

Opening Reflection by Richard Knott

Children and Youth Development Officer

What are you waiting for?
It's the most wonderful time of the year!
Are you feeling Christmassy yet?

Well truth be told of course in the life of the Church we are still many more sleeps away from the great celebration of the mystery of Christmas. We are however approaching that wonder filled season of the Church calendar. The time of **Advent** which begins four Sundays before Christmas and is one of the most special and significant seasons. How do you experience this season which is all about the waiting and the anticipation of the arrival of the most special gift?



How do you feel about the whole idea of waiting? I have a tendency sometimes to be a little impatient. I often become impatient simply waiting in a queue at traffic lights. So, waiting can seem like an odd thing to celebrate, yet the church does this every year.

Spending time alongside children and young people can sometimes be a test of our patience and our willingness to wait. Often too, we have to ask them to wait as they are constantly asking “what is next?” during our events and programmes or “are we nearly there yet?” on journeys.

Waiting can seem to be a waste of time in today's bustle of daily life and the immediacy that the society around us demands. Same day delivery of your items purchased online seemed like an innovation only a few short years ago, now groceries can be delivered to your door via apps on our smart phone in a matter of just minutes (if the adverts for such services are to be trusted). We seem to have a constant expectation that the things we want will be immediately available and the idea of having to wait, let alone any suggestion of this being a positive thing would seem an alien concept to many. We can therefore give grateful thanks to the early Church that we have this time to remind us and to celebrate waiting.

Waiting is important and significant in the life of God's people: throughout Scripture we see how they waited, longing for many years before eventually, the promise of the Messiah was fulfilled. Perhaps that is why traditionally in many Churches the time set aside for Advent lasts longer than the time set aside for celebrating the mystery of Christmas, which doesn't start till 25 December and lasts for only the following two Sundays?

What does waiting look like for you and your congregation this Advent season? Perhaps this doesn't seem like a fair or reasonable question with all the many things listed on your to do list. Or does the fact that you have waited so long to be able to celebrate with friends and family, in ways denied to so many last year, mean that now adding 'waiting' to that list just doesn't sit right with you? But I wonder if that might be, at least in part, the point of the whole season? To remind us that God is in control and that all our striving and busyness can achieve so very little unless we have first waited on God.

Advent is also a time of getting ready: getting ready to celebrate the great mystery of Christmas and the incarnation that changes everything. Most especially it changes the way we understand ourselves, each other, the Creator and the world created around us.

Whatever it is you are waiting for this Advent, I pray that the God of all time may bless you and all with whom you share the joys and blessings of this season, and may you know the true value in the anticipating and waiting on the arrival of the Christ Child, the greatest gift of all.

Richard Knott is Children and Youth Development Officer in the West Midlands Synod, currently on secondment to the East Midlands Synod on a part-time basis.



To help you through this Advent season, as we did last year, the Children and Youth Work team collaborated with the CYDO+ team and the Communications team to offer the **Come and See Advent Packs** which have now sold out – however we are delighted to share some of the contents along with additional free resources, including a church guide, all available to download for free via <https://urc.org.uk/advent-come-see>



Booking is still open for **Youth Assembly 2022** (Friday 28 – Sunday 30 January)! [Click](#) on the picture opposite for more information and to book.

Advent with East Midlands Synod

Evening Prayers – live at 9.30pm every day

“A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.”

Isaiah 11:1

The Bible tells us Jesus was born “of David’s line” – but how often do we stop to consider the generations that were each a stepping stone toward his birth?

