



The United Reformed Church

United Reformed Church Mission Council Swanwick, November 2018

Order paper

Please retain this paper; its material may be needed throughout our meeting.

Adjustments to agenda

Session five will contain I2 Walking the Way
and M1 Listening in the URC (Nigel Uden and Derek Estill)

Session eight will contain M2 Acting with strategic intent (Alan Yates)

Item U3, The Jubilee in 2022, is being withdrawn from this agenda, as we may be able to consider it more effectively once we have taken some decisions about M1 and M2.

Notice from law and polity advisory group

Consultation on marriage law reform in England and Wales

The UK government has recently announced a consultation on possible changes to marriage law in England and Wales, particularly to the current system of registered buildings. It is likely that consideration will be given to allowing weddings in venues other than registered buildings, such as outdoors. Once the consultation begins, anyone in the URC will be able to contribute as an individual. The law and polity advisory group will also consider contributing, and may need to act with speed as consultation windows are not always very broad. Any member of Mission Council with views that they wish to be taken into account in framing any URC response should write to the Convenor of LPAG, the Revd Dr John Bradbury, jp44@cam.ac.uk, as soon as possible.

Consensus decision making

The Moderators would like members to reflect together on how suitably and effectively we have used CDM in this meeting. An opportunity to do this will come in session ten, if it is not squeezed out by overrunning business.

Paper M3

Moderators of Assembly

Recruitment of General Secretary
and DGS (discipleship)



Recruitment of General Secretary and of Deputy GS (discipleship)

The authors have redrafted detail in several parts of their paper. All the text on pages 101 to 102 should be replaced by the following:

1. Preamble

- 1.1 Following provisional intimation at the time of their appointments, we have received formal notice that the Revd John Proctor intends to retire on 31 August 2020 and the Revd Richard Church in the middle of July 2020. Their long ministries have both been fruitful, effective and appreciated; the Church is significantly in their debt.
- 1.2 Their retirements create forthcoming vacancies for a General Secretary (GS) and a Deputy General Secretary (discipleship) (DGSD). It is the responsibility of the Moderators of General Assembly to convene the nominating group that enables the filling of the GS post (*The Manual*, section C.5) and the following brief paper suggests the skeleton of a process and its timeline for the filling of both.
- 1.3 There are five basic assumptions:
 - that people may be nominated, and then invited to apply, or may apply of their own volition
 - that the GS be selected four to six weeks ahead of the DGSD in order that the former can participate in interviews for the latter
 - that appointees may be serving in posts with long notice periods
 - that separate nominating groups will deal with the appointments: one for the GS, chaired by Nigel Uden, will be in keeping with *The Manual* paragraph C5, and one for the DGSD, chaired by Derek Estill, will comprise four people – an Assembly Moderator, the convenor of a relevant committee and two others;
 - in the event that the first GS process does not appoint, the DGSD process will continue in order to ensure as far as possible that the General Secretariat is not left at 50% strength.

2. Process and timeline

2.1	Notice by current DGSD and GS of their intentions to retire in July and August 2020 respectively	17 August 2018
2.2	Submission of process and timetable paper for November 2018 Mission Council	30 September 2018
2.3	Creation of process and consultation with, amongst others <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DGS (administration and resources)• Assembly Clerk• Human resources advisory group (HRAG)• Convenor of most recent GS nominating group (2014)• Convenor of Assembly nominations committee	Autumn 2018

2.4	Mission Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> invited to approve process and its timeline and to elect three committee conveners to join panel 	16 November 2018
2.5	Identification of remaining members of the nominating groups: GS: six people from the panel for Assembly appointments, appointed by the nominations committee; DGSD: two more to accompany the Moderator and a convenor elected by Mission Council, together with the duly nominated GS; review of General Secretariat and of current job descriptions and person specifications	Winter 2018/19
2.6	Submission of papers re review, Job description and person specification for Mission Council's consideration	30 March 2019
2.7	Advertising in June <i>Reform</i> – deadline	10 May 2019
2.8	Mission Council invited to approve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> outcomes of General Secretariat review Job description/person specification 	13 May 2019
2.9	Finalising of paperwork, advertisement, etc; preparation of nominating group	Early summer 2019
2.10	Closing date for nominations to be with the Clerk: 15 June; closing date for applications to be with the Clerk: 12 July.	
2.11	Long listing, shortlisting from 15 to 25 July 2019	
2.12	Interviews for GS in first week of September 2019 Interviews for DGSD in second half of October	
2.13	Appointment by Mission Council	15 November 2019
2.14	News made public following Mission Council at a time mutually agreed with appointees and communications staff	
2.15	Appointees' notice period of up to six months, commencing	1 December 2019
2.16	Start date that ensures overlap, shadowing and hand over	1 June 2020
2.17	Induction at General Assembly 2020	10 to 13 July 2020
2.18	We invite Mission Council's reflections upon this proposed way ahead, recognising that if either group is unable to appoint, we re-advertise, making preparations as necessary for vacancies.	

Draft resolution

Mission Council approves the timeline and process as outlined for the appointment of a General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary ready for Induction at the General Assembly of 2020.

