

Yorkshire Synod

Briefing

Number 160





The Season of the Meeting

Rather that it being the start of Autumn, it is the start of meetings season in the Yorkshire Synod, for individual churches, groups, pastorates and for the denominational church. I'm sure that many of you will be heading to one or many of these vital events which make up the life of our church and where we listen to the mind of God as we guide his Church forward. Well we are no different in Yorkshire Synod, as I have recently attended the Ministries, Financial Resources and Children & Youth Work committee meetings, and later in the month the Synod's Pastoral and Council meetings. Please pray for the work of these Synod Committees as they themselves discern God's guidance.



All these meetings lead to the Synod meetings being held on Thursday 9th and Saturday 11th October (mentioned below in the Briefing), but before that Synod meets on Saturday 4th October for a celebration – to welcome and induct Revd Johnny O'Hanlon into the Sheffield team. The invitation to join him is here and I hope to be able to see as many of you as possible at Central URC in Sheffield as we mark this special moment for Johnny and the Sheffield URC team.

If you have any news of welcoming people into Church, stories of celebration and hope or even notices of future events, please let me know by dropping me a line at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and I'll showcase it in the next edition, due out on Thursday 2nd October 2025.

Thank you

Tim Crossley



!!!!!!!!!!!!PLEASE NOTE THE NEW DATE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



11AM-2PM
SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER
STAINBECK CHURCH, LS7 2PP









Come along and meet all our wonderful community groups
Activities and crafts
Refreshments: drinks and cakes
Thanking our grant funders

www.stainbeckurc.org.uk

Due to essential car park resurfacing and repairs, Stainbeck's community groups'/thanking grant funders' event has been moved from 13th September to Saturday 18 October.

FaithTalk: Christmas Special



On Tuesday 23 September at 7pm the URC's Ecumenical Relations and Evangelism team will host the next in their series of FaithTalk webinars. These are an opportunity to talk about how we share our faith with others, and this month they will focus on using the season of Advent and Christmas. We will hear about the ideas and resources that others have come up with, and look forward to gathering more, in what will be a light-hearted, relaxed hour together.

Please do share this through your own networks and register for the link by emailing

mission@urc.org.uk.

Christian Aid 80th Anniversary Evensong

Sheffield cathedral are dedicating an evensong service to celebrating the 80th anniversary of Christian Aid, with thanks giving for their work, impact and supporters.

When: 21 September 2025, 4pm - 5pm

Where: Sheffield Cathedral, Church St, Sheffield City Centre, Sheffield S1 1HA

RSVP: jandatrezise@virginmedia.com for

refreshments by 12/09/25





Christian Aid is a key member of ACT Alliance. Eng and Wales charity no. 1105851 Scot charity no. SC039150 Company no. 5171525. The Christian Aid name and logo are trademarks of Christian Aid. © Christian Aid 4/8/2025 - 17:15:09.

Online Quiet Day: Playing with God

27 September 2025 10:30am to 4:00pm

Venue: Online, Ticket: Free

Led by Leslie Bailey -(opening prayers),
Mark Argent and Ann Barton, and Jane Weedon (closing prayers).



The day draws its theme from part of the gospel for 27 September, which records Jesus predicting his death (again) and saying to the disciples: "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest."

For some that carries an invitation to come to God "like a child" — which could be heard as "praying with one's inner child". For others that can feel like a more difficult space — particularly if there are uncomfortable memories or associations to childhood.

In biblical times those words could have been heard quite differently — perhaps as a challenge to the idea that power gets someone closer to God (or God is on the side of the powerful).

The invitation of the day is to spend some time in prayer away from our screens, and in discussion with others, to attend to what God may be saying to us.

The <u>readings for the day</u> are Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16; Jeremiah 24:1-10 and Luke 9:43b-48. For this quiet day we'll focus on the gospel:

43b And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. While everyone was marvelling at all that Jesus did, he said to his disciples, 44 "Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men." 45 But they did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it. 46 An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. 47 Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. 48 Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest."

