

Nomination for Moderator of the General Assembly 2025-26

Background

- 1 The General Assembly meeting in July 2024 will be asked to elect a Moderator of the General Assembly to serve from the end of the 2025 Assembly to the end of the 2026 Assembly.
- 2 The Assembly Moderator's tasks include:
 - Chairing (ie "moderating") the Assembly itself, the Assembly Executive and some key committees, as well as being an ex officio member of about 20 others
 - Representing the denomination both internally, especially by visiting local churches at times of celebration or tragedy, and externally on many ecumenical occasions and some public ones eg Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph
 - Making the final decision on some complex issues after listening to advice.
- 3 Synods have the opportunity to make nominations of a Minister of Word and Sacraments, Church-Related Community Worker or Elder. The General Secretary subsequently informs each of those nominated of all the nominations and asks them to decide whether they are willing to be in the election. If so, they will make a short presentation to the 2024 Assembly prior to prayer and the election.

Possible Nominee

- 4 Synod Council proposes the name of the Revd Neil Thorogood.
- 5 Neil was born 60 years ago and started growing up on Pacific Islands where his father, Bernard, was a missionary with the London Missionary Society (LMS). Bernard became the General Secretary of the LMS and was the key person in moving from a colonial model of mission to the equal partnership model adopted by the Council for World Mission. A deep sense of being part of a global Church shapes Neil's understanding of ministry and mission.
- 6 Neil was ordained as a URC Minister in 1992 and has served in four different Synods. Since 2020 he has been Minister of Trinity-Henleaze URC in Bristol, one of our larger churches, and of Thornbury URC, with an average congregation of 20.
- 7 From 2005 to 2020 he was on the staff of the URC's Westminster College in Cambridge, latterly serving as Principal. In 2014 the College completed the most major refurbishment in its history.
- 8 Neil is an exceptionally creative Minister, through drawings and paintings as well as liturgy. His skills as a wordsmith are evident in several publications as well as in his sermons and addresses.
- 9 Neil's uncle, Derek Thorogood, is a longstanding member of the URC within Southern Synod in Sussex.

Resolution

Southern Synod nominates the Revd Neil Thorogood for the role of Moderator of the General Assembly 2025-26.

John G Ellis
Moderator of the General Assembly 2013-16