

Ordination and Induction of Elders

Eldership has been, and remains, an essential feature of the United Reformed Church. Where people of our tradition have the joy of worshipping as part of a Local Ecumenical Partnership, not all the wording here will be appropriate for the induction of their local leaders, but the use of some of the key elements is encouraged.

Ministers and worship leaders are free and encouraged to choose appropriate Bible passages, and to write or prepare their own prayers and material to use alongside or instead of the examples here. There are, however, some parts of the text that must be used and these are indicated (by the orange boxes).

The ordination and induction of Elders should take place during Sunday worship in the local church where the Elders are to serve. The service should normally be led by a Minister of the Word and Sacraments. Recognising that an Elder is part of the leadership of the whole Church as well as of the local congregation the explicit involvement of representatives from the wider Church is encouraged in the ordination and induction of Elders.

The Structure makes it clear Elders are normally ordained by the Minister, or in a vacancy the Interim Moderator. However, pastorates have evolved since the Structure was drafted, and

it might be impossible for either the Minister or the Interim Moderator to conduct the ordination of Elders.

In naming the Minister and the Interim T establishing the principle that Elders are ordained by a representative of the wider Church, not just the local, and Ministers and Interim Moderators are ordaining Elders in their capacity as members of the synod rather Therefore, in order of preference, the following may preside at the ordination of Elders: the Minister, a duly appointed Local Church Leader (themselves an ordained Elder), the Interim Moderator, another relevant Mission Enabler, Pastoral Convener etc, provided that they themselves are either an ordained Minister or Elder, another URC Minister, an Assembly accredited Lay Preacher, with the holder.

It is the custom of the United Reformed Church to lay hands on those who are ordained which Spirit that the person is equipped for their new ministry.

The worship should include the reading of Scripture and proclamation of the Word, and

normally the celebration of the
Lord's Supper. Section 5

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Introduction

Through baptism, members of the Church are called to serve God in the world and to proclaim the love of Christ by the way they live. There are a variety of ministries within the Church and, in the United Reformed Church, some are called to be elders, to share in the pastoral oversight and leadership of the local church. Today, according to the decision of the Church Meeting, we are ... C ... and ... D ...) to serve in this congregation.