Book by clicking on this link: https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/urcsp event/quiet-day-4/

Talking About...Advent

Thursday, September 25th, 7-8pm

on Zoom



JOIN THE ADVENTURE AND
DISCOVER HOW TO SPRINKLE
SOME OF THE URC'S 2025
ADVENT PACK MAGIC INTO
YOUR WORLD... ALONGSIDE
THE DREAM TEAM WHO
CREATED IT!

book your place at www.bit.ly/T4lkingAbout

You may have heard that the 2025 Advent Pack from the **URC's Children and Youth Work Team** is an alternative Advent calendar, a beautiful box of postcard-sized cards — one for each day in Advent — and that the final call for orders has gone out. Alternating images of things associated with Christmas and characters from the Christmas story, there are fun facts and activity ideas on the reverse.

Designed to be reusable, displayed like bunting or in other ways, the box even includes a DIY nativity set. You may have heard that **Advent Unpacked!** is a gift for local URC churches to give to families, produced by the URC Children's and Youth Work and Communications teams.

You may have heard that the price has been reduced (and, if you didn't, get in touch with your CYDO+!)

And you may have pre-ordered your Advent Packs at https://urcshop.co.uk/2025-urc-advent-kit-preorder/ Brilliant!

Now what to do with them?

This session is an opportunity to meet with some of the writers of this year's material, find out how "they" think the packs could be used in different contexts and with different groups.

Come with your questions – and your ideas – and get prepared to share the joy and excitement of

Advent this year. Talking About...Advent September 25th, 7-8pm, on Zoom

Book your place: www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout



Christian Aid 80th Anniversary Service

Headingley St Columba URC, Saturday 27 September

Please join us at Headingley St Columba URC, for a special service to mark the 80th anniversary of Christian Aid. Giving thanks for their work tackling poverty and injustice, it's impact through the years, as well as the faithfulness of supporters.



Service at 2.30pm

Refreshments afterwards

Christian Aid is a key member of ACT Alliance. Eng and Wales charity no. 1105851 Scot charity no. 5C039150 Company no. 5171525. The Christian Aid name and logo are trademarks of Christian Aid.

C Christian Aid 25/7/2025 - 18:43:40 Photos: Christian Aid





Responding to...



How can we work towards racial justice in our churches?

A space to ask the questions you've always wanted to about faith and racial justice, and have the hard, ongoing conversations we need to make real change.

Join Leeds Church Institute and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland for an evening of community and conversation with a panel including members from the Churches Against Racism Group

6-9pm Monday 29th September **Community Wellbeing Hub** Chapeltown, Leeds, LS7 3EZ

Sign up here for your free ticket







JOIN US IN MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

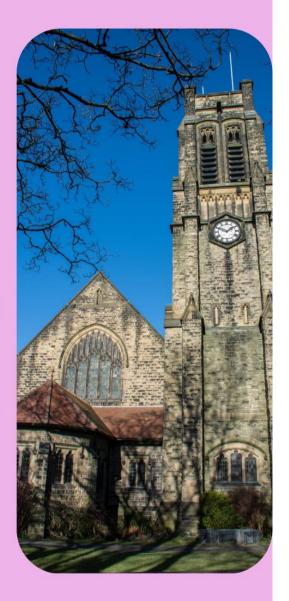
Clocktower Community Café Fundraising Event

WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER 10AM -1PM

This is your opportunity to support Leeds Mind whilst enjoying time with friends. Refreshments will include teacakes, cakes and bacon rolls.









ALL PROFITS DONATED TO LEEDS MIND

Shaftesbury Avenue, Leeds, LS8 1DS www.standrews.cc

Ministry Enquirers

Learn what God might be asking of you

4 October 9.30am-12.30pm on Zoom

Join us in thinking about God's call to: Stepwise, Worship Leading, Lay Preaching, Lay Pioneering, Ministry with children and young people, the Ministry of Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work.

Email us for joining details: ministries@urc.org.uk









Interculturalism, Faith, and Racial Justice

Learning to help our City thrive





Learn how interculturalism, with its emphasis on understanding and interaction between people of different ethnicities, cultures and traditions, can help us to challenge racism and discrimination in our city.

