



The
United
Reformed
Church

THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 11 September 2025.

Please circulate this widely so that the great events and opportunities here can benefit as many as possible. Please feel free to copy and paste any of this news for your own church's noticeboards or newsletters.

Events Diary

Youth Mental Health First Aid 22 September - 1 October

www.bit.ly/youth-mhfa

Time of Worship and Praise Concert with Rony Padilla on Saturday 13 September 2025 6:30pm-8:00pm at Christ Church URC EN2 6NJ

Light on Friday 26 September 2025 at Lumen at 6:15-8:15pm. Book with Maggie Hindley m@maggiehindley.com

Online Quiet Day on 27 September 10:30am- 4:00pm. Book by clicking on this link: https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/urcsp_event/quiet-day-4/

Messy Church Fun Day Saturday 27 September 2025 10:30am - 4:00pm Lumen London WC1H 9RS. Register online at www.bit.ly/messy-fun-day

Disability Awareness Sunday – 28 September 2025

Wild Goose Resource Group 3-5 October 2025 at St Albans URC

gilldotelliott@googlemail.com

Festival of Church Music in Coventry Cathedral on Saturday 11th October 2025

Godly Play Accredited 3 Day Training Powys, Wales 14-16 October 2025 judy.harris.urcwailes@urc.org.uk

Annual Dr Williams Lecture on Wednesday 29 October, at Senate House, London University.

Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCiG) 24-26 November 2025 at the Hayes Centre training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

For Goodness' Sake! on Saturday 8 November 2025 from 10.25am-4.30pm at Reach Conference Centre in Derby. [Book](#)

Meetings of Synod Dates/Venues -

18 October 2025 Venue: Lumen

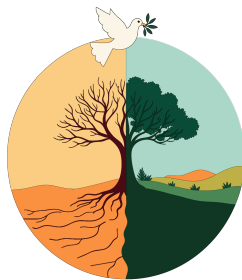
21 March 2026 Venue: TBA

17 October 2026 Venue: TBA

Please note: Synod meetings are usually on the 3rd Saturday of March and October.

News

What is your Church doing for Season of Creation?



Garden of Peace
Isaiah 32:14-18

PEACE WITH CREATION SEASON OF CREATION 2025

I don't know about you but sometimes church life is so busy it seems impossible to squeeze anything else in, especially in September when so many of us will be either just returning from a holiday or going off on one! I thought that was the case for me this year - all I had managed to arrange for the Season of Creation was a showing of David Attenborough's film 'Ocean' right at the end of the month. But then I realised that all the normal things we do this month - The Harvest Festival, the Harvest Supper in aid of Christian Aid, The Oxfam Walk for Water that our Rambling group join in with might also be claimed as Acts of Creation Care - so I am including those too.

Perhaps you also have one or two such things. Whether you have done something special for The Season of Creation or are doing something you always do that fits the brief, the Green Apostles would love to have a photo with a small explanation from you, as we would like to put together a montage of the Season to share at the next Synod meeting and also put on our new webpage. Please send any contributions to Colleen at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk.



Welcome to the autumn edition of **Eco Church Connect**

We started the Season of Creation with a webinar exploring this year's theme - 'What does peace with creation look like?'. This was an inspiring time of reflection and storytelling. If you missed it, you can catch up on the recording below.

Whilst we only had an hour together, we could spend a whole month exploring this theme, which is just what we're planning to do through our [Season of Creation resources](#). We've collated a variety of resources to help your church, including a service plan put together by Revd Mike Perry, one of A Rocha UK's trustees.

And, just this morning, we joined the online Premiere Party for Renovation, a new song by Andy Flannagan, which calls us to cherish the home we've been given - not abandon it - and to long for the day when God makes all things new. Missed the party? [Listen here](#), with lyrics and chords to share the song in your church coming soon!

We hope you enjoy this edition of Eco Church Connect, packed with news from the Eco Church community, opportunities to pray and campaign for creation and resources to support you along the way.

