



# Yorkshire Synod

## Briefing

### Number 168



12<sup>th</sup> February 2026

## Lenten lines

I'm told that it is time to dig out the flour at the back of the cupboard, crack a few eggs, get the milk and the whisk and find a non-stick frying pan. For some people that is the way Lent starts, but for us Christians the real Lent begins the day afterwards on Ash Wednesday, which is upon us – it being next week on the 18<sup>th</sup> February. I could try to make something of the fasting element that some incorporate into Lent, but this year, with all that we are being invited to do, I would like to draw your attention to talking and praying. The "Talking About....." initiative led by the URC's Faith in Action team has returned with a series of events over the Spring, Summer and Autumn. The first one is next week on Ash Wednesday on LGBTQ+ and Inclusive Language, and is followed roughly four weekly on many other topics which will be of interest to you all. As for praying, we have the World Day of Prayer on March 6<sup>th</sup>. I know that there are events at Westfield Wyke URC and at Portholme Church Selby, but there is still time to let me know of any other events or services over that weekend. The invitation to events continue to roll in, and I am ever so grateful for those who let me know of what is going on in their circles. Please continue to send invitations to your events in to me, and I'll continue to advertise them. One invitation that will be heading towards your church's Synod representatives is to join us at West Park URC, Harrogate, on Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup> for the Spring meeting of the Yorkshire Synod. Plans for the day are being put together, so hopefully when the next issue of the Briefing is published, I'll be able to bring more details to the fore. Watch this Space – and church Synod reps – watch your inbox. At Synod meetings we resolve to appoint people to our committees and groups, the people to help guide and steer Synod, but one of the things that we have noticed is that we are still short of volunteers to fill these key roles, especially on the financial and property side of things. If you know of someone who you think would be suitable, let me know and we will approach them.

Please continue to send in your stories and pictures and I'll share them in throughout 2026, either here in The Briefing or on the Synod website at <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/>. They may even end up in <https://urc.org.uk/our-news-stories/latest-news/> which is always worth a read and has the opportunity to sign up for regular URC's news updates and finally, a message from the denomination regarding the **2027 Prayer Handbook**. The deadline for submitting prayers for the 2027 *Prayer Handbook* is **Friday 27 February 2026**. The theme for the next edition is: **A larger belonging**. Prayers are invited that draw us beyond tribe, nation and ideology towards God's new creation. A belonging wider than our differences and deeper than our divisions. All submissions to [phb@urc.org.uk](mailto:phb@urc.org.uk).

Full information at [URC Prayer Handbook - United Reformed Church](#) or <https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/prayer-and-worship/urc-prayer-handbook/>

**So, if you have any news of welcoming people into Church, stories of celebration and mission, 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> March 2026.**

*Tim Crossley*

# Partnering



## News from the Charity Commissioners.

I've been asked to bring this to your attention so that you may take up the offer from the Commissioners to take part in their Faith Security Training. Please have a read and follow the instructions as to how to sign up.

### Free Faith Security Training – Offered by the Home Office

The Home Office is pleased to announce the launch of Faith Security Training (FST) – a free security awareness scheme designed specifically for faith communities across England and Wales, which will be delivered on behalf of the Home Office by CDS Support.

This training will help you strengthen security practices, mitigate threats, and ensure your places of worship remain safe and secure.

#### Why take part?

- Gain practical knowledge to protect your congregation and premises.
- Learn how to identify and reduce risks before they become threats.
- Access expert-led training, developed with input from faith and security specialists, designed to ensure all faith communities achieve a foundational level of security knowledge and principles.
- Be part of the government's Plan for Change, creating safer streets and stronger communities.

#### Who should attend?

- Faith leaders, trustees, facilities managers, volunteers, and anyone with responsibility for security at your place of worship. The training is also suitable for any member of a congregation with an interest in improving security at places of worship.
- How is training delivered?
- Face-to-face or virtual classroom sessions with direct access to security experts.
- E-learning modules available soon via ProtectUK for flexible learning.

The scheme is intended as an additional, fully optional resource that participants may draw on if helpful. It is designed to complement any existing security training that individuals or organisations have already undertaken.

