



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 21 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

Expressions (Youth Night) on 23 May 2026 at 7:15pm at Mill Hill East Church NW7 2NT

Spring Fayre Table Top Sale on Saturday 30 May 2026 12-6pm. High Cross Church N15 4BG

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

Leading your Church into Growth: Youth on 13 June & 11 July 2026 at Brunswick Parish Church M13 9SX. www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/youth

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](#).

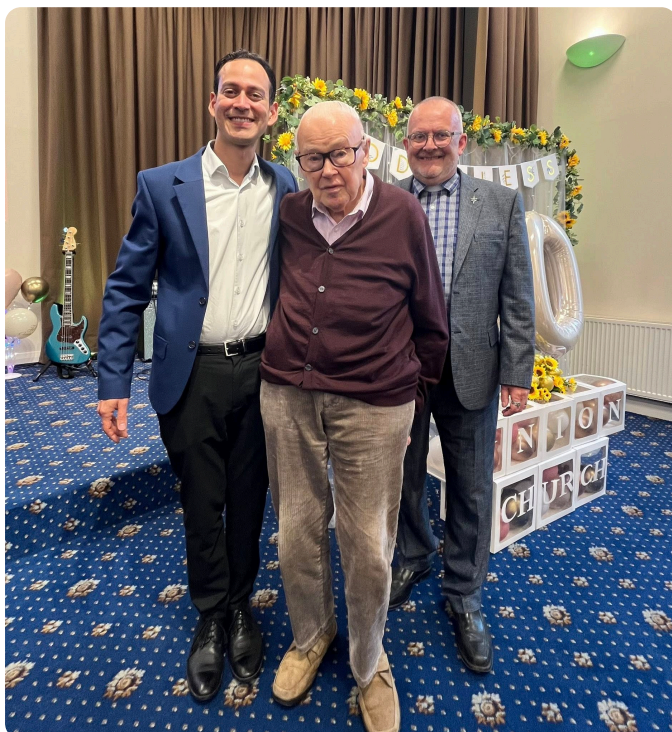
Church Action on Poverty Sunday on Sunday 18th October 2026,
church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

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





Last Sunday the Moderator preached at the Oaken (80th) Anniversary of Totteridge Union Church. This year sees the 25th anniversary of the present building. 8 years ago the congregation were down to less than a dozen (one of them pictured was there on Sunday.) Now it is a thriving congregation of over 80 under the leadership of Rony Padilla.

The Moderator preached on Genesis 18 which appropriately refers to the Oaks of Mamre reminding us of God's enduring presence and promises. The story talks of new birth even at an old age! The celebrations continued with lunch after the service.

Treasurers' Day Resources

At the Treasurers meeting earlier this year we announced three packages for churches in response to comments about struggling with accounting and finance issues and lack of resource.

Brief summaries of the programmes below may be found here:
https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/86qojykrx6n7f8g8kns4m/AM0PcK4XuEz8gIE_FmjFz3o?rlkey=eorvxdszjomat9ouqxir57ov0&st=aokiz6y1&dl=0

- Payroll
- Examination/audit of accounts
- Accounting,accounts and gift aid.

If you want to use any of these for your church then please contact our accountant Lawrence Sinderson at finance@urcthamesnorth.org.uk or call the Treasurer Martyn Macphee on 07884187103. Our resources are limited so early contact is advised for 2026 provision.

Take Part in Churches Count on Nature! 6-14 June



Churches Count on Nature (CCoN) is an annual event where people explore their churchyards and record the plant and animal species they encounter. CCoN is a joint initiative promoted by Caring for God's Acre, the Church of England, the Church in Wales, and A Rocha UK, and churches of any denomination are invited to take part.

We're encouraging churches to connect with local schools, wildlife groups and those in the local community who might not have visited before, to discover their churchyards.

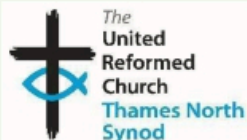
[Register your event or activity](#) on the Caring for God's Acre website, or explore the [map of events](#) to head along to one happening near you. There are also resources on the Caring for God's Acre website to support you in hosting an event or activity.

Make sure to **register by 23 May** to receive the free resources sent by post, in time for your event

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 Spaces for Nature and People'

There will be a wide range of workshops for those on, or considering starting, the Eco Church Journey. There will be a plenary session, and you are invited to submit questions and comments which arise from the day, in writing, by 3pm.

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.

Pop in and Paint (Closely observing and drawing flowers) with Joy Johns

Supporting Hedgehogs in the Garden - (with webcam footage) with Richard Winter

How we set up a Nature Friendly Garden at Vine Church, Ilford - with Peter Musgrave

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

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

Citizen Science Projects and using the iNature App. Smartphone needed 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!



Leading your Church into Growth: Youth

Leading your Church into Growth: Youth is a two-day course for local churches looking to grow youth ministry.

Whether you are looking to grow existing youth ministry or start something new, this course will equip you with an achievable plan for working with young people in your context.

“Many times we feel like our work is failing or not growing but you helped us refocus... and come up with practical ways to achieve our goals as a team while partnering with God” - LyCiG Youth attendee

10am-4pm · 13th June & 11th July
Brunswick Parish Church, M13 9SX
www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/youth

EXPRESSIONS



A creative youth night
Art | Faith | Friendship | Snacks



May 23 - 7:15 PM
Mill Hill East Church
London

EXPRESSIONS - CREATIVE ARTS YOUTH EVENT

By Mill Hill East Church Youth

Attend on

 eventbrite



**Free
Entry**

Spring Fayre Table Top Sale

Saturday 30th May 2026

12pm - 6pm



**Toys Clothes Books
Household Items
Face Painting
Tea, Coffee and Cakes
DJ Robbie & BBQ**



**Essential to Prebook
£5.00 per Table**

Contacts:

Valerie - 07917 425018
Joan - 07717 834558
Pat - 07941 381528



**High Cross United Reformed Church
Colsterworth Road
N15 4BG**

Proceeds to Support High Cross URC Children's Club

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**](mailto:training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk)

[Book here](#)



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 MIKE ROYAL

 HELEN PAYNTER

 CALLAN SLIPPER

 SHERMARA HOYTE

 CHINE MCDONALD

 RICHARD BRADBURY

 GEMMA SIMMONDS

 DORAL HAYES

 ANDERSON JEREMIAH

cte.org.uk/kingdom-over-nation



Safeguarding Training

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 PT 1

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
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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](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 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
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



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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.



**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/>



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