



## URC EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

E-LETTER NO: 268 – 10<sup>th</sup> MAY 2018

EDITED THIS WEEK BY: REVD CLIFF WINFIELD

Jesus said 'I am the good shepherd who is willing to die for the sheep' (John Ch.10v11). This was a very striking comment – one that the disciples would remember and others would wonder about. Shepherding was a very common and undesirable occupation; at the time of Jesus it was dangerous, low paid and the very unsociable hours meant they were outcasts in religious terms. However the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm pictures God as caring for the flock. David the youngest son of Jesse was a shepherd looking after sheep and became Israel's great warrior king and it was to a descendant of David that the people of Israel were to look for a Messiah.

Today we are not so familiar with the work of shepherds and it seems some are even using drones instead of sheep dogs! So I wondered what could be a modern parable? What occupation might Jesus use today to tell people about the kingdom of God? Could it have been the 'Good Bus Driver'? Here is a true story, I know, I was on the bus. My wife and I were travelling on a bus to Nottingham when it stopped for a couple, the lady was in a wheel chair. As they were showing their passes the lady asked the man if he had remembered the key to the caravan (they were going to catch a train to go to Skegness). Patting his pockets he confessed that he had not, so they would have to get off. The driver asked 'where is the key?' 'At home' came the reply, 'just around the corner'. So the driver said 'I'm a bit ahead of schedule – leave your wife here and fetch the key, I will wait', and that is what happened. You could say that the driver went the 'extra mile' without moving and none of the passengers complained.

A modern parable could be 'The Good Bus Driver', waits for people even if they are not exactly at the right stop. She gets you safely to your destination and cares for other road users and pedestrians. In our work, retirement and leisure we all need God's Holy Spirit to go that 'extra mile'. God needs you and I to care for those around us and those not in the flock. I used to be concerned that Jesus told the parable of the shepherd leaving 99 to look for one sheep (Mt.18:12), however I look at it this way now, Jesus wants the outcast to be safe in the fold as well.

God bless, from Cliff (Synod Office Chaplain)



### DERBYSHIRE

**WHY IS HOMELESSNESS RISING?** – A presentation by Pam Orchard at West Derbyshire URC on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May at 3pm. Official figures show a rise in rough sleeping in the UK every year for the past 7 years. In fact across the UK, all types of homelessness is increasing including numbers of people in temporary accommodation such as B&B's and hostels. Pam has worked in homelessness for 15 years and is the CEO at The Connection at St Martins in central London. She will outline what are the main causes of homelessness, different types of homelessness, why homelessness is rising and some of the responses required which would tackle the problem.

The session will include a combination of presentation and discussion.

**MARLPOOL URC THEATRE COMPANY** – presents 'Saints Alive! and songs of New Beginnings' in the Community Hall, Chapel Street, Marlpool from 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £6 each and are available from the box office by calling: 01332 986082 or online at: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/murctc](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/murctc) with no booking fee. This event is in partnership with Marlpool URC Flower Festival which can be visited from 6pm on performance nights.



### LINCOLNSHIRE

Gainsborough United Reformed Church will open for the West Lindsey Churches Festival over the week-end of 19/20 May 2018. The church, built as a memorial to John Robinson, 'pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers,' will be open 10am-4pm on Saturday 19 May and 2-4pm on Sunday 20 May. The church now hosts a permanent Mayflower Pilgrims exhibition. This year churches participating in the West Lindsey

Churches Festival are commemorating the centenary of the end of World War 1. The Art Club which meets at Gainsborough U.R.C. is producing a themed display and there will also be an exhibition of memorabilia relating to WW1. Light refreshments will be served and a Big Cake Sale will begin on Saturday morning and continue until all cakes are gone! There will be an informal concert including music, singing, poetry and drama at 7pm on Saturday and opportunities to hear organ music during the weekend. For further information about the West Lindsey Churches Festival see: [www.churchesfestival.info](http://www.churchesfestival.info).