Don't miss this opportunity to upskill your community and safeguard your place of worship. Register now and take the first step towards a safer future. Together, we can support faith communities to stay safe and secure.

If you are interested in participating, please register [here](https://email.cdssds.uk/en-gb/faith-security-training) - <https://email.cdssds.uk/en-gb/faith-security-training>

For further information, please visit the FST webpage, or email [contact@cdssupport.uk](mailto:contact@cdssupport.uk).

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# Inviting



As I said on page one, there a lot of talking going on this Lent, and below is the poster for the first of this year's "Talking About" sessions, which is being hosted jointly by the URC's Faith in Action Team, URC Youth and URC Children.

## Talking About



### **ABC's of LGBTQ+ inclusive language**

A place to start learning about the LGBTQ+ Community

With space for asking of questions about how  
to support Children & Young people


**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 7-8pm**



<https://bit.ly/T4lkingAbout>





For more information about the first Talking About and to book please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talking-about-abcs-of-lgbtq-inclusive-language-tickets-1980361933854?aff=erelexpmlt> and for future events, details can be found here <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/urc-childrens-youth-work-team-17587842081> as well as on the poster a little further in this Briefing.


TALKING ABOUT...



WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 18	LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE
WEDNESDAY MARCH 25	THE FAMILY FILM CLUB RESOURCE
MONDAY APRIL 20	INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP
THURSDAY 28 MAY	TALKING CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM
THURSDAY JUNE 18	BAPTISM & DEDICATION 
TUESDAY JULY 21	CONNECTING WITH UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 21	MAKING THE MOST OF THE ADVENT RESOURCE
MONDAY OCTOBER 19	HOW TO DISAGREE WELL
TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER	CHRISTIANITY AND MENTAL HEALTH 
FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO BOOK YOUR PLACE: <a href="http://WWW.BIT.LY/T4lkingAbout" style="color: white;">WWW.BIT.LY/T4lkingAbout</a>	







## SATURDAY 7 MARCH 2026

9:45am - 4pm  
*Doors open at 9am*



For all those serving children : youth : families : schools

**Victoria Hall**  
Norfolk Street, Sheffield. S1 2JB

**Tickets £15**  
Includes a Subway lunch

For more details and to book, visit:  
[www.joinedupconference.com](http://www.joinedupconference.com)



Keynote speaker, Lisa Campbell  
(from Wonderful Me)

Brought to you by:





# GENERAL ASSEMBLY MODERATOR INVITATION

An invitation from Revd Neil Thorogood, our General Assembly Moderator Elect. Many of you will remember that Neil served in the Halifax group between 1992 and 1999, so it would be great to invite him to revisit God's Own Country.

*Greetings and good wishes for the New Year!*

*The start of 2026 has me looking ahead to taking on the role of Moderator to the General Assembly as Catriona Wheeler completes her term at the Assembly in July 2026. You may have spotted a piece in the last copy of Reform in which Rachel Fitzgerald introduced herself as the PA to the Assembly Moderator and Moderator Elect. Rachel and I would now welcome any invitations from local churches, synods and other groups within the URC who might like me to visit.*

***If you would like to invite me to visit your church or community, please can you fill in this Google form by Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026:***

***<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSec5SZYp5vmd9CIDk3pNtvJxCvxhtxKPPZneK9ZF8dKOIVnUA/viewform?usp=header>***

*If you have any technical issues with the form or wish to seek clarification about anything, you can contact Rachel on [rachel.fitzgerald@urc.org.uk](mailto:rachel.fitzgerald@urc.org.uk)*

*My hope is to continue the practice of previous moderators in being able to offer to share in ways that you feel would be most appropriate in your context. More than anything, I look forward to the amazing opportunity to simply listen across the URC to the stories of our life and the heights and depths we are living through. Perhaps part of my role can be to help us tell our story well and to discover more together of the riches of the Spirit we treasure and share with the world. You might want me to share with your congregation in Sunday worship or preaching at special services. A visit might include sharing in Bible study or wider reflections on matters of faith and the life of the URC in general. I also have a particular interest in the visual arts and poetry as avenues for reflection, spirituality and theology if that was of any interest. The possibilities are genuinely endless and up to you.*

