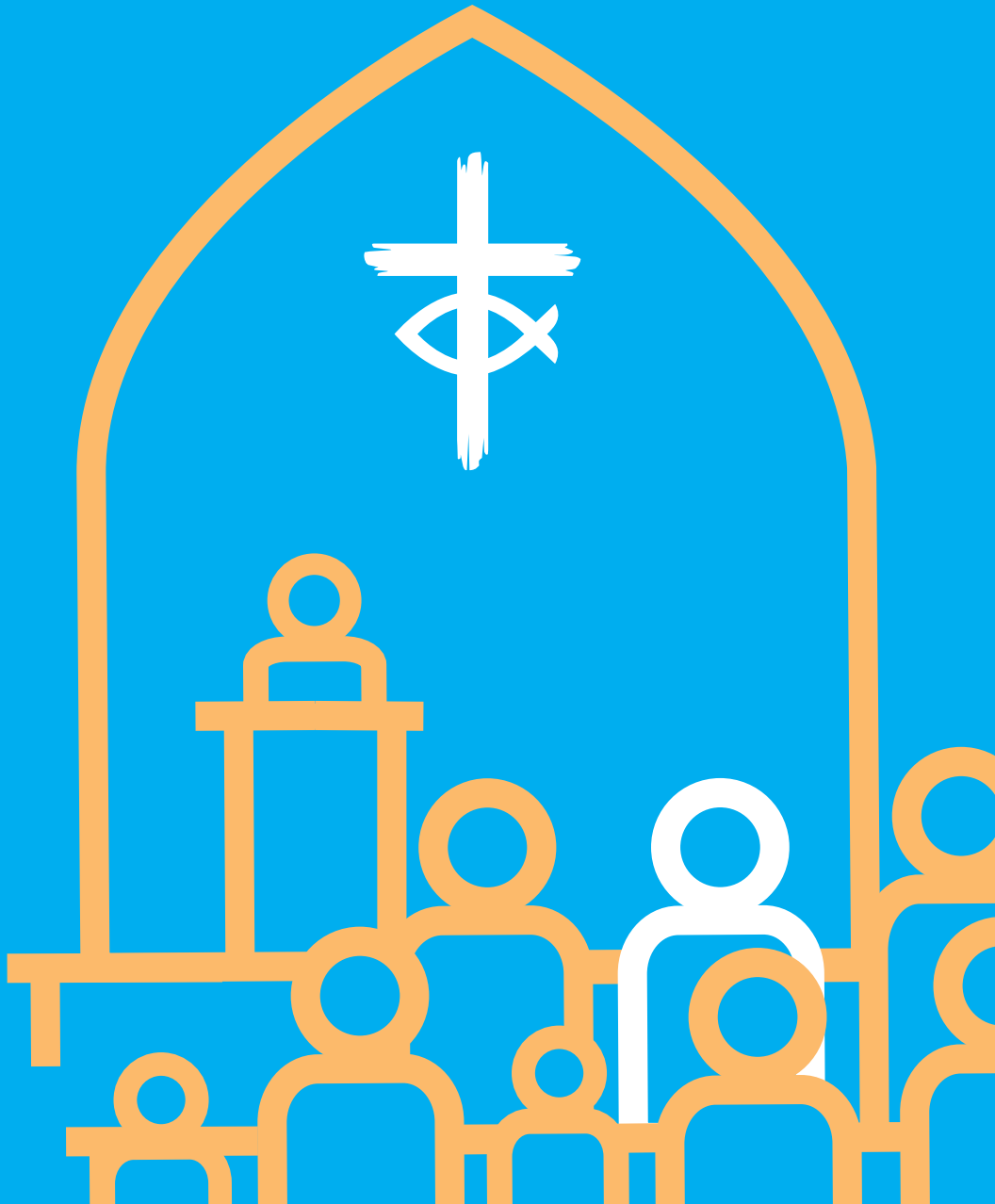


# Join the family

Membership in the United Reformed Church



# What does it mean to be a member of the URC?

Becoming a church member means becoming a recognised part of the world-wide family of Christians. This is a community of people who believe in God. Being part of this family encourages us in our faith as we work together to show God's love and mercy to the world.

