

# Paper D1

## Update

### Faith and Order Committee

#### Basic information

<b>Contact name and email address</b>	Robert Pope <a href="mailto:rpp20@cam.ac.uk">rpp20@cam.ac.uk</a> Philip Brooks <a href="mailto:philip.brooks@urc.org.uk">philip.brooks@urc.org.uk</a>
<b>Action required</b>	For information.
<b>Draft resolution(s)</b>	<b>None.</b>

#### Summary of content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	Update on the work of the Faith and Order Committee.
<b>Main points</b>	This paper outlines the current areas of work for the Committee.
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	None.
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	URC Communications, URC Youth, Fresh Expressions Enabling Group, Walking the Way Steering Group and ecumenical partners.

#### Summary of impact

<b>Financial</b>	None.
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	Ongoing discussions with ecumenical partners about the role of eldership in LEP's.

As with other parts of the Church, the work of Faith and Order has continued during the period of lockdown. Alongside such extraordinary conditions, the Committee has welcomed three new members, Diana Paulding, Sue McCoan and Kristin Ofstad and a new Convener, Robert Pope. We note with thanks the valuable contributions of Alan Spence, our outgoing Convener. Thus far in 2020 we have met twice on Zoom and this paper is intended to update Mission Council on the Committee's work and its priorities for the immediate future.

The November 2019 Mission Council meeting agreed to establish a Worship Reference Group accountable to the Faith and Order Committee. Members have been appointed and an oversight mechanism established with reporting to Faith and Order through the convener of the new group, the Revd Samuel Silungwe, who is also a member of the Faith

and Order Committee. The Worship Reference Group will be a standing item on the Committee's agenda.

Faith and Order has completed work on a leaflet on Baptism (now available online), as well as on ten short, accessible theological themes outlining 'What the URC believes about ...' These are now with Communications for design and production. They outline key theological themes with an emphasis on Reformed perspectives. The Committee trusts they will be useful for members of the URC as well as enquirers.

A discussion document on Eldership and Ordination has been distributed to ecumenical colleagues for feedback. This will inform Faith and Order's continuing work on Eldership in LEPs. This feedback will be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

Discussion has taken place with URC Youth over issues which have arisen around 'Isolated Membership'. More work is being done to reflect theologically on 'membership' and on what it means to 'gather', the latter in part, being a response to the pandemic and the option taken by many churches to meet 'virtually'. This will be fed into continuing discussions with the FX Enabling Group and the Walking the Way steering group about online Church.

Questions have been submitted to the Group for discussion at our next meeting. These include the matter of EM1 students presiding at the Lord's Supper and whether ordained ministry is to 'Word and Sacrament' or 'Word and Sacraments'.

The Committee next meets on 8 October on Zoom and looks forward to being able to meet physically as soon as it is safe to do so.