



# Yorkshire Synod

Somerset House  
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# Yorkshire Synod

## Briefing

### Number 112



20<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Last issue I mentioned that the 2023 United Reformed Church General Assembly had taken place at the beginning of the month. This issue I want to tell you about the second **Yorkshire Synod Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders conference** which took place at Wydale Hall between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> July. Megan Warner, from Northern College, was the main speaker and she inspired and challenged all who attended. The delegates were encouraged to re-frame the way we look at the bible; for it to be relevant to today but true to the context in which the bible passages were written, both Old and New Testaments.



*Anne Dale & Steven Knapton reframing in earnest*



*Glynis & Neil Fletcher with Mark Parker-Randall*

There was a mix of those who came last year and those new to Wydale and all appreciated the venue, the sessions and the time to get to know each other better. Through feedback it was clear that “it felt a safe space”, there were “helpful links between the Old and New Testament and ideas for sharing in services” and the event “made us feel part of the wider URC family”. Not only that, but “lots of food for thought – refreshing to have such open and real conversations”, “good to be with old friends and make new ones” and “lots to consider when we get back home”.

So as it has been a huge success the event will be taking place again next year so mark it in your diaries: the third Yorkshire Synod Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders conference will be from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024, again at Wydale Hall.

Finally, please let me have details of what **YOUR** church is doing. As I will be on holiday for the first two weeks in August the next issue will be in a month’s time. Let me know how the summer has been for you and drop me a line at [clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk) and I’ll showcase it in the next edition, due out on 24<sup>th</sup> August with the deadline for submissions being on 22<sup>nd</sup> August. Now where did those swimming trunks go.....?

*Tim Crossley*

# Inviting



## Making More Disciples

The **Elders Development Group of the Yorkshire Synod** are delighted to invite you to attend the annual 24 hour conference to be held at Wydale Hall (<https://www.wydale.org/>) in North Yorkshire on **28<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023**. It will be led by Andrew Roberts, author of Holy Habits (<https://www.holyhabits.org.uk/andrew-roberts>) and the topic will be 'Making More Disciples'.



In Andrew's own words:

*"Lucy Moore (the founder of Messy Church) suggests that 'Many of us face an inner conflict about the imperative to 'make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:19). There can be a little voice in us that wants more people to become Christian for selfish reasons – to keep the local church going. But God's call to Abram was to 'be a blessing'. What difference might it make to our mission if we set out in faith simply to 'be a blessing'?"*

This question will be explored in the light of biblical texts, wisdom from various writers, stories and our own experiences through conversation and plenty of space for personal reflection in keeping with the relaxed atmosphere of the retreat.

The conference will start with lunch on Thursday 28th September, and finish after lunch on Friday, 29th. Places are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Each church will be restricted to three places, until we can review demand. There is no charge for this conference as the Yorkshire Synod are paying for this residential.

Attendees will need to make their own way to Wydale Hall. In terms of accommodation, each room is ensuite. There are some rooms specifically for those with mobility needs.

To book a place, please send in your request to the Synod Office ([office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk)) giving the name of your church, attendees and any specific dietary or mobility needs. Please reply by **July 15<sup>th</sup> 2023** so that any requirements can be passed onto Wydale in good time.

For further information, please contact Bronwen Robinson on [bronwenrobinson@me.com](mailto:bronwenrobinson@me.com)



# Loving



## Presidency at the Sacrament of Holy Communion



**Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury, WF13 1NH**

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August from 10am-1.30pm**

**Rev Jamie Kissack, Yorkshire Synod Moderator, will be leading a session to reflect together on our practices of presiding at Holy Communion.**

- All are welcome who preside at Holy Communion (lay and ordained)
- Arrivals and tea/coffee from 10am – the session will begin at 10.30am
- Please bring a packed lunch and again drinks will be provided
- If you would like to attend, please book your place by contacting the Synod Office asap at [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk) or 0113 289 8490

# YOUTH RESIDENTIAL

Year 7+

15TH-17TH SEPTEMBER 2023

HESLEY WOOD ACTIVITY CENTRE  
SHEFFIELD, S35 2YH

COME AND JOIN THE ADVENTURE!

MEET NEW FRIENDS, DO

AWESOME ACTIVITIES!

