



# Yorkshire Synod

## Briefing

### Number 126

21<sup>st</sup> March 2024



## Synod in the Spring Time

Little did I think that I would be wondering if I was going to have to edit this time's issue, but the amount of information I've received over the last fortnight has been incredible. Thank you all, it's as though Spring has brought us all to life. The events that are being brought to your attention are a sign that there is a great deal of activity both within the Synod and around the denomination. This is the work of the Lord, and it really does those who are behind these events great credit that their outreach is touching the lives of so many people.

### Yorkshire Synod Meeting

We met as Yorkshire Synod **on Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup>** at Central URC in Sheffield and thank you to all those who travelled to what was a most enjoyable meeting.

At the heart of our deliberations on the day was the sense of fellowship. This was explored through Megan Tillbrook, our Children & Young Person's Practitioner, leading an exploration of our early church experiences and how we can open our churches to those who are wanting to explore their Christian faith. Also emphasised was the return of the Synod Forums (details on p11 below) which will explore further what we as Synod can do to enhance the spiritual journey of our churches. As the format of this meeting was so well received, we hope to expand on it at our next Synod meeting which will be on Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at Christchurch, Ilkley. One of the things we try to do is to spread the location of our meetings around the county, so please join us there in the autumn.



As I've mentioned, it seems that you have been extremely busy as well over the past two weeks. There are lots of stories to tell and lots to celebrate around Yorkshire. Quite often I wonder how I can fill a page or two, but this time there's a great deal to look at. Thank you for the contributions, and please keep them coming in. This is a place where we endeavour to keep churches informed of what is happening in and around the Synod, as well as letting you know what other churches are doing to build the Kingdom in His own country.

**So, please let me have details of what is happening where you are. Tell me what you plan for 2024 so that I can help spread that news, especially what you did in the run up to and over Easter and what you plan to do later in the Spring. 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 Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April with a deadline of Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

Thank you and God Bless,

*Tim Crossley*

**Synod Clerk**

# Loving



## Leading Your Church into Growth



Synod Evangelist-Ashley Evans invites you to Yorkshires  
LYCiG Day 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024, 10am -3pm.

Last November we had our latest LYCiG conference for the five Northerly Synods in Preston.  
It was a great success.

I would like to invite you and your friends from your church or group of churches to come to our follow up day.

**We will be at The Bridge Church, Otley,  
on April 20<sup>th</sup> 2024, from 10 am -3pm**

You are most welcome to join us, it will be a fabulous day together, looking at some of the principles of church growth and sharing together of what 'works' and how things are going.

Coffee & tea will be provided. Please bring your own lunch or take advantage of the excellent, nearby bakers, butchers, sandwich/cafes or fish & chips.

If you could RSVP with numbers that would be most helpful.

Yours in Christ

Ashley<><



*Something must have been funny.*



*Yorkshire folk have smiles all round!*



# TALKING TO A GENERATION

**Samantha Sheehan** looks at how churches can engage with 18-25-year-olds

**I**t's the ultimate question for the Church: how do we engage with 18-25-year-olds? And like the Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe and Everything in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the answers may well be disappointing and elusive. But this should not stop us from searching, exploring and trying to answer them. Like the mice of Douglas Adams' novel, maybe the answer is in our experiments – in our living and working, in our kingdom-building and relationships.

Because the answer to this ultimate question is... talk to them. There isn't really any other way of getting to know someone other than to talk to them, to befriend them and show an interest in their lives. Just like you and me, 18-25-year-olds are people. They

are looking for purpose, looking to belong, looking to be a part of something outside themselves (they are not as self-centred as the media makes them out to be).

What we are really wanting to ask is, 'How do we get 18-25-year-olds to come to my church and get involved?' This is not the same question and, for me, is not a kingdom question, it is not a faith question.

But we should ask, 'How do we engage with 18-25-year-olds, with the intention that they will come to know something of God and be a part of kingdom building? In their own way, how might God be using them?'

It starts by talking to them, being prepared to have a conversation, showing an interest in their lives and befriending them. We need to stop waiting for people to show up at our ◦

**'They are not as self-centred as the media makes out'**

**Reform** | March 2024 | 29





'If this gap is growing, the muscle memory fades'

doors; the traditional church with a set time of worship and gathering no longer works for the majority of people. Faith is a living, breathing part of life and something to be lived out. It is in living out our faith that we have a better chance of making a connection than on a Sunday morning.