*With my deep thanks for their generosity in letting me have the space, my two congregations have enabled us to draft a calendar of potential weekends from July 2026 to June 2027 ready to fill with your invitations. If it were possible for me to do several things each weekend, alongside Sunday preaching engagements, which allowed me to meet more people and see more things that would be wonderful. If there were mid-week events you wanted me to share in, they can be included in your invitations.*

*After the 28<sup>th</sup> February deadline, Rachel and I will be meeting to see how best to fulfil as many of your invitations as possible. We will want to ensure that I travel widely to all parts of the URC and have as broad a range of visits as possible. Thank you in advance for taking time to consider this letter, and every blessing in all you do.*

*Yours in Christ,*



Neil

THE KING'S WAY CHURCH. WESLEY ST. OSSETT

# LENT LUNCHES

We shall again be having lunches on Mondays during Lent. These will take the form of a modest meal of soup and a roll, followed by a talk given by a visiting speaker.

There is no charge, but there will be a retiring collection for the speaker's charity.

Mon. 23rd Feb THE CONE EXCHANGE (the original re purposing)

Mon. 2nd March THE SHANNON TRUST (literacy in HMP's)

Mon. 9th March SHARED HARMONIES (music for dementia)

Mon. 16th March CHAPLAINCY at FOUNTAINS ABBEY

Mon. 23rd March. ABIGAIL HOUSING (homeless refugees & asylum seekers)

All at 12.30pm until approx. 1.45pm at the King's Way Church Hall.

Some indication of numbers attending would be helpful for catering purposes. If possible, please notify Christine Whitworth. Tel.01924 271554, E Mail

Christine\_whitworth@hotmail.co.uk, but please feel free just to come at the last minute – everyone will be very welcome.



# **Lay Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Weekend**

## **"Choosing and Using the Psalms in Worship"**

at the Wydale Conference Centre, Brompton by Sawdon near Scarborough

<https://www.wydale.org>

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

This will be 17th – 19th July 2026 (Friday teatime to Sunday lunch).

We are very pleased that Dr Alison Gray, Director of Studies, Tutor in Old Testament Language, Literature & Theology at Westminster College, will be our main speaker at the conference.

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

There are 30 places available and you are now invited to register with the office at

[office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk) or 0113 289 8490.

Yours in Christ's service

Kath Lonsdale, Anne Dale, Jill Fletcher, Rod Morrison,

Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders Planning Group

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



# **“I will give you rest, come”**

## **Prepared by Christian women from Nigeria**

### **At 2 pm.**

### **On Friday 6th March 2026**

**at**

## **Westfield United Reformed Church**

**Westfield Lane, Wyke, BD12 9DB**

**Followed by refreshments**

## **All welcome**

# WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

A service for everyone!

## Friday 6 March

*I will give you rest, come*

Nigeria 2026

**Portholme Church  
Selby**

**2pm Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March**

*Tea/coffee and cake  
will be served afterwards*

This event started as the  
Women's Day of Prayer  
but men are warmly  
invited to attend.



**INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION**

24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led

[wwdp.org.uk](http://wwdp.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number 233242



Sharing



# MARCH FOR MERCY 10KM PYJAMA WALK



Above is an invitation to either participate or contribute to the March for Mercy Pyjama Walk. Quite a few folk from the Stag Community Church, Rotherham (Herringthorpe URC) are participating, so either, join them or sponsor them as they walk for this worthy cause.  
In you need more information, contact Revd Matt Stone at [matt.stone@cantab.net](mailto:matt.stone@cantab.net).

# Loving



## Yorkshire Synod Discipleship Development Small Grant Fund 2026

The Synod is pleased to let you all know that it has received confirmation that it has a pot of £4000 to grant to those wishing to apply to the Yorkshire Synod Discipleship Development 2026.

1. Who is eligible to apply? Committed members or adherents, including children and young people, of a congregation within the United Reformed Church who are exercising, or want to exercise, a form of lay ministry or community service whether expressed within or beyond their local church. The DDF is not open to Ministers of Word and Sacraments and CRCWs, as there are other designated funds available for those groups.

2. How much is available? Up to £300 per applicant per calendar year, although the Synod may agree to more than this according to the local context and circumstances.

