

The
**United
Reformed
Church
South Western
Synod**

**CORNWALL DEVON SOMERSET
BRISTOL SWINDON WILTSHIRE**

E-News / September 2023

SYNOD MODERATOR NEWS

We have recently learned that the process to appoint the next Synod Moderator has not resulted in a nomination, and there will be a fresh appointment process in due course

Whilst we remain without a Moderator, please continue to contact the Synod Office or your Synod Pastoral Advisor. We are grateful to Revd Steve Faber for his ongoing role as a supporting Moderator and to all those within the Synod covering areas of extra responsibility.

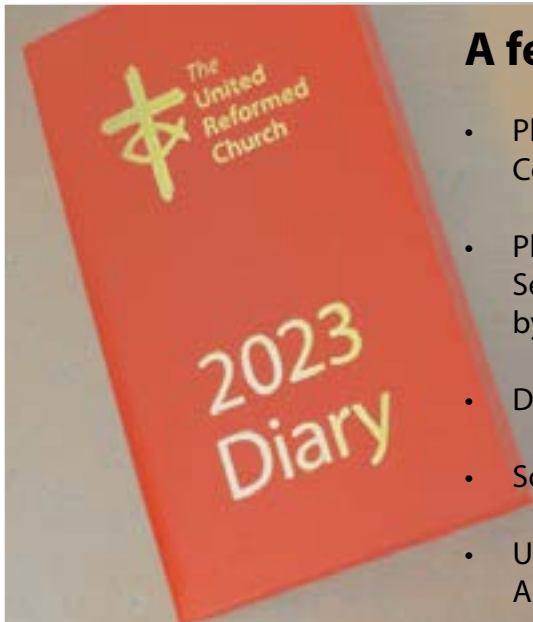
CELEBRATING OUR SYNOD!

We have agreed to a different and very special Synod meeting on **Saturday 21st October**. We'll meet from 9:45am-3:15pm at Westfield URC, Bridgwater. Essential Synod business will be limited to time in the afternoon. The bulk of the day will be devoted to Making Christ Known – our explorations of tools and resources to help congregations seek, serve and share Christ in our communities.

We are opening this gathering to up to 10 from each church. We want to share with a wider cross section of Synod in celebration (travel expenses can be reclaimed from the Synod for all attending, but please share transport as much as possible).

The heart of this synod gathering will be workshops. We are delighted that several churches have offered to run workshops sharing resources for mission, worship and outreach that they have recently used.

Look out for the letter coming to all church secretaries in the next few days with more details and sign up forms for the workshops to be returned by the end of the month.



A few dates for the diary

- Please have all items to be considered by the Executive Committee with the Synod Office by the **12th September**.
- Please have all items to be considered by the Discipleship & Service Committee with the Synod Office or Neil Thorogood by the **5th October**.
- Deadline for workshop choices at Synod **29th September**
- South Western Autumn Synod Meeting **21st October**.
- URC South Western Spring School will run from 22nd - 25th April 2024

Deadline for the October Issue of E-News **3rd October** Please email your contribution to Rachel Leach, Synod Clerk at synodclerk@urcsouthwest.org.uk

LOGOS, LETTERHEADS AND MUCH MORE

This year at General Assembly there was helpful discussion and guidance on design and digital visual identity for The United Reformed Church

Click on the link below to read the report

<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/C5-Design-and-Digital-Visual-Identities-FINAL-1-edit.pdf>

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE IN PROJECT DELIVERY OF ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES

The URC Retired Ministers' Housing Society is seeking to employ someone with experience in project delivery of energy-efficient homes. RMHS is aiming to have a portfolio of houses that is entirely carbon-neutral 'before 2050'.

Follow link for further details

<https://urc.org.uk/jobs/sustainability-project-lead/>



The URC is a sponsor of National Estate Churches Network and you are invited to either Bristol or Sheffield for their 2023 NECN National Conference, 'God With Us: Sharing our journey' on 23 September. There will be practical workshops and time for fellowship. Lunch is included in the ticket price of £20. click on the link below to book your ticket.

https://estatechurches.org/conference/?dm_i=2JB1,1YFB5,2VWVW,6WZ8,1

JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

*Touring to churches and schools this Advent
Share the joy and wonder of Christmas with your local community*

"... a magnificent production. Our church members and their guests were powerfully moved."

