

NEW DATE FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICE APRIL 15TH 2023

There will be an Open Church House event on the same day from 10am to 12noon. Volunteers are welcome to join the Anniversary Choir and to act as Stewards. Tickets are still valid but if you are no longer able to attend, please cancel your ticket.



FAREWELL AND HELLO

At our recent Synod meeting we said farewell to Ruth Whitehead, our Moderator since 2013. She has served us with dedication, insight, care and courage. Leading us through such times of change. We wish her every blessing as she takes up her new pastorate in Wales. As we shared the day together there was some looking back and reflection, alongside encouragement to notice the green shoots of growth. This was wonderfully evident for us as we welcomed the Bristol Korean Church, who wish to become a local URC, a request that was welcomed by the Synod and will be taken to General Assembly later in the year.



Left: Presentation to Hyun Joo Chung, Church Secretary of Bristol Korean Church, by Ruth Whitehead.

Right: The cake created as part of the farewell afternoon tea.





Moderator South Western Synod

Full time, seven-year termed appointment Minister's stipend

General Assembly wishes to appoint a United Reformed Church minister to serve as South Western Synod Moderator from 1st October 2023 (or an alternative by agreement).

South Western Synod is seeking a prayerful, discerning and inspirational Moderator to guide the Synod as it looks to fulfil God's mission. The Moderator will help us build on strengths and develop our response to the challenges which are faced both by churches and those who live in our cities, towns and villages.

You will bring to the role your enthusiasm for mission and outreach, desire to promote inclusion and social justice, and advocacy for environmental sustainability. You will have practical experience and an understanding of leading effective change in complex situations. You will have a vibrant interest in ecumenical and interfaith relationships.

Your interpersonal, management, communication and digital skills will help you to lead a Synod which covers a region of varied communities from rural and seaside villages to towns and cities, with many churches in ecumenical partnerships and some in united areas. The Synod is committed to encouraging and supporting its 110 churches in mission to their local communities and beyond.

You will bring experience in innovative, mission focused, ministry in local churches, to support and encourage our churches to be authentic, outward looking, and rooted in their local community. Your consultative and collaborative style of leadership, and ability to relate well to people, will enable you to provide inspirational and pastoral leadership to the Synod staff team, ministers and churches in the South West.

An information pack and application form can be found on the jobs page of the website:

www.urc.org.uk/jobs

If you wish to nominate a minister for this post, please write to: Deepti Upadhyaya at

recruitment@urc.org.uk by **Sunday 23 April 2023**

If you wish to apply for this post please complete an application form and send it to: Human Resources, The United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT 020 7691 9871;

recruitment@urc.org.uk by **12 noon, Monday 22 May 2023**

Interview date: Monday 26 June

In accordance with the Equalities Act 2010 Part1; Schedule 9 there is a genuine occupational requirement for the post holder to be a Minister of Word and Sacraments of the United Reformed Church.

This post also requires an enhanced DBS certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

SAFEGUARDING

Carrie Kaunda is covering the South Western Synod Safeguarding Officer role while we recruit a new Synod Safeguarding Officer. Carrie is the URC Training and Development Co-ordinator for Safeguarding, so is ideally placed to offer the following training:



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- Intermediate Training Tuesday May 2nd 6.30pm
- Foundation training Tuesday May 9th 6.30pm
- Intermediate training Tuesday May 23rd 1.30pm
- Church Safeguarding Coordinators Training Tuesday 27th June 7pm

The training sessions will be available via zoom. A church may wish to set up a single zoom and have a group of people attend, this will allow 'in person' discussions and will enable those without the technology to attend alongside those that do.

CONTACTS

To book places for training please contact Dinah at the Synod Office.
Email: secretary@urcsouthwest.org.uk Tel: 01823 275470

If you wish to contact Carrie regarding a safeguarding concern
Email: safeguardingofficer@urcsouthwest.org.uk Tel: 07843815952

A few dates for the diary

- Please have all items to be considered by the Executive Committee with the Synod Office by the **25th April**.
- Please have all items to be considered by the Pastoral Committee with the Synod Office or your Synod Pastoral Advisor by the **4th May**.
- Deadline for the May Issue of E-News **27th April**. Please email your contribution to Rachel Leach, Synod Clerk at synodclerk@urcsouthwest.org.uk



Ammerdown is a Christian foundation which seeks to promote peace, justice, reconciliation and hope. We provide opportunities for learning in a safe place of hospitality, where people of differing views and faiths can engage in dialogue and creativity and pursue their

individual journeys of exploration, faith and prayer. [Click here to find out more](#)



CALLING ALL GRANDPARENTS

Fun, challenging, inspiring, exhausting, the grandparenting years can mark a glorious time with our younger generations. Come to a free workshop for grandparents of teenagers, children and pre-schoolers:

- Enrich your relationships at different ages and stages
- Share your faith - overcoming barriers
- Celebrate the challenges and blessings

10 June in Reading, 17 June in Newcastle upon Tyne and 15 and 19 June online <https://bit.ly/glorious-grandparenting> to find out more and book.

