

A SERVICE FOR THE INDUCTION AND WELCOME OF MINISTERS

Introduction

Before the service, members of the Council responsible for the induction gather and pray. The Statement of the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church may be read at this point and is printed here, so that members of the congregation may read it. For the induction of a United Reformed minister, it shall also be read during the service at #16.

The United Reformed Church confesses the faith of the Church catholic in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The United Reformed Church 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.

The United Reformed Church 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.

The United Reformed Church accepts with thanksgiving the witness borne to the catholic faith by the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and recognises as its own particular heritage the formulations and declarations of faith which have been valued by Congregationalists, Presbyterians and members of Churches of Christ as stating the Gospel and seeking to make its implications clear.

The United Reformed Church testifies to its faith, and orders its life, according to the Basis of Union, believing it to embody the essential notes of the Church catholic and reformed. The United Reformed Church nevertheless reserves its right and declares its readiness at any time to alter, add to, modify or supersede this Basis so that its life may accord more nearly with the mind of Christ.

The United Reformed Church, under the authority of Holy Scripture and in corporate responsibility to Jesus Christ its everliving head, acknowledges its duty to be open at all times to the leading of the Holy Spirit and therefore affirms its right to make such new declarations of its faith and for such purposes as may from time to time be required by obedience to the same Spirit.

The United Reformed Church, believing that it is through the freedom of the Spirit that Jesus Christ holds his people in the fellowship of the one Body, upholds the rights of personal conviction. It shall be for the church, in safeguarding the substance of the faith and maintaining the unity of the fellowship, to determine when these rights are asserted to the injury of its unity and peace.

The United Reformed Church declares that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only ruler and head of the Church, has therein appointed a government distinct from civil government and in things spiritual not subordinate thereto, and that civil authorities, being always subject to the rule of God, ought to respect the

rights of conscience and of religious belief and to serve God's will of justice and peace for all humankind.

The United Reformed Church declares its intention, in fellowship with all the churches, to pray and work for such visible unity of the whole Church as Christ wills and in the way he wills, in order that people and nations may be led more and more to glorify the Father in heaven.

The United Reformed Church Moderator and the Methodist District Chair (or their Deputies) shall preside. The Lord's Supper may be celebrated if desired. The service shall normally be held in pastorate to which the minister is being inducted and welcomed.

The text of this service is not intended to curb creative freedom, but to provide guidance. Within the Methodist and Reformed traditions, fixed forms and freer expressions of worship have been, and should continue to be, valued. However, § 13-21 comprise the core of the service and should always be included.

THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

1 Greeting

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

or

Peace be with the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Hymn

3 Let us pray.

God of truth,
you are worthy of higher praise than we can offer,
and of purer worship than we can imagine.
By your Holy Spirit,
assist us in our prayers
and draw us to yourself,
so that what is lacking
in our thoughts and actions
and in our words and music,
may be supplied by your overflowing love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Either

4 Gracious God,
when we do not listen for your word in the words of others,
forgive and renew us.

When we do not use the gifts you have bestowed on us,
forgive and renew us.

When we do not love one another as sisters and brothers in Christ,
forgive and renew us.

When we do not serve our neighbours in their need,
forgive and renew us.

When we do not share the Good News with those around us,
forgive and renew us.

Silence

God calls us to serve,
forgives us in Christ,
and renews us by the Spirit.
Amen. Thanks be to God.

Or

Gracious God,
you call us to be the body of Christ,
yet we often fail in our vocation.
While Christ proclaimed truth, we obscure it.
Though Christ prayed for the unity of all, we remain divided.
While Christ touched the sick and blessed the poor,
we shrink from the demands of justice.
Forgive us. Conform us to Christ.
May all that we do arise from our unity in him,
and may his Spirit renew us,
so that the world might come to believe. **Amen.**

In repentance and in faith hear the promise of grace and the assurance of
pardon:

Through Christ, God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether
on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Jesus says: Your sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God. Amen

5 Gracious God, the source of every perfect gift:
in Jesus Christ you have given us
your life to redeem us,
your word for our wisdom,
your grace for our guide.

