

Resolutions from the 2018 Annual Meetings

Resolution 1

This General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches:

- 1) welcomes the award of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a global coalition of over 460 non-governmental organisations promoting adherence to and the implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW);
- 2) urges fellow Unitarians and congregations to write to the Prime Minister, MPs and, where appropriate, members of the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly, to call on the UK Government to abide fully by its legal obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), of which it is a founding member, and to express their support for the TPNW and promote awareness of the TPNW in our chapels and local communities and through letters to the press;
- 3) resolves to send a message of goodwill and solidarity to the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to commemorate the hundreds of thousands of people who were killed as a result of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs, all those gravely injured and all those who are still suffering and to join with them and all people of goodwill in praying that the world will heed the recent warning of Pope Francis of the 'catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects' of massive nuclear destruction.

Resolution 2

That the By-laws be amended, as follows:

Amend title of section 2) to read

2) Conditions for Admission to Membership of the Assembly

Paragraph 2.1.2 – replace “12” by “8”

Paragraph 2.2 - replace with:

“2.2 Transitional Arrangements

Congregations admitted to membership as at 4 April 2018 under “2.2 Small Congregations” will be recognised as Members of the Assembly with Full voting rights.

Resolution 3

That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches recognises the considerable contribution of Rev Dr Ann Peart to Unitarians in the United Kingdom by naming her as an Honorary Member.

Resolution 4

- 1) That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches accepts the changes to the length and format of the Annual Meetings [as set out in report AGM13/18]; and that a formal review is carried out in three years' time.
- 2) That the General Assembly's Constitution be amended, as follows:

“ 10. Motions at Annual Meetings

No ordinary or procedural motion shall be proposed at the Annual Meeting unless notice in writing thereof shall have been given to the Executive Committee fifty-six days at least before the first day appointed for such meeting. An emergency motion may be proposed at the Annual Meetings if two-thirds of the members present and voting at the meeting give leave for this; this vote is taken without any prior discussion. Any amendment to a motion, which the President deems in order, may be proposed and discussed without notice or leave.

Motions submitted by Congregations, Regional Associations or Affiliated Societies must be supported by a majority of the relevant governing body of the Congregation, Association or Society. Motions submitted by Full Members must be endorsed by at least twelve such individual voting members of the Assembly. The Executive Committee shall give not less than thirty days' notice of any motion to the members of the Assembly, either by circular or by advertisement, as the Executive Committee shall determine. The Executive Committee has the authority to propose motions on its own behalf.

There shall be a maximum of FOUR ordinary motions accepted for debate by the Assembly. There shall be a maximum of ONE Emergency Motion (except in exceptional circumstances) accepted for debate by the Assembly.

In the event that more than FOUR ordinary motions and/or more than ONE emergency motions are received a vote shall be taken at the beginning of the business meetings to determine which four ordinary and one emergency motions shall be accepted for debate. ”

Resolution 5

That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, deeply concerned by the way that the negative effects of the government austerity measures implemented over the last few years have fallen disproportionately on women, calls upon all Unitarians and Free Christians to respond by:

- 1) acquainting themselves and their congregations with the relevant information regarding this subject;
- 2) initiating and supporting actions at congregational level to support women in their community affected by these measures through involvement where possible in local community projects and/or raising funds for the same, seeking advice from the Unitarian's Women's Group if required;
- 3) asking our chief officer to lobby parliament if and when possible for an end to the current austerity measures that are causing misery and hardship for so many people;
- 4) taking specific collective action, in coalition with other organisations and concerned citizens, to support the above.

Resolution 6

That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches recognises the considerable contribution of Alan Ruston to Unitarians in the United Kingdom by naming him as an Honorary Member.

Resolution 7

This General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches:

- 1) Commends the excellent work of the Equality Trust which has shone a light on the evidence that inequality harms *everyone*, not just the poor, in all communities.
- 2) Urges Unitarians to take cognisance of the research findings of the Trust and to support the drive towards greater equality in society wherever possible.
- 3) Resolves that the General Assembly signifies its support by registering as an affiliate of the Trust and instructs the Executive Committee to make the necessary arrangements to put this into effect as soon as possible after these meetings.

FURTHER RESOLUTIONS

- 1) That the Report of the General Assembly Executive Committee and the Accounts of the General Assembly be received and adopted.
- 2) That Shaw Gibbs Ltd be reappointed as Auditors.
- 3) That Peter Hanley be appointed Honorary Treasurer for the year 2018-2019.
- 4) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to Peter Hanley for his service as Treasurer during the year 2017-2018, and to district association and local officers for their invaluable services.
- 5) That greetings be sent to kindred churches and societies abroad.
- 6) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to Rev Danny Crosby for preaching the Assembly Sermon.
- 7) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to Rev Kate Whyman, worship leader for the Anniversary Service, and to all those who provided music and other content for the Anniversary Service and on other worship occasions during these Meetings.
- 8) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to the members of the General Assembly staff and to all volunteers for their inestimable help in organising the Meetings.
- 9) That Joan Cook be appointed President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches for the year 2018-2019.
- 10) That Rev Celia Cartwright be appointed Vice-President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches for the year 2018-2019.
- 11) That this ninetieth General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches expresses its gratitude for the services provided by Rev Charles VanDenBroeder as President during the year 2017-2018.

Motion Referred Back

The following motion was 'referred back' – the proposers being asked to consult further and return with the motion to the next general meeting or the one following.

“That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, understanding and acknowledging the role of the member congregations of the Assembly, recognises the increasing role of new technology to develop virtual Unitarian communities and other forms of Unitarian involvement in today’s society and calls upon the Executive Committee to propose changes to the Constitution that will allow for new forms of membership to be accepted and will allow for such members to be represented in the business of the Assembly.”