

### Opening Reflection by Helen Lidgett

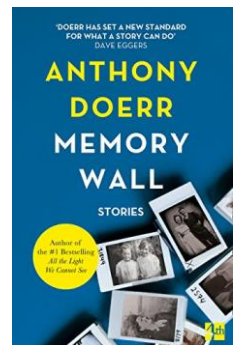
Synod Clerk



Are you a fan of **The Repair Shop**? A group of skilled craftsmen and women under the benevolent supervision of **Jay Blades** lovingly repair treasured objects brought to them by members of the public. The craft people's skills, whether in wood or leather, clockwork, metal work or fabric are remarkable and it is amazing to watching broken and worn objects being restored to life. The value of these objects is not measured in monetary terms, as in **The Antiques Roadshow** or some programmes where classic cars are restored to be sold at inflated prices. Their value is in

memory, the memories they hold of parents or grandparents who first owned the toy car, the sewing table, the clock, the teddy bear, the painting, the portable organ (to name just a few). The return of a treasure, newly restored and in working order, releases emotions and often tears as the recipients return to pick them up. As Jay Blades said in a recent interview, adults and especially men, have to learn that is alright to cry. The tears evoked by a beautifully restored object are not really for the object itself but for the memories it releases, the memories which help shape the lives of the men and women who now own them and wish to pass them down to children and grandchildren.

I've just been reading a book of short stories by **Anthony Doerr** called **The Memory Wall**. All the stories are in one way or another about memory: "the source and meaning of coherence in our lives, and the fragile thread that connects us to ourselves and to others." During lockdown, many people tidied cupboards and drawers and discovered things they had kept because they had meaning at the time and put away 'for remembrance' but had since forgotten about. Tangible objects from the past could rekindle memories and re-thread connections, maybe bringing tears, but helping to gently root and stabilise lives amidst the swirling anxieties of the pandemic.



Our faith too is rooted in memory. At the heart of our worship is the communion service when we are called to remember. We take tangible things, bread and wine, and speak or hear the words of comfort and challenge: "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." (1 Cor 12: 25-26).

When we cannot worship together (for many still cannot), memory, just as much as live-streamed services, Zoom meetings, telephone calls and emailed newsletters, holds us in fellowship with each other. Memory informs our Bible reading and our prayers. Memories, when we hold a loaf of bread or a cup of wine or water, can make connections across space and time even if we eat alone. Use memories wisely and rather than holding us in the past they can release us into the future.

*Helen Lidgett*

## Synod Meeting

**Saturday 10 October 2020 10.30am – 2.30pm**

Our Synod meeting will be virtual. We can however open it up to many more people than when we met in physical meetings. Anyone can log in and follow the business.

At 11.00am we will hear from the United Reformed Church's new General Secretary, **Revd Dr John Bradbury**. At 1.00pm **Revd Stuart Turner**, an army chaplain based at Grantham, will speak about chaplaincy to the armed forces. At 2.00pm our Synod Moderator, **Revd Geoffrey Clarke**, will induct **Derek Graham**, **Geoff Milnes** and **Louise Gee** into new Synod roles during the closing worship.

Log-in details will be circulated to members of Synod and to E-letter subscribers on Wednesday 7 October.

## Synod Office closure

Following the government's announcement of 22 September, which re-established tighter restrictions in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, the **Synod Office Staff** have now returned to working from home until further notice.

If you wish to contact them please e-mail in the usual way. For a list of emails, see: <https://www.urc5.org.uk/synodstaff>

Telephone calls will be forwarded to mobiles so if you wish to speak to a member of staff, please call the office in the usual way on **0115 9609241** between the hours of 9.00am – 3.00pm, Monday – Thursday.

Please continue to monitor our website for updates: [www.urc5.org.uk](http://www.urc5.org.uk)

## Practical Guidance for Churches

### Business Interruption claims

Property Office Geoff Milnes shares a further statement from **Edwards Insurance Brokers**:



You may have seen that the High Court has published its Judgement on the Test Case for COVID-19 Business Interruption (BI) claims.

The Judgement is complex and detailed running to some 150 pages. Whilst the Judgement is in favour of some policyholders there are significant nuances, leaving many insurers to take further advice and potentially appeal for further Judgement under their own policy wording.

We shall let you have further information as soon as we can but in the meantime there is no need to submit formal claims if you have not yet done so. We will work closely with you at the appropriate time.

## A webinar from Churches Together in All Lincolnshire

**Churches Together in All Lincolnshire** has arranged a webinar about responding to the post-Covid world. Entitled "A New Earth", it takes place on **Thursday 19 October** at 2.00pm. Those from other parts of the East Midlands are also very welcome to take part: please contact [PA@lincolnshiremethodist.org.uk](mailto:PA@lincolnshiremethodist.org.uk) for further details.



# A New Earth

In what ways is Covid impacting upon Lincolnshire?

What does the post-Covid World hold for communities of faith?



Do our traditions offer us hope?