Life has changed; life for an 18-25-year-old has changed. If we travel back in time to the 1960s and 70s we could say that by the time a young person reached their early 20s then they would have completed their education, gained long term employment and become financially independent, living outside the parental home. They would most likely be married with their first child. Fully entering their adulthood.

Today, this is no longer the case. According to the Office of National Statistics, in 2019 the average age of marriage was 34 years for men and 32 years for women, and for same-sex couples an average age is 38 years for men and 33 years for women.

Added to this is the prolonged time of education, with an increased number of 18-year-olds attending university for an undergraduate degree and possible postgraduate course. Employment also looks different: the desire for a job which pays well and is enjoyable and fulfilling may lead to multiple short-term employments and periods of unemployment.

Not to mention the unstable housing market, the challenge of saving a deposit for a mortgage, on top of the debt incurred from attending university, all impacting on feeling financially independent and able to fully vacate their parental home.

Young people are living through an extended time of being no longer adolescents but not fully adult. Psychologist Jeffrey Arnett has called this life stage 'Emerging Adulthood' – an in-between age.

All of this has an effect on faith and congregational belonging. So much of what we do as congregations (mostly unconsciously) is aimed towards the 1970s assumption that young people quickly enter their adulthood and settle into employment, a relationship and stable housing. Where once this happened within a five-year period it now can take well over ten years. Where once someone was settling into adulthood in their early 20s, it is now taking them into their 30s and beyond.

Points of contact with church congregations used to be marriage and baptism. A young person may well drift from church during

adolescence but would return when they have their own children. If this gap is growing, the muscle memory fades. If, during the time of connection, the young person did not feel valued or encouraged to contribute, they are less likely to think their children will be.

This becomes even more significant with the increased number of children and young people who have never experienced being a part of a congregation in the first place. The idea of church just isn't on their radar. But God is, faith is.

This offers challenges for the Church of today. How are we helping our children and young people grow a faith which will journey with them during this time of change? What can we offer into this time of uncertainty? What biblical stories speak into times of transition and uncertainty? Where might there be points of connection?

Whether or not we feel we have contact with young adults, having answers to some of these questions is important. Understanding a little about how the world has changed, and some of the challenges and demands facing young adults today, will help us speak into those situations and gives us a right to sit at their table; to listen to their stories and have an opportunity to tell our own story.

Are there celebrations or local points of gathering within the life of the wider community of your village, town or city? How is the church present? Is there an annual festival, a race day, Pride? What might it look like for the church to share in that celebration?

Where is there tension, what are the social justice issues of your location and where is the Church's voice? Does the Church stand on the picket lines, at protests? Do we offer lament at injustice – this is often where we find people, in the messiness of life.

A good place to start and to take stock is pages 22-32 of the 20-40 Task Group Report, presented at the URC General Assembly in 2018. There are a number of questions in the appendix to help begin the conversation.

And if I was to recommend one book, it would be Ruth Perrin's *Changing Shape: The faith lives of millennials*, which offers an insight into the lives and faith of young adults. ●


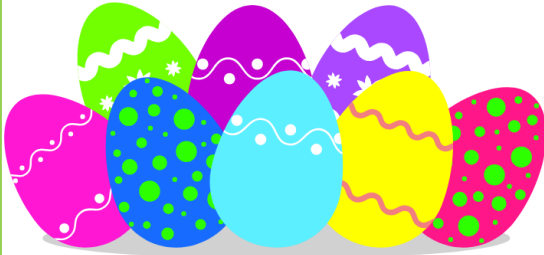
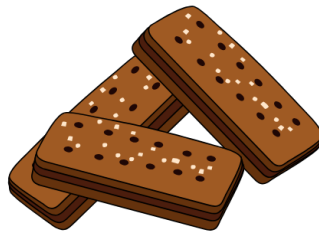
 **Samantha Sheehan** is a special-category minister exploring how congregations can engage with 18-25-year-olds. She is available to work with congregations, exploring what this might look like in their context. Contact her on [rev.s.sheehan@gmail.com](mailto:rev.s.sheehan@gmail.com)

Illustration: ©Elizabeth Sheehan/Stock

# Inviting



## EASTER COFFEE MORNING



**Saturday 30 March 2024**

**10:30am - 12 noon**

**Headingley St Columba URC  
70 Headingley Lane, LS6 2DH**

Please come and join us.

