

URC Spirituality (formerly URC Retreat Group)

Assembly report

1. A while back, we concluded that things had changed. The approach of the URC Retreat Group, and before that of the URC Silence and Retreats Network, had served well for several decades, but was in danger of becoming today's response to yesterday's call.
2. We heard in this an invitation to operate differently. There is a healthily wide range of approaches to prayer within the URC. It seems right to encourage people to deepen and to explore, to recognise the value of silence, retreats and quiet days, but also to recognise that these aren't the whole story.
3. A much closer involvement with *Walking the Way* seemed a natural next step, so that spirituality is seen as core to the URC. Much of the material on spirituality which has appeared in our magazine *Encounter* has been revised, and has been incorporated into the *Walking the Way* website.
4. Prayer – letting the breath of God breathe through our lives – is bound to be in some ways subversive. It is core to the life of the church, but it also needs to disturb and unsettle. Becoming closely involved with *Walking the Way* is a way of contributing to the core of prayer in the life of the United Reformed Church. But we're also keen to enable and encourage people's explorations.
5. The most recent part of this was a residential event at Westminster College at the end of February 2020, with contributions from Terry Hinks and Susan Durber. Besides enriching those who came, this also led to the inclusion of new people in the core group – which still sees itself as provisional – in the sense of enabling something new to emerge.
6. One of the threads being worked on is to connect people in the URC who are involved in spiritual direction (understanding the term quite broadly) and in the leading of quiet days for mutual resourcing and support. This is partly about resourcing within the URC, and partly about articulating the value of what we bring, to enrich our ecumenical contribution.
7. For now, one question to engage with is what's God's invitation to us as we engage with the struggles around Covid-19.
8. The Core Group members are: Mark Argent, Ann Barton, Richard Church, Adelaide Owusu, Geoff Wright.
9. If you'd like to know more, contact Geoff Wright wright_rev.geoff@btinternet.com
10. If you are involved in spiritual direction, please contact Sue Henderson sue@suehenderson.co.uk