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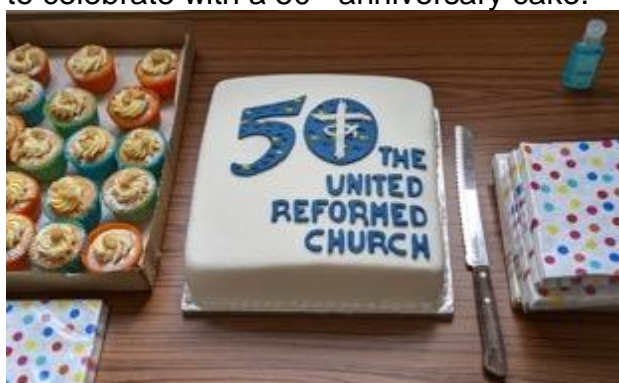
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URC 50TH JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

It was great to see people in person and online in our first hybrid Synod meeting. For those who were able to attend in person we even got to celebrate with a 50th anniversary cake.



INDUCTION INVITATION

Southernhay & Heavitree and Pinhoe churches
are please to invite you to the induction of
Revd Jayne Taylor.

The service will be held at Southernhay URC, Dix's Field, Exeter, EX1 1QA
on 11th December at 3pm

Please RSVP by 1st December for catering purposes to church secretary Diane Burch dianeurch57@gmail.com

BRISTOL AREA JUBILEE SERVICE

On 23rd October, churches from across the Bristol area gathered at Redland Park URC, or on Zoom, to celebrate 50 years of the United Reformed Church.

The service was organised by Revd Helena McKinnon, with churches choosing hymns and also providing cake.



As well as a wide selection of hymns, including the hymn by Stephen Newell and Naomi Sharp that was a winner in the URC hymn writing competition, there were contributions from Revd Helena McKinnon on

other events in 1972, Revd Sue Cossey on Jubilee, Revd Neil Thorogood with prayers and his poem that was also a winner in the competition, Revd James Jang playing the ocarina and poems from church members.

Afterwards, those in the church shared tea, cake and conversation.



Faith and Science in the Local Church – A Workshop for Christian Leaders

January 13 – 14, 2023, Cambridge and online
Join us for this interactive two-day workshop designed for Christian leaders – whether ordained, lay, or active and experienced members of a local church. Participants will be equipped to engage with scientific issues in the day-to-day life of their ministry context.

This workshop will cover contemporary topics in the dialogue between Science and the Christian Faith, including Artificial Intelligence, Bioethics, Evolution, and Miracles.

Open to all church leaders – no scientific background required.

Visit faraday.institute/churchleaders

Ministry & Mission Fund (M&M)

Please note that M&M is no longer dealt with by the Property & Trust team at the Synod office. It is being handled by Paula & Dick in the finance team. If you have any queries on this, please email either Paula

finance@urcsouthwest.org.uk

Or Dick

synodtreasurer@urcsouthwest.org.uk

FROM THE TREASURER

I was challenged about why the amount for Synod Pastoral Advisors (SPAs) had been so high for 2022. When I prepare the budget for 2023 and beyond, I look at previous year's budgets and what we think will change. When determining the 2022 budget for SPAs, we had a vacancy for a SPA. There is quite a large difference in costs depending upon who fills the role. So for 2022 we set a high budget, but in reality the costs were lower than budgeted. In retrospect when sharing a budget rather than use the current year budget, as I did this year, it is probably better in future to use the treasurer's estimate for what is likely to be spent in the current year, which might differ from what was expected.

Helping churches with grants

The Synod exists to support churches in their local ministry. There are several possibilities regarding grants. Further details of forms for application can be found on the Synod web site.

Enabling Grants

These are grants to help churches carry out their mission and would not normally be for work on a building. The limit on Enabling Grants is £25,000, and for grants less than £2,500 there is a simpler process.

We do not set any limits for what the grant can be used. We do expect to see some indication of the church's contribution to the proposed activity and how it will help the church's mission in the local community.

