

## **MOTIONS FOR THE 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The following motions have been submitted for consideration at the GA Annual Meetings 2024. Amendments may be submitted at any time prior to the final vote on a motion. However, it is in the best interests of clarity for amendments to be advised as far in advance as possible. Amendments received are noted in blue.

### **1. FROM TWELVE FULL MEMBERS (AMENDED)**

That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches recognises the rapidly growing significance of automation, algorithms, and artificial intelligence (AI) and encourages a balanced response mindful of both substantial benefits and threats. In particular it:

i) calls upon individuals and congregations to **study learn about** AI, algorithms and their societal impact (**whether good or bad**), encourages Unitarian bodies to host and/or facilitate wider societal and philosophical conversations, and instructs the Executive Committee to urgently launch an AI Response Task Group to oversee this process and develop a study framework for it;

ii) recognises that injustices, often affecting the already disadvantaged, are occurring through automation (AI based or otherwise), and calls upon Unitarians to challenge such injustices either directly or through support of organisations like the Just Algorithms Action Group.

### **2. FROM THE FOY SOCIETY**

This General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches:

- a) Affirms its strong support for the NO MORE DEATHS campaign, promoted by the charity Inquest, which urges HM Government to establish a National Oversight Mechanism for England and Wales – a new independent public body responsible for collating, analysing and following-up on recommendations arising from inquests, inquiries, official reviews and investigations into state-related deaths.
- b) Instructs the Executive Committee to add the Unitarian General Assembly to the list of supporting bodies for this campaign.
- c) Urges Unitarian churches, districts and individuals in England and Wales to support this worthwhile campaign by writing to local Members of Parliament, sharing information about it wherever possible and donating to the Inquest campaign appeal.

### **3. FROM LEWISHAM UNITARIANS**

This General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches grieves and deplores the recent events in Israel and Gaza, notably the actions of Hamas in killing and abducting hundreds of people on 7 October 2023, and the subsequent responses by the Israeli Government which have resulted in huge destruction in Gaza and great harm to innocent civilians.

The Assembly resolves to:

- extend heartfelt sympathy to all those affected by occupation, terrorism, and violence in Israel and the Occupied Territories and appeals to Unitarian congregations to support the humanitarian relief efforts of medical and other charities (such as the Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) and the Palestinian Red Crescent)
- call upon the UK Government to suspend all military cooperation with Israel throughout the conflict, including the cessation of arms sales by UK companies.
- oppose the continuing establishment of illegal settlements in the Occupied Territories, the institutionalised discrimination against Palestinians, and any attempt at ethnic cleansing within the Territories.
- urge political leaders to pursue an immediate halt to the conflict and a peaceful resolution based on principles of justice and the equal human rights of all the inhabitants of Israel and the Palestinian territories and an end to the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza in accordance with United Nations' resolutions.

### **4. FROM STOCKTON UNITARIANS, CHORLEY UNITARIANS, FOY SOCIETY & NORTHERN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION**

That Clause 10 of the Constitution of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches be amended as follows:

Delete the following two paragraphs:

“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.”

**As per the Resolution at the 2018 Annual Meetings, the following administrative motions are not considered to be part of the maximum 4 ordinary motions.**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE MOTIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

5. The GA Executive Committee, in its capacity as Trustees of the General Assembly, proposes a motion to the General Assembly meetings in 2024:

That we make preparations for the General Assembly to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, subject to a Special Meeting to be held in late 2024.

6. The GA Executive Committee, in its capacity as Trustees of the General Assembly, proposes a motion to the General Assembly meetings in 2024:

That the Executive Committee and General Assembly staff proactively develop a matched-funding scheme to invest in local leadership.

7. That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches recognises the considerable contribution of Dorothy Hewardine to Unitarians in the United Kingdom by naming her as an Honorary Member.

8. That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches recognises the considerable contribution of John and Celia Midgley to Unitarians in the United Kingdom by naming them as Honorary Members.

9. That the Report of the General Assembly Executive Committee and the Accounts of the General Assembly be received and adopted.

10. That Shaw Gibbs be appointed as Auditors.

11. That John Bates be appointed Honorary Treasurer for the year 2024-2025.

12. That the thanks of the Assembly be given to Rev Dr Rob Whiteman for his service as Honorary Treasurer during the year 2023-2024, and to district association and local officers for their invaluable services.

13. That greetings be sent to kindred churches and societies abroad.

14. 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.

- 15.** That Geoff Levermore be appointed President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches for the year 2024-2025.
- 16.** That Rev Jeffrey Bowes be appointed Vice-President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches for the year 2024-2025.
- 17.** That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches expresses its gratitude for the services provided by Vince McCully as President during the year 2023-2024.