

Ordinations, Inductions and Commissioning Services

The nature of the tradition to which the United Reformed Church belongs, and the heritage to which it lays claim, are clearly seen when we meet in a local congregation to ordain a new minister or elder, to commission a church related community worker or a lay preacher. As men and women commit themselves to service of the one Church, through ministry within the United Reformed Church, we celebrate both the patterns of service we have inherited from the past and the new traditions we are developing. These services may be opportunities for the wider Church to hear us proclaiming the faith we hold and hopefully to see us putting it into action.

At such services it is right that there are some words and acts which we always say or do and that all is conducted with continuity and integrity. The Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church is therefore very important. For some services of ordination, induction and commissioning there are Schedules of the Basis of Union which have been agreed by the General Assembly. These contain the words of the promises which individuals are expected to make before entering on a new way of serving the church. The texts which follow include all the relevant Schedules, including any variations where there are different options. These parts of the texts *must* always be used, on every occasion, because they express the unity we share.

There is also, as is right for a church which celebrates freedom and diversity, much space for creativity, individuality and local variety. As well as those words which we have agreed always to use, there is still a great deal of material which is there as a suggestion or guide, and can readily be adapted or changed. There are also further resources on the CD Rom.

Selections of readings are offered as suggestions. There are many more possibilities and local situations with creative people will provoke new ideas and new prayers.

