



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 14 May 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

Buildings for Mission Forum Webinar on Tuesday 19 May 7.30pm.
[Register for the webinar here.](#)

Presiding at Holy Communion - Refresher Training for Authorised Elders on 30 May 2026 at 10:30am in person at Lumen WC1H 9RS

Godly Play UK Conference 2026 5-6 June 2026 at St Andrews Church, Rugby. Information and booking [here](#).

Synod Eco Day 2026 on Saturday 13 June 2026 10:30am - 4pm at Amersham Free Church Woodside Road HP6 6AJ. Book with Colleen at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Free to Believe Conference 2026 at Highgate House
Wednesday 17 - Friday 19 June 2026

Limitless Festival 2026 on 5-9 August 2026 at Stafford Showground.
mdoandrew@urcwestmidlands.org.uk or
mdosally@urcwestmidlands.org.uk

Join JPIT on Iona from 17-23 October 2026. Bookings are now open.
Find out more [here](#).

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

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



We are delighted to welcome **Lara Adenitire** as our new Property Officer. Lara will be working alongside Sacha McArdle and the Resources Committee to support local churches across the Synod, helping congregations in the care and stewardship of their buildings. She will also play a key role, together with Sacha, in overseeing Synod-owned church buildings and residential properties, helping to ensure that these valued spaces are well maintained, sustainable, and fit for purpose.

We look forward to the experience, insight, and support that Lara will bring to this role.

The Synod's Local Area Groups (LAGs) have been divided into two areas of responsibility. Lara and Sacha will each take the lead for the LAGs within their area, while continuing to meet regularly as a team to discuss ongoing work and shared priorities.

If you have a property-related question or would like advice or support from one of our Property Officers, please contact the Property Officer responsible for your LAG in the first instance.

Sacha McArdle

East London LAG
Enfield & East Hertfordshire LAG
Heath, Havering & Forest LAG
North Hertfordshire LAG
North London LAG
South Lea Valley LAG

Lara Adenitire

Central London LAG
Chiltern LAG
Good News LAG
Heartland LAG
West London LAG
South Hertfordshire LAG

Prayers Requested

We've had a request from Premier Christian Radio, asking for recorded prayers (audio only) from URC members/friends. These are to be broadcast on its Sunday Prayers of Hope programme.

The producers are seeking prayers of up to 90 seconds each.

All that is required is for you to:

- introduce yourselves (name, role within the URC/your church, and area in which you are based), and then
- pray whatever God is leading you towards at this moment ... there is plenty to be praying about

For example: "Hello, my name is Laurence Wareing, and I'm one of the Communications Officer for the URC's Offices of General Assembly. With lots of misinformation being spread at the moment, I'd like to pray for wise words online and in person. Loving God..."

Some tips:

- Use the voice recorder app on your phone
- Place your phone on something stable and keep it still...
- ...in a room that is nice and quiet, with no echo, rustling of papers etc.
- Speak clearly

- Remember to keep your phone on the table while you stop the recording

Is this something you feel you might be able to offer?

If so, please let Laurence know you'd like to make a recording (laurence.wareing@urc.org.uk), so he knows to expect something; then email him the recording at your earliest convenience, or send it to him on the mobile number 07342 883954.

Churches Count on Nature Webinars Announced



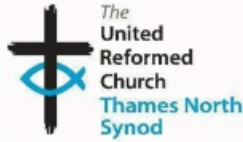
Conservation charity [Caring for God's Acre](#) have announced the return of their popular lunchtime webinars for Churches Count on Nature 2026. There will be a launch webinar on Tuesday 26 May explaining why it's important to record the nature you find during your event and introducing the app iNaturalist. On weekdays during Churches Count on Nature week, webinars on a range of topics including urban wildlife, churchyards for children and encouraging butterflies. [Find out more and book your spot.](#)

If you are planning on running an event between Saturday 6 June and Sunday 14 June, [please register it](#). It will be added to an online map so others can find out about what you're organising. and help us to know how many people are participating in the week!

