



# E-LETTER 376

## 3 November 2022



### Opening Reflection by David Greatorex Synod Treasurer

#### Making the Changes

In preparation for worship last Sunday, I noted some points in the section for the address to the younger members of the congregation. The object of the game was to memorise a number of items (on screen in our case) and then remove one - with the aim of someone being able to identify which one was missing. This was repeated several times. The whole congregation took part, most having either played it years ago, or even recently. It engendered some fun!

Remember the game? It was played on a table or tray when I was younger. It is called "Kim's Game" and named after a **Rudyard Kipling** character from his book **Kim**.

So, what was the point of this? And even more so, what was the reason for playing it as part of worship?



Kipling's Kim was learning to become a spy and this was part of the training. To notice things, and changes.

Sometimes we notice change. Sometimes we don't. Sometimes it's for the better. Sometimes it's for the worse. Sometimes the changes are quite small. Sometimes they can be really big. Sometimes even catastrophic.

Back when God was sharing his blueprint for a new society, Israel was given the rules needed to make sure everyone was equal and looked after. But God knew that things would change over time. Some people would gain great wealth whilst others would gain great debt. Some people would lose their land while others would even lose their freedom. [Wow! That sounds very familiar in our present circumstances.]

So, God gave his people the chance to reset – to look back at how things were at the beginning and go back to that fairer world. Once in a generation – every 50 years – God told the people to forgive debts, return land, free slaves, and let the land rest, so all people and even the Earth could get back to how things were meant to be. It was called the **Year of Jubilee**. I wonder... how we might influence and change the way we live today to make the world a fairer place?

In this Jubilee year for the URC, is that just what is being done?

General Assembly agreed to make 'Cost of Living' payments to assist Ministers and staff with rising household costs, and to investigate a 'benevolent fund to help retired ministers'. A new initiative is underway with the aim of creating a national support fund.

In our own Synod, the recent Meeting agreed to set aside a sum to support churches in difficulties with energy payments. This is supported by the East Midlands Trust and details are being developed. The Trust directors have recognised the effect of costs on our own staff and provided appropriate support.

So, what about the Resource Areas, groups of churches and individual churches - what can be done here? I'm sure some will manage OK, but not so sure about a number of others. Probably we are not able to do what was described in **Leviticus** as God's Jubilee plan, but maybe, just maybe, there is an opportunity to help in a loving and neighbourly way in these inflationary times. Perhaps just talking might be of help, but hopefully more likely some local conversations could lead to positive and creative ways to do supportive things together.

If intuitive and positive solutions are found, how about [sharing with us](#), so we can then share across the Synod?



## Lay Presidency at the Sacraments

**Saturday 26 November**  
**Christ Church URC, Leicester**

You are reminded that this year's **Sacraments Support Day** takes place at **Christ Church URC**, Leicester on **Saturday 26 November**, led by East Midlands Synod Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** and Synod Clerk the **Revd Camilla Veitch**. This should be attended by all Authorised Elders due to refresh their training to preside at Baptisms and Holy Communion. "Refresher" training takes place from 1.30-4.00pm; anyone newly nominated to preside should attend from 10.30am.

All churches have been contacted earlier this year to ask whether they wished anyone currently serving as Authorised Elders to continue in that role, or to make any fresh nominations. If you still need to book attendance, please email **Hannah Holmes** now on [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk). Authorised Elders last trained before 2018 who are unable to attend the Sacraments Support Day for any reason are invited to contact **Derek Graham** (Training & Development Officer) for advice: please email [training@urc5.org.uk](mailto:training@urc5.org.uk).

Authorisation to preside at the Sacraments is granted by the Synod, rather than the local church; its extension is now conditional on undertaking refresher training every five years, instead of three years as before. Lay Preachers who are invited to preside at Holy Communion from time to time are asked to maintain their training in the same way. For full details of East Midlands Synod policy on Lay Presidency please visit: <https://urc5.org.uk/content/lay-presidency-east-midlands-synod>.

## Around the East Midlands



We send our warmest congratulations to the **Revd Geoff Herickx** on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Ordination.

Geoff was presented with his Certificate of Service on Sunday 9 October at Oadby United Reformed Church by **Eileen Williams**, Group Lay Leader.

