

## Opening Reflection by David Greatorex Synod Treasurer

### High Places and Helping Hands



According to Google, there are over 1.1 million named mountains in the world.  
The Bible contains more than 400 references to mountains.

I like mountains!

I've just watched *Songs of Praise* from Snowdonia – a wonderful celebration of the area. My first real experience of mountains was in that region when camping with The Boys' Brigade (BB).

Growing up in Derbyshire I'd become used to higher ground, but there is just one mountain in the Derbyshire part of the Peak District. I graduated to somewhat higher mountains in Norway - again with the BB. A good number of years went by before my next 'real' mountain experiences when my late wife and I visited the Austrian Alps as our silver wedding anniversary gift to each other.

If I were reading this now, I'd be wondering, 'What on earth is he on about mountains for?' Patience, please: I'm getting there.

A few Sundays ago I was asked to share something about 'me' at church. It was a longer version of the mountains story above. In developing it, I sought out some information and also linked it to the current

[URC Daily Devotions](#) exploring John's Gospel, where I'd read references to mountains. Jesus went into mountains and high places, sometimes to be alone. On other occasions he was accompanied and two instances early in the gospel alerted me to something else - **sharing**.

The first was when Jesus was talking with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, where she told Jesus about ancestors worshipping on this mountain. The second was about the feeding of the large crowd, where all were fed from a boy's 'packed lunch'.

So, sharing water and food.

We as a Synod are now well along the route of devising new ways of sharing, by developing the process of Resource Areas. I feel privileged to have shared with some of the emerging Areas, particularly when considering how the finances might be shared.

But as much as finance is important for the Areas to work well, what else do we need to share? Certainly the 'food and water' – and we are supposed to be good at the refreshments bit!

The church I attend is now recommencing the Resource Area route (having been delayed by Covid) and I'm wondering what – and who – we, as a church, have that might be shared within whatever the new Area might look like when finalised.

It's a concept that fills me with some trepidation as we get to know churches that, sadly, most only know by name. But thinking back to John's gospel, both episodes indicate to us what can be done with some faith and conviction on our part.

Maybe looking at it that way I (or we) need to seek out the opportunities for **sharing** what we are all able to offer for the Resource Areas. This applies to whatever stage churches and groups are at – over time these will need to be revised as people come and go!

## October Synod Meeting – Advance Notice

Please note that our **October Synod Meeting** will take place **on Zoom** on the evening of **Monday 10 October** (time tbc). The reason for this is that we are having two separate gatherings as a Synod this autumn: firstly our **Synod Celebration** on the Saturday 10 September, which will be time for us to gather for worship, fellowship and inspiration, and secondly a separate meeting for dealing with business (Monday 10 October).

It was decided to hold the business meeting online on a weekday in recognition that we will already have met as a Synod on a Saturday in September. This is also in line with the recommendation from General Assembly to hold meetings at different times and in different formats to encourage and enable as many people as possible to take part. If you are a Synod representative please make a note of the date in your diary.

**Revd Camilla Veitch**

Synod Clerk

# Synod Jubilee Celebration

**Commemorate – Celebrate – Create**

**Saturday 10 September 10.00am - 3.30pm**  
**De Vere Jubilee Conference Centre, Nottingham**



Join us on **Saturday 10 September** to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the URC and East Midlands Synod in a one-of-a-kind intergenerational **Jubilee Celebration** at Nottingham's De Vere Jubilee Conference Centre!

It's a festival in a day, featuring a cavalcade of music and worship, crafts and workshops, and fun and games for young and old. We'll be **commemorating** the highlights of the past 50 years, **celebrating** our birthday together and starting to **create** the future. Explore a prayer trail around the lake, try your hand at new skills in our workshops and raise your voice in song in the all-age act of worship at the heart of the day. Incoming Moderator of the General Assembly the **Revd Fiona Bennett** will lead praise alongside Synod Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke**.



The **De Vere Jubilee Conference Centre** enjoys a stunning lakeside setting on the University of Nottingham's Jubilee Campus. The venue is situated close to the Queen's Medical Centre and readily accessible by car, bus and tram. It will play host to a great day out, with something for everyone in our Synod family, from babies to centenarians. The day will cost just **£5 per person**, which includes a **refreshments voucher**; under-18s attend free but must be accompanied by an adult.

Places are strictly limited, so we advise you book early to avoid disappointment: please email [finance@urc5.org.uk](mailto:finance@urc5.org.uk) to reserve your ticket. (You can also ask us in confidence if you need help with the cost: no one should feel unable to attend.)

It promises to be a fantastic celebration for the whole East Midlands family - don't miss out.