Rev David Senior

"A wonderful production, so accessible to every kind of audience, especially non-church goers. Opening up the meaning of Christmas."

Rev Novette Headley

"... the best of both worlds: a vibrant piece of entertainment and an opportunity to step back, to reflect, and to refocus."

John Sherbourne, Moortown Baptist Church

For more information and to book for Advent 2023, office on 07775 628442 or email: touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk



URC DISCIPLESHIP DEVELOPMENT FUND LARGE GRANT

Around £5,000 is available to recognised URC groups for the discipleship development of lay people. Grants can be put towards personnel costs, facilities, travel, courses and more. Multi-year projects can be supported for up to three years. Click below for more information

<https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/developing-your-faith/discipleship-development-fund/>



RECONNECT!: a URC event for 20-40s

Saturday 16th September 2023, 10am-4.30pm

Westminster College, Cambridge

We are delighted to be hosting the first URC event for those in their 20s-40s, generously funded by the URC's Discipleship Development Fund.

Reconnect! is a discipleship event with worship, Bible study, panel discussion and small-group discussions. It aims to provide a space for 20-40 year olds to make connections with other Christians, to share in fellowship, and to discuss church life and faith in the context of life in this age bracket. We are hoping to establish an ongoing supportive network that will nourish people in their everyday discipleship and local church life.

Who is this for? Anyone in their 20s-40s who is connected with or interested in the URC, particularly those who have recently left Youth Assembly and those who do not have much contact with a local URC.

When will it be? Saturday 16th September 2023 with the option of staying over from 6pm the night before (Friday 15th) if you are coming from a distance.

Where will it take place? At Westminster College in Cambridge, one of the URC's Resource Centres for Learning.

Why is it happening? The report from the 20-40s task group to General Assembly in 2018 explored the reasons for the lack of 20-40 year olds in traditional churches and emphasised the need to walk together in community. Lack of engagement with traditional church is not a problem that needs fixing, but rather a call to find new ways forward together.

Reconnect! will be an opportunity for those in their 20s-40s to worship and socialise together, but also to think together about future discipleship and fellowship events and how the URC might better support and encourage those in this age-group.

To book your place click here: <http://bit.ly/45WqyZ3>



GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR CHURCHES IN WILTSHIRE

Grants are given twice a year (June and November). Please do not be put off by the word "Historic" - all churches in the County are eligible if they have their own building. Grants can be sought for alterations, developments, roof repairs, heating systems, etc. with respect to their Church building.

Please look at the Trust's website for further details: <https://www.wiltshirehistoricchurchestrust.org.uk/grants/apply/> - applications for a grant can now be requested via the website.

Let's celebrate

children's and youth work in the URC 2023

You are warmly invited to join the Children's and Youth Work team and URC Youth for an evening of:

- ♥ **prayer** and **worship**
- ♥ **updates** following Youth Assembly and General Assembly
- ♥ **hearing** from children and young people
- ♥ **previews** of new initiatives and resources
- ♥ **sharing** your feedback

Thursday 14 September 2023
7.30-8.45pm

online

Please book your free place here:
www.bit.ly/42NAEJo



The
United
Reformed
Church Youth



The
United
Reformed
Church Children



17-18th Oct 2023

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

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

£320 full board
King's Park



Arthur Rank
Centre

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



Vocation and Call

COMING SOON

Have you ever stopped to reflect on where God has called you or where

God might be calling you? These were two of the questions considered at Assembly Executive in November 2022. As a result, a resource has been created called Conversation Starters - Vocation and Call.

This resource will be a way of thinking about how God calls us, sustains us, challenges us and continues to move us on. There will be questions, a theological reflection, worship, and video clips all exploring what we experience and understand as Vocation and Call that will be freely available and ideal for use in small groups.

Conversation Starters - Vocation and Call will be available on the URC Learning Hub, from September. To access this and other resources in the URC Learning Hub, click here: <https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/>

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR CHARITIES HELPING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Charities and community organisations working with vulnerable people are being invited by the Government to apply for a share of a Department of Culture, Media and Sport support package. The fund will support frontline charities and community organisations providing services such as the provision of food, emergency provisions, shelter, safe spaces, warmth and financial or housing advice. Organisations can apply for grants worth between £10,000 and £75,000 to cover project and core costs, including office rent, utilities, staff and volunteers, from now until the end of March.

