



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 18 June 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

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



The synod held a very successful Eco Day on Saturday at Amersham Free Church. It brought *creation, nature, and community action* to those attending in a way that was both practical and spiritually rooted. The 2026 theme **"Nature on our Doorstep"** focused on appreciating local wildlife, sustainable gardening, and energy-saving habits.

It included nature-focused sessions such as:

- **Talk: "Amersham in Bloom"** — how public spaces are transformed to support biodiversity, with ideas communities can replicate.
- **Guided walk to the River Misbourne** — exploring local habitats and chalk-stream ecology.
- **Workshops** on gardening, wildlife support, and using nature-tracking apps.
- **Energy-saving and eco-skills** sessions for households and churches.

What's On



Get to grips with some more big questions about faith and discipleship at the next FaithTalks webinar
Thursday 16 July, 7pm
Sign up now at <https://bit.ly/FTweb>



The
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Theology of Worship Group

exploring the practice and nature of worship today

Exploring

Reflecting

Living

Worship is Word and Sacrament

Speaker - Revd Dr Elaine Colechin, URC minister who becomes Synod Clerk of the Southern Synod in July 2026.

Elaine writes, "There is a strand of our tradition that feels that worship is not worship without the community both gathering around the Word and the Table. Why? What difference does the sacrament make? We will consider these questions and how it might inform our thinking as a denomination as many of our churches wrestle with who can preside at the table."

Date: Thursday 13th August 2026

Time: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. via Zoom

If you have not yet registered with the Theology of Worship Group and wish to attend this meeting, please contact John Burgess by 7 August: john@spiritualseekers.co.uk

Disability Awareness Sunday 27th September



The theme this year is 'One body, many parts', based on 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, showing that we are all part of the body of Christ, the Church.

We have two short videos available for churches featuring Triona Brading, a young autistic Christian, giving a greater understanding of autism and neurodiversity and how we all have an essential part to play in the body of Christ. A free pack is available including the videos, Bible reading,

prayers, activity ideas, suggested hymns and songs, and notes for speakers.

The date for Disability Awareness Sunday is 27th September, but churches can use this material on any Sunday at all. The important thing is to spread the message of welcome and inclusion for disabled people in our churches.

I do hope you'll feel able to pass this information on to your contacts.

Here's the link for people to request the pack:
[Disability Awareness Sunday - Through the Roof](#)

CWM Sunday (19 July 2026)

The Council for World Mission (CWM) marks CWM Sunday on 19 July, this year with the theme "Revisioning Mission". Resources for worship and to share information about CWM have been prepared and can be found at <https://www.cwmission.org/resources/publications/>. In addition, you can view the [General Secretary's Message for CWM Sunday 2026 - Council for World Mission](#) (or use the YouTube link: https://youtu.be/lkNT_eC8E9U, which is also included in the liturgical and presentation materials).

Discipleship Development Large Grant Deadline

The URC's Discipleship Development Large Grant next deadline is near! All **applications need to be in by 30 June**. (The decision-making group meets every quarter – the next deadline is 30 September.)

Applications can be made by churches, synods or other recognised groups within the URC. **Grants of up to £5,000** are awarded to develop lay discipleship development, and projects can be supported for up to three years. Applications may need endorsement from your synod or relevant General Assembly committee.

How is the money used? Previous applications include:

- commissioning an artist to produce a set of Stations of the Cross that reflect the church's commitment to pursuing racial justice

- a missional discipleship initiative to create a culture of invitation among the churches
- to fund an intergenerational conference
- to run a Leading your Church into Growth conference
- supporting a Church Quiet Day Retreat
- appointing a discipleship development worker

If you are unsure about whether an application meets the criteria, please contact the Deputy General Secretary (Faith in Action) on jenny.mills@urc.org.uk

For more information please go to the URC website:

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

Holiday Club materials – and grants

This year's URC Holiday Club materials from the Children, Youth and Intergenerational team (CYI) are available at [Holiday Club Materials - United Reformed Church](#). With the theme **Wisdom Quest**, these are free, downloadable resources for those running holiday clubs for children aged 5–11. (Plus appendices for intergenerational, toddlers, 11–14s and vintage holiday clubs.)

Tying in with the CYI theme for the year, *Wise Words*, begin the quest of searching for God's wisdom, in words, actions and lives. Throughout the Bible we find words to live by, including the 'I am...' statements of Jesus. Explore some of these stories while thinking about how to share our wisdom with others.

Grants

The Children, Youth and Intergenerational committee supports churches in running holiday clubs by offering a grant of either £50 or £100 towards the costs of resources, snacks, decorations, equipment etc. Apply at [Children & Youth work grants - United Reformed Church](#)

Safeguarding Training

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 PT 1

THURS 23RD 10-12.30PM ADVANCED PT 2

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
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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](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



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 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



UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN

Salary: £40,500 pa

The University of Bedfordshire Ecumenical Chaplaincy Trust (UBECT), in partnership with the University, seeks to appoint a **Lead Chaplain** to co-ordinate and oversee the development of a vibrant Chaplaincy for the University, working closely with its Community and Faith team, Student Services and Human Resources on initiatives to support student and staff well-being. The role is based primarily in Bedford and Luton but will involve travel to other University locations.

We seek a committed Christian of any denomination who

- Has experience in a Christian ministry, lay or ordained.
- Is committed to an ecumenical and multi-faith (and no faith) approach, with a solid understanding of other faiths and traditions.
- Has strong communication, pastoral and leadership skills, with experience in team building and planning.
- Is confident, empathetic, self-motivated and reliable, including when working under pressure.
- Has theological and pastoral training or experience.
- Will bring theological insight to contribute to the life of the University.

Deadline for applications: **1st July 2026**

Interview Date: **21st July 2026**

As the role holder will be working for a Christian charity leading a multi-faith chaplaincy to the students and staff of the University of Bedfordshire, they are required to be a Christian, we welcome applications from members of any Christian Church.

For a detailed Job Description and Application Form, please contact
Revd Tricia Reed, PA to the Archdeacon of Bedford
by email tricia.reed@stalbandsdiocese.org or telephone 01727 818167

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