**Cost: £25**  
(incl. £5  
deposit)

**To book,  
email:**

[luhunthurc@gmail.com](mailto:luhunthurc@gmail.com)



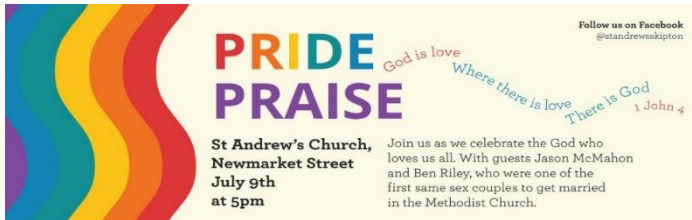
The  
United  
Reformed  
Church  
Yorkshire

Contact [luhunthurc@gmail.com](mailto:luhunthurc@gmail.com) to book!  
Places are limited, don't delay, book today!

# Sharing



## SKIPTON PRIDE



Over the weekend of 7-9th of July it was Skipton Pride and members of St Andrew's and Trinity Churches in Skipton joined in with this year's Skipton Pride. They staffed a community stall where we gave out buns and offered craft and conversation with lots of positive encounters.



The church also hosted **'PRIDE PRAISE'** and around 60 worshipped together and heard the story of Jason and Ben, one of the first same sex couples to get married in the British Methodist church. The liturgy used were based on words put together by Jo and Alex Clare Young who are both URC ministers (and who were both formerly in Yorkshire Synod). The worship was inclusive and affirming and appreciated by all who attended and also those who watched it on livestream and YouTube.



It can still be watched here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7uoZVFJeVQ&t=7s>.



# Celebrate God's Gifts on Disability Awareness Sunday, 17 September 2023

Christian disability inclusion charity 'Through the Roof' is offering free resources for Disability Awareness Sunday on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (or a day of your choice). All churches are invited to celebrate the unique gifts God gives to each one of us – including disabled people. Follow this link to request a free resource pack: <https://throughtheroof.org/forchurches/disability-awareness-sunday/>.

## **Is your church or Christian community including disabled people in its ministry?**

– by enabling the God-given gifts and talents of disabled people to be shared with others.

**You can use Disability Awareness Sunday as a positive message to disabled people.**

We invite each church congregation to celebrate disabled people and to use the free resources we have produced to hold a 2023 Disability Awareness Sunday service or event.

There are **two** sets of free Disability Awareness Sunday resources available:

1. **For your first event:** we recommend using the full resource pack from 2022, on the Luke 5 account of the paralysed man going through the roof, with suggestions for a complete service and 8 videos.
2. **For a further event:** use the new 2023 resource on 'The unique gifts God gives us', with a service outline and a short video of Ashleigh: a Roofbreaker disability champion who overcomes barriers.

Join us in raising awareness by holding a Disability Awareness Sunday service or event this year, recognising and valuing the gifts and talents God gives to disabled people.

**Access the free resources [here](#)**, including free Disability Awareness postcards to order for your event.

Through the Roof is a Christian disability inclusion charity whose name is inspired by the Bible account in Luke 5. Our mission is to transform lives through Jesus with disabled people. For more information, visit [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org) or @TTRChangesLives.



**RECONNECT!: a URC event for 20-40s**

***Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 10am-4.30pm***

***Westminster College, Cambridge***

We are delighted to be hosting the first URC event for those in their 20s-40s, generously funded by the URC's Discipleship Development Fund.

**Reconnect!** is a discipleship event with worship, Bible study, panel discussion and small-group discussions. It aims to provide a space for 20-40 year olds to make connections with other Christians, to share in fellowship, and to discuss church life and faith in the context of life in this age bracket. We are hoping to establish an ongoing supportive network that will nourish people in their everyday discipleship and local church life.

**Who is this for?** Anyone in their 20s-40s who is connected with or interested in the URC, particularly those who have recently left Youth Assembly and those who do not have much contact with a local URC.

**When will it be?** Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023 with the option of staying over from 6pm the night before (Friday 15<sup>th</sup>) if you are coming from a distance.

**Where will it take place?** At Westminster College in Cambridge, one of the URC's Resource Centres for Learning.

**Why is it happening?** The report from the 20-40s task group to General Assembly in 2018 explored the reasons for the lack of 20-40 year olds in traditional churches and emphasised the need to walk together in community. Lack of engagement with traditional church is not a problem that needs fixing, but rather a call to find new ways forward together.

Reconnect! will be an opportunity for those in their 20s-40s to worship and socialise together, but also to think together about future discipleship and fellowship events and how the URC might better support and encourage those in this age-group.

