



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Ministries

The United Reformed Church
86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT

A Lay Preaching and Worship Leading Handbook



1. Introduction

This booklet has been written primarily for those who have been commissioned as an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher or appointed as a Locally Recognised Worship Leader within the URC. It will also be helpful for those who, up to 2021, were appointed to be Locally Recognised (or Synod Recognised) Lay Preachers.

The worship of the local church is an expression of the worship of the whole people of God. Worship is at the heart of the life of the United Reformed Church and each of its congregations. Worship is vital. It is the single most important thing the Church does. Through worship, as Christ's disciples, we are given the strength and inspiration to witness, evangelise, and serve. The United Reformed Church is richly blessed to have a growing ministry of worship leading and lay preaching within our churches.

Within the local congregation, the elders' meeting is responsible for ensuring that public worship is offered, the sacraments are celebrated and the word is preached (The Manual Schedule B 2.(2)). <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/The-Structure-of-the-URC.pdf>

The URC makes provisions about who should conduct worship (The Manual Schedule A paragraph 25)

<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/The-Basis-of-the-Union.pdf>

...the United Reformed Church shall (a) take steps to ensure that so far as possible ordained Ministers of the Word and Sacraments are readily available to every local church; (b) provide for the training of suitable men and women, members of the United Reformed Church, to be accredited by synods as 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.

These provisions are intended to establish the principle that worship should be led by people authorised and trained by the wider church as well as recognised by the local church. Therefore, to maintain worship of the highest possible standard that is challenging, exciting and inclusive requires people to lead it who are properly trained and equipped for and supported in this role. This does not mean that everyone who leads worship needs or should receive the same training. It does mean though that initial and continuing training is important for all those who regularly lead worship on the Church's behalf. We are, after all, called to be life-long learners.

In March 2021 Mission Council agreed that, to reflect the current need within our churches, there would be only two forms of lay ministry with regard to the worship of the church - Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching and Locally Recognised Worship Leading (see Section 2). <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/mission-council-march-2021-papers.pdf> page 61

As Reformed Christians, we believe that we have to offer God our best in worship as well as in life. The United Reformed Church values all those who lead worship, whether Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers or Locally Recognised Worship Leaders and gives thanks to God for faithful service given and continuing ministry service. Thank you for serving in this way.

Nicola Furley-Smith & Jenny Mills

July 2023

2. Worship in the URC

Worship is vital. It is the single most important thing the Church does; through worship we are given the strength and inspiration to witness, evangelise, and serve. In worship God makes saving love known to us; the Risen Lord draws us, through the Holy Spirit, into the presence of the Most High that we might discern God's will and purpose.¹

Worship is grounded in Scripture. Reformed worship always places Scripture at the centre of the liturgy. Believing that the Bible contains the Word of God, we believe the task of the preacher is to explore that Word and bring it alive to God's people today through critical reflection, faithful exposition, contextual awareness, and sensitive preaching.²

Worship is both catholic and reformed.³ We draw far and wide for liturgical patterns and words - reaching back to the earliest days of the Church, exploring across the ages, and examining the rich variety of contemporary material. Yet our tradition follows the broad pattern of the Western Church's worship with a particular emphasis on the insights of the 16th Century reformers, especially John Calvin. Calvin held the true Church was to be found wherever the Word was truly preached and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper duly administered.⁴

Worship is liturgical. In the Reformed tradition we are mindful of St Paul's injunction that worship should be done decently and in order.⁵ URC worship is always liturgical - sometimes that liturgy is known only to the leader of worship, most often it is shared in an order of service. Our predecessors' rejection of legally imposed prayer books did not mean they rejected all concepts of order. While our tradition resists any prescribed fixed liturgy - only our Baptism, marriage, and ordination services have texts which must be used - we do not reject the concept of order in favour of anything goes or a free-for-all.⁶

Worship is musical. St Augustine observed that to sing is to pray twice - with our minds and our bodies. The Reformation restored congregational singing to the life of the Church and we sing, in a variety of styles, material written in every age. Psalms and hymns embody our praise and pain, patience and persistence.

Worship is ecumenical. Many of our congregations are local ecumenical partnerships with a range of other traditions. Our ecumenical commitments mean we've paid great attention to denominational convergence in forms of worship in recent years and have been enriched by patterns of worship which differ from our own.

Worship is always changing. Reformed Christians are aware that the Church is always in need of reformation under the Word of God; this need to be renewed and purified is also true of worship. We live with the tension of creating liturgies which seek to resonate with both our contemporaries and our traditions as language and understandings

¹ see The URC Service Book (1989) Preface by Colin Gunton p vi

² see the Basis of Union paras 12 & 13

³ see the Basis of Union paras 1 - 9

⁴ see The URC Service Book (1989) preface p vii

⁵ see I Cor 14:40

⁶ see John Huxtable's preface to the 1980 "A Book of Services"

change.⁷ In recent years we have been careful to use inclusive language about people and to expand our language about God with a range of Biblical images to give better expression to the truth that God is beyond all our notions of sex and gender.⁸

Worship is contextual. Leaders of worship should know and understand both their own context and that of the congregation. Preachers help the congregation gain a greater understanding of their own situation and responsibilities through skillful engagement with Scripture. Contextual worship helps us understand ourselves, the world, and God more fully that we may be better equipped for service.⁹ This understanding may be enhanced through the exploration of counter-cultural ideas as we are challenged to be committed disciples and encounter the mystery that is the Triune God.

