



Non-Stipendiary Ministry

A Synod Policy for Appointment, Review and Retirement

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the report of the NSM Working Group to the URC Ministries Committee dated April 2017

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2015 the Ministries Committee with the endorsement of Mission Council, decided to establish a new Working Group on Non Stipendiary Ministry. The group provided an historical overview of this ministry within the life of the United Reformed Church and how it has evolved since the formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972.
- 1.2 The group also made several recommendations at the conclusion of their work. This policy document seeks to embed three of the central recommendations into a policy that enables the Synod to value, support and encourage this important ministry in the life of the East Midlands Synod. This policy therefore requires the Synod to implement the following processes in respect of NSM's:
 - A formal Appointment Process
 - A formal Review Process
 - A formal Retirement Process

2 The Appointment Process

- 2.1 In the case of an ordinand, a suitable post should be identified at the point of candidating allowing flexibility throughout training.
- 2.2 A suitable role should be identified by the Ordained Ministry and Churches Group (OMCG) in consultation with the Moderator, the NSM and the local congregation and, in the case of Ministers in Secular Employment (MSE), representatives of those organisations to which it is intended that the minister should relate.
- 2.3 The Terms of Settlement should be drawn up by OMCG in consultation with the Moderator, the NSM and the local congregation and, in the case of Ministers in Secular Employment, representatives of those organisations to which it is intended that the minister should relate.
- 2.4 For ministers who are self-employed, it is encouraged for the minister to set up a support group - this could be a cross section of people that reflect church and secular life.
- 2.5 The Terms of Settlement and Job Description (which can be found as Appendix 1) should include the following:
 - a) Precise details of duties expected to be carried out (while recognising that these may alter from time to time).
 - b) Precise details of duties NOT expected of the NSM where necessary.
 - c) Expectations with regard to the amount of time per week / month expected to be offered.

- d) Expectations with regard to arrangements for holidays – amount and process for booking – recognising that in a part-time role, holidays may need to be expressed differently from a full-time role. (Especially important in relation to ministers in full-time employment);
- e) Arrangements for the reimbursement of expenses (cf the detailed advice presented to General Assembly 1997 - Reports to Assembly 1997, p104);
- f) Details of the support arrangements – church / person / support group
- g) Facilities for ongoing education, including any book grant payable (and by whom)
- h) What is expected from the minister in the wider church, e.g., committee work. Again it needs to be recognised that some requirements may be incompatible with the NSM's paid employment. Any such work will need to be agreed by NSM and their support organisation
- i) The procedure whereby the parties to the Terms of Settlement may vary its terms in the light of experience/changes in personal circumstances etc (i.e. it should only be varied with the agreement of all those parties who originally drew up the Terms of Settlement).
- j) The Terms of Settlement should be, in the first instance, for a period of normally three years and not exceeding five years, should be reviewed by the OMCG in its final year and may be extended for further periods not exceeding five years.

3 The Review Process

- 3.1 The review is triggered six months before the end of the Term of Appointment by OMCG. (A review template to assist this process can be found at Appendix 2).
- 3.2 OMCG shall appoint a panel of three members. The three panel members need not be members of OMCG but will be appointed by, and fully authorised to act on behalf of, OMCG.
- 3.3 In the initial communication to the NSM and Church Secretary/Secretaries advising them of the Review, the Moderator's PA will confirm the names of the three members of the panel appointed by OMCG. In the event that there is any change to the membership of the panel during the review process, the Moderator's PA will notify the NSM and Church Secretary/Secretaries accordingly.
- 3.4 The remit of the panel is to:
 - a) meet with the NSM;
 - b) meet the elders of the local pastorate or workplace line manager.
 - c) write a report for OMCG.
- 3.5 Following the above meetings, separate reports will be written and shared for confirmation as true records with (a) the NSM and (b) the elders/workplace line manager before they are combined within a final report. This final report serves as the basis for the panel's recommendation to be shared with OMCG.
- 3.6 Terms of Settlement, Job Description, Policy Document and Appendices will be forwarded to the NSM and Church Secretary/Secretaries with the initial communication. These will be discussed during the review. The Synod Terms of Settlement Officer may be consulted regarding the Terms of Settlement as necessary.

4. Review Process Outcome

- 4.1 In the light of the panel's recommendation, it is the role of OMCG to decide to:
- (a) re-appoint to the existing pastorate/role for a further term; or
 - (b) recommend that the appointment is brought to a close; or
 - (c) consider alternative strategic opportunities for an NSM appointment elsewhere (if any such appointments are identified by OMCG);
- 4.2 In the case of 4.1 (a) (where the decision is to re-appoint), a resolution shall be taken to the Church Meeting via the Elders' Meeting, on behalf of OMCG for concurrence.
- 4.3 In the case of 4.1 (b) (where the decision is to bring the appointment to a close), OMCG deputies will convey the decision to Church Meeting.
- 4.4 In the case of 4.1 (c) (where the decision is to consider alternative appointments), OMCG deputies will convey the decision to Church Meeting.

