

## Opening Reflection by Revd Sarah Gower Convenor of Children and Youth Development Group

One of the lectionary readings that we had recently was **1 Corinthians 12**. We read it a little differently, and I am not sure if I will ever be able to read it again in church in any other way. We had signs with certain words written on them – like BODY and PARTS and EYE and EAR and HEAD and HAND and FOOT, also things like APOSTLES and PROPHET and TEACHER – and when one of these words was mentioned the person holding the sign stood up or waved their piece of paper and showed the word to everyone. We included as many people as possible, and some decided to respond to their word in pairs. To the two most energetic people in the congregation, I gave the words BODY and PARTS, as it is amazing how many times these words are mentioned, and they had to be fit enough to keep standing and sitting. I think some people thought I had re-written the Bible passage (which I had not) to include even more examples of these two words. It was great fun. I read the passage slowly. We listened. We participated. And we most definitely laughed. Together, we heard that part of Paul's letter to the Corinthians afresh. We heard it as a group of people together, all bringing something a little different to the reading. And, for a moment or two, we were actively and most definitely engaged in being the body together.

Even as I write about it, I recall the fun and the laughter we had as well as realising some of the truth of what Paul is saying to the Corinthians. As God's people it is best when we work together. It is best when we include all people – children and adults of all ages; girls and boys, women and men; those from our own country and those from abroad, perhaps today's equivalent of Jew and Gentile (and Samaritan, my addition to Paul's letter!); different economic and educational backgrounds. Because all of us have a part to play in God's family and as God's people.



Something we have discovered over this last two years is our need of real-life relationships with other people. I wonder, are you still, like me, enjoying being able to meet other people in person? Church on a Sunday morning is different – we are still a little more spread out, we are still using the extent of our building, everyone is wearing masks, and when we share the Peace, we no longer shake hands but offer a wave of peace to each other instead. But it is still wonderful to see people, not confined to a little box. We have learnt a little more how to appreciate each other, something I hope will continue. As we come together in the presence and family of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we realise how the very nature of God is of welcome and love and belonging.

Each and every one of us is vital to God, we are all vital to each other. Together we are enriched and empowered through God to welcome and love and help others in our churches and communities to belong. And in so doing we are further enriched and blessed together by God's amazing grace and overwhelming love.

May I offer you, my brothers and sisters, a wave of peace, and great fun as together we learn to be the body of Christ.

## Coronavirus: Synod Moderators' updated Guidance

Now that governments in England, Scotland and Wales have eased legal restrictions around coronavirus, the Synod Moderators have updated their guidance to churches.

Although regulations have changed, and the current wave of infections is showing signs of easing, infection rates remain high across the United Kingdom. We would therefore urge the continued use of face coverings in churches, including during singing, as well as maintaining good hand hygiene and appropriate physical distancing.

We fully appreciate the high, and rapidly increasing, costs of heating churches, but we remind you of the importance of good ventilation as well to prevent the build-up of virus particles in the atmosphere.

We know the vast majority of people in our buildings will be fully vaccinated, and that vaccination reduces the seriousness of infection. However, it is abundantly clear that the Omicron variant is still making people ill, even amongst those who are vaccinated.

Please continue to care for yourself and others by taking all reasonable measures to reduce the spread of the virus. If you are infected the symptoms may be minor – they could have a much more serious effect on anyone to whom you inadvertently pass the disease.

The Synod Moderators  
February 2022

## Induction of the Revd Caroline Andrews

**Saturday 26 February 2.00pm**

The **Revd Caroline Andrews** will be inducted to the **North Derbyshire Resource Area** on Saturday 26 February at 2.00pm at **St Andrew's United Reformed Church**, Chesterfield.

Due to limited seating, attendance is by invitation only but the service will be live streamed for anyone who would like to watch it online. To obtain the link please email **Bernard Russell** at: [russellb638@gmail.com](mailto:russellb638@gmail.com) .

