the Resource Centres for Learning
Member suggested by the Synod Training & Development Officers
Member suggested by the Mission Committee or Mission Enablers
Member suggested by the Children & Youth Committee or CYDOs
Ecumenical partner with relevant experience/expertise
Up to 2 other members with relevant experience/expertise

Phase 1: September 2016 to September 2018
Phase 2: September 2018 to September 2020

This phasing has been suggested as a means of enabling some potential continuity from the task group into the management structure of the new programme, without stipulating what that might look like at this stage. Active participation in Phase 1 does not imply or depend upon availability for Phase 2.

- a) It is anticipated that there will be a significant commitment for task group members in Phase 1.
- b) The Secretary for Education & Learning's workload will be rearranged to give this work priority and be available for ongoing coordination activities in Phase 1.
- c) It is likely that much of the task group's work will take place at residential 24 hour meetings every 6-8 weeks, with additional time being spent between meetings on specific delegated tasks according to individual expertise.

There will be communication of progress by regular updates through relevant Synod committees and staff members.

The suggested timescale below is given with the understanding that work on the second year may well need to begin before Mission Council has given its feedback on the proposals.

August-end September 2016: Agreement of Termement of TeAugustA3.279ermemen5 (on e-0.7[and s)-1.7s

Budget 2018

	Ian Hardie ianzhardie@googlemail.com
	Decision

	The paper presents a budget for 2018 for decision and financial projections for 2019 and 2020 for information.
	<p>M&M giving for 2018 is forecast to be around 1% lower than the 2017 budget figure.</p> <p>Overall expenditure is expected to be higher than in 2017, largely as a result of depreciating the Church House refurbishment cost but this is fully offset by the anticipated additional income from letting part of the premises.</p> <p>The URC Trust has agreed to advance £2million from reserves to the URC Lay Staff Pension Scheme to reduce an unexpectedly large deficit at its most recent valuation date.</p> <p>The main unknown re 2019 and beyond is the financial position of the URC Ministers' Pension Fund at its next triennial valuation.</p>
	None
	Budget holders in Church House, the Trustee of the Lay Staff Pension scheme and the URC Trust.

	None
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Procedure relating to the nomination and appointment of 'Church Nominated Directors' of the URC Ministers' Pension Trust Ltd



Procedure relating to the

Dated

2017

reaching his or her 65th birthday, unless the Pension Trustee has exercised its discretion under Rule 2.2.2.

- 6.5.6** A member who has between 10 and 20 years' service as a Contributing Member shall be entitled to a pension calculated under Rule 6.5.4 plus an additional amount of pension calculated as follows:

$$(Pension B - Pension A) \times (C / 120)$$

Where:

Pension A is the pension calculated under Rule 6.5.4;

Pension B is the pension calculated under Rule 6.5.5 (but disregarding the requirement that the member must have completed 20 years' service as a Contributing Member for that Rule to apply); and

C is the number of complete months' in excess of 120 that the member has been in service as a Contributing Member.

- 6.5.7** Where this Rule 6.5 applies to a Pre-2013 Member, if it would result in a higher pension than that calculated under whichever of Rule 6.5.4, 6.5.5 or 6.5.6 applies in his or her case, he or she shall instead be entitled to a pension calculated under Rule 6.5.8.
- 6.5.8** The pension under this Rule 6.5.8 is whichever is the higher of:
- 6.5.8.1** A pension calculated under Rule 6.5.5 as if the Pre-2013 Member had retired due to Ill-Health on 1 January 2013 (disregarding the requirement that the member must have completed 20 years' service as a Contributing Member for that Rule to apply). For the avoidance of doubt the pension under this Rule 6.5.8.1 is based on Pensionable Service up to 1 January 2013 and prospective service and Stipend at that date (and the calculation assumes that any change after 1 January 2013 from full-time to part-time service or vice versa had not occurred); or
- 6.5.8.2** Pension B (as defined in Rule 6.5.6) but multiplied by the following fraction: the Pre-2013 Member's service as a Contributing Member up to and including 31 December 2012 divided by the Pre-2013 Member's total service as a Contributing Member up to retirement or reaching his or her 65th birthday if earlier (with each period calculated in complete months). When calculating Pension B for the purposes of this Rule 6.5.8.2, Pension B is calculated assuming that any change after 1 January 2013 from full-time to part-time service or vice versa had not occurred.
- 6.5.9** Where the Pension Trustee has exercised its discretion under Rule 2.4.3 or Rule 2.4.4 (to aggregate periods of membership in the Fund), service as a Contributing Member and Pensionable Service for the purposes of this Rule 6.5 shall include such periods during which the member was entitled to pension under Rule 8.1 as the URC shall direct, provided that the URC must be satisfied that such service was of an appropriate ecumenical nature.

