



## URC EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

E-LETTER NO: 248 – 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2017

EDITED THIS WEEK BY: REVD GEOFFREY TOWNSEND

One of the things I enjoy, when I have the time, is to go bird watching and when I go away on holiday I usually find the time to visit a nature reserve. Increasingly I have become aware of how seriously some people take this. Modern technology means that within minutes of a rare bird being seen, the information is shared via the internet and pagers and often hides empty quickly as people head off in search of the latest rarity. The quality and cost of cameras, telescopes and binoculars continues to escalate, each often in excess of £2,000. Distances seem to matter little to the serious twitcher as rarities often crop up in one of our off-shore islands and charter boats and aircraft are often used in the search for a new tick in their list of birds seen in the year, or even better, for the first time in their lifetime.

Among the serious birdwatchers there's a longing to see something new, with time and money being no problem. And then, I think of the Church, is the Church longing to see something new, or is it far more comfortable with what it knows? Are cost and distance no problem? In the words of the song, "The times, they are a changing." Change in the Church can be uncomfortable, many of our churches today are unrecognisable compared to what our grandparents were used to. Today we need to look to the future and accept that some changes are inevitable, but that can be exciting, just as seeing a rare bird for the first time.

Geoff Townsend (Convenor of Pastoral Group)

### OTHER

#### RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSING FUND

This Fund is available to assist Retired Ministers with their housing costs. The Fund arose from the Will of Rev. Helen Matheson, a non stipendiary Minister, and the purpose of the Fund is "to provide small improvements to accommodation occupied by retired Ministers. It does not matter whether the property is rented or owned by the Minister. Small improvements might include installation of a shower, additional electrical outlets, professional decorating, improvements or repairs to heating, cooking or laundry services or outside work to reduce the labour involved in garden maintenance, replacement of fences or anything else that would be of benefit. The Fund is administered in the Synod Office and grants are payable only if application is made and approval given before the work is commenced. For further details please contact Robert White, Synod Trust and Property Officer at the Synod Office either by telephone 0115 9609241 or by email [trust@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trust@urc5.org.uk).



THE  
BRITISH TRUST  
FOR TANTUR

#### HOMELAND? EXPLORING THE HERITAGE OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October from 10am – 3.45pm at the Notre Dame Centre 1 Suffolk Street London SW1 4HG (Just off Trafalgar Square). Charge for the day £20 (cheques made payable to The British Trust for Tantur and forwarded to The Right Revd John Went, The Rectory, Latimer, Chesham, Bucks HP5 1UA) Reduced charge of £10 for Tantur Alumni and theological and other students. For more information and to download a booking form visit:

[http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/500962/Home/News/Latest\\_news\\_articles/Day\\_Conference\\_on.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/500962/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/Day_Conference_on.aspx)

**A ONE WEEK PILGRIMAGE IN HALF TERM BASED IN JERUSALEM AND GALILEE 10TH -17TH FEBRUARY 2018** with McCabe Pilgrimages.

Jane Wade, Minister at Abington Avenue and Paulerspury URC's is hoping to lead a party to the Holy Land. If you are interested and would like to see a sample programme please get in touch with Jane.

*It is always very moving to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, there is so much to see and experience and learn together. St Jerome said: 'Five gospels record the life of Jesus. Four you will find in books and the one you will find in the land they call Holy. Read the fifth gospel and the world of the four will open to you. We invite you to come and know this for yourselves whether you are new to the Holy Land or have been many times before; there are always new sights and sounds to reflect upon. Reading the gospels will never be the same again and by visiting the Holy Land we are standing in solidarity with our brothers and sisters there too. To have the chance to meet the 'living stones', the local Palestinian and Israeli Christians who are the ongoing, living church in the region, is humbling.*

*Our pilgrimage will include the sites where the most important events in Our Lord's life and ministry took place: in Jerusalem and the surrounding area and further north in Galilee. We hope that if you have never been on pilgrimage to the Holy Land before you will choose to join us and, if you have been before, we welcome you back. Our journey is a life changing as well as faith changing experience.*

The cost would be £1,675 per person sharing a twin/double room and includes everything as stated in the programme - but is based on a minimum group size of 15.

If you are interested in going please let me know asap: jane@thewadetribe.co.uk - as I want to know if there is any interest before I firm up details of the trip.

Revd Jane Wade AAURC



### INVITATION

You are warmly invited to a Service to mark the Golden Jubilee of Revd Michael Playdon's Ordination to the Christian Ministry at Loughborough United Reformed Church on Sunday 23rd July 2017 at 4 p.m.

Presiding Minister: The Revd Peter Meek, Moderator of the East Midlands Synod

Preacher: Mr. Alan Yates, Joint Moderator of the General Assembly

To be followed by refreshments. Please let Mike know if you intend to come – to help with catering.

