



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 2 April 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

Ministry Enquirers - Learn what God might be asking of you webinar on 11 April 2026 on Zoom at 9:30am to 12:30pm email: ministries@urc.org.uk

Playful "Liturgy": A Theology of Worship for a Postmodern World on Date: Tuesday 5th May 2026. Time: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Richard Goldring for further information: rgoldring23@gmail.com

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

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](#).

Meetings of Synod Dates/Venues -

17 October 2026 Venue: TBA

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

News & Information

Bush Hill Park Service



On Sunday the Moderator led a joint pastorate service at Bush Hill Park for Palm Sunday with various people leading the prayers and readings. In the theme introduction we thought about what makes the loudest sound....sadly a bomb exploding. Palm Sunday is about shouting loudly the good news of who Jesus is. In the sermon we reflected on the humble servant nature of Jesus, even being willing to die on the cross. This in stark contrast to some of today's world leaders who seek power and status.

An Easter Message from our partner church, The Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren



Author: Františka Anna Sedláčková

„With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.
The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.“
(Mark 15:37-38)

The eternal God, the Creator of the new humanity, reveals himself and draws near to us especially in the Easter story of the Crucified and Risen Jesus Christ. May his breath and Spirit transform us and encourage us to faith and hope.

Easter 2026


Pavel Pökorný
Moderator


Martin Balcar
General Secretary


Jiří Schneider
Lay Moderator

 THE EVANGELICAL
CHURCH
OF CZECH BRETHERN

New Head of Children, Youth and Intergenerational Discipleship (CYID)



The Faith in Action Team is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Jo Griffiths as the new Head of Children, Youth and Intergenerational Discipleship (CYID).

Jo, who will begin her new role on 1 July, joins the United Reformed Church from Ridley Hall, Cambridge, where she served as Director of Studies and Children's and Family Ministry Tutor. She brings more than 30 years' experience in youth work to her new role.

The Revd Jenny Mills, Deputy General Secretary (Faith in Action), said: "We are delighted to welcome Jo into the team. She brings a wealth of experience to the role, working with children and young people and those that work with them."

Jo holds a PHD from Brunel University, where her research explored the professional identity formation of newly graduated Christian youth workers. Her MA, also from Brunel University, was in Youth and

Community Studies. Jo has a BA (Hons) in Youth and Community Work with Applied Theology from Oxford Brookes University. She is also JNC-qualified (Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Workers).

Before joining Ridley, Jo worked in churches as a children and youth worker, with a particular passion for developing intergenerational worship and community-focused initiatives. She also worked within local authority youth services, managing teams and creating programmes that supported young people facing adversity. Across all her roles, her heart has remained the same: helping people flourish and building communities where children, young people and adults genuinely belong. Jo first joined Ridley Hall in 2005 as Assistant Centre Director at what was then the Centre for Youth Ministry (CYM), becoming Centre Director in 2010. She later served as Director of a children, youth and families project based at St Andrew's Church, Enfield, before returning to Ridley in 2020.

Jo said: "I am absolutely thrilled to be stepping into this new role, and I am really looking forward to meeting everyone."

In her free time, enjoys spending time holidays in Somerset and walking across Exmoor. Jo has three grown-up children and lives in North London with her husband Steve, a vicar, and their dog, Jess.

During the vacancy period, the CYID and the CYDO+ teams will work together to oversee the ongoing work.



