

The United Reformed Church
Minutes of a virtual meeting of Mission Council held 15th March 2021

Monday 15th March

FIRST SESSION

The Moderator, Mr Peter Payas in the Chair.

21/01

The meeting of Mission Council began at 11⁰⁰ The Moderator welcomed everyone and identified new members.

Apologies were received, for all or part of the meeting, from:

Philip French	Observer from the Church of England
The Revd Tessa Henry-Robinson	Wessex Synod Representative
Ms Sarah Lane Cawte	Convenor, Mission
Mrs Val Morrison	Chair, United Reformed Church Trust

Those attending for the first time or attending in a new capacity were:

The Revd Richard Bradley North Western Synod Representative

21/02

The Minutes of the Mission Council

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The Moderator, the Revd Clare Downing, took the Chair.

The General Secretary moved and proposed Resolutions

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21/04

URC website

Mr Andy Jackson introduced a presentation on the current usage and potential future development of the URC website.

Mission Council met in groups to discuss the questions:

1. What is the purpose of the United Reformed Church?
2. How would you explain the URC to Christians and other faiths and to Christians?
3. How does the URC fulfil its purpose? Does it do this better than others?
4. How do you measure the delivery of that purpose?

Feedback from the groups was sent directly to Andy to be a part of the ongoing work.

21/05

Paper M1

Daily Devotions and Sunday Worship

The General Secretary presented Paper M1 and proposed the Resolution:

Mission Council instructs the General Secretariat to consult widely and bring costed proposals to General Assembly 2021 with a view to making the Daily Devotions and the Daily Devotions Sunday Service a continuing feature of the life of the United Reformed Church.

Mission Council agreed unanimously.

The session ended in prayer led by the Revd Helen Everard; Mission Council adjourned at 1500.

Tuesday 16 March

THIRD SESSION

Mission Council resumed at 0930. The Moderator, Mr Peter Paywas in the chair.

Opening worship was led by the Revd Helen Everard; Bible study was led by the Revd Samantha Sheehan.

21/06

Paper G2

URC Future Pensions

The Deputy Treasurer, the Revd John Piper introduced paper G2.

Mission Council met in groups to discuss the questions:

1. Do you agree that this is the right time to consider this matter? If not, why?
2. Which parts of this paper do you not adequately understand?

3. What questions have you got that are not answered by this paper?
- 4.

21/08

Paper D/H2

Ministries and Education and Learning Committees

The Convenor of Education and Learning, Mr Adams, presented paper D/H2 and proposed the Resolution:

Mission Council adopts the process for becoming a Worship Leader or Lay Preacher as detailed in this paper.

Following clarifications and considerable discussion, the Resolution was put.

Mission Council agreed

21/09

Safeguarding

The General Secretary reported on safeguarding that no safeguarding experts currently work at General Assembly level. The Rev Adrian Bulley has been appointed as Assistant General Secretary with responsibility for safeguarding.

The Revd Adrian Bulley reported on three matters to be brought to General Assembly:

1. Despite all safeguarding policies, there has never been a General Assembly safeguarding statement of policy.
2. Safeguarding is not currently mentioned in the URC Structure
3. The Safeguarding Advisory Group should be replaced by a Safeguarding Committee, a standing committee of General Assembly.

Prayers were led by the Revd Helen Everard.

Mission Council adjourned at 1256.

Wednesday 17th March

FIFTH SESSION

Mission Council resumed at 0930. The Moderator, Revd Clare Downing

Mr Alan Yates presented Paper D3, and proposed the Resolution:

Acting on behalf of General Assembly, Mission Council accepts the revised discipleship development strategy and its complementary discipleship development fund policy and operation.

No formal amendment was tabled, but Mission Council, at the suggestion of the Revd Ruth Whitehead, recommended that wealthier synods be advised to provide funding for discipleship development, and less wealthy synods encouraged to use the fund. At the suggestion of the Revd Graham Hoslett, Mission Council recommended that the amount available to synods (Paper D3 6.6.3) be increased to £2000.

SIXTH SESSION

21/15

Mission Council resumed at 1115. The Moderator, Revd Clare Downing, was in the Chair.

The Moderator thanked those leaving Mission Council – Revd Andrew Prasad and Mrs Rosie Martin – for their service, the Chaplain and Bible study leaders, and all members of Mission Council for their participation. She thanked those who had arranged the meeting: Samantha Bircham for Admin support; the tech teams from Affinity and the URC; the General Secretary and staff members, the minute secretary, and the Assembly Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

The General Secretary thanked the Nominations Convener, the Revd Ray Adams who is at Mission Council for the last time, and the Moderator for their leadership of the meeting.

Worship was led by the chaplain, the Rev Helen Everard, during which the Moderator, Mr Peter Pay, preached.

Mission Council adjourned at 1149.