If you would like advice on what you might need to apply for a grant, you are invited to seek help from your Synod Pastoral Advisor. This is advised for all larger grants.

Some examples of grants include updating AV systems, providing meals for needy people, materials for Bible Study, equipment for Messy Church.

ECO Grants

These grants can also be offered for helping your church to become greener, such as insulation, lower power lighting, or boiler efficiency improvements. If you need help, please speak to one of our Green Apostles - Chris Baillie or Robert Weston.

You can use the forms for an Enabling Grant for these (note it is for an ECO grant). Forms and guidance for these grants can be found at <https://www.urcsouthwest.org.uk/finance-resources/>

Property Grants

You can apply for a Property Grant to cover the costs of maintaining your church or manse. To do so you will need to fill out a Property Form which outlines the work you are planning to undertake. Where possible you should seek quotations for the work to be done.

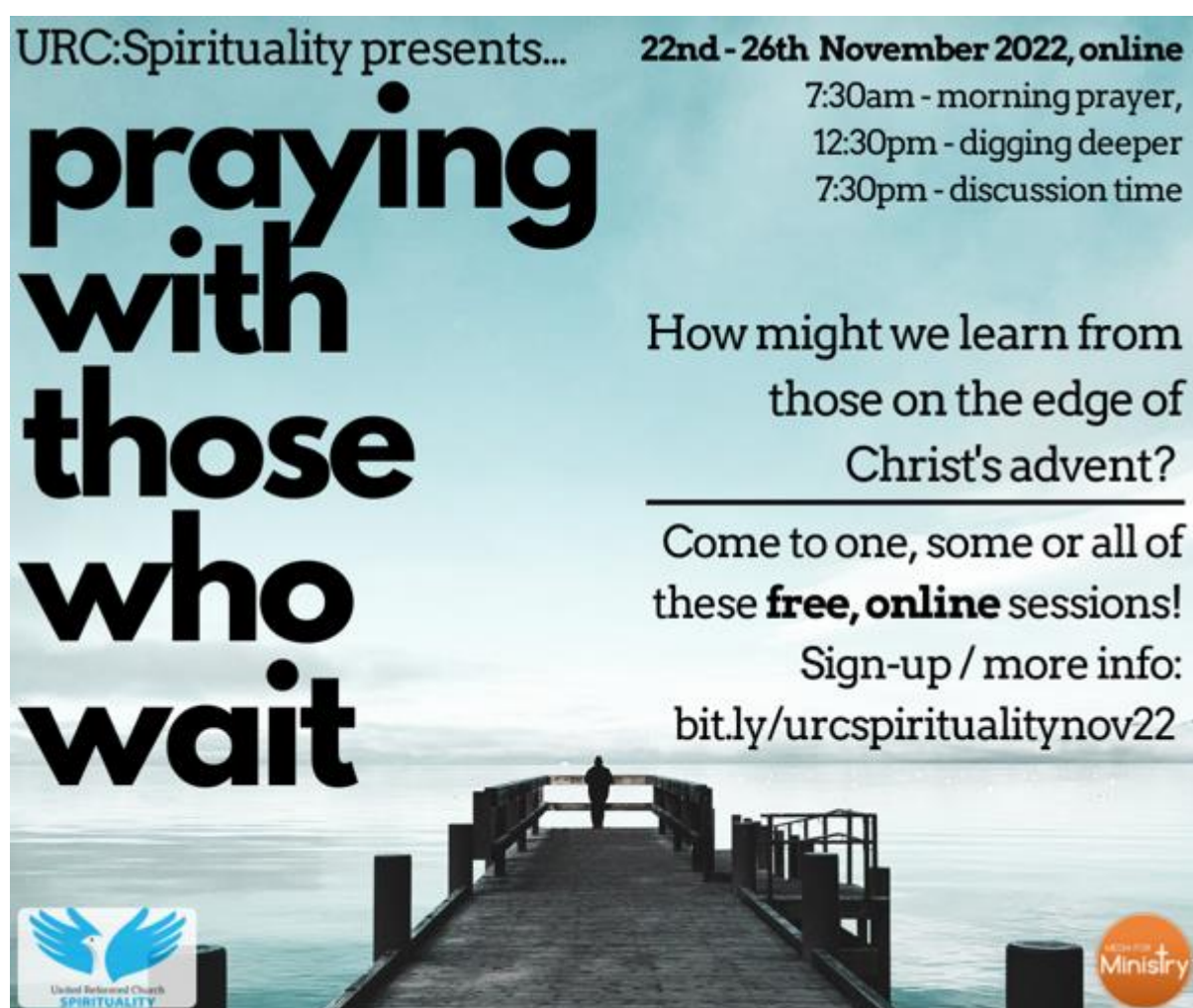
It is the responsibility of local churches to maintain the property they use in good order, and the Synod is willing to help churches to achieve this.