Theology of Worship Group

exploring the practice and nature of worship today

Exploring

Reflecting

Living

Playful "Liturgy": A Theology of Worship for a Postmodern World

Speaker - **Revd Dr Charisa Hunter-Crump**,

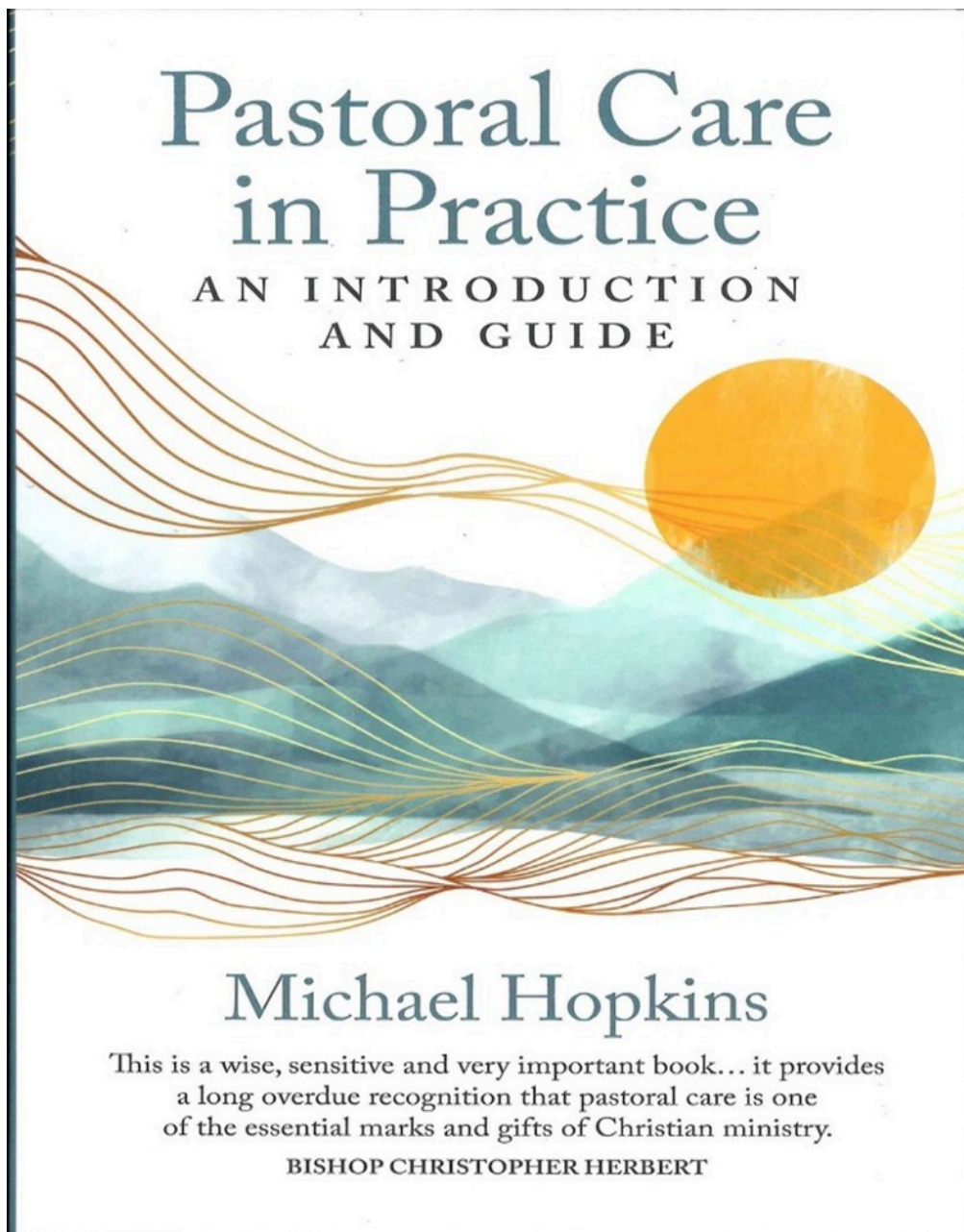
Training and Development Officer for the Southern Synod. Charisa will consider why a playful and communal approach to our creation of worship is critical for the times in which we live and how this might be approached in the local congregation.

Date: Tuesday 5th May 2026

Time: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. via Zoom

If you have not yet registered with the Theology of Worship Group and may be interested in attending this meeting, please contact Richard Goldring for further information: rgoldring23@gmail.com

Thames North Preachers' Circle Presents: Pastoral Care in Practice



Led by:

The Revd Dr Michael Hopkins

Moderator of Wessex Synod

Clerk of the URC General Assembly 2014-2024

Venue: Lumen, 88 Tavistock Place London WC1H 9RS

Date: 09.05.2026

Time: 10:30 – 4:30pm

A day for lay preachers, worship leaders, elders and members to explore some practical and spiritual aspects of our provision of pastoral care. Lunch included.

To book your place at this free event, indicating any food intolerances or allergies, please email, Ola Lawal, [**lpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk**](mailto:lpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk)



Easter begins with an extraordinary story of love, sacrifice and hope. Join us on Good Friday as the Passion of Jesus is performed live in Trafalgar Square in London, welcoming all to experience this moving moment in the Christian calendar.