Worship is well resourced. As Reformed Christians we believe that we have to offer God our best in worship as well as in life. Our ministers train for several years in order to be competent in their various roles. Our Assembly Accredited Lay preachers train for at least two years in order to enjoy the Assembly's confidence that they can lead worship competently within our tradition. Increasingly Elders and others have to lead worship with little or no training and the URC provides many resources to help them and all who lead worship: [Worship Notes](#) which, week after week, give a complete set of prayers and resources to build into a sermon for each Sunday of the year. [Politics in the Pulpit](#) is a weekly podcast which seeks to link contemporary events with the upcoming readings and [Talking Absolute Worship](#) is a recorded discussion between three or four ministers looking at the readings and what we might do with them in worship. We also provide a [weekly URC service in PowerPoint format](#) which can be downloaded ahead of time and used as a form of pulpit supply.

Andy Braunston

Minister for Digital Worship

July 2023

⁷ see Worship From the URC preface by John Young para 2

⁸ see GA [1984 Record of Assembly](#) p22 requiring URC publications to use inclusive language about people and [GA 2014 Record of Assembly](#) page 24 asking that leaders of worship *explore and give intentional consideration to their use of inclusive and expansive language and imagery in worship*.

⁹ see Ephesians 4: 11 - 16

3. Why the difference in the two ministries?

In March 2021 Mission Council agreed there would be two forms of lay ministry with regard to the worship of the Church; *Locally Recognised Worship Leaders* who lead worship in their local context where they hold their membership either as part of a team or as an individual and *Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers* who hold a more formal ministry in the URC, are trained to a high standard and have a sense of a wider Synod based calling as an itinerant resource.

There are two main differences between the two ministries namely, accreditation and area of service and training, just as there had been between the Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching and Locally (or Synod) Lay Preaching prior to 2021.

Before 2021, **Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers** were accredited by the United Reformed Church to preach at any church in the Synod which invites them; to preside at the Sacraments at any church in the Synod with permission/authorisation from the relevant Synod Committee; training was recognised ecumenically; training means if you move Synod, your Assembly Accreditation will be recognised. If you were a **Locally (Synod) Recognised Lay Preacher** appointed before March 2021, you were recognised by the Synod to preach at any church within your local area which invites them; could not preside at the sacraments; their ministry was often not recognised ecumenically, and their recognition could not be transferred to another Synod if they moved.

The ending of previous educational provision for lay preaching and worship leading inevitably led to some inconsistencies in the approach across the Synods and with our ecumenical partners. This gave the denomination a challenge in how it could most ably support those who feel called to lay preaching and worship leading. After a period of consultation (with Lay Preachers, Training and Development Officers or equivalent, Synod Moderators, the and the Ministries Committee) it was concluded that it was not viable to have both Local or Synod Lay Preachers and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers. The issues raised were:

- training and support for Locally Recognised Lay Preaching was often variable across the denomination both in length and content;
- to make the Stepwise programme (used by Local/Synod Recognised Lay Preachers) an accredited and assessed URC Lay preaching course would change the nature of the programme;
- our ecumenical colleagues often did not recognise our Synod/local training as being on a par with their denominational training;
- with the removal of District Councils, often the Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching and Locally/Synod Lay Preaching area of service overlapped and often there was little distinction between the two modes of lay preaching.

Therefore, Mission Council agreed to the two forms of lay ministry mentioned above: - *Locally Recognised Worship Leaders* and *Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers*.

4. Marks of Ministry of a Worship Leader and Lay Preacher

The following is a concise and comprehensive description of what the United Reformed Church can reasonably expect of people who are called to be a Worship Leader or a Lay Preacher. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list and it is not expected that every Worship Leader or Lay Preacher will exhibit all of these marks. It is acknowledged that what this will look like in each Worship Leader or Lay Preacher will vary depending on the context, the individual, and the specific ministry to which they are called.

Both a Worship Leader and a Lay Preacher in the United Reformed Church (URC) seeks to be:

- **A faithful disciple of Jesus Christ:** caught up in the joy and wonder of God's will and work; seeking always to live a holy life in public and in private; sustained by their own rhythm of prayer, Bible reading and worship; open to journeying as a disciple with others.
- **A person of accountability:** committed to serving as a lay preacher within the conciliar oversight of the church; willing to engage in systems of support and mentoring for Worship Leaders and Lay Preachers; willing to engage in mandatory training including safeguarding; ready to collaborate with others for the mission of God.
- **A crafter of worship:** sensitive to the many traditions and styles within the church yet confident to create and advocate new forms as appropriate by combining theological and liturgical knowledge and understanding with technical and practical skills; able to administer the Sacraments if authorised to do so.
- **A preacher:** passionate and effective in breaking open God's Word in preaching; to be relevant in the world whilst retaining their prophetic edge to equip God's people in their mission and discipleship to share the Gospel and to live God's Kingdom of justice and peace to the full.
- **A lifelong learner:** self-aware and committed to lifelong learning reflecting and re-examining the message they communicate; aware of their own strengths, gifts and limitations and thus willing to seek support when and where necessary; making use of the URC provision for on-going training for lay preachers.
- **A contextual theologian:** delighting in Scripture rooted in the Reformed tradition; able to communicate their own faith and its implications; able to encourage others to discover how these rich resources inspire and sustain faithfulness.
- **A pastor:** demonstrates pastoral care through preaching and prayer; confidently adapts when pastoral circumstances dictate.
- **A public figure:** reliable and effective in representing the Church in preaching and/or service leading.
- **A reformer:** able to help congregations to discern and respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit as new chapters open in the life of the Church and others close.

5. Standards for Worship Leaders and Lay Preachers in the United Reformed Church

The following is a concise and comprehensive description of what the United Reformed Church can reasonably expect of people who are called to be a Worship Leader or a Lay Preacher. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list and it is not expected that every Worship Leader or Lay Preacher will exhibit all of these marks. It is acknowledged that what this will look like in each Worship Leader or Lay Preacher will vary depending on the context, the individual, and the specific ministry to which they are called.