## Legacies of Slavery – Discussion Evening

Consider how slavery shaped the East Midlands  
and play your part in the consultation

**Monday 7 March 7.30-9.00pm on Zoom**



The United Reformed Church East Midlands Synod

# Legacies of Slavery

## Discussion Evening

Monday 7 March 7.30pm on Zoom

with  
**Karen Campbell**  
& **David Reynolds**  
of the United Reformed Church  
Legacies of Slavery Task Group

Email [training@urc5.org.uk](mailto:training@urc5.org.uk)  
to register

Supported by **JPIC**

Photo: Hussain Bardshah on Unsplash

The **East Midlands Synod**, supported by **JPIC**, has arranged a Discussion Evening on Zoom to help churches and individuals respond to the consultation launched by the URC's **Legacies of Slavery task group**.

Join **David Reynolds** (Group Convenor) and **Karen Campbell** (Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries) to explore:

- **How the history of transatlantic slavery resonates in the East Midlands**
- **The ways its legacy persists in the inequalities of the present day**
- **What we in the United Reformed Church may be called to do about it now**

The task group has prepared a draft **Apology and Confession** ahead of General Assembly 2022 and urges churches and members to share their feedback. You are asked to email your responses to [global.intercultural@urc.org.uk](mailto:global.intercultural@urc.org.uk) by **Thursday 31 March**.

The Synod's **Discussion Evening** will feed directly into the consultation and may also help you formulate your church's response. To receive the Zoom codes please email [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk).

Full details of the proposals may be found at <https://urc.org.uk/who-we-are/what-we-do/legacies-of-slavery/>. You can also view Karen Campbell's introduction at our last Synod meeting on our YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcDO7yAT1Ps&t=673s>

# Demystifying Worship

Build your confidence in planning worship  
at an interactive development day led by **Lesley Moseley**

**Saturday 2 April 10.00am-3.30pm**

**at Christ Church URC, Leicester**



**Demystifying  
Worship**

A free one-day workshop  
led by  
**Lesley Moseley**

**Saturday 2 April**  
10.00am-3.30pm  
at **Christ Church URC,**  
**Leicester**

**The United Reformed Church  
East Midlands Synod**

**Email [training@urc5.org.uk](mailto:training@urc5.org.uk)  
to register**

Photo: Nicholas Benalia  
on Unsplash

A free one-day workshop for:

- elders and members who are occasionally asked to lead worship or parts of worship
- all those who would like to know more about putting a service together
- anyone who thinks God might be calling them to help with praying or preaching in their own church

Take the worry out of worship-leading at this friendly, interactive workshop, kindly led for us by the **Revd Lesley Moseley**. Lesley will lead you through the essentials of structuring a service before guiding you in how to choose readings and hymns. Try your hand at producing and populating an Order of Service and progress to writing a prayer or even the outline of a sermon.

There will be tea, coffee and of course times of worship to enjoy. By the end of the workshop, you will have a sound grasp of the basics and be bolstered to go back to your church and play a part in leading its people in praise.

If you have ever been asked to consider preparing worship, or worried you wouldn't know how to go about it, our **Demystifying Worship** day is designed for you. It will be held in careful compliance with whatever health guidance may apply at the time.

To register for your place, free of charge, please email [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) .

## Around the East Midlands

### Christmas Outreach Project at Castle Hill URC



With support from East Midlands Synod's Mission Fund, **Castle Hill URC** in Northampton was able to run an outreach project in December 2021 that welcomed over 400 children from the local primary school and many of the local community.



The church erected a life-size Nativity scene outside the building. All through December, visitors, neighbours and passers-by were invited to come and have their own photographs taken as one of the figures in the stable, which all had cut-out faces to peep through – even the sheep. This was complemented by a Nativity trail around the perimeter of the church.

Meanwhile, school classes and community groups came into the church at scheduled times to learn about Advent, take part in crafts and games, and hear the Christmas story.

Visiting children made a number of enthusiastic comments:

“The Nativity scene was huge. It was such fun pushing my face through the hole.”

“This church is awesome. You don't have to sit still!”

“I have had such a good time. I'm going to bring my Mum and sister to see the big Nativity in the dark when it's lit up.”



Following the success of 2021's outreach project, Castle Hill URC is already hoping to add the Magi to the scene this coming December.

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## East Midlands Synod Mission Fund

Do you have a project which would benefit by receiving a grant from the Synod Mission Fund? The Fund can provide grants of up to £30,000 and for not more than 50% of your project costs. The Panel meets twice a year to consider applications: the deadline to apply for the next round is 23 March 2022. The application form and guidance notes are available on the Synod website:

<https://www.urch5.org.uk/MissionFund> .

