THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 11 September 2026

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

Racial Justice Event for Advocates and Activists at Lumen 10:30am on 19 September 2026. Contact Sandra Ackroyd sga322@gmail.com

Carbon Literacy Courses for Christian Congregations on Wednesdays 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th September and 7th October - 6:30pm to 8:30pm. To book a place visit: https://buytickets.at/stalbansunitedreformedchurch/2298655 or Tuesdays on 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th September and 6th October - 6:30pm to 8:30pm ; sign up via this Eventbrite link: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/carbon-literacy-for-congregations-online-creation-time-2026-tickets-1991352776761
Final booking date 27th August 2026

Meeting on AI Generated Complaints on Thursday 10 September, Online
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82757997549?pwd=lqfrAv7mUpfd8UpVCWiBXOxVuA7TaE.1
Meeting ID: 827 5799 7549
Passcode: 214109

LCRF Annual Speaker Meeting "Roots and Refuge" Brother Johannes Maertens on Thursday 17 September 2026 at 6.30pm (doors open at 6pm)at Wesley's Chapel EC1Y 1AU

The Struggle for Land, Justice and Peace in the West Bank. Daoud Nassar: a Palestinian Farmer's Call to Action on 1 October 2026 Doors 6.30, talk at 7pm. https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-struggle-for-land-justice-and-peace-in-the-west-bank-tickets-1998351370744

People's Emergency Briefing Film on Sunday 4 October 2026 at 6:30pm on Zoom Meeting ID: 965 1457 5443

Join JPIT on Iona from 17-23 October 2026. Bookings are now open. Find out more here.

Church Action on Povertv Sunday on Sunday 18th October 2026, church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

Leading your Church into Growth (LyCiG) Conference from 23-25 November 2026 at Highgate House. Book with Eddie at disc.enab@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Meetings of Synod Dates/Venues -
17 October 2026 Venue: TBA
Please note: Synod meetings are usually on the 3rd Saturday of March and October.

Information and News



On Sunday at Union Church, Crouch End, the Moderator presented Revd David Trafford a certificate marking 50 years since his ordination. David and his wife, Penny, were visiting before their move to Sussex. He previously served as minister at Crouch End and also as Pastoral Consultant in the Synod.



St Andrew's Chesterfield Road URC in Barnet was recently bequeathed a baby grand piano, which was formally dedicated in worship on Sunday 6 September. The service included the playing of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No.8 "Pathétique" (2nd movement), to which a new hymn text "Sing God's praise" had been written for the congregation to join in singing.

Big Top Holiday Club

We had a fantastic week with the young people. We had a total of 63 children registered with an average of 53 attending each day over the week. Each day we looked at different aspects of God - God’s strength, God’s Love, God’s Power, God’s Faithfulness and God’s Leadership. Each day we had stories of characters from the Old Testament – Samson, Jonah, Elijah, Daniel and Moses.

Linked to the story there was a memory verse which was in the form of a song. There were work sheets to complete relating to the story and handcraft activities. The Watt Family Drama always proves popular and the children were able to tell us some of their jokes and some of them wrote prayers which were used in our final session on Friday.

This year we were able to provide lunch hampers for families who struggle over the summer holidays and we were thankful to the URC and the Co-op for their donations which enabled us to do this. We also received a food donation from Warburtons’.

On Friday, we provided a hot dog lunch and invited parents to come along to watch our final session. We invited families to join us for the Holiday Club Service in the church on Sunday morning. We have received lots of comments from parents about the Holiday Club as follows:

'*Thank you so much for a great week. Chloe has had a wonderful time and was sad it was over today. This afternoon she has been upstairs dressing up and playing alongside her sister pretending to be on stage and singing and acting. Which I've not heard her do before. So lovely to hear. Thanks again for the lunch package this week too. Hopefully see you all again next year'*

'So sorry Joss won't be able to make tomorrow am. I wanted to thank you so much for having him this week - really appreciate all your time and effort.'

