



URC EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD

E-LETTER NO: 250 – 3rd AUGUST 2017
EDITED THIS WEEK BY: HELEN LIDGETT

In mid-July, the Moderators, Clerks and Treasurers of East Midlands, West Midlands, Wales and South Western Synods met together for their annual day conference in Birmingham. This year they were also joined by the General Secretary, John Proctor. It is not a formal meeting but an opportunity to share visions and priorities and identify areas with the potential for co-operation. Inevitably deployment was at the forefront of everyone's mind. As numbers of ordained ministers decline steeply over the next few years, how are we planning to provide ministry for our churches in future? The problem is the same for all Synods but the solutions vary. Resource churches, flexible pastorates, group pastorates with team ministry, local lay leaders, 'bidding' for part of a minister's time for a particular piece of work and transitional ministry are all in the frame. Alongside this all four Synods are reviewing their committee and staffing structures, or have recently restructured, to improve the support they offer to local churches.

We continue to identify areas where we can cooperate. Although the three- Synod youth camp this summer had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers, some alternative joint events are in preparation. We raised the possibility of East Midlands offering some of its listed buildings expertise to West Midlands. Wales offers training in conducting funerals using the package 'Good Grief'.

After two Synods reported that they will be closing several churches this year, John Proctor asked a challenging question: are any of you opening any new churches? We shared news of mission projects: the 'church without walls' in Milton Keynes, a worshipping community on the outskirts of St Neots, ministry to a town rather than a church in Devon and the ecumenical project in the new housing development at Lubbesthorpe, near Leicester. John's challenge is one for us all to reflect on. Can we move from focussing on decline to creating opportunities for growth?

Helen Lidgett (Synod Clerk)

PEOPLE

- It is with sadness that we inform you of the death of **Revd Kenneth Lee** on 23rd July. Ken served at Stockton from 1970-73 and at Daventry and Badby from 1973 - 1993. Ken's Thanksgiving Service will be held on Monday 7th August, 3.30pm at Witney Congregational, Followed By Refreshments In The Church Hall, OX28 6JF
- It is with regret that we bring you the news that **Audrey Compton-Dando**, wife of retired minister, Revd Norman Compton-Dando, has died. Audrey's Funeral Service will be held at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire, LE9 1UW on 10th August at 11.15am.



DERBYSHIRE

MARTIN LUTHER, THE REFORMATION AND HOW CHRISTIAN LIFE CHANGED - An afternoon of singing, listening and praying in celebration of a key time in the life of the church, led by Revd Professor Stephen Orchard. Sunday 15th October 2017 at 4pm at West Derbyshire United Reformed Church, Coldwell Street, Wirksworth DE4 4FB. Followed by a "Bring and Share Tea" in the Glenorchy Centre, Chapel Lane, Wirksworth. If you are staying for the Tea, you are invited to bring food to share. Please let the Church Secretary, Ian Wright, know if you plan to attend on wright.ian24@gmail.com

MELBOURNE URC: KNITTED BIBLE STORIES - You are warmly invited to come and see knitted Bible stories from the Creation to Easter (as featured on BBC 'East Midlands Today' in 2016) on Saturday 16th September 10am to 5pm and Sunday 17th September 12noon to 5pm (as part of the delightful Melbourne Festival of Arts and Architecture); and Monday to Friday 18th to 22nd September 2pm to 4pm.



ST ANDREW'S URC, CHESTERFIELD - Sunday 16 July 2017 was 86 years to the day since the founding congregation of St Andrew's held their first service in Chesterfield's Market Hall. This milestone of witness was recognised by the congregation and during worship two members of St Andrew's, Dr Alex Harrow and Mrs Margaret Woodhead, cut a celebration cake. See photograph. Dr Harrow is a long standing member and Elder at St Andrews. Mrs Margaret Woodhead provided a link to Sunday 16 July 1931, as Margaret's grandfather, George Mather, a founder member of St Andrew's Church, was present at that service.

After worship the congregation shared in the celebration enjoying a time of fellowship over coffee and cake.



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

THE DALES URC - Once again, welcome Pollyanna Pickering who is giving an illustrated talk on her work & travels dealing with conservation & rescue of animals. October the 4th 2017. Title, "Gone Walkabout.....A Wildlife Artist Down-under." Cost £6. Tickets: 01159875605. Time: 7-30pm prompt.

OTHER

Please note that the E letter will now take a short break over August. The next edition will be sent out on Thursday 7th September.