6.5.10 *A person who retired on the grounds of Ill-Health before 1 January 2013 is entitled to a pension calculated in accordance with Rule 6.5.5 irrespective of the length of his or her Pensionable Service."*

- 1.3 In the first sentence of Rule 7.1.1.2 the following words are deleted:
", except that in the case of a spouse who is of the same sex as the member or who is the Civil Partner of the member, the pension payable will be calculated only by reference to that part of the member's pension that relates to Pensionable Service after 5 December 2005."
- 1.4 In the first sentence of Rule 7.2.1.3 the following words are deleted:
"except that in the case of a spouse who is of the same sex as the member or who is the Civil Partner of the member, the pension payable will be calculated only by reference to that part of the member's pension that relates to Pensionable Service after 5 December 2005."
- 1.5 In the second sentence of Rule 7.3.1 the following words are deleted:
", except that in the case of a spouse who is of the same sex as the member or who is the

Non-stipendiary ministry of Word and Sacraments



Non-stipendiary ministry of Word and Sacraments

7. However in the past couple of years the picture has changed. The number of retirements has been considerably higher than the number required to maintain the balance and this imbalance will continue for several years leading to a projected shortage of approximately 30 ministers by 2025.
8. One way to address this shortage is by granting Certificates of Eligibility (CE) to ministers of other denominations, in order that they can transfer onto our roll and become ministers of the United Reformed Church. This is a course of action we have taken in the past and it can provide good results.

23. The synods will have important advice to give, not only on the general intention and the concrete proposal suggested in paragraphs 15-21 above, but also on the capacity and willingness of local churches and synod folk to manage the support of such posts (e.g. in HR and training needs).
24. Subject to satisfactory consultation with the Finance Committee the Ministries Committee suggests that it would identify two synods to act as pilots for the scheme. The detailed working arrangements for the scheme would be developed in consultation with those two synods.
25. An initial fund of £75,000 would be made available for other ministries within the two synods. Advice is to be sought from the RSTG as to the proportions available to each synod from this arrangement.
26. The arrangements agreed with the pilot synods should provide the outline of a scheme proposed for all 13 synods. This will include the administration of a scheme as well as the proposed proportional distribution of the funds available.

Update

	Bernie Collins: bernie.collins@thecrocker.net Francis Brienen: francis.brienen@urc.org.uk
	For information

	Update on the work of the Mission Committee
	This paper offers an update on recent staff changes, on ecumenical relations and on fresh expressions work.
	None

N/a

- 1.1 The Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, the Revd David Tatem, retired at the end of July 2017 after serving eight years in the post and 38 years in ministry in the United Reformed Church. His successor, the Revd Philip Brooks, took up the post at the beginning of July and the month's overlap proved useful for induction, handover of work and introduction to ecumenical colleagues and networks.
- 1.2 Mission Committee unanimously agreed to endorse the application of The Church of God in Christ to join Churches Together in England. This was communicated to CTE by the deadline of 11 September.

- 2.1 There have been major staff changes in the Church and Society section of the Mission department with the retirement of Wendy Cooper (Administrator for Church and Society) after 36 years of service at Church House and the departure of Grace Pengelly (Secretary for Church and Society). Recruitment for a new secretary is in process and interviews will be held on 16 November. Recruitment for a new administrator will commence once the new secretary is in post.

- 3.1 Mission Committee at its meeting in June considered in depth how Fresh Expressions might be embedded into the United Reformed Church. Fresh Expressions will enter its fourth phase in 2019 and all partners are currently considering this issue, as part of the discussion on the future shape of Fresh Expressions Ltd. It was agreed to commission a small task group to look at 'Where next from here?' taking into account strategy, funding, staffing and the link with *Walking the Way*. The task group will report to the February 2018 meeting of the Mission Committee.



Commitment for Life Review



1.1 The United Reformed Church, through its denominational programme 'Commitment for Life,' has been working in partnership with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now (formerly The World Development Movement) in its present form since 1992. The General Assembly programme was a direct response to the words in Micah, 'What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God'. It is about personal giving and a commitment to seek justice and an end to poverty. The programme grew out of the 1% appeal.¹ The Synod of Scotland joined the programme in 2000.

1.2 In 1992, a report to General Assembly stated: "Commitment for Life was offered to the Assembly, congregations and members of the United Reformed Church as a challenge and an invitation, one way of expressing our obedience to the words of Jesus as we follow in his way, our solidarity in the Spirit with our partners and the poor with whom they are striving for justice, and our faith in the God of hope, of peace, of love."

1.3 Commitment for Life's aim is to see the United Reformed Church play a full part in working for justice in the world, recognising that change starts with each of us.

1.4 Its purpose is to see the United Reformed Church play a full part in working for justice in the world, recognising that change starts with each of us.

28-29 September 2017: Mission Committee to discuss recommendations.
 October 2017: Mission Council.
 Post October: Discussions with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now in light of recommendations.
 July 2018: General Assembly.

