



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

EMURCE No: 280 – 15th NOVEMBER 2018
EDITED THIS WEEK BY: GEOFF TOWNSEND

In so many ways November is a month of Remembrance. It began on the 1st with All Saints Day, although that is hardly remembered or celebrated in most of our churches. Then of course, we had November 5th, celebrated with fireworks and bonfires, where in the celebrations at Lewes effigies of Theresa May and Boris Johnson had replaced the traditional Guy Fawkes. Also, in the procession every year 13 Crosses are carried and laid at the War Memorial, remembering 13 Protestant martyrs who were burnt at the stake in Lewes High Street during the brief reign of Mary 1.

This year being the centenary of the end of the First World War, the Remembrance celebrations have been even more poignant than usual, but I can't help but think that it a sign of the times when the following text message was sent to passengers travelling to France or Belgium for the celebrations:

"Bonjour! As you're travelling during the commemoration period, please remember that you can't bring any real or replica bombs, shells (complete or partial), or weapons on board, even if you have bought them in a gift shop."

In a few week's time we'll be remembering the birth of the one who came to bring peace.

Geoff Townsend, Convenor of Pastoral Group

PEOPLE

It is with sadness that we inform you of the death of the **Revd Hugh Neems**. Hugh served with the LMS/CCWM in American Samoa (1955-1968); the Advocacy Secretary CCWM (1968 - 71) and Lightcliffe URC, Halifax (1971 -93) and, in his retirement, lived in Todmorden. The funeral will be held at 12 noon on Monday 3rd December 2018 at Littleborough URC and afterwards at Rochdale crematorium.

NOTTINGHAM

NOTTINGHAM WORLD CHURCH SUNDAY - November 25th, to be held at Bulwell URC at 4pm with "bring & share" tea. Speaker: Pastor Joseph Zulu, on Extending Compassion to the people of Zimbabwe. Note the date - posters available later. For further details contact: ian.sylvia@salmon.2.co.uk

LEICESTERSHIRE

WESTCOTES UNITED REFORMED CHURCH – Invite you to join them in a celebration of their organ's centenary on Wednesday 28th November 2018 at 7.30pm. An evening of music for all tastes, with guest organists. Refreshments will be served throughout the evening. Admission is £7.00 (incl. Refreshments). All proceeds go to army charities. For reservations call: 0116 2404057 / 07746 951347. The address for the church is: Corner of Hinckley Rd/Westcotes Drive, Leicester, LE3 0TJ

DERBYSHIRE

You are invited to - XMAS BASH! alt: Derby at 7pm on Saturday 1st December at Derby Central URC, Victoria Street, Derby.

Come along for music, party food and conversation. With special Guest Speaker Dave Tomlinson, Author of: Post Evangelical, Re-enchanting Christianity, How to be a Bad Christian, The Bad Christian's Manifesto, Black Sheep and Prodigals, Still Waters & Sky Scrapers.

IS YOUR CHURCH LISTED AND/OR IN A CONSERVATION AREA?

The other day I read about the National Trust's conservation and remedial work on Lindisfarne Castle a Grade 1-listed building. A lot of the remedial work was due to damp. The article noted that "early restoration efforts had trapped it in the walls, causing it to spread ... all the old cement based materials (were) replaced with a traditional lime plaster helping the building to breath." This reminded me of an early 18 C Grade 2 –listed church building in the West Midlands Synod, the walls of which had been given a cement render, trapping naturally rising damp into the walls, and causing the internal plaster to 'blow' and the external brickwork to deteriorate.

As you may know, many buildings, like Lindisfarne Castle and Bedworth URC, are listed because their structure and appearance is deemed to be a significant part of the historical built environment of our towns, villages and countryside and are worth preserving. Some of the church buildings in our Synod are part of this historical and architectural significance within the town or village in which they are situated, and are listed, mostly Grade 2, but some Grade.2*.

In 1990, and subsequently in 2010, the United Reformed Church was specifically included in the "Ecclesiastical Exemption Acts" of Parliament. This means that by those Acts, instead of the Church Secretary, or other person duly authorised by the Church Meeting, making an application for planning permission to make repairs or changes to a listed Church building to the Local Authority (LA), the application should now be made to your Synod, in this case the East Midland Synod of the URC which has been given the power to decide the application instead of the LA.

So firstly:- if your church is Listed and/or in a Conservation Area and wishes to make repairs or changes to, for instance a roof, walls or windows, or make changes to the inside of the building, then the first port of call is to the Robert White at the Synod office. Do NOT apply to the L.A. first as they may not be aware that the Acts apply to URC buildings.

And secondly: - your church will probably be referred to the Synod's Listed Buildings Advisory Committee (LBAC). As part of the membership of the committee we have expert Conservation Architects and others who can give advice about what can and can't be done to church buildings which are listed; and also advice about remedial work to buildings, like crack's in wall's and plasterwork.