## 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.**

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The **North Western Synod** informs us of the death of the **Revd Dr Paul Pells** on Tuesday 8 February 2022.

Paul served at: Sefton Park, Earle Road & Toxteth (1976-81); Toxteth with Sefton Park (1981-98) & Aigburth Vale (1981-87); as Director of Ministerial Training, Mersey Province (1993-96); and at Lord Street, West Southport (1998-2003). We hold Paul's wife, wider family and friends in our thoughts and prayers.

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The **West Midlands Synod** informs us of the death of the **Revd William (Bill) John Boyd**, a retired minister living in the Wolverhampton area of the West Midlands Synod, who died on 7 February 2022.

Bill was ordained in 1968, serving at Tettenhall Wood 1968-2001; Staffordshire District 2001-02. Please remember Bill's wife, their family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

## Free to Believe National Conference

**Keeping Hope Alive**  
**Thursday 14 – Saturday 16 July 2022**



**Free to Believe**, an ecumenical network of Christians striving for an open, inclusive and thinking Church, holds its National Conference at **High Leigh Conference Centre**, Hoddesdon, from **Thursday 14 to Saturday 16 July 2022**.

### Speakers include:

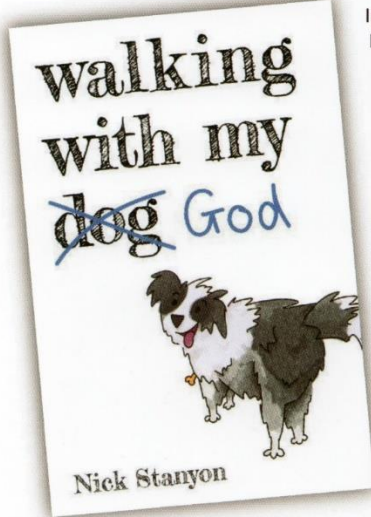
- **Fiona Bennett:** "Respair" - the return of Hope after despair.
- **Karen Campbell:** URC Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministry.
- **Alex Clare-Young:** Beyond Binaries: Hoping for peace in a world of conflict.
- **Helen Garton:** Are we where it's at? Why being Radical is not being Radical at all.
- **Iain McDonald:** Hope frustrated and fulfilled - a personal journey.

FTB Chair the **Revd Dr Martin Camroux** describes the conference as offering hopeful voices at a time we need to hear them. Booking is now open, with places priced £185 per person.

Booking forms are available on the FTB website: [Conferences \(freetobelieve.org.uk\)](http://Conferences(freetobelieve.org.uk))

## Recommended Reading

The **Revd Nick Stanyon**, Synod Evangelist in the URC's West Midlands Synod, has published an unorthodox collection of spiritual reflections inspired by walks with his collie Nina. Copies of **Walking with my Dog God** are available directly from Nick by emailing [nick.stanyon@gmail.com](mailto:nick.stanyon@gmail.com).



In this book of reflections, author Nick Stanyon invites you to join him on his daily walk with Nina, a beautiful border collie.

Along the way we will encounter all sorts of things that prompt thought and prayer. The walk becomes a very meaningful walk with God.

Illustrations by Jessica Lee.

224 pages  
Soft back  
**£8.99**  
plus P&P

To order email  
[nick.stanyon@gmail.com](mailto:nick.stanyon@gmail.com)

## Talking about... event for Children & Youth Leaders

**Thursday 24 February 7.00-8.00pm**

The latest in the series of hour-long "Talking about..." discussions from URC Youth and URC Children focuses on the challenges of resuming work with young people as pandemic restrictions ease. **(Re)Starting from Scratch** takes place online on Thursday 24 February at 7.00pm and tickets are available at <https://bit.ly/3FnfZQn>.

## Crossfire Camp



**Crossfire Camp** is an exciting event for young people aged 12+ brought to you by GEAR and URC Youth. We meet together each year to explore more about faith in Jesus Christ through small groups, teaching, worship and a whole range of fun activities. Join at one of the great weekends for fun, meeting new people and exploring the gospel.