- 4.1 From the responses gathered it was evident that the programme was still highly thought of. With the gospel message of 'good news for the poor' at its heart it is seen as part of the whole mission of the church. It sits within the vision2020 framework relating to statements 8, 9 and 10.
- 4.2 Millions of pounds have been raised by local churches which has enabled Christian Aid to work with those most in need. The money we raise provides greater flexibility for Global Justice Now and Christian Aid.
- 4.3 Commitment for Life kept churches informed of all major campaigns such as Make Poverty History, Jubilee Debt, IF campaign and climate justice. It provides a significant Christian voice at many campaign meetings.
- 4.4 Resources produced have enabled churches to be well informed and knowledgeable. The yearly outline service and prayer sheets are being well used.
- 4.5. Trips to and visits from our partner areas have enriched the lives of many people and inspired them to take action and share that passion for justice.
- 4.6 The intern programme with Christian Aid ran for five years and was hugely successful. All five interns brought many gifts and still speak on our behalf. The reference group initially started funding the programme as part of our legacy for the future and this has been realised as all the interns have embarked on worthwhile careers.
- 4.7 Through Commitment for Life churches have been enabled to be involved in campaigning for justice. It was felt that 'the Church' could speak out where charities could not.
- 5.1 Christian Aid has been an integral part of the programme since its inception. They continue to change, both in terms of staff levels but also in ways of working, which has impacted on Commitment for Life. Many features that were unique to the programme, such as committed giving, festival worship materials (Harvest, Lent and Christmas) and monthly campaign actions are now part of Christian Aid's fundraising year and approach. Their church partnership programme, with excellent match funding projects, has also drawn money away from Commitment for Life.ⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱ Money donated to Christian Aid through the Partnership Programme is for particular projects matched funded through contracts with the European Commission. They have a very narrow focus as the money given is for these projects for a limited period. Christian Aid have always stated that this giving should be in addition to normal giving.

- 8.1 Commitment for Life has always put equal emphasis on education and giving. Many churches have a well-established season for Commitment for Life during which a special service is held. A few churches raise money by events such as communion collections or themed evenings, although these are in decline as it is becoming more difficult to get members to attend extra events. The message of making that commitment to give regularly, even if this is not so exciting as doing a sponsored bungee jump or mountain trek, is at the heart of the programme. We give because God first loved us. Inspiring and enthusiastic speakers were seen as essential in exciting congregations in many of the responses.
- 8.2. The most common query from churches concerns confusion about where the money goes. The perception is that the contributions go directly to a church's designated region, rather than being divided equally among the four regions. This has never been the case and has been stated in all resources sent out over the last 11 years, if not before.
- 8.3. The programme understands that younger people give in different ways. They are usually interested in the issue, but topics that they can relate to are more popular, e.g. mental health. The successful internship programme worked closely with URC Youth but was not able to raise contributions. Different ways of giving should be explored that suit younger members, e.g. texting or Just Giving.
- 9.1 Contributions were in the region of £500,000 but the last few years have seen a substantial decline in giving. The year 2016 saw an 11% decrease. (Appendix 3).
- 9.2 In 2012 there were 678 churches on the database, but by 2017 this had dropped to 475. This is mainly due to churches who had not given over the last three years being asked if they wished to remain in the programme. Of the 149 church letters sent out, 21 replied to remain on the database and 14 wished to be removed. These, together with the 114

Christian Aid's relationship with the United Reform Church (URC) as a sponsoring denomination is longstanding, far reaching and well-established. Commitment for Life (CfL) exists within the wider context of this valued relationship. It reflects a key element of our partnership and raises significant income to support Christian Aid's work.

CfL supporters are some of Christian Aid's most committed supporters and engage with us throughout the year through Christian Aid Week; Community partnerships; Christmas appeal and much between. Many CfL Link people are also CAW organisers, campaigners and church multipliers.

We are keen to explore how together we can renew the inspiration and vision that has engaged supporters of CfL over the past 25 years. We believe that this practical expression of faith in action has the potential to play a significant role in the wider mission of the church as well as continuing to support the work of Christian Aid partners.

This year is the 25th anniversary of CfL Christian Aid's partnership with the URC. Within the URC the scheme is promoted by Linda Mead, the CfL Coordinator and on a voluntary basis by the Reference Group and Link People.

CfL churches choose to support a partner country or region (Bangladesh, Central America, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory or Zimbabwe) and can change annually. They receive updates twice a year about their partner region and an annual update about all regions.

From the total income raised by CfL 75% is divided equally between Christian Aid's country programmes in the partner regions. The remaining income is 5% paid to charity partner Global Justice Now (formerly World Development Movement) and 20% is for administering the programme