This should be read alongside Marks of Ministry for Worship Leaders and Lay Preachers as agreed by Mission Council in March 2021

Expected Standards of

	A Worship Leader	An Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher
A faithful disciple of Jesus Christ	- Is able to speak of their Christian experience; - has a real sense of calling to explore leading worship and preaching.	- is able to express their Christian experience; - has a real sense of calling and commitment to preach the Word of God; - is able to give an account of their Christian faith and how they have grown to this point with reference to challenges faced and insights gained.
A person of accountability	- is a member of good standing within the United Reformed Church; - seeks to be a faithful disciple through regular habits of worship and prayer; - is willing to undertake Safeguarding training for Worship Leaders; - is willing to be involved with a mentor or tutor and with others involved in leading worship.	- is a member of good standing within the United Reformed Church; - seeks to be a faithful disciple through regular habits of worship and prayer; - demonstrates enthusiastic commitment to the URC through the wider councils of the church; - is willing to undertake Safeguarding for Assembly-Accredited Lay Preachers; - is willing to be involved with a mentor or tutor and with others involved in leading worship.
A crafter of worship	- has a willingness to explore leadership in worship; - attends the "presiding at the Sacraments" course organised by the Synod, if authorised to do so.	- is open to trying new worship styles whilst respecting the breadth of diversity of ages, theology and ecclesiology across the church; - takes regular opportunities to attend Synod and Assembly lay preaching events to refresh skills and insights; - attends the "presiding at the Sacraments" course organised by the Synod, if authorised to do so.

A preacher	• has a willingness to share in the journey of faith; • is an effective communicator in sharing the gospel.	• has a good grasp of the Gospel to be proclaimed; • is passionate about leading worship of quality in a range of settings; • is skilled in deepening the faith and worship of others; • is an effective communicator in sharing the gospel.
A lifelong learner	• has a desire to grow in understanding of the Christian faith; • takes opportunities to continue learning and growing in the attitudes, skills and knowledge relevant to the role of a worship leader; • is open to receive and reflect on feedback.	• takes opportunities to continue learning and growing in the attitudes, skills and knowledge relevant to the role of lay preacher; • is aware of their own strengths, weaknesses and potential of self-development; • is open to receive and reflect on feedback.
A contextual theologian	• has the ability to see God at work in the world. • Has knowledge of the place of the United Reformed Church within our contemporary world.	• has the ability to see, and to draw the attention of others to, God at work in the world. • demonstrates faithfulness to how and why our reformed tradition is important for the contemporary world; • has sympathy with the Basis of Union and the ethos of the United Reformed Church.
A pastor	• treats all people with respect; • is committed to ongoing and appropriate training in safeguarding.	• is able to relate to a variety of people and contexts; • has the ability to see God in others; • is committed to ongoing and appropriate training in safeguarding.
A public figure	• is aware of contemporary world events and is able to give a Christian response.	• is mindful of representing the URC when leading worship and preaching in ecumenical situations; • is aware of contemporary world events and is able to give a Christian response.
A reformer	• understands how worship can play a part in positive change in congregational life.	• is open to the prompting by the Holy Spirit and is willing to go where the Spirit leads; • understands how worship can play a part in positive change in congregational life.

6. Guidelines on conduct and behaviour for Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers

1. Introduction

This paper sets down expectations of accredited lay preachers in relation to ministers of word and sacraments, church related community workers (CRCWs) and elders within the United Reformed Church. Parallel papers about the expectations of ministers, CRCWs and elders are to be read alongside this document.

Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers are trained, accredited and commissioned by the United Reformed Church. Lay preachers share with ministers of word and sacraments in the leadership of worship in local churches. In their role of leading worship there may be times when a lay preacher is called upon to exercise a pastoral role when a minister of word and sacraments is not available and they need to adopt similar standards of integrity in their lives and relationships. Lay preachers, in addition to their promises as members of a United Reformed Church, at their commissioning service reaffirm their faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and undertake to exercise their ministry in accordance with the Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church.

We would also expect our Locally Recognised Worship Leaders to adhere to these Guidelines.

2. Standards of Christian Behaviour

2a Personal integrity and health

- To live a Christian life as persons of prayer and integrity.
- To be committed to growing in faith and discipleship and developing the gifts each has been given.
- To be aware of the need of ministers, lay preachers, elders and members to have appropriate boundaries that safeguard personal and spiritual health and welfare, to promote healthy relationships with others and not to do anything to undermine the spiritual health of another.
- To recognise the need for ministers, lay preachers, elders and members to have a healthy lifestyle and to balance demands on ministers/CRCWs' availability and accessibility with respect for ministers'/CRCWs' time for family and friends, personal renewal and rest and spiritual growth.
- To maintain strict confidentiality of all matters shared in confidence, except when required by law to do otherwise, e.g. with regard to the safety of children, and to respect ministers and elders needs to maintain that same confidentiality.
- To exercise care and sensitivity when seeking counsel from others and in discussion about pastoral concerns, in order that the identity of any person shall not be revealed unless permission has been granted.
- To refrain from using privilege or power for personal advantage or gain, whether financial, emotional, sexual or material.

2b Relationships with ministers

- To work collaboratively with ministers/CRCWs, elders, members and other lay preachers where appropriate.
- To regard all persons with equal respect and concern and not discriminate against anyone on the basis of gender, race, age, disability or sexual orientation, including ministers/CRCWs.
- To honour the ministers/CRCWs currently called to serve and not invite or encourage other ministers to be involved in the life of the church or to offer pastoral care without the ministers'/CRCWs' consent.
- To refrain from raising pastoral 'issues with a previous minister/CRCW.
To respect the work of previous ministers/CRCWs and deal honourably with their record.
To welcome retired ministers/CRCWs as members and worshippers in the pastorate.