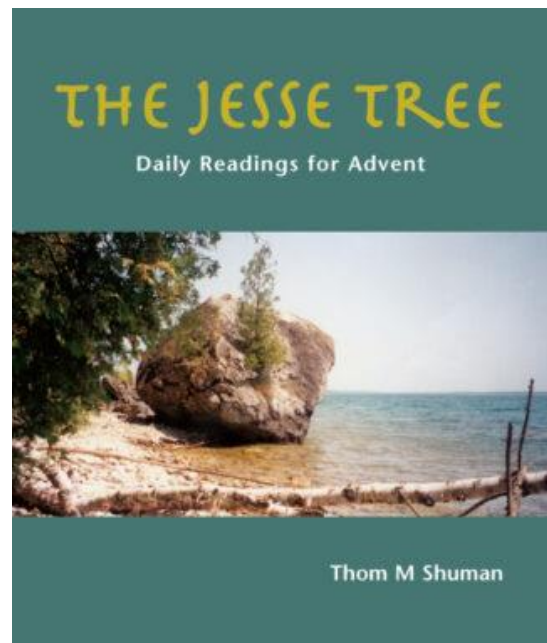


Throughout Advent, as we prepare once more for the coming of Christ, our Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** and the Evening Prayers team will be sharing a series of readings and reflections about Jesus’s heritage.

Each is taken from **The Jesse Tree** by the **Revd Thom M Shuman**, the Ohio-based poet, pastor and associate member of the Iona Community who has taken part in our nightly Evening Prayers ever since they began in spring 2020.

Thom’s book **The Jesse Tree** is available from [Wild Goose Publications](http://www.wildgoosepublications.com), who kindly allow us to share his work. It explores the stories that Jesus himself might have heard about at bedtime - including the women, the prophets and the exiles who, even if not linked to Jesus genetically, passed on their “spiritual DNA” to him and to us.

A half hour of scripture, intercession, music and reflection, our **Evening Prayers** are held at 9.30pm every evening on the Synod’s **Facebook Page** at <https://www.facebook.com/URC-East-Midlands-Synod-102279281444717>, where if you wish you can share greetings and comments live.



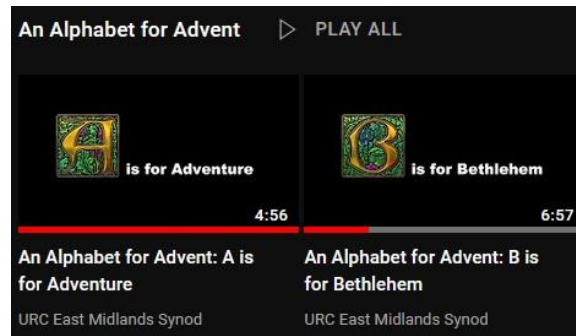
For those who don’t use Facebook, the prayers are also uploaded shortly afterward to our **YouTube** page: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUurjKn8XOGeZU5SgN95g/videos>

You are welcome to join in with prayers every evening, follow the whole story of Jesus’s family tree during Advent, or just drop in once or twice – it’s up to you. Our exploration of **The Jesse Tree** begins this weekend at 9.30pm on **Advent Sunday**, 28 November.



Still available from last year is Thom Shuman’s **A-Z of Advent**. By Thom’s kind permission, the full text is on the East Midlands Synod website at:

<https://www.urch5.org.uk/sites/default/files/attached/An%20Alphabet%20for%20Advent%202020.pdf>



While 26 guest readers from all around the Synod read each day's reflection on our **YouTube** Page at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwj79zQfkCg&list=PL2p7yjgm5IRc2e3kOgDx0VaXHAr_NAZRg

From Daily Devotions: a Pulpit Supply Tool for Advent



All during Advent, as a new innovation, the **Sunday Services** provided as part of the URC's [Daily Devotions](#) are to be available in a format which will make them a useful pulpit supply tool. The services are created on **Powerpoint** – and offered in a format that can be played even if the Powerpoint programme isn't installed on a computer – so that any church with access to data projector and a computer connected to the sound system or speaker can make use of them for a ready-made service.

These include videos of the introductions, sermons and blessings recorded by the four preachers during Advent, of whom the **Revd John Grundy** has also provided a video version of his presiding at Holy Communion. However, the files are fully adaptable so that you can also substitute your own hymns, readings and prayers if you wish.