And if you're feeling creative: bring along  
a decorated egg, hat or garden.

Prizes for the best.

# SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for an inspiring walk through the New Testament



**WALK  
THROUGH  
THE  
BIBLE**

“Relax and enjoy the journey as an experienced guide encourages you to see God’s Word through the ‘Big Picture’. Our FUN and MEMORABLE sessions will help you learn with such CLARITY you’ll be able to retell the whole STORYLINE to a friend.

digging deeper.”

We will also do our best to INSPIRE and EQUIP you to keep

**One event over two days**

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024 7 - 9.15pm AND Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2024 9.30am - 1pm  
at Bilton Grange URC, Harrogate**

**For further details and to book please contact Caroline Butler (Knaresborough URC)  
Tel: 07904 509802 Email: [butler.caroline@outlook.com](mailto:butler.caroline@outlook.com)**

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## United Reformed Church Waldensian Fellowship

Chairman – Revd. John S. Bremner



Gathering at Hinsley Hall, Leeds



### Celebrating 850 years of the Waldensian Movement

Thursday 18 to Saturday 20 April 2024

*This year, the Waldensian Church celebrates the 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the movement started by Pietro Valdo, who sought to preach and live the simple Gospel message.*

*We shall explore something of the history of the Waldensian movement during our time together.*

*This will also be an opportunity for us to share our experiences of meeting the Waldensian people, both in Italy and here in Britain – so bring photographs and other memorabilia!*

Information about the Gathering, costs and timings, and a booking form, are available from:  
George Morton, 4 St Annes Road, Manchester M21 8TD  
email: [g.morton50@ntlworld.com](mailto:g.morton50@ntlworld.com); telephone: 0161 881 8195



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

The latest edition of the URC’s News Update is available online. Click here [https://urc-news.org.uk/cr/AQi9nAcQiejMARjcs9GXAVHOB1\\_h4UQ4FJxlc-iaEP3qBhCEuTZiaVppazZjI2-e](https://urc-news.org.uk/cr/AQi9nAcQiejMARjcs9GXAVHOB1_h4UQ4FJxlc-iaEP3qBhCEuTZiaVppazZjI2-e) for the March 2024 issue and follow the links to subscribe to get it on a regular basis.



# Building



## KELD RESOURCE CENTRE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOW ROW WITH KELD URC NEW FOR 2024 : STUDY DAYS



We are delighted to announce a new series of study days for 2024 and issue a warm invitation to come to any or all of them! They are:

Thursday July 4<sup>th</sup> : Revd. Michael Pearson

**Five impossible Things to Believe before Christmas!**

Saturday August 17<sup>th</sup> : Revd. Peter Sinclair

**After Sunday : Being Church Seven Days a Week**

Thursday September 26<sup>th</sup> : Ms. Dorothy Thomson

**There's a Sermon in There Somewhere!**

The programme will be as follows:

10.30 : Arrivals and Coffee

12.30 : Lunch

11.00 : Session One

13.30 : Session Two

15.00 : Refreshments and Departure

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 your place, please contact Revd David Wood at [david.wood4@btinternet.com](mailto:david.wood4@btinternet.com)



# Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders Weekend

**“Lifting parables from the page: preaching for today’s Church”.**

at the Wydale Conference Centre, Brompton by Sawdon near Scarborough

<https://www.wydale.org>

We are pleased to say that registration for our third **Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders weekend** at **Wydale Conference Centre** is **NOW OPEN**.

This will be **19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024** (Friday teatime to Sunday lunch).

We are excited that Rev Dr Susan Durber will be our main speaker at the conference, and that once again we will be joined by our Moderator, Rev Jamie Kissack.

This weekend will again be paid for by synod and grants so you will only need to cover your travel costs.

**There are 30 places available** and you are now invited to register with the office at [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk) or 0113 289 8490.



Yours in Christ’s service

Kath Lonsdale, Anne Dale, Jill Fletcher, Rod Morrison,  
Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders Planning Group

For any queries, please contact Kath at [kathlonsdale@talktalk.net](mailto:kathlonsdale@talktalk.net) 01274 315203 or 07759525936.

To offer support for the Church’s humanitarian support for those affected by the ongoing crisis in Gaza please visit the URC’s website at [Christian Aid Middle East Crisis Appeal - United Reformed Church](#). Also please visit the [Christian Aid Appeal](#) site which includes supporting key facts and information, together with the opportunity to make donations direct to [Christians Aid](#). You can also contribute through the URC’s own programme *Commitment for Life* at [Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory – United Reformed Church](#).