3. What can this money be used for? The purposes for which the funding is provided are defined by creativity and vocation, in line with the URC's discipleship development strategy. Be bold, take risks. The funding exists to help you to follow Jesus. You might be helped in this by courses (at any level) at any of the URC Resource Centres for Learning or from other learning providers, or you may have ideas on resourcing discipleship development in other people. You may need funds to cover the costs of travel, materials or books. All you have to do is make a case to your local church meeting and submit the application form to the Synod Convenor of Ministries for consideration and, if appropriate, authorisation.

4. How are applications made? Having gained your church meeting's endorsement, applications are to be made on the designated form, well before the spending is due to start. Backdated applications will not normally be accepted. Application forms are obtainable from the Synod Convenor of Ministries via the Synod Office at [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk) and should be sent back for authorisation before being passed to the synod finance office.

5. How are grants paid? Grants authorised by the Convenor of Synod Ministries are paid by a Synod finance officer by reimbursement to you when you have given proof of what you've spent. Contact your Synod Convenor of Ministries for discussion if you need something funded directly on your behalf, rather than waiting for re-imbursement.

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](mailto: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.**





## Community Project Awards

For 28 years, the United Reformed Church's (URC) Community Project Awards have recognised outstanding community projects in local URCs and churches in ecumenical partnerships, that demonstrate the love of God and the mission of the Church by reaching out in many different ways to help the local communities in which they serve.

The partner of the awards for the past 17 years has been <https://www.congregational.co.uk/>. Since the awards began, more than 80 churches have received £150,000 in support. From 2025, the total amount offered to church projects was increased to £10,000.

### 2026 Community Project Awards

This is the last call for entries for the 2026 Community Project Awards. The winning entries will be awarded at the General Assembly on Saturday 4 July, 2026.

Please use the downloadable Word document for your entry, which includes the rules of the competition and this is the link to it <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Community-Project-Awards-entry-form-2026.docx>

The deadline for entries is **Friday 20 February, 2026**, and here is a picture of some of last years winners, which included Yorkshire's own Trinity Church, Wilsden and St Andrew's Roundhay.





# Westminster College

A resource centre for learning

Serving the United Reformed Church

Revd Dr Simon Cross, who serves in the Hull URC Partnership, is instrumental in organising this event due to take place at Westminster College, Cambridge (and online) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March called:

## **The Quiet Revival: Myth, memory or movement?**

Simon writes: *I dare say that you will have either read or at least heard about the report from the Bible Society, last year, which talked about a 'Quiet Revival' in church attendance amongst young people. You may also have seen, read, or heard some of the discussion about that report – maybe even the British Social Attitudes Survey which offered a starkly 'alternative' picture.*

*In order to shed some light on this confused and confusing picture I've asked some clever and well-informed people to take part in a 'symposium' – each of them will present a short paper and there will be room for discussion after each one. As well as some leading social scientists and international researchers I've invited some well-placed church figures, and a resident expert in the history of British revivals. We will also hear, directly, from one of the authors of the original Bible Society report.*

*I'm not saying we're definitely going to get to the bottom of whether there really is a 'quiet revival' going on, or not, (and if there is – whether that's good, bad, or... something else) but we will, at least, have a better sense of what that might mean... I hope.*

*Look at it this way: if nothing else you can have a day with some very clever and interesting people... and me.*

*I'd love you to be able to join us for the event, either in person or – indeed – online (nothing to stop you organising a watch party, by the way). Thanks to a generous grant we've kept the prices as low as possible – the in person ticketing is tiered too, so if you're feeling flush you can chip in a little more to help us make sure we cover the costs. There are only a limited number of 'in person' tickets available (if everyone receiving this email got a ticket, we'd be full) – so if you're keen to be in the room, then my advice is to book early.*

*(And if you're fortunate enough to have a 'training budget' or similar – then this will, I'm sure, qualify. I mean, it might not... I don't really know. To be fair - it's a guess.)*

If you are interested in joining Simon on 21<sup>st</sup> March, between 10am and 6pm there's a booking link here: [Quiet Revival - Westminster College](#) or

