



The
United
Reformed
Church

EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

EMURCE No: 287 – 7th March 2019

EDITED THIS WEEK BY: Revd Dr. Deborah Baird, TDO

This week we enter the season of Lent, a time for reflection and repentance, and spiritual growth. During these forty days of preparation for Easter, we consider Christ's suffering and how we are called to take up our own crosses. Many of us engage in studies and activities designed to help us to do this with more focus, and they are immensely beneficial to our discipleship. However, I would like to add another thought to contemplate.

A few days ago I came across some very challenging words from Clement, an early bishop of Rome. He wrote this: "When the heathen hear the words of God from our lips, they marvel at them as something beautiful and great. However, when they find out that our deeds are unworthy of the words we speak, they turn from this to blasphemy. They say it is a myth and a delusion." This is worrying in the light of our role as the Church in helping people to see God, a God that should be so visible in us, that others want to follow Christ. But as Clement warns, how often do we say one thing, yet do another? This Lent, may we seriously endeavour to make our actions match our words so that we can never be accused of *cheap grace*, as Bonhoeffer calls it, "grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."

May this time of Lent be a blessing to you
Deborah

PEOPLE

We regret to inform you of the death of **Revd Brian Griffith**, living in Wymondham, who passed away on 6th January, 2019. Brian's ministries were at: Kingswood, Bristol 1965-69; London Road, Kettering 1969-80; Trinity, Norwich 1980-86. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this sad time.

I am writing with the sad news of the death of **Revd Gwyn Lewis Thomas**, Retired Minister in the Eastern Synod. Gwyn died on Friday 15th February, aged 99. Gwyn served at Swan Hill, Shrewsbury 1950-53; Orsett 1953-69; Aveley 1962-69. A Thanksgiving Service will be held at 12noon, Thursday 14th March at Pitsea crematorium. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this sad time.

We are sorry to inform you of the death of **Rev Arnold Harrison** on Friday 22nd February 2019. Arnold's ministries were at: Duckworth Street, Darwen 1966 – 73; Darwen Group 1973 – 75; Bramhall 1975 – 97; Synod Clerk, North Western Province 1979 – 85; Moderator, Yorkshire Synod 1997 - 2008. There will be a Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Arnold Harrison at Bramhall United Reformed Church on Friday 15 March 2019 at 3.45 to which all are invited. This will follow a private Service of Committal. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this sad time.

CHURCH ACCOUNTS

Thank you to those who have responded to our request in the last e-letter. If you have not sent in your Church Accounts yet, please be reminded to return to the Synod Office by **31st March 2019** wherever possible.

If any help or advice is needed please contact your local Finance Networker or the Synod office.

Many thanks

David Greatorex, Treasurer



Donkeys in the Bible

CHILDREN AND YOUTH @ SYNOD

16th March 2019, 10am till 4pm
St Andrews URC, Peterborough

Children (from age 5) come along to Synod and explore Donkeys in the Bible. A day of fun, games, craft and stories.

We will be joining the main Synod meeting for worship.

Those who are older (over 11) we will be joining the Synod meeting, to hear from the young people who went to youth assembly and learn what the Synod meeting is about.

Bring a packed lunch.

Please book in through Jane Henderson, CYDO. cydo@urc5.org.uk 07572 291007

SYNOD MISSION FUND

A reminder that applications for the Mission Fund must be **sent to Mrs Chris Willis at the Synod Office by 14th March** for consideration at the next meeting of the Panel on 24th April.

Further details are in the previous e-letter.

Many thanks, Synod Office

CAN YOUR CHURCH HELP?

In discussing church membership, the national church has become aware that there are some people who wish to remain members, but live either too far away from a local church, or through lack of transport or ill health cannot get there for worship or fellowship. Synods have been asked to identify local churches who would be prepared to include such people on their list of members. Ideally we would like to identify 1 or 2 such churches in each Area. These "host churches" might, for example send these "distant" members a copy of their church magazine and make an occasional contact, either by phone or e-mail with them.

If your church would be prepared to help, could you please contact one of your Area Pastoral Consultants.

Revd. Dr. Gillian Poucher – Debut Novel

Revd. Dr. Gillian Poucher will be launching her debut novel, *After the Funeral*, at Gainsborough United Reformed Church on **Saturday 13 April** at 10.30a.m. The book signing will be accompanied by a Q&A session. Light refreshments will be available.

After the Funeral deals with contemporary issues of loneliness and complex relationships and is partly inspired by Lincolnshire's aviation history. The novel is underpinned by Christian spirituality, with a redemptive ending emerging from earlier tragedy. Religious art also features. The spiritual element is intentionally subtle, to raise questions rather than give answers, among those of no faith as well as practising Christians.

