**URC Southern Synod Sacraments Course (Revised (2016) Edition) – READ ME FIRST**

1. The material is arranged in logical order, so look at the folders in alphabetical sequence and each document within a folder in numerical sequence. (Reference to document A.1 means document 1 in folder A, etc.). Not all the material will necessarily be needed on every Course: **Folders F and J** contain some material that will not invariably be needed. Some documents, notably handouts in **Folder J**, may need to be amended according to the needs of students. Similarly, some tutors will wish to adapt for their own purposes the specimen tutors’ notes (**Folder C**), reflecting their own experience and style.
2. This material replaces the first edition of the Southern Synod Sacraments Course produced originally by the Rev. Mike Hensman. As the overall structure and sequence of events is retained, reference to the original tutors’ guidance booklet may well be helpful. (**Folder A**) All the material from the original Course has equivalents or replacements, which can be found in the appropriate folders.
3. Both the first edition and this revised edition assume that students readily have access to *Rejoice & Sing* and *Worship from: the United Reformed Church.* As this is not invariably the case, it may be prudent to email all the documents in **Folder H** to students well before the course begins. The same rites are available from the denominational website as PDFs. Experience shows, however, that students with access to *Worship from: the United Reformed Church* in (loose-leaf) book form find it easier to negotiate their way through the rites*.*
4. The Course was originally designed as a three-tutorial course, but is more typically offered as a two-session (tutorial + Study Day) version. Alternative versions of some documents are accordingly provided and it is important to select the version appropriate to your course. The suffix “a” denotes a document needed for the two-session version and “b” for the three-session version.
5. Home study is required before each meeting of students and after the last one. It is important that adequate time be allowed before the first session and between sessions for students to carry it out. For each session, tutors will find homework rubrics (**Folder D**) for distribution to the students, guidance notes for themselves (**Folder C**), and *pro forma* additional handouts that can be used or adapted if necessary (**Folder F**). Expectations of students work-wise and the need for a minister’s recommendation of a student are outlined in the *pro forma* email for advertising a Course (**Document B.1a/b**), which can be adapted as appropriate.
6. Criteria for assessing students and a *pro forma* certificate for successful students are to be found in **Folder B**. Remember to inform the student’s minister/Church Secretary, Synod Area Pastoral Committee Convener and Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner of student’s successful completion of the course. Successful completion of the Course does not automatically mean that a student is authorised to preside at the Sacraments. Reference should be made to the Synod Lay Presidency Guidelines. (**Document I.1**)

**Checklist of Main Steps**

* Advertise Prospective Course (**Document B1a/b**)
* Obtain Recommendations of Students
* Send Joining Letter with applicable Documents (**Document B2a/b + D1**)
* Send URC Liturgical Material (**Folder H**)
* Compile ‘Welcome to the Sacraments Course’ Student Packs (**Folder E**), for distribution at first tutorial
* Students submit first homework – at or before first tutorial
* Tutorial Session One
* Send Session Two or Study Day homework rubrics, with Health Warnings (**Document D2a/b + F1**)
* Comment on students’ assignments
* Students submit second homework – at or before second tutorial or Study Day
* Ensure that sets of Communion and Baptism Liturgy Card Games (**Folder G**) available for Session Two and Three respectively
* Tutorial Session Two or Study Day Comment on students’ assignments
* [Three Session version –
  + Send Session Three homework rubrics (**Document D3**)
  + Students submit third homework – at or before third tutorial
  + Tutorial Three
  + Comment on students’ assignments]
* After Study Day or Tutorial Session Three, send final communion order instructions (**Document D4**)
* Students submit communion orders
* Comment on students’ communion orders
* Notify student of successful completion of the Course and send Certificate (**Document B4)** (or take any necessary further action to student to reach required standard)
* Inform other relevant people of student’s successful completion of Course

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7 April 2016