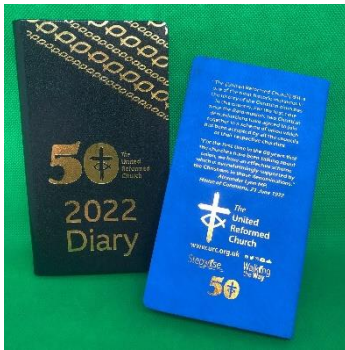
For full details, instructions, and links to all the services please visit:

<https://mailchi.mp/urc.org.uk/advent-services?e=%5bUNIQID>

Services will also be provided for Christmas and New Year, including a Midnight Communion Service, a Christmas morning service, and services for each Sunday up to 9 January, marking Epiphany. If you wish to receive these please [sign up for them here](#). The **Revd Andy Braunston**, who masterminds the Daily Devotions, plans to continue and further develop this gift to local churches in 2022.

Get ready for 2022 - from the URC Shop

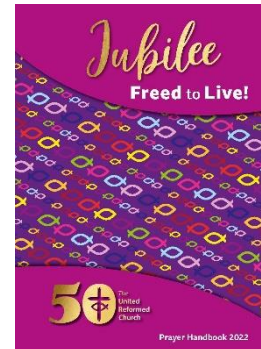
Now available from the [URC shop](#) are:



2022 URC 50th Anniversary
Pocket Diary (£6.99)



URC Buildings Calendar 2022
(£2.99)



The 2022 URC Prayer
Handbook – Jubilee: Freed to Live!
(£5.49/£10.99)

All these, together with a wide range of Christmas cards, books, stationery and branded merchandise are available to order at: <https://urcshop.co.uk/>

URC 50th Anniversary Service: Tickets Available



The organ at Methodist Central Hall

Free tickets are now available for the **United Reformed Church's 50th Anniversary Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving**, taking place on **1 October 2022** at **Methodist Central Hall Westminster, London**, where the Uniting Assembly of the United Reformed Church took place in 1972.

The day starts at **United Reformed Church House** at 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT with an **Open Church House** event, packed full of jubilee related talks and activities, as well as an opportunity to meet the team that work at the office. There will be a Walk to Westminster with a guided tour before gathering for the service which starts at **2.30pm**.

The intergenerational thanksgiving service is free and open to all in the URC. To ensure adequate provision is made, tickets for under 5s, 5-11s, 11-18s, and wheelchair users are available.

Please book your tickets through the Eventbrite booking system here: bit.ly/urc50

Personal News

It is with great sadness that we bring news of the death of the following retired ministers. We give thanks to God for all that He achieved through their lives and ministries.

Resident in the East Midlands Synod in his retirement, the **Revd Eric Allen** died on **Saturday 13 November 2021**. Eric came to ministry in 1954 and served at: Thornton Heath (1954-59); Banstead (1959-65); Banstead and Walton-on-the-Hill team ministry (1965-68); St Andrew's, Leeds (1968-84); Dulwich Grove (1984-87) and finally as Moderator in Mersey Province (1987-94).

Eric's funeral will be held at **12.45pm** on **Monday 6 December** at the Church of **Christ the Cornerstone**, Milton Keynes, followed at **2.30pm** by an interment at **Olney Cemetery**. The church service will be live streamed and the link will be supplied on request: please email: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk. We hold Eric's wife Joan and family in our thoughts and prayers.

The Eastern Synod informs us that the **Revd Bill Francis** died in October 2021, having retired to Raumati, New Zealand.

Bill was ordained a missionary for the New Hebrides at St Paul's Church, Christchurch in 1958 and served much of his life in New Zealand and Vanuatu and, indeed, was awarded the Vanuatu Medal of Merit for his services to Vanuatu. Bill also served at Buntingford for six years from 1992 until 1998, when he and his wife, returned to New Zealand. We hold his family in our thoughts and prayers.

