



Yorkshire Synod

Briefing

Number 128

25th April 2024



Synod in the Spring Time – has it started to get warm yet?

Unfortunately this spring hasn't seen the pleasant weather we tend to associate with this time of year; the lambs in the fields aren't gambolling around but are grumbling in the shelter of a wall, the daffodils may be blooming, but they are not reaching out to greet the warming sun. However, to answer the question above, the good folk in the Yorkshire Synod are certainly warming up as they continue to open up their churches, grow their community links and more importantly spread the Good News of Jesus to all who they meet. This continued season of invitation, which I touched on last month, looks like it isn't abating and I hope that this, and the welcomes these invitations lead to carry on through the summer and beyond. It's really great to hear that our Church is an open and welcoming Church and that we have the ability to welcome in the way that the Lord would want us to welcome. Similarly, the activities being offered also show how easy it is for us to be partners with other groups as well as being able to build the Kingdom from the resources we have on offer from Synod. All this is done through Love. As you'll see the Synod Forums are using Paul's first letter to the Corinthians as the basis of the discussions and as Paul says, *"there are three things that last forever: faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of them all is love."*

Finally, we do have an invitation ourselves, from Rev Tim Meadows, the General Assembly Moderator elect. He is welcoming invitations to visit your church, so have a look on p2 and get your invites in.



I mentioned last time that phone system has just been changed at Somerset House. As with lots of new technology it will take a week or so to get used to the new kit, and it did, but I think we are nearly there. Happily, the phone number hasn't changed and neither have the e-mail addresses. For those who have rung and reached the answerphone I hope the dulcet tones of the Synod Clerk hasn't put you off and I hope that we are now even more accessible to those of you who contact us than we were before.



So, with this in mind, there's no excuse not to ring the office up with all the details of what is happening where you are. Tell me what you plan for the warmer end of spring 2024 and your plans for the summer so that I can help spread that news, especially what you did in the run up to and over Easter. Drop me a line at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and I'll showcase it in the next edition, due out on Thursday 9th May with a deadline of Wednesday 8th May 2024.

Thank you and God Bless,

Tim Crossley

Synod Clerk

Inviting



Moderator invitations open



The Revd Tim Meadows, General Assembly Moderator-Elect is now accepting invitations from churches for his year as General Assembly Moderator July 2024-July 2025. Should you have an invitation to make, please [email his PA Lynne Barker](mailto:lynne.barker@urc.org.uk) at lynne.barker@urc.org.uk.

Saltaire United Reformed Church
Victoria Road
Opens its doors for everyone to explore, this magnificent Grade One listed building during the

World Heritage Weekend 2024

Visitors Welcome
Saturday 27th April
2pm to 4.30pm
Sunday 28th April
12 noon till 4pm

On display, the church's photographic albums and archive memorabilia

*Celebrate our past
Please help protect and preserve our rich cultural heritage*

Enjoy listening to organ music, playing at weekend intervals during the afternoon

Café in the Church

Opening times
Saturday 27th April
1.30pm to 4.30pm
Sunday 28th April
12 noon to 4.00pm

Tours of the Bell Tower on the hour and half hour between 2pm and 4pm
Subject to availability

World Heritage Weekend at Saltaire URC

The weekend of Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th April sees the first of this years events in Saltaire with the World heritage Weekend taking place in the village. As ever Saltaire URC is taking part and is opening its doors on the afternoons of both days.

Refreshments are available for either preparing you for an ascent of the Bell Tower or as a means of recovery once you've descended from it, as well as regular musical interludes on the impressive nineteenth-century pipe organ.

The church will be open from 2pm to 4.30pm on the Saturday and from Noon to 4pm on the Sunday – although there is still the regular 10.30am service which is open to everyone to attend.

