



URC EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

E-LETTER NO: 231 - 27th OCTOBER 2016

EDITED THIS WEEK BY: REVD DR DEBORAH BAIRD

To say that the last two or three weeks have been difficult would be a bit of an understatement. They have included the sudden and tragic death of Peter's brother considered to be in the prime of life from *another* continent, but also the joy of my Mum being reunited with her grandson after nearly four years because they happen, just for a little while, to be on the *same* continent - from three different continents, in fact. But the important reminder for me is about relationships, not just close family relationships, but relationships between friends and colleagues, and knowing that you are surrounded by love. But this week is One World Week too, and we are invited to strengthen the oneness of humanity by working together, delighting in who we are and also our differences, to help create a world full of justice and love across all the continents. So, how healthy are our relationships, both locally and globally, and how can we reflect God to our fellow travellers? Only we know our own relationships and what we need to keep them sound, but a little honest reflection on who and how we are, can only help but to strengthen the world around us. I leave this with you. Deborah

PEOPLE

- **Gordon & Margaret Hunt**, members at Marlpool URC, were involved in a serious car accident over the weekend 15/16 October. Both have been in intensive care. Can we please ask you for your thoughts and prayers towards a speedy recovery.
- It is with regret that we advise you that, retired minister, **Revd David John Bremner** died on Saturday 15th October. David lived latterly in a nursing home, where the staff arranged a celebratory lunch in April, at which South Westerns Synod Moderator presented David with a certificate marking the 60th anniversary of his ordination. David served at Church-in-the Grove Sydenham, at Whitley Bay, at Marple Bridge, at Eastham and finally at Ventnor. He leaves a widow, Wendy, who lives in Cricklade, Wiltshire. For details of the funeral please contact the South Western Synod Office at synodoffice@urcsouthwest.org.uk or phone 01823275470
- It is with sadness that we inform you of the upsetting news that **Revd Paul Floe** died suddenly and unexpectedly at home on 17th October. Paul retired just last year having served in Wellingborough 1976-83; United Church of Jamaica & Grand Cayman 1983-86; Horncastle 1987-91; Ermine & City Centre Group, Lincoln 1987-2001; Trinity, Porthcawl & Kenfig Hill Methodist Church 2001-2015. Please pray for Paul's widow, Jean, son, Matthew, their family and many friends. Paul's funeral will be held at 2.30pm on Tuesday 1st November 2016 at Trinity Methodist & United Reformed Church, John Street, Porthcawl CF36 3DT
- A message from our Moderator, **Revd Peter Meek** - "Thank you everyone for the many cards and emails I've had upon the death of my brother. To have the sympathy, prayers and love of so many is a great help. Once again, thank you."



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

SHERWOOD URC - The Moderator of General Assembly, Mr Alan Yates, will be leading worship at Sherwood URC, NG5 3AA on Sunday Morning 6th November at 10.30am. There will be a brief opportunity to meet the moderator before (the fully booked) dinner.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WORLD CHURCH SUNDAY- November 20th at Friary URC 4-6pm. This will be a cafe church event. Speakers Shelagh & Ian Baird-Smith on "Working with Christians in Uganda". All are welcome.

SYNOD MODERATOR'S REVIEW

Our Synod Moderator, the Revd Peter Meek, completes seven years with us in August 2018. He has offered to serve for a further five year term, so we are conducting a review of his ministry as Synod Moderator as required by General Assembly. Letters have been sent, by email where possible, to all ministers, church

secretaries, Synod members and Synod Group members, enclosing a questionnaire seeking responses. Responses will be evaluated by the Synod Review Group, which will also meet with Peter to explore his calling and what work he would hope to develop if granted a further term. The Synod Review Group will prepare a report for the Assembly Review Panel, which will meet in March 2017 and will make a decision.

The members of the Synod Review Group were appointed by Synod on 8th October. They are Mrs Helen Lidgett (Synod Clerk - Convenor), Revd Chris Ford, Ms Pippa Hodgson, Mr Geoff Shaw, Revd Peter Thomas and Mrs Janet Thompson.

Responses must be sent to the Synod Clerk on clerk@urc5.org.uk or if by post to Mrs Helen Lidgett, Synod Clerk, United Reformed Church East Midlands Synod Office, 1 Edwards Lane, Nottingham NG5 3AA, marking the envelope 'Moderator's Review - Confidential'. All responses will be treated with proper confidentiality and discretion by members of the Synod Review Group.

The timetable for the review is quite tight, so we require your views no later than Wednesday 30th November.

