
Wishing you a blessed and renewing Easter on behalf of everyone at East Midlands Synod



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

I suppose most of you reading this suffer from junk mail although after 12 months with hardly any, I suddenly find myself having to remove some 40 per week with a few of them coming through in triplicate.

They try all sorts of methods these days to make me think that the computerised junk mail is especially for me – 'Mr Kenyon, you have been chosen to...' – and despite our disparagement this type of mailing can work. Why? Because in a limited way, it appeals to a need in all of us... to feel special.

Blinded by tears, Mary doesn't recognise Jesus. It is only when she hears Jesus speak her name that she knows who it is. Several years later a devout Pharisee, caught up in a rage at the church as it grew across the Roman empire, was to fall to the ground in fear at the sound of his own name: 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me..?'

From the moment Mary and Saul heard their names spoken their lives would never be the same. Mary would proclaim the resurrection until her dying day. Saul would become the great church builder and pastor.

We may well have heard our name called. It may have been a commission from God which has been neglected for years. But be certain -- it was no junk mail delivery. We, and only we, have been chosen, for that task.

Induction of the Revd Darryl Root

The Induction of the **Revd Darryl Root** to **Bulwell URC** took place on Saturday 9 April 2022. Deputy Synod Moderator the **Revd Jane Wade** officiated, with the **Revd Louise Gee** (Nottinghamshire Pastoral Consultant) also participating in the service and Darryl herself preaching the sermon. Darryl will serve as a non-stipendiary minister at Bulwell, where she was warmly greeted. Representatives of the other churches of the North Nottinghamshire Area Church Partnership (NNACP), currently in formation, were also present to give Darryl an enthusiastic reception. The churches of the NNACP are currently in vacancy and once a new stipendiary minister is called the Area Partnership will be inaugurated and Darryl will serve all of the member churches.



We are delighted to welcome Darryl to the East Midlands Synod and pray that she will enjoy a fruitful and fulfilling ministry amongst us.



The Revd Darryl Root, centre, with the Revds Jane Wade (left) and Louise Gee. With thanks to Joy Rice for photos.

Lay Preachers' Weekend at Northern College

Thursday 12 – Saturday 14 May



Northern College, Manchester (Luther King House) has unveiled details of its annual **Lay Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Conference**, which runs from Thursday 12 to Saturday 14 May. (It is possible to attend all three days, or Saturday alone.) This year's theme is **The Church in and of the Community** and the schedule includes a visit to a community project. For details of the programme and information about funding to help you attend, please email training@urc5.org.uk

Around the East Midlands

Brigstock United Reformed Church Help for Ukraine

Living in a village made it difficult for some people to take goods for the Ukraine appeal to the town collection points, so we decided to open the chapel for two hours one Saturday, and an hour in the week to coincide with school pick-up times and offered to take the goods ourselves to the collection points. Volunteers, not all connected with the chapel, came and helped us sort out the amazing number of donations we received in that short time, mostly toiletries, medical and sanitary supplies and baby wipes, nappies and bedding.



A month ago, 13 Ukrainian lorry drivers were stranded on the A14 near Rothwell because they couldn't get fuel to return home. Local people rallied round and gave them food and shelter, and fuel was provided along with loads of goods collected by people in the surrounding area. Working to a deadline to fill the lorries and get them moving, we were able to send four estate cars full of the goods we collected, and they were all sent out a week ago. We were amazed-but shouldn't have been!- at the generosity of local people. We are keeping an eye on the situation and are ready to collect again once distribution points are made known.

For some years we have held a Lent Lunch of soup, bread and cheese, and invited members of Brigstock St Andrews C of E to join us, with all proceeds going to charity. After two years of not being able to do this, we enjoyed hosting this event again on March 20th, and raised £220 in donations for the DEC Ukraine appeal.



Providing Temporary Accommodation for Ukrainian Refugees

Information from Geoff Milnes, Synod Property Officer

We have had a few enquiries as to Insurers' stance regarding providing temporary accommodation for Ukrainian refugees. I have now had the following response from our main Insurers Congregational and Ansvar which I thought would be useful to share with you.

