



Past Case Review The United Reformed Church

Churches Preparation

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

The United Reformed Church Past Case Review will invite anyone with concerns about the behaviour or conduct of anyone affiliated with the URC since its formation in 1972 to raise them formally. Some local church members may feel a sense of shock or surprise that such a process needs to take place. We trust that God will guide us and grant us wisdom, sensitivity and open minds as it progresses.

What happens if there is a disclosure in our church?

If a disclosure is made in a local church context always refer the person who wishes to disclose to the Past Case Review team. There will be no pressure on people to disclose, but should they want to, there is a clear process in place which has been authorised by General Assembly.

If an issue of concern about historic abuse is raised in a particular local congregation, this can be devastating and can provoke strong emotional reactions and upset. There may be contrary opinions, shock, outrage, denial and deep hurt.

While an issue is being heard or investigated there may be long periods where, for good reasons, little can be revealed to the congregation as a whole. Such silent passages of time are very unsettling and need to be held with much understanding.

How does our church manage when a disclosure is made?

Words shared within a local congregation need to be carefully measured for the sake of those in the gathering who may be directly involved in any issues. Words in worship need to acknowledge any potential strain within the congregation – and offer careful pastoral support.

We need to help one another through any shock or distress and to encourage good pastoral care for everyone in a congregation, including those who made a complaint and those against whom a complaint was made. Some people will not wish to receive pastoral care from a church, perhaps because of the nature of the complaint. There is a wide range of organisations listed on our web page in order to recommend appropriate organisations for care.

It is likely that the information flow, while the issue is addressed, will be between one representative of the local church and one person from the Past Case Review team. This link is about communication and information and is designed to give as much information as possible, within the appropriate boundaries of confidentiality.

Finally...

In all of this, the Holy Spirit is our comforter whose presence can bring a depth of healing to each individual and sustain and build us up as a church. Resources to help us in worship and prayer to draw on the Spirit's strength beyond our own are listed on our web page.

We trust the God of all time to help and bless us, each one. Please feel welcome to contact the Past Case Review team, no matter who you are or what your question: pastcase.review@urc.org.uk.

Further resources and information are available online at www.urc.org.uk/past-case-review.