



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Yorkshire Synod

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



The Briefing – Number 98

15th December 2022

This will be the last Briefing before Christmas, the last Briefing of 2022 which means that it is the last Briefing to be published during the Jubilee year of the United Reformed Church. I hope that you have been able to mark this anniversary in as many ways as possible, and I know that there have been special services, tree plantings, displays and rededications all around our wonderful Synod.

But it's not over yet as I'm happy to say that what we missed back in October is back on with the **URC Anniversary Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration and Open Church House event** being rearranged for Saturday 15th April 2023.

Andy Jackson, the Head of Communications, has communicated that following on from the postponement of the original event due to rail strikes, they have been working hard to find a new date to celebrate the URC's 50th. Trying to find a revised date which works for those leading the service and the availability of Methodist Central Hall has not been an easy task. Their initial hopes for May 6 were scuppered when the new King chose that date for his Coronation!

Nevertheless the URC is delighted to announce that the new date is **Saturday 15 April 2023**. In an ideal world, we would have opted for a longer gap after Easter, but we hope that as many members and friends of the URC will be able to join us for our delayed anniversary celebrations.

The Open Church House event at 86 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9RT, will also take place on April 15 from 10am-12 noon.

Tickets

If you have a ticket and are able to come to the event on April 15, please do nothing - your ticket is still valid. Please bring it/them on the day. If you would like more tickets, please visit <https://bit.ly/urc50> and amend your order.

If you are no longer able to attend, please visit <https://bit.ly/urc50> and select Cancel Order. This will free up your tickets for others. Or email 50@urc.org.uk and we can cancel the order for you.

Anniversary Choir

If you would like to sing in the Anniversary Choir, you can find out more details and the dates of the rehearsals by visiting <https://bit.ly/urc50-choir>

Stewards and enquiries

If you are able to volunteer as a Steward at the service, please email 50@urc.org.uk which is also the email address for any enquiries relating to the new date.

On behalf of the URC, may I wish you a Happy Christmas, and that it will be filled with the faith, hope and love of the Christ child.

With warmest wishes and thanks,
Andy Jackson, Head of Communications

Winter Warmer Initiative grants from the Yorkshire Synod Mission Fund are still available



The Yorkshire Synod is acutely aware of the challenges facing many people in our communities with the prospect of huge increases in energy bills this winter, and beyond.

We are pleased that some congregations are already responding (and intend to respond) with initiatives to offer warm spaces for their

communities and Synod would like to help with this.

We would encourage congregations (and groups of churches, including ecumenical partners) who are planning such initiatives to apply to the small grants stream of the Synod Mission Fund for help (grants up to £2,500)

To ease the burden and speed of administration the Synod Mission Fund Panel are relaxing our normal procedures for applications as follows:

1. Applications can be made at any time directly to the Synod Clerk at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk. The applications will then be dealt with between SMF Panel meetings as soon as possible.
2. Use and attach the small grants form found at [Forms - URC Yorkshire Synod](https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/181121-Synod-Mission-Fund-SMALLER-grant-application-form.docx) ideally this one <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/181121-Synod-Mission-Fund-SMALLER-grant-application-form.docx>
3. Please insert the title "Winter Warmer Initiative" followed by the Church (or lead Church) name into the Mission Project Name field on page 1 of the form AND in the e-mail subject field so we can pick up applications quickly.
4. Please be very brief in question 1 (Your Project). Some description of what you are doing will be helpful but there is no need for too much detail describing the purpose of your project and how it helps the mission of your church.
5. Churches can still apply for an additional grant towards Winter Warmer initiatives even if they already have applications for other projects in train, submitted recently, or planned for the near future.
6. Churches can apply if your Winter Warmer initiative has already started.
7. We would still like to see indications of offers of match funding plus your latest accounts. Some indication of how your own energy bills are being affected will also be helpful. Insert this in the form at question 3 (How much of this can your church contribute?). Costs of the project for which you request funding must relate directly to the initiative. This includes anticipated additional energy costs but not normal energy costs.
8. Applications towards Winter Warmer initiatives can be submitted up to 31st March 2023

We look forward to receiving your applications. Please come back to either the Synod Clerk, Tim Crossley or the Synod Treasurer, Rev Simon Copley via the office with any questions you may have.