For the [rest of the Eco Church News for Autumn](#)

Disability Awareness Sunday 24-hour Prayer & Free Online Christian Courses



'Encourage the fainthearted, help the weak ... pray without ceasing' (1 Thess. 5:14 & 17)

Free Online Courses: Dementia Support and Hope Explored

Is your church a great place to grow old? Explore how to support people with dementia in church with free online talks in Sept/Oct by charities Through the Roof and Embracing Age. Register free at: <https://throughtheroof.org/2025/09/02/online-events-coming-alongside-people-with-dementia/>

Do you need to find hope right now, or does someone you know? Join charity Through the Roof for a three-part series of relaxed, online **Hope Explored** events in Sept/Oct 2025 to look for hope, peace and purpose. Find out more and register for a free place on the course at: <https://throughtheroof.org/2025/09/04/online-hope-explored-events/>

Encourage your church to mark Disability Awareness Sunday on 28 Sept, using the [free service resource](#), and commit to journey towards including disabled people fully in church.

What's On



The
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Church

Theology of Worship Group

exploring the practice and nature of worship today

Exploring

Reflecting

Living

Liturgy: the work of the people?

Speaker - Revd Sue McCoan

Sue is a recently retired URC minister who served in pastorates in the Sutton Coldfield and West London areas. She writes hymns and prayers and recently served as one of the editors of the URC Prayer Handbook.

Date: Tuesday 4th November 2025

Time: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. via Zoom

At this meeting she will be looking at the role of the congregation in shaping the worship of the church. How do we know if our worship is meeting their needs? What balance might we strike between being welcoming new ideas and maintaining theological integrity? Do we embrace the surrounding culture or stand counter to it? And how do we deal with different desires and competing needs within the congregation?

The Theology of Worship Group is an informal group of people interested in exploring the practice and nature of worship today. We hold three or four meetings a year when an invited speaker presents a topic followed by an opportunity to discuss in short groups and plenary.

Group meetings are open to anyone interested in the theology of worship in the church today. If you have not registered with the Group and would like to attend this meeting, please email the address below to receive the link -

rgoldring23@gmail.com

Ministry Enquirers

Learn what God might be asking
of you

4 October
9.30am-12.30pm
on Zoom

Join us in thinking about God's call
to: **Stepwise, Worship Leading, Lay**
Preaching, Lay Pioneering, Ministry
with children and young people, the
Ministry of Word and Sacraments or
Church Related Community Work.

Further details: ministries@urc.org.uk

Want to learn what God might be asking of you? Join the Ministry Enquirers' webinar taking place on 4 October from 9.30am-12.30pm on Zoom.

Join us in thinking about God's call to: Stepwise, Worship Leading, Lay Preaching, Lay Pioneering, Ministry with children and young people, the Ministry of Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work. Email the Ministries team for joining details: ministries@urc.org.uk



Sunday 14thth September at 6.00 pm

1st Anniversary Service

followed by a refreshments

We invite you to join us as we celebrate our first year at Open Table Wanstead, welcoming and affirming people who are LGBTQIA+ and allies

**Hosted by Wanstead United Reformed Church
Nightingale Lane, Wanstead, London, E11 2HD**

You are more than welcome here

RSVP: Email wansteadurc@gmail.com

It hardly seems like a year since we launched Open Table Wanstead, hosting inclusive Communion Services welcoming and affirming the LGBT+ communities and allies.

We invite all affirming friends to join us at our 1st Anniversary Service. Email wansteadurc@gmail.com

Online Quiet Day: Playing with God



27 September 2025 10:30am to 4:00pm

Venue: Online

Ticket: Free

Led by **Leslie Bailey** -(opening prayers),
Mark Argent and **Ann Barton**, and **Jane Weedon** (closing prayers).

The day draws its theme from part of the gospel for 27 September, which records Jesus predicting his death (again) and saying to the disciples: "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest."

For some that carries an invitation to come to God "like a child" — which could be heard as "praying with one's inner child". For others that can feel like a more difficult space — particularly if there are uncomfortable memories or associations to childhood.

In biblical times those words could have been heard quite differently — perhaps as a challenge to the idea that power gets someone closer to God (or God is on the side of the powerful).

The invitation of the day is to spend some time in prayer away from our screens, and in discussion with others, to attend to what God may be saying to us.

