

# **E-LETTER 367**

26 May 2022



# Opening Reflection by Geoff Milnes Synod Property Officer

This has been a month of celebrations for me.

At the beginning of May, **Melton Mowbray URC** celebrated 200 years of worship at its church on Chapel Street. The congregation had been in existence for a few years before that, worshipping in people's houses until the numbers got so large that they needed a proper building in which to worship.



The weekend included an 'open day' where various displays showed the life of the church over the years as well as what is going on in the church today— there was even a photograph of the **Revd Joseph Twidale** who had been Minister for 50 years between 1850 and 1900. That is a ministry to celebrate!

The celebratory Service was led by the Synod Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke**, who reminded us that we must continue to listen for the voice of God speaking to us and be prepared to act on His words. It was a joyous and proper way to celebrate the life of the church and the witness of its peoples over the years. It was also a reminder that we must not stagnate in our memories but be prepared to listen to God's Word and to move forward in His Name, celebrating His Love and never-ending Grace to His people.



Geoff Milnes (L) with minister the Revd Craig Muir at Melton Mowbray URC's anniversary celebration

Another celebration this month was more personal. After three attempts my elder son Stephen finally got married. For the sake of clarity, he had been trying to marry the same woman on two previous occasions, but Covid had put paid to the first two dates they had set!! So, after the disappointment of two postponements it was with extra joy that they finally tied the knot. The celebrations on the day were wonderful, and the joy of the day overflowed.

Two reasons, then, for celebration, in a world which at times seems bereft of any reason for joy. We see and hear so much that defies celebration – there is the war in Ukraine, the rising cost of living, the increasing needs of those who have little or even nothing, knife crime on our streets, county lines, violence against women, and so much more that leaves us wondering where God is in the world.

Yet He is present! Through His Son Jesus, he has promised us that He is with us always, whatever our circumstances, our worries and woes. He says so in Matthew's Gospel. The very last words of that Gospel are from Jesus: 'Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'! He knows our inmost thoughts, our needs and concerns, and through His Grace He will deliver us from them, even though we sometimes think He has deserted us — He is with us always, He has promised! I am reminded of a verse from **Valerie Collison**'s Hymn 'Come and Join the Celebration' which says 'God is with us, round the World the message bring, He is with us'.

We can all celebrate, not just this month but always, that God is with us in all that we do and are. Let us celebrate God's' presence in our lives, and listen to His voice as he leads us into the future to share that joy with the rest of the world.

#### **Geoff Milnes**

Synod Property Officer and Elder at Melton Mowbray

## **Synod Jubilee Celebration**

### **Commemorate - Celebrate - Create**

Saturday 10 September 10.00am - 3.30pm

De Vere Jubilee Conference Centre, Nottingham



Join us on **Saturday 10 September** to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the East Midlands Synod in a one-of-a-kind intergenerational **Jubilee Celebration** at Nottingham's DeVere Jubilee Conference Centre!



It's a festival in a day, featuring a cavalcade of music and worship, crafts and workshops, and fun and games for young and old. We'll be **commemorating** the highlights of the past 50 years, **celebrating** our birthday together and starting to **create** the future. Explore a prayer trail around the lake, try your hand at new skills in our workshops and raise your voice in song in the all-age act of worship at the heart of the day. Incoming Moderator of the General Assembly the **Revd Fiona Bennett** will lead praise alongside Synod Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke**. There may even be cake.

The **De Vere Jubilee Conference Centre** enjoys a stunning lakeside setting on the University of Nottingham's Jubilee Campus. The venue is situated close to the Queen's Medical Centre and readily accessible by car, bus and tram.

The aim is to offer a great day out for everyone in our Synod family, from 2 to 102. The day will cost just £5 per person, which includes a refreshments voucher; under-18s attend free but must be accompanied by an adult. Places are strictly limited, so we advise you book early to avoid disappointment: please email <a href="mailto:finance@urc5.org.uk">finance@urc5.org.uk</a> to reserve your ticket!

It promises to be a fantastic celebration for the whole East Midlands family - don't miss out.

