

EMURCE No: 304 – 14th November 2019
EDITED THIS WEEK BY: REVD SAMUEL SILUNGWE

Stepwise has come! This is the United Reformed Church's (URC) new intergenerational discipleship development programme. It was launched in September 2018 as an integral part of *Walking the Way - living the life of Jesus today*, the denomination's focus on whole-life discipleship and mission. At our October 2019 Synod meeting we were privileged to have the Rev David Salsbury the URC's Stepwise Programme Manager come to help us understand more about the programme and how it works. The programme is based around five broad streams, namely, *Faith-filled life, Faith-fuelled leadership, Faith-filled confidence, Faith-filled community* and *Faith-filled worship*. One of the frequent questions being asked is: Who is Stepwise for? **Well**, it is for people of all ages and backgrounds – **it is for everyone, including you!** It is open to anyone who is keen to reflect on and develop their Christian faith. *Faith-filled Life* is the opening stream in the Stepwise programme, and having personally accessed this stream, I am particularly impressed by the way it has been designed. This stream is made up of six themes, and depending on how frequently the local group sessions take place, it will take you about three months to complete. Having had an opportunity to mentor one of our local groups in the Synod, Stepwise involves plenty of lively discussion and sharing. But for me, the real bonus about Stepwise, is its practicality, flexibility and instant accessibility – as you can "do" your studying wherever you are.

During the course of our lives we have witnessed so much confusion, anger, sorrow, hate and destruction in our world, it is easy to give up hope. When Paul was in gaol, he wrote "being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6, NIV). Stepwise aims to deepen discipleship and encourage Christian confidence in today's world. And one of the dynamics of Stepwise is that it is shaped around your strengths and needs, in the context of your own community and church. It emphasises the importance of learning from your daily life – wherever you are and whoever God might be calling you to be. Are you thinking of exploring and enriching your personal faith life, discerning where God's call on your life may be leading, preparing for a new direction, or developing a specific role within your community or church, then, I would encourage you to consider taking part in Stepwise. I hope you will find time to browse through the Stepwise page on the URC website and find it a gateway to discover enough to know more about this exciting discipleship development programme. If after browsing your question remains unanswered then please send an email to: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk and we will be happy to help.

Revd Samuel Silungwe – *Synod Stepwise Coordinator*

PEOPLE

Following the sad news of the death of **Revd Jack Thompson**, details of the funeral are as follows:

Private Family committal at Overdale on Tuesday 12th November at 10.15am.

'Celebration of life' service at 11am at St Andrew and St George, St Georges Road Bolton.

THE INDUCTION OF REV MARK HOUGHTON

The Induction of Rev Mark Houghton as Non Stipendiary Ministry within the North Derbyshire Area will take place at

Rose Hill United Reformed Church

on Saturday 7th December at 3pm

All are welcome please let Rev Sue Powell know if you wish to attend : (powellstondon@aol.com)

ROBERT WHITE ANNOUNCES HIS RETIREMENT

Mr Robert White, the Synod Trust and Property Officer, has informed Synod of his decision to retire at 31st March 2020 after 16 years in the role. Churches throughout the Synod owe Robert a huge debt of gratitude for his support, his knowledge, his attention to detail, the gift of his time to resolve innumerable issues, large and small, and his infallible courtesy to everyone. As he approaches his 80th birthday early in 2020 we offer him and his wife Rachel our heartfelt good wishes for his retirement.

We have begun a recruitment process to find a successor whom we hope can be in post by mid-February so they can benefit from an extended handover period with Robert. An advert for the post is included in this E-letter. Please pass it on to anyone whom you think would be interested.

Helen Lidgett,
Synod Clerk

DO YOU KNOW A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON WHO IS PLAYING THEIR PART IN THE MISSION OF GOD?

We at Children's and Youth Work are delighted to announce the launch of the Lundie Memorial Award. A trust fund, established in 1895 in memory of the Revd Robert Henry Lundie, has recently been re-purposed to enable us to spotlight some of the amazing work done by children and young people across the synods.

This award is designed to spotlight and celebrate individuals using their God-given skills, time and talents to good effect within their church, their community, their synod or even nationally.

Each month for 100 months we will make an award to one such person—they will be presented with a certificate, a very special medal, and £100 to be spent on something of their choice that benefits children and young people in their church or synod. Nomination forms should be filled in and sent to your Children's and Youth Development Officer (CYDO) or equivalent for your synod. For East Midlands email Jane Henderson: cydo@urc5.org.uk

Suggested nominations: a young carer, young person running a holiday club, child volunteering at a dementia café, young person fund raising for a messy church outing, a young person providing live music for services, a child raising money for an overseas development project, a young person training older people in the use of technology, etc.

The awards will be made by region: Yorkshire, East Midlands, Eastern in January; Scotland, Northern and North Western in February; Wessex, Thames North and Southern in March; and Mersey, West Midlands, Wales and South Western in April in the first instance. Nominations will need to be submitted by the 6th of the preceding month (the end of November for January)

So start nominating those amazing children and young people and let's celebrate the things they are doing to put their faith into action.