5 The Retirement Process

- 5.1 The Duty to Consider procedure will mean the minister in this situation will be contacted by the Synod Moderator at the time of their 67th birthday.
- 5.2 It is possible for an NSM to continue in service beyond 67 for fixed periods and convention dictates that such extensions be for one term of three years for ministers under the age of 70 and one year for ministers over the age of 70.
- 5.3 A post will be subject to review for a possible extension. Such a review will be conducted by OMCG using the template for a review. Post-70 Reviews may have a less formal structure but will always look forward as well as back.
- 5.4 Upon retirement, the Moderator shall conduct an Exit Interview as with all ministers, which will reach agreement as to what may continue and what will stop, and any boundaries to be observed (e.g. if the Minister remains in the church served).
- 5.5 The Moderator shall send a summary of the NSM's ministry to the Moderator of General Assembly for them to record their thanks.
- 5.6 Retirement should be celebrated by a service of worship in the Minister's local church or another suitable place. Local churches may need to be encouraged to organise this particularly in the case of a Minister whose service has been in MSE or Chaplaincy, or another context not focussing on a local church.

APPENDIX 1

(This will need adapting as appropriate to the context)

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

TERMS OF SETTLEMENT AND JOB DESCRIPTION

THE AGREEMENT IS MADE BETWEEN

XX URC (the pastorate) or

XX (the sphere of work)

AND THE REVD XX (NSM)

1. THE SCOPE

The basic pattern for the NSM's time is ? hours a week spread over ? days at XX URC. The post is initially for 3 years, i.e. until (date), with a review conducted by the Ordained Ministry and Churches Group (OMCG) commencing at least six months before the end of this term.

2. JOB DESCRIPTION

The NSM will be the XX at XX URC.

The NSM's duties will include:

3. STIPEND

No stipend is payable as this is a non-stipendiary appointment.

4. HOUSING

The NSM will live in his/her own house and no housing allowance is payable.

5. ADMINISTRATION

The Pastorate (XX URC) will reimburse the NSM for all administrative expenses, including stationery, postage, computer consumables and resource materials, upon submission of a written claim.

Telephone(s) will be provided by the Pastorate including internet access. The minister will be expected to reimburse the pastorate for private telephone calls. A computer may also be provided (if required) with access via broadband to the internet. Expenses will normally be paid monthly on receipt of a written claim.

6. TRAVEL

The NSM may claim reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses incurred in the execution of his/her duties, at the URC recommended mileage rate.

7. EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

The Pastorate will support the NSM in undertaking EM2/EM3. The NSM will be expected to take two weeks study leave and the Pastorate will encourage attendance at any relevant training days including Ministers’ Spring School. The Pastorate agrees to pay for books up to the cost of £? in any one calendar year.

8. HOLIDAY

The Pastorate will honour recommendations for regular weekly days off, and holidays will be by negotiation.

9. DURATION OF APPOINTMENT

i) The ministry at XX URC to be until (date)

ii) Should the NSM or the church wish to terminate the agreement, a minimum period of 3 months’ notice should be given. The Ordained Ministry and Churches Group (OMCG) and the Moderator should be advised immediately.

10. RENEGOTIATION AND REVIEW

The Pastorate and NSM are willing to renegotiate this Terms of Settlement or the job description during the course of the ministry at the request of the Synod. Any suggested changes from the Pastorate or from the NSM will be subject to the agreement of Synod. The ministry will be reviewed no later than 6 months before the date of the end of the appointment.

11. PASTORAL SUPERVISION

During EM2 training the NSM will have a Support Group and Pastoral Supervisor. Upon completion of EM2 and for the remainder of their “in post” ministry, the NSM will receive Pastoral Supervision, as a mandatory requirement, in line with the guidance from Ministries Committee under the authority of General Assembly.

12. THE WIDER UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

The Pastorate acknowledges that ministers are ministers of the whole URC and have a responsibility to serve the wider church as well as their own pastorate. Requests for specific pieces of wider service will be discussed between the elders and the NSM.

13. PLAN FOR PARTNERSHIP

Both the NSM and the Pastorate will seek to follow the Plan for Partnership and the provisions of the Basis of Union.

SIGNED: (NSM)
..... (on behalf of the Pastorate)
..... (on behalf of the Synod)

DATED:

APPENDIX 2

A Template for Reviews

(This will need adapting by the panel as appropriate to the context)

The following questions may be helpful for the NSM review process:

For the NSM to reflect upon:

1. How do you define your ministry?
2. How do you structure your ministry in any given week?
3. What are the things
 - a) that have gone really well?
 - b) that you would like to have gone better?
4. How would you describe your spirituality?
5. Is the appointment
 - a) purposeful (i.e. do you find yourself integrated in the life of the church)?
 - b) affirmed or is your ministry overlooked?
6. Colleagueship – do you feel part of a team?
7. Independent management
 - a) Are you given a blank canvas on which to operate as a minister, e.g. are you free to show initiative?
 - b) Do you ever yearn to do something but feel powerless?
 - c) Would you ever like to consider redeployment?
8. How have you made use of your CME budget?
9. What do you consider are your training needs?

Concluding comments, recommendations and encouragements

For the Elders/Pastorate to reflect on:

1. How do you think the minister is fulfilling his/her ministry in terms of the NSM job description?
2. How would you describe the relationship between the minister and the pastorate?
3. How do you see the minister developing in the future?
4. In the period ahead what personal and/or professional development in the minister would most help the pastorate?
5. How is the minister working with, and relating to, the Synod/Synod Committees?

Concluding comments, recommendations and encouragements

East Midlands Synod (Revised March 2023)