



A: The Basis of Union

The Church and The United Reformed Church

1. There is but one Church of the one God. He called Israel to be his people, and in fulfilment of the purpose then begun he called the Church into being through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. The one Church of the one God is holy, because he has redeemed and consecrated it through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and because there Christ dwells with his people.
3. The Church is catholic or universal because Christ calls into it all peoples and because it proclaims the fullness of Christ's Gospel to the whole world.
4. The Church is apostolic because Christ continues to (pr)-0.60.6 (s)-3.4 (e 1.2 (s)r)-0.8 /P AMCID 1Glicch.15 (t). by the failure and weakness which mar the life of the Church.
6. Christ's mercy in continuing his call to the Church in all its failure and weakness has taught the Church that its life must ever be renewed and reformed according to the

The United Reformed Church and the purpose of the Church

11. Within the one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church the United Reformed Church acknowledges its responsibility under God:- to make its life a continual offering of itself and the world to God in adoration and worship through Jesus Christ;- to receive and express the renewing life of the Holy Spirit in each place and in its total fellowship, and there to declare the reconciling and saving power of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;- to live out, in joyful and sacrificial service to all in their various physical and spiritual needs, that ministry of caring, forgiving and healing love which Jesus Christ brought to all whom he met;- and to bear witness to Christ's rule over the nations in all the variety of their organised life.

The faith of the United Reformed Church

12. The United Reformed Church confesses the faith of the Church catholic in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It acknowledges that the life of faith to which it is called is a gift of the Holy Spirit continually received in Word and Sacrament and in the common life of God's people. It acknowledges the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people.
13. The United Reformed Church believes that, in the ministry of the Word, through preaching and the study of the Scriptures, God makes known in each age his saving love, his will for his people and his purpose for the world.
14. The United Reformed Church observes the gospel sacrament of baptism into Christ as a gift of God to his Church, and as an appointed means of grace. Baptism is administered with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. It is the sacrament of entry into the Church and is therefore administered once only to any person.

When the Church observes this sacrament it makes explicit at a particular time and place and for a particular person what God has accomplished in Christ for the whole creation and for all humankind - the forgiveness of sins, the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit and newness of life in the family of God. In this sacrament the Church affirms its faith in the action of God in Jesus Christ; and takes corporate responsibility for those receiving baptism, promising to support and nourish them as it receives them into its fellowship. Baptism may be administered in infancy or at an age of responsibility. Both forms of baptism shall be made available in the life of every worshipping congregation. In either case the sacrament of baptism is a unique part of the total process of Christian initiation. When baptism is administered at an age of responsibility, upon profession of faith, those baptised enter at once upon the full

Their service may be stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and in the latter case their service is given within the area of a synod and in a context it has approved.⁴

22. Some are called to the Ministry of church related community work. After approved preparation and training, they may be called to be Church Related Community Workers in a post approved by the URC.

lay preachers; (c) make provision through synods, in full consultation with the local churches concerned, for the recognition of certain members of the United Reformed Church, normally deaconesses, elders or accredited lay preachers, who may be invited by local churches to preside at baptismal and communion services where pastoral necessity so requires. The pastoral needs of each situation shall be reviewed periodically by the synod in consultation with the local church. Apart from ordained Ministers of the United Reformed Church and of other churches, only such recognised persons may be invited.

'The provisions of paragraph 25 are intended to establish the principle that worship should be led by representative persons recognised by the wider church as well as by the local church. The provisions do not prevent the congregation assembled for baptismal or communion service from themselves appointing, as a church meeting, a suitable person to preside at the celebration of the Sacrament in a case of emergency, for example if the expected president is taken ill or held up in travel. The provisions do not require such an action rather than a postponement of the baptismal or communion service if that seems preferable.'

SCHEDULE A
(see clause 14 in the Basis of Union)

Q 3: Will you faithfully fulfil the duties of your charge?⁷

A: *By the grace of God I promise to lead the Church in worship,
to preach the word and administer the Sacraments,
to exercise pastoral care and oversight,
to take my part in the councils of the Church,
and to give leadership to the Church in mission to the world.*

*As a Minister of the United Reformed Church
I promise to seek its well-being, purity, and peace,
to cherish love towards all other churches,
and to endeavour always to build up the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.*

*I undertake to exercise my ministry
in accordance with the statement
concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church.
All these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

⁷ The presiding Minister (after appropriate consultation) may modify the wording of qu (r)3.7-2.8 (r .3 (F)-2.5n734 (r.6 (di

VERSION II

With the whole Christian Church
the United Reformed Church believes in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*The living God, the only God,
ever to be praised.*

The life of faith to which we are called
is the Spirit's gift
continually received
through the Word, the Sacraments
and our Christian life together.

*We acknowledge the gift
and answer the call,
giving thanks for the means of grace.*

The highest authority
for what we believe and do
is God's Word in the Bible
alive for his people today
through the help of the Spirit.

*We respond to this Word,
through the years.*

We accept with thanksgiving to God
the witness to the catholic faith

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rights of membership of any council of the Church. Suspension does not remove any of the rights accorded by the process of determining the matter which had led to the suspension.

5. A person whose name has been deleted from the Roll of Ministers of the United Reformed Church and who remains a member of the URC has the privilege and responsibilities of that membership, but not those of a Minister of Word and Sacraments, and should refrain from all activity which may lead others to believe that he/she is acting as a Minister of religion. However, should that person be re-instated to the Roll of Ministers, he/she would, on being called to a pastorate, need to be

SCHEDULE F

(See clause 22 in the Basis of Union)

Part 1

Affirmations to be made by Church Related Community Workers at commissioning and induction.

NOTE: The service will also include the reading of the Statement contained in Schedule D, and provision will be made for a statement to be made concerning the circumstances of the call.

Q 8: Do you promise as a Church Related Community Worker of the United Reformed Church to seek its well-being, purity and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always to build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?

A: By the grace of God, I do.

Q 9: Will you undertake to exercise your ministry in accordance with the statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church?

A: *I will, and all these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Or:

VERSION II

Q 1: A.B., will you confess anew your faith?

A: *I confess anew my faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
I believe that the Word of God in the Old and New*

