



URC EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

E-LETTER NO: 232 – 10th NOVEMBER 2016

EDITED THIS WEEK BY: REVD GEOFFREY TOWNSEND

The first few weeks of November seem full of special days. Having remembered Halloween, the month began with All Saints Day, and then there's the celebrations of November 5th. The following week brings Armistice Day on the 11th with that leading to Remembrance Sunday. In "Pride and Prejudice", Jane Austen wrote, "Think only of the past, as its remembrance gives you pleasure." Having trained initially as a history teacher, I think it is very important that we remember the past, for as the Spanish philosopher, poet and novelist, George Santayana said, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Certainly we must hope that we learn from the events of the past and don't repeat the same mistakes.

Most of our churches are full of past memories, last Sunday worshipping in the small Northamptonshire chapel at Crick, I counted 7 memorial tablets to faithful servants of the past. For 2017 the United Reformed Church has the theme of "Feasts and Festivals." In addition to our usual festivals, in September we will celebrate the Centenary of the ordination of Constance Coltman, the first woman to be ordained in the Congregational Church and then in October we will remember the events triggered by Martin Luther which sparked the Reformation in Europe.

The danger with remembering is that we can focus too much on looking back, instead of looking to the future. So as we celebrate what has happened, may we also look ahead and be open to where we may be led in the future.

Geoff Townsend

PEOPLE

- There is a welcome service for **Sue Steer** the Pioneer Community Worker of the Lubbesthorpe project on 20 November 2016 at 4.30pm. The service is to be held at St Andrew's LEP, Hinckley Road, Leicester Forest East, Leicester LE3 3PF. All are welcome.
- It is with sadness that we inform you of the death of **David Tompsett**, former Elder, Church Secretary and Treasurer of Newport Pagnell URC. He was also Synod rep and had presented, at a Synod Meeting, our experience of TRIO and its success in helping us manage our finances. He died in Willen Hospice in Milton Keynes on Saturday 29th October after living with cancer for 6 years. We think now of his wife Ruth and daughters Joanna and Andrea. He will be remembered for his thoughtful and incisive contributions to Church Meetings and general discussions and decisions in the life of the Church. He was a key player in our redevelopment of the Church and part of the team taking forward our mission project that will culminate in the rebuilding of our Church Hall. His faith was authentic and an integral part of who he was and he challenged us all by his deep reflection and thinking. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Our lives have been changed by the experience we have had of walking together in faith.



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

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!



LINCOLNSHIRE

WESTGATE CHURCH - On Sunday October 30th 2016 Westgate Church, a URC and Methodist LEP in Peterborough, moved home and became Westgate New Church.

We planned this move so that, freed from the heavy demands of an old and ailing building, we would have more time and energy to devote to being a church involved in mission to the people of Peterborough and the wider world and we pray for God's help in carrying out this task. The new dishwasher may have caused a flood the day before and two of the builders were installing the fridge on Sunday morning, but our new church was ready for us,



bar a few finishing touches; just like moving house, it will take a while to get everything just as we want it. We began the service in our old building, giving thanks for our past history as a church and saying goodbye to our beautiful, but impractical and expensive to maintain old building. We processed out of this building, through the car park, between the old hall and the Christian Bookshop towards our new home at 68b Westgate, led by the cross. Everyone carried something. Group after group came across with their 'luggage' as we wanted to keep so many things from our former life. There were Westgaters past and present, a previous minister and a representative from the Methodist circuit. We entered the new sanctuary from the front so everyone could see the whole room as they found seats. When everyone was settled, we resumed our service. Each one of our ministers, preachers and worship leaders led part of the service in one building or the other. There was a prayer of dedication led by our church secretary, Audrey Thompson, who also led a sketch. Our minister, Rev'd Lesley Moseley, was the preacher and Rev'd Doug Stevens presided at communion. After the service there was a chance to see the items we had carried across and to explore the rest of the building, which has been radically changed from its previous layout as the Westgate Centre and then as Centre68@Westgate. There were refreshments, too, including a special cake baked by June Caunt. We offer a vote of thanks to the architect who came up with such a good design, the builders who have done such a lot in a little time, to Lesley and Audrey, who have both put in an incredible number of hours over the building period, to the helpers from the congregation who have faithfully turned up when many hands were needed, and to the numerous Methodist and URC friends who supported us with their prayers and good wishes. In the next week, the old church was stripped of the organ and pews in the first stage of being made ready for its new owners.

Please to pray for us as we adapt to our new situation.

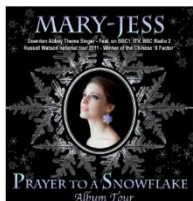


LEICESTERSHIRE

NATIVITY EVENT – ENDERBY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, Chapel Street, Enderby, Leicester, LE19 4NE – Between Friday 9th December and Sunday 11th December we have an exciting Nativity Event. We have been loaned a collection of Nativity Scenes from all around the world. Each one is different but each one tells of the birth of Jesus over 2000 years ago. The church will be open for viewing at the following times:-

- Friday 9th December: 2pm – 5pm
- Saturday 10th December: 10am – 4pm
- Sunday 11th December: 12pm – 4pm (after our morning Nativity Service at 10:30am)

The exhibition is open to all and free of charge and light refreshments will be available.



