



Faith and Order Reference Group

Ongoing Areas of work: report for information

1. **CPCE Documents:**
2. **Two documents have been referred to the URC by the Council of Protestant Churches in Europe for a response. These are ‘A time to live and a time to die’, and ‘Scripture - Tradition - Church’. The FORG has sent in responses to both of these on behalf of the URC.**
3. **Worshipping the Triune God:**

FORG looked at this report, referred by the World Communion of Reformed churches. The report looks at worship through the development of a number of ‘proverbs’, offered for reflection and discussion. It was noted that since the end of the Doctrine Prayer and Worship Committee, there was no longer a URC group which had a particular remit for Worship. It was agreed to look at ways in which this report could be disseminated more widely across the church, and whether a group of ‘liturgists’ could be called together. It was also agreed to explore holding a conference on worship in 2013.

4. **Lay Presidency**

There are ongoing discussions in this area.

5. **Ethical Decision-making in the URC**

Romilly Micklem led the group in a helpful discussion, raising in particular the question of authority in a church with a conciliar structure.

6. **Housing and Land**

Frank Kantor referred this issue to the FORG on behalf of the URC and the Methodist Church. , who made some suggestions for further work. The FORG are involved in an ongoing discussion about the theology of housing and land.

7. **URC future**

Arising out of discussion with regard to the nature of membership, it was agreed to begin a major theological discussion on the nature, purpose and identity of the URC. The following questions will be looked at, with positive responses invited from across the URC on 2 sides of A4: ‘what

do we see as the future of the church (URC and other) and why are we where we are? Where are we going (where could we go)? Where is God calling us?' The work will begin at the FORG meeting at the end of February 2012, at which there will be a discussion as to how best to take it forward across the wider church.

7. Other areas of work

The FORG has also looked at a range of other areas of working, including theological aspects of 'Radical Welcome,' and, more briefly, Human Sexuality, a doctrinal matter referred from a moderator, God's Reign and our Unity, 'Theology and the Academy. The FORG is currently working on a written remit, to include purpose and areas of work to be covered, membership and accountability.

8. Change of secretary

The Group is very grateful for the hard work and commitment put in by Richard Mortimer in being secretary to the Group. In view of the pressing nature and extensive range of Richard's commitments, David Tatem has now taken on as secretary.

Revd Elizabeth Welch
Convener
February 2012