2c Relationship with elders, members and others

- To regard all persons with equal love and concern.
- To uphold values of faithfulness, trust and respect.
- To share leadership and pastoral care with others called to these purposes where appropriate.

- To seek advice from others if in doubt about one's competence to deal with any issue or situation.
- To consider very carefully taking any position of responsibility, particularly in any church where the lay preacher is a not member, and to support the direction of church life initiated through the ministers/CRCWs, elders and church meetings.
- Not to enter a sexual relationship with anyone in their care.
- Not to be alone with a child or children or young people in a place quite separate from others.

2d Relationship with councils of the Church

- To recognise that local URC churches are part of the wider United Reformed Church and that the ministers/CRCWs are committed to play their part in the wider councils of the Church and in ecumenical relationships.
- To engage positively with all the councils of the church.
- To participate in synod's consultation and review of a pastorate if appropriate.

Ministries Committee September 2012

Updated Mission Council 2020

6. Training

6.1. Mission Council noted that **Locally Recognised Worship Leaders** would be trained through:

- the Stepwise Faith Filled Life and Faith Filled Worship modules,
- or a Synod led course equivalent to Stepwise,
- a portfolio of reflections, journaling, resources and worship material,
- extension tasks
- a final presentation or 1,000 word essay and
- an assessed service.

It was envisioned that this process would take between 18 and 24 months to complete, would require the endorsement of the Church Meeting, DBS/PVG checking and a commissioning service in the local context led by the Synod.

Extension Tasks for Faith-filled Worship.

Please choose 3 tasks from this list – one from each category (**worship**, **theology**, **faith**).

Some of these extension tasks are based on the Mission Possible tasks that are found at the end of each session. They are designed to be included within your portfolio which can be used to provide evidence of your learning and reflection as you work through this stream.

Extension Task 1: following on from Session 2: Seasons of Worship

Find out about a festival or event taking place locally, or a national event which marks a special occasion or celebration. Think of ways that the church might contribute liturgically to this festival or event, e.g., through worship or prayer, and make some notes about this. Say why you think this is important. What would you want to include? What would you avoid doing? Give reasons for your responses.

Extension Task 2: following on from Session 3: Walking with Scripture

Select a familiar book of the Bible or a well-known passage. Go and delve more deeply into the history of the book or passage and find out more about the context of when it was written and its history as a book of the bible. Try to access some commentaries to find out as much as you can. From what you have discovered prepare a 10 min talk or presentation that could be given to an intergenerational group from your church.

Extension Task 3: following on from Session 4: Working with Scripture

Reflecting on some of the ways that you've explored sharing the Bible in worship in the stream so far, find a way in the next few weeks to share scripture in worship creatively.

You might like to select a Bible reading, or a character from the Bible (one which is important to you, or a favourite of your own) and use it as the basis to create a different kind of worship event (e.g. congregational/all-age worship, bible study, children's meeting, 'group' presentation or evening, prayer group meeting etc.).

Make some notes about what you chose to do and the context in which you did it for inclusion in your portfolio.

Extension Task 4: following on from Session 6: Encounter with God and Session 9: Dance of the Spirit

This task invites you to explore more deeply the concept of spiritual preferences as discussed in sessions 6 and 9. Look again at the handout from Roots (<https://tinyurl.com/2p887dtj>) and watch the short video from David Csinos (<https://youtu.be/rX-Y1KB6aZA>). Consider your own preferences and make a list of the things you enjoy doing in worship and the things that make you uncomfortable (like the four children in the handout). Are your preferences evident from doing this exercise? What does this insight tell you about your own experiences of worship and other faith-related activities?

Think about a typical worship service in your home church. Which elements of the service engage with the word / emotion / symbol & action preferences? Do you think the balance is right? If not, how might it be improved?

Give some examples of how an awareness of different spiritual preferences would influence you as you prepare and lead worship.

Extension Task 5: following on from Session 6: Encounter with God

Find out how different traditions within the Christian Church understand the sacraments? What does the URC believe about them? Look at either the sacrament of Baptism or Communion and explore its historical and biblical background. Your local church is going to discuss its practice on believer's baptism or communion with children. Use what you have learned to offer arguments on keeping or changing their current practice.

Extension Task 6: following on from Session 7: Communicating with God

Write or otherwise create a prayer experience suitable for Children and Young People for one of the seasons of the Christian Year, e.g., Advent; Lent; Holy Week, Pentecost etc.

Extension Task 7: following on from Session 8: Breaking Open the Word

In the month ahead, find an opportunity to share a bible story using the 'hook, line and net' approach (as described in session 8) to a small group. This might be a school assembly, a young people's group, in a care home, a theme talk in a Sunday service or any other situation you may have available in your context.

Extension Task 8: following on from Session 8: Breaking Open the Word

Listen to a sermon and critique it. Think about its content, structure, use and exposition of scripture, its overall message and application to life.

Or

Listen to a sermon and consider ways that the same message could be conveyed in a different way. What did you appreciate? What might you have done differently?

Extension Task 9: following on from Session 10: Pushing Frontiers

Design your ideal space for worship. Be able to say why you have designed it in such a way. Think about encountering God and each other; accessibility and inclusivity; etc. as you do this.

Extension Task 10: following on from Session 11: Dare to be different

Take time in the week ahead to be mindful of the encounters of your senses and take a brief moment give thanks to God for them. (e.g. notice the taste of food, the sound of daily life, the smell of rain, the touch of a leaf, your first sight of the day). Keep an appreciative journal for 7 days in which you give thanks for what you have encountered.