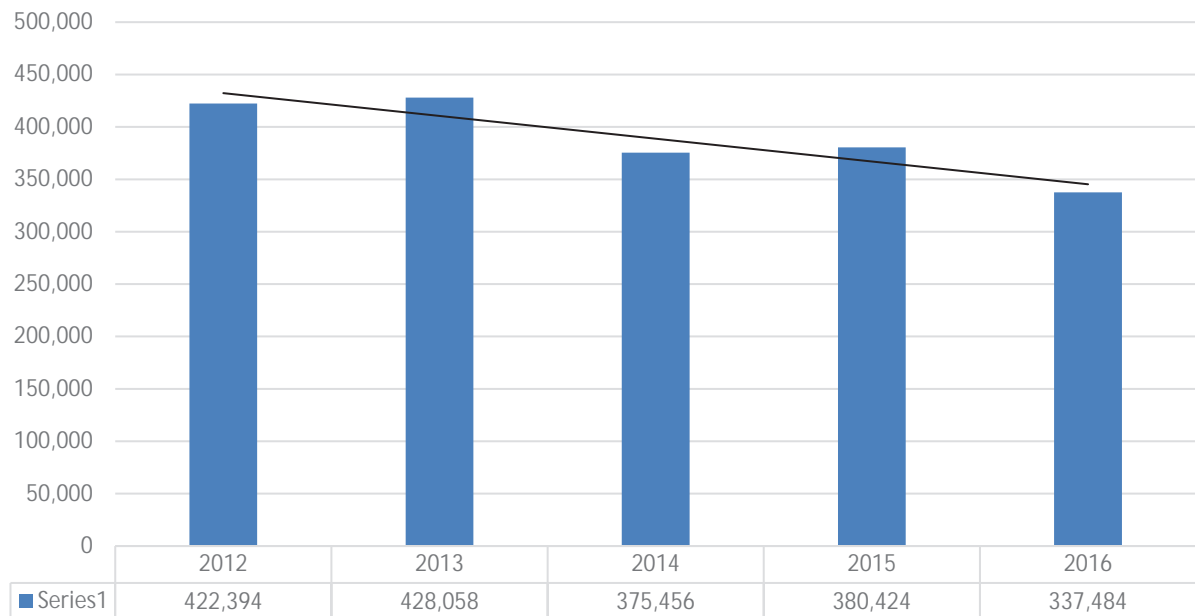
This review is being undertaken by the URC Mission Committee. The TOR are summarised below (see appendix 1 for detail).

Aims: To determine how the current Commitment for Life programme will transition into any further ongoing work in this area by:

- Reviewing the achievements of the Commitment for Life programme
- Assessing the ongoing and future needs of the programme
- Assessing what form of programme the United Reformed Church needs now in order to achieve the vision and mission of Commitment for Life.

Objectives: To review the achievements of the Commitment for Life programme by:
Its own vision and mission statement

2016 Commitment for Life Income 2012



There are 475 churches currently supporting CfL. This represents a reduction overall and that in turn reflects a number of factors including a clean-up of data. Whilst the level of support is good we would be keen to have a deeper understanding of the challenges facing churches that may have contributed to the decline and explore how those can be tackled.

Expenditure can be divided into three sections; printed resources, promotion and supporter trips.

CfL programme cost of all printed materials is split 50/50 between Commitment for Life and Christian Aid. Resources produced are two A4 updates (one in March, another in November) featuring the partner regions and a small CA campaigns update. In addition, CfL churches receive an annual update in July – an A5 16 pages booklet and an A2 poster – which features all partner regions, and a CA and Global Justice Now update.

Staff time (both CA and CfL) is not accounted for within these costs. It is important to point out that the full time CfL Coordinator's (Linda) role encompasses all the administration and promotion of CfL. Linda's salary is paid for through CfL funds raised as part of the 20% admin cost.

The resources are planned and managed through the CA Creative Team and Charlotte Scott oversees this process.

Christian Aid does not do any active promotion of Commitment for Life at the moment. There are plans to do a week of social media promotion from the main CA accounts in August 2017 and this will be the first time this has been done.

Ownership by URC
Biggest denominational fundraising appeal
Long term commitment
Opt in scheme (decision of the whole church)
Regular updates on 4 countries gives variety
Focused on specific countries
Long term relationships with partners
Understood as part of the mission of the church
Programme coordinator embedded in URC
Advocates and link people
Has built good partnerships and engagement more broadly
Christian Aid.

Desire to see 'where my money is going'
Lack of quick wins to report back
Internal changes at CA disrupting
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For example, reflect on the aging population in URC congregations, combined with a high level of commitment to Christian Aid and the Commitment for Life. A CfL legacy campaign in 2010 resulted in two legacies, £75k in 2012/11 and £100k in 2012/13.

This could include possibilities for linking CfL supporters with one another through an annual event or more local synod-based events. This would build a sense of community for those who may feel isolated within their own church.

This could include looking at supporter travel and how we might offer that more widely. The Zimbabwe trip in 2017 and El Salvador trip in 2014 have yielded enthusiastic supporters with personal stories to tell. Working specifically with these people and setting some goals may help to use their personal enthusiasm to best effect for the partnership.

Walking the Way



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This is an update on the progress of the development of *Walking the Way: living the life of Jesus today* with its emphasis on discipleship and mission.

The primary means through which the life of faith is nurtured and grows is that of the local church. The steering group has therefore worked to resource local churches with materials that can be useful in developing missional discipleship which touches on all aspects of our life.