Applications will be accepted until 16 October 2023. Further details on eligibility and the applications process can be found on The National Lottery Community Fund website, in its role as the intermediary grant maker.

Click her to go to the website

<https://www.nlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/community-organisations-cost-of-living-fund>



URC BUILDINGS
FORUM

**Local churches
working towards
Net Zero**

for more information and to register for a link:
mission@urc.org.uk

Tuesday 26 September
8pm - 9.30pm



2023 Safeguarding Symposium

Thursday 12 October 1:30-4:00pm (Zoom)

We are excited to bring to you our safeguarding symposium where we will launch [Good Practice 6](#) and also headline [Dr Leroy Logan MBE](#) in a thoughtful discussion.



- 1:30-1:45pm** Welcome – Sharon Barr, Designated Safeguarding Lead, United Reformed Church
- 1:45-2:00pm** *Safeguarding: so much more than a compliance matter*, a reflection by Adrian Bulley, Deputy General Secretary
- 2:00-2:45pm** GP6 launch – [Dr Kerry Baker](#), Safeguarding Policy Development Coordinator
- 2:45-3:00pm** Break
- 3:00-3:45pm** [Dr Leroy Logan MBE](#) *Recognising unconscious bias; overcoming barriers of equality in safeguarding* – Q&A hosted by Carrie Kaunda, Safeguarding Training & Development Coordinator
- 3:45-4:00pm** Round up and thank you – Sharon Barr

Places are limited so please register your interest through Eventbrite [here](#) for this Zoom event.

HELLO FROM OUR NEW SYNOD SAFEGUARDING OFFICER



My name is Claire and I am the new Synod Safeguarding Officer. I have been a primary teacher for many years, a special educational needs coordinator across two small schools for about 8 years and a safeguarding lead too. My role was varied and I enjoyed being able to support all family members to overcome challenges that they faced. Since I started at the URC I have been busy getting to know faces and understanding the way that the synod supports its churches. I am looking forward to meeting you all and supporting you in the important role that you play in safeguarding your church communities. My number if you need to contact me is 07875 454064.

THANK YOU

As we say hello to Claire we say a huge thank you to Carrie Kaunda who has been handling safeguarding matters for our Synod whilst we advertised the post. I'm delighted to say, that it is not a goodbye, because Carrie, as many of you will know is the URC Training Officer for Safeguarding. So Claire and Carrie have become colleagues.

A FEW OF THE SUMMER ACTIVITIES AROUND THE SYNOD

CANNINGTON HOLIDAY CLUB

On our first day we introduced the children to our 'Watery World' sharing the story of God's creation and taking part in all manner of 'Watery' activities.

We made water filters, worked together to make a water drop maze without any 'leaks,' made rain drops and played a game to score points by getting our rain drops in the hoop and made rain gauges from milk bottles to observe the amount of rainfall in our local area. We talked about



the impact of this on food production and access to drinking water for children across the globe.

On day 2 we continued to explore God's Creation Day 3 was 'Family Folk' and we talked about the 'Good Samaritan' we had a short sketch by the adults at the start of the day. We invited families to stay to lunch at the end of the holiday club session.



WESTFIELD URC – SUMMER CLUB

For 1 week during the 6 weeks holidays Staff and Volunteers at Westfield URC hosted a Free summer club, open to all children.

attended by an and gave them the new skills.

The aim of the holiday club was to produce a mini show in a week.

On day one we introduced the children to the story of Joseph and his Coat of many colours. We prepared slides for the children to read and learnt a variety of songs to illustrate the story. Throughout the week we added more songs and dances and introduced the microphones, until we had learnt all we needed for our show.



