

Appendix 4 Role Description for a Minister of Word and Sacraments

A sample generic role description is as follows (although it is understood that pastorates may wish to include specific role descriptors according to their particular context).

Their role includes:

- the celebration of the sacraments, which are the Lord's Supper (or Holy Communion) and baptism
- preaching
- providing pastoral care and support to people in need or who are affected by tragedy or crisis
- chairing both Elder and Church Meeting which have responsibility for the spiritual issues within a congregation, and guiding those meetings in their discussions
- conducting funerals and offering pastoral support to those who are dying and those who have been bereaved
- conducting weddings and helping people prepare for marriage
- enabling and developing the congregation(s) through their leadership and vision.

Some of these functions are also performed by elders and lay preachers.

The Marks of Ministry (Agreed at Mission Council 2019) may be helpful in drawing up a role description:

A Minister of Word and Sacraments in the United Reformed Church (URC) should 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 so that they might model and encourage such life-long patterns in others with integrity; open to learning discipleship from others.
- **A person of integrity and resilience:** self-aware and committed to their own lifelong learning (especially through the URC's provision for ministers); aware of their own limitations and thus willing to seek support; ready to deal with situations of conflict; balancing ministry's joys and pains with the fostering of right relationships with family and friends.
- **A contextual theologian:** delighting in Scripture, rooted in the Reformed tradition, able to communicate their own faith and its implications within and beyond congregations; encouraging others to discover how these rich resources inspire and sustain faithfulness.
- **A worship leader and preacher:** able to craft and lead worship that shows appreciation for the Sacraments and the resources of many traditions and styles yet unafraid to create and advocate new forms as appropriate; passionate and effective in breaking open God's Word

in preaching; ready and able to foster skills, techniques and experience in others so that they might lead worship and preach well.

- **A pastor:** sharing with others, especially Elders, in sustaining care; making time to walk in love alongside people; rejoicing and grieving with others through listening deeply and offering prayerful support; wise in knowing their limits and boundaries when more specialised help is needed; reliably dealing with issues of safeguarding and confidentiality.
- **A leader and collaborator:** identifying, developing, and enabling leadership in others, particularly Elders; capable of working in, and leading, teams through collaborative and shared leadership; aware of their own leadership style and open to learning with and from others, when necessary acknowledging their own mistakes and seeking restoration; committed and equipped to building up others in faith and witness so that the gifts and callings of all might flourish; demonstrating love for God's people.
- **A missionary and evangelist:** passionate about and active in sharing the love of God for the world; alive to the significance of contexts and cultures in shaping mission and creative in discovering missional opportunities; empowering and equipping God's people in mission to share the Gospel and live God's Kingdom of justice and peace to the full.
- **A public figure:** reliable and effective in representing the Church in ecumenical, community and wider settings; committed to and equipped in speaking truth to power and challenging injustice and marginalisation wherever they may be found.
- **A communicator:** who uses written, spoken and other modes with clarity and grace to share faith and build up relationships and communities; helping others to find their voice.
- **A committed participant in the councils of the Church:** responsive to God's call as gift and blessing to be lived out within the discipline and accountability of the denomination which trains, ordains and inducts them and the pastorates and ministries within which they serve.
- **A reformer:** wise in the dynamics and challenges of change; bold yet humble in helping individuals and 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.