CONCERT AT CHRIST CHURCH, LEICESTER - We will be hosting a concert, featuring singer Mary-Jess, Downton Abbey Theme Singer 'PRAYER TO A SNOWFLAKE' Album Tour at Christ Church on Thursday 24th November at 7.00pm.

Tickets are £10 and available from Sheila Forryan on 01530 245098 or on the door. Christ Church URC, Barbara Road, Leicester, LE3 2EB

OTHER

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR ADVENT

Daily Devotions from the United Reformed Church will be sent out by email every day from the First Sunday of Advent. A team of writers from different places and perspectives in the URC are reflecting on a reading and offering a short prayer each day for us to use in our own journeys of discipleship. During the first week of Advent we are going to be reflecting on the passages in St Luke's Gospel about John the Baptist's birth (and the prophecies of it), the Annunciation and the Magnificat. We then move on to look at the women in the Messianic line. We explore the social context of these women who were defined by their ability to find life despite the deathly patriarchal mores of their times. In the third week of Advent we look at the prophecies of the New Age to come and, in the final week we look at the O Antiphons - which we know now as the haunting hymn O Come O Come Emmanuel.

In order to sign up please simply go to: <http://tinyurl.com/URCDailyDevotions> and complete the form.



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



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

ADVENT FOR EVERYONE



A series of Bible Study meetings for Advent based on Tom Wright's book: Advent for Everyone (A journey through Matthew)

East Midlands Synod invites you to join us at Kilby URC, Leicester, LE18 3TD

(All Tuesdays at 7pm)

- November 22nd Watch
- November 29th Repent
- December 6th Heal
- December 13th Love

Led by Captain Syd Henderson BTh (Hons) Church Army. To book please contact Hannah Bones at the Synod Office: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk Tel: 0115 9609241

THE WINDERMERE CENTRE

Exploring Spiritual Direction with Mark Argent Wednesday 7th – Saturday 10th December 2016

Spiritual Direction is often spoken of as something more associated with Catholic and Anglican traditions. Someone from the URC training in spiritual direction or attending a conference is likely to be in a small minority. Yet there are things in the Reformed tradition which look remarkably like 'spiritual direction by another name', ranging from the model of ministry in Richard Baxter's *The Reformed Pastor* to what we tend to talk of as pastoral care.

We'll bring together people who give direction, people who would like to explore training in this area, people who receive direction, and people who are wondering about looking for a spiritual director. The aim is not to propose a URC-specific model of spiritual direction, but rather to explore spiritual direction in a Reformed context. That's both about exploring the riches we bring to the ecumenical encounter, and naming some of our strengths in a way which makes it easier to receive from others.

This is run as a group event, using group process and drawing on the encounters which happen between people in sessions and social time. There will also be times of silence and experiences of giving and receiving spiritual direction, and reflecting on the process.

It's likely to be helpful (though not essential) to include walking in the prayer experience, so it's worth bringing waterproofs. On previous occasions, this event has been enriched by having some participants from outside the URC, so ecumenical friends will be most welcome.

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 follow this link: http://windermereurc.org.uk/events-by-date/?event_id=104 or call the Windermere Centre directly: 015394 44902

YOUTH AND CHILDREN

UPCOMING SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Saturday 21st January 2017 – 10am – 1pm - Great Doddington, Chapel Lane, Great Doddington, NN29 7TJ

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

If you're church is interested in hosting a safeguarding event please contact Hannah B or Jane Henderson (CYDO):

cydo@urc5.org.uk Tel: 0757 229 1007

MESSY CHURCH – FAMILY MINISTRY DAY

You are invited to attend a Messy Church Family Ministry Day, led by Jane Henderson (CYDO). Come along to find out more about family ministry and get lots of ideas!!! Saturday 25th February 2017 from 10am – 4pm at Christ Church, Leicester. Booking is essential, to book contact Hannah B at the Synod Office: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk tel: 0115 9609241

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Director of Training - £32,000, London or home based

Are you passionate about equipping church leaders for ministry? Are you an experienced leader and trainer? We are looking for an exceptional individual who will take over the management, development and delivery of our renowned training, ensuring continued excellence across all delivery channels while looking for new opportunities to expand our ability to impact church transformation.

Working with a small staff team mostly based in North London, and a wider group of training partners around the country, you will want to take Bridge Builders transformative training into the next chapter of its development.

Bridge Builders leads the way in equipping those in leadership roles within the Church to better handle the inevitable tensions of church life. Its acclaimed courses raise leaders' self-awareness, change their attitude to conflict and teach facilitation skills and processes. It teaches that conflict is not to be avoided but transformed; so transforming the Church.

Please pass these details on to anyone you know who might make a suitable candidate for this role. We need your help in getting the word out. Thank you!

For an application pack, please email bb@bbministries.org.uk or visit the Bridge Builders website: <https://www.bbministries.org.uk/about-us/news/>

Informal enquiries to Colin Moulds, Executive Director director@bbministries.org.uk
Closing date for applications: **28th November 2016**

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.
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