# Around the East Midlands Synod

## Central URC, Derby



**Central URC Derby** are delighted to announce (at long last, after veery long negotiation with Derby City Planners and others) they can now be easily found! The church signs are now complete and the building is identifiable after their move from the old Victoria Street site, complete with a new roof.



*(new church roof)*

## Platinum Plate in Nottingham



Amongst the many churches commemorating the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen last weekend was **St Andrew's with Castle Gate URC** in Nottingham, which held a Jubilee street party for members and friends, including others from the South Nottingham Resource Area and students from the neighbouring residence. Although rainy weather forced the revelries inside, the day featured barbecue food, musical entertainments and games.



It was also the perfect occasion to unveil a special Jubilee plate commissioned from local mosaic artist [Sophie Robins](#). The church secured funding from Arts Council England's "Let's Create" fund to enable Sophie to lead workshops for its Craft Club and Junior Church, whose members all created mosaic tiles of their own.

For her plate, which commemorates this year's jubilees of both Her Majesty and the United Reformed Church, Sophie took the geometric design from the church's central stained-glass window, adding a cross, multi-coloured fish emblems inspired by the URC50 branding and the Queen's favourite flower, lily of the valley.

*Left: the **Revd Chris Ford** displays the Jubilee mosaic plate (photo by Revd Geoffrey Clarke)*

## Abington Avenue URC

**Abington Avenue URC** hosted several successful Jubilee events over the bank holiday weekend! These started on the 27 May with a Friday lunch club meal and festivities with 27 people in attendance. A giant carriage was placed outside the church for folk to have their photo taken with the Queen during the week.



*(Revd Jane Wade pictured above in the Queen's carriage!)*

The 29 May saw a special -All-age Jubilee service. On 2 June an afternoon tea (for about 70 people) was held. The afternoon included our own local version of the Jubilee pudding contest and the burial of a time capsule, which saw items collected from the congregation buried by the Vice lieutenant of the county. To decorate, each of the churches front windows represented a decade with photos of world events displayed, while in the Sanctuary we had a timeline with photos of the church family and events including, weddings, births, graduations, special holidays, anniversaries. This was followed on the next day by a 'Messy Jubilee' with about 26 people. Finally on 4 June we were invited to join in the Northamptonshire Platinum Jubilee Pageant as representatives of the faith community.



*(Sue Croft, Revd Jane Wade and David Jones at the jubilee pageant)*

# Christians on Ageing Conference

Wednesday 21 September



**Christians on Ageing** has announced details of its annual Conference, entitled: "Older people need the best: supporting faith and care"

The Conference will include presentations by well-known practitioners including: Tina English (Director of the charity Embracing Age, and author of *A Great Place to Grow Old: Reimagining Ministry Among Older People*), Marion Shoard (author of *How to Handle Later life*) and Dr Joanna Walker (Educational Gerontologist and co-author *Spiritual Dimensions of Ageing*).

Expert speakers on:

- Training for our ministry and work
- Later life spiritual learning
- Being a blessing to residents in care homes
- Rights and quality of life in care homes

The Conference will be held at **Central URC** in the middle of Sheffield with a welcome at 10.00am and conclusion at 4.00 pm. The fee will be £30 (£25 for members) which will include preparatory papers and the conference report plus refreshments and a sandwich lunch.

More information and booking arrangements will be circulated in July. To register your interest please email: [info@ccoa.org.uk](mailto:info@ccoa.org.uk)

## Personal News

**East Midlands Synod** is sorry to share the news that **Brian Heeley** from West Derbyshire URC, Wirksworth, has died. Brian was an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher and served the Synod and churches in Derbyshire faithfully over many years. We hold his family and church family in our prayers at this sad time.

**Wessex Synod** informs us of the death of the **Revd James Forster**, who died suddenly on Sunday 8 May 2022. Jim served in the South East Manchester District (1981-90) and Parkgate & Neston (1990-97).

The funeral will take place at United Church Winchester on **Monday 13 June** at 11.30am. This will be followed by refreshments in the church hall, where the family will join people at once they have returned from the interment at Magdalen Hill Cemetery. We hold his family and friends in our prayers.



There will be a service celebrating the life of **Revd David Morris MBE**, on **Saturday 18 June** at 2pm. The service will be held at Wycliffe United Reformed Church, The common, Evington, Leicester, LE5 6EA. The service will be a celebration of David's life as a minister and his service to people who were homeless in Leicester for over 50 years. Please RSVP to: [life@communityofgrace.co.uk](mailto:life@communityofgrace.co.uk) Community of Grace, 117 Margaret Road, Leciester, LE5 5FW.

Those attending are requested to wear bright colours!