There are 2 levels of Property Grants:

- Facelift Grants which cover 50% of the costs of any work done up to a maximum grant of £10,000 (£5,000 and 25% for United Churches). These can be applied for no sooner than 5 years after the payment of a previous Facelift Grant.
- 5% or 10% grants can be applied for at any time for work on churches and manses. The lower rate applies to United Churches.

If your church does not have sufficient funds to carry out the work, you can at the same time apply for a loan to cover any shortfall. These are normally for up to 5 years, and interest on the loan is charged at Bank Rate plus 1% charged daily.

If you need help with filling out forms or getting quotations, you should contact Diane Phillips our Property Officer. Information about these grants and forms can be found at: <https://www.urcsouthwest.org.uk/property-resources/>





URC: Spirituality presents... **22nd - 26th November 2022, online**
7:30am - morning prayer,
12:30pm - digging deeper
7:30pm - discussion time

praying with those who wait

How might we learn from
those on the edge of
Christ's advent?

Come to one, some or all of
these **free, online** sessions!
Sign-up / more info:
bit.ly/urcspiritualitynov22



REVD ROWENA FRANCIS'S CHECKPOINTS, HILLSIDES, HUMMUS AND GUNS!



I am back after an amazing three months monitoring human rights in Occupied Palestine and Israel. I served with the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI).

I have witnessed

- people climbing over walls and waiting squashed together in a corridor with turnstiles at each end at 5am to ensure they get through a checkpoint between Bethlehem and Jerusalem hoping to get to work by 7.30am.



- shepherding above the Dead Sea when I have acted as a protective presence, to help prevent Israeli Settlers from attacking the women shepherds,



- a silent protest in a village, by family and supporters when their 17 year old son's body has not been released for burial by the Israel military some three months after he was shot by them.
- Palestinian buildings demolished by Israel normally due to them not having a permit because Israel has not granted one

- and I have written reports for the United Nations to use as evidence of the impact of the occupation on both Palestinian and Israeli people.



For more information see the blog site at www.eyewitnessblogs.com. You can also find details on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: @eappiukireland

The hospitality and warmth of welcome in Bethlehem where I have been based has been amazing. I would love to tell you more about my time as an Ecumenical Accompanier. I am available to come and speak to groups of any size.

Please contact: Revd Rowena Francis 01749 679300 rwnfrncs@gmail.com

YOUTH ASSEMBLY

Each year the URC Youth Assembly brings together a diverse group of under-25s from across Scotland, England and Wales for a weekend of business and fun combined, exploring issues and topics relevant to Church, society and life through workshops, seminars, discussions and creative activities.

Online bookings for the 2023 Youth Assembly are now open.

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

Age range: Year 10/S3 to 25 years inclusive.

Dates and venue: 27 – 29 January 2023 at Whitemoor Lakes near Lichfield.

Cost: **£119** if booking received on or before 11

November 2022, **£149** if booking received on or after

12 November 2022. If money is an issue, please

contact us on 020 7916 8683 or email children.youth@urc.org.uk as financial support is available.

After the success of last year, we will be running a **Youth Leaders' Gathering** for adults alongside next year's Youth Assembly. There will be opportunities to network with others, share ideas and discuss issues, and a chance to see what happens at Youth Assembly too, as well as social activities and a chance to talk 1:1 with regional youth work advisors from our CYDO+ team. Contact children.youth@urc.org.uk for more details and a booking form.



