

EMURCE No: 307 – 9th January 2020



Next Moderator of East Midlands Synod Nominated



Revd Geoffrey Clarke has been nominated to serve as the next Moderator of East Midlands Synod. Geoffrey is presently minister of The Crossing Church, Worksop and Wales Kiveton Methodist Church, both in Nottinghamshire. He had previously served churches in Seaton Delaval in Northern Synod and Trinity Cheadle in North West Synod.

The Assembly Nominating Group which made the recommendation was impressed by many fine qualities in Geoffrey: his experience of 27 years of pastoral ministry; substantial spells of service as Synod Clerk in the North West and Deputy Moderator in the East Midlands, and the high respect he has gained in both these roles; deep and broad ecumenical understanding; detailed knowledge of the Synod, its structures and staffing, and many of its people and churches; thoughtful pastoral insight; and a tested and honest personal spirituality.

Geoffrey's name will be brought to the United Reformed Church's Mission Council in March, which has the power to ratify this nomination as a formal appointment of the Church.

He will begin his term as Moderator on 1st May 2020, for an initial term of seven years.

Geoffrey will stand down as Deputy Moderator of Synod from the end of December in order to prepare for this new role. Please remember him in your prayers.

MODERATOR'S INDUCTION SERVICE

Revd Geoffrey Clarke will be inducted as Moderator of East Midlands Synod on Saturday 16th May 2020 at ChristChurch Grantham. The service will be at 3.00pm. Revd Nigel Uden, one of the Assembly Moderators, will preside. Invitations will be sent out shortly.

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR MODERATORIAL COVER

Synod has put arrangements in place to provide moderatorial cover until Geoffrey takes up his post as Moderator on 1st May.

Essential tasks will be covered by a team of three people: Revd George Mwaura, minister of Christ the Cornerstone Local Ecumenical Partnership, Milton Keynes, Revd Dr Peter Stevenson, minister of ChristChurch Local Ecumenical Partnership Grantham and Stamford United Reformed Church, and Mrs Helen Lidgett, Synod Clerk. They will have the advice and support as necessary from Revd Steve Faber, Moderator of West Midlands Synod, and Revd Kevin Watson, Moderator of Yorkshire Synod.

George will be available to provide pastoral support to ministers. Peter will chair the March Synod meeting and meetings of Synod Council. Helen will oversee the ongoing work of the Synod. Ministers are advised to contact the office as usual to report sick leave or other pastoral concerns, such as requests for compassionate leave. Hannah Willey will direct queries to the appropriate person. Local churches - there is no change! Your first port of call is your Pastoral Consultant who will either deal with the issue themselves or refer it on if they need additional advice or help. Safeguarding issues should be reported to Jane Henderson, the Synod Safeguarding Officer, as usual.

Please remember in your prayers all those taking on additional responsibilities during this transition period.

CHRISTMAS MAILING

A mailing was done to all church secretaries and was posted on Monday 30 December. This included the Annual Return and several other items. Can you please ensure that the Annual Return is sent back to the Synod Office by 31 January 2020.

PEOPLE

- ❖ We regretfully inform you of the death of **Revd Leslie Watson**. Les was a non stipendiary minister in Milton Keynes serving Hodge Lea from 1991-2006 and a faithful and well loved member of West End United Church in his retirement. He died peacefully at Willen Hospice on Friday 27th December after a period of illness. His funeral is on Wednesday 15th January 3.15pm at the Willow Chapel, Crownhill, Milton Keynes followed by a Church service at West End United Church, Wolverton.
- ❖ It is with sadness that we advise you of the death of retired minister, **Revd Doreen Mildred Vick**, who died on 5 December 2019. Doreen's served the Black Country team from 1988-97. The thanksgiving service will be held on Friday 17 January 2020 at Harrold URC 12.30pm.

NEW SYNOD APPOINTMENTS

SYNOD TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Mr Derek Graham has been appointed as the Synod Training and Development Officer. He starts on the 1st February 2020 and will be based in the Synod Office.