## **Faithful Flourishing:**

*discipleship development and training opportunities*



### **Voice Coaching with Steve Arnott**

**Saturday 20th April 2024**  
**(10am - 12.30pm or 1.30pm - 4pm)**

**St James' URC,**  
**Newcastle upon Tyne**



**Steve is a well known local actor and director with over 25 years experience in training and teaching across the Tyneside area.**

**Open to *all* involved in leading worship, this half day, fun and highly interactive session will offer an opportunity to explore vocal and public speaking techniques.**

Many of us now lead worship in churches with effective sound systems and we may be tempted to think that this means we don't need to worry too much about projecting our voices and making ourselves heard. However, effective public speaking is about much more than volume!



Whether you've been leading worship for a long time or are just starting out, this session will help you to ensure you are making the most of your voice!

Come along for the morning or afternoon session.  
*Participants in both sessions are warmly invited to come together to share lunch **which will be provided.***

We look forward to seeing you there!

***To book a place please contact Lucy (details below) stating whether you would like to come to the morning or afternoon session, if you will be joining us for lunch and whether you have any dietary requirements.***



**Lucy Cooke**  
**Learning & Development Officer**  
**Email: [lucy.cooke@urc-northernsynod.org](mailto:lucy.cooke@urc-northernsynod.org)**

**Tel: 07752 385197**

# Making Disciples Day

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – 10.00am to 3.30pm

## Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury

36, Longcauseway, The Princess of Wales Precinct, Dewsbury WF13 1NH

This is a day for all members and friends of our churches in the Yorkshire Synod. It will be led by Andrew Roberts, author of Holy Habits and Linda Rayner, URC co-ordinator for Fresh Expressions.



*Andrew and Linda write, “In response to the call and commission of Jesus to go and make disciples we will share and explore stories of initiatives in this area that have been fruitful and consider stories that have not been so fruitful and see what learning we can take from these.*

*We will also take time to consider how we can be bearers of good news and people of hope as we seek to make God known in difficult times and situations.*

*There will be plenty of time for both group conversations and personal reflection which will include the provision of prayer stations.”*

Please bring your own lunch – tea and coffee will be provided.

To book a place please email [valmorrison7@btinternet.com](mailto:valmorrison7@btinternet.com)





The  
**Synod  
Forum**  
Yorkshire

10.30am – 1pm

*Followed by lunch together*

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

At St. Andrew's United Reformed Church, Scarborough, YO11 2LN

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024**

At Gleadless United Reformed Church, Sheffield, S12 2NP

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

At Salem United Reformed Church, Burley in Wharfedale, LS29 7DG

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

At Christ Church LEP, Hipperholme, HX3 8AA

*All members and friends of the Yorkshire Synod churches are invited to join us in faith-shaped conversation about the life and mission of the local church.*

Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee, tea and cakes or pastries provided

Building on the success of last year's Synod Forums as opportunities for fellowship and good conversation, we will be meeting again in four different locations around Yorkshire Synod in May, June and July. You are free to choose the date and venue that is best for you. All will run from 10.30am – 1pm. You are encouraged to stay to share a bring-your-own lunch.

As last year, the conversation will be based around Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. It will be mostly in small group discussions, so you get chance to share with people from other churches. We will

picking up on some of the themes in the URC's Theos report (<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/cmsfiles/URC-report-Final.pdf>), and will be asking Where do we see flourishing in Yorkshire Synod? (And what might be the barriers to flourishing?)

We hope that this will also be a chance for those with Synod roles to hear from the local church about your opportunities and challenges so that together we can find the best ways to support and encourage each other. The Synod Forum is your place to have your voice heard, and to help shape the priorities of the Synod.





# Helping Yorkshire's Historic Churches & Chapels

## Good news! Funding available for Yorkshire's Churches

The Yorkshire Historic Churches Trust is welcoming funding applications from places of worship across the county for repair, restoration and maintenance work. Due to the generous donations and legacies received last year, the Trust is actively encouraging churches to apply for the next round of funding.

The application deadlines for 2024 are 8<sup>th</sup> March for consideration in April and 23<sup>rd</sup> August for consideration in October grants committee. For guidance and how to apply please go to:

[www.yhct.org.uk/grants](http://www.yhct.org.uk/grants).

