

**To: All Ministers in a pastorate, Church representatives, Synod/United Area Leaders, Administrators and Treasurers, Local Church Leaders, Children and Youth representatives, Synod Staff, Co-opted members, Retired Ministers, Students and Observers.**

Dear Friend

**2020 Autumn Together Meeting**  
**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2020 10.30 am to 1.00 pm**  
**'Virtual Meeting' via Zoom**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89989049882?pwd=OEpvR2p3cUpWbkJhZEVNSFF4TWQ4QT09>

Meeting ID: 899 8904 9882

Passcode: 515596

Grace, mercy and peace to you.

It is a joy that the first task I perform as the newly appointed Synod Clerk is to invite you to attend the 2020 Autumn Synod Together Meeting. We look forward to being part of the first meeting of Synod Together convened by our new Synod Moderator, Rev'd Bridget Banks.

As you will all be aware, we had to sadly cancel the Spring Synod Together Meeting due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. All these months later it is still not possible for us to gather together in the same place for our autumn meeting. Therefore, the Synod Officers have arranged to hold a 'virtual' meeting of Synod Together via Zoom. Everyone will recognise that this is a far from ideal way for a council of the Church to meet, but it does enable us to meet and to discuss urgent business.

Many of you will be familiar with Zoom, others will be anxious about being part of a virtual meeting. Everyone who wishes to will be able to join the meeting, even if you do not have a desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone. It is possible to join a Zoom meeting by telephone so we hope no one feels excluded who would normally be present. Please see that attached/enclosed paper which gives you details of joining a Zoom meeting. The Zoom account that is being used for this meeting can accommodate up to 500 participants so please do not worry that you won't be able to join the meeting. You will also find attached/enclosed a very useful guide to 'Zoom etiquette' produced by the United Reformed Church. Please do remember to remain 'muted' unless you are speaking.

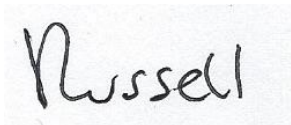
In order for the meeting to run as smoothly as possible we assume that you will all have read the attached/enclosed papers beforehand. We plan to take Papers A and B as read. There will be presentations about Ministerial Pastoral Supervision and various vital finance matters as separate items. We will have an update about safeguarding and an introduction to the new URC Children and Youth Friendly Church Award. There will also be an opportunity for you to discuss, in breakout rooms, how we can support one another during the continuing pandemic.

We are grateful for those with the necessary technical expertise who are making this meeting possible. Please be patient and gentle with your new Moderator, new Synod Clerk and others as we facilitate this important meeting.

Please let us know if you will **not** be able to attend by sending your **apologies** indicating clearly whether you are a minister, church representative etc. and your church to Opuene Charles on [office@urcsouthern.org.uk](mailto:office@urcsouthern.org.uk)

Despite the limitations of meeting 'virtually' I pray that the continuing work of the United Reformed Church in Southern Synod will be blessed through our meeting together and that we will be strengthened in our life and witness knowing we do not work alone. May God's will be done – and may the technology enable that to happen smoothly!

Yours in Christ,



Rev'd Russell Furley-Smith, Synod Clerk

1<sup>st</sup> October 2020