

EMURCE No: 309 – 6th February 2020
Edited this week by: Natalie Gibbs

At the end of January URC Youth held our annual Youth Assembly, this year based on the theme Common Ground: Where Is It? The URC Youth Executive were keen to try something new this year and chose to replace the key note speakers with panel discussions. During the weekend we looked at three challenging, yet very important, topics – these were politics, sex, faith and relationships and war and peace. It was so encouraging to see the young people engage and discuss openly about topics that are still considered taboo, and are rarely talked about in churches. The young people were encouraged to find the common ground in our differing opinions, learning to respect everyone's views but still finding a way forward as a community of faith.

During our year as Moderator of URC Youth Assembly we were encouraged to see just how much the wider church respected and valued the voices and opinions of young people. During our business sessions at Youth Assembly, young people were once again given the opportunity to raise the issues and topics they're passionate about, and this year that included resolutions about the environment, recognising the climate emergency, issues of equality and looking forward to the future as the URC turns 50. Thank you to everyone who attended Youth Assembly, to those who supported Katie and I over the past year and to those who remembered us in your prayers. I have mixed feelings about finishing my term as Moderator – in some ways it is sad to move on, however, we had a wonderful year and we wish Reuben and Jo and this year's exec all the best as they start their journey.

Natalie Gibbs, Synod Youth Executive

PEOPLE

We regret to inform you of the death of **Reverend Margaret Howard** on 2nd January 2020. Margaret was latterly a resident at a care home in Ilfracombe and died in hospital in Barnstaple: she had not been well for several weeks.

Margaret served at Staplehurst 1961 - 70; Ilfracombe 1970 - 83; Spalding & Boston 1983 - 92; Hospital Chaplaincy 1993 - 97; Interim moderator Muddiford 2007 - 09.

A service of thanksgiving was held at 11.30 am on Monday 3rd February at Emmanuel Church in Ilfracombe.

MODERATOR'S INDUCTION SERVICE

Revd Geoffrey Clarke will be inducted as Moderator of East Midlands Synod on Saturday 16th May 2020 at ChristChurch Grantham. The service will be at 3.00pm. Revd Nigel Uden, one of the Assembly Moderators, will preside. Invitations will be sent out shortly.

CENTRAL URC, DERBY IS MOVING TO NEW PREMISES

Do you know of anyone or any organisations who may be interested in:

- 104 words copies of 'The Source' books 1 and 2 and Music copies of books 1 and 2.
- 134 words copies of 'Let's Praise'.

If you can help please email Cathy: cathy@cathyjim.co.uk or mob: 07986 450580

FLOWER FESTIVAL

Duston United Reformed Church, Main Road, Duston NN5 6JF invite you to their Annual Flower Festival and Church Anniversary on 29th February and 1 March. This year our theme is 'Around Great Britain' when 25 Flower Arrangements will depict different towns or cities in Great Britain. Refreshments will be served all day on the Saturday when we are open from 10am until 4.30pm and Teas will be served on the Sunday afternoon when we are open from 2pm, to 4.30pm.

ECO-CHURCH SILVER AWARD FOR ST ANDREW'S CHESTERFIELD

St Andrew's has achieved an Eco-Church Silver Award for its achievements in becoming an environmentally friendly church and congregation.

The story began 10 years ago when we transferred gas and electricity supplies to Ecotricity and undertook a detailed survey of the premises to identify ways to improve insulation and use electricity more efficiently. This proved a lengthy and in some cases expensive process, as all the cavity walls were insulated, roofs were fitted with insulating panels and lights were converted to LEDs. We are grateful to Synod for grants to help with this work.

The church garden has flowers attractive to bees and insects, unused corners where bugs and hedgehogs flourish and hedges where blackbirds nest. Last year we planted a rowan tree as a demonstration of our commitment to addressing climate change. We added bird feeders and roosting nests to the existing trees.

In worship services, the newsletter and on the website, we have focused on environmental issues, climate change and Christian responsibility to care for the natural world. We are keeping track of the church's carbon footprint and encourage our members to do the same for their own homes and life style. One of our young members took part in the Extinction Rebellion demonstrations in London and reported back excitedly on her meeting with Greta Thunberg. We purchase environmentally friendly cleaning materials in bulk. The company supplying our new photocopier, hearing from us about Eco-Church, was keen to demonstrate its carbon neutral manufacture and highly efficient electricity use.

We know how difficult it will be to maintain the high standard we have set ourselves and to move forward into new areas. We pray for the Holy Spirit to guide us along this green pathway.

WORSHIP LEADING TRAINING AT CENTRAL URC - 29th Feb 10.30am – 3.30pm

All are very welcome, but numbers would be helpful. Please contact Judith Tatton-Schiff if you are planning to attend: minister@derbywesturc.com

The idea is to offer confidence-boosting and encouragement:

- to those who already lead worship
- to those who think they might like to
- to those who really don't want to lead themselves, but would like to know enough in order to effectively delegate others!

We'll do some simple teaching, sharing stories and opinions and, for those who want to, having a little go! This is definitely NOT a preaching course (although we can organise one for those interested in the future, if need be.)

I also hope that the day will give us an opportunity to identify what you would like next or in the future!

LIVING LENT - CREATING A CLIMATE OF CHANGE

Living Lent is back! Responding to the climate crisis is not just an activity, but a lifestyle. That's why during Lent, 'Living Lent' invites us to make a commitment towards change.

During Lent 2020, we are invited to journey together towards radical change in our relationship with all of God's Creation. During Lent, could you for example:

Go single-use plastic free? Go vegetarian or vegan (perhaps for 2 days a week)? Commit to using alternative forms of transport, like walking more? Reduce your electricity consumption perhaps by 10%?