1. In September 2017, every church was sent copies of a leaflet which introduces *Walking the Way, living the life of Jesus today* to all those associated with URC

7. A growing resource within the United Reformed Church are the D



List of nominations



- i. The Revd Dr Neil Messer will conclude 4 years as convenor in 2019, not 2020.
- ii. The Revd Dr Jack Dyce is no longer a Resource Centre for Learning (RCL) principal.

- i. Mrs Ruth Clarke has resigned.
- ii. Mrs Pat Poinen (1) accepted an invitation in 2015 to serve until 2019 and should therefore be added to the Nominations List.

- i. Mr Graham Stacy has resigned.

- i. Mr Ken Meekison has resigned.

Ms Julie Grove was appointed in 2014 to serve until 2018 and should therefore be added to the Nominations List.

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 For the good ordering of General Assembly's time, the Moderators for that Assembly, in consultation with the General Secretary and the Clerk, shall group the draft motions into three Groups which shall determine the manner in which the Assembly shall consider them: A – en bloc, B – majority voting, and C – consensus. All matters covered by paragraphs 3(1) and (2) of the Structure of the United Reformed Church shall be placed in Group B. In the case of any other matter the Moderator may rule at any time that a motion be taken from Group B and placed in Group C. At the same time the grouping of draft motions is published any matters already known to be urgent under Standing Order 2.3 shall also be published, with reasons given.
- 1.3 The motions in Group A shall be taken en bloc. Notice in writing to the effect that one or more of the motions included in Group A should be considered separately may be given to the General Secretary by the close of business on the first day of the meeting of the Assembly. If such notice, which must be signed by at least six members of the Assembly, is duly received, then the motion(s) in question shall be removed from Group A. It shall be for the Moderators, in consultation with the General Secretary and the Clerk, to determine in which of Groups B and C any such separated motions should be placed. When the single motion to approve Group A is before the Assembly, the vote shall be taken immediately, the motion being determined by a majority of the votes of members of the Assembly present and voting as indicated by a show of voting cards.
- 1.4 The motions in Group B shall be determined by majority vote, and Standing Order 2 shall not apply.
- 1.5 The motions in Group C shall be considered by means of the consensus decision making process set out in Standing Order 2.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 Motions arising from a report which have been duly seconded and submitted by individual members of Assembly under Standing Order 4.2 shall be taken at a point in the business determined by the Moderator on the advice of the Convener of the Assembly arrangements committee.
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9

- 2.5.5.1 What is your response to this proposal? (inviting a show of indicator cards)
- 2.5.5.2 Do you believe we have consensus in support of this proposal?
- 2.5.5.3 Do you believe we have consensus not to support this proposal?
- 2.5.6 If there is strong but not unanimous support:
 - 2.5.6.1 Who supports the proposal?
 - 2.5.6.2 Who does not support the proposal as your first option, but is prepared to accept it? Are you prepared to have the issue declared resolved by consensus?
 - 2.5.6.3 Who is not prepared to accept the proposal?
- 2.5.7 Where some members of Assembly indicate an unwillingness to accept a proposal there shall be further discussion and then the Moderator shall seek to ascertain that they accept that they have been heard and agree to live with the outcome.
- 2.5.8 The Moderator shall ask:
 - 2.5.8.1 Are you prepared to have the issue declared passed, recognising disagreement? If so they may choose to record their dissent.
 - 2.5.8.2 Who is not prepared to accept the proposal?
- 2.5.9 Continuing disagreement
Asseem

2.8 Coloured cards

2.8.1 Coloured cards are not essential in consensus decision making but they are helpful.

2.8.2 Each member receives two cards:

2.8.2.1 Orange – held at the end of a speech, so that the Moderator can see, indicates warmth towards a point of view or approval of a proposal.

2.8.2.2 Blue – held at the end of a speech, so that the Moderator can see indicates coolness about what has been heard or disapproval of a proposal.

2.8.3 Cards held crossed indicate to the Moderator it is time to move on to the next subject.

2.8.4 Cards should be shown only at the invitation of the Moderator and held so that the Moderator can see them. They indicate response to what has just been said. They help the Moderator to gauge the strength of feeling for various ideas, and to invite speeches from those who are unsure or cool towards the proposal.

2.9 Changes of order

Changes of order may be raised by any member of Assembly at any time during the meeting and must refer to the proceedings of the council. The Moderator asks the member to state their change of order. The Moderator rules on it immediately, or asks for a decision by the Assembly via a simple majority vote.

Changes of order include:

2.9.1 Out of order – the speaker is digressing from the matter being discussed.

2.9.2 Closed session – that the matter in hand is sensitive and should be conducted in private. This is voted on immediately without discussion. It can be raised more than once during a discussion. If it is agreed, all those who are not members of the council must leave. Members must treat the subsequent discussion in the strictest confidence and must not divulge its content or process to non-members.

2.9.3 Adjournment of the discussion – this is voted on immediately without further discussion. It can be proposed more than once in a discussion. It cannot be brought by a person who has already spoken. When the discussion is resumed the person whose speech was interrupted has the right to speak first.

2.9.4 Personal explanation – a member feeling that some material part of their former speech has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may ask to make a personal explanation.

