



# Yorkshire Synod

## Briefing

### Number 142



21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

## **BUSY, BUSY, BUSY**

I'm sat writing this in sunny Milton Keynes. Not something you would expect to hear from the Yorkshire Synod Clerk, but here I am, looking out onto the manicured car park of a conference centre where representatives from all thirteen Synods of the URC are gathered at the Church Life Review Shared Services Consultation. Much of the work the seventy or so people gathered here will be doing is in response to the challenge laid down by General Assembly in 2023 which asked Synods and Synod Trusts to explore ways in which we can reach agreement around the resources to be hosted on a new shared resource portal, and how this can be achieved in a way that is compliant with the responsibilities of trustees. General Assembly also asked Synods and Trusts to consider creative ways in which we might be able to collectively provide shared services for local churches beyond the resource portal, funded from a new shared fund. These objectives are designed to get the URC to a place where we do better as a church together. It won't be easy, but I do know that there is a wish that we can share what we have and what we know so that the work of the URC can become more relevant and effective in making new Christians.

Next week is no less busy with Assembly Executive and Synod Council meetings, each having its own challenges as the national church and Synod makes decisions on how we look to be a relevant church as the second quarter of the twenty-first century is about to start.



I would imagine that churches are getting busy as well as we approach Advent. Advent Sunday this year is on 1<sup>st</sup> December, so by the time the next Briefing comes out on 5<sup>th</sup> December, many of our churches will be getting into the swing of this time of expectation. Sadly I'm not aware of many of our churches plans, so if your church has events on in the season of Advent, please let me or the good folk in the office know and we'll add it to the news section on the Synod website. It really is important for

churches to set the scene for Christmas, and Advent is that time when churches become the focal point of our communities celebrations.

So here I'll sign off and head for the start of the CLR gathering and I hope to be able to bring you some news of the direction the national church is taking in the challenge it has set for itself to help the local churches of the URC, where the work of bringing people to God through Jesus really happens.

**If you have any news of welcoming people into Church, stories of celebration and hope or even notices of future events, especially during the Advent, Christmas and New Year periods, please let me know by dropping 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 5<sup>th</sup> December.**

**Thank you and God Bless,**

*Tim Crossley*

# Inviting



## PRAYER SUBMISSIONS



Premier Christian Radio has asked the URC if it would like to submit prayers for Advent, Christmas and the New Year to be broadcast. The Communications department in Church House have asked if there are any ministers, CRCW's, lay

preachers/leaders or anyone moved to prayer in your synods who could offer a voice recordings of up to 90 seconds each.

Those willing to do so can use the voice recorder on their mobile phones to say a suitable Advent, Christmas or New Year prayer. They just need to ensure the device laying flat and still on a table or similar surface near them, and the room quiet.

They simply need to introduce themselves and then pray whatever God has laid on their heart. (Eg Name, role in what church, in what synod, and pray).

Once done, all that is then needed is that the submissions can be made to Ann-Marie Nye in the URC's Communications Department at [ann-marie.nye@urc.org.uk](mailto:ann-marie.nye@urc.org.uk) by email by 27<sup>th</sup> November and she will forward on the Premier Christian Radio.



## Let's get together

Talking About...Unpacking Advent With Children  
Exploring the meanings behind the season



The URC's Children and Youth Work Team is hosting a new event, and they would love to see you there.

Join them for  
**Talking About....Unpacking Advent,**  
28th November  
2024 at 7:00 pm.

Register soon because spaces are limited. We hope you're able to join us!

**Thursday, 28 November 2024 20:00, Talking About..... Unpacking Advent,**  
[Register here](#)

# PRESIDENCY AT THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Please book your place now for Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November

Following a couple of successful events in 2023 and some requests for further training, there are two future events planned in different areas of the Synod for those who preside at the sacraments in churches on Wednesday **27th November 2024** at 10am-1.30pm at Heath URC, Halifax and on Saturday **1st February 2025** at 10am-1.30pm at Elloughton URC, East Yorkshire.

Both events will be led by Revd Jamie Kissack and Mrs Val Morrison; each event consisting of a reflective session on the practices of presiding at Holy Communion. This is an open invitation to all who preside at Holy Communion – lay and ordained.

The day will begin with arrivals and refreshments from 10am. The session will start at 10.30am and finish with lunch (please bring your own packed lunch) and drinks will be provided. Departure around 1.30pm.

If you have any questions or you would like to book, please contact the Synod Office at [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk) or [moderatorpa@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:moderatorpa@urcyorkshire.org.uk) to let us know which event you would like to attend and who will be coming from your church.



