

23 October 2025

Dear Members of General Assembly,

Together, we are approaching a very different kind of General Assembly. When we gather at Kents Hill Park in Milton Keynes for the Extraordinary General Assembly on 14-16 November, we gather in the knowledge that this is a *Kairos* moment in the life of the United Reformed Church – a moment of opportunity and renewal, in which we review the outputs of a Spirit-led process of discernment.

In July 2023, Assembly tasked Church Life Review Phase Two (Design) with working up proposals for financial resource sharing, provision of shared support services, employment of lay workers, and new communities of discipleship and worship (Resolutions 47-51a, General Assembly 2023). In November, we will review the outputs of this phase of work. At the heart of the proposals is a new shared Church Life Fund, out of which innovative and essential shared services, grants for lay workers in local church roles, and new communities of discipleship and worship will be funded.

The papers, which are now available online, represent the combined output of several years' work. The papers deal with complex topics, which require substantial detail in places. Yet beneath the detail lies a portfolio of proposals which will bring substantive change in our Church. Some of you may have particular interests, and to make this easier we suggest a few starting points:

- For an overview of the proposals and the scriptural underpinning, read Paper A1.
- For an overview of the Church Life Fund, what it will enable, and its finances, read Papers A2 and A11 (A11 will be published after Synod Meetings in October).
- For an overview of the upcoming denominational shared resources hub, myURC, read Paper A3.
- For an overview of the innovative new approach to denominationally developed and locally delivered services, read Papers A4, A5, and A6.
- For an overview of grants for lay workers in local churches, read Paper A8 (along with Paper A7).
- For an overview of grants for new URC communities of discipleship and worship, read Paper A9.
- For an overview of the next phase of strategic work as we faithfully respond to God's call, read Paper A10.

The papers are the result of a big and deeply collaborative effort from people across the councils of the Church, who have come together in consultations, meetings, and other fora to collectively discern where God is leading us. All of the proposals contribute to the same,

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overarching vision: **a flourishing church, less burdened and better enabled.** The CLR Steering Group is excited to share these papers with you. We hope that, as you read them, you will share our excitement about the opportunities which lie ahead.

This Assembly will be different in other ways, too. After the business of reviewing the papers and resolutions, we will change mode, collectively discerning the key questions we need to address as we enter the next phase of strategic work. In all this we seek the flourishing of Christ's Church, reformed and always being reformed, to the glory of God.

We are very much looking forward to gathering with you all in Milton Keynes in November.

With warmest wishes,

John, Steve, and Myles

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. P. Bradbury" with a small "2" written below it.

John Bradbury, General Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Faber".

Steve Faber, Steering Group Convenor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Myles Dunnett".

Myles Dunnett, Programme Manager