For more details visit <https://salthairefestival.co.uk/events/world-heritage-day-2/>

Saltaire Arts Trail

As well as being part of the World Heritage Days over the weekend of the 27th and 29th April, Saltaire URC is hoping to participate in the Saltaire Arts Trail over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend of the 4th, 5th and 6th May 2024

As part of the Arts Trail in the village, Saltaire URC hopes to have an exhibition of tapestries entitled *Tales from the Loom*, by artist *Chrissie Freeth*, displayed in the United Reformed Church. Opening times for the exhibition are:

Saturday 10am to 4pm

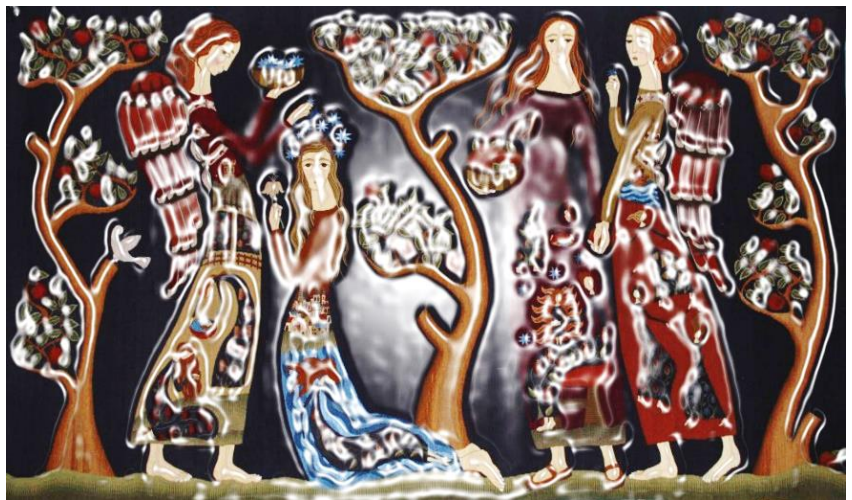
Sunday 12 noon to 4pm

Monday 10am to 4pm

Please check the Saltaire Arts Trail website

<https://salthaireinspired.org.uk/> a

few days beforehand, if you plan to visit the exhibition, to check it has been installed.



In addition, why not join students from Bradford College of Art in the grounds of the United Reformed Church, for drop-in textiles activities on Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 4pm.

There will also be an exhibition of work by the students on the theme *Connections: People and Place*.

Faith Talk

How do we talk about and share our faith as individuals and as churches?

This webinar is the first in a series as the Church seeks to develop a more holistic vision of mission.

Join us for a relaxed 90 minutes at **7.30pm** on **Wednesday 1 May**.

For more information or to **register for the webinar** please contact:

mission@urc.org.uk

FaithTalk
everyday evangelism for the URC

the first in a series of webinars
Wednesday 1 May 7.30pm
register for a Zoom link at mission@urc.org.uk

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 **19th – 21st 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 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 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](#).

Loving



Making Disciples Day

Saturday 18th 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



The
**Synod
Forum**
Yorkshire

10.30am – 1pm

Followed by lunch together

Saturday 11th May 2024

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

Saturday 1st June 2024

At Gleadless United Reformed Church, Sheffield, S12 2NP

Saturday 8th June 2024

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

Saturday 6th 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.



Free to Believe Conference 2024

Coming to our Senses

The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick

Wed 4th to Fri 6th September 2024

Free to Believe Conference 2024

The Hayes Conference Centre

Wednesday 4th to Friday 6th September 2024

Cost £275 (Booking Form Attached)

Coming to our Senses

*'The Word made flesh is here made word again' (Edwin Muir, The Incarnate One).
A focus on embodiment, a continuing challenge for churches, and worldwide.*

Speakers:

Kathy Galloway

Former Leader of the Iona Community, and former Head of Christian Aid Scotland.

Victoria Turner

Editor - 'Young, Woke and Christian'

Worship Leaders:

Fiona Bennett

Minister of Augustine URC, Edinburgh

Kathy Galloway



For more information please contact Revd Sally Massey Thomas
Minister with St Paul's Bayswater and Kensington United Reformed Churches, Acting Ecumenical
Officer Thames North Synod, Email - minister.stpaulsbayswaterurc@gmail.com ,
Tel - 0207 912 3253 / 07738 766677

Partnering



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 4th : Revd. Michael Pearson

Five impossible Things to Believe before Christmas!