<https://www.westminster.cam.ac.uk/quiet-revival> and you can read the original

Quiet Revival report here: [The Quiet Revival: Gen Z leads rise in church attendance](#) or

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/research/quiet-revival>



# Free to Believe Conference 2026

**‘Come help us dream your future into birth’**

**Speakers:** Ian Bradley, Jo Clifford, Graham Adams

**Worship leader:** Nicola Robinson

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***Wednesday 17 to Friday 19 June 2026***

Highgate Conference Centre,  
Northamptonshire

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£275 (Same price as 2024)

Download a booking form at [freetobelieve.org.uk](https://freetobelieve.org.uk)

or email [bookings@freetobelieve.org.uk](mailto:bookings@freetobelieve.org.uk)



For more information, please visit the Free to Believe website at

<https://freetobelieve.org.uk/conferences.html>



## NEWS FROM THE DENOMINATION

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

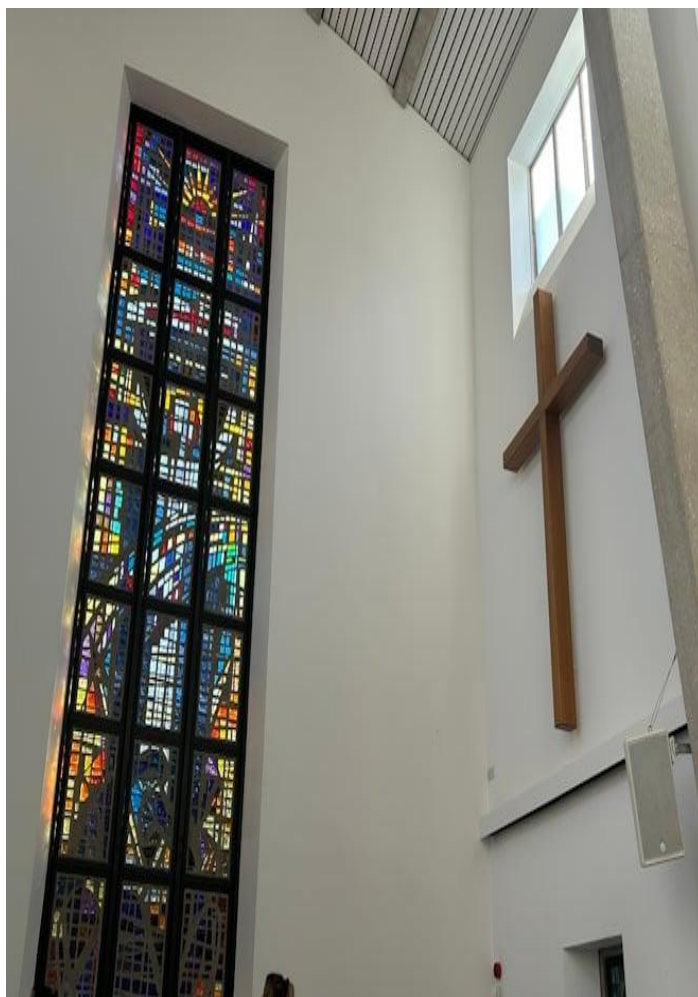
To receive this popular newsletter, please visit the <https://urc.org.uk/news-updates-sign-up-form/> page on the URC website and follow the links. If you just want to dip in and catch up on what is going on, that's fine and you can read and print recent editions of our e-newsletter by visiting the [URC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

### Submit your photographs for the 2027 URC Calendar

**The 2027 United Reformed Church Calendar is titled 'Transparent as glass' and will feature stained glass windows and glass sculptures from our churches and Local Ecumenical Partnerships.**

Glass has been used in churches since the 7th century for visual storytelling and religious education, acting as colourful "picture books" for congregations to learn Bible stories and for Christian teaching. Stained glass also creates a sacred atmosphere by focussing light for worship and enhancing our churches' architectural beauty.


We invite you to send in your photos of large and small windows, as well as any sculptures made from, or including, glass. Please include the name of the church and the photographer. You can email your image(s) to the URC Press Office, [pressoffice@urc.org.uk](mailto:pressoffice@urc.org.uk).