2.9.5 Objection – a member may raise an objection if the remarks of a speaker are deemed offensive or derogatory. On such an objection being raised the Moderator shall immediately rule as to whether the remarks are offensive or derogatory and if the ruling is in favour of the objection may require the speaker to withdraw the remark. Should the speaker refuse to do so the Moderator may require the speaker immediately to terminate their speech.

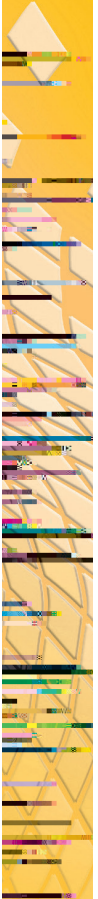
8.3 Questions

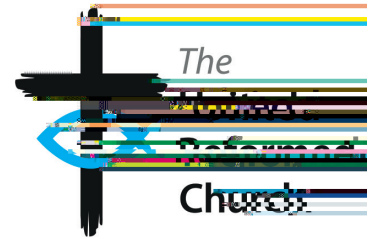
- 15.1 In any case of urgency or upon proposal of a motion of which due notice has been given, any one or more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of the Assembly present and voting shall so decide.
- 15.2 Motions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Clerk of the Assembly for report before being voted on by the Assembly (or, in case of urgency, by the Mission Council). The Clerk of the Assembly may from time to time suggest amendments.

Last updated 21 March 2016

- 3.10 Alternative (but not directly negative) motions may be moved and seconded in competition with a motion before the Assembly. It shall be for the Moderator, on the advice of the Clerk, to rule when motions shall be considered as alternatives under the Terms of this Standing Order.
 - 3.10.1 When such draft alternative motions have been received by the General Secretary, the Moderators may ask the General Secretary to convene a meeting (physical or electronic) of the proposers, to ascertain if it may be possible to agree on a single draft motion to put before the Assembly, or to clarify the areas of disagreement.
 - 3.10.2 If the Assembly has alternative motions before it, each proposer shall be given the opportunity to present their motion in an order decided by the Moderator.
- 3.

- 13.2 Everything written and shared on social media sites at any time is the sole responsibility of the author, and is subject to the same defamation laws as any other form of written communication.
- 14.1 A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such a manner as the Assembly arrangements committee may determine.
- 14.2 The draft minutes of each day's proceedings shall be made available in an appropriate form normally on the following day. They shall, after any necessary correction, be approved at the opening of a subsequent session. Concerning the minutes of the closing day of the Assembly the Clerk shall submit a motion approving their insertion in the full minutes of the Assembly after review and any necessary correction by the Officers of the Assembly. Before such a motion is voted upon, any member may ask to have read out the written minute on any particular item.
- 14.3 A signed copy of the minutes shall be preserved in the custody of the General Secretary as the official record of the Assembly's proceedings.
- 14.4 As soon as possible after the Assembly meeting ends, the substance of the minutes together with any other relevant papers shall be published as a "Record of Assembly" and a copy sent to every member of the Assembly, each synod and local church.
- 15.1 In any case of urgency or upon proposal of a motion of which due notice has been given, any one or more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of the Assembly present and voting shall so decide.
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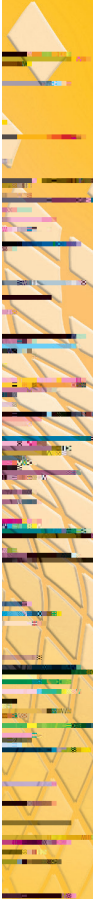
Appeals Process

	Michael Hopkins clerk@urc.org.uk
	Decision

	A drafting error has been pointed out, which this paper proposes to correct.
	The current definition of a dissentient inadvertently excludes someone who is the subject of a decision from appealing, unless they are a member of the relevant Council, meaning that, for instance, someone could not appeal a synod decision that directly affected them unless they were a member of the synod. This is against natural justice, and was not intended.
	n/a
	The General Secretary

	n/a
	n/a

1. The current definition of a dissentient inadvertently excludes someone who is the subject of a decision from appealing, unless they are a member of the relevant Council, meaning that, for instance, someone could not appeal a synod decision that directly affected them unless they were a member of the synod. This is against natural justice, and was not intended.
2. Mission Council is asked to update the definition of a “dissentient” at paragraph 9.20 in the Rules of -3.278 3.279 fecparon of a “dissentient” at pansit



General Data Protection Regulation

	Jane Baird jane.baird@urc.org.uk
	Compliance – in the long term, rather than specifically in the meeting

	To increase awareness of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
	GDPR comes into effect in May 2018. It updates the requirements for the ways in which personal data is processed.

Subject access requests rights will be expanded and organisations will have an obligation to comply with them without undue delay and within one month (as opposed to the current 40-day period), with a potential extension of up to two additional months.

