



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

## THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

### Welcome to our News Roundup for 28 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

**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](#). **Places still available.**

**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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:mdoandrew@urcwestmidlands.org.uk) or [mdosally@urcwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto: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](http://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

## Youth Get Together

### Youth Get Together

Last Saturday young people from Thames North and Southern Synods got together for a social gathering at Queens Ice Skating Rink followed by a picnic lunch in Kensington Park. Why not come and join us next time. Look out for more Youth Get Together events this year.



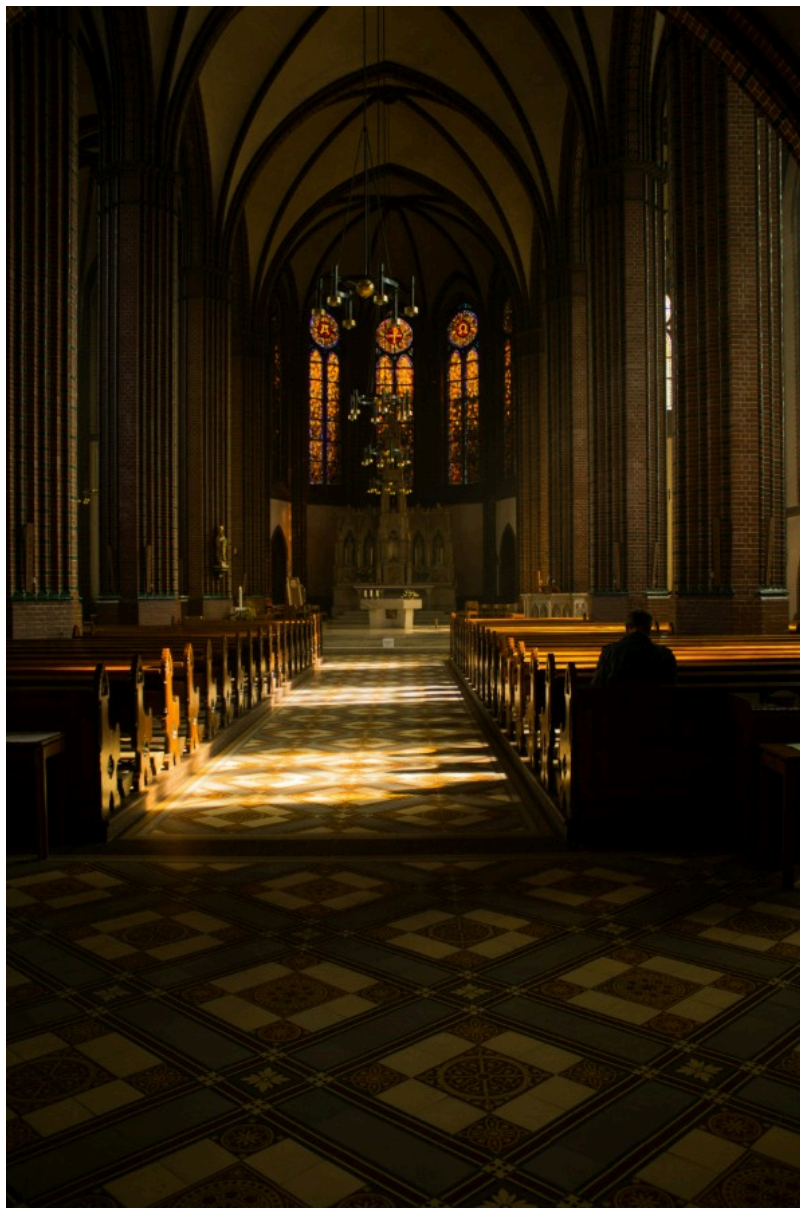
“...it’s great to meet up with friends I haven’t seen since Youth Assembly.”

“I’m rubbish at ice skating, but the group helped me. I’ve made new friends now.”

“We are young Christians; we should be having fun!”

Interested? Contact Lorraine for more information.  
[cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk)





Many Listed Places of Worship have suffered significant increase in repair and maintenance costs since the government decided to scrap the 'Listed Places of Worship' Grant Scheme which enabled local listed churches to claim back the VAT on works carried out. If your Church Building is deemed a 'Listed Place of Worship' within the terms of the Historic England scheme for national listing, you may be eligible for the new Listed Places of Worship Renewal Fund. This is not for claiming back VAT but to help support funding for urgent repairs and essential improvements to listed places of worship in England. More details on the scheme can be found at: [Places of Worship Renewal Fund | Historic England](#)

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## 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.