Please note that for all photos submitted, the photographer is granting the URC permission to use the photographs in print and digitally. The deadline for submitting your photos is **June 5 2026**.

The calendar will be available on the URC Bookshop from August and is once again generously supported by [Edwards Insurance](#).

The Safeguarding team 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](mailto:safeguarding.1and4@urc.org.uk) will be answered within 24 hours.



## Zoom

### Safeguarding Training

### Yorkshire and Northern Synods 2026

Please click the links on each date to book or email [safeguarding.1and4@urc.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding.1and4@urc.org.uk).

#### Intermediate


[Tuesday 17th March 2026 – 7pm-9.30pm](#)  
[Tuesday 12th May 2026 – 10am-12.30pm](#)  
[Wednesday 22nd July 2026 – 7pm -9.30pm](#)  
[Thursday 17th September 2026 – 1pm-3.30pm](#)  
[Saturday 5th December 2026 – 10am-12.30pm](#)

#### Advanced

This will run over 2 sessions both will last 2 hours. You must attend both

[Tuesday 14th April 2026 7pm Part 1, Tuesday 21st April 2026 7pm Part 2](#)  
[Thursday 20th August 2026 10am Part 1, Thursday 27th August 2026 10am Part 2](#)

Please email [carrie.kaunda@urc.org.uk](mailto:carrie.kaunda@urc.org.uk) with any questions.



www.urc.org.uk

## WANTED!!

The Children's and Youth Work Committee of the Yorkshire Synod is in need of a new Convenor, to succeed Mr Dan Morrell who has filled this role for a good few years now. He steps down from the role at our next Synod meeting, to be held on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2026 at West Park URC in Harrogate. This means we are looking for a successor to Dan, so if you are interested in this role, or you may know of someone who would be ideal to help guide the Children's and Youth Work side of our Synod life, please contact the Synod Clerk at [clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk) for more details and for a more detailed job description.



## LISTED BUILDINGS NEWS

We have a message from the Synod's Property Officer, Jane Bunyan, which is of interest to all of you who worship in and care for the Synod's Listed Buildings.

*Dear Friends*

*Firstly, thank you for everything that you do to maintain the buildings you care for and I need to remind everyone that ALL buildings within the curtilage of your grounds are listed, not just the bits that appear on the listing with Historic England! This includes church halls and any outbuildings etc. If you are not sure please check with me in the office, especially as the Synod Property committee should always be advised of works to Listed buildings.*

*Secondly, if you have done any works on your buildings (including architects fees etc) in 2025, you can claim the VAT back on these up to a value of £25,000. This needs claimed before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, and I suggest doing so sooner rather than later, in case the pot runs out. The link to start that claim is this one <https://listed-places-of-worship-grant.dcms.gov.uk/>. Several United Reformed Churches in our synod would have been eligible for more in 2025 if the cap had not been in place, as would major historic buildings such as York Minister, or St Michael-le-Belfry in York, Ripon Cathedral and Leeds Minster.*

*Thirdly and most importantly, this scheme is **NOT** being renewed in 2026. It is being replaced with a new grant funding system and some detail on it can be found here <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2026-01-22/hlws1266>.*

*It is called the **PLACES OF WORSHIP RENEWAL FUND** and is the result of successful lobbying by many heritage organisations who feared the loss of relief on the work done to historic buildings and it does indicate that the government acknowledges the importance of these listed buildings.*

*Please do get in touch if I can offer any more help or support.*

*With best wishes*

*Jane Bunyan*

*Synod Property Officer*

## FIRE SAFETY

Jane Bunyan, our Synod Property Officer [property@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto: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](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-your-small-non-domestic-premises-safe-from-fire) 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.





Limitless Festival is a vibrant summer gathering for young people, featuring dynamic ministry and a packed programme of activities, sports, events, seminars, workshops, and late night venues.

As God breaks out in our lives, we breakout into the world! So what does it look like to represent Jesus through mission, justice, social action and evangelism?

Are you 11 or over and under 18, involved in the United Reformed Church and interested in going to this great event?