Held at **Stathern Lodge** (near Melton Mowbray), **Crossfire** is a camp for young people aged 12+ years (year 7 upwards). It is a fun weekend of talks, small group sessions, sung worship led by the Crossfire worship band and fantastic cooked food. Expect a great weekend of learning more about Jesus, fun activities and meeting new people.

When	<b>Wednesday 1 – Saturday 4 June 2022</b>
Where	<b>Stathern Lodge Farm, Nr. Melton Mowbray, LE14 4EX</b>
Cost	Early Booking Only £30 – Tent hire available from £5
To Book	<a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/crossfire-camp-2022-tickets-214999628677">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/crossfire-camp-2022-tickets-214999628677</a>
More info	<a href="https://crossfirecamp.org.uk/crossfire-camp-2022/">https://crossfirecamp.org.uk/crossfire-camp-2022/</a>

## GEAR - Lent Series on Zoom



**Group for  
Evangelism  
And  
Renewal**  
*within the United  
Reformed Church*

**GEAR** are hosting a lent series that is open to any individuals and churches who wish to join us. Each week there will be worship, Bible Study, discussion and prayer as we will unpack the aims of **GEAR**.

- Wed 3 March** - Growing Close to Jesus, led by **Sally Willett**
- Wed 10 March** - Enthusiastic about the Bible, led by **Andy Twilley**
- Wed 17 March** - Alive in the power of the Spirit, led by **Paul Stokes**
- Wed 24 March** - Reaching our with the good news, led by **Ashley Evans**

All from 7.30-9pm on Zoom. Contact **Matt Stone** for the Zoom details:  
[matt.stone@cantab.net](mailto:matt.stone@cantab.net).

The sessions (excluding discussion) will be recorded and made available the next day in case churches wish to use them.



# East Midlands Synod URC Youth Games Day



The poster features a yellow background with a white central area. At the top left is the logo for 'The United Reformed Church Youth'. In the center, an illustration shows four diverse young people sitting around a table, playing cards. Below the illustration, the text 'EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD URC YOUTH' is written in black. To the left of the main title is a red circle with the text 'YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN'. The main title 'GAMES DAY' is in large, bold, black letters. Below it, the text 'Space for Fun' and 'Food & Feedback' is written in a smaller, italicized font. At the bottom left, the event details are listed: 'SATURDAY 26 FEB', '10am-2pm', 'SYNOD OFFICE', '1 Edwards Lane, Nottingham, NG5 3AA'. At the bottom right, the text 'Games to Play' is in red, followed by 'BOARD GAMES, CARD GAMES, VIDEO GAMES & MORE' in black. A QR code is located at the bottom right of the poster.

**EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD  
URC YOUTH**

**YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN**

**GAMES  
DAY**

*Space for Fun  
Food & Feedback*

**SATURDAY 26 FEB  
10am-2pm  
SYNOD OFFICE  
1 Edwards Lane, Nottingham,  
NG5 3AA**

*Games to Play*  
**BOARD GAMES, CARD  
GAMES, VIDEO GAMES &  
MORE**

Online registration <https://bit.ly/34YWwZD>  
More information: 07577-867024 or [cydo@urcwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urcwestmidlands.org.uk)



A chance to get together with those who attended Youth Assembly in January, play some games together, share some food and some feedback on Youth Assembly and discuss future activities and events for young people in the Synod. Everyone connected with a URC Church in School Year 10 up to 25 years is invited.

Sign up at <https://bit.ly/34YWwZD> or use the QR on the attached poster/image.

## Church at the Edge

Be inspired, be reflective, be re-charged!



A monthly space for busy activists to reflect together on what it means to be a 'Church at the Edge'

**Church Action on Poverty** and the URC's '**New Reality Same Mission**' group from the **Discipleship & Mission teams** bring us news of new monthly sessions being held on zoom from March – July.

If you are a busy activist, a passionate disciple, and/or engaged in community ministry (however you might chose to interpret these terms), and need a space to meet with others, to be inspired, to be open and honest about current difficulties, and to seek support from each other in living through these challenging times, then please sign up for the third series of monthly Zoom sessions, brought to you by **Church Action on Poverty** and the URC's '**New Reality Same Mission**' group from the **Discipleship & Mission teams**.

