



Yorkshire Synod

Briefing

Number 129

9th May 2024



Synod in the Spring Time Planting for new growth

The momentum that seems to be within the churches of Yorkshire Synod shows no sign of abating and this seems to have been copied by the denomination centrally. Again, during this past fortnight there are further signs that our churches and the URC as a whole are actively working to bring God's Kingdom ever closer. I can be a lot more positive and safely say that the lambs in the fields are now gambolling around, the daffodils may have bloomed, but in my garden the self-seeded forget-me-nots are in full flower, whilst the majority of the dandelions have turned and their seeds are now floating looking for good soil to develop into next year's blooms (I'm sure there's a passage in there – perhaps Matthew 13: 18-23). So, in this continued season of invitation, it really is great to keep hearing 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.

“Worship must be our first priority in the synod”

Rev. Jamie Kissack, Synod Moderator.

For those of you with a keen eye and regularly visit the Synod Website, you may have noticed that the <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/worship/> page has been re-invigorated. Recently churches have been asked to let us know if they are streaming/recording their services and where they can be found online. We are then uploading these links to the [Worship - URC Yorkshire Synod](#) page so that we all can share in the different styles of worship that makes Yorkshire Synod such a rich place to be in. For starters we have the links to Herringthorpe URC in Rotherham, Trinity St Andrew's in Skipton and St Luke's, Lodge Moor in Sheffield. In time we hope to have many more and from these links you can also explore the missional work being done by the participating churches.

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 and where we can find it. Tell me what you plan for the warmer (and hopefully dryer) end of spring 2024 and your plans for the summer so that I can help spread that news. Drop me a line at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and I'll showcase it in the next edition, due out on Thursday 23rd May with a deadline of Wednesday 22nd 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.

Talking About...Uniformed Organisations

The latest in the "Talking About..." Sessions is due to take place later this month to which we are all invited.

For many, youth work in the local church started with uniformed organisations and leadership has often been drawn from local church members who grew up in the uniformed organisations themselves.

Over the years they have adapted as the world, and church, has changed. But are they still relevant for our mission to young people today? How can we better support their mission to young people?

Joining us to talk through these, and other, questions, will be Revd. Stewart Cutler – the Boys Brigade National Chaplain – and Revd. Keith Morrison – URC Chaplain to the Scout Association.

Join us on Thursday, May 23rd (7-8pm) on Zoom.

Book your places at

www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout

Talking About...Uniformed Organisations



Making the links between uniformed organisations and mission in the local church

Thursday, May 23rd 7-8pm on Zoom

Book your place on www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout



Daily Devotions



Lindsay Brown, the URC's Mission Support Officer has been in touch with the following message. "Hopefully you will have spotted that the last two weeks of Daily Devotions have been dedicated to the theme of evangelism. They were written by Eddie Boon, Thames North's Discipleship Enabler. We're thankful for these thought-provoking and accessible reflections, which you may find to be a useful resource for your churches. We add these Devotions in booklet form which can be printed off locally and used to encourage people to think more about evangelism. Andy Braunston

(andy.braunston@urc.org.uk) can provide booklets for the 5 Marks of Mission series and would be interested to know if you'd value either of these series to be reworked into small group studies for local church use.

Starting from 1st May there will be a 5-week series on the 5 Marks of Mission, as reenvisioned by Graham Adams in his book *Holy Anarchy*. You can find the first in the series here: <https://devotions.urc.org.uk/todays-daily-devotion/>. From Andy Braunston's introduction to the series: *'Over the next five weeks a diverse group of ministers and thinkers will look at these five marks of mission and write about them from their own contexts - which range far and wide in our global and ecumenical interconnectedness. Graham will write the first reflection for each week and then five others will continue to reflect on that mark with their own unique theological, cultural and mission perspectives.'* We do hope you find them stimulating and recommend them to your churches and networks."

These initiatives are part of the Church's response to calls for a more holistic view of mission, where sharing our faith with others becomes as natural as serving our communities and working for justice.

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.

The first of the relaxed 90 minutes sessions was on **Wednesday 1 May**, but you can still register for the sessions in the rest of May at

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 is only 1 place left so get in touch as soon as possible with the Synod Office at office@urcyorkshire.org.uk or ring 0113 289 8490 to book.



