

Reading: Hebrews 13: 7 - 8

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings; for it is well for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by regulations about food, which have not benefited those who observe them.

Questions

- What are the ways in which your congregation welcomes different types of people?
- What else could your congregation do?
- Is the fact that we are provisional in our views – always being open to what God has in store for us next – a source of joy or frustration for you?
- The URC is a church which has, by design, decided it has a variety of views on a number of issues – back in the 1980s when the Churches of Christ joined, for example, we decided to honour and celebrate two different baptismal polices – either to baptise infants or to dedicate them and let them decide, as adults, if they wished to make a public faith commitment. In recent years we've decided we don't have a common position on same sex marriage, with those churches who wish to offer this being able to whilst no church has to. What do you think about this diversity?

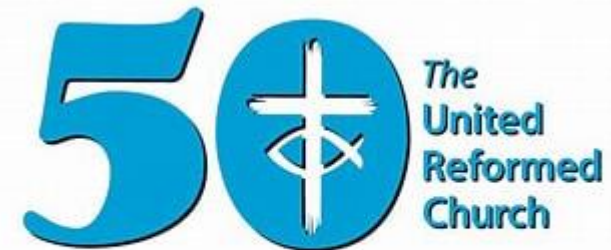
Closing Prayer

Holy God, You call us to be faithful and provisional; to hold fast to what we know to be true, yet willing to follow where You call. Help us to be true pilgrims, unafraid to follow, faithful and fruitful, incisive and inclusive, that we may be a house of prayer for all people. Amen

Nurturing our Faith

Bible Study Group

January 16th 2023



**Faith – Hope – Love –
Since 1972**

Sing a new song into being

Sing a New Song into being

Opening prayer led by Karen

Hymn: Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

Introduction

Reading Psalm 96: 1-6

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous works among all the peoples. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Honour and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Question

- If you were asked to name a favourite hymn, what would it be and why?
- What do you like in a hymn? (is it the tune or the words or the pairing of the two?)

Hymn of Jubilee (for the United Reformed Church) © Jan Berry

1: We celebrate the call that's shaped our story,
the joys and struggles since we first begun;
we are your people, reaching for your glory
until the day when all shall be as one.

2: We welcome all to gather at Christ's table,
our wounds & sorrows made whole in your grace;
inviting all, regardless of the labels
defining us by status, creed, or race.

3: We long to see all people in your image,
sharing the world, the riches that you give;
but pride and greed can overwhelm the message
spoiling the life you meant us all to live.

4: As buildings fail, and worshippers grow older,
we wonder whether witness can survive.
We struggle on, with passion growing colder,
yet hope persists, still keeping faith alive.

5: Let Jubilee become a shout of mission,
as those who've been downtrodden find a voice.
We're reaching out with joy to catch the vision
that makes our hearts sing out with praise: "Rejoice!"

Question:

- In what ways does this hymn reflect today's church?