

Opening Reflection by Ron Kenyon Chair of the East Midlands Synod Trust

Psalm 126 A song of ascents

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

² Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
'The LORD has done great things for them.'

³ The LORD has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

⁴ Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

⁵ May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.

⁶ Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.



Look back in wonder – remembering perhaps some moment of incredulous relief, similar to that of the Psalmist, when a long ordeal ended. 'At first it seemed a dream': many of us will recognise that feeling, but dreams can fade and new troubles take their place. That is the moment to recall 'God's love in time past,' as this Psalm itself does before launching into prayer.

Keep on in faith - appreciating God's different ways of transforming what he touches. Two of them are pictured in the Psalm: the first, as torrents in the Negeb when a great downpour brings a desert suddenly to life. It owes nothing to man, everything to heaven, and the blossoming of a spiritual desert can be like that - prayed for, not engineered.

But the second picture is equally valid, presenting us with farmland to be toiled at, even with tears of discouragement, yet with seed that is worth sowing, and a harvest which will not find us mere spectators. That will be the day!

Appointment of Synod Clerk



Dr Graham Jennings has been appointed as **Synod Clerk**, to serve from 1 July 2023 to the October 2023 Synod Meeting where he will be officially inducted. He will serve for an initial term of three years, to be reviewed after one year in post and with the option of extension for further term(s).

Mission Development Officer



My name is **Tom Donoghue** and I am a week into my new role as **Mission Development Officer**. I am married to Chloe, we have a daughter called Hetty who is 2 years old and we are expecting a baby boy, due in October. We live in North Derbyshire in the Peak District where I am a part of the Peak Methodist Circuit. We enjoy walking and exploring the area as a family.

I have been working at Cliff College as their Evangelist since 2018 and I am now really looking forward to working with you all. You can contact me by email: mission@urc5.org.uk or call me on my mobile: 07592 423490.

I've enjoyed getting to know the Synod team and I am looking forward to visiting your church and meeting you but please feel free to contact me before then.

Around the East Midlands

40th Ordination Anniversary

We send our best wishes to **the Revd Derek Gardner** on the occasion of his 40th Ordination Anniversary. East Midlands Synod Moderator, the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** was delighted to present Derek with his certificate and thank him for his many years of service.



90th Birthday Celebrations

Many happy returns to **Kathleen Pass** as she celebrated her 90th Birthday in June. A surprise celebration was organised by members of Boulevard URC on 1 July to show their appreciation for all that Kathleen does for the Church and congregation. One church member writes "Kathleen has been a big blessing to our lives and a mother to us at church. We love her so much".



Safeguarding Training Opportunities



Foundation training is available as an e-learning course. Simply follow this link to access the course:
[Foundation Safeguarding Training - eLearning](#)

There are lots of training opportunities around the Synod this year, to book on to any of the Synod training below, or to request that, Ben Twelves, our Synod Safeguarding Officer, comes to deliver training at your Church, please email Hannah Holmes at: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

<p>Zoom Foundation Training Tuesday 17 October 6:30pm – 8.30pm</p> <p>Zoom Intermediate Training Wednesday 16 August 6:30pm – 9pm Tuesday 19 September 1pm – 3.30pm Thursday 23 November 6:30pm – 9pm Wednesday 13 December 10am – 12.30pm</p>	<p>Face to Face Intermediate Safeguarding Training</p> <p>Tuesday 24 October 1pm – 3.30pm At Duston URC, Northampton, NN5 6JF</p> <p>Tuesday 7 November 10am-12.30pm At West Derbyshire URC, DE4 4FB</p>
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National Safeguarding Training Opportunities

To book a place on any of the training listed below please email Emma Pearce at:
emma.pearce@urc.org.uk

