



The
United
Reformed
Church

THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 22 January 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

Resources Day 2026 at 10am on Saturday 31 January 2026.

Hybrid - in person at Lumen and online (link to follow in the new year). Book [here](#) or with Colleen at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

FaithTalk webinar – Preparing for Easter on 28 January 2026 at 7-8pm <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/faith-talk-webinars-4796784>

Taster Sessions at Martin Luther House - Become a Lay Preacher on 29 January 2026 at 7-8pm and **Church Leadership Programme (CLP) Taster** on 12 February 2026 7-8pm. Sign up for both learning@lutherking.ac.uk.

Zoom details (for both sessions)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88399225995?pwd=wWEeusxuRdVIxcsCb6ZFKo6Ey6SFz3.1>

Meeting ID: 883 9922 5995

Passcode: 716649

Preachers Circle: How to Construct a Clear Sermon on Saturday 7 February 2026 at Lumen 10:30am-12:30pm. [To register](#)

Authorised Elders Communion Presidency Refresher Training on Saturday 7 February 2026 at Lumen 2 - 4pm. [To register](#)

"How shall we sing that majesty?" Finding the right hymn for the right moment on Tuesday 10 February at 7:30-9:30pm 2026 via Zoom rgoldring23@gmail.com

Wise Words - Youth Assembly 2026 27 February to 2 March 2026. [Book here](#)

URC Youth Leaders Gathering 27 February-1 March 2026 at Highgate House, Northampton. [Register](#)

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

Meetings of Synod Dates/Venues -

21 March 2026 Venue: TBA
17 October 2026 Venue: TBA

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

Synod News



On the 18th the Moderator had the joy and privilege of attending a special service celebrating the renewal of the Covenant between the Churches on the Hill in Amersham. He was signatory to the revised Covenant along with other Denominational Leaders.

The service was held at Amersham Free Church, a joint URC/Baptist Church which has also in recent years welcomed Methodist members following the closure of their local Church.

The ecumenical theme was interwoven in the Communion service with hymns by Nick Fawcett (Baptist) and John Campbell (URC) and a hymn tune written by Rachel Hewett (from the local Anglican Church) to accompany Summoned by God who Made Us. The preacher was Revd Tim Norwood, National Ecumenical Officer for the Church of England.



Art in Plain Sight

Following the ongoing success of this Thames North Synod project, there is now an opportunity for a few of our local churches to begin to be a new host venue starting in the early summer of this year. This involves a two-year programme of an A2 print of art/photo which changes every month and is displayed in an area of your building with a good level of community and congregational footfall. All the art and the equipment is provided free of charge to you.

To register an interest or to find out more then please contact our Discipleship Enabler Eddie Boon via disc.enab@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

What's On

Resources Day 2026

Saturday 31 January 10-4pm at Lumen

for Church Secretaries, Treasurers, administrators and property managers.

With updates on property, legal and finance matters and a special focus on what the URC's Church Life Review might mean for your church.

The event will be hybrid (online and in person). To book please fill in this form <https://forms.office.com/r/rr0w3Ts4ej?origin=lprLink> or email Colleen Fraser at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Explore your calling...



Sign up for free!

Become a Lay Preacher

- Learn more about the AALP programme.
- Discover what Luther King and the URC can offer you.



Online via Zoom



29 January 2026
7:00pm-8:00pm



learning@lutherking.ac.uk



lutherking.ac.uk/courses/training-for-lay-people

Church Leadership Programme (CLP) Taster

Reflective Practice & Sustaining Leadership

- Explore your call through reflective practice.

- Discover how Luther King and the URC can inform your leadership.



Online via Zoom



12 February 2026
7:00pm-8:00pm



Sign up for free!



learning@lutherking.ac.uk



lutherking.ac.uk/courses/training-for-lay-people

Luther King Theological College (formally Northern College) warmly invites you, and anyone you know who may be interested, to attend our taster sessions for:

- Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher Programme (**AALP**) – **Thursday 29 January, 7–8pm**
- Church Leadership Programme (**CLP**) - **Thursday 12 February, 7–8pm**

Both sessions will take place online via Zoom and are open to anyone who would like to learn more about the programmes, including prospective students.

