Sharing
Building
Partnering
Loving
Inviting

Yorkshire Synod Briefing

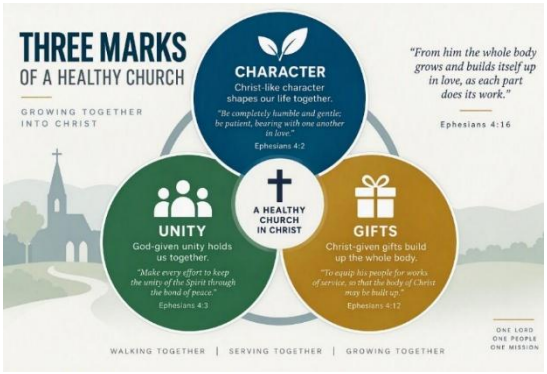
Number 184

The United Reformed Church Yorkshire

5th November 2026

AUTUMN SYNOD SPECIAL – Part Two

TALKING MONEY, TALKING MISSION



Thanks are in order for those from around Synod who met up for the second part of this autumn's meetings last Thursday (29th October). Although we all met on Zoom from wherever we were in and around Yorkshire, the fellowship that was created at the in-person meeting at Moldgreen was still evident. In it we were able to look at some of the "drier" aspects of Synod life, in particular Safeguarding and the Synod's Budget. These topics may be dry, but they are extremely important as they underpin all that Synod does to support all its churches. Those three marks which were expanded upon by our Training and Mission Enabler, Jon Steel, at Moldgreen earlier in the month was evident as Matt Knowles encouraged us to be more proactive in our engagement with the safeguarding process and Revd Simon Copley encouraged us to be generous with our gifts and resources.

It was a poignant meeting as it will be the last one at which Simon will grace us with his wisdom as he stands down as Treasurer at the end of the year. The role is key to ensuring that the synod's mission is rooted in sustainable resources and as yet no successor has been identified. If you would like to offer your gifts to Synod in this way, or if you would like to offer a name, please get in touch with either the Clerk at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk or the Moderator at moderator@urcyorkshire.org.uk.

November and early December sees the last round of the regular Synod committee meetings, so please hold the your committee members in your prayers. Not only that, but we have our final ministerial induction of the year this month. On Saturday 14th November at 2.00pm, Knaresborough URC will host the welcoming service for Revd Mark Elvin. Mark joins us from East Anglia and will be looking after Knaresborough and Bilton Grange URCs as well as having a Synod role in developing "Leading Your Church Into Growth across our area. Again I ask that you hold Mark in your prayers as he embarks on this further step in his ministerial journey.

Finally, you may see the odd Christmas Tree in this issue. Fear not, it's not a full on Christmas Issue, you'll have to await the December issue for that, but as you will read, Norristhorpe URC are leading the way with their Warm Spaces and the hosting of the Clifton and Lightcliffe band at the end of the month. If you are planning anything leading up to Christmas, please let me know and I'll add it to the Briefing and try and get it on the website.

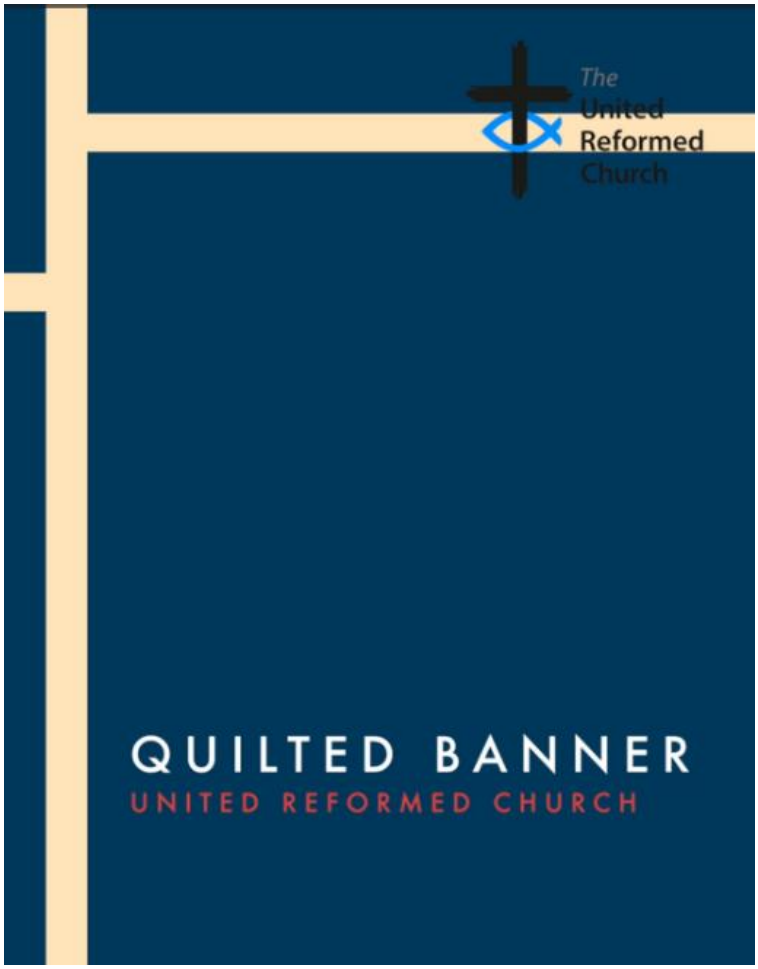
If you have any news of welcoming people into Church, stories of celebration and mission, please let me know at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and I'll showcase it in the next edition, due out on the website only on 19th November 2026.

