

## Legacies of Slavery

### An Update of Our Work, November 2022

**Confession and Apology:** On 12 July 2022, in her first act as General Assembly Moderator, 2022-3, the Revd Fiona Bennett read out a statement that included these words: “We, the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, mindful of our own history and that of our antecedent bodies, wish to confess and apologise for our role in transatlantic slavery, and the scars which continue to blight our society, our Church, and the lives of black people in our midst and around the globe today.”

<https://urc.org.uk/urc-apologises-for-its-role-in-the-transatlantic-slave-trade/>

For a vivid insight into the continuing problems of racism within our own church, see this fifteen-minute video [“Telling It Like It Is”](#)

**Saying “sorry” is not enough:** The Confession and Apology followed a process of consultation with synods across the URC and also discussion and decision in General Assembly itself. But Assembly also agreed that the URC must “find constructive ways by which we can move from saying ‘I’m sorry’ into concrete actions of ‘repairing justice’ and so contribute to the prophetic work of God’s coming kingdom.”

**What might “Repairing Justice” mean?** During 2022-3 the Legacies of Slavery (LoS) Task Group will draw up a shortlist of proposals and possible projects, which will be circulated to synods for consideration at their March 2023 meetings. The task group already received suggestions during its consultation earlier in 2022, including

- Strengthening our relationships with our CWM partner churches
- An education programme to help us understand the legacies of transatlantic slavery, particularly as they impact our life together today
- Seeking to add the URC’s voice to campaigns encouraging the UK government to release LoS countries and communities from debt owed to the UK

Any further suggestions and comments can be sent to [global.intercultural@urc.org.uk](mailto:global.intercultural@urc.org.uk)

12 July 2022 was the start of a long journey towards creating an actively anti-racist church – a journey in which honesty about the past fosters real hope for the future. We pray God’s blessing as we continue the journey.