Revised Jan 2022

6.2. Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers would be trained through our Resources Centres for Learning (currently at Northern College) and would, again, take around 2 years to complete. The course would offer:

- work on personal development,
- a course on crafting worship,
- the Level 4 Biblical Module from the Common Awards Scheme,
- the URC Ethos and History course,
- an understanding of contextual worship and preaching.
- a course on maintaining safe boundaries in pastoral practice,
- Equality and Diversity Training and
- a course in Worship and the Art of Public Speaking

Again DBS/PVG checking would be required. During the training an AALP candidate would have a Synod mentor and regular feedback from their College tutor. The possibility of training to lead funerals is also offered. A Church Meeting

resolution would be required for the person to become a candidate, the Synod would offer a mentor, and a portfolio of learning would be required. The mentor and College offer regular reviews and the College eventually decide on whether recommend to the Ministries Committee whether or not to issue the Assembly Accreditation.

For both roles Mission Council agreed both Marks of Ministry for *Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers* and *Locally Recognised Worship Leaders* as well as the expected standards for those who exercise these ministries. These can be found in Sections 4 and 5. *Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers* are accredited and commissioned to their Synod wide role by the Synod whilst *Locally Recognised Worship Leaders* are recognised and commissioned to their local role by the Synod.

7. Safer Recruitment for Locally Recognised Worship Leaders and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers

7.1. Locally Recognised Worship Leaders

The United Reformed Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all within our church communities. The United Reformed Church recognises the importance of carefully selecting, training and supporting all those with any responsibility within the Church.

7.1.1. Those thinking of becoming Locally Recognised Worship Leader should, where possible,

- a) be a church member for at least one year;
- b) be given copies of the leaflet 'Become a Worship Leader, even a Lay Preacher' <https://urc.org.uk/your-church/taking-a-role-in-your-church/become-a-worship-leader-lay-preacher/>;
- c) have a conversation with the Synod Lay Preaching Advocate;
- d) have a conversation with their minister/interim moderator;
- e) agree for their name to go forward to Church Meeting.

7.1.2 The applicant should contact the Synod Office for a registration form plus copies of this Handbook to reflect on Sections 2-6;

7.1.3 The Synod Will send a course outline (either Stepwise Faith Filled Worship or the Synod Course);

7.1.4 The Synod Lay Preaching Advocate should ensure the Synod Office receives:

- a) The application form
- b) A Church meeting minute that the church meeting approves of the candidate going forward;
- c) Two references – one being the minister of the church or the interim moderator where there is no minister;
- d) Should these not give cause for concern then the local church would organise the DBS; if there is a blemish this is followed up by the Synod Safeguarding Officer as per the usual process;

7.1.5 Any concerns during training come back to the Synod where the concerns would be dealt with.

7.2 Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching

The United Reformed Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all within our church communities. The United Reformed Church recognises the importance of carefully selecting, training and supporting all those with any responsibility within the Church.

7.2.1 Those thinking of becoming an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher should, where possible,

- a) attend an Enquirer's Event organised by the Ministries Office and normally held in February and October each year via Zoom;
- b) be a church member for at least one year;
- c) be given copies of the leaflet 'Become a Worship Leader, even a Lay Preacher' <https://urc.org.uk/your-church/taking-a-role-in-your-church/become-a-worship-leader-lay-preacher/>;
- d) have a conversation with the Synod Lay Preaching Advocate;
- e) have a conversation with their minister/interim moderator;
- f) agree for their names to go forward to Church Meeting.

7.2.2 The applicant should contact the Ministries Office for a registration form plus copies of this Handbook to reflect on Section 2-6;

7.2.3 And a course outline

7.2.4 The Synod Lay Preaching Advocate should ensure the Ministries Office receives:

- a) The application form
- b) A Church meeting minute that the church meeting approves of the candidate going forward;
- c) Two references – one being the minister of the church or the interim moderator where there is no minister;
- d) Should these not give cause for concern then the Ministries Office would organise the DBS; if there is a blemish this is followed up by the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries) and Designated Safeguarding Lead as per the usual process;
- e) Any concerns during training come back to the Ministries Office where the concerns would be dealt with.

8. Funding

All training for those called to a ministry worship leading encourages personal discipleship development alongside experience and learning. As both ministries will be exercised within the United Reformed Church using existing URC learning and education provision is important. Therefore, for Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers may claim a grant of up to £300 through the Synod Training Development Officer or equivalent.

For Locally Recognised Worship Leaders, some Synods offer a grant to funding worship resources. You should speak with your Training Development Officer or equivalent for further details.

The URC's Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration gives guidelines to local churches for remuneration to Lay Preachers:

Para. 6.1.5 Pulpit Supply costs maximum refund per service is £40 plus travelling expenses. Although local churches are encouraged to pay this, it is acknowledged that some will pay more, some less.

9. Accreditation

10.1 Synod Accreditation for Locally Recognised Worship Leaders

On completion of the course for LRWL:

- 10.1.1 The Synod Lay Preaching Advocate brings the name of the candidate to the appropriate Synod committee having checked they have completed all the necessary steps for completion including extension tasks, a final presentation or 1000 word essay from a list of topics and an assessed service;
- 10.1.2 The Synod Lay Preaching Advocate will inform the TDO or equivalent who will send the relevant documentation to the candidate and to the Synod Lay Preaching Advocate for completion;
- 10.1.3 The Synod TDO or equivalent sends a copy of the completed form to the Ministries Office;
- 10.1.4 The Synod Administrator uploads the completed form to the database.
- 10.1.5 The Synod Lay Preaching Advocate organises with the candidate and the minister/interim moderator a commissioning service and the presentation of the certificate marking their start as an LRWL.
- 10.1.6 The certificate template is provided by the Ministries Office for Synod completion.