# Moderator of General Assembly coming to East Midlands Synod



The Revd Fiona Bennett, currently Moderator-elect of General Assembly will be attending our Synod Jubilee Celebration on Saturday 10 September (by which point she will be the serving Moderator of General Assembly). She is available to lead worship the following day, Sunday 11 September in a church in our Synod. If you would like your church to be considered for Fiona to lead worship there please contact the Synod Clerk, Revd Camilla Veitch, on <a href="mailto:clerk@urc5.org.uk">clerk@urc5.org.uk</a>. It would be an ideal opportunity for a group of churches or a Resource Area to come together for a service for Fiona to lead!

## **October Synod Meeting – Advance Notice**

Please note that our **October Synod Meeting** will take place **on Zoom** on the evening of **Monday 10 October** (time tbc). The reason for this is that we are having two separate gatherings as a Synod this autumn: firstly our **Synod Celebration** on the Saturday 10 September, which will be time for us to gather for worship, fellowship and inspiration, and secondly a separate meeting for dealing with business (Monday 10 October).

It was decided to hold the business meeting online on a weekday in recognition that we will already have met as a Synod on a Saturday in September. This is also in line with the recommendation from General Assembly to hold meetings at different times and in different formats to encourage and enable as many people as possible to take part. If you are a Synod representative please make a note of the date in your diary.

#### **Revd Camilla Veitch**

Synod Clerk

## **Around the East Midlands Synod**

#### **New Elders in Bulwell**

**Bulwell URC** share with us the wonderful news that they are blessed to have six new elders, five of whom were ordained and inducted on **Sunday** 24 April.

"Revd Darryl Root, our NSM, led a wonderful service and we are excited about working together here in Bulwell. The ordination service for our sixth new elder took place on 8 May".



## **Ella steps out for Young Minds**



# YOUNGINDS

The voice for young people's mental health and wellbeing

East Midlands Synod's Youth Representative **Ella Lemon** has organised and undertaken an 87-mile walk with friends and colleagues to raise money for **Young Minds**, the UK's leading charity dedicated to the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and

#### Ella writes:

young people.

We are walking **The Ridgeway National Trail** in five days to raise money for **Young Minds**. Young Minds is important to us as a charity as at some point or other we have all seen someone close suffer from mental health.

The support that Young Minds offers is something that can help so many young people, and by doing this walk we hope to help them help as many people as possible.

Ella and friends need help to reach their target of £4,500. If you would like to support their walk and give to Young Minds, please visit: <a href="https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-us-raise-money-for-young-minds">https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-us-raise-money-for-young-minds</a>

## **Volunteering at General Assembly**

The **General Assembly of the United Reformed Church** is taking place from **Friday 8 to Monday 11 July** at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. There is an opportunity for people from East Midlands Synod to volunteer at the Assembly - meals will be included!



Help is needed in the following areas:

- on reception and greeting of members of assembly as they arrive at the venue (arrivals from midday)
- guiding people to arranged transport at Alfreton Railway station on Fri 8 July from about 1:00pm till 2:30 pm
- guiding members at the venue on the Friday to breakout rooms, restaurant and so on.

Help is also needed on the Saturday to guide day visitors from about 10:30am till after lunch.

To register your interest please contact the Synod office on <a href="mailto:admin@urc5.org.uk">admin@urc5.org.uk</a> or phone **0115 960 9241** to give your name and contact details. We will then pass your details on to the national committee which is responsible for the organisation of General Assembly and they will be in touch with you.

## **Sacraments Training in East Midlands Synod**

### Saturday 26 November Christ Church URC, Leicester



East Midlands Synod is pleased to announce that this year's **Sacraments Day** will be held at **Christ Church URC**, Leicester, on **Saturday 26 November**. Training will be led by Synod Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** and Synod Clerk the **Revd Camilla Veitch**. Our Sacraments Day is designed to support those churches who request that Elders and/or regular Lay Preachers may preside at Holy Communion and at Baptisms, to guarantee worshippers access to the Sacraments where no Minister of Word and Sacraments is available.

The Synod Meeting in February adopted a new policy clarifying who may be nominated for authorisation and specifying that **Authorised Persons** must take part in refresher training at least **every five years** (previously three). Only those appointed via the Synod are authorised to preside at the Sacraments. The full policy is available on our website <a href="https://urc5.org.uk/content/lay-presidency-east-midlands-synod">https://urc5.org.uk/content/lay-presidency-east-midlands-synod</a>.