Enter and possess our hearts,
to dwell with us always,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

6 Statement

A presiding minister says:

As A Synod and Circuit/ United Area, with representatives of other local churches, and in the company of friends from many places, we meet to induct and welcome N as a minister of Word and Sacraments in... Let us now hear the word of God in Scripture.

7 The Old Testament reading¹

8 The Epistle²

9 Hymn

10 The Gospel³

11 *The Ministry of the Word may include an Anthem, liturgical dance, or some other appropriate medium for the interpretation of Scripture.*

12 Sermon

THE PRESENTATION, PROMISES, INDUCTION AND WELCOME

13 *For a United Reformed minister:*

The interim moderator or another appropriate person presents the candidate to the presiding ministers in these or similar words:

Moderator, N has been called to serve as minister of this pastorate by decision of the Church Meeting(s).

The Synod/ Area Council has given its concurrence; and the Methodist Conference has appointed *him/her* to serve in the B Circuit. I now present N to you for induction into the pastorate.

or, for a Methodist minister:

Sisters and brothers, I present to you N, whom the Conference has appointed to serve in this Circuit.

As minister of this *church/pastorate*, s/he will become a member of the (*name*) Synod of the United Reformed Church.

14 *A representative person introduces to the presiding ministers and the congregation the minister who is to be inducted and welcomed and may relate briefly to the circumstances of the appointment. The minister who is to be inducted and welcomed may make a personal statement about his/her*

sense of call. If the minister is a United Reformed minister who has been (or is seeking to be) authorized by the Conference to serve the church as a minister, the District Chair announces this.

- 15 *One of the presiding ministers reads this Statement of Faith:*

The Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church confess the faith of the Church Catholic in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They acknowledge that the life of faith to which they are called is a gift of the Holy Spirit continually received in Word and Sacrament and in the common life of God's people. They acknowledge the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as the supreme rule of faith and practice for all God's people.

The Methodist Church accepts the further undertaking *made by N prior to this service/now to be made by N*, to exercise his/her ministry in accordance with the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church.

- 16 *Where a United Reformed minister is being inducted, the Statement of Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church shall be read here.*

- 17 *For a United Reformed minister:*

N, do you confess anew your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do

Do you believe that the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people?

Answer: I do

Do you believe that Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, lived our common life on earth, died upon the cross, and who was raised from the dead and reigns for evermore, is the gift of God's very self to the world?

Do you believe that through him God's love, justice and mercy are revealed and forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life are offered to all people?

And will you faithfully proclaim this gospel?

Answer: By the grace of God this I believe and this I will proclaim.

Do you believe that the Church is the people gathered by God's love to proclaim the reconciliation of the world to God through Jesus Christ?

Answer: I do.

Are zeal for the glory of God,
love for the Lord Jesus Christ,
obedience to the Holy Spirit
and a desire for the salvation of the world,
so far as you know your own heart,
the chief motives which lead you to enter this ministry?

Answer: They are.

Do you promise to live a holy life,
and to maintain the truth of the gospel,
whatever trouble or persecution may arise?

Answer: Relying on the strength of Christ, I do.

Do you promise to fulfil the duties of your charge faithfully,
to lead the Church in worship,
to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments,
to exercise pastoral care and oversight,
to take your part in the councils of the Church,
and to give leadership to the Church
in its mission to the world?

Answer: By the grace of God, I do.

Do you promise,
as a minister 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?

Answer: By the grace of God, I do.

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

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

For a Methodist minister:

N, will you hold before us
the story of God's love and mercy,
above all, the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and will you be among us
as one who preaches the word of God,
administers Baptism,
presides at the Lord's Supper,
teaches the faith,
and cares for the flock?

Answer: I will.