In place of floweres, donations can be made in David's memory to Community of Grace: [www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/Revd-David-Morris](http://www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/Revd-David-Morris)

## Joint Venture Launches New Pioneering Hub



A new venture between the URC, the Congregational Federation, Church Mission Society, and the Seedbeds organisation has led to the creation of the **Newbigin Pioneering Hub**. The hub is named in honour of the inspirational URC minister and mission theologian, **Bishop Lesslie Newbigin** and aims to offer a space for Pioneers to connect and learn.

A celebration of the new hub will also be held alongside the Newbigin Public Lecture at 1.00pm on Saturday 2 July, at the Lodge Road Community Church, Winson Green, Birmingham. Further information is available [on the URC website](#).

## Sacraments Training in East Midlands Synod

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





East Midlands Synod is pleased to confirm that this year's **Sacraments Day** will be held at **Christ Church URC**, Leicester, on **Saturday 26 November**. Training will be led by Synod Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** and Synod Clerk the **Revd Camilla Veitch**. Our Sacraments Day is designed to support those churches who request that Elders and/or regular Lay Preachers may preside at Holy Communion and at Baptisms, to guarantee worshippers access to the Sacraments where no Minister of Word and Sacraments is available.

The Synod Meeting in February adopted a new policy clarifying who may be nominated for authorisation and specifying that **Authorised Persons** must take part in refresher training at least **every five years** (previously three). Only those appointed via the Synod are authorised to preside at the Sacraments. The full policy is available on our website <https://urc5.org.uk/content/lay-presidency-east-midlands-synod>.

The Training & Development team will be writing to all churches in the coming weeks to share further details of the training, verify whether those Authorised Persons already listed continue to preside, establish whether they are now due to refresh their authorisation, and ask whether the church has a need to nominate anybody new to undergo training this year.

## Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers Course



The next Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching course begins in September. The two-year part-time course covers personal development, crafting worship, the Bible in worship, theology of the URC, safe boundaries in pastoral care, equality and diversity and intergenerational worship.

Applications should be submitted by 30 June. Please see the URC website for [more information](#). If you are interested in training to become an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher, please

contact **Derek Graham** (Training & Development Officer) as soon as possible by emailing: [training@urc5.org.uk](mailto:training@urc5.org.uk).

## A Taste of Theology at Northern College

**Friday 22 – Sunday 24 July**

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to study theology? Northern College is offering a unique opportunity to find out more at its [Taster Weekend](#) at Luther King House, Manchester from 5.30pm on **Friday 22 July** to 2.30pm on **Sunday 24 July 2022**. The College invites you to come and be a theological student for a weekend, participating in 'taster' classes in Old and New Testament Studies, World Christianity, Church-Related Community Work and Ministerial Formation.

Old Testament tutor **Meg**

**Warner** shares a little about it in a video on the Northern College website:

A screenshot of a video player. The video content is a promotional slide for Northern College's Taster Weekend. The slide features the Northern College logo (a stylized cross) and the text: 'NORTHERN COLLEGE', 'Meg Warner', 'Tutor in Old Testament and Biblical Hebrew', 'Friday 22nd July – Sunday 24th July 2022', 'From 5.30pm on Friday evening until 2.30pm on Sunday afternoon', 'All accommodation, meals, refreshments and classes are included!', a list of fees: '• URC Members—£50', '• Non-URC Members—£100', 'Fee deducted from any formal study costs at Northern College in 2022/23', and contact information: 'To register or for more information; Paul Barrett—College Administrator paul.barrett@lutherking.ac.uk'. On the right side of the slide is a portrait of Meg Warner, a woman with short grey hair wearing a dark jacket and a necklace. The video player interface includes a 'MORE VIDEOS' button at the bottom left and a 'L' logo at the top right.

**£50** for URC Members  
**(£100** for non-URC Members)

These costs are heavily subsidised and include accommodation for two nights and all classes, meals and refreshments (with the exception of Saturday Dinner, when there will be an opportunity to visit Manchester's famous Curry Mile). Even better, these costs can be deducted from the cost of any formal study at Northern College in 2022-23.

For further information and to claim one of the limited number of places, email:  
[paul.barrett@lutherking.ac.uk](mailto:paul.barrett@lutherking.ac.uk) .

## Free Holiday Club Materials



'Time Travellers' is the theme for this year's Children's and Youth Work's free **holiday club** resources. Resources include: videos, a song, five complete sessions and suggestions for adapting the material for different ages and settings.

Small grants towards the costs of running a holiday club are also available. Applications forms can be found [here](#) .

## URC Buildings Calendar 2023

Following on from the fantastic success of the 2022 **URC Buildings Calendar**, photographs of URC church buildings are again invited for the 2023 Calendar.