The URC Waldensian Fellowship On-Line

Monday 14 November at 7.30 pm

Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land

The experience of English-speaking congregations in Italy

with

Victoria Munsey,

an American who has lived in Italy for more than 30 years

and

Daniel and Grace Pratt Morris-Chapman,

Methodist ministers, currently serving in Rome

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84476125567?pwd=MFFTR3F5c0REU2IOYkVLa2x1cU5qdz09>

Meeting ID: 844 7612 5567

Passcode: 326951



The Incarnate Houseparty provides a great opportunity to meet with those involved in pioneering, those overseeing it and those simply wanting to find out more. It is a relaxed gathering with friendly conversation, insightful main sessions and times of prayer and reflection. This year we will be joined by Ash and Anji Barker (see below for more details).

Wastelands and wildernesses were often places where people in the Scriptures encountered God. How and where do we experience wastelands and wildernesses today? How might we reimagine or reinterpret places of desolation as spaces of unexpected blessing, surprising forms of life and new ways of meeting God?

£140 per person

All meals, refreshments and accommodation are included in the cost. We have 30 tickets available and to ensure there are enough spaces, accommodation is shared in twin rooms. Please indicate when booking if there is someone particular you would like to share with, if you have a genuine need for a single room or if you have any special dietary requirements.

Concession tickets are available at £90 for those who are low or unwaged or self-supporting in ministry.

We have a pay it forward option for £180 if you or your church or organisation would like to support someone else to come to the Houseparty.

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

An idea for our churches—free take aways for anyone using our buildings?



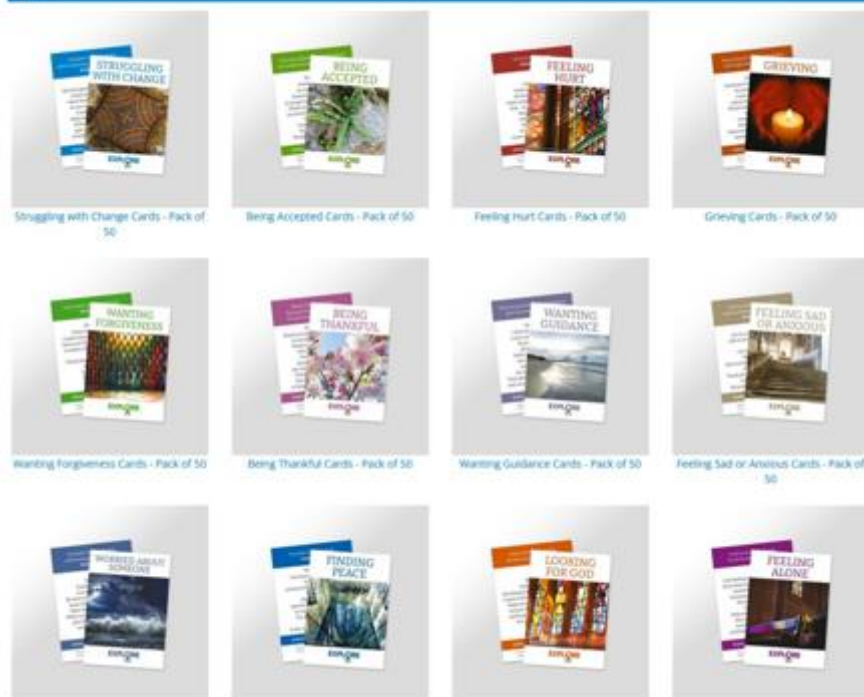
EXPLORE was launched by the C of E and others in April 2022. There are three types of resources: attractive, small and free prayer cards for 12 different situations (Struggling with Change; Being Accepted; Feeling Hurt; Grieving; Wanting Forgiveness; Being Thankful; Wanting Guidance; Feeling Sad or Anxious; Worried about Someone; Finding Peace; Looking for God; Feeling Alone) ; 6 more in-depth but brief booklets (Is There Something Beyond Death?; Why Do So Many Bad Things Happen?; Will Anything Happen If I Pray?; Am I Good Enough For God?; Where Is My Life Going?; Is God Real?)