Book your place at: <http://bit.ly/45WqyZ3>



As mentioned, please book your place at: <http://bit.ly/45WqyZ>



'I'm an Elder of the URC – am I also a Trustee, and if so, of what?  
What are my responsibilities?'

'Our church building belongs to us. But who are the building's Trustees?  
What does this mean?'

## *A Zoom Consultation for all Elders*

*Led by Val Morrison and Jamie Kissack*

*Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August, 10am-1pm*

*OR*

*Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 10am-1pm*

*Please register at [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk).  
A Zoom link will be sent in advance of the meeting.*



# Herringthorpe URC's Church Away Weekend 2023



From 23-25 June, 38 members and friends from Herringthorpe URC, Rotherham, gathered at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire, for our Church Away Weekend. We started on Friday evening with dinner and an icebreaker game, before moving into worship and our opening session. Our speakers for the weekend were Mike & Alison Davies, who are part of the 24-7 Prayer Network and who lead a prayer community in

Nottingham. Mike began by getting us to explore our feelings around prayer. It turns out that most of us struggle with prayer and feel guilty for not praying enough! Thankfully, on Saturday, Mike and Alison led us in 3 sessions that would help us connect with God in deeper ways. We explored the themes of Intimacy with God, Walking and Being Real, and Praying in Community.

Mike and Alison's sessions were very practical. After some introductory teaching, there was space to simply be with God. Alison had prepared some prayer stations for us, and offered us a range of different tools and techniques to help us connect and engage with our Heavenly Father.

Alongside the adult sessions, the children explored the theme of prayer by looking at the Lord's Prayer, as well as three encounters with God in scripture: Blind Bartimaeus hearing Jesus's question "What do you want me to do for you?"; young Samuel hearing God in the Temple; and the thief on the cross who recognised Jesus' kingship and asked to be remembered in God's kingdom.



Who am I?  
Every morning  
you'll hear me at it again.  
Every morning  
I lay out the pieces of my life  
on your altar  
and watch for fire to descend. (Ps 53:15C)

Consider the "pieces of your life", particularly pieces you don't often bring to God.  
Take a moment to write one or more of the pieces of your life on the writing  
And pray for "fire" of God to descend.



On Saturday afternoon, between sessions, there was some free time, with people heading off for walks or to visit local attractions, and on Saturday evening we had a range of party games that were great fun! These free/social slots helped build deeper relationships between church members across the generations, and there was space for pastoral conversations too.

If you or your church want to explore how you can fund this kind of training and learning, look no further than the next page and the article on the Discipleship Development Funds. Herringthorpe URC did just that and look how that has helped them explore what it is to be a missional church.

# Yorkshire Synod Discipleship Development Grant funds 2023

The **Discipleship Development Funds** are intended to contribute to the development of lay people and therefore the purposes for which it can be used are as broad as can be generated by creativity and vocation, in line with the aims of the URC's Discipleship Development Strategy (DDS), which are to equip the people of the United Reformed Church to:

- Create opportunities for everyone to encounter the living God, whether they already identify themselves as followers of Christ or not.
- Encourage everyone in their prayer life and relationship with God to enable them to live as disciples of Jesus.
- Encourage everyone to make the most of education opportunities that are relevant and appropriate for them in their discipleship journey.

The eligible costs would include, without being restricted to:

- National or denominational learning events, conferences or programmes developed in-house;
- Personnel costs;
- Courses (at any level) at any of the United Reformed Church Resource Centres for Learning or other suitable learning providers;
- Books, equipment and resources related to a particular topic or activity;
- Attendance at Synod learning events; and
- Travel costs for attending learning events.

There is a video for you to watch if you want at <https://youtu.be/HQ8ODOW3rA0> and lots more information on the dedicated URC website page at [Discipleship Development Fund - United Reformed Church](#)

As ever though, if anyone wants to discuss any form of Discipleship Development project then look no further than our Convenor of the Synod's Ministeries Committee, Kath Lonsdale at [kathlonsdale@talktalk.net](mailto:kathlonsdale@talktalk.net). And remember this is for any age to apply so please discuss with your young people as well as adults.