We are currently in the process of launching a new website over the next month or two. In the meantime, further information about both programmes can be found here:

<https://www.lutherking.ac.uk/courses/training-for-lay-people>

Zoom details (for both sessions)

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88399225995?
pwd=wWEeusxuRdVIxcsCb6ZFKo6Ey6SFz3.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88399225995?pwd=wWEeusxuRdVIxcsCb6ZFKo6Ey6SFz3.1)

Meeting ID: 883 9922 5995

Passcode: 716649



Theology of Worship Group

exploring the practice and nature of worship today



"How shall we sing that majesty?" Finding the right hymn for the right moment"

Speaker - Revd Dominic Grant

Dominic is a URC minister and hymn-writer, and will reflect upon some of the theological issues at stake in choosing hymns for services of worship.

Date: Tuesday 10th February 2026

Time: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. via Zoom

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



Preachers' Circle

How to construct a clear sermon



Saturday 7 February 2026

10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

**Lumen, 88 Tavistock Place,
London, WC1H 9RS**

This workshop will discuss the craft of sermon construction and offer guidance on how to:

- identify themes from biblical texts
- select a clear message
- use a structure to explore the message

Co-led by:
Julian Templeton
Training and Development Officer

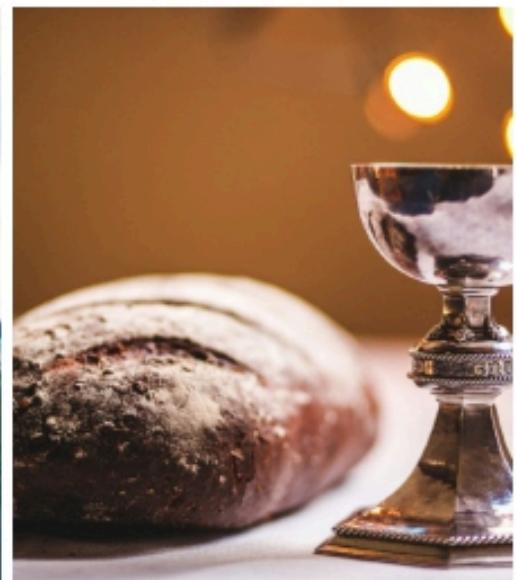
Nathan Eddy
Co-Director, Council of Christians and Jews
Chaplain, Mansfield College Oxford

To register, email **Ola Lawal**,
Lay Preaching Advocate:
ipa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

To register

Authorised Elders

Communion Presidency Refresher Training



Saturday 7 February 2026

2:00 - 4:00 PM

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.

This session is for those seeking to develop what they already do. (initial training, which can be repeated, will be offered on future dates).

Co-led by:

Julian Templeton
Training and Development Officer

John Campbell

Tutor and Minister

To register, email Julian Templeton
training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

To register

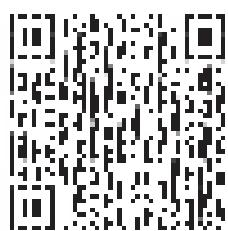
URC
YOUTH ASSEMBLY
2025

Open to Year
10/S3 students
up to 25 years
inclusive

Your voice. New friends.
Find fellowship. One epic weekend.

WISE WORDS

Here's a taste of
Youth Assembly 2025
www.bit.ly/3TkqSfn



Great venue
with twin
rooms and
good food!

WISER ACTIONS



The
United
Reformed
Church Youth

Cost: £155
uary

27 February to
1 March 2026

Kings Park Conference
Centre, Northampton
NN3 6LL

Your voice. New friends.
Find fellowship. One epic weekend.

WISE WORDS



The
United
Reformed
Church Youth

Worship – Inspiring Bible studies, prayer zones, powerful music, and outdoor worship and communion.

Youth Decides – What matters to you? Dive into real talk, make change happen, and engage with the wider church.

Workshops – Level up your skills, challenge your thinking, and go deep on this year's theme – all in creative, hands-on sessions.

Book your place today:
www.linktr.ee/URC_YouthAssembly

Entertainment – From campfires and karaoke to crafts and games – there's always something going down!

Book your place today

Friday 29 May - Sunday 31 May 2026
Whitemoor Lakes, Staffordshire

Cost: £75 (£30 deposit
required at booking)
Age: 11 (must be in Year 7)
to 16 years

Thames North & Southern Synod Youth Residential 2026 “WISE WORDS”



Book by 22 Feb
www.bit.ly/residential2026

Outdoor Activities
Creative Workshops
Games
Discussion
Worship

URC Youth Leaders Gathering



27 February -
1 March 2026



Highgate House,
Northampton

£210



Keynote: Rev Dr. Ash Barker

Join together with others involved in youth work for a weekend of encouragement, reflection, challenge and sharing ideas.

