



The
United
Reformed
Church

Yorkshire Synod
Somerset House
St Paul's Street
Morley
Leeds
LS27 9EP

Synod Moderator
Synod Clerk
Treasurer
Property Officer
Trust Secretary

Rev. Jamie Kissack
Tim Crossley
Rev Simon Copley
Jane Bunyan-Murray
Alastair Forsyth

e-Mail: office@urcyorkshire.org.uk
Website: www.urcyorkshire.org.uk
Telephone: 0113 289 8490

The Briefing – Number 52 6th May 2021

Dear Friends,

As we move closer to the next date in the series of steps at which the levels of restrictions imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic are eased, so the number of rumours suggesting what to expect increase. We are now within a fortnight of the May 17th date at which there may well be movement or lifting of the current restrictions. The papers are full of stories and the broadcast media are full of pundits filling the airwaves with speculation, especially with the news that the lifting of restrictions at funerals is about to happen. It has been [announced](#) by Government that the legal limit of 30 mourners will be removed as part of England's Step 3 of the roadmap. What has not been made clear in the media is that the attendance limits are now determined by how many people the venue – whether indoors or outdoors – can safely accommodate with social distancing. The change will take place from 17 May *at the earliest*, a phrase which may allow for potential slippage in the schedule. The advice from Synod is to double check the Government sites – the links are below – and to make sure that your churches and church buildings are suitably risk assessed and prepared for such changes.

The reminders which we published in recent editions of the Briefing are still valid until 17th May at the earliest, so please check out these pointers to what we as churches can do. The current Government guidance was published on 14th April and can be found at [\(COVID-19\) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). As set out in the [COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021](#), out-of-school settings and wraparound providers as well as organisations such as Scouting and Guiding can offer outdoor provision of activity, to all children, with limited indoor provision. The indoor guidance is here <https://tinyurl.com/3w2tx2m8> but the numbers able to meet are limited by your own church's risk assessments. I wish you all well and if you need any help and advice as this momentum builds, please get in touch with us at Synod.

At Synod we are looking more and more to what we can offer in the months to come. The new-look website is now up and running. If you haven't had a chance to have a look, please do so at the usual address [Yorkshire Synod \(urcyorkshire.org.uk\)](http://Yorkshire Synod (urcyorkshire.org.uk)). There are lots of things to see and lots of resources to draw from and as usual within the Briefing I will be showcasing the new and the important as we upload them. If you have anything that you would want to highlight in the News section or to drop into the Calendar, please let me know. May's diary is filling up rapidly with the Synod Quiet Day being now only just over a week away. I also hope to be able to fill up some of your June diary courtesy of the Lay Preachers Planning Group. You will even see further in this Briefing that we are organising things for October and November. As ever there are plenty of events, courses and resources as we move through spring into summer. If you have any events you would like to add to our list, please send them into the office and we can put them on the website as well as on Synod Calendar and in the Briefing.

The United Reformed Church
Yorkshire Synod



Reflection, Refreshment, Renewal

Saturday May 15th 2021

10am – 1pm

By Zoom

*We gather online, and then spend time in our own
space, with guided reflections and prayers*

Led by Rev Annette Haigh

To book, contact office@urcyorkshire.org.uk

Lay Preachers Planning Group news

Exploring the upcoming lectionary readings together

Next month the Lay Preachers Planning Group are putting on two new sessions exploring the lectionary readings in June and July.

The first is on **Tuesday 8th June** at 10.30am – 12.00noon and repeated 7.30pm – 9.00pm on Zoom. Facilitated by Kath in the morning and Jill at night, this will be a time for participants to look together at the lectionary readings for 13th, 20th, 27th June and 4th July in preparation for leading worship on those Sundays.

The second is on **Tuesday 29th June** at 10.30am – 12.00noon and repeated 7.30pm -9.00 pm on Zoom. Facilitated by Rod this will be a time for participants to look together at the lectionary readings for 11th, 18th, 25th July & 1st August in preparation for leading worship on those Sundays.