Saturday August 17th : Revd. Peter Sinclair

After Sunday : Being Church Seven Days a Week

Thursday September 26th : 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



Sharing



ALPHA @ CHRIST CHURCH

Following on from showcasing what the Synod Mission Fund is helping to resource in Darnall in the last issue, here's another project which has benefited from Synod Mission Fund input, and on a more modest scale.

Christ Church, Hipperholme – a Methodist/United Reformed Church LEP - has just completed a second successful Alpha Course at Christ Church. On this most recent 10-week course, they were helped by a wonderful group of volunteers - out-front and in the kitchen, with speakers Revd Colin Sherwood and Pamela Hales contributing to the discussions. Although they used outside caterers (Village Pantry – Emma always looks after us and her Lasagne was the biggest hit!) the preparation by the volunteers was as much part of the course as the course itself. It was financed predominately by donations from the guests and the Synod Mission Fund grant, for which they are extremely grateful.



It was an excellent and well attended course (10 attendees) exploring life's big questions and the Christian Faith, over a warm meal and with great conversations, where everyone forged new friendships and felt the movement of Spirit at work in them.

This year the attendees were asked for feedback and how they described themselves before and after Alpha. Joyfully, two people moved completely from 'Searching' to 'Christian'. Praise the Lord!

They took on suggested improvements in the hope that the course runs again next January (we have already been contacted by someone who has seen the banner from on the bus!) and we are encouraged by some great feedback:

- "I have found answers to my questions."
- "Being able to share, in a safe place, non-judgemental and loving has been so precious and have loved meeting other Christian's with different experiences. Thank you! I feel more able and equipped to love people in Jesus' name."

A massive thank you has gone out from Christ Church to everyone involved. You were all amazing!

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

All training listed below will take place via Zoom

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

Foundation Training can be accessed on the Learning Hub
bit.ly/3TxIdm4



The United Reformed Church Safeguarding
www.urc.org.uk

● From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee ●



Westminster College Cambridge

A resource centre for learning

Supporting Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders 2024

“Living in Praise”

Friday 6th - Sunday 8th 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



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.

Building



United Reformed Church Buildings Forum Webinar

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

Part 1 – 21st May 7.30pm

Part 2 – 4th June 7.30pm

This is an open invitation to attend the **URC Church Buildings Forum webinar** on Zoom on 21st 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 4th 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.

Solar Panels

Our erstwhile Property Officer, Jane Bunyan, as well as the Eco Apostles, have been made aware of new guidance for the installation of Solar panels to church buildings. Full details can be found through the Historic England website at <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/building-services-engineering/installing-photovoltaics/>, so if you are thinking of helping God's planet, please take a look here and contact Jane at property@urcyorkshire.org.uk

Resources Committee HR Volunteer Opportunity



The United Reformed Church recently announced some new and exciting opportunities to contribute to its governance and operational effectiveness. We are looking for an HR volunteer to join the new Resources Committee that will not only support key operational services delivered from Church House but will also serve the wider denomination. Do you have experience in HR? Do you want to be part of this exciting and transformational committee?

If so, we invite you to apply for the following voluntary position:

- [One HR specialist committee member – Role description](#) (Word | 66kb)
- [Resources Committee – Terms of Reference](#) (Word | 49kb)

Interested?

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact Victoria James, Chief Operating Officer on 07540 146 883 or email victoria.james@urc.org.uk.



To apply, please send a CV by email to Victoria James. Nominations can also be sent to Victoria. Please submit your application or nominations by 12pm on 15 May. Applications will be screened by the Chief Operating Officer and a relevant staff member. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to attend a short meeting with them. References for all volunteers will be sought prior to positions being confirmed.

And Finally

I make no apologies for these rather lengthy “and finally” news items because the work being done using URC resources through the Synod Mission Fund is worth celebrating. I’m highlighting two projects, each of which have been mentioned in recent issues of the Briefing.



