

JULY 2023

SAFEGUARDING

NEWSLETTER

TRAINING UPDATES

TRAINING REVIEW GROUP

All training developed in line with the safeguarding framework is discussed at our Training Review Group and at each meeting we welcome a member of a local church to join us. If you are interested in joining a meeting to give any feedback on safeguarding training then please contact carrie.kaunda@urc.org.uk

SPECIALIST SAFEGUARDING TRAINING (ZOOM)

11 September 2-30pm - Suicide Awareness

12 September 6.30-8.30pm - DBS Verifier and Safer Recruitment

19 September 1.30-3.30pm - Domestic Abuse

25 September 7-9pm Modern Day Slavery

October 9th 2-4pm Safeguarding for Ministers Supporting Survivors

November 21st 7-9pm Adult Safeguarding

Please book your space through Emma Pearce emma.pearce@urc.org.uk

DBS VERIFIER AND SAFER RECRUITMENT (ZOOM)

This training is provided by Matt Tuckey from DDC and Carrie Kaunda from the Central Safeguarding team at Church House. This is important for verifiers and those who have a role in recruiting paid and volunteer staff in their church.

12 September 6.30-8.30pm

15 November 1.30-3.30pm

Please book your space through Emma Pearce emma.pearce@urc.org.uk



SAFEGUARDING SYMPOSIUM & GP6 LAUNCH - AVAILABLE TO BOOK NOW!



2023 Safeguarding Symposium Thursday 12 October 1.30-4.00pm (Zoom)

We are excited to bring to you our safeguarding symposium where we will be launching 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's - Sharon Barr

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

Safeguarding and General Assembly

General Assembly 2023 was held at Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, from 30 June to 3 July.

You can read the Safeguarding Annual Report which will be considered at General Assembly [here](#)

FEELING SAFE POSTER

We have produced a poster to explain that the church safeguarding coordinator can be contacted if there are concerns. This is to send out a clear message that the church supports safeguarding disclosures and will listen. This poster could be displayed on the back of toilet doors on notice boards.



This is not to place onus on the Safeguarding coordinator that they will directly support with all the issues but to promote that they are there and can be contacted for support. The Safeguarding coordinator can then liaise with the SSO about referrals or any additional support. All churches will receive a copy of this poster in July but copies can also be accessed [here](#).

INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (IICSA) - AN UPDATE

You may recall that the URC were core participants in one of the 15 investigations led by the inquiry the URC was part of was for Child Protection and Religious Settings. There were 2 final recommendations from that inquiry along with 85 recommendations from the other inquiry investigation. The final IICSA report was published in October 2022 and has 20 recommendations which were presented to the UK and Welsh government for a response within 6 months, in May the response was presented in Parliament and can be read [here](#)

The General Assembly Safeguarding Committee have supported a small working group to come together to produce a URC reflection report on the findings of IICSA and what this means for the URC, this report should be available in early 2024 with any recommendations or resolutions coming to summer General Assembly in 2024.

Safeguarding Team Awayday



In June, the URC's safeguarding team came together for our own professional development. The URC is committed to safeguarding those that worship with us and these training days are invaluable for those who support safeguarding across the denomination.

We explored topics such as the psychology of victim blaming, received training in supporting people with dementia in churches through the Anna Chaplaincy, and also a very thought-provoking session on self care from Northern College.

We took time in the evening to just 'chill 'n chat' (and not about work!) so we could get to know each better and reconnect as a team. Who knew that Donna Gordon is a poet and she took the time create this tome just for us the event:

Safeguarding Away Day.. You had to be there

We were in the Dark
On dementia mark-ers
We issued a plea
For Agree-ments
Surely we can
Rename to support plan?

A toolkit
To make things fit
With questions
Directions
So we can explain
Not victim blame

Good things happen to good folk
What!?
Bad things happen to them too?!
Wait... Rocks are hurled ???

WHERE IS OUR 'JUST WORLD'?

A stress cycle that is chronic
Where is the tonic.. to sooth and calm

Protect from harm..
'A safeguarding term if you will..'
And now...
Sit still
And breathe
And ease
Your mind
And you will find
That given time, and love, and care
You will make it through

I'll see you there 😊

Donna Gordon, East Midlands Synod



STAFFING UPDATE

We welcome Ben Twelves as the new Synod Safeguarding officer for East Midlands Synod. He says 'Hi' right here!

My name is Ben Twelves and on 1 May 2023 I started my new role as Synod Safeguarding Officer for the East Midlands Synod. I want to say a big thank you to Carrie Kaunda and Donna Gordon who have looked after the East Midlands so well and are being incredibly supportive to me as I start my new role. It is really lovely to work with such great people at both the Synod office, and the central Safeguarding team and SSO teams.

I've been a primary school teacher for 17 years (including headship and deputy headship) and have worked as the Designated Safeguarding Lead in three different schools. I am also a member of the Fountain Square Church in Tideswell (in the Peak District) where I am the Church Safeguarding Officer.

As a URC/Methodist LEP we follow the Methodist Safeguarding policy, so I have a good understanding of the many complications and blessings of LEPs. As my synod role is part time, I am also continuing to do a small amount of supply teaching in my local village school so that I don't lose my teacher voice!

Our job on this earth is to show God's love to all people. It's a pretty big responsibility that we can't do on our own, but with his help, we will do it. Safeguarding has a big part to play in this mission. It must not get in the way of the job, but it is our way of making sure that our activities do not cause harm to people. If we allow any sort of abuse to exist in our churches without being addressed and dealt with appropriately, we present a horrific and incorrect image of God to the world and we fail to carry out our main mission.

Safeguarding is sometimes challenging and often frustrating but it should always be involved in all decisions that we make as churches and I am looking forward to supporting the churches in the East Midlands Synod in every way I can.

South Western, Northern and Yorkshire Synods are currently recruiting for a new Synod Safeguarding Officer- we will update you all soon.