<p>Suicide Awareness Monday 11 September, 2pm – 3.30pm, via zoom</p> <p>DDC Verifier and Safer Recruitment Training Tuesday 12 September, 6.30pm – 8.30pm, via zoom</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Monday 19 September, 1.30pm – 3.30pm, via zoom</p> <p>Elders as Trustees Thursday 21 September, 1pm-3pm, via zoom</p>	<p>Modern Day Slavery Monday 25 September, 7pm – 9pm, via zoom</p> <p>Safeguarding for Ministers Supporting Survivors Monday 9 October, 2pm – 4pm, via zoom</p> <p>Safeguarding for Elders as Trustees Friday 20 October, 2pm – 4pm, via zoom</p> <p>DDC Verifier and Safer Recruitment Training Wednesday 15 November, 1.30pm – 3.30pm, via zoom</p> <p>Adult Safeguarding Tuesday 21 November, 7pm – 9pm</p>
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Safeguarding Symposium

SAFEGUARDING SYMPOSIUM & GP6 LAUNCH - AVAILABLE TO BOOK NOW!



2023 Safeguarding Symposium Thursday 12 October 1.30-4.00pm (Zoom)

We are excited to bring to you our safeguarding symposium where we will be launching Good Practice 6 and also headline Dr Leroy Logan MBE in a thoughtful discussion.

1.30 - 1.45pm Welcome - Sharon Barr, Designated Safeguarding Lead, United Reformed Church
1.45 – 2.00pm Safeguarding: so much more than a compliance matter, a Reflection by Adrian Bulley, Deputy General Secretary
2.00 – 2.45pm GP6 launch – Dr Kerry Baker, Safeguarding Policy Development Coordinator
2.45 - 3.00pm Break
3.00-3.45pm - Dr Leroy Logan MBE Recognising unconscious bias; overcoming barriers of equality in safeguarding - Q&A hosted by Carrie Kaunda, Safeguarding Training & Development Coordinator
3.45 – 4.00pm Round up and thank you's - Sharon Barr

Places are limited, to sign up via Eventbrite click the image above or click here: [SafeguardingSymposium](#)

Holiday Forum

Saturday 19 - Friday 25th August 2023



The **Holiday Forum** will soon be gathering at [The Hayes](#) (and [via Zoom](#)) for their annual conference. This year's theme is 'Inclusion Through Invitation' and will be led by **Michael Harvey**. [Find out more here](#).

Michael will be joined by 2023 worship leader the **Revd Ruth Watson**. There is a jam packed programme, including guest speakers Victoria Turner, Sam Sheehan and Lorraine Webb!

There is still time to book but places are limited, so don't delay.

If you can't join in person, they are once again streaming a lot of the conference online so you can join from the comfort of your own home. Either [sign up here](#) as a virtual attendee, or simply [use this zoom link](#).

Disability Awareness Sunday

Celebrate God's Gifts on Disability Awareness Sunday, 17 September 2023



Christian disability inclusion charity 'Through the Roof' is offering free resources for **Disability Awareness Sunday** on the 17 September 2023 (or a day of your choice). All churches are invited to celebrate the unique gifts God gives to each one of us – including disabled people. Follow this link to request a free resource pack:

<https://throughtheroof.org/forchurches/disability-awareness-sunday/>

In the UK approximately 20% of the population has a disability (Family Resources Survey, 2021). Yet our churches do not always reflect that percentage – especially not in leadership and other roles serving in the church. We are all 'fearfully and wonderfully made' by God and we are 'all parts of the body of Christ'.

Is your church or Christian community including disabled people in its ministry by enabling the God-given gifts and talents of disabled people to be shared with others?

You can use Disability Awareness Sunday as a positive message to disabled people.

We invite each church congregation to celebrate disabled people and to use the free resources we have produced to hold a 2023 Disability Awareness Sunday service or event.

There are two sets of free Disability Awareness Sunday resources available:

- For your first event: we recommend using the full resource pack from 2022, on the Luke 5 account of the paralysed man going through the roof, with suggestions for a complete service and 8 videos.
- For a further event: use the new 2023 resource on 'The unique gifts God gives us', with a service outline and a short video of Ashleigh: a Roofbreaker disability champion who overcomes barriers.