The event is free and open to everyone. Learn more here: <https://www.wintershall.org.uk/.../the-passion-of-jesus.../>

A Lent Note from the Green Apostles



Eco church

As a green team we hope we have encouraged you, and your church, during Lent, to explore the natural environment a little more and also to consider different ways to extend your care for creation. A useful way to further what you do for the natural world is to join an eco journey as an eco church. If your church is not yet registered as an eco church may we encourage you to consider registering at ecochurch.arocha.org.uk You can then download the survey and decide what you might need to work on to earn the first award. You may be surprised at how much you are doing already and we are always on hand to help out. Just contact us through modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

What's On

'Creation care: mission or mission drift'

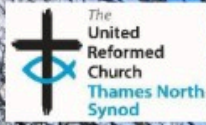


The annual John Stott Lecture from last autumn hosted by LICC is now available to watch online.

'Creation care: mission or mission drift'

Kuki Rokhum from A Rocha and based in North India challenges the global church to integrate creation care into its missional theology and practice – without compromising the centrality of Christ.

Watch it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdw9UvJFGmA&t=263s>



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 information email: Colleen Fraser at modpa@thamesnorthurc.org

Thames North Synod Eco Day: Nature on Our Doorstep
Saturday, June 13th, 2026 | 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Amersham Free Church, Woodside Road, Amersham, HP6 6AJ

Join us for the Thames North Synod Eco Day at Amersham Free Church! We're looking forward to welcoming fellow churchgoers for a day of eco-themed workshops and discussions. 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.

Please contact Colleen Fraser at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk to let us know you're attending and to help us plan for lunch. Booking details

will be provided later.

Programme Highlights:

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

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

Workshops on eco topics: drawing plant life, caring about hedgehogs, energy saving in our buildings, gardening, and hymn writing.

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 there will be a space for younger ones to play.

We look forward to spending the day with you!

Please [click here](#) to download a poster to display in your church – Thank you!

Safeguarding Training 2026

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.

There is a new Safeguarding Training Framework which was agreed at the most recent General Assembly, as well as a document highlighting the key changes in the training framework which shows who is mandated to complete training may be accessed [here](#) - please take the time to note

these as it will have an impact on Ministers, Elders, Children's Workers and Church Safeguarding Coordinators.

There is also national training available for Ministers who need to complete the Advanced level. Ministers will need to have completed the Foundation and Intermediate within the last 3 years prior to attendance on the Advanced training. This training is being facilitated by Carrie Kaunda, the Training Development Officer (Safeguarding) so please contact her directly to book on to that training using the details in the attached document.

I am trialling a new way to book on to training, so if you would like to book on to the advertised dates, please book via this link

<https://forms.gle/ypiNNdikjU7oHUxM8>

Your place will only be confirmed once you receive a follow up email with the link to the Zoom training and slides to attend.

Please note that the Foundation training is now available online via eLearning. You do not need to login to access this training.

This is the link to access the eLearning:

<https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/course/view.php?id=24> This it takes approximately an hour to complete, and a certificate will be generated and sent to you straight away.

There will be more training dates advertised in due course so please do share this email with those who need to update their training.

If you have questions on what training you need following referencing the framework, please let me know.

Regards

Belinda Herbert



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](#)

 The United Reformed Church Safeguarding

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
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[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



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From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

Vacancies

URC Resources Hub & Helpdesk Coordinator

- London (Hybrid)
- Permanent contract, Full-time, 35 hours per week
- Salary: Circa £38,599 – £40,180 per annum
- Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Wednesday 15 April 2026
- Interview date: Tuesday 28 April 2026

Job Advert

We are seeking a proactive and organised Hub and Helpdesk Coordinator to oversee the day-to-day operation of the URC Resources Hub and deliver an efficient, user-focused helpdesk service.

In this role, you will be the first point of contact for enquiries, triaging and tracking queries through to resolution and escalating issues as needed. You will monitor Hub performance, flag content and technical issues, maintain service documentation and coordinate closely with the relevant teams and users to ensure a consistent and reliable service. The role also involves preparing regular performance reports and escalating risks or development needs, helping to support continuous improvement of the Hub's operations.

The successful candidate will demonstrate excellent judgement, strong risk awareness and confident use of IT tools. You will have outstanding communication and interpersonal skills, the ability to manage a complex workload within the tight deadlines and the confidence to act on your initiative when appropriate.

This is an excellent opportunity for someone who thrives in a service-oriented digital environment. We offer you a flexible and friendly hybrid work environment from the Office of General Assembly in London and from home.

Apply for this post

If you are interested in working for us and can meet the above requirements, please read the job description and complete the job application form.

- [Job description \(PDF | 149kb\)](#)
- [Job application form \(Word | 975kb\)](#)

Send the completed job application form to: recruitment@urc.org.uk
Please note, we do not accept CVs.

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