

# Assembly Business Digest

**The 2024 meeting of  
the United Reformed  
Church (URC) General  
Assembly met at The  
Hayes Conference  
Centre in Swanwick**

**from 12-15 July.**

Opening the four-  
day meeting in  
worship, Karen  
Campbell, one of the

Picking up on



### [Paper G4 Energy Crisis Fund](#)

The Finance Committee asked General Assembly to approve the closure of the Energy Crisis Fund and to return the unused balance of around £1.79m to the URC's General Funds.

During discussion, Mr Alan Yates, the Church's Treasurer, indicated that there are a number of pockets of money around the Church that could be consolidated.

### [Paper G5 Legacies of Slavery](#)

The URC has agreed to establish a fund to cover the operational and project costs of its Legacies of Slavery work.

Having considered the URC's context and financial position, a target of £1m was assessed as a fair figure when considered against the Church of England's response (£100m) which, while not a perfect or easy comparison, is the only currently available yardstick.

### [Paper H3 Pastorates & Scopings](#)

The paper from the Ministries Committee set out what should happen when a 100% ministry was not sustainable, and it was necessary

to reconfigure the scoping without needing to wait for the minister to move on.

If the Call to a minister is affected where more than one church closes, the Synod Ministries Committee (or equivalent) will explore whether the closure does make 100% scoping for the pastorate unviable and, if so, whether it is possible to reconfigure the pastorate.

After changes to add the words stipendiary support, and a change to the time periods, the resolution was adopted.

### [Paper H9 Withdrawal of Call](#)

## Day Three

Day three began with worship and “marching in the light of God”, to the rhythm of drums played by the Moderator’s chaplain, the Revd Stephen Ansa-Addo. If representatives didn’t feel awake at the start, they did by the end – spontaneous applause followed the singing.

This was the story that the Revd Dr Michael Jagessar drew on in his pre-recorded Bible Study.

Dr Jagessar invited Assembly to consider what timely words are being addressed to “the grey-haired cloud of witnesses”; what is Jesus saying to “you excessively wordy Protestants?”.

Warning Assembly not to confuse agenda with mission, he asked if we can “let go” and trust the Spirit to take their own trajectory and transform us in the journey of our lives.

### [Paper N1 Church Life Review](#)

John Bradbury, General Secretary of the URC, brought General Assembly up to date with the completion of the first phase of the Church Life Review, and Myles Dunnett, Church Life Review Programme Manager, explained the second phase.

The review came out of a sense in the URC of decline and the burden of regulation, out of budget deficit and out-of-date structures, and a

belief that we are called not to give up but to find new ways to a thriving future.

Phase one of the review raised the question: how do we use the resources we have to relieve tiredness and engage in evangelism? What would it look like to view our resources more collectively? How can synods work together to deliver needed support to local congregations?

Myles explained that phase two of the review is the design phase. It consists of three work streams to unburden local churches: financial resource sharing; shared support services and the employment of lay workers.

A finance consultation took place in June and other consultations will follow.

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Day four, 15 July, began with worship and a Bible study. "To which new thing might God be calling?" asked the Revd Stephen Ansa-Addo, Chaplain. Dr Lisa Adjei of Christian Aid and the Sankofa Collective preached.

Dr Adjei pointed to three things that Jesus did that we are called to do too:

We must reorder power. Jesus changes who is at the centre of the story. We must reimagine. Dr Adjei quoted Akan phrase from Ghana, 'Sankofa'. It can literally mean 'Go back and get it', but is also about learning from the best of the past and restoring what has been lost. We must renew. Dr Adjei quoted Vanessa Machado de Oliveira saying that the world as we know it is ending and we must embrace the new world. We must stand alongside those who have been on the outside.

### **Session 11**

Northstowe Church Network (LEP) was welcomed at Assembly as a local United Reformed Church, you can watch a video about it here:

<https://youtu.be/D6pikiQzEXo?si=sYuueZ7axZGJWIJI>

### **Moderator-Elect Acceptance Speech**

The Moderator-Elect of the URC General Assembly 2025-26, Ms Catriona Wheeler addressed Assembly.

Ms Wheeler said that, through the support of others and through prayer, she will discern how God can use her "as together we face a somewhat uncertain future and work

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General Assembly passed a number of resolutions on the current conflict in Israeli and the occupied Palestinian Territories, called for an immediate, permanent ceasefire between Hamas and the Israeli Defence Force, arms sales, embargoes, acts of antisemitism in the UK, acts of Islamophobia in the UK, and encouraged every local church and Synod to reach out in friendship and welcome local faith communities. The full text of the amended resolutions can be found in the [minutes of the General Assembly](#).

### **Address to the Throne**

The Revd Fiona Bennett, former General Assembly Moderator, delivered the Address to the Throne to Assembly, after which Assembly voted to approve.

### **Induction of the Revd Timothy Meadows as Moderator of the General Assembly,**

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