Holiday Forum Social Zoom Drop-in Evening

Saturday 4 December from 7.00-9.30pm



HOLIDAY FORUM
faith, fun and fellowship

Beat those winter blues

It's getting darker outside and the days are getting shorter, but you've got a chance to warm yourself up by joining the Holiday Forum's **Zoom Social Drop-In Evening** on **Saturday 4 December** from 7.00-9.30pm.

This is a very relaxed drop-in evening – there will be breakout rooms to catch up with people and a few quiz rounds to keep you entertained.

It's the perfect opportunity to catch up with Forum friends before the new year.

All you need is the following [Zoom link](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82281200423): <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82281200423>

We Need To Show Another Way



The Christian disability charity **Through the Roof** shares news of a special presentation:

At a recent online event **Jonathan Bryan**, who communicates by using eye movements only, encouraged us all that, *“As a church community we need to show another way from the norms of society, where disability is often begrudgingly accommodated.”*

Jonathan communicated every word of his powerful presentation, although it was physically read by his friend, and it can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Psp9xLxKR6s>

Jonathan shared some of his incredible journey from being unable to communicate to being freed to express his innermost thoughts and perspectives on life and faith, using eye movements alone to communicate via a specially designed spelling board.

He is used to the many disabling factors in society, and church life, that limit his full participation as part of God’s family – although his own church and youth leader intentionally involve him in the planning and decision-making of activities which affect him.



Jonathan Bryan

Still only aged 15, he has published a book, **Eye Can Write**, and established the charity **Teach Us Too**, which calls for all children to be given the opportunity to read and write, regardless of their perceived ability.

One delegate enthused: *“Jonathan showed us that although he is profoundly disabled, he is also profoundly able.”*

Through the Roof CEO, Tim Wood said, *“Jonathan’s presentation is highly recommended viewing for those committed to enabling disabled people to be part of church life, and absolutely essential for those who aren’t!”*

The charity provides free support and resources to anyone who signs up as a Roofbreaker to champion the needs of disabled people in their church or ministry. Find out more at: [Home - Through the Roof](#)

The Art of Spiritual Accompaniment



The Art of Spiritual Accompaniment is an experiential course for both lay and ordained people exploring listening, prayer, discernment and accompanying others in the Christian life, organized by **The Spirituality Network within the Diocese of Derby** and the **Nottingham and Derby Methodist District** but open to all. The course will run from **March 2022** until the end of **July 2022**.

There will be four face-to-face sessions on Saturdays at **Darley Dale Methodist Church**, and eleven sessions on Tuesday evenings run on Zoom. These sessions will include space and silence, an exploration of different ways of praying, practical listening skills in triads, reflection time in small groups and teaching about spiritual traditions and good practice.

The closing date for applications is **15 December 2021**. For full details and an application form please email **Nicky Fenton**: nicky.fenton@bishopofderby.org

Some Personal Reflections on COP26

by **Graham Ghaleb**

We looked up at the clock and then shared our prayers for the success of **COP26**. The clock on the Tolbooth Steeple in Glasgow had been set at one minute to midnight, with a message of urgency for the planet, picked up by world leaders during the first few days of the conference.

I had gone to Glasgow as one of thousands of faith and community activists concerned for the future of the planet, and more specifically one of a smaller group of pilgrims determined to support the **Young Christians Climate Network** relay, which had taken their message of climate justice from the **G7** leaders' conference in Cornwall to the COP in Glasgow. Over 2,500 people had joined the walk in its course through the country with hundreds of churches offering hospitality, including some from East Midlands Synod, so that the walkers never had to pay for accommodation or food. On one occasion they were invited to breakfast by three different churches and felt they could not refuse any of the invitations!