Please sign up to receive further information and reminders for each session here

<https://forms.gle/9kdPpVtQgy1PRqiu9>

## Church Energy Costs

With the announcement on the **3 February** that the price cap on energy costs is going to increase by 54%, it is vital that churches seek the best contract from electricity and gas providers that is available.

There are a number of agents (some might call them middlemen) who can look at the market and get the best deal going – they get paid by the provider, so it doesn't cost the church anything to do this.

Recently I received an email from a company called **The Utility Management Company** offering this service, and I have had dealings with **Love Energy** when arranging contracts for my own church at Melton Mowbray. There may well be others, so it would pay to have a look around.

With all costs escalating in the coming months, and often not accompanied by a matching increase in income, it is even more important that we continue to give good stewardship to our churches.

On another matter, can I remind churches that they must undertake regular inspections of their Manses and keep them well maintained and in good decorative order. I have had a couple of occasions recently where Ministers have moved out of Manses and a full programme of redecoration, and in one case the replacement of carpets, had to be carried out before the property could be either let or sold! The cost of this was over £1000 in each case, which had to be paid by Synod. If the Manses had been regularly inspected such costs would have been minimised as the defects would have been discovered early and easily dealt with.

It is incumbent upon us all to make sure that our Ministers are able to live in clean, well-presented and maintained houses – after all, it is their home.


Geoff Milnes, Synod Property Officer

## Central URC, Derby – Bacon Butties

*On Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February*  
*In aid of Headway. Derby Branch*

**Bacon Butties**

*and much more*



*Toasted Teacakes*



*Raffle*



*Cake Stall*

*Book Stall*

**Central URC, Stuart House,  
Green Lane Derby DE1 1RS  
from 10:00 a.m. until 11:30**

# Vacancies



## Digital Content Officer (Digital Worship)

Permanent contract, 21 hours per week  
Salary: £18,524

**Are you ready to help the discipleship and mission of the Church through digital worship?**

Working in the creative Communications team and closely with the Minister for Digital Worship, this role supports the teams purpose to promote effective communication and celebration of the Gospel in and beyond the URC; giving voice to good news and facilitating regional and national communications.

You already have experience in website content development, extensive knowledge of digital platforms and experience of managing internal and external digital communications. You have a wide set of digital editing and production skills, with experience in online videos, images, podcasts, social media, websites, PowerPoints, and emails. You possess excellent English language skills including writing for social and digital media. You are highly organised with an ability to multi-task and work to tight deadlines. An awareness of Christian mission and language, and appreciation for worship in varied formats is essential. Experience of managing focus groups and delivering training events would be advantageous.

We can offer you a friendly work environment: flexibility to be home-based or hybrid working from United Reformed Church House in London and from home (following a successful probationary period).

**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.urc.org.uk/jobs](http://www.urc.org.uk/jobs)

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Monday 21 February 2022 Interview date: Tuesday 8 March 2022



## Administrative Assistant

Permanent contract  
21 hours per week  
Salary: £16,334

**Are you interested in being part of a team to help the Church keep people safe?**

As part of the Safeguarding and Discipleship teams, in this role you will provide vital administrative support to the Safeguarding Office, responding to initial enquiries from local churches and synods.

Educated to A level or equivalent, with GCSE passes (grades A-C) in English and Maths, you already have experience in general office procedures and administration. You will have excellent interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to handle information with discretion in a sensitive and confidential manner. You will be organised and thorough with a high level of accuracy and attention to detail.

The ability to take accurate and timely minutes would be a distinct advantage.

We can offer you a friendly work environment with the flexibility for hybrid working from United Reformed Church House in London and from home 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.urc.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.urc.org.uk/vacancies)

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Monday 28 February 2022 Interview date: Monday 14 March 2022

## 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/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

Following the relaxation of the government's Covid guidance, the **Synod Office** is now open again from **Monday to Thursday** each week. As a continued precaution, members of staff are each working two days per week on site and otherwise working from home, in two alternating "bubbles". 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](http://www.urch5.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

CCL1067405  
Photo by Shane Rounce on [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com)

*Next edition: Thursday 3 March 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 28 February 2022**