10.2. Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers

Procedure for Assembly Accreditation with the AALP Course at Northern College

- 10.2.1 Once an applicant has successfully completed the AALP Course at Northern College, the Ministries Office will complete Section D – and the first two lines of Section 1 – Personal Details of the 'Application Form' and email it to the individual;
- 10.2.2 The applicant attends 'An introductory Course on the United Reformed Church'
- 10.2.3 The applicant will finish completing Section A – Personal Details and organises the signing of Section B – Church Recommendation of the church they are a member of including the church ID number.
- 10.2.4 The applicant will send the form onto their Synod Lay Preaching Advocate;
- 10.2.5 The Synod Lay Preaching Advocate will sign Section C - Synod Recommendation and send it to the Ministries Office;
- 10.2.6 The Ministries Office will check that the DBS certificate is in order and issue the Accreditation Certificate and badge to the Synod Lay preaching Advocate and the Ministries Grant letter to the applicant.
- 10.2.7 The Synod Lay Preaching Advocate organises with the applicants and their minister/local church a Service of Accreditation. The service of Accreditation can be for a group of Lay Preachers.

OR

10.3 Procedure for Assembly Accreditation with Other Qualifications

- 10.3.1 An applicant's 'other qualifications' need to be verified by consulting with the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries) before they embark on the process of Assembly Accreditation.
- 10.3.2 Once the 'other qualifications' have been verified and the applicant has completed studying 'An introductory Course on the United Reformed Church' and has taken at least two assessed services in United Reformed (or United) Churches.

- 10.3.3 The Lay Preaching Advocate will complete Section E – Applicants with Other Qualifications and the first two lines of Section A – Personal Details of the 'Application Form' and email it to the individual;
- 10.3.4 The applicant will finish completing Section A – Personal Details and organises the signing of Section B – Church Recommendation of the church they are a member of including the Church ID number. The applicant will send the form onto their Lay Preaching Commissioner;
- 10.3.5 The Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner will sign Section C - Synod Recommendation and send it to the Ministries Office;
- 10.3.6 The Ministries office will check that the Disclosure certificate is in order by either
- contacting the other Denomination they trained with or
 - issuing a Disclosure and Barring Service application pack for the United Reformed Church ;
- 10.3.7 Once the Ministries office is issued with a 'clear' disclosure notice they will then issue the Accreditation Certificate and badge to the Synod Lay preaching Commissioner and the Ministries Grant letter to the applicant;
- 10.3.8 The Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner organises with the applicants and their minister/local church a Service of Accreditation. The service of Accreditation can be for a group of Lay Preachers

10. Where Can I Preach or Lead Worship?

Under the new Policy

an **Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher** is accredited by the United Reformed Church

- to preach at any church in the Synod which invites them;
- to preside at any church in the Synod with permission from the relevant Synod Committee who will give authorisation;
- training is recognised ecumenically;
- if an AALP moves Synod, their training and accreditation means their Assembly Accreditation will be recognised.

a **Locally Recognised Worship Leader** is commissioned by the Synod

- to preach in their own church or pastorate;
- to preside only if they are an Elder and have been recognised by the appropriate Synod Committee as an Authorised Elder;

For those who have been and continue to preach under the ministry of **Locally/Synod Recognised Lay Preaching**, the decision of 2021 does not negate or undermine your valuable service but merely regularises some of the practices which had been agreed by General Assembly and corrects some of those which over the years have led to a lack of accountability and distinction in ministry.

If you are a **Locally (Synod) Recognised Lay Preacher** appointed before March 2021, you are commissioned by the Synod

- to preach at any church within your local area which invites you;
- are not authorised per se to preside at the sacraments;
- your local recognition may not be recognised ecumenically;
- your recognition is not transferable to another Synod.

11. Who Can Preside At the Sacraments?

11. The policy of the United Reformed Church regarding presidency at the sacraments has changed little since 1972. However, because of a wide diversity of practice to meet the perceived needs of local congregations which has not always been in line with the Church's stated policy.

Authorisation to preside at the Sacraments is always for a specific church or specific churches. This was previously authorised by the District Council and latterly by the appropriate Synod Committee. It is the responsibility of the church which has invited you to preach to seek authorisation from the appropriate Synod committee. You may wish to check they have done this.

The United Reformed Church considers that the person presiding in a local church should normally be someone who is well known to that congregation. It believes that the current provisions of the *Basis of Union* for the Synod, through its relevant committee, to authorise particular Elders (now known as Authorised Elders) or Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers to preside are adequate. It is hoped that the Synod will take their responsibilities seriously in recognising when 'pastoral necessity' arises in each local church, what the best response should be, and in keeping such situations under review.

The 2016 Faith and Order resolution on Authorised Elders (<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/book-of-reports-2016.pdf> page 90) standardised the process across the denomination but still linked such authorisation to particular church or churches, where there would be synod involvement in, and knowledge of, where such people were authorised and acting. Only Elders and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers can be authorised because they are a recognised denominational role; Synod/Local Lay Preachers recognised do not have a standard across the 13 synods.

The 2016 resolution was entitled Authorised Elders, but Lay Preachers were included because the Basis of Union names Lay Preachers as those who can be authorised. Because Locally Recognised Worship Leaders are recognised in their own church or denomination, providing they are an Elder and have completed the Synod Sacraments Course or equivalent, may be authorised with the status Authorised Elder.

The provisions in Schedule A paragraph 25 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.

13. A Service of Commissioning

For Locally Recognised Worship Leaders

This service is offered as an example. 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 unaltered and these are indicated by the orange boxes. Locally Recognised Worship Leaders are commissioned, by the synod, to lead worship in their local church or pastorate. A commissioning service is conducted by the synod after completion of an approved course of study. The service may be led by the minister of the congregation/pastorate where the Worship Leader is to undertake their ministry, or by a representative of the synod. The act of commissioning should follow the proclamation of the Word.

Introduction

Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.