Book by clicking on this link: https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/urcsp_event/quiet-day-4/

Visit to Hebron

One of our retired ministers, Maggie Hindley, travelled back to Hebron this year to meet up with the Community Peacemaker Team, having last travelled there in 2023.

She starts her reflections with: Welcome to Checkpoint 160, the notorious Saleymeh crossing in Hebron, Palestine. I spent quite a bit of time standing a few yards down the road from it, observing, at the start and end of the school day in May of both 2022 and 2023, and I made friends with some of the people who lived in its shadow. This August, 2025, I was at last able to go back and ask how things have changed since the war on Gaza began.

Kawthar , a softly spoken retired nurse, lives alone in a tiny house that overlooks the checkpoint very closely. There was a scary/comic episode

in 2023 when my team mate and I investigated a grenade that might or might not have been an unexploded tear gas or sound canister. It had landed in the small patio area between her house and the checkpoint and when Kawthar, daringly, asked how it got there, the soldiers said 'It flew'. Fortunately, it didn't explode as we removed it to a nearby skip.

You may read the [rest of her reflections here](#).



Above clockwise: The 160 Crossing, the CPT Hebron team, Kawthar and shopkeeper Musbah.

**You are warmly invited to
Lumen, 88 Tavistock Place, London
on Friday 26th September 2025,
6:15 to 8:15 pm for a screening of**

“Light”



**A film showing the work of Community Peacemaker Teams
in Hebron, West Bank Palestine.**

***“Where all other elements are controlled and rationed,
perhaps our light is the one thing that cannot be taken”***

**All are welcome. Free admission with donations to CPT
invited.**

Watch the trailer at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vk0W3nqFZjl>

17.45 Doors open, tea/coffee

**18.15 Introduction by Rev Maggie Hindley, reservist with
CPT in Hebron**

18.20 *Light* (60 mins)

**19.20 Q and A with the film director, Ahmad Abu Monshar,
by Zoom from the West Bank.**

**Please book your place with Maggie Hindley
m@maggiehindley.org, 07545 130260**

National Churches Trust News



To find out about the National Churches Trust, how they can support you with grants for your church, how they have helped churches, about their tours and events, and much more see here <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/>

Christian Police Association



Hello all,

My name is Gary Bentley and I am a serving Herts police officer coming up to 26 years in the role. My voluntary role is as the chair of the Herts Christian Police Association and I have over the last 6 years in this role been attending churches, giving inputs on the CPA, how, why and when it was formed, what the charity does what we do locally in Herts. I also give a bit of witness testimony and chat about life as a Christian and a copper.

If you think this would interest your congregation, please let me know
Gary.BENTLEY@herts.police.uk

Vacancies



Adeyfield Free Church, Hemel Hempstead
Families' and Youth Worker
To oversee our church ministry to children,
young people and their families

For a job description please email admin@adeyfieldfree.org.uk
Closing date 6th October 2025

Could you be the new East Herts Police Chaplain?

We are currently looking to recruit a new police chaplain to support our staff in East Hertfordshire.

The voluntary role involves visits to Hertford police station and other local police stations in the East Herts district, as well as potentially supporting staff across Hertfordshire from time to time.

Police chaplains are a group of volunteers that represent many different faiths. They provide support and pastoral care to police officers and staff that work for Hertfordshire Constabulary, regardless of their faith or religious belief.

Those interested should be or have been involved in ministry, leadership or mentoring roles.

If you are interested, please contact Penny Brown by email penny.brown@herts.police.uk to register your interest and find out more about this fun and challenging role.

Safeguarding Training

Synod Training Dates 2025

To book a place on any of the training listed below, please email safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

In person training is TBA and will be limited due to the timescales within my role and existing cover period.

E Learning

Foundation Training and Safeguarding Coordinators Training are available as e-learning courses.

Simply follow the links below to access the courses.

Foundation Safeguarding Training

<https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/course/view.php?id=24>

Safeguarding Coordinators Training

<https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/course/view.php?id=70>

Advanced Safeguarding Training

Part 1 - Tuesday 16th September 2025 - 6.30pm – 9.00pm

Part 2 - Tuesday 23rd September 2025 - 6.30pm – 9.00pm

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