This time the group are trying a repeat of the morning session at night to assess how this works for you all. As previously these sessions will be participative rather than “expert led” by an outside speaker and the links will be sent to all lay preachers nearer the dates.

If you need further information, please get in touch via the office@urcyorkshire.org.uk e-mail.

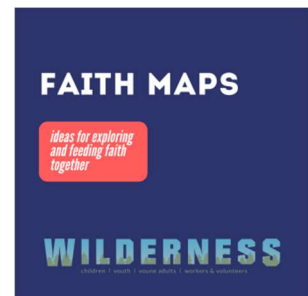
Never let it be said that there is no forward planning in Synod. Not only are the Lay Preaching planning group doing some brilliant work this spring and summer, they have also got your Autumn diaries to fill as well. They have asked Lawrence Moore to leading an overview of **Luke’s Gospel** for worship leaders. The provisional dates are **2nd, 4th, 9th and 11th November 2011** between 10.00am and 11.30am, with a repeat at 7.30pm on the dates mentioned. More details as we get closer.

Children and Young Peoples News

Wilderness Faith Maps

This simple weekly resource provides an easy way to engage with the Bible, prayer and the world around us. Linked to a Sunday Lectionary reading, it is suitable for all ages and faith experiences, as a starting point for a discussion or for personal reflection. You can find it each week here on [facebook](#).

Watch out this Easter for a short daily post, and please add ‘like’ the page, to be alerted when each weekly post arrives.



Youth Mental Health First Aid training: 9.30am – 12 noon on 11th, 13th, 18th, 20th May on Zoom. There are FREE places for church volunteer leaders, but you need to attend all the sessions. There are still a couple of places left. Contact Jon Steel to book a place.

If you struggle with any of the hyperlinks, please get in touch with me at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk or Jon Steel at joncyp@urcyorkshire.org.uk



URC Children's & Youth Work and Education & Learning invite you to a series of free, online workshops to improve communication skills.

There are eight workshops listed below; book to attend any one workshop, each pair or the whole series!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/series-of-workshops-building-skills-confidence-and-capacity-in-comms-registration-144181152709>

The first two sessions on creating and editing videos have already taken place, but there are still five sessions which may be of interest to you.

13/05/2021: Improve your social media: This session will for those already using social media for their group, event, church will look at getting more from the main social media platforms and creating engaging content for them - how to use them effectively, with more advanced options and applications. The session is led by Oli Deeks.

20/05/2021: Inclusive worship using signs and symbols- session 1: Lorraine will introduce us to Makaton (unique language programme that uses signs, symbols and speech) and using Widget (communication in print) to support worship that is more accessible to those with particular needs. You will also hear about other inclusive ways of worshipping. At the end of the session you will have some ideas of things to try out in worship. The session is led by Lorraine Webb.

17/06/2021: Inclusive worship using signs and symbols- follow up session: Return and share what you have learned and tried out; share your successes and challenges and learn from each other. Lorraine will again lead us and encourage building on the previous session.

27/05/2021: Sharing stories more effectively- session 1: Want to write a press release, a good news story or an eye-catching advertising piece? Come along and find out some of the 'tricks of the trade' to help your writing get the message across more effectively and interestingly. By the end of the session you will have a greater understanding of the power of words and be encouraged to go away and try out the ideas. The session is led by Ann-Marie Nye.

01/07/2021: Sharing stories more effectively- follow up session: Come back and share what you have learned and tried out; share your successes and challenges and learn from each other. This session will build on what you did the previous session. The session is led by Ann-Marie Nye.

Additional info: All sessions will be recorded and will take place from 7.30pm to 8.45pm. We are pleased to be able to offer small grants (up to £200) to those connected with URC's who attend these training sessions. The grants will be to enable you to put the training into practice (ie purchasing equipment, software, further training) and will be by application (more details at the sessions). For more information please contact Sam Richards sam.richards@urc.org.uk where she can point you in the right direction.

Safeguarding News

Basic safeguarding training.

It may be you have never had any safeguarding training before, are due for a refresher (every 3 years) or just want to find out how good the new training is, but this session is for anyone and everyone within the church.