'I returned home with the food hamper you gave me and I am truly humbled by your generosity. - I had in my mind a snack for the children, but this is above and beyond what I was thinking. I really appreciate the time, effort and thoughtfulness that has gone into this gesture and the holiday camp overall. '

'Your team are amazing and what you do for the children is really appreciated'







News from the West Bank, Palestine



This summer Maggie Hindley again served with Community Peacemaker Teams in Hebron in the Occupied West Bank of Palestine. She found the harassment and humiliation of the local people more severe than ever but their spirit courageous and generous. One Thursday afternoon the whole of the Old City was forcibly shut and shuttered simply so that Itamad Ben-Gvir, Israel's Security Minister and proponent of hanging for Palestinian prisoners, could walk through. Of course they lost half a day's much-needed business; with tourism much reduced, business is in any case very poor.

Contact her if you would like a piece she has written about people in Hebron, *Beautiful Resistance.* Read about the preservation of historic buildings, a classic bakery shop, an artist's studio and work with local girls. m@maggiehindley.org.

Contact her also if your church/group would like to take up any or all of these possibilities:
To see a half hour film, *Descendents of the Orange,* made by a former member of the team about refugees in Tulkarm. Here's a link to the trailer: https://youtu.be/W2bqDjRo9e8
To meet the director, Ahmad, on Zoom after the screening for questions and answers.
To have Maggie attend and say more about her visit.

Season of Creation - Message from the Green Apostles



The theme for this year's Season of Creation is Living Water. Water is fundamental to our lives, indeed the life of the whole of creation. The recent rainfall has brought life back to our natural environment, evidenced by the renewal of colour all around us. We also recognise Christ as living water, renewing the whole of creation spiritually. As churches we can encourage reflection and action during the season of creation. Here are some ideas to help.

- Create a display using pictures of water e.g. lakes, rivers and reservoirs.
- Make a collection of seasonal flowers in jars of water.
- Include songs and prayers on the theme of water in services.
- Organise a Bible study to search for scriptures on the topic of water.
- Host an art and craft session using the theme of living water.

Visit the Season of Creation website for more ideas.
Let us know what you are doing!



The Season of Creation Day at Greenwood went very well. Rachel Johnson came and did a prayer station (above). The reflections are available for all to use here.

A Rocha - Pray with us!



We believe that if we put all our individual prayers and actions together, it will make a difference - for biodiversity, the environment and our communities. Join us by downloading our latest quarterly prayer diary for July - September.

Download here

Guidance on Martyn's Law

In light of Martyn’s Law receiving Royal Assent in April 2025 premises hosting events that exceed 200 people will be required to consider how they would respond to a terrorist incident. This legislation is coming into force in April 2027, therefore we want to give all local URC’s the opportunity to be prepared for this change. Therefore, the Resources Hub now has some useful guidance notes for local churches on what the law entails and gets them to begin thinking about the practical next steps.

The guidance notes can be found here;
https://urcresourceshub.org.uk/martyns-law-guidance/

We would also like to take this opportunity to invite churches to join a free webinar on **Thursday 22nd October 2026 at 1pm** which is being done in partnership with the Community Security Trust (CST). This session is designed to help local churches, trustees, elders, ministers and church officers understand their responsibilities under the new legislation and what steps they may need to take to comply. Further details of this event can now be found on our new ‘Learning’ page on the Hub here;

https://urcresourceshub.org.uk/learning-development/, as well as the link to register for the event.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

All the best,
Ross
Ross Furley-Smith (he/him)
Helpdesk and Hub Coordinator
86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT
07691 9862 (ext.220)| ross.furley-smith@urc.org.uk

What's On



Racial Justice Event for Advocates and Activists- Thames North Synod



You are invited to this event. Please invite others too. Sandra (Convener of Thames North Advocates) would value knowing if you would like to add your name. Thank you!