Paper J2

Nominations

Supplementary nominations



Supplementary nominations

Draft resolutions

- 1) Acting on behalf of General Assembly, Mission Council notes and approves the changes set out in section A of the report.
- 2) Acting on behalf of General Assembly, Mission Council appoints according to the list of nominations in section B of the report.

A. Amendments to published list of nominations: see resolution (one) above

Mission Council is asked to note and approve the following additional amendments to the nominations list that was agreed at General Assembly 2018.

- 2.2 Nominations committee
The Revd Nicola Furley-Smith is now the Southern Synod member.
- 3.1 Mission committee
Ms Lindsey Brown is now the Eastern Synod member, serving until the end of General Assembly 2022.
- 5.2 Communications committee
Mrs Heather Carr has resigned from the committee.
- 5.5 The United Reformed Church Trust
Mr Clifford Patten has been co-opted to serve until the end of General Assembly 2020.
- 11.3 Congregational Fund Board
 - i. This is a long-established charity providing financial support to ministers and ordinands of the independent tradition. The URC appoints five trustees.
 - ii. The Revd Eric Allen has been a trustee since 1996. He has resigned giving his 90th birthday in 2019 as a reason. The nominations committee will seek a replacement.
 - iii. The other four URC trustees are:
Mr Anthony Bayley serving to 30 June 2019
The Revd Geoffrey Roper serving to 30 June 2019
The Revd Kate Hackett serving to the end of General Assembly 2020
Mrs Jackie Haws serving to the end of General Assembly 2021.

B. New appointments: see resolution (two) above

2.3.1 Ministerial incapacity and discipline advisory group

The Revd Alison Davis wishes to relinquish her role as Consultant for mandated groups. The nominations committee proposes that the Revd Ian Kirby be Consultant for mandated groups from 1 January 2019 until the end of General Assembly 2023.

2.4 Disciplinary process commission panel

The officers of the panel have asked that the Revd Bill Bowman be re-appointed to the panel because of his recent experience. His previous term finished at General Assembly 2018. The nominations committee proposes that he be appointed with immediate effect until the end of General Assembly 2023.

2.6 Pastoral reference and welfare committee

Mrs Wilma Frew has resigned from being convenor. General Assembly 2018 appointed the Revd David Grosch-Miller to be convenor-elect until 30 June 2019. The nominations committee proposes that David become convenor with immediate effect, until the end of General Assembly 2023.

C. Appointment and review groups: for information

- i. The Revd Andrew Mills has resigned as Moderator of North Western Synod, to take up a local pastoral charge in Southern Synod from February 2019. An appointment group has been formed for the vacant post in the North West, to be convened by Mrs Val Morrison (Yorkshire).
- ii. The Revd Ruth Whitehead will complete seven years as Moderator of South Western Synod in June 2020. A review process is under way. The review group is to be convened by the Revd Paul Bedford (Wessex).

Paper M2

Alan Yates

Back office/front office: what next?



Acting with strategic intent; or Better supporting our local churches; or Back office/front office: what next?

Alan Yates writes as follows, about the slides and ideas he will present:

Introduction

The front office/back office presentation given to Mission Council in March 2018 suggested that such an approach could be used to:

- Improve *and* cost-reduce the administrative work we do in synods and churches by centralising the work (note: **not** Londonising!)
- Enhance the focus and extent of our outward-facing activities.

Alan was asked to develop this concept further and to give Mission Council an opportunity to comment.

How the session will work

Alan will give a short recap of the March presentation and add a little more detail to the concept. This will take 25 minutes or so. Only questions for clarity will be taken at the end of the presentation to enable sufficient time for group discussions. After a maximum of five minutes of Q&A, MC members will spend 30 minutes in groups discussing the following questions:

1. **Would such an approach be beneficial to the URC at the present moment?**
2. **What elements of the approach do you feel are workable and which elements are not?**
3. **What changes would you suggest to enhance the approach (either its functionality – making it work better – or its implementability – making it easier to achieve)?**
4. **How should we start the process? Note this is not a decision to start, simply early planning on what we would do if and when approval is given.**

All groups are asked to respond quickly to questions one and two. Even groups should then do question three and then question four. Odd numbered groups should start with question four and then do question three. This will ensure we get good responses to both three and four.

There will not be plenary feedback. Group reporters are asked to write directly within a week to alan.yates@urc.org.uk

Paper M1

Moderators of Assembly

Listening in the URC

Church 2018
United Reformed Church 2018
Church 2018



Listening in the URC

Questions for discussion in groups

1. **What might be the benefits of a listening project for the URC?**

2. **And what might be the difficulties?**

3. **What other ideas do you have about how we might best listen to each other?**

4. **Do you have other suggestions about how the URC discerns its future trajectory?**

If we proceed with a listening project

5. **Would it be better to bring together elders with ministers/CRCWs, or for them to meet separately?**

6. **Would you favour a single residential moment or a sequence of events for various groupings of synods? Or, would you prefer a process in local churches and synods that culminated in a significant session at General Assembly 2020?**

7. **Would you support the URC providing (from central resources) personnel and money to facilitate a listening project?**

8. **What would you want to say to those organising such a project?**

Group reporters are asked to give **written feedback to Derek Estill or Nigel Uden** in the Saturday lunch break.