Seeking Serenity

The Bible doesn't say 'cleanliness is next to Godliness' but decluttering our lives and our buildings can have a very healthy impact on mission. Jess Craig at SeekingSerenity has recently transformed Wheoley Castle URC in Birmingham and would love to help churches in Thames North. More details at <https://www.seekingserenity.uk/communitycentres>

What's On



Thames North Synod URC

Eco Day

Saturday 13th June 2026

9.30am - 4pm

Amersham Free Church

Woodside Road, Amersham HP6 6AJ

Nature on our Doorstep

Join fellow churchgoers from across the Synod in exploring animal and plant life, gardening skills, and energy saving.

Hear our gold medal winning 'Amersham in Bloom' describe how they transform public places for nature and people.

Come for a walk with us (optional!) through the woods to the River Misbourne, a chalk stream. 45 minutes of gentle walking, but bring strong shoes. We'll bus back.

Enjoy a delicious lunch - locally sourced produce, and home-made cakes for tea.



For more information email: Colleen Fraser at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk



Thames North Synod Eco Day 2026

At: Amersham Free Church, Woodside Road, Amersham HP6 6AJ

On: 13th June 2026 - 9:30am - 4pm

Theme: 'Nature on our Doorstep'

Key Speaker – Michelle Catanach and the Amersham in Bloom Team, speaking on 'Transforming Public Places for Nature and People'

There will be a wide range of workshops for those on, or considering starting, the Eco Church Journey. A draft programme can be found [here](#). If you have any particular topics you would like information on, please let us know. If you would like to share the story of your Eco Church journey, either as a workshop or a display, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please include this information in your church newsletters.

Spaces are limited so please book early by emailing Colleen Fraser modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk or via the online [Booking Form](#).

NB The last date for registration is **Thursday 4 June 2026** as the admin team will need an idea of numbers by then to finalise catering.

We would find it helpful if people could **indicate what workshops they would be interested in booking**. The list of workshops on offer is below and it would be particularly helpful if you could indicate whether you are interested in the afternoon accompanied walk so that we can allocate you to other workshops in the morning.

(We are expecting all the workshops, except the Using the Nature App one, to be repeated in the afternoon as an alternative to the walk).

Our Workshops, to be held from 12 noon.

Most of them can be repeated in the afternoon for those who would rather go to a workshop than do the walk.

Pop in and Paint (Closely observing and drawing flowers) - *Carey Room* with Joy John

Caring about hedgehogs - (with webcam footage) *Hall Vestibule* with Richard Winter

Gardeners Question time - *Sanctuary* with Peter Musgrave

Hymns – creating new hymns to familiar tunes - *Wesley Room* - with Ian Green

Energy savings for buildings – simple and practical steps - *Owen Room* - with Andrew Mills and Sacha McArdle

Using the Nature App on our phones - *vestibule and outside* with Anna Barrett - morning only

The church is a 10-minute walk from Amersham Station (Metropolitan and Chiltern lines). There is also parking available, with easy access via the M25.

Programme Highlights:

9:30 AM: Arrival & registration (by 10:10 AM)

10:10 AM: Worship, followed by a presentation on "Transforming Public Spaces for Nature and People" by Amersham's gold medal-winning "Amersham in Bloom" volunteers.

Workshops on eco topics: drawing plant life, hedgehogs in the garden, energy saving in our buildings, setting up a wildlife friendly garden ,hymn writing, and using the iNature app.

Lunch: Ploughman's style with vegan and gluten-free options.

Afternoon: Optional walk to the River Misbourne, with easy downhill walking (sturdy shoes needed). We'll take the bus back to the church in time for tea.

Final worship and plenary session.

Children are welcome! School age children will find plenty to interest them in the programme, and if there are younger ones we will provide a space for them to play. A parent or carer will need to stay with them.

We look forward to spending the day with you!