Our congratulations are also due to **Abington Avenue URC**, Northampton, who have now achieved **the Eco Church Award** at the **Silver** level, marking their continuing work to care for God's earth.

**General Assembly 2022** adopted a renewed **Environmental Policy** and urged all bodies of the URC, including local churches, to take urgent action to reduce carbon emissions. Participation in **Eco Church**, a free programme offered by the charity **A Rocha UK**, is a recommended route for churches to examine and improve their care for Creation. For details, visit:

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> .

Has your church already signed up for **Eco Church**, or taken strides to improve your environmental credentials? Please share your news with us in this e-letter by emailing [training@urc5.org.uk](mailto:training@urc5.org.uk) and [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) .



# Anniversary Concert at St Andrew's URC, Peterborough

Sunday 27 November 3.00pm

## St Andrews United Reformed Church

Ledbury Road, Netherton, PE3 9RF



**Concert on Sunday 27 November at 3pm**  
to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the  
church.

**Helen Didsbury *soprano*: Cassie Pattinson *violin*:**  
**Fergus Black *piano***

**Scottish music by Haydn, Beethoven, Arvo Pärt and  
Malcolm Arnold. As well as some music by real Scots.**

Entry is free including seasonal refreshments. Donations to the  
church charities are welcome.  
Booking is not needed, although seats may be reserved by emailing:

[standrewsurcpeterborough@gmail.com](mailto:standrewsurcpeterborough@gmail.com)



Faith - Hope - Love - Since 1972

## Personal News

It is with great sadness that we bring news of the deaths of the following servants of the Church. We give thanks to God for all that has been achieved through their lives and ministries.

**Wessex Synod** informs us of the death of retired minister the **Revd Chris Copley**. Chris died on **Tuesday 18 October 2022**. She served at: City Temple (1983-86); Bushey (1986-90); Bannister Street, Lytham (1996-98); and Lymington (2011-17). We hold Chris's family and friends in our prayers.

**North Western Synod** informs us of the death of retired minister the **Revd Marjorie Ayton**, who died on **Thursday 27 October 2022**. Marjorie served at: Stanningley (1962-81); in the West Leeds Team (1977-81) and at Armley before retiring in 1997. We hold Marjorie's family and friends in our prayers.

In our own Synod, it is with deep regret that we report the death of our Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher **Sheila Ashmore**, on **Sunday 23 October 2022**. A long-term member at Burton Joyce URC, and latterly at Sherwood URC, Sheila not only preached widely but served the Synod as Lay Preaching Commissioner for Nottinghamshire. She also served as the Free Church representative on the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Synod. We hold Sheila's family and friends in our prayers.

Further to the news of his death in our last edition, we can now confirm the details for the funeral of the **Revd Angus Duncan**. The funeral will be held at **St. Peter's Church**, Waverton, Chester (CH3 7QN) on **Friday 4 November** at 12.15pm, followed by light refreshments at Waverton Institute (CH3 7QN). There will be a private committal beforehand at Blacon Crematorium for immediate family only.

## Horticultural Highlights from Our Jubilee Banner

Our **Jubilee Banner**, on which every church in the East Midlands Synod is represented, features in the Digest section of **Reform's** November issue. If you would like to borrow the banner for a special service at your church, please call the Synod Office or email [jubilee@urc5.org.uk](mailto:jubilee@urc5.org.uk)

Here are a few more of the individual squares found in the banner, all from churches who chose to represent their local presence and ministry by reflecting God's green fingers.





**Spalding URC** have created a stylised representation of the tulip fields that play such a major part in the life of the Lincolnshire town. For more than 50 years, the church welcomed and fed hundreds of visitors on the weekend of the annual **Tulip Parade** and many became friends, returning year after year.



**Rose Hill URC** in Chesterfield also chose a floral theme, in keeping with the church's name: a beautiful yellow rose. It was embroidered by church member **Margaret Meeney**.



**Arnold URC** is represented by a flower inspired by those found alongside the church's driveway. Craft Club member **Hazel Bromiley** used acrylics to paint her own design, in which the bloom represents Jesus, Light of the World, while the brown stem and green leaves symbolise the Cross.