Tim Crossley

Yorkshire Synod Clerk

Inviting

The Ever Joyful Banner Project



Hopefully by now, every church in Synod will have received a special envelope from our own Revd Samantha Sheehan, who is currently serving as the Chaplain to this year's General Assembly Moderator. She is organising a denominational wide project called the "Ever Joyful" patchwork banner. You could almost call it the Great URC Sewing Bee……

She is already very grateful for your support in this and has already received a number of emails from folk requesting their packs following the article in the URC News Update earlier this month.

The packs have been put together with everything a congregation needs to get started - the fabric square, instructions and return envelope – and each church's pack will be sent to the Synod Office.

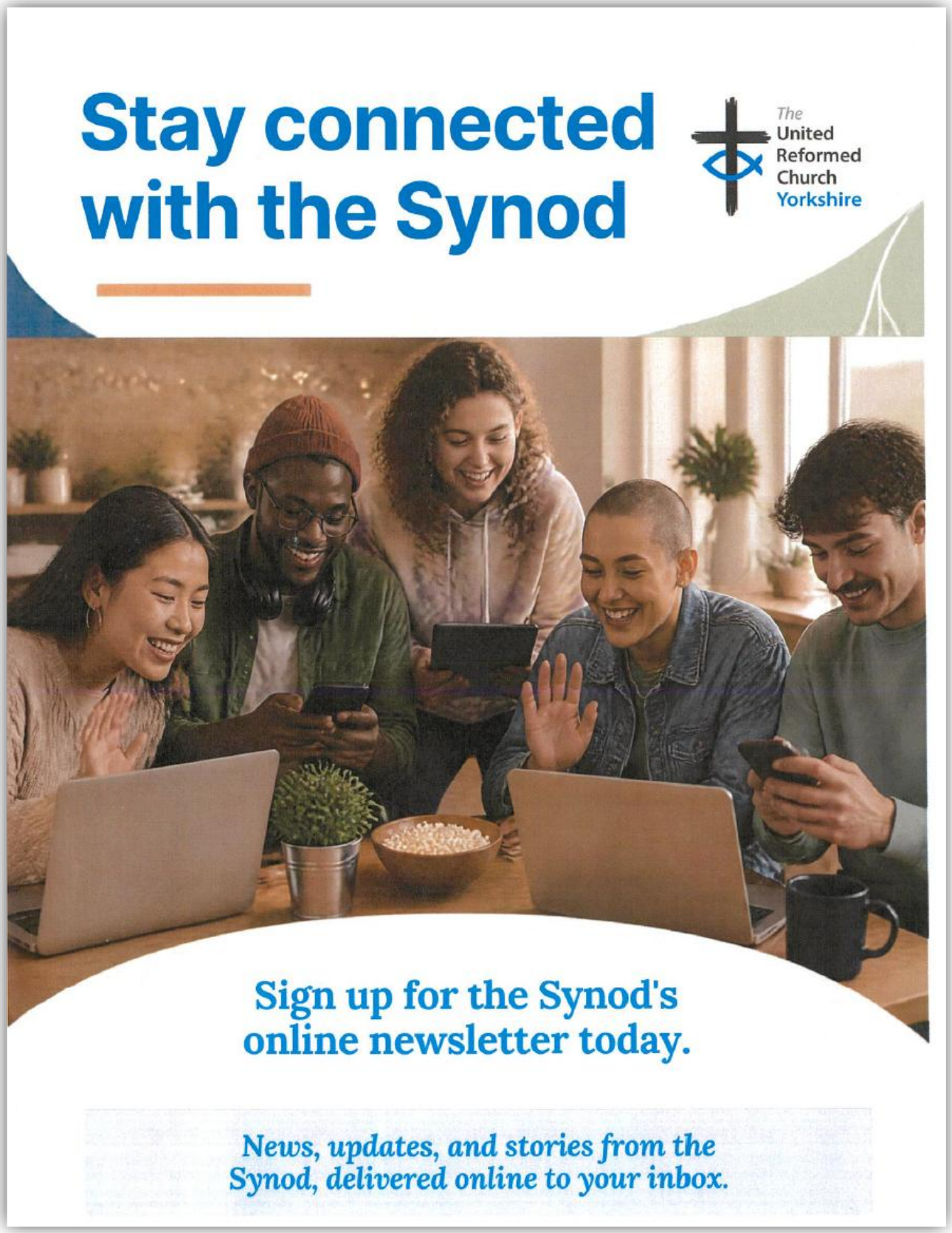
Thank you to all those who collected their envelopes (and other church's envelopes) at our Saturday Synod meeting on October 10th at Moldgreen URC in Huddersfield. Those that were not collected have been posted out to the relevant church secretary so there shouldn't be an excuse not to be aware of the project.