Psalm 49:1-3

or

Come, listen, all who revere God, and I will tell you what the Most High has done in my life. My mouth cried to God, my tongue extolled the Eternal One. Blessed be the Most High who has not left undone my prayers nor removed loving kindness from me.

Psalm 66:16-17, 20

or

God, our Sovereign, has bestowed on me a disciple's tongue that I may discern how to help those who are tired and weary with a word. Each morning God rouses me and excites my ear to listen as a disciple.

Isaiah 50:4

In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
the only Head of the Church,
we are now to commission ... N ... as a Locally Recognised Worship Leader,
who has been commended by the ... X ... Synod
to lead God's people in worship within this congregation/pastorate.

Statement by the Locally Recognised Worship Leader

The Worship Leader makes a statement concerning their faith and sense of calling.

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 forms such as the one below:

This Statement is to be read aloud in one of the two prescribed forms.
VERSION II is printed here, however **VERSION I** may be used if preferred.

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, whose servants we are
with all God's people through the years.**

We accept with thanksgiving to God
the witness to the catholic faith
in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.
We acknowledge the declarations made in our own tradition
by Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Churches of Christ
in which they stated the faith
and sought to make its implications clear.
**Faith alive and active: gift of an eternal source,
renewed for every generation.**

We conduct our life together according to the Basis of Union
in which we give expression to our faith
in forms which we believe
contain the essential elements of the Church's life,
both catholic and reformed;
but we affirm our right and readiness, if the need arises,
to change the Basis of Union
and to make new statements of faith
in ever new obedience to the living Christ.
**Our crucified and risen Lord,
who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection.**

Held together in the Body of Christ
through the freedom of the Spirit,
we rejoice in the diversity of the Spirit's gifts
and uphold the rights of personal conviction.
For the sake of faith and fellowship
it shall be for the church to decide
where differences of conviction hurt our unity and peace.
**We commit ourselves to speak the truth in love
and grow together in the peace of Christ.**

We believe that Christ gives his Church
a government distinct from the government of the state.
In things that affect obedience to God
the Church is not subordinate to the state,
but must serve the Lord Jesus
Christ, its only Ruler and Head.

Civil authorities are called
to serve God's will of justice and peace for all humankind,
and to respect the rights of conscience and belief.

**While we ourselves are servants in the world
as citizens of God's eternal kingdom.**

We affirm our intention to go on praying and working,
with all our fellow Christians,
for the visible unity of the Church in the way Christ chooses,
so that people and nations may be led to love and serve God
and praise him more and more for ever.

Source, Guide, and Goal of all that is:

to God be eternal glory.

Amen.

Affirmations

The congregation is invited to stand as the presiding Minister asks the Worship Leader to affirm their faith:

In the light of this Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church ... N ... is now asked to answer the following questions:

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

I do.

In dependence on God's grace do you reaffirm your trust in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and your promise to follow him and to seek to do and to bear his will all the days of your life?

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?

I do.

Do you accept the office of Locally Recognised Worship Leader of the ... X ... Synod and do you promise to perform its duties faithfully?

I do.

Do you promise as an Locally Recognised Worship Leader of the United Reformed Church to seek its well-being, unity and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always so far as you are able to build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?

By the grace of God, I do, and all these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The presiding Minister asks the congregation:

Do you, the members of this local church/pastorate receive ... N ... as a Locally Recognised Worship Leader and promise *them* your prayerful support and encouragement in this ministry?

We do.

Commissioning

O Most High,
in worship our restless hearts find their rest in You.
May we find meaning in the music of Your praise.

O Risen Saviour,
in worship you proclaimed good news for the poor,
freedom for prisoners, sight for the blind, and liberation for the oppressed;
may we find strength to follow and proclaim your message.

Most Holy Spirit,
in worship you speak to and empower us,
filling us with grace at pulpit and table,
in silence and song, in laughter and listening;
may we find strength to live as committed disciples.

We give thanks today for ... N ... ,
whom you have called to lead Your people in worship,
and in your name we commission *them*
to be a Locally Recognised Worship Leader to minister in this congregation/pastorate.
Inspire *them* with your Holy Spirit
so that *they* will be fired with passion
and always seek deeper understanding of the worship they lead.
Sustain *them* in *their* calling, when it is easy and when it is difficult.
Keep *them* humble, but make *them* aware of what *they* bring
to the life and well-being of the Church, as,
through *their* leading of worship Your people are strengthened.
Keep *them* ever hopeful and ever joyful.
**Bring ... N ... and all of us at the last
to full maturity in Christ, in whose name we pray.
Amen.**

Declaration

In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
the only Head of the Church,
and in accordance with the decision of the Synod,
I declare you to be commissioned to the office
of Locally Recognised Worship Leader in this church/pastorate
and welcome you into this office.

Presentation

The certificate and also a Bible or other suitable gift may be presented.

The service concludes with the Lord's Supper; a prayer for this is included on page DD1, or with a hymn and blessing.

The following readings are appropriate:

Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures:

Numbers 11:16-17, Psalm 150 (for musicians), Isaiah 40:1-11, Isaiah 52:7-12, Jeremiah 1:4-10, Jeremiah 23:16-22.

New Testament:

Matthew 9:32-38, Luke 10:1-6, Luke 18: 1-7 (persistence in prayer), John 15:1-17, Acts 11:19-26, Romans 1:8-17, Colossians 3:14-17 (psalms, hymns and songs – but also teaching and thankfulness), 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 1 Peter 4:8-14.

For an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher

Introduction

Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.

Psalms 49:1-3

or

Come, listen, all who revere God, and I will tell you what the Most High has done in my life. My mouth cried to God, my tongue extolled the Eternal One. Blessed be the Most High who has not left undone my prayers nor removed loving kindness from me.