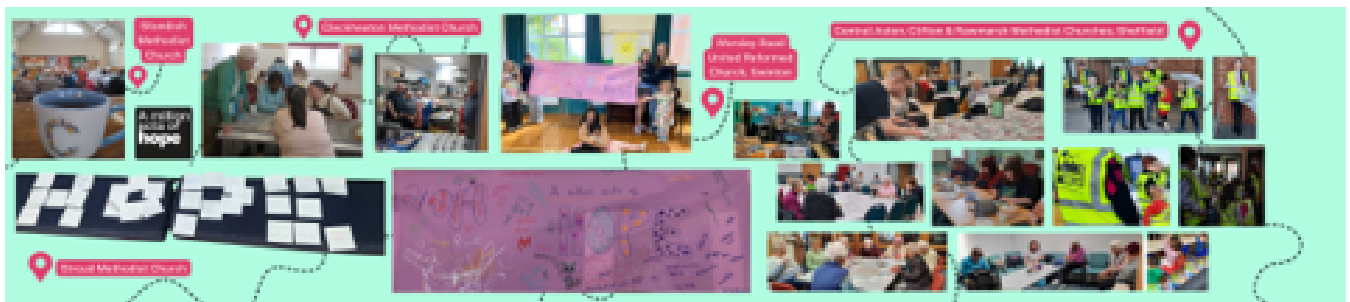
Brief summaries of the programmes below may be found here:  
[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/86qojykrx6n7f8g8kns4m/AM0PcK4XuEz8gIE\\_FmjFz3o?rlkey=eorvxdszjomat9ouqxir57ov0&st=aokiz6y1&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/86qojykrx6n7f8g8kns4m/AM0PcK4XuEz8gIE_FmjFz3o?rlkey=eorvxdszjomat9ouqxir57ov0&st=aokiz6y1&dl=0)

- 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](mailto:finance@urcthamesnorth.org.uk) or call the Treasurer Martyn Macphee on 07884187103. Our resources are limited so early contact is advised for 2026 provision.

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## Looking back: A Million Acts of Hope in Pictures



Thank you to everyone who shared their responses to A Million Acts of Hope! In this time of division and polarisation, it was heartwarming to see all your efforts to bring together your local communities in the week of action from 13-20th May. We have loved supporting our denominations in this uplifting campaign, which strongly resonates with our hope for a politics of listening, kindness and truthfulness. Visit [their website](#) for more information about the initiative.

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## 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>

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# What's On



## **Eco Church Prayer forum 4 June 12 - 1pm** ***Praying together as an Eco Church community***

Join us online on **Thursday 4 June** from **12 - 1pm** for an hour of reflection, prayer and connection with the Eco Church community.

Led by the A Rocha UK churches team, we'll share a short reflection before heading into breakout groups to pray together, for creation care in our churches, and for one another. Bring along any prayer requests for your church's Eco Church journey. We'll also share some prayer points to help guide you.

Whether you're brand new or have been part of Eco Church for years, you are so welcome!

**Register via Eventbrite** to receive the Zoom link. This will be sent out via Eventbrite *two days before* and the *morning* of the event.

[Book your Place](#)



Thames North Synod URC

# Eco Day

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk)



### Thames North Synod Eco Day 2026

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

**On:** 13<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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

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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*

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10am-4pm · 13<sup>th</sup> June & 11<sup>th</sup> July  
Brunswick Parish Church, M13 9SX  
[www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/youth](http://www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/youth)

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**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

***Places still available***

## Ideas for Great Big Green Week - how about litter picking?



The Great Big Green Week (6 to 14 June) is the UK's largest annual celebration of community action, bringing people together to take action for climate and nature. This year's theme is 'Together for good' - we can make our 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.

[Read more](#)

## Safeguarding Training

# SYNOD SAFEGUARDING

*training*

## JUNE

WED 17<sup>TH</sup> 6-8.30PM- INTERMEDIATE

TUES 23<sup>RD</sup> 2-4.30PM INTERMEDIATE

THURS 25<sup>TH</sup> 6-8.30PM INTERMEDIATE

## JULY

WED 15<sup>TH</sup> 6-8.30PM COMBINED

MON 20<sup>TH</sup> 10-12.30PM COMBINED

THURS 16<sup>TH</sup> 10-12PM ADVANCED PT 1

THURS 23<sup>RD</sup> 10-12.30PM ADVANCED PT 2

## AUGUST

WED 12<sup>TH</sup> 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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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](mailto: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](mailto:emma.pearce@urc.org.uk)

21<sup>st</sup> May – 1pm

9<sup>th</sup> July – 10am

8<sup>th</sup> September – 10am

8<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 1-3pm and Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 1-3.30pm

[Ministers Advanced Training Booking Form January](#)

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 10am-12noon and Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 10am-12.30pm

[Booking Form for Advanced Training for Ministers March](#)

Wednesday 6 May 1-3pm and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 1-3.30pm

[Booking Form for Advanced Training for Ministers May](#)

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 1-3pm and Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 1-3.30pm

[Booking Form for Advanced Training for Ministers October](#)





# UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2026

Make your booking by emailing:  
[Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.urc.org.uk)



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

## Vacancies



**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](mailto:minister@hgsfreechurch.org.uk)

If you would like to keep your inbox clear, please feel free to unsubscribe at the bottom of the page.

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



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