At the meeting we showed a short film (3 minutes) to explain the project and which invites local congregations to share in decorating a fabric square. If you missed it, or if you want to watch it again, these are the links to this video:

Ever Joyful or https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C30CqIh6_Td7sISGfUICxkARzSD9jJBt/view to download from a Google Drive or from YouTube here Ever Joyful or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnr9Vcn1OJc

We have given the deadline of 1st December for the patches to be returned, so Samantha and the Ever Joyful Banner team are very grateful to Northern Synod for being willing to receive them all. If folk miss this deadline, squares can be received up until the Assembly Executive meeting at the beginning of February. Although they do wish for as many as possible to come back by December giving them as much time as possible to create the banner before General Assembly 2027.

For more information please contact Samantha at Rev.S.Sheehan@gmail.com



To sign up, all you have to do is visit the Yorkshire Synod website at
https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/
scroll to the foot of the page and fill in your name and e-mail address.
It's as simple as that!!



Wednesday mornings 10:30-12:30



Starting 28th October 2026



Norristhorpe Warm Space



At

Norristhorpe United Reformed Church

All welcome to join us for a natter, meet new people, knit, read, play games or sit in peace...all with a free cuppa and biscuits.

Pop in or call 07745209270 for more info.

Norristhorpe united Reformed Church, Norristhorpe Lane WF15 7AR

Norristhorpe United Reformed Church
Norristhorpe Lane, Norristhorpe, LIVERSEDGE. West Yorkshire. WF15 7AN.
www.space.urc.org.uk

Clifton & Lightcliffe BAND

Let's get ready for Christmas



Saturday 28th November 2pm.

Tickets: £6.00 including refreshments after the concert.
Available from Linda and Janet
Or pay at the door
FURTHER DETAILS CALL: 07891979921

Warm Welcomes at Norristhorpe

It is all go at Norristhorpe this Autumn, as their welcoming spirit is inviting us into a very warming space. As you'll see, they have already begun the Church's regular autumn and winter Wednesday Warm Space programme. Pop by to say hello and enjoy the welcome that is on offer from 10.30am each week.

And, they are hosting the Clifton & Lightcliffe Band again. This local Brass Band will offer their "Let's Get Ready For Christmas" concert on the afternoon of Saturday 28th November, so check you diaries and head off the Norristhorpe for a cracking concert.

Ministry Enquirers

Learn What God might be asking of you.

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

7th November on Zoom,
9.30am – 12.30pm

The United Reformed Church



The United Reformed Church

Leading your Church into Growth

The United Reformed Church Leading Your Church Into Growth Conference

Highgate House, Northampton
23rd - 25th November

Contact Jon Steel

tme@urcyorkshire.org.uk

£180 per delegate including materials & accommodation.