Ministers taking Ukrainian refugees into their own homes

- All refugees are in the UK legally
- This must be done as part of the Government scheme so all vetting/checks done by them
- Safeguarding measures must be in place to protect the Minister and his/her family and also the refugees
- This is a temporary arrangement
- Premises are suitable for this arrangement
- All risk assessed and appropriate Health & Safety assessments carried out

The Minister should advise his/her contents Insurers.

Use of Unoccupied manses

- Refugees must be in the UK legally
- Again, this must only be on a temporary basis
- Must be part of the Government scheme so all vetting/checks done by them
- Properties must be suitable/fit for purpose – up to date gas/electric etc
- Appropriate risk management assessments done as per any other letting of the property

Other points to note

- We must be made aware of any arrangements made
- Insurers would prefer family units rather than groups of unrelated people

To assist the situation, Insurers do not propose to charge any additional premiums/extra terms. However, we would kindly ask you to refer all arrangements to ourselves at the Synod Office, in the first instance.

Email: property@urc5.org.uk Tel: 0115 9609241

And now for the good environmental news

A call to prayer and action



UN BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE

COP 15 - CP/MOP10-NP/MOP4

Ecological Civilization-Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth

KUNMING · CHINA

If you have been keeping up with reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change since **COP26** you will know that it is 'Now or Never' to save the World (especially the Poor World) from climate chaos. And the fall-out from Putin's horrific war in Ukraine means that we will have to tighten our belts even further (as if they were not tight enough with the fall-out from Covid-19).

So here is something to cheer you up: **COP 15** is about to get underway in China at last (although much may be on-line)! COP15? What on earth is that? I'm glad you asked.

There are two great threats to God's wonderful Creation: **climate change** (mainly because of too much atmospheric carbon dioxide, methane &c) and **biodiversity loss** (numbers of wild creatures tumbling and many species going extinct). Biodiversity loss results from change in land use (more colloquially: land grabs), pollution, over-exploitation and (notoriously) the introduction of foreign species. For a good introduction see: <https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/biodiversity> . Needless to say, climate change is making things worse.

Happily, many scientists, not to mention Sir David Attenborough, are on the case. In 1993, the **Convention for Biological Diversity** or CBD was signed by 196 countries (neither the USA nor the Holy See were signatories, although the Encyclical by Pope Francis: 'On Care for Our Common Home' is highly supportive). The three goals are: conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from genetic resources.

Needless to say, most countries fell far short of their targets. Well, a piecemeal approach was never going to work; these are global issues although we can all do our bit locally. Now, with cautious hope, we have the 15th conference of the parties to the convention (COP15). This started on-line last October, gets into its stride in May this year, with final talks at the end of August. At last, there seems a real determination to hammer out a Global Biodiversity Framework.

Two approaches are needed. The first is to protect and restore wilderness (including the oceans). The big agenda (as described by Dr Scott Leatham of the Centre for Alternative Technology) is to protect 30% of the world's land and ocean by 2030 ("30 by 30"). This will give wild populations from angel sharks to zebras an opportunity to recover and countless species a chance to avoid extinction. Even more ambitious is the Earth 50 Plan, which would see half of this World a protected area.

The really big worry about this is that a 'top-down' approach could lead to the eviction of indigenous people, who are in practice often the best guardians of nature. There is a long and murky history here, starting with the eviction of native Americans from Yellowstone Park by the military in 1872. The danger (as with some 'offsetting' schemes) is of 'eco-colonialism' by Northern nations and vested interests. Do you begin to see why it is so important to pray for wisdom for the delegates at COP15?

The second approach, which you will be familiar with if you are an **Eco Church**, is to recognise that we are part of the wilderness – regardless of whether we live in city or country. “We have to learn to live in and within nature” (Dr Leatham, again). What we are talking about is a change in our lifestyle: all the way from eating less meat and boycotting unsustainable palm oil to putting up bug-hotels and avoiding chemicals in our back yards. As with climate change, we need to talk the talk, walk the walk and demand that politicians and industries make the change. Here's some more good news: this is a win-win because many measures to save biodiversity will also help to save the climate.