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON PROMISES MADE BY ELDERS

In 2018 General Assembly passed a Resolution proposing the addition of an extra promise to those made by Elders at ordination and induction. As this would involve changes to the Basis of Union it was referred to local churches for consideration at Church Meetings. The General Secretary, Revd John Proctor, wrote to Church Secretaries in early September 2018 with details of the Resolution and asked for responses to be sent to him by 31st December 2019. We brought this Resolution to Synod on 12th October 2019, having given time for local churches to discuss it before we brought it to a synod meeting, as recommended by the General Secretary. As a great many members of Synod at the recent meeting claimed they had not received the letter, I draw your attention to it now. John Proctor points out that churches still have two months to discuss the proposal and send their comments to him by 31st December 2019.

The letter can be found here: <https://www.urc5.org.uk/content/promises-made-elders>

Helen Lidgett, Synod Clerk

CHANGES TO MARRIAGE LAW

The following information comes from the General Secretary via the Free Churches Group:

The Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration, etc.) Act 2019 received Royal Assent in March 2019 but is not yet implemented. The changes introduced by the Act affect those churches and chapels whose buildings are registered to solemnise marriages and who have an Authorised Person to register the marriage.

Once the Act is implemented (most probably sometime in 2020), the process for registering a marriage will change significantly, most notably in that churches will no longer hold their own registers or issue marriage certificates. This will all be done on the new electronic Marriage Register at the Register Office. The role of the Authorised Person will – therefore – change significantly with them no longer being responsible for the completion of registers or the issuing of certificates, although they may still have a role in signing the couple's 'Marriage Schedule' to confirm the marriage has lawfully taken place.

As soon as we receive further information about the date of implementation and changes churches will be required to make, we will pass this on.

Those churches who have registered to conduct civil partnerships should also note that the Act extends civil partnership to opposite-sex couples and that these provisions are effective from 31st December 2019.

ALFRETON MALE VOICE CHOIR CONCERT

Saturday 23rd November 2019 at 7.30pm at West Derbyshire URC, Coldwell Street, Wirksworth, DE4 4FB.

An evening of song and laughter including items by the 'Sagalouts' the Choir's comical skiffle group.

Admission: £6, pay at the door or from Ian Wright 07768 948506 – in aid of URC funds.

FOLK CAROL CELEBRATION

West Derbyshire URC invite you to come and join the 'Folk Carol Celebration' at West Derbyshire URC, Coldwell Street, Wirksworth, DE4 4FB on Monday 6th January at 7pm.

The Folk Carol Service will be a little different! There will be carols in folk style (some with traditional words, some with new words) mixed with a variety of Christmas readings.

PROPERTY OFFICER AND TRUST OFFICER

Part time - 15 hours pw, Salary £12,307 pa

Based at the Nottingham office of the East Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church

Responsibilities include:

- oversee the property portfolio of 123 church premises and 56 manses
- undertake transactions related to the properties as required
- advise local church management teams on their responsibilities for the buildings in their care
- provide administrative support for the Synod Trust Company.

We are looking for someone who is:

- An excellent administrator
- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- Understands the legal requirements involved in property administration
- Has some experience of charitable trusts
- Has empathy with the church

Application packs available from the Synod Office - admin@urc5.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 12.00noon, Tuesday 3rd December 2019

Interviews: during week of 9th -13th December 2019 in the Synod Office



United Reformed Church
Broomhill Rd/Brooklyn Rd
Bulwell, NG6 9GJ
www.bulwellurc.org.uk

Saturday November 16th – 10.30am



Many stalls – gifts – toys – toiletries
bric-a-brac - prize every time stall
preserves - refreshments – cakes.

We will be serving Bacon cobs,
vegetarian option & warm mince pies!

Come along and bag a bargain!

We are a Fairtrade Church



Christmas ukulele concert

Saturday 7th December

at 7pm

United Reformed Church,
Broomhill Rd, Bulwell, NG6 9FL

Join us for a singalong
concert

with

the Nottingham Ukulele
Orchestra

Tea/coffee/juice included.
Home-made cakes to buy.

Tickets £3 (or pay on the door)

contact - Joy Rice - riced@hotmail.co.uk

Proceeds to our Christmas appeal
supporting Framework and Joshua
Orphanage in Malawi

nottinghamukuleleclub.com



CALL FOR SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020

The United Reformed Church General Assembly meets on Friday 10th - Monday 13th July 2020 at the University of Aston in Birmingham. Each Synod is requested to send 16 representatives, of which not more than 10 can be ordained ministers of Word and Sacraments or CRCWs and not more than 10 can be lay people. We must include two young people under the age of 26 and, because of a Resolution passed at Synod in October 2019, at least one person of 40 or under in addition to the two youth representatives. Synod also resolved that the Synod Moderator and the Synod Clerk would be included in our representation.

So are you interested in attending? Is there some one in your church whom you could recommend?

Please send nominations and contact details to Chris Willis, the Synod Administrator, on admin@urc5.org.uk or by post to the Synod office by **Tuesday 7th February 2020**. Please let Chris know if you or any of your nominees are up to 40 years old.

If you are under 26, or nominating someone under 26, please also send the details to Jane Henderson, the Synod CYDO, on cydo@urc5.org.uk.

The Synod Council meeting on 18th February will agree the list of names to be submitted to the Synod meeting on 21st March 2020 for approval.

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: 25.11.2019

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