The theme is 'Inside our churches', and photos from LEPs are also warmly welcomed. See the [URC website](#) for more information.



# Job Opportunities



## Mission Support Officer

**2 year fixed-term contract, 35 hours per week  
Salary: £41,116**

### Are you excited to help further the engagement of the whole church with its mission priorities?

In this role you will be working closely with the Deputy General Secretary for Mission, providing programme support in the areas of pioneering ministry, ecumenical relations and evangelism and witness. You will manage, deliver, and communicate campaigns and activities and facilitate the engagement of Synods, local churches and other networks.

We are looking for an excellent communicator, used to working in a mission orientated environment with experience of ecumenical relationship building. You will be educated to degree level, or equivalent, with evidence of theological studies. You have a good basic knowledge of Christian theological perspectives in mission, ecumenism and pioneering, able to embrace new ways of being church.

You have good interpersonal, networking and presentation skills. You are a team player with the ability to engage and motivate others. Competence in the use of social media platforms is essential. Experience of working in local and wider church contexts would be a distinct advantage.

We can offer you a flexible and friendly work environment; working from Church House in London and from home is a possibility.

**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](mailto:recruitment@urc.org.uk) [www.urch.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.urch.org.uk/vacancies)**

**Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Friday 17 June 2022**

**Interview date: Thursday 23 June 2022**

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010: Part 1, Schedule 9, there is a genuine occupational requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian  
This post also requires an enhanced certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service.



## Repairs and Maintenance Coordinator London

*(near to Kings Cross and Euston)*

**Permanent contract, 35 hours per week  
Salary: £32,102**

### Are you eager to support a team to deliver an efficient customer focussed service?

The Retired Ministers Housing Society (RMHS) exists to assist retired and retiring ministers to meet their housing needs during retirement, aiming to provide appropriate housing suitable for long-term occupation. We maintain around 300 properties tenanted by retired ministers, arranging inspections and repairs.

In this role you will be responsible for the daily coordination of repairs and maintenance activities. You will be the central point of contact for our elderly residents, liaising with surveyors to ensure our programme of works and cyclical compliance checks are followed through and carried out promptly.

You are educated to A level standard, or equivalent, have excellent administration and ITC skills and are highly organised. You also possess good communication skills and can problem solve, dealing with issues in a calm and sensitive manner. Experience of matters relating to housing and/or property management would be highly desirable.

We can offer you a flexible and friendly work environment in a small team; hybrid working from Church House in London and from home is a possibility.

**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](mailto:recruitment@urc.org.uk) [www.urch.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.urch.org.uk/vacancies)**

**Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Monday 20 June 2022**

**Interview dates: Monday 27 June 2022**



## ASSISTANT PROPERTY OFFICER

Thames North Synod are looking to recruit an experienced Building Professional to deal with all aspects of property repair and maintenance and providing guidance on legislation and other matters in connection with church and residential property to Thames North Synod and all United Reformed Churches within Thames North Synod. This person will initially shadow the existing Property Development Officer until 2023/24 when he retires and will then assume full responsibility.

Home-based with regular travel to churches, Synod Properties and Synod Office (within UK).

A full-time contract at a salary of circa £35,000 - £45,000 per annum based on experience. Contributory pension scheme.

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

For a more detailed description of the position and application form please contact Colleen Fraser, URC Thames North Synod, Newton Road, London W2 5LS.

T: 020 7799 5000 E: [modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk](mailto:modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk)

W: [www.urcthamesnorth.org.uk](http://www.urcthamesnorth.org.uk)

Closing date for applications: 17 June 2022 – Please note that we do not accept CV's.

### COUNTY ECUMENICAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (CEDO) FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Are you inspired by the vision of Christians  
of different traditions working together?

Are you a great networker, solution-finder and administrator?

If so, this post may be for you.

**£8,049 plus 10% pension contribution  
home based, 10 hours a week**

Contact [caroline.hutchings@shireandsoke.org.uk](mailto:caroline.hutchings@shireandsoke.org.uk)  
for an application pack.

Applications to be received by  
11 a.m. Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Interviews: Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Commencement date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

[www.shireandsoke.org.uk](http://www.shireandsoke.org.uk)



## 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/) 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/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. 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 at: [www.unc5.org.uk](http://www.unc5.org.uk)

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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

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Photo by [Kalen Emsley](#) on [Unsplash](#)

***Next edition: Thursday 23 June 2022***

Please send all material for this E-Letter to both:  
[trainingpa@unc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@unc5.org.uk) and [training@unc5.org.uk](mailto:training@unc5.org.uk)

Copy deadline for next edition: 12 noon on **Monday 20 June 2022**