Ashleigh is a fantastic example of a disabled person using her gifts to serve in the church, as she helps lead the Edinburgh Roofbreaker Network. In the new video, Ashleigh shares her inspirational message that "it's so important to use the gifts God has given you as you – not as the person you think you need to be."

Katie Mobbs, Through the Roof's Roofbreaker Team Leader, who is a wheelchair user, says "A church without disabled people is an incomplete church. We need disabled people – especially in leadership – because they know what is needed to make the path clear for more disabled people; there is also a lot that can be gained by the whole church."

Join us in raising awareness by holding a Disability Awareness Sunday service or event this year, recognising and valuing the gifts and talents God gives to disabled people.

Access the free resources [here](#), including free Disability Awareness postcards to order for your event.

Reminder of Forthcoming Events

Season of Creation

Sunday 1 September – Friday 4 October



A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

This year's **Season of Creation** (also known as Creation Time or Creationtide) runs from 1 September to 4 October. The 2023 resources "**Let Justice and Peace Flow**", are now available to download to help plan ahead for worship during this month-long season. Resources include prayers, ideas, videos and events to help you get involved. View them now at: <https://jpit.uk/creation> .

Joint Synod Youth Weekend

Friday 15 - Sunday 17 September 2023

We are delighted to inform you that we are hosting a weekend away for young people and young adults from Friday 15 - Sunday 17 September at the **Blackwell Adventure Centre** near Bromsgrove.



Offering a warm and welcoming lodge and a range of activities, this will be a great weekend for young people to meet other young people connected with URC Congregations. The event is being jointly organised by the East and West Midlands Synods.

For a copy of the poster or a booking form contact Hannah Holmes: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

Situations Vacant



Eastern Synod

Special Category Ministry post in Love's Farm and St Neots

Eastern Synod is looking for a Stipendiary Minister to fill the new Special Category Ministry post in Love's Farm and St Neots. The Post Holder will be working with a fresh expression of church at Love's Farm, helping them develop discipleship and explore whether being a congregation of the URC is their next step. At St Neots URC the work will be around seeing whether a fresh expression of church can be developed in a town centre setting with and alongside an established congregation. This is a 5 year post, possibly renewable for a further 5 years and as an SCM role comes under Plan for Partnership. Closing date for applications is 12 Noon on 20th July 2023 and the interview date is 15th September

For more details or for an application form: [SCM Love's Farm and St Neots](#)



Eastern Synod

Synod Transitional Minister

Eastern Synod is looking to recruit a Synod Transitional Minister under the Plan for Partnership. This will be a Minister willing to help churches, Ministers and leadership teams to create Mission Partnerships using the principles agreed by Eastern Synod. The Minister will be based in South Cambridgeshire but will work across the whole Synod. This is initially a 5 year post which will be reviewed at year 4 with the intention of renewing for up to a further 5 years, subject to the review, or until the Synod Pastoral Committee decides otherwise.

For more details or for the application pack: [Synod Transitional Minister](#)

Westminster College is Seeking an Honorary Treasurer

Following the retirement of its long-standing member, Westminster College is seeking a dedicated and experienced individual to fill the role of Honorary Treasurer.

The Honorary Treasurer is a Governor of the College. They have a crucial role in shaping Westminster, as it continues to provide a vibrant and inclusive learning community pivotal to the URC. Some flexibility of role responsibilities exist, but broadly includes:

- Reviewing financial statements, budgets and financial policies to maintain transparency and accountability.
- Collaborating with the College Executive and Management Committee in its development and implementation of effective financial strategies aligned with the college's mission and goals.
- Providing regulatory oversight of the financial affairs in collaboration with the Management Committee and the Board of Governors.
- Providing strategic financial guidance to ensure the college's long-term sustainability and growth.
- Attending four Management Committee meetings and four Board of Governors Meetings each year, as well as occasional ad hoc meetings or events as required.