6-9pm Monday 6th October **Community Wellbeing Hub** Chapeltown, Leeds, LS7 3EZ

Sign up here for your free ticket





This Autumn's Synod has a different feel about it as we are doing it in two parts. On the evening of Thursday 9th October we will be discussing the financial aspect of Synod life via Zoom, then on Saturday 11th October at St Andrew's, Roundhay we look at the missional, justice and youth engagement aspect of our Synod's life.

There are three workshops available and we invite Synod Representatives to join two of them during the day. They are:

Exploring Life, Love and Faith with Gen Z – Matthew Willmott, Frontier Youth Trust

Each generation understands the world slightly differently than the one before. How are Gen Z understanding life stages and in particular, what it means to be in a relationship? How can the church support, challenge and walk alongside young people as they make their way in the world? This is just the starting point of a conversation that we need to be open to having.

Discipleship in Divided Times - Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT)

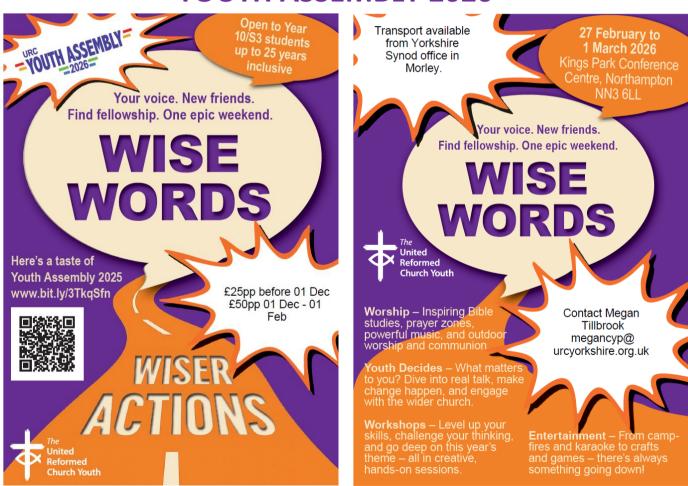
How might Christians engage in a political and social mainstream that is shifting into more populist and openly far-right views and expression? How can our conversations with friends and family reflect a sensitivity to these influences, build trust across difference yet challenge extreme-right policies that undermine democracy and Christian values? The Joint Public Issues Team will lead a workshop highlighting current trends in society, the impact these have on the most vulnerable, and how Christians can engage effectively in changing times.

The Gift of Presence: How children and young people can transform church life – Tony Harris and Tracey Winfrow

What difference does it make when children and young people are truly part of the life of the church—not just present, but participating, shaping, and belonging? This workshop invites you to explore how the presence of young people can breathe new life, perspective, and purpose into your church community. Through stories, reflection, and discussion, we'll uncover the theological, relational, and missional impact of engaging younger generations. Whether your church is growing with young people or longing for their return, this session will challenge and encourage you to see them not as the church of tomorrow, but as vital members of the church today.

Everyone will be able to attend 2 of the 3 on offer and choices can be made on the day, but we hope that by providing this information in advance, churches and synod representatives can share, discuss and consider their options. Those who are not synod representatives, but with an interest in the topics may also wish to attend. Everyone is welcome to come along and there will be creche facilities (unsupervised, in the main meeting hall) for babies and small children.

YOUTH ASSEMBLY 2026



Bookings have opened for next year's URC Youth Assembly which will be happening between 27th February and 1st March 2026. Visit www.bit.ly/3TkqSfn for more details or contact Megan at the Synod Office at megancyp@urcyorkshire.org.uk. Megan will also be at the Synod meeting on 11th October, so if you get chance, have a word with her there.

It's time for a Macmillan Coffee Morning and you're invited

Let's do whatever it takes to support people living with cancer.