When: Saturday 19 September 2026 from 10.30am to 2.30 pm
Where: Lumen Community, 88 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RS
Lunch is included

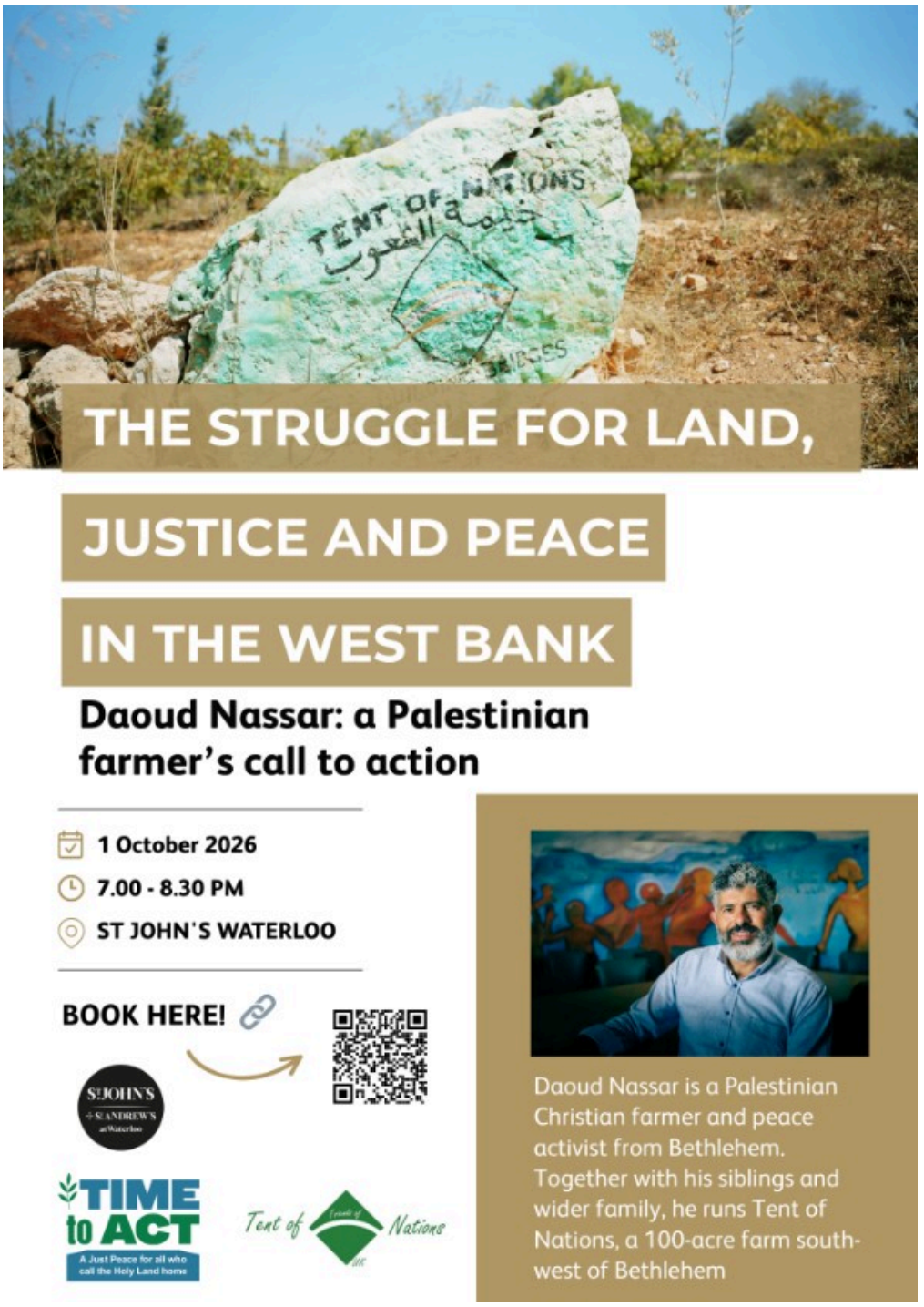
Programme

- Worship
- Listening to experiences of ministers from overseas, now working in churches in our Synod - **Revd. Margaret Ali**
- Discussion involving all of us including our Synod Moderator about the role of Advocates in our Synod.
- 'Singing truthfully, finding words for racial justice in worship- Revd. John Campbell'
- Developing our knowledge and understanding of the URC work on Reparations, **Revd Dr. Tessa Henry-Robinson**
- Information concerning URC Global Ministries (Windrush, Jason Arday, + ?????)

