



The
United
Reformed
Church

THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 4 September 2025.

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

Youth Mental Health First Aid 22 September - 1 October

www.bit.ly/youth-mhfa

Time of Worship and Praise Concert with Rony Padilla on Saturday 13 September 2025 6:30pm-8:00pm at Christ Church URC EN2 6NJ

Light on Friday 26 September 2025 at Lumen at 6:15-8:15pm. Book with Maggie Hindley m@maggiehindley.com

Online Quiet Day on 27 September 10:30am- 4:00pm. Book by clicking on this link: https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/urcsp_event/quiet-day-4/

Messy Church Fun Day Saturday 27 September 2025 10:30am - 4:00pm Lumen London WC1H 9RS. Register online at www.bit.ly/messy-fun-day

Disability Awareness Sunday – 28 September 2025

Wild Goose Resource Group 3-5 October 2025 at St Albans URC

gilldotelliott@googlemail.com

Festival of Church Music in Coventry Cathedral on Saturday 11th October 2025

Godly Play Accredited 3 Day Training Powys, Wales 14-16 October 2025 judy.harris.urcwailes@urc.org.uk

Annual Dr Williams Lecture on Wednesday 29 October, at Senate House, London University.

Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCiG) 24-26 November 2025 at the Hayes Centre training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

For Goodness' Sake! on Saturday 8 November 2025 from 10.25am-4.30pm at Reach Conference Centre in Derby. [Book](#)

Meetings of Synod Dates/Venues -

18 October 2025 Venue: Lumen

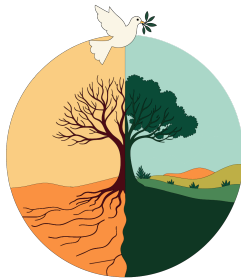
21 March 2026 Venue: TBA

17 October 2026 Venue: TBA

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

News

Season of Creation



Garden of Peace
Isaiah 32:14-18

PEACE WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2025

Green Apostle Anna Barret says: This year I went to Greenbelt for the first time. Although I did see several friends there, I was on my own and spent the weekend listening to talks, enjoying craft activities and taking part in worship and reflecting on the weekend theme of 'Hope in the Making'. It was a noisy place to take a retreat – but that's what it felt like for me. The theme of this year's Season of Creation is 'Peace with Creation'. On my return from Greenbelt I reread this year's guide and I noted the organisers' hope that "Creation will find Peace" based on Isaiah 32:16

"Then justice will dwell in the wilderness and righteousness abide in the fruitful field"

They go on to state:

There is hope for a peaceful Earth. Biblically, hope is active—it involves prayer, action, and reconciling with Creation and the Creator through repentance (metanoia) and solidarity. Isaiah 32:14-18 envisions a peaceful Creation where God's people live only when justice is achieved.

I am, to be honest, a relatively new recruit to climate activism and to begin with the situation the world faces seemed overwhelmingly

immense. In the face of such widespread injustice what could I possibly do to make any difference? But now I feel differently, I see any little action, from me or anyone else, as a seed of hope. To quote Rob Hopkins, one of the Greenbelt speakers and author of 'Falling in love with the future' who said, "I've been to the future, and we won"! In my own life and my role as a Green Apostle and local Eco church champion I have been helped by becoming Carbon Literate*.

I took the course in 2023, and it was a real eyeopener. In the first instance it raised my awareness of the true extent of the problem and the reasons for it. With this knowledge and understanding I have now been able to make much better-informed judgements about my own lifestyle choices and to suggest lifestyle changes for my church with much greater confidence and assurance. Ever since, I have been trying to encourage others across the Synod to take up Carbon Literacy training. It has proved quite a challenge to find an appropriate time to suit people. I am delighted to report that the Church of England has now updated its Carbon Literacy for Church Congregations, an ecumenical course to run in a similar way to a bible study/house group discussion and which will be downloadable from the Carbon Literacy Project's website. This means that it is much more readily available for church groups to take up.

My belief is that for us to achieve the justice needed to make peace with creation there is a pressing need for us all to act on climate change and that is just what Carbon Literacy can enable us to do; even the smallest of actions counts. Please watch out for more information after the launch later this month

**Put simply, 'Carbon Literacy' is the ability to understand, communicate about, and act on climate change in our daily lives. It's about being motivated and empowered to deliver the best possible climate action, wherever you are.*

A Call to Prayer and Public Witness for Peace in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory



Congregations across the country are invited to join a call to prayer and public witness for peace in the Holy Land on Sunday 21 September.

We are witnessing the devastating escalation of violence in Gaza and the West Bank with Israel's latest decision to mount a new offensive in Gaza City threatening hundreds of thousands with further forced displacement. The cries of Palestinian church leaders for peace and solidarity have echoed across the global Church, urging us to respond with clarity, compassion, and conviction.

As Christian agencies rooted in faith and justice, we believe the gravity of this moment demands **a visible, united Christian witness**—one that speaks to our shared commitment to peace, reconciliation, and the dignity of all people.

In response we are calling on churches across Britain to pray for peace on Sunday 21st September, coinciding with UN World Peace Day and the global call to prayer from the World Council of Churches.

Prayer could include holding a minute's silence; or the prayer from Archbishop Hosam of Jerusalem; or joining the #FastforGaza action. Your prayers might focus on one or more of the issues below:

- An immediate ceasefire in Gaza
- Unfettered access to humanitarian relief.
- An end to violence in Israel and Palestine.
- The release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian detainees.
- A meaningful peace process.