Place: Idle Upper Chapel URC

Date: Saturday 11th October 2025

Time: 10am to 1pm

Contact: Idle United Reformed Church

Westfield Lane, Idle, BD10 8PY

idleurc@outlook.com

Refreshments, Stalls, Tombola, Games

No admission charge - Donations Welcome





Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity in England and Wales (261017), Scotland (SC039907) and the Isle of Man (604). Also operating in Northern Ireland. MAC19933_InvitePoster



Tuesday 28th October 2025 10am-1.30pm West Park URC, West Park, Harrogate, HG1 1BL

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

- All are welcome who preside at Holy Communion (lay and ordained) or anyone who is interested in finding out more
- 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 this event, please book your place by contacting the Synod Office asap at <u>office@urcyorkshire.org.uk</u> or 0113 289 8490

If you have any questions or you would like to book, please contact the Synod Office (office@urcyorkshire.org.uk or moderatorpa@urcyorkshire.org.uk) to inform us, who will be coming from your church, so we can advise West Park URC of numbers expected.

Loving



Yorkshire Synod Discipleship Development Small Grant Fund 2025

The Ministries Committee have so far approved 21 applications to this fund since 2022 and we encourage all lay church members to consider applying in 2025. Please use the new application form available through the Synod Office as the amount which you can ask for resources or has increased to up to £300. This fund exists to help you on your Christian journey including the costs of attending a course or to offset the costs of buying resources for personal development or sharing with others. If anyone wants to discuss an application before submitting it please contact the Convenor of the Yorkshire Ministries Committee, Kath Lonsdale at kathlonsdale@talktalk.net.

Remember this is for any age of lay person in our churches to apply for so please discuss with your young people as well as adults.

LEEDS PARTNERSHIP PRAYERS



Although this is primarily aimed at those of us who are linked with the churches of the Leeds URC Partnership, this invitation is open to everyone from around the Synod and beyond.

It will be happening on the first Thursday of the month on Zoom at 7:30pm. The next one will be tonight, **Thursday 2nd October** and the link is here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7019277749

There will be a time to pray together, a time to share in reading the Bible and a time to share the joys and challenges in our lives, churches, communities and world.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Partnering



Disability Awareness Sunday

Janet Eardley, the Mission Programmes Manager for Through the Roof, a charity partner of the UFC has been in touch about **Disability Awareness Sunday**, which this year is on Sunday 28th September. Through the Roof are offering a short video of disabled Christian author Emily Owen that can be played in

churches, and Emily has also written the materials for use in services too on the theme of 'Made in the image of God'. All the resources are free and include suggested hymns and songs, prayers, etc, as well as Emily's video and ideas for the talk. The material, though made for **Disability Awareness Sunday**, can be used on any Sunday: the important thing is to spread the message of welcome and inclusion for disabled people in our churches. Here's the link for people to request the pack:

<u>Disability Awareness Sunday - Through the Roof or</u>

Through the Roof

https://throughtheroof.org/forchurches/disability-awareness-sunday/



For more information and to get your Early Bird tickets follow this link https://joinedupconferencecom.wordpress.com/york/



NEWS FROM THE DENOMINATION

The URC's News Update is a monthly e-newsletter that keeps you informed about the latest news and events.

To receive this popular newsletter, please visit the https://urc.org.uk/news-updates-sign-up-form/ page on the URC website and follow the links. If you just want to dip in and catch up on what is going one, that's fine and you can read and print recent editions of our enewsletter by visiting the URC News Update page at https://urc.org.uk/urc-news-update/.

Church Action on Poverty Sunday

On Church Action on Poverty Sunday, give, act and pray with others – together we can end UK poverty. Use the powerful 'Dreams and Realities' portrait exhibition to challenge and inspire your congregation Use our free worship resources to reflect and pray for change. Celebrate what your church is already doing – and explore how you could do more in partnership with Church Action on Poverty. Raise funds to support people working together to reclaim dignity, agency and power across the UK. If you took part in Church Action on Poverty Sunday in March, this is a great chance to celebrate the commitments you've made to tackle poverty locally. Please do join in again!	Church Action on Poverty Sunday Sharring OUT Dreams 19 October 2025
Please send me a resource pack for	
Church Action on Poverty Sunday, 19 October 2025	
Contact name:	It's a conscious effort
Address:	
	I'm making each day
Church or group:	to do something that
Email address:	
	makes me feel makes me feel
I would like prayer cards and donation envelopes.	happy, and confident
I enclose a donation of £ (Please make cheques payable to Church Action on Poverty)	with our support, artist stephen Martin created portraits that shared the dreams and realities of people dreams and realities of people
I am a UK tax-payer and would like Church Action on Poverty to treat all gifts of money that I make today and in the future as Gift Aid donations. I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.	Give, Act and Pray with us.
Return this form to Freepost RTTY-JGEE-JJEZ, Church Action on Poverty, 28 Sandpiper Court, Water's Edge Business Park, Modwen Road, Salford M5 3EZ	Together we can share dreams
Church Action Or register and download resources now at sunday www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday	of a better world — and challenge the reality of poverty
Registered charity no 1079986. Company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, no 3780243.	and amplifacing the bonds