ECO-CHURCH / ECO-CONGREGATION

resources and engagement materials for children and young people. To support and encourage churches working towards the eco-church/eco congregation awards, Children's and Youth Work have produced a pack with questionnaires and other resources to use with children and young people as part of the process. Find them here or contact children.youth@urc.org.uk for a copy. Thursday 27 April 7pm TALKING ABOUT... will be on this theme. Sign up on www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout



URC CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH WORK ONLINE

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth/>

Website <https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/children-young-people>

YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/channel/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCUhcQnrk2N78c89wM9Rhow)

[UCCUhcQnrk2N78c89wM9Rhow](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCUhcQnrk2N78c89wM9Rhow)

Pinterest <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/URCCYWD/>

Have you signed up yet to the new Facebook group for Faith Adventures for Children Together?

Why not have a look on

www.facebook.com

THE CHURCH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

The Church Leadership Programme (CLP) is a comprehensive programme to refresh experienced lay and ordained leaders in authentic leadership, helping church leaders to develop external skills from their core sense of being. A mix of physical and virtual learning, the course threads from September to June every academic year. Each year, participants form into a faith community, committed to each other for encouragement and support.

[To find out more click here](#)



Crucible Courses

This module will be taught in-person to participants in Exeter, using the training room of the South West Baptist Association. This room has the facilities needed to livestream the teaching, making it accessible anywhere. This means that you can participate in any of three ways:

In person in Exeter

Together with others in a local hub with an experienced facilitator

Online as an individual

As always, the course is open to anyone interested in exploring faith, discipleship, mission and church in a changing culture.

[Click here to find out more and book tickets](#)

The cost per module is £80 (£40 if unwaged). Some bursaries are available by contacting admin@urbanexpression.org.uk



URC SUPPORTS OPEN TABLE NETWORK

The URC is granting £50,000 to the Open Table Network, a partnership of communities across England and Wales which welcomes and affirms people who are LGBTQIA+. The URC Mission Committee is seeking to develop more spaces where people can build authentic communities and explore and develop their faith. [Read more.](#)



CHURCH LIFE REVIEW

The Church Life Review Group have been tasked with looking at the future of the URC and the challenges we face at church, synod and denomination level. For an update on their work so far and their next steps, [watch this short video.](#)



[For the latest dates and events click here](#)

EXPLORING ELDERSHIP

Are you an Elder seeking to find out more about the ministry of Eldership? Or perhaps you have recently been called as an Elder and are just starting out on your Eldership journey?

Exploring Eldership is a six-module training programme designed to help you learn more about the ministry of Eldership, whatever point you are at on that journey.

It's suitable for individuals or groups and is available to everyone in the URC Learning Hub – [Click here to access Exploring Eldership](#)



publishes weekly lectionary-based resources: these include topical sermon ideas, weekly outlines for intergenerational worship services, and resources for children's and youth groups.

Jenny Mills, the Secretary for Education and Learning, sits on the ROOTS Board of Trustees and uses the resources herself as a URC minister in a local pastorate. She says: "Having a resource that can be used by the worship leader and those engaging with children and young people, based around the lectionary readings, is such a blessing. I value the wealth of material that is offered and the archive resources. So much to choose from!"

ROOTS has just launched a free online trial of its resources, giving you complete access to their website for one month. You don't need to give any card details and there is no ongoing commitment. [Sign up here!](#)



Rural Ministry Course

25-26th Apr 2023
17-18th Oct 2023

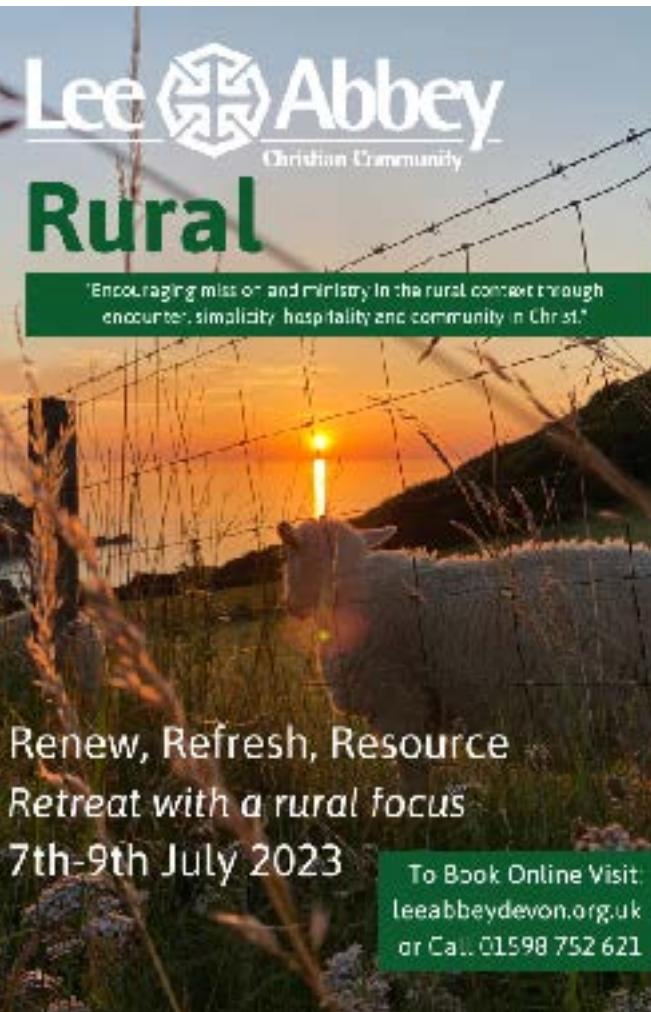
- New to rural?
- Fancy a refresher?
- Come & meet others
- Learn together

