

A CHECK LIST FOR CHURCH STEWARDS AND ELDERS

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ELDERS

Elders share with the minister(s) in the total caring oversight by which God's people grow in faith and love. Through election by the members of the local church, the United Reformed Church acknowledges their vocation and gives them authority to exercise their particular ministry for as long as God wills. Their solemn setting apart with prayer in the context of worship is termed ordination. They are then inducted to serve on the elders' meeting for such limited time as the local church shall determine.

Elders take counsel with the minister(s) for the whole church and are associated with the ministers in all the wider councils of the Church.

The functions of the Elders' Meeting include:

1. Fostering witness and service, evangelism, Christian Education, ecumenical action in the community.
2. Arranging for public worship, including the celebration of the sacraments.
3. Ensuring pastoral care of the congregation along with the minister.
4. Nominating from among its members a Church Secretary for the election by the Church Meeting.
5. Keeping a roll of members, adherents and children, making recommendations to the Church Meeting on admissions to membership, transfers and removals.
6. Overseeing children's and youth work and all church organisations.
7. Calling for the election of Elders and advising on the number required.
8. Advising the Church Meeting on applications for recognition as a candidate for ministry.
9. Recommending arrangements for oversight of property and the finances of the church.
10. Acting for the church in the wider councils of the United Reformed Church.
11. Representing the whole Church to the local church.

METHODIST CHURCH STEWARDS

Church Stewards are corporately responsible with the minister in pastoral charge for giving leadership and help over the whole range of the life and activity of the local church. They are particularly charged to hold together the variety of concerns within the church, and to act upon the decisions and policies of the Church Council. In fulfilling these responsibilities they are encouraged to draw other members with appropriate gifts and skills into the leadership team appointed by the Church Council (based on Standing Order 633).

A minimum of two Church Stewards is appointed annually by the General Church Meeting, although there is a convention in many churches that they serve for a number of years and retire in rotation, thus assisting continuity in leadership.

Their particular duties include:

- 1 Making arrangements for services and attendance on the preacher.
- 2 Preparing the announcements/written notices.
- 3 Arranging public collections, accounting for them, remitting them to the treasurer.
- 4 Making arrangements for the sacrament of baptism in consultation with the minister.
- 5 Appointing one of their number to serve on any official meeting in the local church to make effective their corporate responsibility.
- 6 Appointing one of their number to represent the church on the Circuit meeting and any other Circuit committees where required.