Charles Jolly

Green Apostle

Festival of Church Music



**Festival Theme
Unity**

Festival of Church Music

**Lichfield Cathedral
Saturday 21st May 2022
6.30pm**

Choir of 200 voices

The Officiating Minister

Rev'd Dr. Janet Wootton

Festival Conductor - Peter J Williams

Organist - Rufus Frowde

Visit the website

<http://www.freechurchchoirs.org.uk>

ADMISSION FREE

Enquirers' Event

SATURDAY 30TH APRIL ENQUIRERS' EVENT

9.30am-12.30pm
on Zoom



Do you see new possibilities?
Do you feel God calling you to witness in
new ways in your local community?
Do you hear the need for 'church' to be different?

Come along and hear more about
lay pioneering and the proposed
URC Pioneering Hub



Contact Ministries@urc.org.uk for more information and Zoom link

Personal News

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

Eastern Synod inform us of the death of **Revd John Whitehorn** on 10 March, formerly a missionary to Taiwan and Time for God administrator. Please pray for John's wife, their family and friends.

The Thanksgiving Service for John's life was held at Downing Place Church, Cambridge on Tuesday 5 April.

South Western Synod inform us of the death, on Sunday 13 March, of retired minister **Revd Harold Bignell**. Harold served at Sidmouth Group 1991-2002; and at Tiptree, Kelvedon & Great Totham 2002-2007. We remember his wife in our prayers.

The Thanksgiving Service for Harold's life was held on Tuesday 5 April at ReBorne Community Church in Dorset.

Online Youth Mental Health First Aid

Southern Synod share with us the dates of upcoming Online Youth Mental Health First Aid Training with MHFA England.

Evening courses will be taking place online on the following evenings in May.



Session 1 – Tuesday 17 May, 6:30pm-9:30pm

Session 2 – Thursday 19 May, 6:30pm-9:30pm

Session 3 – Tuesday 24 May, 6:30pm-9:30pm

Session 4 – Thursday 26 May, 6:30pm-9:30pm

Bookings are open via: - <https://may-mhfa.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Southern Synod are able to offer spaces at a subsidised rate of £27.75 per person to help cover costs of MHFA England course manuals. Participants are required to attend all 4 sessions and must complete independent learning activities before each of the sessions.

Further details about the course content is available on the MHFA England website - <https://mhfaengland.org/individuals/youth/online-youth-mental-health-first-aid/>

Hybrid Church Meet- up

A promotional poster for a Hybrid Church Meet-up. The left side features a photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The right side has a yellow background with black text. The title "Hybrid Church Meet-up" is in large, bold letters. Below it, the date and time "Tuesday 3rd May 2022, 7:30-9pm" are listed. A call to action says "Come along to YOUR space to share and learn..". Three bullet points with lightbulb icons describe the benefits: "Share ideas and good practice", "Hear valuable, experienced input", and "Gain inspiration on Children's and Youth Work, Community Outreach, Technology and Worship".

Hybrid Church Meet-up

Tuesday 3rd May 2022, 7:30-9pm

Come along to YOUR space to share and learn..

- Share ideas and good practice
- Hear valuable, experienced input
- Gain inspiration on Children's and Youth Work, Community Outreach, Technology and Worship



