

# **UNITED WE STAND**

**By Rod**

*Originally written from a town united service, this poem will need a little updating to fit the current situation – or omit the verses where this matters.*

We are the Church together, the united Church of God;  
Taken from an outside view, we must look very odd.

Some of us are Baptist and some of us are not;  
Some of us are Catholic but most of us are Prot.  
Some churches have new comfy chairs, inside they're warm and bright;  
Others still cold wooden pews; boilers that never light.  
Some have the latest gadgetry, all done without a hitch;  
Some have bought an OHP , but can't find the on-off switch.

Some of us are members of the good old C of E.  
We all have our favourites for the vacant Canterbury.  
Some would go for London, but others plump for Wales;  
Others favour Liverpool, when they're all weighed in the scales.  
Still others think that Ali is the one it's got to be;  
He may be pushing sixty, but still stings like a bee.

Some of us have steeples with a set of peeling bells;  
Others sound a tinkle to warn of incense smells.  
Some of us take babies and hold them in our arms.  
We sprinkle them with water, gurgling at their charms.  
Others take our adults, we love the full immersion,  
We drag them under water in joy at their conversion.

We all have our foibles, our personal sacred cows:  
Some hold the Lord's Prayer must be said with "thees" and "thous".  
Some like our sermons shorter; "Shorter's so much better";  
Others look for three points that start with the same letter.  
Millennially speaking, we're either post or pre.  
Crucial matters when it comes to adding milk to tea.

Some of us love liturgy, in it we need no training.  
We say our "Amen's" loudly; bold without refraining.  
For others, choruses are worship just sublime;  
So deeply felt the meaning, we sing it one more time.  
Yes, we will repeat it one more time, and then,  
To make the message sink right in, we'll sing it yet again.

Some don't like witnessing, preferring prayer that's humble;  
Others go for Alpha, and all things Nicky Gumbel.

Some worship charismatically, hands shooting up like rockets;  
Some hate such emotionalism, hands firmly in our pockets.  
Some share “The Peace” with exuberant hugs and kisses;  
Others do it with a nod – but only to “The Missus”.

When asked about Toronto, with blessings that abound,  
Some may give their position as ‘prostrate upon the ground’.  
Some have children running wildly up the aisles;  
Others hate a Family Service, with all its modern styles.  
We much prefer the quiet of good old Evening Prayer;  
Children not seen or heard; in fact not even there.

When it comes to music, where do we begin?  
Some think guitars in church just make a dreadful din.  
Some have choirs of schoolboys, robed and cherub like;  
Others have their modern bands playing loudly through a mike.  
Some are ‘Happy Clappy’, Graham Kendrick’s where it’s at;  
Others like the chant and words of old Magnificat.

Some of us are Ancient and, some Modern - not the same.  
Some follow Cricket, but for some football is the game .  
Some of us are modernisers, we love all things new;  
Some say “No change thanks”; not since 1662.  
Some of us have women priests as leaders of our flocks;  
Others hold its not for us, “It’s men that wear the frocks”.

We are the Church together, the united Church of God;  
Taken from an outside view, we must look very odd.

What is it that unites us, that makes us simply one?  
Is it that we’re British, disagreement’s just not done.  
No, it goes much deeper, back before the Flood,  
Jesus washed our sins away when in love he shed His blood.  
It is He that oils the wheels that makes all churches run,  
With the Father and the Spirit, He is our three in one.