**Mackworth URC** have chosen to depict their magnificent flowering cherry, planted when the church was built over 60 years ago. Secretary **Ann Luckett** explains, "Every child who has gone through the church, Boys' Brigade or Girls' Brigade has played under it, picnicked by it or tried to climb it." Making a wonderful display of blossom every spring, it stands as a potent symbol of the church.



Church gardens also feature in the panel crafted by members of the **Hobby and Chat** group at **Long Eaton URC**. Standing right in the centre of the town, the church was built in 1876 as the Congregational Church and is proud to have praised God and served its community for almost 150 years. Secretary **Teresa Hopkins** says, "We have a beautiful lawned area at the front of church, surrounded by flowering shrubs and trees, which has seen many Sunday picnics, garden parties and recently an outdoor baptism!" The musical notes, meanwhile, mark the community choir concerts and robust hymn singing which give rise to its local nickname as the "singing church".

The contribution from **Newport Pagnell URC** symbolises its vision of a new building as a community hub serving the needs of local people. This vision has now been realised in bricks and mortar in the form of the **Mead Centre**, a place where it hopes seeds will fall on good soil and bring forth grain a hundredfold. The patchwork panel, crafted by **Lyn Kidby** using home-marbled fabric applied to the backing material, represents the seed of the church's vision gradually blooming towards its destiny.



## Climate Justice Talk

**Wednesday 9 November 7.30pm**  
**The Manor Room, Teversal**

In response to the **Talking Climate Justice** tour which Christian Aid is inviting churches to participate in throughout this autumn, a talk and discussion on the subject of Climate Justice will be held next **Wednesday, 9 November**, in the Nottinghamshire village of **Teversal**, close to Sutton-in-Ashfield.

The event will be held in the **Manor Room** community centre, beginning at 7.30pm. For satnav or smartphone directions to the venue, please use the postcode **NG17 3JW**.

All are warmly invited to this ecumenical event.



## Talking about Hybrid Church

**Wednesday 9 November 7.30pm, online**

A promotional poster for an online event. The background is dark blue with light blue circles. At the top left is the logo for 'The United Reformed Church Trinity'. At the top right is the 'MEDIA FOR Ministry' logo. The main text reads: 'Talking about... HYBRID CHURCH' in large white letters, followed by 'Wednesday 9th November @ 7:30pm' in white. Below that, 'WORSHIP TECH OUTREACH YOUTH WORK' is written in yellow. Underneath is 'Come along to YOUR space to share and learn' in white. At the bottom left, there is a yellow envelope icon, followed by the text: 'For more info, email: jenny.mills@urc.org.uk dan@media4ministry.co.uk'. Below that is a blue video camera icon, followed by 'Meeting ID: 892 8553 7599' and 'Passcode: 655777'. On the right side, there is a circular image showing a glass of wine and some bread on a table.

# URC Waldensian Fellowship Online

Monday 14 November 7.30pm



*The URC Waldensian Fellowship On-Line*

**Monday 14 November at 7.30 pm**

*Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land*

*The experience of English-speaking congregations in Italy*

with

**Victoria Munsey,**

an American who has lived in Italy for more than 30 years

and

**Daniel and Grace Pratt Morris-Chapman,**

Methodist ministers, currently serving in Rome

Since 1975 the **Waldensian Church** has been united with the **Methodist Church** in Italy. Each denomination has its own churches but ministers of both denominations move between the two in their ministry. Some, like the churches in Turin and Milan, also have English-speaking congregations and the Methodists have their own church in Rome near Castello Sant'Angelo. These congregations are by no means limited to English and American worshippers.

For this event we are joined by people who have experience of some of these churches which they will share with us. There will also be time for questions and answers.