Revd Francis Ackroyd, who will kindly be presenting a workshop, needs a lift to Amersham, either all or part of the way. He lives in Ilford, but would be prepared to drive to your home/church to meet part of the way, as it is too long a journey for him to do all the way from his home to Amersham. Please contact me, Colleen, at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk if you're able to help him.

THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

Churches Count on Nature is just one way to participate in [Great Big Green Week](#). During the week, more than a million people from across the country will come together to take action for their communities, for nature and for the climate, to make their neighbourhoods better places to live, protect the natural world we love and show politicians and decision makers that people across the UK want positive change. Churches are encouraged to host events for their communities that include repair cafés, nature walks, community clean-ups, family crafts and activities, and film screenings. There are lots of ideas on the website, including [this guide specifically for churches](#). Please [register your event online](#) so we can keep track of the impact we are having.

A UNIQUE BLEND OF STAND-UP COMEDY AND CLIMATE INFOGRAPHICS

Stand-up to climate chaos

Featuring climate change comedian

Dr. Matt Winning
Friday 5th June

6:30pm to 10pm. Programme starts at 7.45

Wycombe Arts Centre, Desborough Road, HP11 2PU

Parking available at the Eden Centre



Get Tickets

- ★ Talks and stalls by local environmental groups
- ★ Bar (inc. non-alcoholic drinks) & vegan food from 6:30 pm
- ★ Hot Vegan Cafe by Khepera (Order with advance tickets only)

£12 advance tickets

£15 on the door - Concessions £10

Event by Wycombe Friends of the Earth



Presiding at Holy Communion

Refresher Training for Authorised Elders



Saturday 30 May 2026

10:30 AM - 12:30 PM, in person

Lumen, 88 Tavistock Place
London WC1H 9RS

Elders who have been authorised to preside at Holy Communion are expected to refresh their training every three years.

This refresher will assume that Elders already have experience of presiding and wish to reflect on their practice and learn from the practice of others.

Co-led by:

Julian Templeton
Training and Development Officer

John Campbell
Tutor and Minister

To register, email:

training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Book here

**COMBINED
SAFEGUARDING**

training

**TUES 19TH MAY
2026**

**1.30PM- 4PM
ST ALBANS URC
HOMWOOD ROAD, ST ALBANS AL1 4BH**

EMAIL:
SAFEGUARDING@URCTHAMESNORTH.ORG.UK
TO BOOK

SYNOD SAFEGUARDING

training

JUNE

WED 17TH 6-8.30PM- INTERMEDIATE

TUES 23RD 2-4.30PM INTERMEDIATE

THURS 25TH 6-8.30PM INTERMEDIATE

JULY

WED 15TH 6-8.30PM COMBINED

MON 20TH 10-12.30PM COMBINED

THURS 16TH 10-12PM ADVANCED PT1

THURS 23RD 10-12.30PM ADVANCED PT2

AUGUST

WED 12TH AUG 10-12PM COMBINED

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/IYFSRTKKWXASXU4
N8](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.urch.org.uk



Safeguarding Training 2026

June

Wed 17th June 6-8.30pm Intermediate

Tues 23rd June 2-4.30pm Intermediate

Thurs 25th June 6-8.30pm Intermediate

July

Wed 15th July 6-8.30pm Combined

Mon 20th July 10-12.30pm Combined

Thurs 16th July 10-12pm Advanced pt1

Thurs 23rd July 10-12.30pm Advanced pt2

August

Wed 12th Aug 10-12pm Combined

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>

Building Bridges Across Generations

Empowering Communities Through Intergenerational Workshops

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.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](#)



www.urc.org.uk



UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2026

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

All training listed below will take place via Zoom

First date	Event
Tuesday 13 January 7:00pm	Domestic abuse
Monday 26 January 7:00pm	Safeguarding for Pastoral Workers and Elders supporting survivors
Thursday 5 February 1:00pm	Refugees and Asylum Seekers Including Modern slavery
Tuesday 24 February 7:00pm	Elders as Trustees
Thursday 5 March 1:00pm	DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment
Monday 23 March 1:00pm	Substance abuse
Tuesday 21 April 1:00pm	Online Safety
Wednesday 13 May 1:00pm	Safeguarding for Ministers supporting survivors
Tuesday 19 May 6:30pm	Spiritual abuse
Thursday 28 May 1:00pm	Adult safeguarding