If you are not able to come, please remember Mike in your prayers. Please reply to: 43 Grange Drive, Glen Parva, Leicester, LE2 9PH, or 0116 230 4634 or playdon.mike@gmail.com

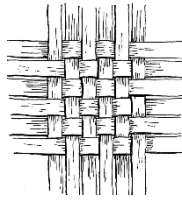


### FEASTS AND FESTIVALS

- ❖ **SYNOD STUDY DAY** – All are invited to our Study Day, led by Revd Dr David Cornick on the theme of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2017 from 10am – 4pm (please bring a packed lunch) at Sherwood URC, Nottingham. Booking is essential, to book please contact Hannah Holmes at the Synod Office: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk Tel: 0115 9609241
- ❖ **CONSTANCE COLTMAN CENTENARY SERVICE** - on Sunday 17 September, 3pm at the American International Church in London. All are invited. Please let Francis Brienen know of women to invite especially who have played a pioneering role in our churches: francis.brienen@urc.org.uk
- ❖ If you held a 'Celebrating Freedom' event on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June, then please let us know what you did and email your pictures to Hannah Holmes: trainingpa@urc5.org.uk or post to: Synod Office, 1 Edwards Lane, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3AA We would love to display them on our Synod website!

## KNITTING FOR GREENBELT

I am really enjoying picking up/ receiving the knitted and crocheted food / fruit that everyone has been doing for Greenbelt. If you are busy making food please take pictures as we want to display pictures of our makers in our 'takeaway tent'. Also, let me or Hannah know if you are so that we can arrange to get the food from you. If you would like to get involved then email Hannah at: [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) and she will send you the links for the knitting patterns. Thanks, Jane Henderson (CYDO)



### WEAVING THE WORD - Workshop and Bible Study

You are invited to join us for a craft afternoon of Bible Study and fellowship, led by Revd Dr Deborah Baird at Marlpool URC, Heanor on Saturday 19th August 2017 from 12.30pm - 4.30pm.

To ensure enough materials are available please contact Hannah Holmes to book: [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) Tel: 0115 9609241 Cost: **£5.00** payable on the day

## CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND – CONFERENCE: RESPONDING TO THE REFORMATION

This major conference is open to all those with experience of ecumenical working at county (eg diocesan, district, synodical etc) and national levels. It is one of the conferences organised roughly every three years by the National Ecumenical Officers for all Ecumenical Officers. This year we are opening it up more widely.

Responding to the Reformation takes place from lunchtime on Monday 16 to lunchtime on Wednesday 18 October 2017 at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. Book for the conference now! (Delay and it becomes more expensive.) For more information or to book visit:

<http://www.cte.org.uk/Group/Group.aspx?ID=286822>

## YOUTH AND CHILDREN



### CHILD FRIENDLY CHURCH AWARD

Have you considered exploring this award? You do not have to have children attending regularly to gain the award, it is about how welcoming and friendly you are to children and their families when they visit.

Please get in touch with Jane Henderson to find out more, we have 16 Churches with a current award and many working towards it within our Synod. Email: [cydo@urc5.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urc5.org.uk) Tel: 0757 229 1007



### YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S LEADERS WEEKEND

Are you a Youth or Children's leader? Why not come along to East Midlands Synod's Youth and Children's Leaders Weekend? Join our CYDO, Jane Henderson for a weekend of:

- Worship Ideas
- Bible Study
- Social Time
- Idea Sharing/ Renewal

From Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at the Hayes, Swanwick, Alfreton, DE55 1AU. Spaces are limited, so booking is essential. There is no charge for this event but you may like to make a voluntary contribution of £20. For a booking form contact Hannah Holmes: [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) Tel: 0115 9609241



### **THREE SYNOD'S YOUTH WEEKEND**

From 17- 19 November 2017 at The Pioneer Centre, Kidderminster. East Midlands together with Wales and West Midlands Synod's are holding this exciting weekend. This is a chance to meet together and have fun.

If you are aged between 11 and 17 then we hope you'll join us. This is an inclusive event at which everyone is welcome.

How much does it cost? £69

How do I get involved? - Just ask for a booking form and send it in

Funding may be available towards costs. For a booking form contact Hannah Holmes at: [trainingpa@urc5.org.uk](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) Tel: 0115 9609241

If you have any queries then give Jane Henderson (CYDO) a call on: 0757 229 1007 or email: [cydo@urc5.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urc5.org.uk)

### **YEAR BOOK CHANGES**

- Please note that Old Brumby united Church have a new Secretary, Mrs I Holtby: Old Brumby United Church, 185 Ashby Road, Scunthorpe, N Lincs, DN16 2AQ
- Please note that St Andrew's URC, Peterborough have a new Secretary: Colin Jeffries: 18 St. Benet's Gardens, Eye, Peterborough, PE6 7UW Telephone: 01733 222532 Email: [j.f.hedges@btinternet.com](mailto:j.f.hedges@btinternet.com)

**AND FINALLY:** - Please send any comments or feedback on this e-letter to: [admin@urc5.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto:trainingpa@urc5.org.uk) Copy Date for Next E-Letter: 17.07.2017