For more information contact: **Revd John Bremner** on 01324 306887 or [bremner.johns@gmail.com](mailto:bremner.johns@gmail.com)



# Youth Mental First Aid

**Wednesday 30 November – Thursday 1 December 2022**  
at URC Church House, London  
[www.bit.ly/november-mhfa](http://www.bit.ly/november-mhfa)

**Thursday 2 February – Friday 3 February 2023**  
at Northern College, Manchester  
[www.bit.ly/february-mhfa](http://www.bit.ly/february-mhfa)

**Youth Mental Health First Aid**  
Learn to support young people

- Gain an in-depth understanding of mental health and factors that can affect wellbeing in the youth sector
- Develop practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues
- Feel confident to step in, reassure and support a young person in distress
- Enhance your interpersonal skills such as non-judgemental listening and learn to champion self-care

For more info and to book, contact:

**MHFA England INSTRUCTOR MEMBER**  
Children's & Youth Development Officers  
Mersey Synod - Steven Mitchell [cydo@urcmerseysynod.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urcmerseysynod.org.uk)  
Southern Synod - Tom Hackett [cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk)

Visit the MHFA England website at [mhfaengland.org](http://mhfaengland.org)  
Find us on social media: @MHFAEngland

[www.bit.ly/november-mhfa](http://www.bit.ly/november-mhfa)  
30 Nov - 1 Dec 2022  
URC Church House,  
London WC1H 9RT

[www.bit.ly/february-mhfa](http://www.bit.ly/february-mhfa)  
2 Feb - 3 Feb 2023  
Northern College,  
Manchester M14 5JP

**Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)** is an internationally recognised training course, designed to teach people how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. **MHFA England** offer a range of courses tailored for people who teach, work, live with and care for young people aged 8 to 18. The courses can be attended by anyone from age 16 upwards. Each and every MHFA England course is delivered by a quality assured instructor.

## Youth MHFA Two Day course

Completing the two-day course qualifies you as a Youth Mental Health First Aider, equipped with:

- An in-depth understanding of young people's mental health and factors that affect wellbeing
- Practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues
- Confidence to reassure and support a young person in distress
- Enhanced interpersonal skills such as non-judgemental listening
- Knowledge to help a young person recover their health by guiding them to further support – whether that's through self-help sites, their place of learning, the NHS, or a mix – engaging with parents, carers and external agencies where appropriate
- Ability to support a young person with a long-term mental health issue or disability to thrive
- Tools to look after your own mental wellbeing.

The courses are delivered by MHFA England Instructor Members **Tom Hackett** and **Steven Mitchell**. For further information, please contact: [cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk) .

## Positively Rural – Opportunities of Rural Chaplaincy

Tuesday 17 January from 7:30pm



**Positively Rural** offers a webinar exploring different models of rural chaplaincy and the support offered in rural communities.

At the webinar there will be two speakers who have diverse experiences of Rural Chaplaincy. **Revd Maggy Ellison** is a chaplain at York Auction Mart and **Deacon Maggie Patchett** has been involved in various rural chaplaincies. They will explore what is involved in chaplaincy and our role in supporting it and playing our part in it.

To register, please visit: <https://PositivelyRural230117.eventbrite.co.uk> . **Positively Rural** is an online community hosted by the Yorkshire Plus Learning Network, but open to anyone of any denomination involved in rural ministry, including volunteers, lay workers and ministers.

## URC Spirituality

**Tuesday 22–Saturday 26 November**  
**Online**

For five days beginning on **Tuesday 22 November**, **URC Spirituality** invites you to prepare for Advent by dropping into its free online sessions.

Entitled **Praying with Those Who Wait**, the sessions will reveal what we might learn from those on the edge of Christ's advent through a blend of prayer, exploration and discussion.

For more information, and to sign up, please visit: [bit.ly/urcspiritualitynov22](http://bit.ly/urcspiritualitynov22) .



22nd - 26th November 2022, online  
7:30am - morning prayer,  
12:30pm - digging deeper  
7:30pm - discussion time

URC: Spirituality presents...

# praying with those who wait

How might we learn from  
those on the edge of  
Christ's advent?