Contact your Synod for funding options.





Contact megancyp@urcyorkshire.org.uk to book your place!
https://urc.org.uk/.../chil.../urc-youth/urc-youth-assembly/

Lay Worship Leaders' Weekend

"Date for the Diary"

9th – 11th July 2027

(Friday teatime to Sunday lunch)

at Wydale Conference Centre, Brompton by Sawdon near Scarborough www.wydale.org

We are very pleased that Revd John Proctor has agreed to be our main speaker at the annual 2027 conference.

Look out for theme information in January 2027.

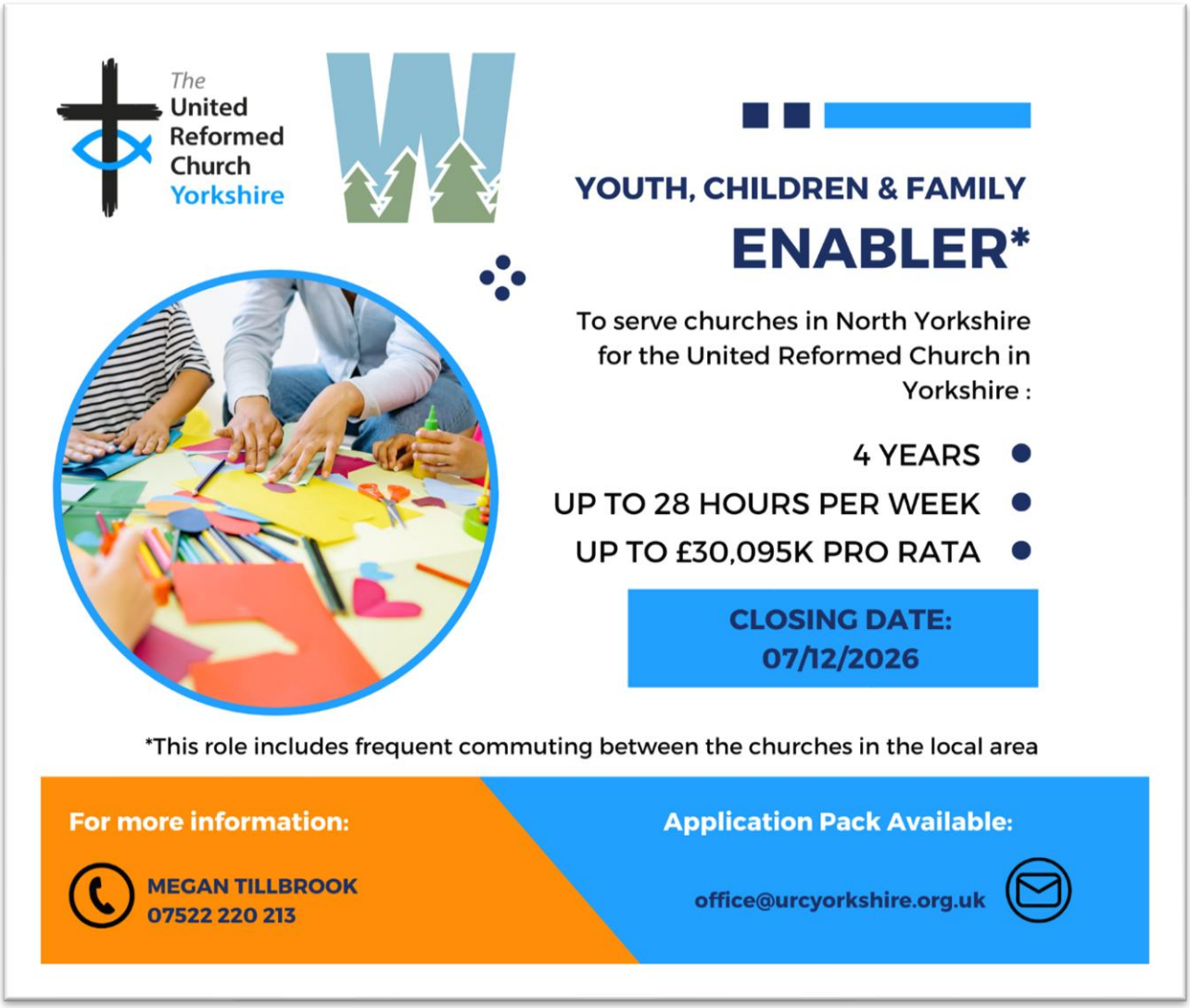
This weekend will again be paid for by Synod and grants so you will only need to cover your travel costs.