You will also be pleased to know that the Yorkshire Synod budget for 2023 includes £100,000 set aside to help churches in Yorkshire with the challenges of their own normal energy costs. This is in addition to £2 million that is being set aside by the URC centrally to help churches in all Synods. The detailed criteria for distributing these central funds is yet to be decided but further updates and other useful information will follow as soon as we have more details.

Warm Welcomes in Yorkshire

Westfield Wyke

Warm space for Wyke foodbank Christmas toys and hamper distribution

Between 4th and 10th December Westfield URC Wyke, hosted a special week when parents referred to the Wyke foodbank were given appointments to choose 2 main presents and 3 stocking fillers per child. 168 children benefitted from this offer. A warm space, warm drinks, people to talk with and



the opportunity for prayer were available all week. The Wyke churches and local businesses provided the toys and contributions to the hampers and volunteers helped to prepare and deliver 100 hampers to those who have needed to use the foodbank in the last few months. Many of the parents commented on coming into the old school how good it was to come into rooms with the heating on and we feel it helped people stay longer and feel listened to and not

rushed as they were choosing Christmas presents for their children. The volunteers coming on different days and on the Friday to prepare the hampers also appreciated being in a warm environment.

There were many grateful and heartfelt comments through the week. One example was a mum who left saying "now I can face getting the tree out of the loft because I have something to wrap and put under the tree".



Westfield Wyke URC benefitted from a Synod Winter Warmer Mission Fund grant to help do this fantastic work. If your church is looking to provide that little extra to ensure that there is a warm space in your community then please send in an application to clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk.

St Columba's, York



A warm welcome awaits you at
St Columba's United Reformed Church
Priory Street, York
Community Drop-in Winter Warmer
Afternoon



Every Tuesday 12.00pm - 4.00pm (except 20th December)

12.00 Short worship

12.30pm Soup and bread (no charge, pay as you feel)

12.00pm - 4.00pm a warm place to do jigsaws, crafting, games, read or just chat.



Denholme

For more information visit [Denholme Shared](https://denholmesharedchurch.org.uk)

WARM WELCOME
with Denholme Shared Church

FREE WARM WELCOMING SAFE

Wednesday 10am-12pm at DMI
Our regular 'Place of Welcome' with hot drinks & biscuits.

Friday 12pm-3pm at Denholme Shared Church
Church is open for hot drinks/biscuits & cakes/activities/charging points/WiFi

Sunday 4pm-7pm at Denholme Shared Church
Church is open for our 'Sunday Supper Club.' Hot drinks/cooked meal/biscuits & cakes/activities/charging points/WiFi/games/toys and more...

Bringing the community together this winter

For details of what you'll enjoy seeing

SCAN QR

[Church \(denholmesharedchurch.org.uk\)](https://denholmesharedchurch.org.uk)

Roundhay

St Andrew's Roundhay

A warm, safe place, where you can expect a friendly and inclusive welcome!

Complimentary Refreshments
FreeWi-Fi
Quiet Space
Board Games

Welcome to our **Warm Space**
Supported by local ward councillors

Every Friday
13:00 - 16:00

Shaftesbury Ave, Roundhay, Leeds LS8 1DS

If your church is planning something similar, please let us know at Synod office.

Christmas Services

Carols at Saltaire



As many of you will know, back in February 2020 there was a partial collapse of the ceiling at the back of church. After a great deal of hard work by the contractors, the Synod team and especially by the fellowship at Saltaire we are delighted to tell you the repair is now completed and the scaffolding removed. So, on the afternoon of Sunday 18th December, you are invited to come along to Saltaire United Reformed Church to marvel at the result of the work of the various craftsmen who have worked on the ceiling and to raise the roof in celebrating the coming of the Messiah.

1pm – 1.30pm: A chance to look round church and listen to Ryszard playing the organ.

1.30pm – 2.30pm: Carol Service.

2.30pm – 4pm: A further opportunity to wander around church whilst Ryszard plays the organ again.

Coffee and mince pies will be served downstairs in the cafe room following the Carol Service until approximately 4pm.

Leeds URC Partnership service



The 'Longest Night' is a gentle, reflective service for anyone who finds this time of year difficult, who misses someone, or who wants to spend some time remembering.