The United Reformed Church (URC) welcomes all to attend its worship and other activities, and all who attend are part of the community and life of the church. Becoming a member of the URC enables you to take part in the life of the whole Church, including its decision-making bodies.

## **Who can become a member?**

Our membership is diverse. Drawn from all parts of society, membership is open to anyone who wants to follow Jesus Christ. If you have not been baptised previously, your admission to church membership will include an act of baptism. You will then be welcomed into the local congregation, where you will be asked to acknowledge your faith in God and Jesus Christ. The local church will prepare you for this so that you understand the promises you are making.





Once you have become a member, you may later transfer your membership to another local church if you move. If this happens, your new church might want to welcome you during a worship service.

### **What are the origins of the URC?**

The URC is a Christian church in the Reformed tradition. This acknowledges that the Church, as a community, saved by God's grace, should always be open to learn and to change as it seeks to follow Christ and his ministry in a changing world. The URC resulted from a union of the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church in England and Wales in 1972, with the Re-formed Association



of Churches of Christ in 1981, and with the Congregational Union of Scotland in 2000. The URC believes strongly in our unity with other Christians and seeks to bring all Christians together.

## **What are some of the aims and goals of the URC?**

The URC strives to be a hospitable and inclusive church where all, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation or social class are warmly welcomed into the life of the Church, its worship and pastoral care.

The URC supports movements and charities working for justice and peace, including Fairtrade and Christian Aid (through its Commitment for Life programme) and works in partnership with the Council for World Mission.

Local congregations support these and other organisations, including homeless shelters, food banks, environmental and other community programmes at local and national levels.

The URC seeks to glorify God through worship, prayer, Christian friendship and Bible study. It also explores how best to serve God locally, regionally and nationally. More about Christian discipleship, and discovering what it might mean for you to live more fully as a disciple of Christ can be found on the Mission and Discipleship pages of the URC website: [www.urc.org.uk/wtw](http://www.urc.org.uk/wtw)

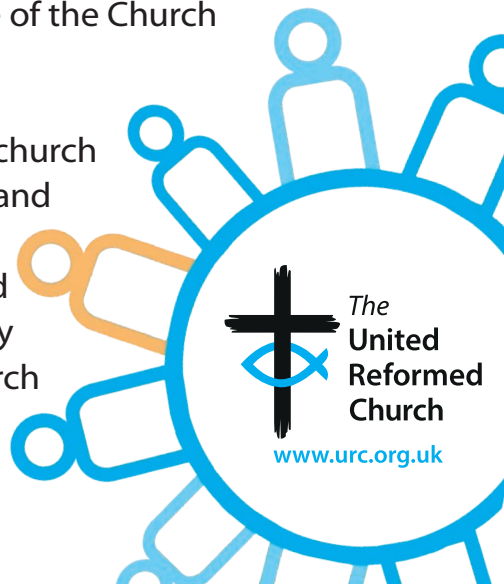




## How is the URC run?

Acknowledging Christ as the head of the Church, the URC makes its decisions corporately when its members meet formally in councils. There are three different levels of decision-making in the URC. These consist of the local Church Meeting, the Synod, which brings together representatives of local churches in a geographical area, and the General Assembly, representing the whole of the Church in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Leadership and pastoral care in a church are generally shared by ministers and elders who are elected by church members. The congregations hold Church Meetings which are usually open to all, but at which only church members may vote. Prayer and discussion takes place before important decisions are made.



## What are my responsibilities as a church member?

Members are encouraged to share in the life of the local church. Most do this by participating in weekly worship, attending Church Meetings, contributing financially to the work of the church, and taking part in its activities.



If you feel you might want to become a member of a local church, and would like to know more, have a word with the minister, an elder or

another member, who will be only too happy to advise you and guide you through the process.

If you would like to be a part of shaping the continuing life of the United Reformed Church, we warmly welcome you.

Join the family.

[www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk)

Want to know more? Visit

[www.urc.org.uk/what-we-believe](http://www.urc.org.uk/what-we-believe)





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*The*  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

[www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk)

**“We worship God, ever present in the Holy Spirit;  
who brings this Gospel to fruition, assures us of  
forgiveness, strengthens us to do God’s will,  
and makes us sisters and brothers of Jesus,  
sons and daughters of God.”**

*The United Reformed Church Basis of Union*

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