On Saturday we will be joined by Ash Barker as we consider the theme being followed by URC Youth Assembly.

Wise Words - Wiser Actions

We will explore together how we can be wise in all we do with young people as we seek to grow disciples in God's kingdom.

A programme that allows time for worship, space to reflect, relate and relax. Share joys and sorrows with others as we learn together in community.

If you are working with young people aged 11-25 in any context, this is the weekend that you deserve!



REGISTER NOW

<http://linktr.ee/urcyouthleadersgathering>

Ash Barker is a Shalom Activist and Pioneering Minister with over 35 years of experience unlocking potential in urban communities. Born and raised in Melbourne, Australia, he spent 12 years serving in Bangkok's largest slum before relocating to inner-city Birmingham, UK, in 2014.

Alongside his wife Anji, Ash lives in community at Newbiggin House in Winson Green and ministers with Lodge Road Community Church (URC).

With a vision for every neighbourhood to flourish in God's love and shalom, Ash's work through Seedbeds grows local leaders and communities into fullness of life.

Ash remains committed to investing in local leaders and communities, passionately advocating for shalom, justice, and grassroots transformation.



If you are bringing young people to Youth Assembly why not enjoy a weekend of refreshment for youth workers in the luxury environment of Highgate House, just down the road from Kings Park?

If you are not bringing young people to Youth Assembly, you are just as welcome!

Speak to your Synod CYDO about grants to support the cost of attending

Register now <http://linktr.ee/urcyouthleadersgathering>. Contact your CYDO about grants to support the cost of attending Lorraine Downer

Milton Mount Foundation

(Registered Charity No. 306981)

Secondary Education

The Milton Mount Foundation offers means-tested bursaries to assist with the cost of secondary school fees to the children of Congregational and URC ministers, and also to the daughters of members of these churches.

Subject to the availability of sufficient funds, it may also be possible to provide grants to assist with the cost of school uniform and educational trips for ministers' children at both state and fee-paying schools.

Higher Education

Grants are offered to daughters of Congregational and URC ministers **starting their first undergraduate degree** in autumn 2026. Grants are also offered to those beginning a **first postgraduate degree**, for up to three years. Subject to sufficient funds being available, similar grants may also be available for sons of ministers.

For further information and application forms, please contact the Secretary, Mrs Rosie Hopkins, at **miltonmountfoundation@gmail.com**.

The closing date for all applications for the 2026-27 academic year is **10 May 2026**.

Vacancies

Temporary Lumen Centre Manager

Thames North Synod are looking to recruit an innovative and inspiring person to manage the Lumen Centre as a key resource facility for the Synod and to grow a Christian presence and witness there as we continue to develop a vision for the building.

The Lumen Centre is located in Central London (Tavistock Place). The Lumen Centre is a building that is strategically situated to play a key role in the development of the surrounding community, building bridges with local people and other churches as well as offering opportunities for worship and discipleship.

The postholder will have responsibility for overseeing the running and use of the building, and will work closely with the Synod Discipleship Enabler, Training Officer, Children and Youth Development Officer and other Synod staff members to make the most effective use of the building for the Synod. They will also help to continue to grow a Christian presence and witness.

This is a full-time post (37.5 Hours) requiring some flexibility in the pattern of hours worked, with a fixed term contract of 2 years at a salary of circa £35,000 - £40,000 per annum based on experience.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010: Part 1, Schedule 9, there is a genuine occupational requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian.

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

For a more detailed description of the position and application form please contact:

Colleen Fraser, URC Thames North Synod, Newton Road, London W2 5LS
T: 020 7799 5000 and leave voicemail or 075 3185 3524
E: office@urcthamesnorth.org.uk
W: www.urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, 29 January 2026

URC Vacancies

Current vacancies with the United Reformed Church:

1. Head of Children, Youth and Intergenerational Discipleship
2. Regional Surveyor (RMHS)
3. Repairs & Maintenance Officer (RMHS)
4. Head of Ministries – Learning and Development

Here is the link to our job page: <https://urc.org.uk/jobs/>

Safeguarding Training 2026

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



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Safeguarding

www.urc.org.uk



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

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



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