First is the work being done across Sheffield where we have just welcomed Tracey Winfrow (seen here at her commissioning service with Rev Barry Welch) as Children, Youth and Families’ Worker at Shiregreen URC. Second (on pages 14 & 15) is the work being done in the Darnall and Attercliffe area of Sheffield, where through The Church of Christ in Darnall we help fund the Church Army initiative.

Create Afterschool Church

A couple of issues ago we were updated on the work being done in east Sheffield, where **The Church of Christ in Darnall** has teamed up with the Church Army and into which the Synod has been able to grant Mission Fund resources. Gina Kalsi, one of the leaders there has sent us an update on their *Create Afterschool Church*, which is another of their key missional activities.



In January, Create Afterschool Church based in Attercliffe & Darnall, celebrated its first anniversary. A year ago, Kinder and Gina Kalsi who run the Attercliffe & Darnall Centre of Mission (also known as the St Albans House Christian Community) had a number of prompts to develop something for young families in the area, as part of their developing new Christian community in the area. After a conversation with a local head teacher, who described how young people were asking what there was for them to do, and a few parents expressing a desire for something afterschool, they decided to try something.

Gina explains how it developed.

“There were only 3 of us at that point, and we wanted to offer something weekly – so there was regularity – so we decided to try and develop something that did not require lots of time for preparation every week, but offered a structure of activity, prayer, worship and learning together. By necessity, we developed something for the whole family – not just aimed at children but hoping to engage all ages, so that parents and children could come together to explore faith.



We tried a Christmas one-off event in December 2022, where we offered craft activities, followed by a time of prayer and singing, with the Christmas story and then we ate together. We invited all the contacts that we had through the activities we offer and encouraged them to invite others. This was well attended and there was enthusiasm for us to continue after Christmas.

So, in January 23, we opened our doors every Thursday in term time, after school. We have varied activities week by week, some requiring more prep than others. So there are craft and baking weeks, and board games, puppets, dressing up and building (lego) weeks. Usually these have some relevance to the story or theme that is then explored through story, prayer and singing (and dancing!). Throughout the year, we have explored stories that Jesus told, things Jesus did, the beatitudes, as well as marking special festivals like Easter and harvest. We have done a litter pick, made thank you's for local people who care for us, planted Easter gardens, told the Christmas story in pictures and built boats, temples and even a donkey!



After the activity, we sing together, we have our favourites like Great, Great, Brill, Brill and My Lighthouse. It is wonderful watching our very youngest (under 1) doing the actions and there is one family who now play worship songs to their little boy, to help him settle for sleep. We use simple actions for prayer, and everyone is encouraged to join in. We check in on how we are – how our day has been, and offer this to God, and each week, remember to share what we are thankful for, and give thanks to

God.

We end with eating together. Again, because there are so few of us, we have simple food – pasta and sauce, soup and sandwiches, hot dogs and jacket potatoes. We encourage everyone to get

involved in clearing away the activities, and setting up for food. We have been blessed by 2 wonderful ladies who help in the kitchen – washing up and clearing away, alongside many willing hands from the group.

Two of the parents that come along have now volunteered to help with the planning and so the team is starting to grow. One mum said it is her favourite day of the week, and one of the children said that they love coming as its fun and they love the singing. There have been interesting conversations around things like suffering, what resurrection is, and what the Bible is. We have given books with the Christmas/Easter story and have given gospels to both children and adults.

We have between 30-40 people attending each week, our youngest member has just turned 1 and our eldest is in their 70s. It is wonderful to see children and adults worshipping and sharing together, and friendships being built. We are looking forward to what God will do in the coming year, and how we might develop opportunities for deeper faith conversations. We are currently talking about baptism - why we do it, what it is about and what happens and are offering baptism or re-affirmation of baptism vows.”

They would love to chat to anyone who wants to know more about what they are doing – their contacts are:

St Alban’s Church; www.achurchnearyou/StAlbanschurch;

Gina Kalsi, Pioneer Priest Gina.Kalsi@churcharmy.org;

Kinder Kalsi, Lead Evangelist kinder.kalsi@churcharmy.org.

If you have a good news story from your part of the Synod, drop me a line at 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](#).