For more details contact:

Rev Andrew Willetts [mdoandrew@urcwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:mdoandrew@urcwestmidlands.org.uk) 07828195831 or

Rev Sally Willetts [mdosally@urcwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:mdosally@urcwestmidlands.org.uk) 07828110639

We book as a group; our group information can be found here:



# And Finally

## The Wonders of Withernsea

Debra Milnes, the Church Secretary at Withernsea URC contacted us recently with a report of what they are doing in their community. Withernsea is a small place right on the edge of Yorkshire Synod and its great to share their news of how a small church can have a big impact in its community. Here is what she said:



*"Withernsea URC is a small church set in a seaside town with 4 serving and 1 retired Elders and 11 members. We have our Breaking of Bread Service Weekly with a time of prayer beforehand for those who wish to attend, we also have a weekly Bible Study Group, Weekly Prayer Meeting. There is a fellowship group (Fairhaven) every Tuesday for adults and we meet for Seated Aerobics each Friday. Both are open to the church family as well as those from outside of the church.*

*We are part of Withernsea Churches Together who are busy in the town with monthly services in three of the Residential Homes for the elderly. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and chat with those who are unable to get to church. We also support the Messy Gazebo (Children's Work) which is set up and manned by members of Churches Together during the festival weekends in the town, and is enjoyed by our folks as we do not have children at our Sunday Services.*

*The Holderness Gazette is our local weekly paper and the town's churches take it in turn to write the 'Thought of the Week Column' once each month with our thought being printed every 3rd week in the month. Another wonderful opportunity to share our faith with those outside.*

*We have a Church Pantry with the food being donated by the church folks, with support from the Anglican church who collect food, and make small monetary gifts to support the project. Each foodbag has enough food to last for three days (similar to that of Trussell Trust), we also provide toiletries, nappies and wash powder when available. We take referrals from the Children's Centre, Citizens Advice, Social Workers, Church Oversight, other Churches in the Town.*

*Pet Food Donations are gifted to us via another charity in the town who pass on to us items which they cannot use (damaged packs etc) which we pass on to those who struggle to feed their pets.*



David Milnes & Lesley Kirby collecting food from Fairshare Partner TESCO

*Fairtrade Project – We are matched with Tesco – Withernsea who provide us with food stuffs, flowers, plants, clothing, toys, cards, seeds and much more. The food is collected twice weekly, sorted and delivered the same evening with 7-10 bags most weeks but can rise to 17-20 bags. The deliveries are made to families who are struggling we are happy to accept self-referral as well as referral from outside agencies. Non-food items are donated to other charities such as Shoebox Appeal, Smalls for all. With seeds going to the town gardening group.*

*We are keen to support a number of charities including LIFT, Tear Fund, Leprosy Mission, Christian Aid, Shoe Box Appeal, MAF, and make donations as emergencies occur. We also collect new baby items and make up Baby Packs to be given to new mothers who are in need. We also make a selection of Christmas Packs for new mothers. We have folks who knit baby hats and canula sleeves for the Baby Unit and NICU as they are always in need.*

*We are also a keen “ECO” Church but perhaps not in the way many churches think of as eco. We have recycle bins in the church office and kitchen to encourage recycling. We also collect and deliver thin plastics to our local supermarket. We collect milk bottle tops, stamps, postcards, good quality ladies’ foundation garments to support charities.*

*We have a rail for good second-hand clothing and footwear, where donations can be left, and can be purchased for a small donation. We also have a supply of clothing and household items which can be gifted to anyone in great need of support.*

*We have a Jigsaw swap and books which can be taken for a small donation or swapped.*

*Our church garden houses Bird Feeders and Insect Hotels, with the bird food donated by a couple of the elders. Our caretaker has planted fruit trees, with the idea that if they fruit, it can be taken by anyone who is in need. We also have a compost bin at the rear of the car park.*

*We are a small church but desire to further the Lord’s work in Withernsea. To God be the glory.”*

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**If you have a good news story from your part of the Synod or something that you feel reflects the work of Synod and which inspires others as we move into 2026, 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](#), at [United Reformed Church in Yorkshire - Home | Facebook](#) and [Wilderness URC Yorkshire - Home | Facebook](#), the YouTube page at [URC Yorkshire - YouTube](#) and the Twitter (X) page at [URC in Yorkshire \(@URCYorkshire\) / Twitter](#).