Booking & further details:
<https://tinyurl.com/RMC2023>

£300 full board
King's Park,
Wiltshire

Arthur Rank Centre

[Click here](#) to visit the Arthur Rank website & find out more about the Rural Ministries Course.



Lee Abbey
Christian Community

Rural

"Encouraging mission and ministry in the rural context through encounter, simplicity, hospitality and community in Christ."

Renew, Refresh, Resource
Retreat with a rural focus
7th-9th July 2023

To Book Online Visit:
leeabbeydevon.org.uk
or Call: 01598 752 621

[Click here to visit Lee Abbey's website](#)

Southern Synod are running a training session. It is an online session and have therefore opened it up so that folk from other synods can join. To register please [click here](#).



**Inclusive practice:
pastorally
supporting LGBTQ+
young people**

Free online training session led by Frontier Youth Trust

Weds 26 April 2023 7:00pm - 8:30pm

Discussion topics will include:

- Creating LGBTQ+ inclusive environments
- Inclusive language and use of pronouns
- Pastorally supporting LGBTQ+ young people

Register at
www.bit.ly/inclusive-practice2023

SOUTHERN SYNOD
Children & Youth Work

Congratulations to Christ Church United Church, Braunton, in North Devon.



It is great to have another Bronze Eco Church awarded in our Synod. The congregation have worked steadily through the Eco Church survey to ensure all aspects of church life have been considered from an environmental perspective. Last year, Christ Church Braunton hosted a day conference in conjunction with Christian Aid to explore a number of crucial issues, with a panel of speakers in the morning and workshops in the afternoon. The event drew together local Christians, local Councillors and the wider community- an important aspect of Eco Church is community engagement on environmental issues.

Congratulations to Glastonbury URC, who have been featured in a new Eco video - to find out more, follow this link:

<https://linktr.ee/ecovideo>

If you have an eco story to tell, please do get in touch with one of our Green Apostles.

Rob Weston and Chris Baillie,
SW Synod Green Apostles

LEGACIES OF SLAVERY

Telling It As It Is – Confronting Racism in the Church, is a short film by the URC Mission Committee and is part of the URC's aim in taking active steps to become an anti-racist Church. The film is about uncovering white privilege in the Church and features a range of interviews with ethnically-minoritised members who serve in a variety of positions. Watch it, click the image.



**Group for
Evangelism
And
Renewal**
*within the United
Reformed Church*

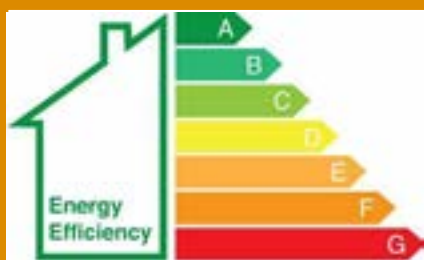
[Click here to find out more and book a place](#)

REFRESHING YOUR MINISTRY

10-12 October 2023

High Leigh Conference Centre, Herts

These gatherings include teaching input, Bible studies and worship, space for prayer plus valuable down-time with colleagues away from regular responsibilities. They are for serving URC Ministers and CRCWs, and also include Synod-appointed Local Leaders, and retired ministers who are in pastoral charge.



EPC REGULATION CHANGES FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY LETTINGS FROM 1 APRIL 2023

We, as landlords, should prepare for the next round of EPC regulations coming into force on 1 April 2023 as part of the government's push to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

2018 saw the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) come into force which brought about the requirement that no new tenancy be created without the property having an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E.

From the 1 April 2023, this requirement will tighten so that all tenanted commercial properties will have to achieve an E rating or less on their EPC, regardless of whether the tenancy is new.

On the grant of a new lease the EPC must be available at the outset with a minimum rating of E as the law stands at present – rising to a minimum of C for all new leases granted from 2025 onwards and with the added requirement that the rating for pre 2025 leases is raised to a minimum of C by 2028 (unless one of the statutory exemptions can be relied upon).

As the Trust & Property Officer I am aware this might have significant implications for many of our churches relying heavily on their rental income to support them.

We at the Synod are encouraging local churches to apply for Eco Grants and of course our Green Apostles are also there to help too.

Kind Regards Diane Phillips Property & Trust Officer

HOW CAN I TRAIN TO BE A SUPERVISOR?

URC Ministries Dept has partnered with Westminster College and Wesley House in Cambridge to provide training for the Certificate in Pastoral Supervision.

The next course is scheduled for:

November 20th – 24th 2023 at Westminster College.

To apply for the training contact: ministries.pa@urc.org.uk

