

Where does the money go?

As has been outlined in the 'thank you' from John Ellis, the denomination's treasurer, the main calls on the Ministry and Mission Fund are paying the stipends of United Reformed Church ministers of Word and Sacraments, and church related community workers, as well as funding the majority of costs for those training for stipendiary and non-stipendiary service.

There are 440 stipendiary ministers and 13 active church related community workers serving the United Reformed Church in local settings. Over 90% of our stipendiary ministers of Word and Sacrament serve in local pastorates across the three nations. Some of these ministers are in single church pastorates, but most serve in more than one of the URC's 1,472 churches.



Ministers serving in other roles

“ Whilst the majority of ministers are deployed in local pastorates, a significant if small number occupy other roles that add much to the life of the denomination.

The Special Category Ministry (SCM) scheme enables a number of ministers – currently 23 – to serve in ways that would not otherwise be possible. This includes workplace and higher education chaplaincies, pioneer and evangelism roles, and work of denominational significance such as the St Cuthbert's Centre on Holy Island. Additionally, approximately 20 ministers in stipendiary service exercise their ministry in

a synod post. And, perhaps not surprisingly, several of those in SCM or synod posts also serve part-time in a pastorate.

Stipends are also paid to another group of ministers – those appointed by General Assembly; this group includes the 13 synod moderators, the teaching staff at Westminster College, and six other Assembly appointed posts (including the general secretary and the secretary for ministries).

Your generous giving to the Ministry and Mission Fund ministry enables the work and mission of the whole Church – in both traditional and innovative ways – to continue and flourish. Thank you. ”

Craig Bowman
Secretary for ministries

A prayer

Generous God,
Fountain of surpassing grace and overflowing joy,
we praise you for the riches of faith in Christ Jesus.

We rejoice in the privilege of sharing in fellowship which sustains the faithful ministry of your people.

May we spend ourselves in the power of your Spirit,
that the seed of your Kingdom may bear abundant fruit.

Amen.

Further resources on stewardship are available here:
www.urch.org.uk/stewardship



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Thank you for all that you give



The United Reformed Church



Thank you for your generosity!

“ United Reformed Church people are generous. I see this every working day. People give of themselves – their time and talents, their hard work and earnest prayer, their care, concern and commitment. So as you read this thank-you leaflet, please do not think only of money. Read it as thanks for all that you give to our Church and through our Church – to the glory of God, to witness in our local communities, to the work of Christ in the world. Thank you for your part in all of this.

There is a long section in the New Testament about Christian giving, in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Yet we never find the word ‘money’ in these two chapters. We read of giving as ‘harvest’ – as sowing that leads to growing. We discover that giving is a means of ‘fellowship’: it links giver to giver, and giver to receiver, in a strong bond of Christian care. The words ‘praise’ and ‘prayer’ appear: giving opens people to God in new and deeper ways. And the thought of ‘grace’ repeats again and again: the church’s whole life is a matter of grace, with its source in the heart of God. So thank you for all that you give – for your generosity of heart and hand, for the finance and friendship you share, for the growth your giving makes possible, and for the grace of God that you share by your gifts.

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John Proctor
General secretary of the United Reformed Church

Can you give an additional 1%?

Almost all the money in the Ministry and Mission (M&M) Fund comes from the gifts of local churches. Many congregations are in difficult times financially, yet they give to God in gratitude for all the gifts they receive from God.

One such congregation in Bristol took an initiative to challenge the wider Church about its giving. The South Western Synod welcomed this idea and brought the topic to the 2014 General Assembly.

Assembly resolved:

General Assembly challenges all local churches to increase their giving to the Ministry and Mission Fund by at least an additional 1% per annum.

Can you help make this happen? **If your church gives £1,000 a month to M&M, could your Church Meeting agree to give £1,010 a month instead?** Our Assembly is not asking you to consider a large increase ... but, perhaps surprisingly, an increase of just 1% in the gifts of all URC congregations could transform the finances of the denomination.

If every church were to follow this lead, the steady decline in the overall M&M giving could be halted and future threatened deficits be avoided.



Thank you for all gifts received in 2014

“ In 2014 local churches gave over £19.6m to the M&M Fund, and another £0.7m was contributed by our investments, which had a better year than has been the case recently. Nevertheless the overall income was down on 2013, which shows the importance of the General Assembly resolution on increased giving described on the previous page.

The number of stipendiary ministers we can pay depends on the level of M&M giving; £15m goes directly into paying the stipends of ministers in local settings and a portion of the M&M Fund goes towards the training of ministers. It would be a sad day if we ever had to refuse to train someone whom we believed to be called by God to the ministry because we had not got the money to pay them.

Many of the other areas of spending from the M&M Fund also relate to forms of ministry. Our four Resource Centres for Learning, for example, help develop the discipleship of lay people as well as ministers. Between them they receive around £1.2m from the M&M Fund each year.

In fact every congregation of the United Reformed Church benefits directly or indirectly from the spending made possible by the M&M Fund. So to all who make this possible by their giving, a huge THANK YOU.

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John Ellis
Treasurer of the United Reformed Church