Wednesday 21st December, 7:30pm

On Zoom, the link

is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7019277749>

For more details please contact Rev Nicola Robinson at

revnicola.robinson@gmail.com

The Yorkshire Synod Office will close for Christmas from lunchtime on **Friday, 23rd December** and will not re-open until 8.30am on **Tuesday 3rd January 2023**.

From all the Synod Team, we send our blessings and wish you Peace and Joy this Christmas and for the coming New Year.

Jamie, Tim, Jane, Alastair, Simon, Ashley, Megan, Matt, Paula, Anne, Hayley, Rachel and Sally,





Christmas Tree

FESTIVAL



All are welcome...

11 - 17 December 2022

**St Andrew's Roundhay,
Shaftesbury Avenue, LS8 1DS**

Come and see the Christmas Trees on display in church,
decorated by local groups and businesses.

Visit our outdoor interactive Garden Nativity
Clocktower Cafe Monday - Saturday 12:00 - 16:30
with Live Festive Musical Interludes

Shiregreen on the map



A snapshot of the work at Shiregreen URC, Sheffield, is now on the Synod Website and on YouTube. They emerged from lockdown responding to the needs of the elderly in their community as well as being able to create a safe space for mums with babies denied of 'normal' social contact. Jean, one of the members interviewed, was 93 in November! Have a look at either [Shiregreen on the map - URC Yorkshire Synod](#) or https://youtu.be/NkiBKj_QDUA to see if this is something your church could replicate in your community.

Lay Training news

Yorkshire Synod Discipleship Development small grant fund 2022

We have been pleased to give out £500 of the £2000 Yorkshire were allocated for this year from the national small grant Discipleship Development fund but it would be good if we could have more applications to use the rest of this money before the end of the year. So far money has been agreed for new bible study resources and for sending a young helper on a messy church course. If anyone wants to discuss an application before submitting it please pass on my contact details. Remember this is for any age to apply so please discuss with your young people as well as adults.

Every blessing

Kath Lonsdale, Convenor of Yorkshire Ministries, kathlonsdale@talktalk.net

Making Sense of the Minor Prophets

On **Saturday 11th February**, between 10.00am and midday Dr Alison Gray, one of the Old Testament lecturers from Westminster college, will lead a zoom session for us on this day entitled "Making Sense of the Minor Prophets: An overview and a deep dive into preaching on Jonah" This is a date for the diary for anyone interested in joining this session. Whether you are a minister, lay preacher, worship leader or just interested in this topic please consider keeping this date free. Registration is now open via office@urcyorkshire.org.uk. The link and pre information will be sent to those registered nearer the date.

Annual Elders Conference

22nd April 2023

Speaker: Rev Adam Scott, Principal, Northern College – more information to follow....

Lay preachers and worship leaders conference

You know how every now and then I get advance notice of events, well this is one such advance notice. Thanks to our ever efficient and attentive Ministries Committee Convenor Kath Lonsdale who has let me know that the next Lay preachers and worship leaders conference will be at Wydale from **7th to 9th July 2023** - look out for more information in the new year.

Children and Young Peoples News

The new [bi-monthly newsletter](#) from the URC's Children's and Youth Work office is available [here](#) or sign up to join our mailing list for it [here](#).



Online Bookings for the 2023 Youth Assembly are now open

Each year the URC Youth Assembly brings together a diverse group of under-25s from across Scotland, England and Wales for a weekend of business and fun combined, exploring issues and topics relevant to Church, society and life through workshops, seminars, discussions and creative activities. Next year it is being held again at Whitemoor Lakes near Lichfield between 27th and 29th January.

The cost is £119 if the booking is received on or before 11 November 2022; £149 if booking received on or after 12 November 2022. To book visit [URC Youth Assembly - United Reformed Church](#) and if money is an issue, please contact us on 020 7916 8683 or email children.youth@urc.org.uk as financial support is available.