Thirdly – if your church is contemplating repairs, renovations or changes to your buildings make sure your Architect, who you may have consulted, is also aware of the Synod's LBAC, as many are not aware of the inclusion of URC churches in the Ecclesiastical Exemption Acts.

And so finally, if your building is listed or in a conservation area the LBAC is here to give advice and help. So please ask!

Leslie Giller (Secretary to the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee, E. Midlands Synod, URC.)

DO SOMETHING SMALL THIS CHRISTMAS AND MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Broxtowe Borough Council are collecting donations for Women's Aid to provide new gifts for children and teens. These presents will be given to the children who are living in refuges over the Christmas period. We are asking for presents for girls and boys of the following age ranges: 0-2, 2-4, 4-6, 6-8, 8-10, 10-12, 12-14, 14-16.

We are acting as a collection point for donated gifts. We will ensure these are appropriately wrapped and passed on to the intended recipients through our links with Women's Aid.

Please call Debbie Johnson on 0115 917 3610 if you are interested in making a donation and we can arrange collection if necessary . If you have any questions or queries, do not hesitate to contact us.



SYNOD ADVENT REFRESHER



On Saturday 1st December 2018, from 10.30am – 2.30pm at The Synod Meeting Room, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3AA. Bring your own lunch.

This event is led by our Training and Development Officer, the Revd Dr Deborah Baird and all are welcome. Come along to share ideas, join discussions with other churches and be led in bible study and advent reflection. Booking is essential, please contact Hannah Holmes at the Synod Office to book your place: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk Tel: 0115 9609241

MISSING A COAT?

There were 3 coats left behind at the Synod meeting held on 13th October at Marlpool URC and 2 of them have not yet been claimed. Is one of them yours? If you think it is then please contact Chris at the Synod Office so that you can be reunited.

Email: admin@urc5.org.uk Telephone: 0115 9609241



THEOLOGY SLAM

A search for new engaging voices thinking theologically about the contemporary world.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has endorsed an exciting competition to find engaging young voices who think theologically about the contemporary world.

“Theology Slam” is organised jointly by the Church Times, SCM Press, the Community of St Anselm, and the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC).

It is open to anyone, lay or ordained, between the ages of 18 to 30, and consists of two rounds.

In the first round, applicants are asked to write 500 words on one of 12 contemporary issues, which include Theology and Mental Health; Theology and Artificial Intelligence; and Theology and Political Tribalism. Alongside the 500 words, applicants are also asked to submit a 90-second video, introducing who they are and why they are interested in the topic. The deadline for submissions is 11.59 p.m. on 7 December.

Three entrants will be chosen to take part in the Theology Slam Final on 7 March 2019 at LICC in central London, where they will deliver talks of between seven and ten minutes, based on the 500-word entry. Each finalist will have been given a half-day training session on public speaking before the final, free of charge.

The three talks will be judged on the night by a panel that consists of Dr Eve Poole, the Third Church Estates Commissioner and theologian; Professor John Swinton, the winner of the 2016 Michael Ramsey Prize; Mark Greene, the executive director of LICC; and the Revd Dr Isabelle Hamley, Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury. There will also be an audience Q&A. The talks will be filmed and made available on YouTube and social media.

The winner will receive a collection of books worth up to £200 and his or her 500-word entry will be published in the Church Times.

For more information and to apply, seeing the full list of topics, visit: www.churchtimes.co.uk/theology-slam. Any questions, email theologyslam@hymnsam.co.uk

SING – MUSIC WEEKEND

URC Youth are hosting a Music weekend for young people aged 14 to 25 from 23 to 25 November 2018, costing £75. It is being held at Whitemoor Lakes, Barley Green Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 8QT

The weekend is sure to be full of music making, worship and workshops exploring how we can use music in, and as, worship. We will also be discussing how to create more musical opportunities for young people within the URC in the future. On the Saturday evening we will be holding a talent show so please bring along something prepared or use the free time to join up with friends and create something to show. It doesn't have to be a musical act, it can be dance, drama, comedy or anything else you'd like to share.

For more information contact: Children and Youth Work Office, Email – children.youth@urc.org.uk

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES – PROGRAMME EXECUTIVE FOR ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

The WCC is looking for a Programme Executive for Ecumenical Relations to be responsible for coordinating the work of "Ecumenical Relations" towards enhancing fellowship among WCC, Christian world communions and international ecumenical organizations. The position reports to the Deputy General Secretary for Unity and Mission. Deadline for application : 30 November 2018.

How to apply: Complete application dossiers (curriculum vitae, motivation letter, application form, copies of diplomas and recommendation letters) are to be sent by email to recruitment@wcc-coe.org (preferred option)

For more information visit: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/get-involved/job-openings>

Note: When filling vacancies the World Council of Churches takes into account regional, confessional, gender and racial balance to the extent possible. However, competence for the job will take precedence.

AND FINALLY: - This E letter is sent on behalf of The URC East Midlands Synod, 1 Edwards Lane, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3AA. Telephone: 0115 9609241

Email address for E-Letter Editor: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

Copy Date for Next E-Letter: 26.11.2018

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