The next available sessions are **Thursday 13th May 2021 at 10am to 12pm** and **Tuesday 18th May 2021 at 1pm to 3pm**. Sessions are limited to 15 people so places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. To book a place on one of the above dates, please contact Matt Knowles, our Safeguarding Adviser me at matt.knowles@urcyorkshire.org.uk

Leading Your Church into Growth

Again, hot of the press and well in advance, is notice of the LYCiG 2021 National Conference.



CALLING ALL CHURCH LEADERS!

We are very excited to once again been able to secure places on this very popular and effective church growth conference. We are asking that at least two, or even better three could come from each sending church to be able to get the most from this highly effective course.

The full cost is usually £225 for this residential course.
UNDER 30's Free- 100% discount.

This includes accommodation and food.

We are able to offer up to **50%** discount. This means that for those who would not be able to go at the full cost, you now can!

We only have limited places at this fantastic offer

The earlier we book our places the more places we can secure.
So please get back to me as soon as possible to secure your place.

For more information and booking information
Please contact:

The Synod office
or
ashley@bvurc.org.uk

Yours in Christ

Rev Ashley Evans

Synod Evangelist

LEAD YOUR CHURCH INTO GROWTH

October 4th-6th 2021

Three days to inspire,
encourage and equip
ordained and lay
leaders

Yorkshire Synod
are subsidizing
this course by up
to 50%

The Hayes
Conference
Centre

To go on the
journey with
others.

SYNOD EVANGELIST

Rev Ashley Evans

07403423082


ashley@bvurc.org.uk

For more information and booking information contact the Synod office at office@urcyorkshire.org.uk or Rev Ashley Evans at ashley@bvurc.org.uk.

Property News

As I mentioned on the front page, the past few weeks have been relatively quiet when it comes to the change in regulations regarding what we can do in our buildings. However, please keep an eye on the various Government sites next week as that is where the official announcements will be published in relation to any changes that could happen from 17th May. There is some flexibility though in the rules surrounding the meetings of charitable organisations that can be found here [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) guidance for the charity sector - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector). This is a rather complex page on the Government's website, but it may allow churches to hold Annual Meetings as the meeting fulfils the charitable objectives of the church. However, do bear in mind that you will still have to be Covid secure, following track and trace guidance, be able to ensure appropriate social distancing and have an up-to-date Risk Assessment. As ever Synod is here to help so if you need advice on this, please get in touch as Jane, our Property Officer is available for advice via property@urcyorkshire.org.uk if you need to discuss this further. To help the key links to the Government website which cover church opening: <https://tinyurl.com/4vjhv2ee> and <https://tinyurl.com/jhm9cur8>.

General Information and Resource Sharing



Westminster College
A resource centre for learning
Serving the United Reformed Church

**MINISTRY IN A TIME OF TRAUMA: A VIRTUAL ONE DAY
COURSE FOR THOSE IN CHURCH MINISTRY**

Saturday 8th May 2021, 10am – 4pm

We have had notification that this course will be taking place and full details can be obtained from the Synod Office or from Westminster College directly at Tutorial Office, Westminster College, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0AA; admin@westminster.cam.ac.uk, 01223 33 06 32.

Dementia Friendly Churches Questionnaire

I have received this week a request that churches fill in a simple questionnaire asking about dementia friendly worship and their response to it. The questions have been prepared by Mal Breeze who is a Community Minister in North-Western Synod. He has developed some dementia friendly worship resources and is now taking this wider across the Northerly Synods. Mal would be delighted to help any church across the URC which wishes to become dementia-friendly and would appreciate it if you could share the questionnaire offering his support.

If you could fill out this simple form, or if you know of someone who could do it on behalf of your church please let me know at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and I'll forward it to you.