Palestine Visit

Sadly, when we hear about Israel or Palestine on the news it is all too often regarding the latest act of violence in the long history of trouble in those countries. However, when four of us from Christchurch, Ilkley, visited during early November, we experienced wonderful hospitality, amazing food and the beautiful landscape providing us with a hugely positive experience. The generosity of spirit, enduring hope and stubborn perseverance of the Palestinian people in the face of occupation by Israel greatly inspired and moved us.

amos  **trust**

justice and hope for the forgotten

We were expertly guided by the Amos Trust. Margaret and Pat enjoyed a 'Taste of Palestine' trip staying in comfortable hotels, cooking, and sampling delicious food and produce and visiting projects in Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Nazareth. Chris and Helen meanwhile walked the Palestine Heritage Trail staying in a variety of accommodation including Bedouin camps. They completed the trail that they started in 2019 walking south and eastwards from Jericho through Bethlehem to Hebron and beyond to finish at the separation wall.

We will be sharing more of our experiences in Christchurch (and suggesting how we can each play a part in standing up to injustice) during January but do feel free to speak to any of us in the meantime to find out more or visit the website of the Amos Trust [Home \(amostrust.org\)](http://amostrust.org). For the January dates, keep an eye open at [Home | My Site \(christchurchilkley.org.uk\)](http://christchurchilkley.org.uk).



Pat Evans, Margaret Cook, Chris Mannall and Helen Singleton (Christchurch, Ilkley)

Faith and Science in the Local Church



For those among us who take an interest in Faith, Medicine and Science, the following workshop being run by the Faraday Institute in Cambridge may be of interest. All this information can be found on the Faraday Institute website, including registration details: <https://www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/>

Faith and Science in the Local Church – A Workshop for Christian Leaders

January 13 – 14, 2023, Cambridge and online

Full details to be had from Dr Zoe Binns, Events Manager, The Faraday Institute, Woolf Building, Madingley Road, Cambridge, CB3 0UB, UK. Tel: 01223-748-888, zcl21@faraday.cam.ac.uk, www.faraday.cam.ac.uk

For news about what the URC is doing around the country, head here [URC News Update November 2022 \(urc-news.org.uk\)](https://www.urc.org.uk/news) and sign up for their monthly updates.

Coming in 2023

United Reformed Church
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Read the URC Environmental Policy

2024 URC Prayer Handbook - prayers requested

Prayers for the 2024 Prayer Handbook, *Full to the Brim*, are now invited: <https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/prayer-and-worship/urc-prayer-handbook/> The deadline is February 24, 2023.

For more information, please contact
Andy Jackson, Head of Communications
The United Reformed Church

Last Minute Christmas Gifts

I know that you will all be extremely organised and well ahead of the game this year so I imagine that your Christmas Shopping will now all be done and dusted. If, however, you are looking for any last minute Christmas gifts (or haven't started as is the case with a certain Yorkshire Synod Clerk), the Synod Office has limited supplies on a first come, first served basis, of the following:

- URC Jubilee Socks Size 4-7 - £4.95 (plus postage)
- URC Buildings Calendar 2023 - £1.99 (plus postage)
- URC Prayer Handbook 2023, Cities of Sanctuary - £5.99 (plus postage)
- URC Celebrate Together 50th Anniversary free booklet - (postage only)



I realise that with the postal strikes, it might not be guaranteed when you would receive your order, but we would endeavour to send them out asap. Alternatively, if you live near enough to the synod office, you could always collect your order, with negotiation with the office staff, to make sure there's someone here before you set off.

Do let us know as soon as possible if you want to make a purchase and we can organise it with you.

God Bless and have a very happy Christmas and a healthy and fulfilling 2023.

You can also keep an eye on all our social media platforms for news; on the website at [Home - URC Yorkshire Synod](#), the Facebook pages at [United Reformed Church in Yorkshire - Home | Facebook](#) and [Wilderness URC Yorkshire - Home | Facebook](#), the YouTube page at [URC Yorkshire - YouTube](#) and the Twitter page at [URC in Yorkshire \(@URCYorkshire\) / Twitter](#).

Please don't hide these events and resources in your inboxes. Why not send the Briefing around your own church mailing lists as these events are for everyone, member or non-member, church-goer or non-church-goer. All these activities within and beyond Synod are designed to grow the Kingdom.

Plans are always happening to bring more activities and good news stories to your attention and as Christmas is around the corner you have no excuse not to let us know what you are up to. Keep an eye open for the next Briefing due on 5th January. All you need to do is get in touch with me at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk.

Tim Crossley
Synod Clerk