# Safeguarding news

## Safeguarding Intermediate Training via Zoom

Don't forget that these courses are still running, contact [emma.pearce@urc.org](mailto:emma.pearce@urc.org) for more information

### **National Safeguarding Training 2023**



Refugee and Asylum Seekers  
May 30th 7pm-9pm

Substance Abuse and the impact on  
Safeguarding  
June 26th 7pm-8.30pm

Suicide Awareness  
September 11th 2pm-3.30pm

Domestic Abuse  
September 19th 1.30pm-3.30pm

Modern Day Slavery  
September 25 7pm-9pm

Safeguarding for Ministers Supporting Survivors  
October 9th 2pm - 4pm

Adult Safeguarding  
November 21st 7pm - 9pm

**All training will take place via zoom.  
Bookings can be made by emailing  
[Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk](mailto:Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk)**

# Partnering



## NEW LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP IN SKIPTON

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July after a special Skipton & Grassington Methodist Circuit Service at Cracoe Village Hall in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, the Methodist Church congregation at Trinity Church on Westmorland Street in Skipton joined the existing Local Ecumenical Partnership of St Andrew's Skipton which had been created way back at Pentecost 1975 with the coming together of Skipton URC, Broughton Road Methodist Church and Gargrave Road Methodist Church on the current Newmarket Street site.



Moving forward the enlarged LEP will be known as **Trinity St Andrew's** and brings together the missional activity of the two churches so that the work of both denominations can be more effective in the town.

Rev'd Andrew Webb said of the new LEP: *"Trinity St Andrew's is excited about coming together as one congregation. It is an opportunity to share resources and to refocus on mission activities in our local community. Hopefully reducing our number of buildings and management roles will give renewed energy to engage in God's calling to share his transforming love."*



The signing of the new constitution was led by Rev'd Kerry Tankard, the Chair of the Yorkshire West District, who was joined by Rev'd Jamie Kissack, Moderator of the Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed Church, Rev'd Andrew Webb, the minister of both joining churches, Neil Platt of St Andrew's and Eileen Lloyd of Trinity.



*Kerry Tankard, Neil Platt, Eileen Lloyd, Jamie Kissack and Andrew Webb*

# HEYWOOD URC and their GRAVEYARD

Each week, a group of up to 10 volunteers from Chapel and the community, meet up on a Tuesday morning to maintain the graveyard at the rear of Heywood United Reformed Church, Northowram, which is near Halifax. Led by Alan Rushworth who lives opposite the Chapel, the group continue to do sterling work over this large site, which is much appreciated by the members, as well as the many visitors.



Recent plans has been the creation of a Quiet Area at the request of families who regularly visit loved ones' graves, plus an adjacent wild flower meadow which has brought vibrant coloured plants for visitors to appreciate.

The group, with the encouragement of the Church Meeting, approached the Woodland Trust earlier this year, who have kindly agreed to donate a variety of 30 small trees this autumn, which will be planted at the top end of the site near to the boundary. On their website, the Woodland Trust has this statement: 'We want to make sure everybody in the UK has the chance to plant a tree. So we're giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities. Together, we'll get millions more trees in the ground'. They have recognised the value of this site to the local community as well as appreciating that this is a partnership scheme between the Chapel and the neighbourhood.

The small fellowship at Heywood are indebted to the incredible work undertaken on their behalf by this committed group of volunteers, which, in turn, is of great benefit to the village of Northowram and fully supported and commended by them.



Established in 2010 we are a Christian charity providing a warm welcome, hot meals, support and wellbeing activities for homeless and vulnerable people. Based in Bradford city centre we engage with up to 400 people a week.

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help at our busy city centre hub which is open Monday to Friday from 9:30 to 1:30. We need friendly, welcoming people to be part of our kitchen team as well as supporting guests to engage with various activities.

If you have any time to give between 9:00 and 2:30 Monday to Friday we would love to hear from you. (2 or 3 hours a week of your time can make a big difference to our guests).

If you'd like to be involved please contact us at:

[enquiries@theimmanuelproject.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@theimmanuelproject.co.uk) or 07961 913376

You can also follow us on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TheImmanuelProject> or instagram [the.immanuel.project](https://www.instagram.com/the.immanuel.project)

# KELD RESOURCE CENTRE

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOW ROW WITH KELD URC

## NEW FOR 2023: STUDY DAYS



The Keld Resource Centre will be holding more study days over the summer.

**Saturday August 19<sup>th</sup>: Us reading Ruth reading Us!** Led by Rev. Peter Poulter

**Thursday September 28<sup>th</sup>: Rivers of Living Water: Reading John's Gospel in a Thirsty World.** Led by Rev. Jamie Kissack

The programme for each day will be as follows:

10.30: Arrivals and Coffee

13.30: Session Two

11.00: Session One

15.00: Refreshments and Departure

12.30: Lunch

There will be discussion, sharing, space to ponder .....