## **OTHER**

### **CHANGES COMING TO THE WAY YOU SUBSCRIBE TO AND RECEIVE THE E-LETTER**

As part of the changes that the Synod Office are making to comply with the new General Data Protection Regulations, we will be changing the way in which we send out the e-letter, requiring you to subscribe if you wish to continue to receive our news. There will be more information available on this soon, so please keep a look out!

### **VOLUNTEERS FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY - STILL NEEDED!**

We need more people to volunteer to be stewards at the URC General Assembly in Nottingham from Friday 6th to Monday 9th July. We particularly need people for Friday morning as people are arriving. You do not need to do more than one session or one day. If you are willing to volunteer, please contact Chris Willis at the Synod Office on [admin@urc5.org.uk](mailto:admin@urc5.org.uk) or 0115 960 9241 and she will send you a form.

## **CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND**

### **'Spirit of Windrush: Contributions to Multicultural Britain - A Service of Thanksgiving'**

Churches together in England are holding a national event to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landing of the Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks on 22 June 1948 carrying over 500 passengers, and which is recognised as the start of the Windrush era. 'Spirit of Windrush: contributions to Multicultural Britain – a service of thanksgiving' will take place from midday on Friday 22 June 2018 in Westminster Abbey. Admission is free but everyone must register and receive a ticket accompanied by personal ID on the day. To register visit: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/spirit-of-windrush-a-service-of-thanksgiving-tickets-44188760773>

The preacher will be the Rev'd Canon Joel Edwards and in attendance will be national political and religious leaders as well as members of the diverse communities that make up multicultural Britain.

## **VOLUNTEERS TO HELP SPURGEON'S CHILDREN'S CHARITY AT NEW WINE**

Got a sense of adventure, love of coffee and a passion to share our work? We need your help – Please!

We're excited to announce that we'll be representing at New Wine this year, caffeinating festival goers and getting the word out about the fantastic work we get to do for children and families across the UK.

We're all raring to go in fundraising but we really can't pull off this event alone and we need your help.

We'll be running a coffee shop and need 12 volunteers to do that - so please, could you volunteer? or could you spread the word to your friends, family, neighbours, churches ... anyone who'll listen basically? - We'd love to have enough volunteers to paint the resource area and coffee bar at New Wine a shade of orange brighter than EasyJet and Sainsbury's combined!

If you're interested, here are a few more details you'll need to know:

**What's New Wine?** - New Wine is an annual Christian festival that brings together churches and families of all denominations to worship, hear from God and discover what's happening in mission and Christian organisations through seminars and family activities.

**Why are we going?** - We're going to get the word out about Spurgeons, to meet potential new supporters and to sign up as many of the 8000+ participants as we can to support us so we can keep growing and supporting the services we provide.

**Job description:** - We need 12 volunteers to work either morning or afternoon shifts at our very own coffee shop! All you need is a great attitude and a willingness to get stuck in. You'll be trained to make 'proper coffee' and use a till by some professionals at the event.

**Dates:** - New Wine runs across two weeks but we're not asking you to volunteer for the whole time. If you can spare a few days or a whole week that'd be awesome!

Week 1: 28th July - 3rd August

Week 2: 5 August - 11th August

Location: Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet

There are a few little perks for volunteering at New Wine!!

You'll be Barista trained to make proper coffee by a professional! FREE COFFEE

You'll get chance to attend some seminars and talks with your FREE onsite pass.

As a member of the team, you'll get FREE meals and an optional FREE tent pitch!

You'll get the chance to meet potential supporters face to face!