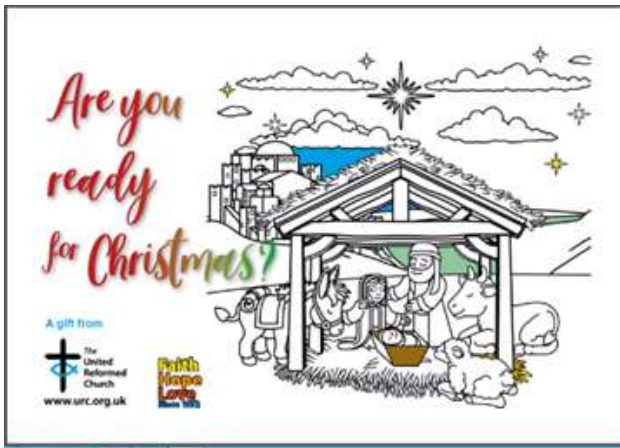
Come to one, some or all of  
these **free, online** sessions!

Sign-up / more info:  
[bit.ly/urcspiritualitynov22](http://bit.ly/urcspiritualitynov22)

United Reformed Church  
SPIRITUALITY

Media for  
Ministry

## New: Free Advent Packs from the URC



**Are you ready for Christmas?** How often does someone ask that? Being ready means different things to different people. Being ready can feel like a huge 'to do' list. It might feel impossible in these challenging times.

Now **URC Children and Youth Work** has created a new Advent pack, available **free** via the URC Bookshop. The pack is ideal for churches to give to families as a Christmas gift, inviting them to explore how everyone got ready for the first Christmas.

The Advent pack is designed to give people of all ages some space and some fun, as they prepare for Christmas:

- Count down to Christmas using the poster – mark off each day.
- Each week spread out the activity sheet – then choose what to do:
  - read and share the story
  - solve the puzzles
  - do the challenges
  - colour and doodle
  - chat about the questions
  - find the 10 hidden pictures
  - make an advent ring



There is something for everyone – you can do as little or much as you like, dip in and out over the week, on your own or together with others. Each week there is also a link to **Families on Faith Adventure @ home** for anyone who wishes to explore further . You are warmly invited to claim some free packs, to help families celebrate God coming to be with us through the birth of Jesus.

**URC Advent resource for churches to share with families and households – available for free (with an option to donate if able) from URC Bookshop (pay P&P) from 19 October**

These A5 envelopes will be delivered unsealed so churches can add their own material and invitation to a Christmas Service – they can also include other items such as colouring pencils, play dough, or craft materials should they wish.

## Situations Vacant



The East Midlands Synod  
of the United Reformed Church  
is seeking to appoint a

**Children's and Youth Development Officer (Ref CYDO)**

This is a full-time post for 37.5 hours/week  
(including evening and weekends) on a permanent contract.

Salary: £32,796 to £33,624 depending on experience and  
qualifications

This post is subject to an Enhanced DBS Disclosure

This post offers a challenging opportunity for an experienced and professionally qualified Children's and Youth Worker with training and development skills. We are looking for an enthusiastic and committed Christian to develop our strategy, serve the churches of the Synod in offering advice, training, and support to those working with children and young people and to work with the wider United Reformed Church. The Officer appointed will be a member of a collaborative Synod team and therefore good team working skills are essential.

If you share our passion for children and young people playing their part in the mission of God, please contact:

Mrs Chris Willis  
East Midlands Synod Office  
1 Edwards Lane  
Sherwood  
Nottingham  
NG5 3AA  
Tel: 0115 9609241  
E-mail: [admin@urc5.org.uk](mailto:admin@urc5.org.uk)

**Closing date for applications: 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022**  
**Interviews to be held: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

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

We are committed to diversity and equality of opportunity. We especially welcome applications from women and Black and Minority Ethnic Groups who are currently under-represented in this area of work in the Church.

## Find Us Online



The [East Midlands Synod website](https://www.urch5.org.uk/) is the one-stop shop for all essential information:  
<https://www.urch5.org.uk/>



Our [East Midlands Synod Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/URC-East-Midlands-Synod-102279281444717/) 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 [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/UCzXFUjKn8XOGeZU5SgN95g), the Synod shares special events, training videos, worship resources and more. **Evening Prayers** are also uploaded here. Please subscribe:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUjKn8XOGeZU5SgN95g>

## 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.

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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

***Next edition: Thursday 17 November 2022***

Please send all material for this E-Letter to both:  
[trainingpa@urch5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urch5.org.uk) and [training@urch5.org.uk](mailto:training@urch5.org.uk)

Copy deadline for next edition: 12 noon on **Monday 14 November 2022**