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](#).



**SUMMER
FUN**

FRIENDSHIP, GAMES, FAITH & FUN

**AUGUST 15 | 12 - 4PM | £2PP
HERRINGTHORPE URC**

Book your place here

Sign up with Megan Tillbrook
wilderness@urcyorkshire.org.uk

After such a wet spring and it feels like the summer is still so far away



However, here is an event to give you that summer feeling!

THURSDAY 15 AUGUST at

Herringthorpe United Reformed Church

Get your young people together and come and join in with an afternoon of fun and friendship.

We will have inflatables available, a nerf war, summer craft activities, food and drink, and short faith seminars.

Bookings now open!

For more information contact wilderness@urc.org.uk.

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
United
Reformed
Church
Yorkshire

Synod Forum

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



Church Related Community Work

Creating Change in Communities & the Church

Church & Community Engagement Newsletter

New for May 2024 is the first edition of the Church & Community Engagement Newsletter! It's packed full of information, resources and means of encouragement to enable you and your church to be even more present and engaged within your local neighbourhood and with communities as an expression of God's love and mission.

It is run by Steve Summers (Development Worker) and Samara Andrews (Administrator) who are based through Church House in the Church Related Community Work and Special Category Ministry section. In each issue they will bring us news of all that is happening in the life of CRCW and SCM projects around the denomination as well as highlighting partner activities and resource sources. This is the link to this first issue [Church & Community Engagement News \(urc-news.org.uk\)](https://www.urc-news.org.uk) or <https://tinyurl.com/26wjxoe9> or for more information and to sign up to the newsletter contact Samara at samara.andrews@urc.org.uk.



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.

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

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● 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

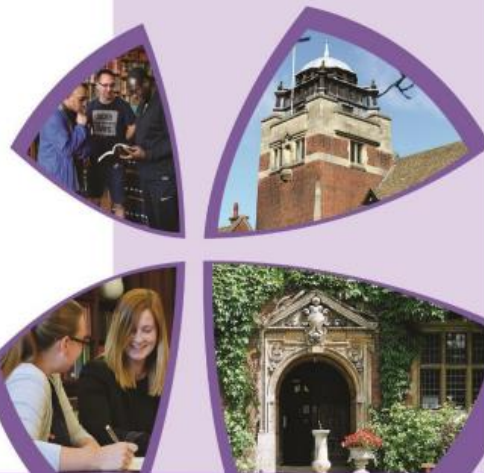
Prices (inclusive of accommodation, meals and course):

- 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>

Also the College is seeking immediate nominations and applications for a Convenor of Governors for Westminster College. This is an opportunity to support the College at an exciting time of change and development. Do you have experience of UK higher education? Do you value good governance? Do you enjoy charring meetings? If so then we would love to hear from you. For details please visit <https://urc.org.uk/jobs/>. To find out more about Education and Learning in the URC and how Westminster College fits into that please contact jenny.mills@urc.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.

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](#)
- [Resources Committee – Terms of Reference](#)

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.

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

And Finally

You may have noticed that there have been a few horticultural references in this time's Briefing. Part of that is to do with the Clerk's wife hinting that now that the days are getting longer and weather a bit dryer there is work to be done in a certain garden near Bingley. Another part of that has been the news that at **Heath URC** in Halifax they are continuing to work with their local community on their garden project.



Last year, the gardens, both in the grounds of the church and along the adjacent Manor Drive, needed some tender loving care, and through a collaborative effort they applied for and received a local council Ward Forum grant of £500 to develop it. The area was cleaned up, planters were obtained, flowers, fruit trees and herbs were donated to create a garden which is now a welcoming space for people to enjoy. This year they are continuing to develop the garden. They hope to have more flowers to attract bees, grow more tomatoes and strawberries, which were a great success last year, and develop the woodland area to attract more bugs.

This year they hope to link in with their local "Incredible Edible" group

whose vision is to create kind, confident and connected communities through the power of food. You can find out more here <https://www.incredibleedible.org.uk/> and even find a group local to you.

So, by bringing the church out into the community they have been able to create a place where you can breathe in the atmosphere and enjoy a peaceful haven in a much loved place.



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](#).