If any of the recipients listed above has not received the invitation to take part in the review and wishes to do so, please email or phone Mrs Chris Willis at the Synod Office: admin@urc5.org.uk, or 0115 960 9241 for a copy of the questionnaire.

Helen Lidgett, Synod Clerk

OTHER

THE FUTURE OF THE WINDERMERE CENTRE

The future of the Windermere Centre was discussed during four separate sessions of Mission Council last week. The discussion was wide-ranging and careful, and included the Centre's financial position. Mission Council considered three options:

To pursue a partnership with an ecumenical hospitality provider;

To continue to operate on the current model and;

To close the Centre.

The conclusion was that of the three options, Mission Council was minded to favour the third option to close the centre. With sadness, Mission Council considered that the financial challenges of keeping the Centre open are too great and it did not wish to continue underwriting the costs of maintaining the Centre. The finance and the education and learning committees, noting that the final decision about the Centre has not yet been taken, have been tasked with looking at the full implications of closing the Centre. The two committees will bring a report to the next meeting of Mission Council in May 2017, and it is expected that the final decision on the future of the Windermere Centre will be made then. A clear call was made to use the Centre as much as possible between now and May 2017. Go to the URC website, www.urc.org.uk/media-news, for a fuller report of the discussion and the full text of the Resolution agreed by Mission Council.

FEASTS & FESTIVALS 2017 - A year of celebration!

2017, a year for the whole United Reformed Church to celebrate all that we have been, are now and are called to be as we continue walking the way of Jesus Christ today.

It's 500 years since the Lutheran Reformation, 100 years since the ordination of Constance Coltman, the first woman to enter congregational ministry, 45 years since the URC came into being, more than 80 years since Pilots started and 25 years since Commitment for Life began. So, let's celebrate! And, in doing so, let's think about who we are, what we're about and how we can support one another as we all, in our own ways and contexts, seek to be better disciples of Jesus.

To see what's happening near you and download the poster containing more information on events nationally follow this link: <http://www.urc5.org.uk/FF2017>

MILTON KEYNES MISSION PARTNERSHIP

Following last year's successful Mission Fair, we are offering a new Fair on Saturday 5th November. This year, we will have a large number of stalls for you to explore mission in MK, to be inspired by what is happening and perhaps even involved in one of the many opportunities in mission in the city. Alongside the stalls, we have invited Bart Gamber to introduce the new Vital Signs report, an essential guide to what life is really like in MK, and Martin & Margot Hodson to engage us in thinking about mission and the environment in their talk "Not just

the Church boiler". Come and join us any time from 9.00 - 1.00 at Christ Church Stantonbury on November 5th. Download the leaflet from our website for more information - <http://www.missionpartnership.org.uk/the-mission-fair-is-coming/>

We've also created a facebook event, so do check that out if you're on social media - <https://www.facebook.com/events/608301059371912/>

To join up for the Milton Keynes Mission Partnership newsletter, follow this link: <http://www.missionpartnership.org.uk/november-newsletter-3/>.

NOTTINGHAM INTER FAITH COUNCIL

Nottingham Inter Faith Council warmly invite you to "The Listening Experience" bridging faiths

The Vine Community Centre, Bobbers Mill Road, NG7 5GZ on Tuesday, 15 November 2016, 7pm until 9pm
.....an illuminating and enriching opportunity, to share a personal one-to-one experience with someone of a different faith, of how you each came to your beliefs and how these influence your lives.

If you would like to join us for this friendly and relaxed evening of listening and sharing, please obtain a booking form from: office@interfaithnottingham.org.uk or richardhawthorne@ntlworld.com



CHRISTIANS WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

90th Weekend Conference at The Hayes Swanwick, from Friday to Sunday 24th -26th February 2017. This is an opportunity for women to join in fellowship, prayer and worship, study and service; make new friends and learn from each other's varied backgrounds, experiences and insights. Guest Speaker Rev Kate Bottley.

Workshops: Craft, Prayer Walk, Music, Writing - Evening concert- Communion service - Bible Study

Initially a conference for women from the traditions of Churches of Christ and the United Reformed Church, we welcome Christians from all churches. For more details contact booking secretary Sara Millard: 0114 2864427 Email: cello67@hotmail.com

NEWS FROM MISSION COUNCIL

For details of what went on at October 2016's Mission council please follow this link: <http://urc.org.uk/general/2173-october-2016.html>

LGBT RETREAT at the Windermere Centre

From Wed 9th Nov 2016 - Sat 12th Nov 2016 with Mark Argent

This retreat is an opportunity to explore scripture drawing on the experiences of LGBT people. Stillness and scripture are two rich places for encountering God. In many ways they go together, as silence, and talking with others, are two rich ways to let things from the Bible resonate more deeply, opening new insights and new possibilities.