Grants are available for repairs to the church fabric, the walls, roofs, floors, tower, bell frames, windows, stonework, repointing and rainwater goods. Grants are also available for the conservation of fixture and fittings, such as monuments, furniture and stained glass and repairs to bells, clocks and organs. Applications are also welcome for investigatory work. You can apply for this type of grant at any time of the year. Do contact Jonathan Stamp by email at [grants@yhct.org.uk](mailto:grants@yhct.org.uk) if you would like to discuss this.

The YHCT have no set funding amounts, but common grants range from £2000 - £10,000, depending on the size of the works. The Grant Committee looks at how much the total project is and how much effort has gone into fund raising locally, and which other funders have been approached or confirmed their grants. The YHCT ideally likes to be able to help a church or chapel who have neared the end of their fund raising and only have a shortfall of say £10 - £15,000 to be able to start their project.

It is also inviting individual churches and chapels to become 'Church Members' and to support the Trust by opening churches on Yorkshire Churches Day on 14 September 2024 or taking part in the Ride and Stride sponsored event. All this is found on the trust website

<https://www.yhct.org.uk/yorkshire-churches-day/>

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## United Reformed Church Buildings Forum Webinar

*'Living stones for a living church: buildings for the ministry of Mission'*

**Part 1 – 21<sup>st</sup> May 7.30pm**

**Part 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm**

This is an open invitation to attend the [URC Church Buildings Forum webinar](#) on Zoom on 21 May 2024 7.30-9pm. Following the launch of these webinars just over three years ago, The Revd Dr John P. Bradbury will return as the keynote speaker to address how we may best use our building and assets for mission and ministry, particularly within the context of the [Church Life Review](#) and its outworking. As always with the webinars, you will have the opportunity for conversation in breakout rooms and, importantly, it will also be a listening exercise to hear the questions that you have, the challenges that churches face, and positive ideas, examples and news to be shared.

A complementary and more pragmatically focussed Part Two will take place on 4 June 2024 7.30-9pm. There will be a presentation of North Western Synod's strategy '*A Church with People at the Margins: A Strategy for Mission and Ministry*' and examples of a number of local churches already on that journey, in order to stimulate debate and encourage other synods and local churches.

Coming along to one of the webinars will be more useful than not coming to either, but we do hope that you will be able to attend both.

To register for either or both seminars please email [mission@urc.org.uk](mailto:mission@urc.org.uk).

# Partnering



## Volunteer with the United Reformed Church at The Greenbelt Festival 2024!

22 – 25 August 2024 at Boughton House, near Kettering



### yoURCafe venue team

As well as being an exciting opportunity to be part of the URC team in the yoURCafe venue, now in its third year, offering food saved from landfill, crafts, talks, music and more, you will also get to enjoy the myriad activities the festival has to offer.

You will receive a complimentary weekend pass, food vouchers and a car or caravan pass as a thank you.

For more information on how to become a volunteer, what is involved, and how to apply, visit <https://urc.org.uk/greenbelt/>

### Youth Engagement team

Are you aged 18+?

Do you enjoy supporting 12–17 year-olds?

Have experience, gifts, skills to share?

Then volunteer on the URC Youth Engagement team.

The opportunity comes with festival benefits, training and support.

Email [children.youth@urc.org.uk](mailto:children.youth@urc.org.uk) for more information.

The theme for this year's festival is: **Dream On.**

If you would like to know more about this theme and why it has been chosen, you can read a blog by Paul Northup's, Greenbelt's Creative Director, [here](#).

**The deadline for applications is Saturday 20 April** and the Volunteer Team will aim to inform applicants as to whether they have been successful (or not) by the **end of Thursday 25 April**. Demand for spaces is high (as ever) and although we had an amazing team of volunteers last year, we always welcome and encourage new people to join.



# Sharing



## Peak Wesley Way

Our friends in the Sheffield Methodist District have brought this invitation to small groups of all faiths and none to engage in the ancient practice of pilgrimage along a path connecting six rural chapels in the beautiful Peak District National Park.