Preparing for GDPR –

<https://ico.org.uk/media/1624219/preparing-for-the-gdpr-12-steps.pdf>; and a readiness self-assessment tool - [https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-proc-0-Tw-\(1e7-\(eo69.5hce\)-1-\(si\)-1-k5nD-7-\(efoin.5\(k-0-Tw-;\)Tj0.001-Tc-60.20:to\)5.1-\(tw\)1.7-\(o\)\)T](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-proc-0-Tw-(1e7-(eo69.5hce)-1-(si)-1-k5nD-7-(efoin.5(k-0-Tw-;)Tj0.001-Tc-60.20:to)5.1-(tw)1.7-(o))T)

Report to Mission Council

Val Morrison valmorrison7@btinternet.com
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Section Nine: Decision.

Report Title: The Task Group (with IT) to help the church to become more mission focused

its members, so it will seek to be aware of the pains and joys, the adventures and hopes of the whole body.”¹

6.4

- 9.6 We have consulted the Synod of Scotland, through their Moderator, over the immediate effect of this proposal – that the Assembly would not meet in Scotland in 2020.
- 10.1 Having consulted extensively, the Task Group propose a number of general recommendations, which we wish to make regardless of decisions to be made about the size and frequency:
- 10.1.1 Time of year: the General Assembly should continue to meet in late June or early July, preferably not clashing with the Methodist Conference, the Church of England General Synod, or the Presbyterian Church of Wales General Assembly. No evidence has been found to suggest that a different time of year would bring any practical, financial, theological, or governance advantages.
- 10.1.2 Meeting at tables can be helpful, but an absolute requirement for tables should not rule out an otherwise suitable and affordable venue.
- 10.1.3 Whatever the number of synod representatives is, that number should be divided equally among the synods, and unfilled places (apart from youth reps) may not be transferred. Smaller synods have found it difficult to ensure fair representation from the breadth (theological, ecclesiological, demographic and geographical) of their synods on the current formula, while some larger synods have difficulty filling the places allocated to them. The Task Group observed that no-one thought an equal division of places among the synods at Mission Council, despite widely differing sizes of synods, was unfair. Therefore the Task Group propose that it would be simpler and fairer to divide the places at General Assembly equally among the synods.
- 10.1.4 Rather than a strict 50:50 division between Ministers of Word and Sacraments and CRCWs on the one hand, and “lay” members on the other, we recommend that a measure of flexibility be introduced, while retaining enough provision to prevent either group dominating. Therefore we propose that at least one third of each synod’s reps should be “lay”, and at least one third “ministers”, with the remaining third open to either category. Equality of representation between ministerial and “lay” has always been an important ecclesiological belief in the United Reformed Church. The Task Group, however, notes that the exact division does not take into account the fact that some Synods now have very few ministers. Nor does it take into account that a number of churches are led by various forms of “lay” leaders. The Task Group propose that the most helpful way to address this situation is to introduce a measure of flexibility, while retaining safeguards for both ministerial and “lay” representation.
- 10.1.5 The Task Group propose that Synod Moderators should be included within the number of each synod’s reps, rather than as a separate category. While the Task Group expect that most synods will wish their Moderator to represent them, this also adds a measure of flexibility because a synod whose Moderator was on sabbatical or close to retirement or on long term sick leave, for instance, might decide that place was better used by another representative.
- 10.1.6 The survey made it clear that the only way of paying for Assembly that will be acceptable to the Church is from the Ministry and Mission Fund. Expecting payment from individuals or from synods would not find support. However, the

current or a larger Assembly more often, and neither were we convinced

300.

Paper 01

Report on Recent Work



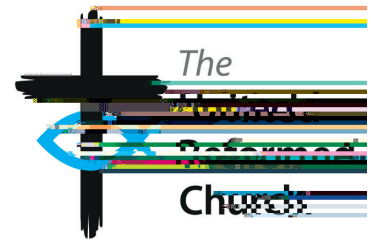
Paper 01

Human Resources Advisory Group Report on Recent Work

	Geoff Shaw geoffshaw2810@sky.com







Michael Hopkins clerk@urc.org.uk
Advice on which direction Mission Council might wish to go.
Possible consistent denomination-wide policy for dealing with complaints.
After consultation, a proposed policy is suggested, along with possible ways Mission Council might wish to implement it.
None
Legal Advisor, synods, General Secretary.

1. This matter was drawn to the attention of the Clerk by a Church Secretary, who felt that no guidance



An allegation that there has been unreasonable delay by a minister, elder, other member, or a volunteer serving the United Reformed Church in responding to an enquiry or request.

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Summary notes will be kept of all meetings throughout the process.

The independent investigator(s) will endeavour to provide you with an initial response on your complaint within a period of thirty working days from when they first considered the complaint, however some complaints may require longer.

Step 4: The outcome

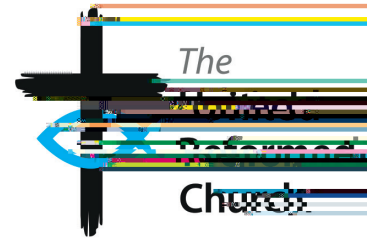
Upon completion of their enquiries, the independent investigator(s) will hope to have achieved one of the following possible outcomes (although this list is not exhaustive):

- You as complainant are satisfied that the matters raised in the complaint have been resolved
- You as complainant and the respondent have reached a mutual agreement that the matter need go no further
- The independent investigator(s) will offer advice to the respondent(s) as to their future conduct
- The complaint has been withdrawn
- The complaint has been dismissed, or
- The complaint having been dealt with, the matter is, despite no agreement having been reached, nonetheless concluded.