The relay had been organised at short notice because of the pandemic, despite warnings that it would be a very demanding undertaking, but the young people were determined to do something in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in churches and communities around the world at risk of losing their homes. Climate-vulnerable countries cannot access finance for adaptation and climate-induced loss and damage without incurring further debt. So for the **YCCN** and others **COP26** is the time to change this, to hold governments to account to deliver and exceed the promised £100bn a year in climate finance, although at the time of writing the fulfilment of this pledge has been delayed by at least 18 months. They believe it is time to "Rise to the Moment" as they want to be able to look back in years to come and say "we did not just sit at home while unjust decisions were made on our doorstep; we set sail towards a just future." Alongside their relay, the young Christians also arranged for the transportation of a small boat to Glasgow, reflecting the reality that all humanity is in the same storm but not in the same boat.



I had arrived in Glasgow six hours and six minutes late, because of flooding in the Lake District and the Scottish Borders: frustrating to be sure, but a timely reminder that floods and fires are more likely as the climate warms. The next day, the second last day of the relay, was no different as we walked from Motherwell to Uddingston, with rivulets running down the pavements and lakes in some of the roads. In places the rivers had burst their banks. But the conversation was interesting and at times inspiring, as we heard of the concerns and the strong faith that had prompted the launch of the YCCN relay. As the rain stopped and the sun appeared there was a warm welcome at a church in Uddingston, with tea and Tunnock's tea cakes (the Tunnock's factory is in Uddingston) and a conversation with the local MSP.

The following morning a much larger group gathered for the final leg into Glasgow, including ten of the pilgrims who had walked from London to Paris six years before for COP21. The sun shone. Walking was relatively easy, except in those parts where the path was under water, with the highlight perhaps the encounter with a larger **Extinction Rebellion** group, including members of their Faith Bridge group walking under the **Camino to COP** banner. Some of their group had started their pilgrimage on the beach at Newhaven, others had started at St James's Church, Piccadilly, but all seemed inspired by a concern for the integrity of creation.

Central to their pilgrimage was the **Coat of Hopes**, which gathered the griefs, remembrances, prayers and hopes of individuals and groups along the way with small creative squares being sewn onto the coat at every stop. Every time a different person wore the coat and felt the weight and warmth of people's hopes, the song of the Coat was sung: "Ask me where I'm going; ask me what is my purpose; ask me what my name is; they call me the coat of hopes." Its creator, artist **Barbara Keal**, commented: "The coat will carry some voices that are rarely raised. It is not making a demand, but living a story. Its work is to share stories, build connections, start conversations and by its beauty, born of the energy committed to its creation and journey, maybe make that little space in which hearts can be changed." [See www.coatofhopes.uk and <https://caminotocop.com/>]

Although climate change for most was the primary concern, for some **COP26** was an opportunity to speak about a very different future from the one we seem to be pursuing, arguing that we should be seeking to create a kinder, more caring world in which all children are fed, where children and adults are freed from a life of anxiety and mental ill-health, where the majority of people's needs can be met locally and where all have the opportunity to experience life in all its fullness. For them and for many others that I met, the challenge was not just to address the issues of climate change but to answer God's call to create God's Kingdom on earth, a Kingdom of justice and peace in which every single person is valued. Clearly there is still a long way to go.

The gathering place for the various pilgrimages was Glasgow Green, where we met pilgrims who had walked from Sweden, Poland, Germany, Holland and Switzerland, including a small number we had met in 2015 when pilgrims from Europe and beyond had gathered in the Cathedral of Saint Denis in Paris. It was a noisy but brightly creative gathering with some participants developing very visual representations of the climate crisis. One man, who felt he had to do something to express his concern, had created a 3 metre high "displaced Dora", a woman representing all those who have already lost their homes as a result of the rise in sea water. Sadly, even with urgent action over the coming years, increasing numbers of people in the

low-lying islands of the Pacific Ocean will lose their homes, their heritage and their identity as the seas rise. We will see increasing numbers of climate refugees at a time when our attitude to refugees is often less than hospitable. Then there was the man who had dragged a polar bear (not real) over 300 miles to Glasgow as a reminder that a warming climate is threatening the habitat of many animal species, including the polar bear, and that many species are at serious risk of extinction.