It ran for 3 hours per day, was average of 38 children each day opportunities to learn many



RECORD BREAKERS HOLIDAY CLUB OTTERY ST. MARY

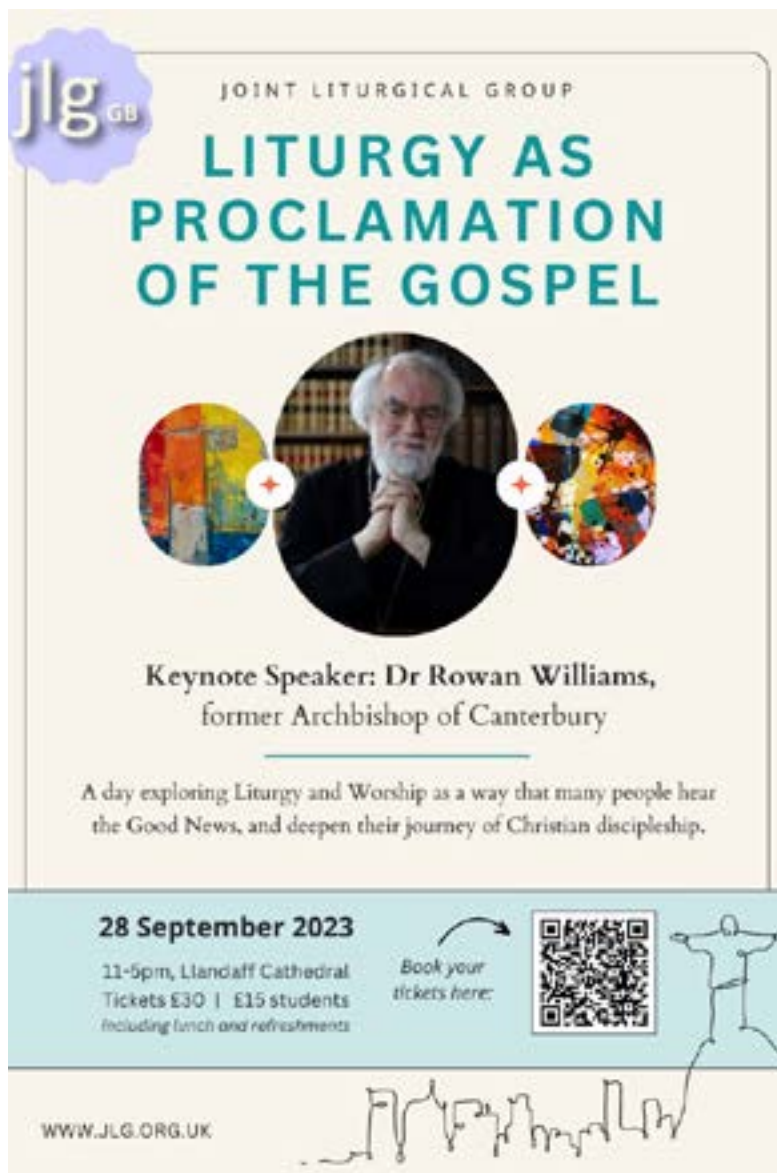
Each day we had well over 30 children attend. We also had a number of young leaders this year, aged 12-13 years, who made such a difference in helping and leading the children. During the week we looked at the stories of Noah, Jonah, Samson and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Each day we also did a craft linked to the story. In the main

tent we looked at the various themes in the stories and how they can apply to us. For instance with Noah I looked at God's promises and how he keeps them and for Jonah I looked at the topic of Mercy. Final day saw us do a Holiday Club Celebration Service.

This is where we showed

the parents what we had been doing, sang some of the songs we had learnt and also did a few record breaking attempts. The adults that attended seem to enjoy it. At the end we gave every child a Record Breaker Medal. After the celebration we all stayed for a BBQ.





HONORARY TREASURER FOR WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

Westminster College is looking for a new Governor to serve as Honorary Treasurer. This unpaid position is a vital component of Westminster's governance, ensuring it has impartial oversight. With a degree of flexibility around the position's responsibilities, Westminster would be keen to explore how the role might fit in with other obligations of suitably qualified and experienced candidates. To discuss the role or to register your interest, please contact bursar@westminster.cam.ac.uk.



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

ASIST TRAINING

The first 3 dates are live for application on our website: www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/mhfa

The dates are as follows:

28th & 29th September - Yeovil

26th & 27th October - Taunton

23rd & 24th November - Yeovil



The course is aimed at frontline workers in Somerset, typically from the following areas: Statutory and voluntary sector workers in health, welfare or social justice, Adult education, leisure and community safety staff and volunteers, Emergency service workers, General Practice staff

HOW CAN I TRAIN TO BE A PASTORAL 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