We also have a poster, headed (Unconditional Love)

Contact Sandra Ackroyd **Phone**: 020 8558 5270 or 07790 792818
Email: sga322@gmail.com

West Bank Talk



As you may know the URC is a key supporter of the Time to Act campaign and having Daoud as a speaker is going to be a real treat.

See link here:

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-struggle-for-land-justice-and-peace-in-the-west-bank-tickets-1998351370744

Join us at St John's Waterloo for The struggle for land, justice and peace in the West Bank. Daoud Nassar: a Palestinian farmer's call to action.

1st October 2026 Doors 6.30, talk at 7pm.
Bar, stalls and snacks.

Life for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank is becoming harder and more threatened. Settlement expansion, settler attacks, military checkpoints and growing restrictions on movement are cutting communities off from one another and placing increasing pressure on Palestinian families, farms and community life. Daoud Nassar will bring these developments to life through his family's experience at Tent of Nations, their farm south-west of Bethlehem.

Whether you know little about the West Bank or have followed Tent of Nations for many years, this will be an opportunity to hear directly what is happening, what it means in everyday life, and why action is needed now.

Jointly hosted by the Friends of Tent of Nations UK and members of the Time to Act campaign coalition, this evening will also be an opportunity to hear how you can take action through joining the Time to Act campaign, which brings together churches and Christians across the UK who are committed to working and praying for a just peace for all who call the Holy Land home.

Doors open: 6:30 PM. Tea and snacks available. Bar and stalls until 9,30pm.

7:00 PM Talk by Daoud Nasser with time for Q&A, chaired and hosted by Ruth Valerio.

Eco Church Prayer Forum on 24 September

Praying together as an Eco Church community

Join us online on **Thursday 24 September** from **12 - 1pm** for an hour of encouragement, reflection and prayer with the Eco Church community.

Led by the A Rocha UK churches team, we'll begin with a short reflection before moving into smaller breakout groups to pray together.

It’s a chance to meet others from across the Eco Church community, share stories, pray for one another, and for the work of caring for creation in our churches. You’re welcome to bring along any prayer requests from your church’s Eco Church journey. We’ll share some prayer points to help guide your prayers, too.

Whether you’re brand new or have been part of Eco Church for years, you are so welcome!

Please **register through Eventbrite** to receive the Zoom joining details. The Zoom link will be emailed to registered attendees *two days before* and the *morning of* the event (via Eventbrite).

Book your place.



Safeguarding Training

Just a gentle reminder to book on to your mandated safeguarding training.
Please see below the poster which has all of the dates scheduled for this year.

You will see that there is a new **COMBINED** safeguarding module. This is the Foundation and Intermediate module in one. If you need to complete both modules, that training shortens the amount of sessions that need to completed. You are welcome to book on to the COMBINED module if you need to renew your INTERMEDIATE training. If you *only* need to complete the Foundation module please complete the Foundation eLearning (link below).
https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/course/view.php?id=24This

In order to book on to the ADVANCED module, you **must** have completed either the COMBINED module or the separate FOUNDATION and INTERMEDIATE modules beforehand.

If you would like to book on to the advertised dates, please click on the link below and complete the form
https://forms.gle/nKrqAeM28XosXbmg7
Your place will only be confirmed once you receive a follow up email with the link to the Zoom training and slides to attend.

For the URC Safeguarding Training Framework document please click here.

SEPTEMBER
WED 16TH 6-8PM ADVANCED PT1
WED 23RD 6-8.30PM ADVANCED PT2
THURS 17TH 6-8.30PM INTERMEDIATE

OCTOBER
WED 7TH 6-8.30PM COMBINED
THURS 29TH 10-12.30PM COMBINED

NOVEMBER
WED 11TH 6-8PM ADVANCED PT1
WED 18TH 6-8.30PM ADVANCED PT2

DECEMBER
THURS 10TH 10-12PM ADVANCED PT1
THURS 17TH 10-12.30PM ADVANCED PT2

The United Reformed Church
Thames North Synod

TO BOOK ON TO ANY OF THESE TRAINING DATES, PLEASE COPY THE LINK BELOW INTO YOUR BROWSER AND COMPLETE THE FORM.

HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/IYFSRTKKWXASXU4N8

PLEASE NOTE THAT IN ORDER TO ATTEND THE ADVANCED TRAINING, YOU MUST HAVE COMPLETED THE INTERMEDIATE OR COMBINED SAFEGUARDING TRAINING BEFOREHAND.



DDC Verifier Safeguarding Training (On Zoom)

To book...

Please email

emma.pearce@urc.org.uk

This training is for all Primary Contact Church Safeguarding Coordinators, Secretaries and DBS verifiers as you act as verifiers for DBS checks within your church.

This training provides all the information for you to access the portal and conduct document verification,

The training also provides additional information on Safer Recruitment Processes for the Church.

PLEASE BOOK ONE DATE ONLY by emailing Emma Pearce emma.pearce@urc.org.uk

21st May – 1pm

9th July – 10am

8th September – 10am

8th October – 7pm

The United Reformed Church Safeguarding

www.urc.org.uk

Safeguarding Training 2026

September
Wed 16th September 6-8pm Advanced pt1
Wed 23rd September 6-8.30pm Advanced pt2
Thurs 17th September 6-8.30pm Intermediate
October
Wed 7th October 6-8.30pm Combined
Thurs 29th October 10-12.30pm Combined
November
Wed 11th November 6-8pm Advanced pt1
Wed 18th 6-8.30pm November Advanced pt2
December
Thurs 10th December 10-12pm Advanced pt1
Thurs 17th December 10-12.30pm Advanced pt2

To book for this training, please complete the booking form here
https://forms.gle/iYFSrtkkWxAsXu4N8

Safeguarding-Committee-Strategic-Plan

The URC Safeguarding Committee's 2026–2028 Strategic Plan sets out a five-year vision to embed safeguarding good practice into everyday life across the denomination, with clear goals in culture, engagement, training, and practice development. The full document may be accessed here.

S2 The United Reformed Church URC Safeguarding Training Framework

The United Reformed Church recognises that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard others and thus needs to ensure that people holding certain roles and responsibilities are specifically equipped to protect vulnerable groups including both children and adults. 2. URC's Safeguarding Training Framework In order to achieve this goal, the URC offers regular safeguarding training for all those working with children and adults at risk as well as those they support. They need to know how to promote the welfare of those they support, reduce the likelihood of harm, abuse or neglect, and respond effectively to concerns or allegations of abuse which arise.

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/6cltwe2kpki65biriqdva/
https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/6cltwe2kpki65biriqdva/S2-URC-Safeguarding-Training-Framework.pdf?rlkey=bngnf7ctdykccbx3p6b7vp3mq&st=qe2phzp9&dl=0
.pdf?rlkey=bngnf7ctdykccbx3p6b7vp3mq&st=qe2phzp9&dl=0

See the **Safeguarding page** on the synod website here for more Safeguarding information.



Training Workshops for Supporting Intergenerational Communities

This series of training sessions aims to foster intergenerational communities, offering insights for working with young people and expanding ministries. Co-delivered by the Children and Youth Team and Safeguarding, these workshops will be conducted via Zoom.

Workshop Details:

1. **Growing Intergenerational Communities**
   - **Date:** 8th September, 7:30 PM–9:00 PM
   - **Topics:**
     - Healthy Relationships
     - Unconscious Bias / Roles
     - Creating Welcoming Environments
     - Generational Theory
2. **Developing Spaces for Under 5s**
   - **Date:** 13th October, 7:30 PM–9:00 PM
   - **Topics:**
     - Effective Communication
     - Safe, Spiritual Spaces
     - Creative Storybooks / Activities
     - Missional Opportunities in Toddler Groups
3. **Supporting Faith Development in Young People**
   - **Date:** 8th November, 7:30 PM–9:00 PM
   - **Topics:**
     - Models of Discipleship / Mentoring
     - Youth Groups in Private Dwellings
     - Engaging Young People
     - Lone Working & Risk Assessments

To participate, please email emma.pearce@urc.org.uk. These workshops are an excellent opportunity to enhance skills in fostering intergenerational relationships and faith development.