The **Peak Wesley Way** is a contemporary opportunity to engage with the ancient spiritual practice of pilgrimage within the beauty of the Peak Park. It began as a vision of members of Peak Methodist Circuit to share their stories with small groups who are spiritually curious and intrigued by spending time in the ancient holy places, indoor and outdoor. The pilgrimage is for groups of friends or family with a shared quest for adventure, wanting to connect with a simpler greener lifestyle, or needing space to broaden life

experiences. Thanks to support from many circuit members, people from beyond the circuit's congregations and district officers they are now ready to invite you to book your pilgrimage. Please visit <https://peakwesleyway.com/>, follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#), and tell your friends! Is this the next step of your journey?

## Looking for a New Home



The Michael Church in Lowedges Sheffield is wanting to offer their organ to someone who can give it a new loving home. It is now no longer used so is available to collect by any fellowship or individual who can make use of it.

Here comes the technical bit: the organ is a Viscount Grand Opera Rondo Domus 1332 organ with two large speaker boxes. It is 51 inches high (1.295 metres), width 67 ins (1.702m), depth 30 ins (0.762m), plus the depth of the pedals which adds another 22 inches (0.559m).

There are two speakers 31.5 ins high, 15.5 ins deep and 17.5 ins wide (0.8m x 0.394m x 0.445m).

They are also looking for a new home for some song books; they have in braille Rejoice & Sing hymn books and Mission Praise song books. The books were produced by RNIB and there are 18 folders in the set.

If you can make use of either the organ or the song books, please contact Trevor Orr, Church Secretary at [trevorcorr@aol.com](mailto:trevorcorr@aol.com), tel 0114 348 4155. They are bulky and if you are unable to collect, happy to arrange to meet halfway or pass them on at next Synod meeting.





## Lent Lunches at Waverley



As part of their growing work in the north Huddersfield area, Waverley URC came together for a Lent Lunch on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. As you'll see from the picture kindly sent in by Barry Simmons it was a time of fellowship over soup and bread and one which they hope to be able to enjoy again, not only in Lent, but throughout the year.

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## ATTERCLIFFE & DARNALL CENTRE OF MISSION

As many of you may know, Yorkshire Synod, through its Synod Mission Fund, help to support the Attercliffe and Darnall Centre of Mission. Although the church in Darnall is one of our smaller ones, its heart is one of our biggest. By working with the Church Army in that part of Sheffield they are able

### Our Prayer for 2024

To be able to Grow in number our Christian community, to create deeper connections with people and help transform Attercliffe and Darnall

Bible verse Isaiah 61 1-4

to be part of a continuing and thriving Christian mission based out of the St Albans House Christian Community. The leaders there, Kinder and Gina Kalsi of the Church Army, regularly send me updates, and here are a few extracts of their latest letter.

They are pleased to let us know that they have been joined by a Sheffield Diocese Centenary Project youth worker who will be working to develop youth work for the Centre of Mission and Church of Christ in Darnall. Siân, a commissioned Church Army Evangelist and has recently moved to Sheffield from North Wales where she did youth and families ministry amongst various other things for several years. Sian is a mum of three grown up children and a nanna to her beautiful granddaughter who is four years old.



One of the things Siân will be involved in, will be developing youth connections within *Create Afterschool Church*. Create is going really well, with an established group of 50 or so people aged from 0 to 80. They have been looking at the sayings of Jesus, including the I Am sayings and the beatitudes. At *Create* they are blessed by 2 wonderful ladies who help in the kitchen, and 2 people who are going to help plan the activities each week. As they approach Easter, they will be offering baptism for anyone

who wants to use this to mark where they are in their journey of faith. Thursdays are probably the best day of the week, with Create in the afternoon and in the morning the Toddler group alongside coffee morning. The toddler group is growing, and as some of the older children left, they have had lots of babies come along and it is a joy to watch them develop.

### **Easter 2024**

As they approach Easter, they are planning to join in with the Arise initiative [www.arisesheffield.org](http://www.arisesheffield.org) that aims to prayer walk every street in Sheffield. They will be increasing their prayer walking from 2 to 3 or even 4 times a week, and aim to walk every street in our area, at least once.

### **Partnership Outreach**

They continue to work with partners across the area, including litter picking and environmental groups and the business network. They feel blessed by being part of the network of churches in the area, and meet regularly with the leaders for prayer and to share news and value Church Army cluster – where all members of the Church Army community in the area can gather and share and pray together.

If you feel moved to help or find out more contact [Gina.kalsi@churcharmy.org](mailto:Gina.kalsi@churcharmy.org) or [kinder.kalsi@churcharmy.org](mailto:kinder.kalsi@churcharmy.org).