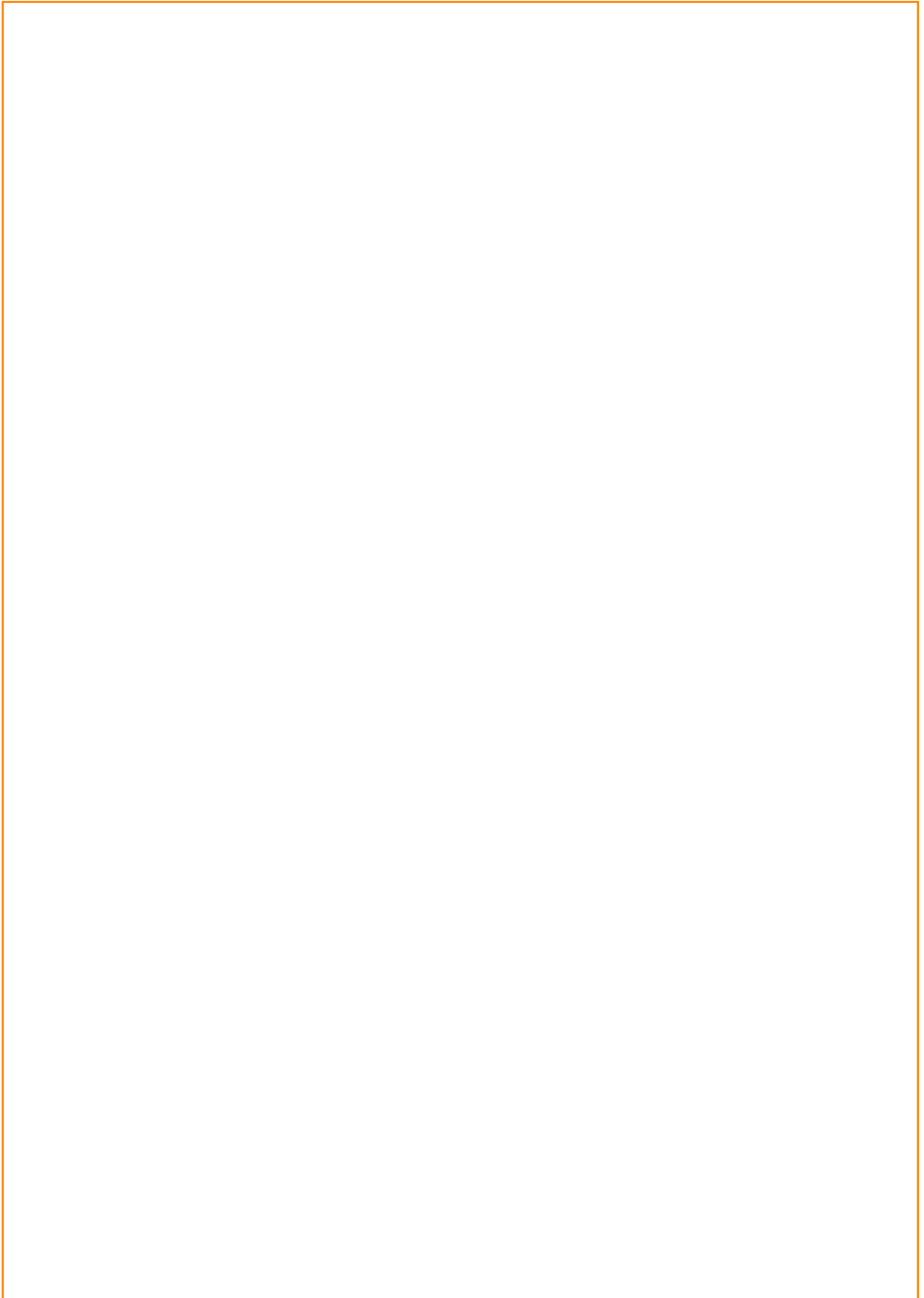
Statement of purpose

people of God called and committed to his service. To equip them for this ministry he gives particular gifts, and calls some of his servants to exercise Elders. Elders share in the leadership of the local church and the pastoral oversight of its members. In the Elders' Meeting they take counsel together for the whole congregation.

They are responsible for making provision for Christian worship and discipleship, for maintaining proper standards of membership, and for promoting witness and service to the community, encouraging mission and fostering the peace, unity, and welfare of the Church. It is their duty to arrange for the proper maintenance of church buildings, and to ensure the oversight of of the Church, and by virtue of their membership of these Councils represent the whole Church to the local church.

Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church

This Statement (Basis of Union, Schedule D) is read in one of the approved



Ordination

This section is only used for those not previously ordained.

All those to be ordained Elders may kneel.

Thank you, God,
for the various gifts which you give to your people,
and for the varieties of ministry in the Church.
Thank you for all those of faith and integrity who have served this local church.
Thank you, now, for ... A ... (and ... B ...).

The presiding minister, and appointed Elders lay hands on each person to be ordained, praying thus:

Empower them with your Holy Spirit,
give them humility and grace,
so that by their faithfulness,
they may show your love to your people:
in the name of our Saviour R^•~•ÁÔ@!â•cÉÁ

All Amen.

In your name, and trusting it to be your will, we now ordain ... A ... to be an Elder.

Induction

The Minister asks the members of the church to accept the ministry of all the Elders named, both newly ordained and any previously ordained:

Will you encourage and support them,
and respond to their ministry
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All We will

Eternal God,
you have called us all to serve you in the world
and to share your love with each other and our neighbours.
Through the decision of this local church
you have called ... A ... (... B ... , ... C ... and ... D ...) to serve us as
an Elder/Elders.

Give them the promised blessings of your Holy Spirit
æ}âÁ, ||Áthem with fresh vision and courage,
to lead us in the work you have called us to do.

Make them wise with the mind of Christ,
and give themÁc@^Á *â-c•Ác@^Á } ^^âÁc [Á~ | , |Ác@â•Á•^!çâ&^Á-æâc@~ ||^LÁ
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All Amen.

Communion Prayer for use at a service Ordaining and Inducting Elders

The newly ordained Elders may be invited to read I Corinthians 11:23-26:

On the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

God is here!

All God's Spirit is with us!

Lift up your hearts

All we lift them up to God!

Let us give God our thanks and praise!

All This is indeed our duty and joy!

Eternal Majesty,

before the ages began you formed the heavens and the earth,
the moon and the stars proclaim your glory,
and all that was created sings your praise.

You make humanity in your own image,
intending us to glorify and enjoy you forever.

Again and again, we turn away from your love,
despite the guidance of your Law and the warnings of your prophets.

In the fullness of time, you emptied yourself of all but love and dwelt with us.

You proclaimed good news to the poor,

freedom for prisoners,
sight for the blind and liberation for the oppressed,

but we preferred to turn away from freedom

choosing the bondage of sin, and nailed you to the Cross.

Yet you defeated the powers of death and evil

and revealed a new life for all who follow you.

Before you were given over to the powers of your age,

you shared in the simplicity of a meal with your friends,

and, during that meal, you took bread, said the ancient blessing,

When Supper was over, you took the cup of wine,
again prayed the ancient prayer of blessing,
gave the cup to your friends and said:

Take this all of you and drink from it,
this is the cup of my blood,
the blood of the new and everlasting covenant
so that sins may be forgiven.
Do this in memory of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:

All Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Come, O Holy Spirit,
on these gifts of bread and wine,
that they may be, for us, the body and blood of Christ.
Lift us into your presence that our faith may be renewed,
our commitment to follow strengthened,
and our understanding of Church deepened.

Bless those who serve this congregation as Elders,
that through their Meetings the mind of Christ may be discerned,
this congregation strengthened in its mission
of worship and witness, evangelism and service,
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V@! [~*~@ÁR^•~•ÉÁ , äc@ÁR^•~•ÉÁ}ÁR^•~•É
in the loving power of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are Yours, O Most High,
forever and ever,

All Amen!

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Some suggested Scripture readings: Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures):

Exodus 18:13-27, Numbers 11:16-17, 24-30, Isaiah 42:1-9,
Ezekiel 34:11-16 New Testament: Matthew 25:14-28, Mark 10:35-45,