AUTHORISATION TO PRESIDE AT THE SACRAMENTS

To help clarify the position as to who can preside at the Sacraments, I have been in touch with Revd Michael Hopkins, Clerk to General Assembly to confirm what the denomination's present position is. The only people who can preside at the Sacraments without permission from the Synod are ordained URC Ministers of Word and Sacrament, or ordained ministers of other recognized denominations. No lay person has the authority to preside in any church, other than those which have specifically made a request to Synod for them to preside. Requests from a local church may be for an Elder of their church, or a lay preacher well-known to the congregation, who has been recognized at either National or Synod level and has received training approved by the Synod.

Hannah Holmes maintains the Synod database of who is at present authorized and for which Church and she can be contacted on trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

Rev Geoff Townsend, Synod Pastoral Group Convenor

TLS LITE GROUP

A new TLS Lite group is being set up in the North Nottingham area based around Hucknall/Bulwell in late September 2017. If you are looking at TLS Lite or TLS Lite+Plus and would like to join a group in this area of the Synod please contact Revd. Colin Bones – colin@bulwellurc.org.uk or 0115 854 5665. If you think you might be interested and would more information about TLS Lite please contact Revd. Deborah Baird via the Synod Office 0115 960 9241 or Charles Jolly 01298 22557.



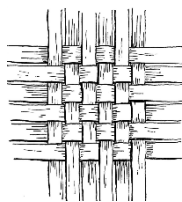
REFORMATION COMMEMORATION ECUMENICAL SERVICE

All are welcome at St. Mary's Church Attenborough on Saturday 23rd September at 3pm for this service commemorating 500 years since the Reformation. Under the auspices of: The Lutheran Church in Great Britain & The Anglican Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham.

CONSTANCE COLTMAN CENTENARY SERVICE

It is a great pleasure to invite you to a special Service to celebrate the centenary of the ordination of the Revd Constance Coltman, who was one of the first women to be ordained to the ministry in a mainstream British denomination. The service will take place on Sunday 17 September 2017 at the American International Church on Tottenham Court Road in London at 3pm and will be followed by refreshments. The centenary is an important event in the life of the United Reformed Church and the Congregational Federation and we would be

delighted and honoured if you would attend. RSVP: Tracey Hardingham at tracey.hardingham@urc.org.uk



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 Tel: 0115 9609241 Cost: **£5.00** payable on the day

NEWS FROM ACAT

Newsletter - The July Newsletter is now available on the ACAT Website - you can view and print it from here: <http://acat.uk.com/membership/newsletter.php>. As well as information regarding our own ACAT publications, with an eye on the news we are covering issues that are particularly pertinent at the moment, including: Data & system safety; Church safety & security; Reporting matters of material significance; On-line bank payments; Currency old & new; Employment status for tax checks and Charity accounts review.

Conferences - Preparations are well under way for our Annual Conferences, this year entitled "Managing Risk" and including key speakers from Stewardship Services, HMRC, the insurance profession and the Charity Commission. We are keen to be accessible to more of our members, so are holding the Conference in two venues, the details are:

- Royal National Hotel, 38-51 Bedford Way, LONDON WC1H 0DG - Saturday 14 October 2017 (to include AGM)
- Bridge Community Church, Rider Street, LEEDS LS9 7BQ - Wednesday 15 November 2017

The content & speakers will be the same at both venues, with the AGM taking place in London & being summarised in Leeds. The price remains the same as for the last 2 years at £50 per delegate, which includes all materials, refreshments & a buffet lunch. Booking is now open either by post using the attached flyer, or online at <https://www.acat.uk.com/confsel.html>

Training - Our training season for 2017 takes a slight pause for the summer after the Foundation Course in Wembley on Saturday 22 July, but continues again into the autumn with booking already open for venues in September to November. The current programme, which continues to expand, is certainly worth browsing & is available at <https://acat.uk.com/courses.html>. Additional autumn dates will be added over the coming weeks. Running alongside our popular Foundation Course, we have the more specific Training Workshops that may be relevant to you: **Workshop 5** – This workshop addresses important issues which all treasurers face in this current climate. Practical guidance will be given on planning & implementing church projects of all kinds – buildings, missions, community events etc. for a successful outcome.

Workshop 6 – looks in detail at Gift Aid & GASDS, and explores how software can help the treasurer.

We are delighted to welcome industry experts for some of these sessions - you can find out more about them here https://www.acat.uk.com/2017_guest_tutors.html.

WARNING ABOUT A SPAM EMAIL

We have been alerted to the fact that a spam email has been received from some treasurers, purporting to be from Church House. The email is sent from MoM.Pensions@urc.org.uk

It encloses an invoice and in the e-mail it says words to the effect of 'here is your invoice for the one off payment you are to give'. Please note that Church House do not issue invoices and the email address quoted is no longer used. If you receive this email please delete.

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 Tel: 0757 229 1007



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
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

YEAR BOOK CHANGES

- Please note that Margaret Loydall, Secretary at Melbourne URC has a new email address: margaretloydall@outlook.com.

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: 04.09.2017