**Thursday 19th November 2 till 3.30pm**

**Prof Ted Fuller**

*UNESCO Chair on Responsible Foresight for Sustainable Development*  
<https://staff.lincoln.ac.uk/tfuller>

**Carolyn Custis James**

*Internationally renowned speaker and award winning author*  
[www.carolyncustisjames.com](http://www.carolyncustisjames.com)

**Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg**

*Author and Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism UK* [jonathanwittenberg.org](http://jonathanwittenberg.org)

**Churches Together in All Lincolnshire**

For log in details contact Alison  
on  
[PA@lincolnshiremethodist.org.uk](mailto:PA@lincolnshiremethodist.org.uk)

## Legacies of Slavery

As part of its continued commitment to examine the Legacies of Slavery, the URC has created a new web page to bring together a wide range of resources to help explore how this shameful part of our history continues to have an impact on all lives today and how we can work to build more conscious, just and anti-racist communities. Launched in time for **UK Black History Month** (1-31 October 2020), the web page already contains videos and worship to mark this important season, with further resources to be added in months to come: <https://urc.org.uk/legacies-of-slavery>



**Want to know how the legacies of slavery continue to affect people today?**

Explore a range of resources on the theme which includes: Bible Studies, Films, Conversation starters, books, papers, prayers and theology.

[www.urc.org.uk/legacies-of-slavery](http://www.urc.org.uk/legacies-of-slavery)  
[veronica.daniel@urc.org.uk](mailto:veronica.daniel@urc.org.uk)

# legacies of SLAVERY

## Green Homes Grants

*JPIC Convenor **Graham Ghaleb** shares the following:*

Homeowners and people responsible for manses should find out about the new **Green Homes Grant (GHG) Scheme** recently launched by the government. Homeowners and landlords in England can apply for a voucher towards the cost of installing energy efficient and low-carbon heating improvements to homes. It seems very straightforward and I intend to apply!

While funds last, the government will provide a voucher that covers up to two thirds of the cost of qualifying improvements to your home. The maximum value of the voucher is £5,000. However, homeowners where a member of the household receives one of the 'qualifying benefits' could get a voucher up to £10,000, covering 100% of the cost of the improvements.

***The deadline for redeeming vouchers and completing the improvements is 31 March 2021 but I recommend acting quickly.***

For more details of the scheme and how to apply, visit the user-friendly Simple Energy Advice website: <https://www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/pages/green-homes-grant>

**Graham Ghaleb**

East Midlands Synod **Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation** (JPIC) Working Group

## Justice for people and planet

The group for **Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation** (JPIC) works hard to bring related issues to your attention but we would very much like to hear back about what is going on in the Synod. Your church may be an **Eco Church** or a **Commitment for Life Church** but of course many churches are active without 'signing up'. If you have a passion for the Church's mission to serve and empower the world's poorest people, to challenge the unjust structures that cause so much harm to humanity and other species and/or to protect and care for God's wonderful Creation, then we would love to hear from you.

Please feel free to contact any member of the Group. My contact details are:  
[charles.jolly13@btopenworld.com](mailto:charles.jolly13@btopenworld.com) telephone 07484243885.

**Charles Jolly**

**Green Apostle**

## Around the East Midlands

### Farewell to Revd Jenny Mills



Last Sunday, 27 September, the **Revd Jenny Mills** led her final service at **Newport Pagnell URC** following 12 years' ministry there. The service, followed by a number of surprises for Jenny, can be viewed on the church's Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/NewportPagnellURC/videos/3419624654782416>. Her final service at **West End United Church, Wolverton** was earlier in the month.

We thank Jenny for all her service in East Midlands Synod and wish her well in her new role as the URC's **Secretary for Education and Learning**, which she begins the same day this e-letter is published.

## Personal news

**Wigston Magna URC** is sad to announce the death of **John Charles Standley**. John was a member, Elder and Lay Preacher. He was also a longstanding stalwart of the Boys Brigade, being Captain of the 14th Leicester Boys' Brigade at Wigston Magna URC for many years.

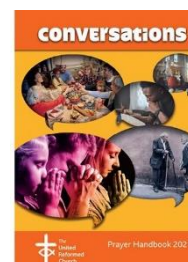
John will be sorely missed by all who knew him. His funeral was held on Thursday 17th September 2020.

## 2021 Prayer Handbook

The URC's **2021 Prayer Handbook** has been published, entitled **Conversations**.

Owing to the closure of the Synod Office, and the fact that our Synod Meeting is online, we are unable to collate orders for the Prayer Handbook this year.

You are invited to order your copy directly from the **URC Bookshop**: [www.urchop.co.uk](http://www.urchop.co.uk).



## East Midlands Synod contacts

The **Revd Gillian Poucher**, Minister at Gainsborough URC and a Pastoral Consultant for Lincolnshire, has a new email address: [revpoucher@gmail.com](mailto:revpoucher@gmail.com). Please amend your contact lists accordingly.

## Find us online



The **East Midlands Synod website** remains the one-stop shop for all essential information: <https://www.urchop.org.uk/>



Our **East Midlands Synod Facebook Page** continues to host the Evening Prayers led by our Moderator the **Revd Geoffrey Clarke** and others as the health crisis continues. If you are a Facebook user, please consider **Liking** and **Sharing** this Page and its posts: <https://www.facebook.com/URC-East-Midlands-Synod-102279281444717/>

Similarly the **Synod Youth and Children's Facebook Page** shares news and ideas related to our work with young people: <https://www.facebook.com/URCEastmidlandsYouth/>



These have recently been joined by a dedicated **YouTube channel**, where the Synod will share special events, training videos, worship and more. Evening Prayers are now available here subsequently. Please subscribe:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzXFUrkKn8XOGGeZU5SgN95g>

This E-letter is produced on behalf of:

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Telephone: 0115 960 9241

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**Next edition: Thursday 15 October 2020**

Please send all material for this E-Letter to both: [modpa@urchop.org.uk](mailto:modpa@urchop.org.uk) and [training@urchop.org.uk](mailto:training@urchop.org.uk)

Copy date for next edition: 12 noon on Tuesday 13 October 2020