The next Poverty Sunday has been brought forward to **Sunday 19 October 2025** to tie in with Challenge Poverty Week. The theme is *Sharing Our Dreams* and it is a conscious effort to share dreams of a better world. If you or your church feel called to this work, please contact the Church Action on Poverty team at https://www.church-poverty.org.uk/ where you will be able to

- Use the powerful 'Dreams and Realities' portrait exhibition to challenge and inspire your congregation
- Use our free worship resources to reflect and pray for change.
- Celebrate what your church is already doing and explore how you could do more in partnership with Church Action on Poverty.
- Raise funds to support people working together to reclaim dignity, agency and power across the UK.

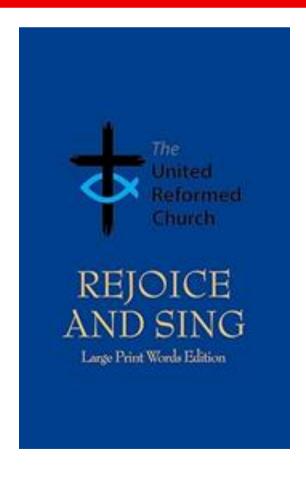
Building (5)

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 at safeguarding.1and4@urc.org.uk will be answered within 24 hours.

FIRE SAFETY

Jane Bunyan, our Synod Property Officer property@urcyorkshire.org.uk has asked that I remind churches that fire regulations for small non-domestic premises have changed in light of the Grenfell Tower Enquiry outcomes. The advice Synod is giving is that all churches should make themselves aware of the new regulations and advice updated in 2024 at Making your small non-domestic premises safe from fire - GOV.UK or https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-your-small-non-domestic-premises-safe-from-fire but if you would like a pdf copy then please email Jane at the above e-mail address.



WANTED

The Synod Clerk has been contacted by the good folk at Bingley URC. They are in need of some large print Rejoice and Sing hymn books. At the moment they are saving up to repair their roof and rather than having to buy new, are asking that if any churches in the Synod have any spare they could pass them on. If there are any, please contact the Clerk at the Synod office via clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk so that a transfer can be arranged.



The Bridge Church, The United Reformed Church in Otley, Bridge St., Otley, West Yorks, LS21 1RW

CHILDREN & FAMILIES WORKER

A three year post to develop both church-based and community work with children and families.

- Full time (37.5 hours per week) Fixed Term Contract
 - £27,711 £30,060 (depending on experience)

The Bridge Church is a United Reformed Church accredited Children and Youth Friendly Church, and has extensive children's work

We are seeking an enthusiastic worker, who will work with our volunteers to develop and expand this work further and make links with local schools and community groups.

An information pack, together with application form can be downloaded from the church website – www.otleybridgechurch.org.uk

Completed application forms must be returned to our Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Colin Whitaker at colin@otleybridgechurch.org.uk by Friday 10th October 2025.

Interviews, for those shortlisted, will take place on Tuesday 4th November 2025.



And Finally



After the success of last year's Pet Blessing service, Stainbeck URC are inviting everyone to this year's Pet Blessing Service. The invitation is open to all pets around the Synod and they are encouraged to bring their humans along with them as well.

If your pet is too shy, or you are worried about bringing them or they have passed away, then please come along with a photograph of your pet.

If you have a good news story from your part of the Synod or something that you feel would enhance the work of Synod in 2025 and into 2026, 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, at URC Yorkshire - Home | Facebook, the YouTube page at URC Yorkshire - YouTube and the Twitter (X) page at URC In Yorkshire (@URCYorkshire) / Twitter.