



The  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

## **Presidency at the sacraments**

### **Some practicalities – a checklist**

#### **Baptisms**

- What about baptism preparation for believers and for the parents/carers of infants being baptised? Does the person presiding also do this?
- Is it assumed that parents/carers of infants have been given a chance to explore a blessing/welcoming as an alternative to baptism. If so, who will have done this?
- Make sure that someone has put water in the font
- Make sure that the water is pleasantly warm, especially in infant baptism
- Is there a jug for pouring water into the font, or is any jug present there for symbolism?
- At an infant baptism invite any children who are present to take part in blessing the water – and don't just speak over it – run your hands through it.

#### **Communion**

- Make sure that there is wine in the chalice and bread on the paten before you begin
- Arrange the table so that you cannot knock over the chalice and have the service sheet within easy eye view. Raising it on a small lectern can help
- Check the church's habit about distribution – do people keep the bread until all are being served, and likewise the wine until all are served? (Some congregations eat the bread as it comes around and keep the wine until all have been served)
- Check the church's habit about when serving elders come to the front – is it before, during or after the communion hymn.

#### **Generally**

- Sometimes you may accidentally overlook a small section of the words or part of the service. In many cases this will go unnoticed so there is no need to draw attention to it by taking people back to it – just carry on
- Avoid having separate pieces of paper. Prepare a personal order of service for yourself with all your words as well as the words that the congregation says, and keep it in an unobtrusive loose-leaf folder: A5 if possible, because that's a size that fits easily on lecterns and tables.