



URC EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

E-LETTER NO: 233 – 24th NOVEMBER 2016

EDITED THIS WEEK BY: DAVID GREATOREX

In the last e-letter editorial Revd Geoff Townsend did some 'remembering' as well looking forward. As we approach the start of Advent we can do the same - look back on that Wonderful time leading up to the Birth of Jesus - but also another occasion that we can and will celebrate in just a few days' time and give thanks to God for the great gift he so generously gave to us all - that of his only begotten Son.

At this week's meeting of the Synod's Property and Finance Group one of the main discussions was around generosity - this time the generosity of the churches, and by that it means the people, many of whom give so generously of their time and talents - and in this particular instance the giving towards the Ministry and Mission Fund. We are reminded each year about how vital it is for this fund to be maintained so as to support the ministry and mission of the whole URC. So it is very appropriate at this time to give a big 'thank you' for those Churches - and people - making generous offers towards the Fund for 2017 and a plea to all Churches to give serious and prayerful thought when considering future offers.

May this time of Advent be a true time of preparation for us all.

David J Greatorex, Treasurer

PEOPLE

- We regretfully inform you of the death of the **Revd Alan Spivey**, a retired minister living in Northern Synod. He died suddenly on 10th November following a heart attack. Alan leaves a widow Jenny and three children: Nigel, Karen and Elizabeth. Alan was minister at High Street, Cheshunt & Wormley 1957 -60; Chaplain to the Forces 1960 – 1976; St Columba's, North Shields 1976 – 87; Kirkheaton & Holmfirth 1990 – 94. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jenny and the family.
- It is with sadness that we bring you the sad news of the death of the **Rev Clifford Fry**, a retired minister, who died on Tuesday, 15th November. Clifford lived latterly in a nursing home in Taunton. He was ordained in 1955 and served at Bovey Tracey, Wellington, Coggeshall, in the Corsham Group and finally in the Mid Wiltshire area. Clifford's wife, Mary, died in 2013.
- Very sad and unexpected news arrived from Scotland on Thursday 17th November. **Revd John Humphreys**, who was Moderator of the Scotland Synod until his retirement a few months ago, died early that morning at home. John had been ill for just a few weeks, and had not shared news of this illness widely. So his death will come as a great shock to all who knew him. Few of our URC people can have been more widely liked and respected. He was a man of great kindness and gentleness - wise, purposeful, caring, and deeply committed to our Church and its people. A public service of Thanksgiving will be held at St John's Episcopal Church, Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4BJ on Tuesday 13th December 2016 at 2.00pm. Our

thoughts and prayers are with John's partner, John, his mother and his sister Gweno and her family.



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

ABINGTON AVENUE URC * Riding Lights Theatre Production * - We invite you to this fantastic, great value family production. An opportunity for all to enjoy the message at the heart of the Christmas story. Saturday 17th December at 6pm. **Tickets available from the Church Office, tel: 01604 604623 email:office.aaurc@btconnect.com** Seating unreserved – please come early, doors 5.15pm. Please allow time for parking, it can often be difficult.

*Riding Lights Theatre Company Presents... **THREE CHEERS FOR CHRISTMAS!** A Riding Lights Story-coat production for Christmas 2016 with stories from Rebecca Thomson, Nigel Forde and Paul Birch.*

The Riding Lights story-tellers have arrived, bringing three outlandish characters and their amazing animals to star in three spectacular stories. They promise to lift your spirits and drop your jaws just in time for Christmas!

An unexpected invite to a hum-dinging party teaches The Sheepish Shepherd that being different isn't always a bad thing. There's comic chaos in Angel Unawares when dastardly duo Max and Tich are sent to hunt down a very special baby and A Very Astonished Astronomer discovers what makes the world go around in Zooming in to Christmas. Woven together with puppetry, music, comic silliness and plenty of interactivity for younger members of the audience, this colourful cloth of yuletide yarns offers a brilliant background to the heart of Christmas.

Three Cheers for Christmas! It's filled with festive cheer!



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.



SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE GROUP ANNIVERSARY SERVICE - On Sunday 13 November 2016 the South Leicestershire Group held their annual Anniversary Service. This year the service took place at Wigston Magna URC and marked the 30th Anniversary of the Group. The service was led by Mr David Todd and the talk was given by Jane Henderson the East Midlands Synod CYDO. Following the service we all shared a faith tea. A special Anniversary Cake was made by Joan Seaton from the Kilby Church with the names of all 6 churches around the edge.

OTHER



EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD ADVENT REFLECTIONS BOOKLET

This collection of thoughts, poetry and pictures has been compiled from around the Synod to provide a daily meditation for the season of Advent.

We hope you will find these useful as you prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus in 2016. To download the booklet please follow this link to our website:

www.unc5.org.uk/adventreflections2016

11 GRANTS MADE TO MISSION PROJECTS

The Synod Mission Fund Panel was delighted to approve 11 grants to a variety of projects throughout the Synod in 2016. These include support for community outreach in inner city Nottingham, children's and youth work in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Buckingham, a pioneer community worker for a new housing development in Leicestershire, contributions to two major redevelopment appeals, one in Milton Keynes and one in Derbyshire, and three local church building projects. See the full list on the Synod website:

<http://www.unc5.org.uk/MissionFund>

The Panel looks forward to receiving new applications in 2017. Applications can be submitted to the Synod Office at any time. Note the cut off dates for Panel meetings: 15th February for the spring meeting and 13th September for the autumn meeting. The application forms and guidance notes can be downloaded from the Synod website: <http://www.unc5.org.uk/MissionFund>



SYNOD ADVENT REFRESHER - **There are still places available**

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@unc5.org.uk or call 0115 9609241



HOPE NOTTINGHAM

Thanks to the many individuals, Churches, Businesses and Organisations who give freely of time, effort and money the work of Hope Nottingham continues to touch the lives of many in need.

Good News – Food Donations have been very generous through the Harvest Period and the Tesco in store collections are imminent. Together with the regular donations we receive, we anticipate that food stocks will be sufficient through the Christmas period through until mid-January. Not such good news – funds for the ongoing work of Hope Café continue to be a struggle as we develop the support available for the many visitors. Hope Café is a one-stop community support cafe meeting people's needs in a holistic way and opens:-

Monday & Wednesday 9.30am – 12 noon Plus Thurs & Saturday 9.30am – 10.30am

We offer free food and friendship to anyone in need and a positive supportive community for all.

Hope Café is developing support services at the centre to help local people find hope. These include:

- * Help with addictions and access to counselling
- * Practical support with clothing and Foodbank
- * Employment support and mentoring
- * Life skills & volunteering opportunities
- * CAP debt advice on Mondays
- * Citizens Advice Drop-in on a Wednesday
- * Adult Literacy and IT tuition

As we approach the Christmas Season we are appealing for funds to help with our work.

Can you help please? Does Hope Nottingham make a difference? Take a look at the following

<http://nottstv.com/programmes/news/?videoid=4942896649001>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVlMjQEO-UM>

For ways to donate please visit: - <http://www.hopenottingham.org.uk/giving/>



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 your 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

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:

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