# HEYWOOD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH 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 have 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 (see photos below).

The group, with the encouragement of the Church Meeting, approached the Woodland Trust earlier last year, who have kindly agreed to donate a variety of 30 saplings, which duly arrived last November. The Church members approached the Brownies, which meets on the premises on a Monday evening and asked if they would help out by planting at the top end of the site near to the boundary. They were thrilled to be asked, and a group, along with their leader, under the supervision of Alan Rushworth, planted the 30 saplings.



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.

Rev Chris Wood  
(Yorkshire Synod Companion to Heywood URC, Northowram)

**If you want to know more about Eco and Environmental matters in Synod, or how to start the Eco Church journey, please drop us a line at the Synod Office and we'll pass you into the care of our dedicated Eco Apostle team.**





# SAFEGUARDING

The Safeguarding team have asked that you are reminded that they are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year (and even 366 days in Leap Years!!). Details can be found on the Yorkshire website at <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/safeguarding/> and any query, either by phone or by e-mail will be answered within 24 hours.



## UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2024

Make your booking by emailing: [Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk](mailto:Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk)

All training listed below will take place via Zoom

First date	Event	Second date
17 January, 2024 1:30pm	<b>Domestic abuse</b>	4 June, 2024 6:30pm
25 January 1:30pm	<b>Safeguarding for Pastoral Workers and Elders supporting survivors</b>	11 June 6:30pm
30 January 6:30pm	<b>Modern slavery</b>	8 October 1:30pm
31 January 1:30pm	<b>Elders as Trustees</b>	14 May 7:00pm
8 February 1:30pm	<b>DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment</b>	23 May 6:30pm
27 February 6:30pm	<b>Substance abuse</b>	3 October 1:30pm
6 March 1:30pm	<b>Refugees and asylum seekers</b>	17 September 6:30pm
18 March 6:30pm	<b>Safeguarding for Ministers supporting survivors</b>	25 September 1:30pm
18 April 6:30pm	<b>Adult safeguarding</b>	15 October 1:30pm
8 May 1:30pm	<b>Spiritual abuse</b>	11 November 7:00pm
28 October 6:30pm	<b>DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment</b>	4 December 10:00am
19 November 1:30pm	<b>Online safety</b>	

Foundation Training can be accessed on the Learning Hub  
[bit.ly/3TxIdm4](https://bit.ly/3TxIdm4)



The United Reformed Church Safeguarding

www.urc.org.uk

Facebook Twitter Instagram YouTube LinkedIn

From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee



# Funding Resources – Winter & Spring 24

Rev Simon Copley, our Treasurer, has circulated a fuller version of this to all our church treasurers recently, but it is useful to let you all know that there are plenty of resources available to Synod churches to help them through this winter as well as to help them build on any missional initiatives they plan to work on.

## 1. Synod Funds

The Synod has three sources of grant support that local congregations (including LEPs) can access:

**Synod Mission Fund** - this is our go-to funding pot for any projects/posts that help your congregation carry out any aspect of mission in your local community. Both small and larger/multi-year grants are available.

**Mission Capacity Fund** - this new fund will support any measure (including back-room, support, organisational changes and administration tasks) that will help release energy for your congregation to engage in mission.

**Vision and Opportunity Property Grants** - these can be of any size and fund any alteration to church buildings that help congregations engage more effectively in mission.

We recommend a conversation with our Synod Clerk, Tim Crossley ([clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk)) about any prospective application to the Synod Mission and Mission Capacity Funds and with Val Morrison, Convenor of the Synod Property Committee ([valmorrison7@btinternet.com](mailto:valmorrison7@btinternet.com)), about Vision and Opportunity Grants.

Further details of how to apply to all these funds can be found on the Synod website at [Forms - URC Yorkshire Synod](#)

## 2. National URC Funds

The United Reformed Church has national funding streams that any congregation can apply to. The two largest are:

**Church Buildings Fund** - gives loans, and sometimes grants, towards any building cost. These are usually £25,000 maximum but larger loans and grants can be made. Please ask Simon Copley, the Synod Treasurer, about details of how to apply to these funds ([whiteknight\\_copley@hotmail.com](mailto:whiteknight_copley@hotmail.com)). Further information is also available at [Church Buildings Fund - United Reformed Church](#)

**Legacy Fund** - gives grants normally with a limit of £50,000 per application for innovative and ground-breaking mission projects. Further information is available at [The Legacy Fund - United Reformed Church](#) where you can download the application form.