More info, email:
jenny.mills@urc.org.uk



Meeting ID: 892 8553 7599

Passcode: 655777

Online Book Group: The Radical Disciple

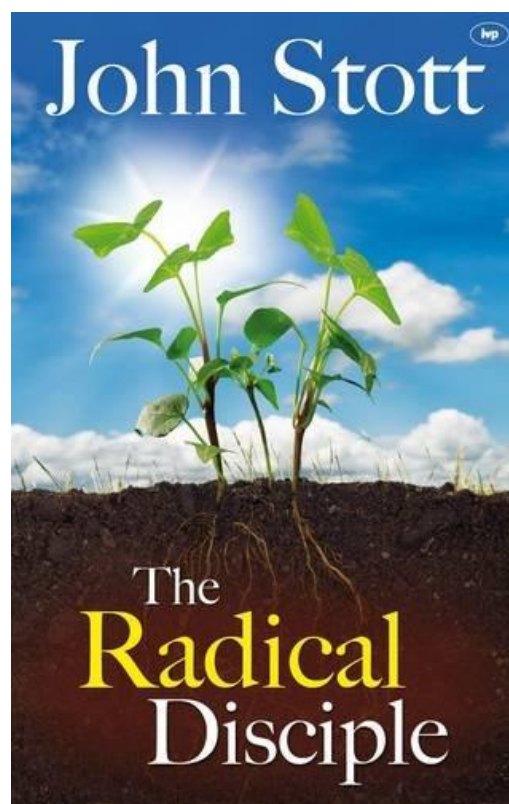
from Tuesday 24 May at 7.30pm

Dig down deep into what it means to follow Jesus with our latest Synod **book group**, live on Zoom. Beginning on 24 May, we will explore **The Radical Disciple** over four successive Tuesday evenings led by the **Revd Matt Rigden**.

Published in 2010, **The Radical Disciple** represents the final word of **John Stott**, one of the UK's most celebrated Christian writers and teachers. In eight short and highly readable chapters, Stott explores eight key aspects of Christian discipleship which deserve to be taken seriously – and challenges us not to pick and choose only those which sound the most appealing.

Matt, who is Community Minister for the Heath Christian Partnership in Lincoln, will lead us in four weekly sessions, exploring two chapters at a time. The sessions will each last around 90 minutes and conclude in a time of prayer.

The Radical Disciple (RRP £9.99) is available new from numerous online sellers such as www.aslanchristianbooks.com/ (which offers an 11% discount and free shipping), while second-hand copies are available from www.wob.com and similar sites.



To join our exploration of **The Radical Disciple**, simply email training@urc5.org.uk to receive the Zoom codes. The first session, on **Tuesday 24 May** at 7.30pm, will explore chapters 1 (Non-conformity) and 2 (Christlikeness) – so there is plenty of time to order a copy and get reading.

“This book is faithfully biblical, deeply engaging, firmly challenging and profoundly moving ... I can think of no better teacher on this theme than John Stott, whose lifetime of personal commitment to radical discipleship shines out from every page.”

David Stone, Team Rector, Newbury

Sheffield Methodist District



The Sheffield Methodist District share with us details of the following courses:

Positively Rural

Wednesday 27 April : 10:00-11:30am

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 clergy.

This session will be looking at Wellbeing and Mental Health.

Register here: <https://220427positivelyrural.eventbrite.co.uk> before 24 April

Working in Partnership Wednesday 18 May 2022 : 1 – 2:30pm

Working in Partnership with other organisations can enable your ministry with older people to achieve things you could not working alone, but can also bring new challenges. This event will explore the pitfalls and positives of partnership working, and how to go about setting up a new partnership or improving an existing one.

Book here by 11 May to register your interest: <https://220518-partnershipwork.eventbrite.co.uk>

Situation Vacant



Policy Development Coordinator Safeguarding

Permanent contract, 14 hours per week
Salary: £38,000 - £40,000 FTE

Are you a dedicated professional ready to support the church in its mission to safeguard all people?

In this role you will be responsible for managing, updating, and promoting safeguarding policies and procedures, working within a small team and with the wider United Reformed Church.

With proven experience of developing and implementing safeguarding policies, you will have knowledge of statutory and other relevant legislation relating to safeguarding. Your knowledge of best practice and policy concerning issues related to the protection of children and adults at risk will be key to supporting the synods in delivery of safeguarding policies and procedures. You will be educated to degree level or equivalent in a relevant field and have excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Excellent written communication and attention to detail is essential.

Experience of working within the voluntary sector or within a faith-based context would be a distinct advantage.

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

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Friday 29 April 2022

Interview date: Tuesday 17 May 2022

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

Find Us Online



The [East Midlands Synod website](https://www.urc5.org.uk/) is the one-stop shop for all essential information:

<https://www.urc5.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](#) shares news and ideas related to our work with young people: <https://www.facebook.com/URCEastmidlandsYouth/>



On our dedicated [YouTube channel](#), 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

Following the relaxation of the government's Covid guidance, the **Synod Office** is now open again 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 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

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Cross Photo by [Cdoncel](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Next edition: Thursday 28 April 2022

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 25 April 2022**