Books & Booklets



Things Happen?; Will Anything Happen If I Pray?; Is God Real?; Am I Good Enough For God? Where Is My Life Going?); a website for people wanting to discover Christianity (which includes link to URC website). The materials have been informed by major recent and ongoing research into UK culture and attitudes to faith and the Church by the Centre for the Study of Christianity & Culture at the University of York. All are sold via the Christian Publishing and Outreach website:

AT Cards



<https://www.cpo.org.uk/explore-resources>

POSSIBILITIES?

1. Might each church buy at least one of the card display stands (£16.99 each) and display prominently where visitors will see it/them? Buy packs of cards and keep the displays topped up. Cards cost £2.49 for 50 of one design (so £29.88 for 50 x all 12 designs). The display stands will hold up to 40 of each of the 12 cards.



2. We buy some of the booklets to have available near the cards (£1.99 each).

3. We link the EXPLORE website to our congregations' websites.

4. I know that many of our churches are eager to find ways to translate visiting the building for other purposes into something more closely linked to discovering faith as our buildings are used by the community. This is one tiny example of doing something more

intentional. The material is produced to a very high standard, isn't intimidating and is specifically designed to be small enough for visitors to pop into a pocket or bag as they pass. Worth investing in as an act of planting seeds for the gospel?

Revd Neil Thorogood (Convener, Synod Discipleship and Service Committee)

Youth Mental Health First Aid

Learn to support young people

- Gain an in-depth understanding of mental health and factors that can affect wellbeing in the youth sector
- Develop practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues
- Feel confident to step in, reassure and support a young person in distress
- Enhance your interpersonal skills such as non-judgemental listening and learn to champion self-care

For more info and to book, contact:

Children's & Youth Development Officers:

Mersey Synod - Steven Mitchell cydo@urcmerseysynod.org.uk

Southern Synod - Tom Hackett cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk

Visit the MHFA England website at mhfaengland.org
Find us on social media @MHFAEngland

www.bit.ly/november-mhfa

30 Nov - 1 Dec 2022
URC Church House,
London WC1H 9RT

www.bit.ly/february-mhfa

2 Feb - 3 Feb 2023
Northern College,
Manchester M14 5JP



The East Midlands Synod
of the United Reformed Church

is seeking to appoint a

Children's and Youth Development Officer (Ref CYDO)

This is a full-time post for 37.5 hours/week

(including evening and weekends) on a permanent contract.

Salary: £32,796 to £33,624 depending on experience and qualifications

This post is subject to an Enhanced DBS Disclosure

This post offers a challenging opportunity for an experienced and professionally qualified Children's and Youth Worker with training and development skills. We are looking for an enthusiastic and committed Christian to develop our strategy, serve the churches of the Synod in offering advice, training, and support to those working with children and young people and to work with the wider United Reformed Church. The Officer appointed will be a member of a collaborative Synod team and therefore good team working skills are essential.

If you share our passion for children and young people playing their part in the mission of God, please contact:

Mrs Chris Willis
East Midlands Synod Office
1 Edwards Lane
Sherwood
Nottingham
NG5 3AA
Tel: 0115 9609241
E-mail: admin@urc5.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 30th November 2022
Interviews to be held : w/c 12th December 2022

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010: Part 1, Schedule 9, there is an occupational requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian

We are committed to diversity and equality of opportunity. We especially welcome applications from women and Black and Minority Ethnic Groups who are currently under-represented in this area of work in the Church.

AMMERDOWN CENTRE AUTUMN PROGRAMME



[Click here for the
autumn programme](#)



DIGITAL RESOURCES

The national URC has many digital resources you may find helpful. Some have been going for a while, some are quite new on the scene.

[Click here to find out
more](#)

Deadline for the December/January Issue Friday 25th November. Please email your contribution to Rachel Leach, Synod Clerk at synodclerk@urcsouthwest.org.uk