From Glasgow Green we paraded through the streets to George Square, protected, as it seemed, for a few moments by a magnificent double rainbow, a vivid and powerful reminder of God's covenant with the people and with all of creation.



As we walked we became aware that not everyone was supportive, with a group of Anti-Vaxxers proclaiming a very different message, and many others just going about their business, in the shops or preparing for the Halloween festivities which were to follow that evening. It was a timely reminder that the hearts of many will need to be changed if our aspirations for a carbon neutral world and for climate justice are ever to be realised. Despite this, the gathering in George Square was joyous, as representatives of the various pilgrim groups spoke about their journeys and their purpose and their sense of solidarity particularly with those in the Global South who are most at risk but least responsible for the climate crisis. Many had walked hundreds of miles, with some walking a thousand, including a man from Germany in a wire globe carrying the climate promises of hundreds of people [mypromise.earth]. These pilgrimages and displays of determination and stamina were a sign of many people's commitment to climate justice and the future of God's earth. That memorable day ended, for those who had supported the YCCN pilgrimage, with a moving celebration of their achievement and the story of the relay itself in a service held at St George's, Tron in the heart of Glasgow. [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geJ3KLOgVPw>]

I stayed in Glasgow for another few days, attending events or watching Zoom meetings when I could and spending time in conversation with others concerned about the climate crisis. Like many others I tried to gain access to the Green Zone, but without a ticket I was refused entry. However I shared the prayers for the COP which members of Synod had asked me to bring and hope that they will have a positive impact alongside the hundreds and thousands of other prayers from people around the world.

History will determine whether Glasgow has been a good COP or bad COP, but what my relatively brief stay in Glasgow has shown is that there are many, many people from around the world who will continue to work tirelessly for climate justice and for a world in which all are valued. The disappointment is that the voices of those most at risk have not been sufficiently well heard, particularly as for some it is already too late. As one of the pilgrims who walked with me to Paris commented, "when you speak with someone from the Pacific islands, they do not ask, 'what is your name?', but 'where do you come from?'" so when their island slips beneath the waves, they lose not only their home but their very identity. For the sake of those most at risk and for our children and grandchildren, the struggle for climate justice must continue; all of us as God's children have a part to play.

Graham Ghaleb

Convenor of the East Midlands Synod **JPIC** group (Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation)

Church Leaders Respond to COP26

The **Revd Clare Downing**, Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, joins with leaders from the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Methodist Church in Great Britain in responding to the conclusion of the COP26 summit held in Glasgow:



“Our Churches acknowledge that while we live in an age of individuality and immediacy, this is a journey not of individuals but of a community: the people of God and the people of the earth. Whilst individual actions are important, this is a journey that requires us to work together to build a safe and healthy future for all. The involvement of so many sectors of society in **COP26** was an inspiration. Sadly, the response of governments is not yet adequate, and we call for further actions that respond meaningfully to the magnitude of the emergency that we face.”

The full statement is available on the URC website at:

<https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3970-cop-26-summit-failed-say-church-leaders>

Action for Children Christmas Appeal

Be a Secret Santa for a vulnerable child

Action for Children shares the following appeal:

For most of us the festive season is a happy time. But there are children all over the UK who face Christmas without food, warmth or love. Action for Children is doing everything they can to change this – and they need your help right now.

Please be a Secret Santa for a vulnerable child.

Visit iamsanta.org.uk/URC to give a virtual gift or dedicate a gift to a loved one. Thank you!

A promotional poster for the 'Be a Secret Santa' campaign. The background is dark blue with white stars. At the top, the text 'Be a Secret Santa' is written in a large, white, cursive font, followed by 'for a vulnerable child' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. To the right is a red star with the text 'Action for Children' inside. Below the main text, it says 'Thousands of children and young people face Christmas without a hot meal, a present or a safe place to sleep.' followed by 'With your help, we could change this.' At the bottom left, a red rounded rectangle contains the text 'Donate at: iamsanta.org.uk/urc'. At the bottom right, there is an illustration of a young girl with long, wavy orange hair, wearing a teal dress and grey tights, sitting on the ground. At the very bottom, small white text reads: 'Registered charity nos. 1097940/SC038092. Company no. 04764232. © Action for Children 2021. 1735.'