## Presidency at the Sacrament of Holy Communion

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 10am-1.30pm**  
Heath URC, Free School Lane, Heath, HX3 0DW

or

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025 from 10am-1.30pm**  
Elloughton URC, Main Street, Elloughton, HU15 1HR

Rev Jamie Kissack, Yorkshire Synod Moderator and Mrs Val Morrison, will be leading these events to reflect together on our practices of presiding at Holy Communion.

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



# BIG DAY OUT 2025



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church  
Yorkshire

# BIG

DAY OUT



## Activities :

- ✓ Bible Study
- ✓ Worship
- ✓ Crafts
- ✓ Family Theatre

## Prices:

18 & over £5 &  
19 - 25 £3  
Under 18 FREE

A note

from the planning team:

*'Plans are well underway for our BIG Day Out next year. We are looking forward to seeing you at YSP to enjoy a time of fun and friendship. So get the date in the diary, get your coaches booked and spread the word!'*

**Saturday 17 May 2025, Yorkshire Sculpture Park**

URC  
YOUTH ASSEMBLY  
2025

All are

welcome

Arrive as strangers, leave as friends

7-9 March 2025

New venue with twin rooms and menu choices  
Kings Park Conference Centre, Northampton, NN3 6LL

A fun weekend to have your say, make friends  
and find fellowship

Worship - Bible study, music, prayer spaces,  
late night communion

Youth Decides - discussion on issues that matter to us -  
leading to action and engaging the wider church

Workshops - grow your skills and thinking  
while exploring the theme

Entertainment - campfire, karaoke, sports, games and more

**£120** early bird until 1 December / **£150** from 2 December  
until 2 February 2025

Please talk to your church and synod about help with funding.

Open to Year 10 / S3 students up to 25 years inclusive.

Book your place today:

<https://linktr.ee/URCYouthAssembly> or contact [children.youth@urc.org.uk](mailto:children.youth@urc.org.uk)



Here's a taste of Youth Assembly 2024

Just scan the QR code, or visit:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1npXCWKf00](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1npXCWKf00)

For all young people with a connection to the United Reformed Church including:

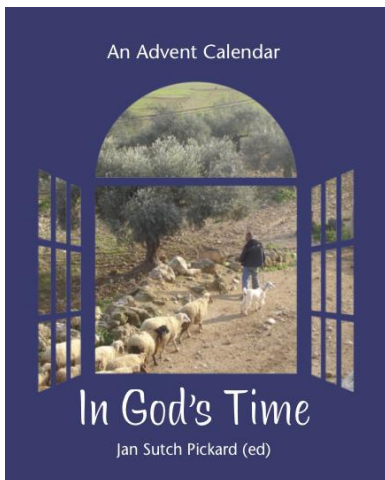




# Loving



## 'In God's Time' - an Advent Calendar with a difference



Instead of cardboard cut-outs the 'windows' we open are word-pictures and stories from the Land called Holy. Readers can respond with prayer.

We glimpse how people in Palestine/Israel face an unjust and divisive situation with courage and often hope and readers can respond with prayer.

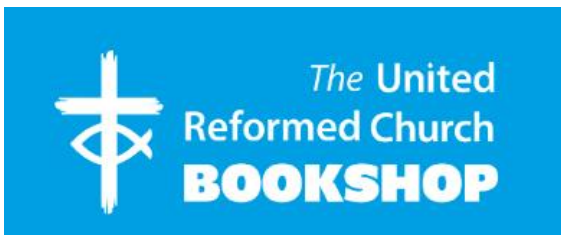
And, in most cases, there is extra information, in an appendix, for further reading or action.

Written by members, associates and friends of the Iona Community.

Sadly, they could not include chocolate!

<https://www.ionabooks.com/product/in-gods-time-downloadable-book/>

# Sharing



## Christmas from the URC Bookshop

Explore our range of resources, gifts, tree baubles and hanging decorations.

See <https://urcshop.co.uk/christmas/>

## Resources for churches

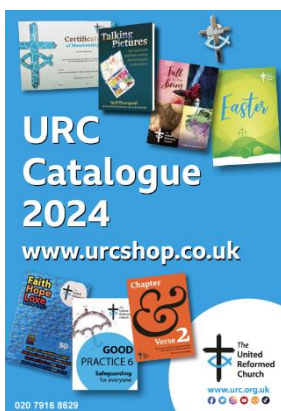
Explore our range of resources for churches, see <https://urcshop.co.uk/church-resources/>.

## Send a card to family and friends

Explore our range of Christmas cards, see <https://urcshop.co.uk/christmas-cards/>.

## Merchandise

Explore our range of merchandise, see <https://urcshop.co.uk/merchandise/>.