To register your place, contact:
office@urcyorkshire.org.uk or 0113 289 8490.

For any queries, contact Kath at
kath.lonsdale@outlook.com
01274 315 203 or 07759 525 936

The United Reformed Church Yorkshire Synod

Building



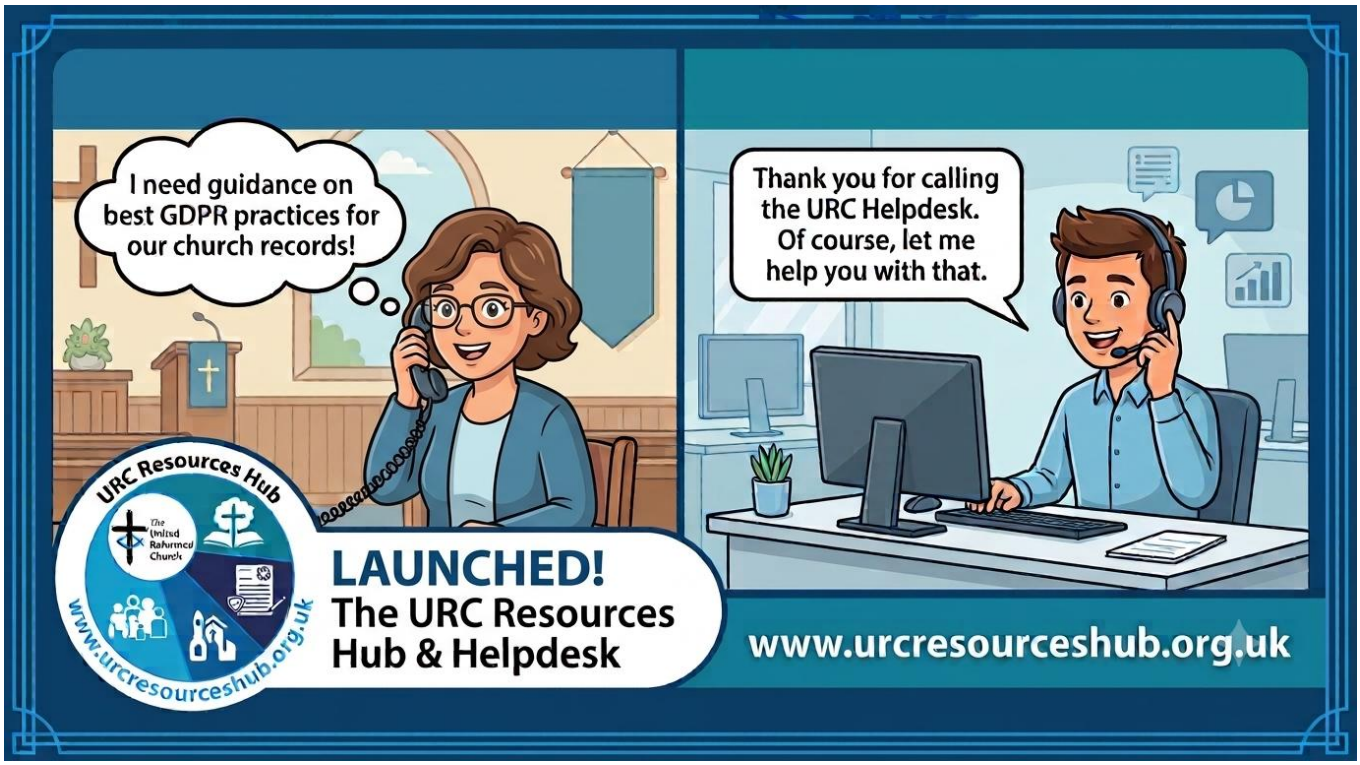
!!! WANTED !!!



The Synod is also looking for people to join some of our key groups, especially in the Property, the Financial Resources and Children and Young People's committees. These bodies guide the direction of Synod and without them Synod would find it hard to function. If you are able to take up a call to help Synod out, please contact the Synod Clerk at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk for more information.