The Training & Development team will be writing to all churches in the coming weeks to share further details of the training, verify whether those Authorised Persons already listed continue to preside, establish whether they are now due to refresh their authorisation, and ask whether the church has a need to nominate anybody new to undergo training this year.

## **Personal News**

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the death of the **Revd David Morris** on Saturday 30 April, aged 83. David served at Humberstone Road, Leicester (1965-79), as Director for the Community of Grace Mission Project (1995-2019) and at Wycliffe, Leicester (2002-2019).

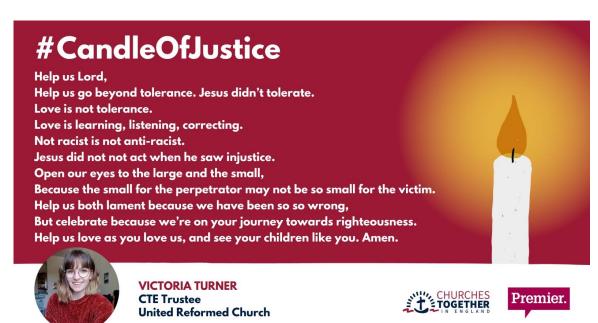
Please hold in your prayers David's loved ones and all who knew him through his work with homeless people through the Community of Grace.

Funeral arrangements will be confirmed later: anyone who would like to know the details of the arrangements please contact **Hannah Holmes** on <a href="mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk">trainingpa@urc5.org.uk</a>.

### Candle of Justice

All this week, **Churches Together** in England is calling churches and individuals to pray for **racial justice**, marking the second anniversary of the killing of **George Floyd** in Minneapolis on 25 May 2020.

The day itself was marked by a prayer vigil at noon, but for each day a separate prayer has been provided in text and video form by a member of a different denomination. One is written by **Victoria Turner**, a CTE Trustee from the United Reformed Church:



The full set of daily prayers, which run until Sunday 29 May, can be found at <a href="https://cte.org.uk/coj-daily-prayers-2022/">https://cte.org.uk/coj-daily-prayers-2022/</a> and on our Synod <a href="Facebook Page">Facebook Page</a>.

## **Getting to Net Zero – Webinar Series**

East Midlands Synod's **JPIC** group (Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation) recommends an ongoing series of <u>webinars</u> offered free of charge by the Church of England.

The webinars are designed to support and equip churches to reach the ambitious target of "**net zero carbon**" emissions and feature everything from forming your team to putting solar panels on your roof, including low cost 'housekeeping' actions which can pay back quickly. They will be of great help to all churches already engaged in **Eco Church** as well as those which are just beginning their environmental journey.



Those webinars which have already taken place are available to view as videos. The full list is available here.

## **Prayers for Peace Ukraine/Russia**



The **Fellowship of Reconciliation**, an ecumenical charity which incorporates the former URC Peace Fellowship, leads prayers every Friday evening for a peaceful end to the continuing war in Ukraine. The organisation has roundly condemned the invasion, calling for peace, the monitoring of human rights abuses and safe passage for those wishing to flee.

The prayer meetings take place over Zoom at **7.30pm each Friday**. If you would like to gather and pray for peace in Ukraine, please register here.



## **Training for Certificate in Pastoral Supervision**

# How can I train to be a supervisor?

URC Ministries Department has partnered with Westminster College and Wesley House in Cambridge to provide training for the Certificate in Pastoral Supervision.

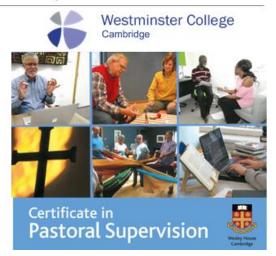
Further courses are schedule for

November 14-18, 2022

March 20-24, 2023

To apply for the training contact:

Ministries PA <ministries.pa@urc.org.uk>



Training is available for active ministers, retired ministers and laypeople of the United Reformed Church who have backgrounds and skills in counselling or supervision in other contexts. Further details are available by emailing: <a href="ministries.pa@urc.org.uk">ministries.pa@urc.org.uk</a>. Please note that to apply all applicants **must** have a recommendation from their Synod Moderator.