Psalms 66:16-17, 20

or

God, our Sovereign, has bestowed on me a disciple's tongue that I may discern how to help those who are tired and weary with a word. Each morning God rouses me and excites my ear to listen as a disciple.

Isaiah 50:4

In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
the only Head of the Church,
we are now to commission ... N ... as an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher,
who has been commended by the ... X ... Synod
and accredited by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church

Statement by the Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher

The Lay Preacher makes a statement concerning their faith and sense of calling.

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 forms such as the one below:

This Statement is to be read aloud in one of the two prescribed forms.
VERSION II is printed here, however **VERSION I** may be used if preferred.

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the United Reformed Church believes in one God,
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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, whose servants we are
with all God's people through the years.**

We accept with thanksgiving to God
the witness to the catholic faith
in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.
We acknowledge the declarations made in our own tradition
by Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Churches of Christ
in which they stated the faith
and sought to make its implications clear.
**Faith alive and active: gift of an eternal source,
renewed for every generation.**

We conduct our life together according to the Basis of Union
in which we give expression to our faith
in forms which we believe
contain the essential elements of the Church's life,
both catholic and reformed;
but we affirm our right and readiness, if the need arises,
to change the Basis of Union
and to make new statements of faith
in ever new obedience to the living Christ.
**Our crucified and risen Lord,
who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection.**

Held together in the Body of Christ
through the freedom of the Spirit,
we rejoice in the diversity of the Spirit's gifts
and uphold the rights of personal conviction.
For the sake of faith and fellowship
it shall be for the church to decide
where differences of conviction hurt our unity and peace.
**We commit ourselves to speak the truth in love
and grow together in the peace of Christ.**

We believe that Christ gives his Church
a government distinct from the government of the state.
In things that affect obedience to God
the Church is not subordinate to the state,
but must serve the Lord Jesus
Christ, its only Ruler and Head.

Civil authorities are called
to serve God's will of justice and peace for all humankind,
and to respect the rights of conscience and belief.
**While we ourselves are servants in the world
as citizens of God's eternal kingdom.**

We affirm our intention to go on praying and working,
with all our fellow Christians,
for the visible unity of the Church in the way Christ chooses,
so that people and nations may be led to love and serve God
and praise him more and more for ever.
**Source, Guide, and Goal of all that is:
to God be eternal glory.
Amen.**

Affirmations

The congregation is invited to stand as the presiding Minister asks the Lay Preacher to affirm their faith:

In the light of this Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church ... N
... is now asked to answer the following questions:

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

I do.

In dependence on God's grace do you reaffirm your trust in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and your promise
to follow him and to seek to do and to bear his will all the days of your life?

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?

I do.

Do you accept the office of Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher of the United Reformed Church and do you
promise to perform its duties faithfully?

I do.

Do you promise as an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher of the United Reformed Church to seek its well-
being, unity and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always so far as you are
able to build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?

By the grace of God, I do, and all these things I profess and promise in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The presiding Minister asks the congregation:

Do you, the members of this local church and members ofXY....Synod receive ... N ... as an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher and promise *them* your prayerful support and encouragement in this ministry?

We do.

Commissioning

Ever gracious God,
you have brought us into your Church and made us your witnesses,
giving us the gifts we need to proclaim the gospel of your holy love.
We give thanks today for ... N ... ,
whom you have called to be a preacher of your Word,
and in your name we commission *them* to the office of Lay Preacher.
Inspire *them* with your Holy Spirit
so that *they* will be fired with passion and always seek deeper understanding
of the gospel *they* proclaim.
Sustain *them* in *their* calling, when it is easy and when it is difficult.
May *they* find eager hearers who respond to *their* proclamation,
and give *them* their support and encouragement.
Keep *them* humble,
but make *them* aware of what *they* bring to the life and well-being of the Church,
as, through *their* preaching, the gospel is proclaimed.
Keep *them* ever hopeful and keep *them* ever joyful.
Bring them and all of us at the last to full maturity in Christ,
in whose name we pray.

Amen.

Declaration

In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
the only Head of the Church,
and in accordance with the decision of the Synod,
I declare you to be commissioned to the office
of Assembly Accredited Lay Preach in the United Reformed Church
and welcome you into this office.

Presentation

The certificate and also a Bible or other suitable gift may be presented.

The service concludes with the Lord's Supper; a prayer for this is included on page DD1, or with a hymn and blessing.

The following readings are appropriate:

Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures:

Numbers 11:16-17, Psalm 150 (for musicians), Isaiah 40:1-11, Isaiah 52:7-12,
Jeremiah 1:4-10, Jeremiah 23:16-22.

New Testament:

Matthew 9:32-38, Luke 10:1-6, Luke 18: 1-7 (persistence in prayer),
John 15:1-17, Acts 11:19-26, Romans 1:8-17, Colossians 3:14-17
(psalms, hymns and songs – but also teaching and thankfulness),
2 Timothy 4:1-5, 1 Peter 4:8-14.

And finally.....

About one third of the services held throughout the United Reformed Church each Sunday are led by worship leaders and lay preachers. In part this is due to the fact that there are fewer ministers than there are churches, but lay preachers and worship leaders are a valued resource and play an important role in the public ministry of the church. The lay person is in a unique position alongside the 'person in the pew' to reflect the needs of the congregation. Often their daily work is outside the church, mixing with people who are not associated with the church, and because of this the Lay Preacher can bring a different perspective to worship and has a rich course of experience to use for illustration. When Jesus taught people about God he used everyday work situations to make the message real for his listeners.

Together the Minister of Word and Sacraments and the Worship Leader or Lay Preacher bring their varied experiences into their conduct of worship to give praise to God and to build up and encourage their fellow Christians. In the same way that the church needs ministers, the church needs Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders of all ages to offer themselves in this way.

Thank you for your willingness to serve in this way.

Ministries February 2025