In supporting compliance of the College's financial management, the role requires:

- Strong financial expertise, ideally gained through professional experience or relevant qualifications.
- Commitment to the United Reformed Church and an understanding of its values and ethos.
- Passion for the development of Westminster College as a Resource Centre for Learning, and a desire to contribute to its ongoing success.
- High levels of integrity, professionalism, and attention to detail.

If you are excited about the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of students, staff, and the wider community through your financial expertise, we would love to hear from you. To discuss the position or to apply please contact bursar@westminster.cam.ac.uk.



Moderator – National Synod of Wales

Full-time, seven-year termed appointment
Minister's Stipend

General Assembly wishes to appoint a United Reformed Church minister to serve as Moderator of the National Synod of Wales from January 2024

The National Synod of Wales are looking for a new Moderator to play a key role in the Synod Support Team as we work to support our churches in their mission and encourage members to consider and develop their part in the Whole People of God. As a synod we work with an Appreciative Inquiry mindset, valuing collaboration, mutual support and mutual accountability.

Our next Moderator will be able to think strategically and implement locally, working with churches to understand and respond to their communities. You will be someone who understands the specific context of a National Synod and is willing to engage with the culture and language of Wales and its distinct regulatory and compliance frameworks. You will be comfortable representing the United Reformed Church at high profile events in Wales.

Having invested significant time and resources building a collaborative team dynamic, we are looking for someone who is a team player, who trusts their colleagues and values their passions. You must be empathetic, caring and, very importantly, like to have fun!

An information pack and application form can be found on the jobs page of the website: www.urc.org.uk/jobs

If you wish to nominate a Minister for this post, please write to: Deepti Upadhyaya at recruitment@urc.org.uk by **Sunday 23 July 2023**

If you wish to apply for this post, please complete an application form and send it to: Human Resources, United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT 020 7691 9871; recruitment@urc.org.uk by **12 noon, Monday 21 August 2023**

Interview date: Wednesday 27 September 2023

In accordance with the Equalities Act 2010 Part1; Schedule 9 there is a genuine occupational requirement for the post holder to be a Minister of Word and Sacraments of the United Reformed Church.

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

Keeping up to date with Synod News and Events

If you would like to subscribe to receive this **Synod Newsletter** please click here <https://bit.ly/URCEletter> or scan the QR Code below:



If you would like to subscribe to receive our **Synod Children and Youth Newsletter** which includes news about resources, events and lots more please click here <https://bit.ly/CandYNews> or scan the QR Code below:



Find Us Online



The [East Midlands Synod website](https://www.unc5.org.uk/) is the one-stop shop for all essential information:
<https://www.unc5.org.uk/>



Our [East Midlands Synod Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/URC-East-Midlands-Synod-102279281444717/) hosts **Evening Prayers** every day at 9.30pm, led by our Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** and our prayer team, along with other posts. 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 [Synod Youth and Children's Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/URCEastmidlandsYouth/) shares news and ideas related to our work with young people: <https://www.facebook.com/URCEastmidlandsYouth/>



On our dedicated [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUrjKn8XOGeZU5SgN95g), the Synod shares special events, training videos, worship resources and more. **Evening Prayers** are also uploaded here. Please subscribe:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUrjKn8XOGeZU5SgN95g>

Contacting East Midlands Synod

The **Synod Office** is 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.

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

The inclusion of items in this newsletter does not constitute endorsement by the East Midlands Synod. Any views expressed do not represent the views of the East Midlands Synod or any of its officers or staff except where explicitly stated.

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Next edition: Thursday 27 July 2023

Please send all material for this E-Letter to both:
trainingpa@urc5.org.uk and training@urc5.org.uk
Copy deadline for next edition: 12 noon on **Monday 24 July 2023**