After the Funeral, published by Red Door Publishing, will be available to buy at the event at £8.99 or can be pre-ordered on line from the publishers and other distributors.

If your church hosts or has links with a book group, Gillian would be happy to visit to discuss her novel within a fifty mile radius of Gainsborough.

RESOURCE FROM CHURCH HOUSE

Youth and Children's work Elders or Church Secretaries as well as Nationally Accredited Lay Preachers should have received a mailing from Church House, containing amongst other things the **One Body Resource**– you will find within this a wide variety of material suitable for use with different ages, and all-ages, in a host of settings. It is excellent and please make sure that all those who may lead worship or work with children and young people in your churches get to see it.

If you have not received it please get in touch with Jane our CYDO, cydo@urc5.org.uk and she will try to help.

SAFEGUARDING RETURNS

Thank you to all those who have so far sent in their returns. Please note they need to be with Jane Henderson, Synod Safeguarding Officer, safeguarding@urc5.org.uk by 31 March 2019. If you have not received your Safeguarding return (these are separate to the church annual return) please get in touch with Jane.

MESSY CHURCH TRAINING: MESSY DISCIPLESHIP AND HOLY HABITS.

Saturday 9th March 2019 from 10am – 4pm in the Synod Meeting Room

Please bring your own lunch. Booking is essential!

We are excited that this training event is happening in our Synod. We have a trainer from Messy church and Andrew Roberts (author of Holy Habits) coming to deliver this day.

Please let Jane know if you are planning to attend so she has enough biscuits! Email: cydo@urc5.org.uk

Core Skills Training

Core Skills Training for Youth and Children's Leaders will be running at Bulwell URC on:

- **Saturday 23rd March 2019, 10:00 – 16:00** (please bring your own lunch)

For more information contact Jane Henderson: cydo@urc5.org.uk and to book click this link, <https://bulwellurc.churchsuite.co.uk/events/zsk0py48>

IDEAS FOR LENT

If you are thinking of what you can do for Lent please see: www.sharethemiracle.org

It is a simple all-age act of kindness project you could consider – collect Easter Eggs to give away, and share the stories

EVENTS AND EVENT REMINDERS...

JULIAN CLEF CONCERT PIANIST - SATURDAY 23RD MARCH 2019, 7:30PM (Doors open at 6:45pm)

Julian Clef plays serious and light classics across the musical spectrum

BRAHMS Intermezzo in A Major & 2 Rhapsodies

BEETHOVEN Piano Sonata 'Les Adieux'

CHOPIN Etudes & Grand Valse Brillante

KAPUSTIN Etudes

RODGERS arr HOUGH 'My Favourite Things' (Sound of Music)

EARL WIND Virtuoso Etudes on Gershwin Songs

At The Crossing Church & Centre, Newcastle Street, Worksop, Notts, S80 2AT

Adult Tickets £10 Under 16's £4 - Now at the welcome desk **or** order from 01909 475421 **or**
by email: info@musicatthecrossing.co.uk

Is it I Lord?

Ministry Enquirers' Day – Saturday 6th April 2019

10:00am – 4:00pm

Luther King House, Manchester

- Explore opportunities for service through the United Reformed Church
 - Ask the questions that are on your mind and heart
- Hear from people engaged in a variety of lay and ordained ministries
 - Listen for the voice of God as we worship and pray together

FOR FULL DETAILS CONTACT: Vivienne Williams. Tel: 0207 916 8649 Email: Vivienne.williams@urc.org.uk

SYNOD VOCATION DAY

Saturday 11th May 2019 – 10:00am – 3:00pm at Christ Church URC, Leicester
"Whom Shall I send"

This is the day for you if you feel God is calling you to serve in some way but you are not sure what or where or how.

Here is an opportunity to come and hear from people engaged in a range of ministries who will share their stories and answer questions you might have.

OLD TESTAMENT IN A DAY

All Welcome – come along to this Bible Study Day on one of the dates below!

Led by Revd Dr. Deborah Baird – READING THE HEBREW BIBLE AS STORY

Saturday 29th June 2019, 10:00–4:00pm at St. Andrew's URC, Peterborough

Saturday 2nd November 2019, 10:00–4:00pm in the Synod Meeting Room

Please Bring your Lunch

Booking is essential - please contact trainingpa@urc5.org.uk or telephone Hannah Willey at the Synod Office

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: modpa@urc5.org.uk

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