If you or someone you know might be interested in volunteering visit: <https://united.new-wine.org/teams>

### **LAY PREACHERS GATHERING**

Join us for Bible Study, discussion and fellowship. Led by Revd Dr Deborah Baird on **Saturday 23rd June 2018**, 10.30am - 2.30pm at the Synod Meeting Room, Nottingham, NG5 3AA (Please bring your own lunch) To book contact Hannah Holmes: [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) Tel: 0115 9609241

### **SYNOD STUDY DAY - RADICAL LIVING**

A study day looking at the rule of St. Benedict. All Welcome! On **Saturday 14th July 2018** from 10.30am - 3pm (bring a packed lunch) at the Synod Meeting Room, Nottingham, NG5 3AA. Led by Revd Dr Deborah Baird. Booking is essential, to book contact Hannah Holmes: [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) Tel: 0115 9609241

### **YOUTH AND CHILDREN**

#### **FROM THE SYNOD YOUTH EXECUTIVE**

We need your help!

The Synod Youth Executive have been asked to put together a display of the whole Synod to put up at General Assembly.

We would like photos from local churches showing you as a church, worshipping, or eating together, community activities that you do, anything that sums up your church community in a photo.

We cannot promise to use all the photos that we get sent in and we obviously need to make sure that the people in them have given their permission for their image to be used for a display at General Assembly, which means that we need to have written consent from those in the photos, to obtain a photo consent form please visit: [www.urc5.org.uk/photoconsentform](http://www.urc5.org.uk/photoconsentform)

Please email photos to Jane Henderson, [cydo@urc5.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urc5.org.uk) by the end of May.

### **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **MINISTER - SINGLE CONGREGATION LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP**

The Church of England, The Methodist Church, The United Reform Church St Francis, Valley Park

Contract: Permanent Location: South Recruiter: Winchester Diocese

We are seeking a Minister to lead us forward, providing spiritual direction, guidance and challenge in mission. We offer:

A motivated lay leadership team - active in all areas of Church life

A part-time parish administrator

A newly renovated vicarage - within walking distance of the church, school and local amenities

A strong ecumenical partnership

An energetic and capable congregation

We welcome an applicant who:

Is an inspiring and creative team leader who motivates those around them

Can maintain broad and varied styles of worship

Can reach out to the local community, increasing the Church's presence and responding to need

Is an ordained minister of the Church of England, the Methodist Church or the United Reformed Church.

For an informal conversation contact:

The Revd Canon Fiona Gibbs on 01489 795443

Closing date 17 May 2018 at 12 noon Interviews: 27 & 28 June 2018

Application pack available at [www.winchester.anglican.org](http://www.winchester.anglican.org) or from [jane.hammond@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:jane.hammond@winchester.anglican.org)

An enhanced DBS check is required, Closing date: 17 May 2018

### **FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR, CHURCH HOUSE**

**LONDON, FULL TIME, SALARY: £30,027**

Are you an efficient Finance Administrator who can initiate, process and manage financial transactions within the regulatory framework of the charity sector?

The United Reformed Church is a family of Christians worshipping in 1400 local churches in England, Scotland and Wales. Church House is the central administrative office of our denomination supporting the mission and ministry of all churches. The finance team, based in London, is responsible for the financial management of the United Reformed Church Trust's resources by maintaining accounting records, preparing annual accounts and managing payroll and pensions.

In this role you will have responsibility for banking, including ensuring the management of the direct debit system, which collects contributions from local churches and maintaining accurate records of receipts and payments. You will also manage the administration of grants made to students training for ministry, accounting for payments made and handling queries that arise.

Applicants will be AAT qualified, numerate and have good IT skills. Excellent interpersonal skills are essential to enable you to liaise and interact with people in a variety of roles across the United Reformed Church. You must be able to meet tight deadlines whilst maintaining attention to detail and accuracy. The ability to manage your own workload through effective prioritising, time management and organisation is essential.

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

T: 020 7691 9871 E: [recruitment@urc.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@urc.org.uk) W: [www.urc.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.urc.org.uk/vacancies)

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Monday 4 June 2018 Interview date: Friday 15 June 2018

**AND FINALLY:** - Please send any comments or feedback on this e-letter to: [admin@urc5.org.uk](mailto:admin@urc5.org.uk)  
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