There are a number of **other, smaller funds** and details of these can be found at: [Grants & funding opportunities - United Reformed Church](#). Please note that national URC funds tend to be undersubscribed so a well-thought application will have a good chance of success. Please contact Simon ([whiteknight\\_copley@hotmail.com](mailto:whiteknight_copley@hotmail.com)) for advice on how to put your bid together.

## 3. Trust Funds, Landfill and Lottery Funding etc

There are a large number of Trusts and Foundations (and other sources) that give grants for community, Christian and environmental causes.

Synod has access to the **Directory of Social Change database** with information about over 4,500 Trusts and Foundations giving grants for the widest possible range of causes.

The database can be accessed by any Congregation. Contact Simon, the Synod Treasurer ([whiteknight\\_copley@hotmail.com](mailto:whiteknight_copley@hotmail.com)), and he will be happy to guide you through the access procedure and to give any further advice on how to research the database.



# Westminster College Cambridge

A resource centre for learning

## Supporting Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders 2024

*“Living in Praise”*

**Friday 6th - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September**

Arrivals from 4pm (course start 6pm) - 2pm departures

Our 2024 Supporting Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders residential will be using the Year C Lectionary to help us reflect on what we have to share with our churches that will engage with peoples' lives, our local communities and address some of the big issues the world is facing. By using the lectionary Year C we hope to offer you insights and resources that will help your worship leading throughout the coming year.

As ever this popular event will include input from college staff and others. There will be time for discussion, reflection and worship, as well as social time together. There will also be space to enjoy the facilities and beauty of Westminster and Cambridge. We look forward to seeing you back again or for a first visit. A warm welcome awaits.



Serving the United Reformed Church

Prices (inclusive of accommodation, meals and course):

- Single room - £195
- Double room - £390
- Day delegate - £ 90

For more information and a booking form please contact the Tutorial Office  
**01223 330649**  
[office@westminster.cam.ac.uk](mailto:office@westminster.cam.ac.uk)



More details as well as a booking form can be found on the Westminster College website at <https://www.westminster.cam.ac.uk/urc/events>



# The URC History Society Conference

16-18 September 2024, University of Durham

*The Church on the margins:  
learning from the past to shape the future*

Speakers include:

1. Dr Michael Hopkins: *"Durham and its Dissent"*
2. Nancy Graham: *"The trajectory of Erik Routley"*
3. Prof. Alec Ryrie: *"A remarkable work of grace": the first era of Presbyterian missions (c. 1740-70)*
4. Prof. Peter Ackers: *"The Churches of Christ and the early twentieth century British labour movement"*
5. Dr Victoria Turner: *"Coming to terms with Coloniality: The Changed Mind of Bernard Thorogood as General Secretary of CWM"*
6. Prof Stephen Taylor: *"Episcopalian congregationalism: a neglected episode in the development of Anglicanism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries"*



This is an open and welcoming conference, for those with a general interest through to professional historians/theologians. We welcome serving ministers, because the conference is about exploring where we have come from in order to know where we are going. **£275 full board in single room, £250 per person sharing a double room.** Payments to United Reformed Church History Society 40-52-40, 00032467

*Ministers can access EM3 funding towards this and for others it comes within the scope of the small DDF grant application for lay folk in Synods. For more information on this contact Kath Lonsdale through the Synod office at [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk).*

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## And Finally



Usually stories which feature graveyards begin with the words **It was a dark and stormy night**, but in this case it was a wet and windy Eccleshill which saw our erstwhile Trust Secretary, Alastair Forsyth, hand over the plans of the former Eccleshill URC Cemetery on Chapel Street to representatives of the newly formed *Friends of Chapel Street Cemetery*. When Eccleshill URC closed in 2021 the site of the church building sold very quickly, but the cemetery,

situated where the original chapel was founded back in 1823, did not garner much interest apart from the Friends, who had taken it on themselves to make the cemetery a haven of peace and tranquillity. Encouraged by the Synod, the *Friends* began to raise funds and incorporated themselves as a charity. This all bore fruit as they are now able to purchase the site so that the work they have begun can continue for the benefit of the villagers in Eccleshill.

If you have a good news story from your part of the Synod, drop me a line at [clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk) and I'll make sure it hits the back page!!

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](#).