Sharing

Yes, It's Here:
The URC's Resources Hub



One of the first roll outs from the Church Life Review is this brand new Resources Hub for all our churches and volunteers to use. There are two ways into it, through the URC website, or directly using this link: https://urcresourceshub.org.uk/. Please take a bit of time to have a look, and if you have any feedback or any suggestions for what you may want it to hold, please contact me at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and I'll pass on your feedback.

There will be more resources being uploaded to the resource over the next few months. The next tranche will be documents covering governance and finance, so keep an eye out on announcements here, in the URC's regular News Update circulars and in Reformed magazine.

It's not too late to ask that the team behind the hub add items which you may want. If you know of any resources which you feel may benefit all our churches, drop the Clerk a line at clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk and he'll contact the team putting the Resource Hub together.



Leeds URC Partnership Prayers

Thursday 5th November, 7:30pm.
A short time to pray together by reading the Bible and sharing the joys and challenges in our lives, churches, communities and world.

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

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 one, that's fine and you can read and print recent editions of our e-newsletter by visiting the **URC News Update** page at https://urc.org.uk/urc-news-update/ .



Book ahead to meet 2027-2028 General Assembly Moderator

The Revd Dr Susan Durber, General Assembly Moderator Elect, hopes to visit congregations, communities, projects and events across the URC throughout her year in office, July 2027-2028. If you would like to invite Susan to make a visit, please complete **this dedicated Google form** https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeBCxYBjjiH3Hi36Rf2luwqMpnCsri6_1OgMx7XkDVBQjiI9w/viewform?&dm_i=2JB1,24666,59BX7G,7URKM,1,0,0,0&pli=1 by 12 January 2027. For any queries, please **email Susan's PA, Rachel Fitzgerald** rachel.fitzgerald@urc.org.uk. Invitations to ecumenical gatherings, LEPs, or where there is a minister who has come to the URC on a certificate of eligibility are particularly welcomed.

The **Milton Mount Foundation** https://www.miltonmountfoundation.org.uk/ is looking for a new trustee from the URC. The advert is on the URC website: https://urc.org.uk/jobs/
Please go down to the Volunteer Positions section to find the ad.

Loving

World Day of Prayer Preparations

A group from the wider Churches Together in Wyke attended the World Day of Prayer preparation day for the Huddersfield area at Moldgreen URC last Saturday, 31st October. The group, comprising members from Westfield URC, St Mary's Anglican church and Wyke Moravian church had a wonderful day together preparing for the 2027 World Day of Prayer due to take place on 5th March.



Revd Sarah Fitton led the day and the Moldgreen URC folk gave us homemade soup and a sweet as well as scrumptious scones. The President, Louise Bowes (pictured below at the lectern) had come across from her home in Northern Ireland and brought greetings from the national committee.



The World Day of Prayer group is a global, women-led ecumenical movement which encourages women to plan ecumenically for the World Day of Prayer, promoting prayerful living and worship for men, women and young people and helping raise awareness of the lives and concerns of others throughout the world, especially those who write the service.



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

For more information, please have a look at the website at https://www.wwdp.org.uk/ or visit the facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/WorldDayOfPrayerEWNI/?locale=en_GB

Partnering

Lay Worker (Mission & Community)

Keld-in-Swaledale, North Yorkshire
Full Time (35 hours per week) | Fixed Term: 3.5 Years | 37.5k per year

Keld URC, working in partnership with the URC Northern Synod and Lady Hewley Trust is seeking an enthusiastic and committed Christian Lay Worker to develop and lead mission, outreach and faith-based community involvement across Upper Swaledale. The successful candidate will develop innovative projects, retreats, youth and family activities, prayer and discipleship opportunities, environmental initiatives, and partnerships with local churches and community groups. We are looking for someone who:

- Is a practicing Christian with a passion for mission and community engagement.
- Has experience of working with volunteers, churches or community groups.
- Has excellent communication and organisational skills.
- Can work independently and collaboratively.
- Holds a UK driving licence and has access to a car.

This is a unique opportunity to help grow Christian witness and build lasting impact in one of the most beautiful parts of the country.

There is a genuine occupational requirement for the postholder to be a practicing Christian in accordance with Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010.

The successful applicant will be expected to live within reasonable proximity of Keld to enable effective delivery of the role.