There is an option to gather as a dispersed community, to explore the difference personal lifestyle change really makes in response to a global crisis

Daily Reflections – Starting on Ash Wednesday, this year's daily reflections will be written by guest contributors from across the Church. Each day will explore how our faith and concern for creation connect: though the Bible, through art and through poetry.

Celebration Sunday – The world we are seeking to care for is full of wonder and beauty. We are encouraged to celebrate on Sundays, by taking time for an activity which will help us to appreciate God's creativity.

For more information go to the Living Lent website: <https://livinglent.org/living-lent-2020/>

GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVE

One of our representatives to the URC General Assembly has had to withdraw. We need one more person, minister or lay, to join our team.

General Assembly will be held at the University of Aston in Birmingham on 10-13th July. If this interests you, please let Chris Willis at the Synod Office know as soon as possible.

WALKING THE WAY

With Revs. Sally and Andrew Willett

A free event exploring the Holy Habits

'Making more disciples'

& 'Prayer'

@ Christ Church URC, Barbara Road, Leicester LE3 2EB.

on Saturday 7th March 2020

'Making more disciples': 10.30 - 12.30, 'Prayer': 1.30 - 3.30.

Come to both or just one!

Bring a car load from your church! Arrivals from 10.00am, bring a packed lunch.

To book and give numbers contact Hannah Holmes at the Synod Office: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

More info: www.praytheway.org.uk/events or andrew.era@gear.org.uk

THY KINGDOM COME RESOURCE EVENING

The period of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost known as Thy Kingdom Come, is a growing worldwide movement of prayer, spreading across the Christian denominations in the UK as a valuable aid and inspiration to pray for revival of churches and people.

Various promotional and resource evenings are run by the TKC national team and held throughout the UK and Stamford Methodist Church are pleased to be able to share their premises for such an evening on Monday 23rd March from 7pm.

The event will (re)introduce the basics of Thy Kingdom Come 2020 and give access to resources to inspire churches to engage with prayer during this period.

Booking is through Eventbrite at www.eventbrite.com/e/thy-kingdom-come-promotion-evening-tickets-92345876001

MAYFLOWER 400 CELEBRATION SERVICE

Members of Synod are warmly invited to a service to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower Pilgrims' voyage at Gainsborough United Reformed Church at 2pm on Saturday 13 June 2020. The service will be followed by a tea. Gainsborough United Reformed Church was built as a memorial to John Robinson, known as the 'pastor of the Pilgrims.'

Last year the church opened a Mayflower Room which contains an all-age exhibition about the history of the Mayflower Pilgrims and the building of the church. The Mayflower Room will be open on the afternoon of Saturday 13 June. Visitors are also welcome to church Heritage Mornings on the first and third Thursday mornings of every month, 10am-11.30am.

Places for the Celebration Service are limited. Please e-mail or phone Janet Gilbert:

mj_ gilbert@talktalk.net, Tel. 01427 610358 to book your place. If you would like to arrange a group visit to the Mayflower Room outside Heritage Mornings, please contact Susan Bee by e-mail bee.susan@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01427 811258.

CHRISTIANS ON AGEING NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

Christians on Ageing has benefited from the ideas and fellowship generated at our recent Conference. This was held in Sheffield in September last year. If you missed it, you can read the full Conference Report here:

<https://christiansonageing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/67/2019/10/Conference-2019-Report.pdf>

MILTON MOUNT FOUNDATION

Secondary Education

The Milton Mount Foundation offers bursaries to assist with the cost of secondary school fees to the children of Congregational and URC ministers, and also to the daughters of members of these churches.

Subject to the availability of sufficient funds, it may also be possible to provide grants to assist with the cost of school uniform and educational trips for ministers' children at both state and fee-paying schools.

Higher Education

Bursaries (currently £1,250 per annum) are offered to daughters of Congregational and URC ministers starting their first undergraduate degree in autumn 2020. Bursaries are also offered to those beginning a first postgraduate degree, for up to three years. Subject to sufficient funds being available, similar grants may also be available for sons of ministers.

For further information and application forms, please contact the Secretary, Mrs Rosie Hopkins, at miltonmountfoundation@gmail.com or on 01252 715087.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR FOR SAFEGUARDING

Home based, 3 year fixed-term contract, 35 hours per week, Salary: £34,019

Are you passionate about equipping people with skills and resources to safeguard the vulnerable?

The Safeguarding team is looking for a committed team player to enable and support the United Reformed Church to develop and coordinate its safeguarding training programme.

You already work in the field of safeguarding with extensive knowledge of legislative guidelines and statutory guidance related to protection of children and adults at risk. You have experience of developing policy and practice guidance, delivering training and enabling others to do so.

You have excellent interpersonal and communications skills with the ability to work co-operatively and collaboratively in a variety of settings using differing media. Experience of working in safeguarding within a faith-based charity context would be a distinct advantage.

We can offer you a flexible and friendly work environment with a generous final salary pension scheme.

If you are interested in working for us and can meet the above requirements, please contact us/see our website for an application form (noting that we do not accept CVs): Human Resources, the United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT

020 7691 9874 recruitment@urc.org.uk www.urc.org.uk/vacancies

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Monday 24 February 2020 Interview date: Friday 13 March 2020

AND FINALLY: - This E letter is sent on behalf of The URC East Midlands Synod, 1 Edwards Lane, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3AA. Telephone: 0115 9609241

Email address for E-Letter Editor: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

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