Derek Graham began his career as an English teacher but went on to gain extensive experience in Arts administration at Nottingham Playhouse, specialising in communications and marketing. More recently, as Memberships Manager, he ran a popular programme of talks and events for the theatre's dedicated supporters. He lives with his wife and two children in Stapleford, Nottinghamshire and is a regular worshipper, serving Elder and Junior Church leader at St Andrew's with Castle Gate URC, Nottingham. Derek is delighted to take up the post of Training and Development Officer and looks forward to working widely with Ministers, Elders and congregations all across the East Midlands.



(Derek Graham)

SYNOD PROPERTY OFFICER

Mr Geoff Milnes has been appointed as Synod Property Officer, working 15 hours a week and based in the Synod Office. He starts on 18th February 2020 for a 'hand over' period before Robert White retires on 31st March. We will confirm his working days before he takes over the role fully on 1st April.

BRITAIN AND IRELAND SCHOOL OF FEMINIST THEOLOGY

SUMMER SCHOOL 2020 - Tuesday 16th June to Thursday 18th June 2020

At University of Wales, Trinity St David, Lampeter, SA48 7ED - Ecofeminist Theologies In the Age of Climate Crisis.

Our keynote speakers are: Prof Heather Eaton, [St Paul, University, Ottawa], Prof Agnes Brazal, [DeLa Salle University, Manila], Prof Catherine Keller, [Drew University, USA], Kara Moses [Re-Wilding, Cymru]. Dr Megan Clay will discuss the art exhibition entitled 'Women Dancing with Gaia'.

Cost : £190 inclusive of B&B, lunch, evening meal, teas and coffees throughout the day and conference fee. All meals will be vegetarian

Daily Rates: Full days £60 including lunch; Half Days £30 / Early Bird Booking before 15th April, £175. Closing date for all bookings 30th May, 2020.

If you offer a seminar paper or workshop there is a £40 fee discount for full board participants and £10 fee discount for daily participants. All papers will be considered for publication in the international journal 'Feminist Theology'.

For further information contact: Professor Lisa Isherwood l.isherwood@uwtsd.ac.uk

RURAL MINISTRY COURSE

Our highly-regarded Rural Ministry Course is back!

The Rural Ministry Course is designed for *lay and ordained church leaders across the denominations entering a rural appointment for the first time, and those already *in rural ministry who feel the need for a 'refresher'.

The three-day residential programme employs a variety of approaches including practical sessions, group work and workshops led by practitioners, and includes sessions on understanding rural contexts, mission and growth, leadership, farming and work with children and young people in the countryside. Launched in 1982, the course provided training for hundreds of rural church leaders for almost four decades before it was briefly paused in 2017. After a period of review and updating, we are delighted that the course is returning in 2020.

We are running what amounts to a pilot course from Tues 11 – Thurs 13 February 2020, lunchtime to lunchtime, at King's Park Conference Centre in Northampton. This course will cost £250 to reflect the fact that this is a pilot; the fees include a one-year subscription to Country Way magazine.

We will be running a second course from Mon 8 – Wed 10 June 2020; the fees for this will be £300 and will also include a one-year subscription to Country Way magazine.

Delegates can book for either the February or June course by going to germinate.net/ruralministrycourse and following the links to our online booking form, or by contacting Deb Soesan, our office administrator, by email (debs@germinate.net) or phone (020 7685 3066).

'CONFLICT AWARENESS WORKSHOP' from Northerly Synods Listening and Reconciliation Service

On Saturday 15th February 2020 from 9.30am - 4pm at The Synod Meeting Room
Bring your own lunch

East Midlands Synod are delighted that Jim Coleman from Yorkshire Synod, will be leading the day for us and all are welcome to attend. Booking is essential and limited places are available so please let Hannah Holmes know asap if you would like a place: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

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: 20.01.2020

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