Download the URC Catalogue at [Bookshop catalogue 2024.pdf](#)

# Building



## 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.

## Staying safe in church buildings

The Synod Safeguarding Team is reaching out to all churches across the Synod to signpost you to the following website: <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/marauding-terrorist-attack-mta-run-hide-tell> This website gives specific guidance on what to do if you or your local churches are faced with any instances of threat. Please don't let it frighten you, it is just there to ensure your safety and to know what to do if anything should occur. If there is any further information that any church may need, please contact your Carrie Kaunda, the Yorkshire Safeguarding Officer straight away or visit <https://urc.org.uk/your-church/guidance-support-for-churches-synods/staying-safe-in-church-buildings/>

### Spiritual Abuse Webinar



**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 1.00pm – 3.00pm**

We are delighted to be hosting a one-off webinar with Dr Lisa Oakley focusing on Spiritual Abuse.

Dr. Lisa Oakley is an Associate Professor at the University of Chester. She is also the Chair of the National working group for abuse linked to accusations of witchcraft and spirit possession and the Church of England Task and Finish Group on Spiritual Abuse and acted as a core participant to the independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Lisa has conducted research into issues of faith, safeguarding and abuse for the past 16 years. Her doctorate was on the topic of spiritual abuse and in 2013 she co-authored a book entitled *Breaking the Silence on Spiritual Abuse*. In 2019 a further book was published entitled *Escaping the Maze of Spiritual Abuse. Creating Healthy Christian Cultures*. Lisa has presented on these topics nationally and internationally.

Please do register at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/null/t-gjpnqzd> and join us for this event

Click this link to book  
[Spiritual Abuse Webinar booking](#)

  
The United Reformed Church Safeguarding  
[www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk)  


Are you looking to secure funding for your church or charity? Join Jo Luck (Benefact Trust Grants Officer), for this insightful webinar where she will share her advice and top tips on applying for a Benefact Trust grant.

The graphic features a dark blue background. In the top right corner is the Benefact Trust logo, a white geometric shape resembling a sphere or a cluster of atoms, followed by the text 'BENEFACT TRUST' in white. Below the logo, the date '26th November' is written in white. The word 'Webinar' is prominently displayed in a large, white, sans-serif font. Underneath it, the text 'Everything you need to know about applying to Benefact Trust' is written in a smaller white font. On the right side, there is an illustration of a man in a blue shirt standing at a large screen, presenting. To his right, three people are seated in orange chairs, looking at the screen. Various icons like a question mark, a lightbulb, and a speech bubble are scattered around them, suggesting an interactive or educational session.

This webinar is designed to equip you with the tools and information you need to make the most of your application, giving your church the best chance of success.

**Date: Tuesday, 26th November 2024**

**Time: 14:00 PM - 15:00 PM**

To register for the webinar, simply click [here](#) and hopefully you will be able to make the most of the funding opportunities available through Benefact Trust.

For more details about the work of Benefact Trust, visit <https://www.benefacttrust.co.uk/>



## Administrator Church Life Review London

**Fixed Term contract until March 2026**  
**35 hours per week**  
**£36,103 per annum**

**Are you ready to help support the Church on its important journey of change?**

The Church Life Review (CLR) is a significant and important journey of change to fully review all aspects of the life of the denomination.

In this role you will work closely with the Programme Manager on all administrative aspects of the CLR, playing a vital role in seeing that they are properly supported in their busy schedule.

You will be educated to A level or equivalent with GCSE passes (grade A-C) in English and Maths. You already have experience of PA and administrative work in an office environment and are highly organised, with excellent communication and interpersonal skills *and an ability to operate with discretion.*

We can offer you a flexible and friendly working environment; working from Church House and from home.

If you are interested in working with us and can meet the job requirements, please send your application form to:  
Human Resources, the United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT  
020 7691 9871 [recruitment@urc.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@urc.org.uk) [www.urc.org.uk/jobs](http://www.urc.org.uk/jobs)

Closing date: 12 noon, Friday 3 January 2025 Interviews: Friday 10 January 2025



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## Musical Offering



We have had a message from a David Austin, who is an experienced church organist of moderate competency (his words, not mine) based in West Yorkshire. He isn't seeking a permanent post but he is looking to help out at churches that have an occasional need for a stand-in organist and is happy to travel up to 25 miles from home in Elland as he has his own transport.

He normally requests a fee, one that a church can afford, and one that will cover travel expenses plus the cost of a Sunday lunch out. He

doesn't stipulate a specific fee and, for some special events, will even play free of charge.

Places where he has played in the past include Headingley St Columba and Waverley Huddersfield (in the old building).

If your church has an occasional need of a stand-in organist, then please contact David directly on 07790 480058.

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**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](#).