Minister's Advanced Safeguarding Training

Please email
carrie.kaunda@urc.uk.org
with any questions.

Each course will last 4.5 hours, delivered across 2 Zoom sessions

Please click the link below the relevant date to go to the booking form.

The zoom link will then be sent the week before.

Thursday 15th Jan 1-3pm and Thursday 22nd Jan 1-3.30pm
Ministers Advanced Training Booking Form January

Tuesday 3rd March 10am-12noon and Tuesday 10th March 10am-12.30pm
Booking Form for Advanced Training for Ministers March

Wednesday 6 May 1-3pm and Wednesday 13th May 1-3.30pm
Booking Form for Advanced Training for Ministers May

Monday 5th October 1-3pm and Monday 12th October 1-3.30pm
Booking Form for Advanced Training for Ministers October

The United Reformed Church Safeguarding
www.urc.org.uk



UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2026

Make your booking by emailing: Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk

All training will take place via Zoom

Foundation Training can be accessed on the Learning Hub

Home | URC Learning Hub

Thursday 2nd July 10.30am-12.30pm	**Domestic Abuse**
Tuesday 7th July 1.00pm-3.00pm	**Supporting Survivors**
Tuesday 14th July 7.00pm-9.00pm	**Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Modern Slavery**
Monday 7th September 1.00pm-3.00pm	**Elders as Trustees**
Tuesday 15th September 7.00pm -9.00pm	**Online Safety**
Wednesday 23rd September 1.00pm-3.00pm	**Spiritual Abuse**
Tuesday 6th October 7.00pm.9.00pm	**Adult Safeguarding**
Wednesday 21st October 1.00pm-3.00pm	**Discriminatory Abuse**

The United Reformed Church Safeguarding

www.urc.org.uk

From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

Vacancies

All URC vacancies may be found here.

URC nominated Trustee on the Board of Westhill Endowment

The URC is looking for someone with a passion for faith-motivated community projects, inter-faith cohesion, and religious education to serve as a URC nominated Trustee on the Board of Westhill Endowment.

You can see the ad here in the 'volunteer positions' section of the URC Jobs page:
https://urc.org.uk/jobs/ with more details and all the documents (Job Advert, Person specification, Job description, Prospectus for New Trustees).

URC Representative on World Day of Prayer National Committee (Voluntary Role)

Closing date: Tuesday 15 September 2026

At the heart of the United Reformed Church (URC) lies a strong commitment to active ecumenical partnership and global Christian unity. We are looking for someone with a passion for prayer and ecumenical unity to serve as a URC representative on the World Day of Prayer National Committee for England, Wales & Northern Ireland.

The World Day of Prayer service is held annually on the first Friday in March. There are approximately 1,500 local branches which hold about 3,000 services each year. It is part of the international World Day of Prayer movement with over 100 countries and islands involved. Representatives are expected to be able to commit to an initial 3-year term, followed by a further 2 terms if willing (max. 9 years).

Why volunteer with us?
• Make a Global Impact: Connect with a worldwide movement active in over 120 countries, while helping allocate vital charitable grants funded by service offerings globally.
• Enrich Your Spiritual Journey: Immerse yourself in worship materials, theology, and lived experiences shared by Christians from countries around the globe (such as Nigeria, Costa Rica, and Italy).
• Build Ecumenical Bridges: Form deep friendships and collaborate creatively with committee members representing different Christian traditions across the UK.

• Grow Your Skills: Gain valuable hands-on experience in publishing, proofreading, workshop facilitation, Bible study leadership, and charity governance. (Mentoring and training are provided to help build your confidence!)

More information:
Job advert
Job Description
Person Specification

If you're interested in volunteering for this role or would like more information, please contact Victoria Blunt, Convenor of Nominations Committee at nominations@urc.org.uk

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