St Andrew's URC Sheffield has a very gifted and committed organist who has put worship resources on every week since the beginning of the first lockdown. The music is an eclectic, rich and classical selection and he now puts the text into a digital voice, which means the words are there to read yourself. The service from the previous week is immediately accessible below the new one, and earlier services are now archived and accessible too. www.standrewsurcsheffield.org.uk/stop-press

For those with local tastes I know that the **Sheffield team** have their services on their own website at <http://sheffielddurc.org.uk/> and on the Yorkshire site you can find help in preparing and participating in Online Worship at [COVID-19 Advice and Support | URC Yorkshire Synod](#).

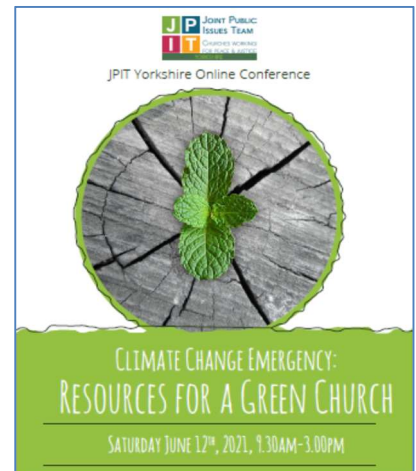
As I keep mentioning the Yorkshire Synod has a dedicated **YouTube channel**. On it there are the **Moderators musings** and releases from **the LYCiG team, Children's and Youth, Mission** and more! The link is here: <https://bit.ly/urcyorkshireyoutube> and have a look at what has already been uploaded. If you have a google account, you will receive emails when a new video is posted. In addition there is a great deal of information on the LYCiG page on the Synod website. Now is as good a time to have a look at [Leading Your Church Into Growth | URC Yorkshire Synod](#)

Worshipping God Together : Apart. has become a cherished regular feature. The latest service from Rev Janine Atkinson has been uploaded to the website and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Janine for these resources. You can find it under the 'What we do' drop down heading if you fancy a Yorkshire Synod Website surf or more directly at <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/worship/>

We have had advance notice of a major environmental conference that will be held online on Saturday 12th June 2021. The **JPIT YORKSHIRE ONLINE CONFERENCE, Resources for a Green Church** event is open to everyone and details are available on the flyer that was sent out at the same time as this Briefing and should be on the Synod website as well.

"If you think that the Climate Change Crisis really is an emergency, and that the Church has an important part to play in helping people transition to new ways of living more gently with God's world, then sign up for the JPIT Yorkshire online conference via sue.cutting1209@gmail.com

More details will follow nearer the date.



And if you are interested in this I do recommend that you sign up for these newsletters, <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org> from Eco Congregation in Scotland and the other is the Joint Public Issues Team newsletter <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/whats-new/newsletter/>



I have listed much of what I know is happening above, but it would be good for you to send across notification of any open events you are hosting in your churches. Please don't hide these events under a bushel, but let me know so that I can get it out to a wider audience; my usual deadline is Wednesday teatime. Similarly, please send the Briefing around your congregations so they know of those activities within and beyond Synod designed to grow the Kingdom. Plans are already afoot to bring more activities and good news stories to your attention, so keep an eye open for the next Briefing. All you need to do is get in touch with me at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk.

As I mentioned above the Synod team are ready and willing to offer advice and help. They can still be reached through the usual channels listed below and the team is still recommending that you abide by the advice given both here and on the Yorkshire and National websites.

Once the next tranche of restrictions are lifted on 17th May I'll bring together all the relevant Covid-19 links (as I still have to learn where everything is on our new website) so that there is a simple on-stop-shop here on the Briefing. It will also give me the opportunity to assess what we may expect at the next easing of restriction due on 17th May. However all the current regulations can be found here as well as a list of those things which changes on 12th April is available on the Government's latest update which is here ([COVID-19 Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do) (www.gov.uk)).

If you know of anything you may find useful for our churches, please contact me at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and I'll circulate it here and on the website. Similarly if you need any further help, be it to do with IT, finance, property or the like we are here to help.

National URC site: <https://urc.org.uk/> Yorkshire Synod: <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/> Yorkshire Synod

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/urcyorkshire> Yorkshire Synod Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/urcyorkshire> Yorkshire Young People's Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/wildernessyorkshireurc/>

Tim Crossley

Synod Clerk

