

# Paper N1

## The URC at 50 – it's almost time...

### URC 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Planning Group

#### Basic information

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<b>Action required</b>	For information.
<b>Draft resolution(s)</b>	N/A

#### Summary of content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	This paper provides an update for Assembly Executive on the work of the URC 50 <sup>th</sup> Jubilee Planning Group.
<b>Main points</b>	As 2022 fast approaches, this meeting provides the last opportunity to update the Assembly Executive on plans for the URC's 50 <sup>th</sup> Jubilee before the year of celebration begins. Members of Executive are encouraged to prepare themselves and the synods or networks they represent to make the most of the local church packs, worship resource competition, books, merchandise and events which will be on offer alongside celebrations which synods, local churches and other groups will, it is hoped, organise themselves.
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	Mission Council 03/21, Paper I3 Mission Council 11/20, Paper O1 General Assembly report 2021, p.162.
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	Mission Communications Education and Learning General Secretariat Church House Connective.

## Summary of impact

<b>Financial</b>	Using monies from existing budgets, planned income from resource and merchandise purchasing, and sponsorship from organisations such as Edwards Insurance Brokers, the planning group has appropriate financial plans in place.
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	Ecumenical partners will be formally invited to contribute to the celebrations in various ways, including attending jubilee events.

### 1. It's almost time...

- 1.1 As 2022 fast approaches, this meeting provides the last opportunity to update Assembly Executive on plans for the URC's 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee before the year of celebration begins.
- 1.2 Members of Executive are encouraged to prepare themselves and the synods or networks they represent to make the most of all that will be on offer, as well as prepare to celebrate this significant milestone in their own ways.

### 2. Local church packs

- 2.1 In early 2022, a pack of resources will be sent to every local congregation in the United Reformed Church containing, amongst other things, worship resources, resources for organising a quiz event, resources for organising a drama performance, and more information about merchandise, events and other significant opportunities to celebrate, such as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Reform* magazine.
- 2.2 Local churches, alongside all other groups and networks associated with the United Reformed Church, are encouraged to begin preparations for celebration, including looking out for these packs.

### 3. Worship resources competition

- 3.1 All choirs, bands, individuals, songwriters, composers, and poets are invited to submit their entries for the 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee worship resource competition, which has four categories: traditional hymn/song; poem; contemporary hymn/song; and rap. The deadline for entries is Friday 8 April 2022. More details can be found at [www.urc.org.uk/50](http://www.urc.org.uk/50).

### 4. Books and merchandise

- 4.1 New publications on the history of the United Reformed Church will be available from the URC Bookshop, alongside a new publication on hymnody. Publication dates will be advertised when available.
- 4.2 In addition, various 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee merchandise items will be available to purchase, including candles, story stones, ties, pin badges, Better Cotton Initiative socks, scarves, tote bags and soap bars. Some items will be for personal use or to use as gifts, whilst others will be for local churches to sell for a profit for their own fundraising activities. This is something that churches and their publishing houses

have done before, but all of the items in this part of the range will be available to buy in bulk or individually from the URC Bookshop.

## 5. Events

- 5.1 In terms of a main jubilee event, there are plans to open Church House to visitors in the morning on Saturday 1 October 2022, ahead of a worship service in the afternoon at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster.
- 5.2 Church House will be open from 10am to 1pm, and will host a “Living Library” where visitors will be able to interact with a wide range of people who have a story, experience or knowledge of the United Reformed Church to share. It is hoped that a great diversity of people from across the denomination will be able to participate in this “Living Library” as well as visit it.
- 5.3 In the afternoon, visitors will be encouraged to walk from Church House to Westminster ahead of the worship service, or use public transport, and will be provided with a guide containing different routes and points of interest which are significant to the denomination’s story.
- 5.4 At 3pm, the worship service will begin, welcoming a large congregation of people from across the United Reformed Church, including our ecumenical partners.
- 5.5 In order to manage numbers of worshippers, a booking system is being devised. More information about this will be advertised when available.
- 5.6. In addition, other events such as the Ministers’ Gathering, Greenbelt and URC Youth Assembly will provide diverse audiences with the opportunity to celebrate and reflect on this important milestone as they explore the jubilee’s specific significance for their own lives and ministries, individually and collectively. All of these events will play a key role in making this a year to remember.

## 6. Local and regional celebrations

- 6.1 It is hoped that local churches, synods and other groups will find different ways to celebrate this important milestone which mark its significance for their own particular context or locality. The 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Planning Group would love to hear about these. Please email [50@urc.org.uk](mailto:50@urc.org.uk).

## 7. Finance

- 7.1 Using monies from existing budgets, planned income from resource and merchandise purchasing, and sponsorship from organisations such as Edwards Insurance Brokers, the planning group has appropriate financial plans in place.

## 8. Tickets

Free tickets for the Open Church House Event, the Walk to Westminster and the Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving are available from Eventbrite:  
[www.bit.ly/urc50](http://www.bit.ly/urc50)