## **Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**



**Her Majesty the Queen** is the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, and many churches will be amongst those marking her 70 years of service during a weekend of celebrations from **Thursday 2 – Sunday 5 June**.

The United Reformed Church has produced its own act of worship to help churches mark the occasion, including prayers, hymns, children's activities, readings, quotes for sermons, Psalms, poems and additional ideas. Read more and download the files here.

#### Are you Jubilee ready?

That's the question posed by **Edwards Insurance Brokers**, who share their advice for planning safe street parties at: https://www.edwardsinsurance.co.uk/other/are-you-jubilee-ready/

**Gracious God, how great your love!** 

We lift our song to you as we gather with praise and thanksgiving on our hearts. We come, part of the rainbow of your family, from the nations of this United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, rich in our diversity and culture.

We come as people of faith to give you thanks for Her Majesty The Queen - a leader, a mother, a wife, a servant.

Thank you for her life of service and the example of her deep sense of vocation. May she continue to be blessed with divine guidance and find strength in her faith.

May she be encouraged by the widespread celebration of this Jubilee. Amen.

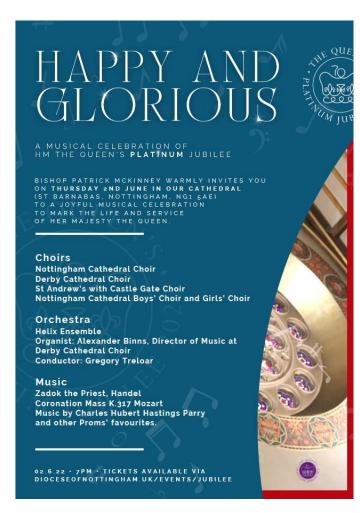
#### **Share your Jubilee celebrations**

If you are marking the Queen's **Platinum Jubilee** in some way, why not share the news around the East Midlands Synod in the next edition of this e-letter?

Whether it is a commemorative service or a street party, a display or a performance, we would love to hear about it.

We would be delighted to share pictures of your Jubilee celebrations, but please ensure that **everyone** whose face is seen is aware that the photograph may be published by the East Midlands Synod and is happy that it will appear in this e-letter, posted online. (Suitable captions would also be appreciated.)

Please send news and pictures of any special activities throughout the year to <a href="mailto:training@urc5.org.uk">training@urc5.org.uk</a> and <a href="mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk">trainingpa@urc5.org.uk</a> .



## **Hybrid Church Meet-Up**



## Church at the Edge

### Thursday 9 June 1.30pm

#### with Eunice Attwood



If you are a busy activist, a passionate disciple, a minister, and/or engaged in community ministry (however you might chose to interpret that term), and need a space to meet with others, to be inspired and to be open and honest about current difficulties, and to seek support from each other in living through these challenging times, then please sign up for the third series of monthly Zoom sessions, brought to you by **Church Action on Poverty** and the URC's **'New Reality Same Mission'** group.

Sign up to receive further information and reminders for each session here: https://forms.gle/9kdPpVtQgy1PRqiu9

The next session will be led by **Eunice Attwood**, Church at the Margins Coordinator for the Methodist Church. In conversation with an inspiring local leader, Eunice will explore what it means to be a Church at the Margins in practice.

Eunice brings over twenty years' experience of ordained diaconal ministry from a variety of contexts, including city- and town-centred ministry amongst marginalised and vulnerable communities, where she helped start and grow many fresh expressions of church. Serving as the Vice-President of the British Conference in 2010-2011, she has significant experience of working with diverse groups of people across the Methodist Connexion.

Over the last eight years, Eunice has been the Tutor in Pastoral Theology at the **Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education**, Birmingham. She is also one of the launch team leaders for **New Inclusive Church Birmingham**, a church plant started out of a deep commitment to living out the love of Jesus in practical, unexpected, and transforming ways.

The final session of this series will be on **Thursday 14 July** with speaker **Lucy Zwolinska** of the **Poverty Truth Commission**. Lucy will reflect on her two years as facilitator of the Gateshead Poverty Truth Commission, which recently had its final 'celebration event'. Here is a **Church at the Edge** meeting with people who have lived experienced of poverty.