Situations Vacant

Anti-Trafficking & Modern Slavery – Awareness Raising & Volunteer Opportunities

Our ecumenical partners in the **Salvation Army** share the following volunteering opportunities relating to **anti-trafficking** and **modern slavery**.

Transport Volunteers - Do you drive? Do you have a car? If yes, then The Salvation Army needs your help! No car, no problem! The Salvation Army need Chaperones too.



Giving
Hope
Today

The Salvation Army Anti-Trafficking & Modern Slavery Unit are recruiting for Transport Volunteer Driver & Chaperones to transport victims of Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking to one of their contracted Safe Houses.



JUST ONE JOURNEY per month

- **Could make an amazing difference to someone's life**
- Do you drive? Do you have a car? If yes, then **we need your help!** The Salvation Army are recruiting for new **Transport Volunteer Drivers** to transport victims of Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking to one of our contracted Safe Houses.
- No car, no problem, **we need Chaperones too!** The Salvation Army are recruiting for **Transport Volunteer Chaperones** to accompany Drivers & to ensure victims feel safe and cared for.

Raise awareness NOW, Stop Modern Slavery

If you are interested in finding out more please contact ATMSVolunteering@salvationarmy.org.uk or visit our website <https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/volunteer/anti-trafficking-and-modern-slavery-volunteering>



Love God
Love Others

Do you want to support potential victims of Modern Slavery? **Can you spare 3 to 4 hours once per month?** If yes, then **we need your help!** The Salvation Army are recruiting for **First Responder Volunteers** to complete NRM Interviews.

What are NRM Interviews? NRM Interviews are the first step in a victim's journey of recovery, enabling access to support entitlements. Interviews are completed over the phone, with some face-to-face interviews as required. Volunteer First Responders gather information in order to understand what has happened and refer victims into the NRM via an online process.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact ATMSVolunteering@salvationarmy.org.uk or visit our website <https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/volunteer/anti-trafficking-and-modern-slavery-volunteering>

First Responder Volunteers -

Do you want to support potential victims of Modern Slavery? Can you spare 3 to 4 hours every month? If yes, then The Salvation Army need your help! The Salvation Army Anti-Trafficking & Modern Slavery Unit are recruiting for First Responder Volunteers to complete NRM interviews with potential victims of Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking.

For more information on either role, please contact ATMSVolunteering@salvationarmy.org.uk or apply via The Salvation Army website [here](#).

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 – **including our Advent series**. 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/UCzXFUrjKn8XOGGeZU5SgN95g), the Synod shares special events, training videos, worship resources and more. **Evening Prayers** are also uploaded here. Please subscribe:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUrjKn8XOGGeZU5SgN95g>

Contacting East Midlands Synod

The **Synod Office** is now open from Monday to Thursday each week. As a continued precaution, members of staff are attending the premises in two alternating “bubbles” and otherwise working from home. In the first instance please contact the staff by email in the usual way, as this will receive a direct response from the staff member you wish to correspond with. The office phone (**0115 960 9241**) will be answered Monday-Thursday, 9.00am-3.00pm.

Any further update to these arrangements will be posted on our website: www.urch5.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

Waiting Photo by [Ümit Bulut](#) on [Unsplash](#)

With thanks to ‘Through the Roof’ for photograph of Jonathan Bryan

Next edition: Thursday 9 December 2021

If your church is holding any special services for Advent and Christmas – and especially if others are invited to take part virtually – please consider sharing the details in the next edition of this E-letter, which will be the last of 2021.

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

Copy deadline for next edition: 12 noon on **Monday 6 December 2021**