I ask God to help me,
and I invite you all to join with me
in proclaiming the Gospel of life and
hope.

Through Christ, we have Good News to share.

Will you hold before us
God's call to holy living
and be among us
as one who awakens the careless

and strengthens the faithful?

Answer: I will.

I ask God to help me,
and I invite you all to join with me
in commitment to the way of Christ.

**May we reveal Christ's way
through our words and example.**

Will you hold before us
God's commitment to human community,
to our neighbourhoods
and all who live within them,
and to the world that God has made?

Answer: I will.

I ask God to help me,
and I invite you all to join with me
in sharing God's all-embracing love.

May we respond to Christ in all we meet.

*If a newly-appointed minister is the new Superintendent/Area Chair, the
presiding minister says to him/her:*

N, to you is committed the responsibility
for the life and work of this Circuit.
Will you, with your colleagues, lay and ordained,
care for its people,
inspire its witness
and watch over its life
in the name of Christ?

Answer: I will, and I ask God to help me.

18 *A representative person says to the people:*

Sisters and brothers,
will you welcome *N*
and will you offer *him/her*
your friendship, support and prayers
as we join together in the work
to which God has called us?

With God's help, we will

19 Hymn

20 *All stand.*

*A presiding minister says this or some other
Induction Prayer:*

Let us pray.

God of every perfect gift, we give you thanks
that you have called your servant *N*
to serve as a minister in your Church.
Renew in *him/her* the gift of your Holy Spirit,
as, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
we induct *him/her* to serve as ...
Strengthen the gifts you have given *him/her*,
that the ministry and mission of your people
may bear fruit.
Inspire *him/her* in leading worship,
in preaching, teaching and service; and
may the gospel be celebrated
when *he/she* presides at the sacraments.
Bless *him/her* with love in the pastoral care
of your people.
Give *him/her* power and patience to witness
with all Christians to your way,
and to work with all people of goodwill
for justice and mercy in society.
Watch over *him/her* in times of trial, keep
him/her from complacency and spiritual pride;
and fill *his/her* home with your peace.
Give grace to the people of this church
and the congregation to which we belong,
that we may accept the service God offers
us through *N*.
May we work together for the glory of your Name.
And may the good work you have begun today
be brought to completion in Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you, Father,
and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Amen.

- 21 In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and representing the *(name) Synod/ (name) Area Council*
of the United Reformed Church, I declare *N*
to be inducted to ...

May God grant you strength and power
through the Spirit.
In company with all God's people,
and with deep roots and firm foundations,
may you know the breadth and length
and height and depth of the love of Christ.
May your ministry give glory to him. **Amen.**

- 22 *Welcomes may then be given by Methodist Circuit, United Reformed Synod
and ecumenical representatives, civic leaders and other appropriate persons.
The newly inducted minister may reply briefly in his/her own words.*

23 *These or some other prayers of Intercession*

Let us pray.

In faith we pray to God,
who is more ready to hear than we are to ask.

Let us pray for the whole Church of God,
that, rejoicing in our richness and variety,
we may seek peace and unity
and be constantly renewed for mission and service.

Silence

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

Let us pray for the churches of our Circuit, District & Synod and for
other churches in this area,
that, rejoicing in our common heritage,
we may strengthen each other and be built up in love.

Silence

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

Let us pray for the life of the world,
that, rejoicing in our common humanity,
we may reject the ways of war and conflict
and work together for justice and peace.

Silence

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

Let us rejoice in the communion of saints,
that, strengthened by their faithful example,
we may follow the way of Christ
and live to God's praise and glory.

Silence

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

Give us wisdom, Lord, to know your will,

and courage to do it.
May our words declare your love
and may our compassion give substance to our words;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We say together the prayer that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Supper may follow. Otherwise the service concludes:

24 *Offering and prayer of dedication*

25 Hymn

May the God of love
stir up in us the gifts of his grace
and sustain each of us
in our discipleship and service;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* for ever. **Amen.**