## From the Ground Up – JPIT Conference

#### Saturday 11 June

From the Ground Up, a one-day conference organised by the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT), will be held on Saturday 11 June in hybrid form: you can take part in person in central London or online, as you prefer.

The day features a host of exciting, engaging and interactive workshops, all led by inspiring practitioners and designed to **inspire hope** and equip you to **seek justice**.



Tickets are still available: full details are available on the JPIT website.

## A Taste of Theology at Northern College

#### Friday 22 - Sunday 24 July

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to study theology? Northern College is offering a unique opportunity to find out more at its <u>Taster Weekend</u> at Luther King House, Manchester from 5.30pm on **Friday 22 July** to 2.30pm on **Sunday 24 July** 2022.

The College invites you to come and be a theological student for a weekend, participating in 'taster' classes in Old and New Testament Studies, World Christianity, Church-Related Community Work and Ministerial Formation.

Old Testament tutor Meg Warner shares a little about it in a video on the Northern College website:



#### £50 for URC Members £100 for non-URC Members

These costs are heavily subsidised and include accommodation for two nights and all classes, meals and refreshments (with the exception of Saturday Dinner, when there will be an opportunity to visit Manchester's famous Curry Mile). Even better, these costs can be deducted from the cost of any formal study at Northern College in 2022-23.

For further information and to claim one of the limited number of places, email: paul.barrett@lutherking.ac.uk.

## The URC @ Greenbelt 2022

## Friday 26 – Monday 29 August 2022 Boughton House, near Kettering

**Greenbelt Festival** is set for a jubilant return this year with a long weekend of artistry, activism and belief right here in the East Midlands in the beautiful grounds of Boughton House.

Musicians Brian Eno, Martyn Joseph and The Magic Numbers and speakers Simon Armitage, John Bell, Caroline Lucas, Renni Eddo-Lodge and Rowan Williams are just a fraction of the lineup already announced,





with more to follow.

The **United Reformed Church** is playing a key part, taking "Revolting Christians" as its theme. **Revolting Christians** stand up to injustice, confront oppression and seek lasting change for good, following the example of Jesus. Alongside delicious drinks, treats and affordable meals, the **URC café** will host worship, discussion, music, bedtime stories and superb crafts, all celebrating revolting Christians from history and encouraging and equipping us to be revolting Christians now!



#### **LET GREENBELT TAKE YOU TO CHURCH!**

There will be a special service on **Sunday 28 August** to mark our **50**<sup>th</sup> **Jubilee**, celebrating the rich diversity of the URC with a memorable birthday party:

No matter who you are or what you believe, there will always be a place for you in our festival fields. So why not let Greenbelt take you to church one Sunday this summer? You'll have the chance to experience a communion like no other, dance away to **Guvna B**, raise the roof with **House Gospel Choir**, get all theological with **Nadia Bolz Weber** and **Brian McLaren** and laugh until your sides hurt with **Shaparak Khorsandi**. Plus much, much more.

Use code GB22SUN20 to get 20% off Sunday Tickets here: Sunday at Greenbelt Festival 2022

Are you or your church group interested in an online or in-person meeting about the practicalities of the Festival?

**Roo Stewart**, Programme Support Officer for Church and Society and **Steve Summers**, CRCW Development Worker, are available for either an online or in-person meeting and conversation with a church group or individuals about the practicalities of going to the Festival. For further info please contact: <a href="mailto:steve.summers@urc.org.uk">steve.summers@urc.org.uk</a>

## **Job Opportunities**

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

#### **Mersey Synod United Reformed Church**

37.5 hours pw. Office based.
Salary: £37,000
Lay appointment or URC Minister's Stipend

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 1 June 2022 12 noon

Are you passionate about facilitating and developing the gifts and competencies of the whole people of God?

Mersey Synod is looking for a committed **Training and Development Officer** who will proactively consult, guide, advise and provide training in order to assist the development and delivery of the Mersey Synod training and development strategy.