A local church complaint which remains unresolved may be referred to the synod for investigation using the steps above. A synod complaint which remains unresolved may be referred to the General Assembly for investigation using the steps above.

Past Case Review Update





Past Case Review Update

	Richard Church richard.church@urc.org.uk
	For information

1.

complainant was resident was added, so the synod could add comment about their prior knowledge of the case brought to the PCR.

6. The types of cases which came to the PCR were:

sexual/abuse of power

b

Paper U1

Criteria for the Appointment of a General Secretary

	John Ellis, Immediate Past Moderator john.ellis@urc.org.uk
	Decision

To give Mission Council an opportunity to express a view on whether the current requirement for any new General Secretary to be a URC Minister of Word and Sacraments TJ0 -1.153 TD8k1 scn7E ref701

1. The United Reformed Church has always had a General Secretary and restricted that post to URC Ministers of Word and Sacraments. Despite the many changes in the Church and wider society since 1972, this feature of our polity has remained unchanged and no evidence has been identified of any considered review of the principle by any governance body.
2. Following a variety of concerns expressed within Mission Council and elsewhere in 2012-rsihethiiCeun--7.T69[(E)t(ev)3.(y)3.7 (e(pi)-1 (t i)-1 (put(E)t(ev)l)-1 (S)1.4 (ec i)-1 ((taff l)- ec)-1.

8. MCAG did not believe it was within its remit to take a view on the underlying question, only to facilitate a debate. However MCAG felt it would help give Mission Council discussions a focus if there were a draft Resolution for the Council to accept, amend or reject, rather than a totally open paper.
9. It is hoped that the background paragraphs above make it entirely clear that this discussion does not arise from any dissatisfaction with the current General Secretary. This paper is not inviting a performance appraisal of the Revd John Proctor.
10. The United Reformed Church has always restricted a number of Assembly appointments to Ministers alone. These include the Synod Moderator posts and the executive Secretary for Ministries in the central staff team. There is no suggestion that these criteria should be changed.
11. Of the seven people to have served the URC as General Secretary, all have come into post with long service as Ministers behind them. However, their ministerial careers have been far from typical, with most having only a relatively short time spent in pastoral charges and usually a decade or several working in theological colleges, or overseas, as Synod Moderators or in central staff roles.
12. HRAG sent a questionnaire around a small group of Assembly officers and others who have extensive recent experience of working with successive General Secretaries. The current General Secretary was included in the circulation. A request for lay General Secretaries working in other partner Churches to complete the questionnaire unfortunately produced no response.
13. The questionnaire asked respondents to consider the advantages and disadvantages of opening up the position to a wider range of people than just Ministers in the light of the current General Secretary role description. This did not lead to any consensus in favour or against relaxing the current restriction.
14. A summary of the feedback, as prepared by HRAG, was as follows:

If an Ordained General Secretary:

Will have the confidence of Ministers and Synod Moderators
 Has experience of and understands local ministry
 Credibility and respect – both internal and external
 Theological knowledge

Lack of management expertise (in the broadest sense)
 The pastoral approach might predominate
 Reinforces the perception that only the 'ordained minister' can lead

21.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: GENERAL SECRETARY

REQUIREMENTS	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	MEASUREMENT
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community at Church House.
Able to prioritise a demanding workload through effective time management and delegation.
An understanding of and commitment to a multicultural church (i.e. ability to relate







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Changes to the Rules of Procedure for the conduct of the United Reformed Church

	Dan Morrell urcyamoderator@gmail.com
	Decision

	<p>To bring clarity to the current process for the election of the Moderators of General Assembly. To provide greater fairness amongst all nominees for the role. To mirror closely the procedure for electing the Moderator of Youth Assembly, as this has been proven to be fair and useful in determining, with prayer, the most suitable Moderator.</p>
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The current procedure is flawed:
 it shows bias towards nominees who are incumbent members of Assembly;
 it does little to help voting members of Assembly discern who may be best suited for the role;
 it near-guarantees election for anyone who is a sole nominee.
 All nominees will be invited, and expected, to attend the Assembly at which they will be voted on, they will read their biography (or have it read) to the Assembly, and will be asked a question by the Moderator in the chair and have the opportunity to respond.
 The introduction of a 'Re-Open Nominations' option to ensure that the Assembly's voice is truly heard.
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1. URC Youth Executive felt that the current procedure for the election of the Moderators of General Assembly is unfair and not in line with what we, as the URC, believe.
2. The procedure at URC Youth Assembly for the election of the Moderator gives those standing an opportunity to read out their 'pen portrait' and answer a question posed to them by the current Moderator.