Foundation Training can be accessed on the Learning Hub

[Home | URC Learning Hub](#)



www.urc.org.uk



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee



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



www.urc.org.uk



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

Vacancies

Advert: Mission Enabler, Leaside Church, Ware

Part-time – 18 hours per week (flexible, including some evenings and weekends)

Annual salary (at 0.5 FTE) – £12,600 – £17,000 pa depending on experience

- ***Can you come alongside our town centre church to develop practical mission opportunities in partnership with the congregation?***
- ***Do you have the skills and experience to build stronger links between church and community centre users helping meet users' needs?***
- ***Are you confident working alone and building the team you need with local volunteers?***

We are seeking a person who is experienced in mission and outreach to work with us within an urban / suburban setting in the town of Ware in Hertfordshire. The role will be based at Leaside Church which is a URC/ Methodist Local Ecumenical Partnership.

In accordance with the Equalities Act 2010 Part 1; Schedule 9, there is a genuine occupational requirement that the post holder be a Christian. Work will be split between engagement on the church premises and wider outreach within the town and local area. Office and administrative work can be carried out from home. Willingness to travel will be expected within the local area (e.g. to churches in neighbouring towns: Harlow, Hertford, Bishop's Stortford) and will enable engagement with those in similar roles working across the Synod and Methodist District for training and fellowship.

An application pack can be accessed via the Synod website:

www.urceastern.org.uk

or by emailing Elizabeth Stockdale

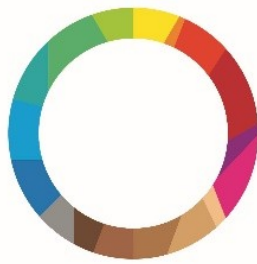
on: elizabeth.stockdale@perfectgroundssolutions.co.uk

Only completed application forms will be accepted. No CVs.

Closing date for applications is 4pm on May 28th

Interviews are expected to be held on the afternoon of Friday June 5th 2026; applicants will be notified by Monday June 1st.

As part of the interview, you will be asked to discuss your previous experience in mission and outreach and to outline some practical mission opportunities that you think would be appropriate in Ware. These discussions should allow you to display the essential knowledge and skills and abilities listed in the person specification.



American
International
Church

American International Church is looking to add to our receptionist team to support our busy building with commercial events, church activities and community outreach every day.

We are seeking candidates with a friendly, professional manner; reliability; good communication skills; helpfulness; spatial awareness; confidence engaging with people from diverse walks of life; and attention to hospitality and security in engaging with members of the public.

Employment is casual, with shifts set in advance based on building needs. The building is usually open seven days a week, from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., with shifts generally a minimum of five hours. Weekend and evening availability is a must. Hourly pay at London Living Wage.

Minimum Qualifications: at least 18 years of age; physical requirement to move chairs and tables, lift delivery boxes, and walk stairs frequently; basic computer usage to handle email and MS Word documents. undergo the church's safer recruitment process, including a DBS check that confirms suitability for working in a position of trust.

Full job description available [here](#).

Please send letter of inquiry or resume to info@amchurch.co.uk.



**Children and Young People's Worker at Hampstead Garden
Suburb Free Church**

Based: London, NW11

Contract: Fixed term (3 years), full-time

Salary range: £30,000 to £32,000

Applications close: Monday 1 June

Interviews: week commencing 15 June

Application packs from minister@hgsfreechurch.org.uk

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<http://urcthamesnorth.org.uk/>



[Unsubscribe here](#)