For More Information visit: <u>Job Vacancies - URC Mersey (urcmerseysynod.org.uk)</u>

## **HEAD OF OPERATIONS**

#### **Churches Together in England**

CTE is pleased to announce a new role of Head of Operations. The organisation seeks someone with extensive experience of operations management — including finance, HR, governance, ICT and event management.

The role is advertised on the **Churches Together in England** website here: <a href="https://cte.org.uk/vacancies/head-of-ops22/">https://cte.org.uk/vacancies/head-of-ops22/</a>. Applications must be received by 12 noon on Friday 10 June 2022.



# The United Reformed Church

## **Mission Support Officer**

2 year fixed-term contract, 35 hours per week Salary: £41,116

#### Are you excited to help further the engagement of the whole church with its mission priorities?

In this role you will be working closely with the Deputy General Secretary for Mission, providing programme support in the areas of pioneering ministry, ecumenical relations and evangelism and witness. You will manage, deliver, and communicate campaigns and activities and facilitate the engagement of Synods, local churches and other networks.

We are looking for an excellent communicator, used to working in a mission orientated environment with experience of ecumenical relationship building. You will be educated to degree level, or equivalent, with evidence of theological studies. You have a good basic knowledge of Christian theological perspectives in mission, ecumenism and pioneering, able to embrace new ways of being church.

You have good interpersonal, networking and presentation skills. You are a team player with the ability to engage and motivate others. Competence in the use of social media platforms is essential. Experience of working in local and wider church contexts would be a distinct advantage.

We can offer you a flexible and friendly work environment; working from Church House in London and from home is a possibility.

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 9871 recruitment@urc.org.uk www.urc.org.uk/vacancies

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010: Part 1, Schedule 9, there is a genuine occupational requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian

This post also requires an enhanced certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

# COUNTY ECUMENICAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (CEDO) FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Are you inspired by the vision of Christians of different traditions working together?

Are you a great networker, solution-finder and administrator?

If so, this post may be for you.

£8,049 plus 10% pension contribution home based, 10 hours a week

Contact <u>caroline.hutchings@shireandsoke.org.uk</u> for an application pack.

Applications to be received by 11 a.m. Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Interviews: Monday 27th June 2022.

Commencement date: 1st September 2022.

www.shireandsoke.org.uk



## **Find Us Online**



The <u>East Midlands Synod website</u> is the one-stop shop for all essential information: <a href="https://www.urc5.org.uk/">https://www.urc5.org.uk/</a>



Our <u>East Midlands Synod Facebook Page</u> continues to host the **Evening Prayers** led by our Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** and others during the ongoing pandemic. If you are a Facebook user, please consider **Liking** and **Sharing** this Page and its posts: https://www.facebook.com/URC-East-Midlands-Synod-102279281444717/

Similarly the <u>Synod Youth and Children's Facebook Page</u> shares news and ideas related to our work with young people: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/URCEastmidlandsYouth/">https://www.facebook.com/URCEastmidlandsYouth/</a>



On our dedicated <u>YouTube channel</u>, the Synod shares special events, training videos, worship resources and more. **Evening**Prayers are also uploaded here. Please subscribe:

<a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUrjKn8XOGeZU5SgN95g">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUrjKn8XOGeZU5SgN95g</a>

## **Contacting East Midlands Synod**

The **Synod Office** is now open from **Monday to Thursday** each week. Please contact staff members by email in the first instance, as this will receive a direct response from the person with whom you wish to correspond. The Synod telephone line (**0115 960 9241**) is answered Monday-Thursday, 9.00am-3.00pm.

Arrangements remain under regular review and any update will be posted at: www.urc5.org.uk

This E-letter is produced on behalf of: The URC East Midlands Synod, 1 Edwards Lane, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3AA. Telephone: 0115 960 9241

CCL1067405

Bread and wine: photo by <u>James Coleman</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>
Her Majesty the Queen: photo from Wikipedia (Joel Rouse/UK Ministry of Defence)

Next edition: Thursday 9 June 2022



Please send all material for this E-Letter to both: <a href="mailto:training@aurc5.org.uk">training@aurc5.org.uk</a> and <a href="mailto:training@urc5.org.uk">training@urc5.org.uk</a>

Copy deadline for next edition: 12 noon on Monday 6 June 2022