For further enquiries and application procedure, please contact Rev Nadene Snyman at:-

teesandswaleurc@gmail.com

Closing Date: 14th December 2026
Interview Date: To be arranged

Lighting the Way Together for a shared future



Inter Faith Week runs from Sunday 8 to Sunday 15 November 2026, and this year's theme is *'Lighting the way for a shared future'*. The week opens on Remembrance Sunday, so it begins with the nation's memory of sacrifice and its hope for peace.

The theme draws on the symbolism of light across faiths and traditions, and the Hindu festival of lights, Diwali falls on the opening day. It also reflects on the life of an amazing interfaith leader: Mohandas Gandhi, better known to us as Mahatma Gandhi who wrote about the impact of the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes in his autobiography, "The Story of My Experiments with Truth". He recalled that he first read them in the 1890s while living in Durban, describing how the text affected him when he first read the Sermon on the Mount. Those teachings, including "turn the other cheek" and offering no violent resistance to evil, went "straight to my heart". Gandhi frequently noted that the verses filled him with bliss and had the power to "quench my agony of soul"..

Light is a familiar image for Christians too. In John 8:12, Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world," and that claim is echoed in the Advent wreath, in the Paschal candle and in the call for every Christian to be a light in the world. Sharing this imagery with neighbours of other faiths can deepen their understanding and enrich our own.

The organisers describe the theme as a celebration of hope and also a call to action, inviting people of all faiths, beliefs and backgrounds to take part.

The belief behind the week is that, even in challenging times, communities can come together to build understanding, trust and friendship. Those are the same habits that ecumenical work depends on: patient listening, hospitality and a readiness to learn.

For CTE Member Churches and Churches Together Groups, the week offers a few simple starting points:

- Invite a neighbouring mosque, gurdwara, synagogue or temple to a shared meal or an informal conversation.
- Include a prayer or reflection on light in a service, or hold a joint evening of music and readings.
- Work with local schools, since there is a **hub of free resources for schools** marking the week.
- Join a community service project alongside people of other faiths.

None of these actions ask us to dilute our convictions. Ecumenical and inter faith work have long taught that real encounter comes from being honest about who we are while staying curious about others.

However you mark Inter Faith Week, we encourage every church and Churches Together group to do something this year, even if it is only a conversation across a fence or a card to a local faith leader.

Visit the Inter Faith Week website for more information and resources.

Explore *'Reaching Out in Love'* the Interreligious Dialogue toolkit from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

For more Inter-faith and Racial Justice material, please contact the Synod's Racial Justice Advocate, Judy Rogers, via the office e-mail at office@urcyorkshire.org.uk.

And Finally

NEW LOOS FOR PORTHOLME

Portholme Church in Selby have always tried to be a "welcoming church" but they have realised that, for some people, they are not a church that "*welcomes, serves and enables all to experience belonging*".

The reason? The toilets!!

The toilets are well below the standards expected today. Back in 1984 when the church was built they would no doubt have met the accessibility standards expected at that time. However, in today's more enlightened age, they have realised they need to meet people's needs so much better. People of all ages and abilities interact together in the building, and they want to be more attentive to their needs and to show how much they care about everyone by providing toilet facilities which are fully accessible to everyone.

This is very expensive! Their members have been very generous but they still need to do some fundraising to be able to make our church as welcoming to ALL as we would like it to be.

So this year they have decided to organise an event which is a little different from a Christmas Fayre or one of their usual Cafeterias. On the afternoon of Saturday 21st November, we are holding a "Tea in the Afternoon" event and this will take place from 1.00pm to 4:30pm.

They hope that you can support this event. To entice you in they will have their usual stalls with hand crafted items, their popular Book Stall will be open, as will a Tombola and a card stall where you can find some really nice Christmas cards and general greetings cards.

Refreshments will include cakes and pastries together with tea & coffee with a free top-up! Please make a note of the date so that you can join them at any time that afternoon. They would love to see friends, both "old" and "new", from all across the URC Yorkshire Synod.



If you have a good news story from your part of the Synod or something that you feel reflects the work of Synod as we move into the last two months of 2026, or even things that are to happen in 2027, 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 **United Reformed Church in Yorkshire - Home | Facebook** and **Wilderness URC Yorkshire - Home | Facebook**, and the YouTube page at **URC Yorkshire - YouTube**