In the past some people have read scripture in a way that excludes LGBT people. But we've always been part of the story, and this retreat creates the space to explore what echoes for us as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people — and for others who want to join us on the journey. Where are the places in scripture that nourish us, and have nourished people like us down the centuries? What is it to explore scripture as LGBT people created in the image of God? Where might there be surprises in store?

This is a group retreat. It will include silence, conversation, group work and creative possibilities to explore scripture speaking to us over a few days. There will be scope to deepen our own experiences, and be enriched by different understandings and experiences of others in the group.

Mark Argent is the Editor of Encounter, the Magazine of the URC Retreats Group, and is a non-serving Elder at St Columba's URC Cambridge. For more information or to book visit: http://windermereurc.org.uk/events-by-date/?event_id=109

REFRESHER & TRAINING EVENING FOR PRESIDING AT COMMUNION

Wednesday 9th November at 7.30 p.m. in the 'schoolroom' of Enderby URC, LE19 4NE.

For those who have been exercising this valuable ministry for many years, please do bring along the resources that you use and tips that you have found helpful, especially when going to serve in this way in different

churches, so that we can all learn more. For those who have not yet presided, or are very new to doing so, here is the opportunity to undergo some training. All are welcome and I look forward to seeing you. Please let me know if you are coming, by email mary@spiritualseekers.co.uk or phone 0116 2849623

SYNOD ROADSHOW

Are you interested in learning more about Evangelism, Mission, Ministry, Youth and Children's Work, Community Work or Training for Learning and Serving (TLS)? Come along to meet with our Training and Development Officer, Children and Youth Development Officer and other representatives from around our Synod who can answer your questions, tell you about what's on offer and how we can help. Everyone welcome! Join us at Riverside Church, Sleaford on Thursday 3rd November 2016 for one of our drop in sessions from 2pm - 4pm or 7pm - 9pm. Booking is essential, please contact Hannah B at the Synod Office to book your place: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk Tel: 0115 9609241

SYNOD ADVENT REFRESHER

East Midlands Synod Development Team invites you to an Advent Refresher Event!

Led by Revd Dr Deborah Baird, all are welcome, come together to hear and discuss new ideas for your church this advent - Saturday 26th November 2016 from 2pm-5pm at Sherwood URC. To book please contact Hannah B at the Synod Office: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk or call 0115 9609241

YOUTH AND CHILDREN



HOW TO LEAD ALL AGE WORSHIP

Saturday 12th November 2016 from 10.30am - 2pm at Christ Church, Leicester

Led by Deborah Baird (TDO) and Jane Henderson (CYDO). Come along to share ideas, discover new resources and much more! Please bring a packed lunch. Booking is essential, to

book contact Hannah Bones at the Synod Office: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk Tel: 0115 9609241

URC YOUTH ASSEMBLY 2017

Booking for the URC Youth Assembly 2017 is now open for anyone between the ages of 14 and 25 (inclusive). The URCYA17 will take place from 27 to 29 January 2017 at Whitemoor Lakes, Alrewas, Staffordshire. The theme for the Assembly is 'Feasts & Festivals' with URC Youth adding the tagline of 'We're all invited!' Record numbers are expected for 2017 so book early because the price goes up after 9 November (on or before 8 November: £100/on or after 9 November £120). The aim of the weekend? To 'focus on Jesus, to share in community with other young people, and to explore what it means to be church together.' Please contact Jane Henderson CYDO if would like to go - funding is available to help with attendance.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

THAMES NORTH SYNOD - PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO MODERATOR AND SYNOD CLERK

Salary £27,692 - 30,091 per annum Full-time, with flexibility to work occasional evenings and Saturdays

Based at St. Paul's URC, Newton Road, Bayswater, London W2 5LS

The right candidate will have: Excellent verbal and written communication skills, the ability to work calmly under pressure, an organised, efficient and collaborative style of working.

Closing date for completed applications: 5 pm on Monday the 31st October 2016. Interviews to be held on: Monday the 14 November 2016. The anticipated start date: Monday the 09 January 2017.

Applicants must be eligible to work in the UK. E To download an application pack please visit: www.urcthamesnorth.org.uk

AND FINALLY: - Please send any comments or feedback on this e-letter to: admin@urc5.org.uk

The URC East Midlands Synod, 1 Edwards Lane, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3AA.

Email address for E-Letter Editor: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk Copy Date for Next E-Letter: 07.11.16