All participants are invited to bring a packed lunch. Drinks will be provided. The cost for the day will be £10 per person. To book, please contact Revd David Wood at [david.wood4@btinternet.com](mailto:david.wood4@btinternet.com).

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## NHS 75: Much to celebrate?

The Rev'd Fran Kissack, a United Reformed Church minister and NHS hospital chaplain of more than 20 years, has had her reflection on the NHS' 75th anniversary, which was celebrated on 5th July, uploaded to the URC website at [NHS 75: Much to celebrate? - United Reformed Church](#).

In a short video, which is also available via YouTube at <https://youtu.be/pkV4ALgnogk>, Fran reflects on what its founder, Nye Bevin, might feel about the state of the under-resourced health service today, the commitment of its dedicated workers during the pandemic, and how we have much to be grateful for an organisation that cares for us from cradle to grave.



**An Opportunity**  
at  
**West Park United Reformed Church**  
a member of  
**The Leeds URC Partnership**  
for a  
**Property Administrator**

We wish to appoint a person to administer our church buildings and user groups on Spen Lane, Leeds, LS16 5BB

This is a key role in the mission and witness of our church to the local community and in loving and serving our neighbours near and far.

It is an opportunity to join us in God's mission as witnesses to Jesus in word and action.

We are seeking a self-employed person  
Pay will be at a weekly rate of £112.50  
(Based on £15/hour for an average 7.5 hour week)  
This package is negotiable for the right person.

To express an interest or for more information please email: [geoffellis51@virginmedia.com](mailto:geoffellis51@virginmedia.com)

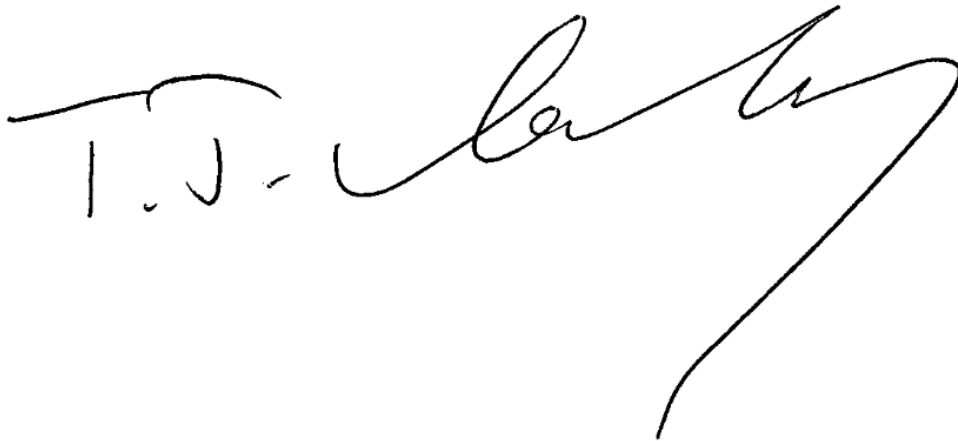
Closing date for applications is 16<sup>th</sup> August.  
Interview date 21<sup>st</sup> August.  
Start date 4<sup>th</sup> September.

# Are You Called?

Every now and then I ask you all to see whether you, or anyone you know, feel a call to help us out at Synod. Many of you who read this will have worked with the Synod team and may know that the functions of Synod are quite often left in the hands of the excellent staff based in and around the office at Somerset House in Morley. However behind this team, supporting them and guiding the way in which Synod looks to support all the churches in its care, are another group of people without whom the basis of what we do would falter. These are the people who sit on the various committees which are at the beating heart of Synod life. They prayerfully consider the way in which the Synod moves; through offering pastoral care to giving financial advice, from offering a broad range of theological training to giving technical or compliance support.

This group of people is sadly diminishing so a call has gone out to see whether you can fill any of the key roles Synod needs to fill to enable it to function. At present there is a need for those with a financial acumen or interest to join the Financial Resources Committee as it plans how to best resource the Synod's support for its churches. Similarly those whose expertise in bricks and mortar are gladly welcomed on to the Property Committee which supports churches' in how best to utilise their buildings. Not forgetting those who have a call to help the pastoral and missional side of our many churches. We welcome anyone who can offer their wisdom and if you do feel called, please get in touch with me at [clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk) or call on 07936 362673.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Crossley', with a long, sweeping flourish extending downwards and to the right.

Tim Crossley  
Synod Clerk

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](#).