

Paper M2

General Secretariat

The Church's Hymnody

United Church 2017
Church 2018
Reformed Church 2018
Church

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The Church's Hymnody

Basic Information

Contact	John Proctor john.proctor@urc.org.uk
Action required	Informal consideration only, at this stage.
Draft resolution(s)	None

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	What the URC sings.
Main points	A variety of hymnbooks are used around the URC. Does this mean that congregations have the resources they need?
Previous documents	None
Consultation has taken place with...	The communications committee has been asked for comment. Otherwise it seemed important for Mission Council to reflect on this matter before any wider consultation were undertaken.

Summary of Impact

Financial	Not yet known.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	This is an attempt to discern our own practice and needs. If we wanted to take new steps to meet some of these needs, we might want to ask about ecumenical opportunities too.

The Church's Hymnody

1. A reputable Christian publisher has made an informal approach to indicate possible interest in producing a hymnbook designed specifically for the URC. This paper is an attempt to gather some outline information about what our congregations actually do, and what they need. If there is need for new resources, and interest too, then we ought at least to ask what sort of new work might be within reach of our capacity and budget; taking those points forward in detail would be a discussion for another day. But if there is no need, or not much interest, then we should not go further. We already have a hymn book of our own, compiled within and for our own fellowship, in *Rejoice and Sing* (1991), and we may find that this still suffices as a specifically URC resource.
2. The communications committee has been asked for comment and will be able to contribute at Mission Council.
3. Members of Mission Council are, collectively, acquainted at first hand with many of the URC's congregations. Members are asked to complete the questionnaire below, in regard to the congregation you know best.
4. Should you feel that you know a few congregations well enough to answer for them all, please do continue your responses on the reverse of your questionnaire. More information will probably be more helpful than less.
5. A summary of the picture that arises from the responses will be presented to MC on day two or three, and we can see where it has led. It will inevitably be impressionistic rather than systematic, but not entirely without value.

Questionnaire on hymn books

Please respond in regard to a church you know well.

1. Name of this church (so that we shall know if someone else has also written about it).
2. Is it a URC congregation alone, or an LEP?
3. Roughly how many people attend the main weekly worship in an average week?
4. Do your people generally look at a screen to sing, or hold books in their hands?
5. What is the main hymnbook that you use as a source of your material?
6. Do you use other hymnbooks as major sources? Which ones?
7. How satisfied do you think your people are with your present source(s) of material?

very satisfied	satisfied	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied
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8. If this church wanted a new source of hymns, would it be likely to prefer one that was labelled URC?
9. If this church wanted a new source of hymns would it be more likely to purchase an electronic resource or buy a set of books?
10. Have you any other comment about local usage, habit, preference or need?