We recognise that our efforts, as agencies, can only go so far. Your leadership is essential. We need you to help mobilise the scale of

response this crisis demands.

We are therefore asking you to:

- Share this call to prayer with your senior colleagues and churches
- Encourage your churches to consider their prophetic witness—what more they might do to stand for peace
- Join with other faith leaders in public witness, amplifying the call for justice and reconciliation

To support these actions, we are working with **Churches Together in Britain and Ireland** to create an accessible online hub of resources for prayer and action. This will include theological materials, liturgical resources, and guidance to help churches engage confidently with the complex realities of the region. www.ctbi.org.uk/middle-east-prayers

In faith and hope,
Christian Aid, Tearfund, Embrace the Middle East, Sabeel-Kairos, Quakers in Britain, All We Can, Reconciling Leaders Network, Difference, Friends of the Holy Land, USPG, Centre for Missionaries from the Majority World, Commitment for Life

Keeping you updated on the Church Life Review



A flourishing church, less burdened and better enabled.
[Here's your latest update on the Church Life Review](#)

What's On

Time of worship and praise concert with **Rony Padilla** and friends

Saturday 13 September 2025
6:30pm-8:00pm
Christ Church URC
Chase Side, Enfield, EN2 6NJ



All are welcome to attend this free event
It will be followed by refreshments
and a time of fellowship together



Online Quiet Day: Playing with God



27 September 2025 10:30am to 4:00pm
Venue: Online

Ticket: Free

Led by **Leslie Bailey** -(opening prayers),
Mark Argent and **Ann Barton**, and **Jane Weedon** (closing prayers).

The day draws its theme from part of the gospel for 27 September, which records Jesus predicting his death (again) and saying to the disciples: "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest."

For some that carries an invitation to come to God "like a child" — which could be heard as "praying with one's inner child". For others that can feel like a more difficult space — particularly if there are uncomfortable memories or associations to childhood.

In biblical times those words could have been heard quite differently — perhaps as a challenge to the idea that power gets someone closer to God (or God is on the side of the powerful).

The invitation of the day is to spend some time in prayer away from our screens, and in discussion with others, to attend to what God may be saying to us.

Book by clicking on this link: https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/urcsp_event/quiet-day-4/

**You are warmly invited to
Lumen, 88 Tavistock Place, London
on Friday 26th September 2025,
6:15 to 8:15 pm for a screening of**

“Light”



**A film showing the work of Community Peacemaker Teams
in Hebron, West Bank Palestine.**

***“Where all other elements are controlled and rationed,
perhaps our light is the one thing that cannot be taken”***

**All are welcome. Free admission with donations to CPT
invited.**

Watch the trailer at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vk0W3nqFZjl>

17.45 Doors open, tea/coffee

**18.15 Introduction by Rev Maggie Hindley, reservist with
CPT in Hebron**

18.20 *Light* (60 mins)

**19.20 Q and A with the film director, Ahmad Abu Monshar,
by Zoom from the West Bank.**

**Please book your place with Maggie Hindley
m@maggiehindley.org, 07545 130260**

JPIT 2025 conference



How often do you find yourself saying 'Oh, for goodness sake!'. Well, you're not alone. We live in challenging times, when to be on the side of justice, kindness and love can feel like an uphill struggle.

We're writing to invite you to an event that will bring together Christians who long for justice, for a day of inspiration, encouragement, and making connections. 'For Goodness Sake!' is taking place a gathering of people who long for justice on Saturday 8 November 2025 from 10.25am-4.30pm at Reach Conference Centre in Derby. The event is being organised by the Joint Public Issues Team on behalf of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church, and in association with the Church of Scotland and Iona Community.

Whether you are a petition signer or an action taker, a self-professed politics geek or a church member searching for a way to make your voice count, this is a space for you. A space to connect with other people who yearn for justice and a space to re-group. A space to get practical and a space to be heard on the topics that matter to you. A space to share wisdom and a space to be inspired.

Details [here](#). [Book now](#)

Make your voice heard during the Climate Coalition's Lobby Week



In July, more than 5,000 people gathered at in Westminster to call for a healthier, fairer, safer future for people, climate and nature. This autumn, the mass lobby goes local with the Climate Coalition's Lobby Week, taking place 13-20 September. Supported by the Joint Public Issues Team and the Constituency Action Network, the Lobby Week is a nationwide push to meet your local MP to have a conversation about what matters to you and call for the leadership we need. You don't need to have joined the coalition in Westminster to take part. You can join the movement now and start by emailing you're MP, logging it onto the Climate Coalition's map. [Learn how to get involved.](#)



Festival of Church Music **Theme – Justice and Freedom**

Coventry Cathedral
Saturday 11th October 2025
at 6.00pm

Choirs from across the country

Service Led by Martin Leckebusch
President of The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland

Festival Conductor - Peter J Williams
Organist - Rufus Frowde

Visit the website
<http://www.freechurchchoirs.org.uk>
ADMISSION FREE
www.freechurchchoirs.org.uk

Vacancies

Job Opportunities at Roots for Churches Operations Coordinator

We are excited to announce an opportunity for an Operations Coordinator to join our dynamic team from 29th September, or as soon as notice periods allow.

In this role, you will support our Managing Director with financial and administrative tasks that underpin our charity's mission to publish resources for churches across the UK, Ireland, and internationally. This includes both print and digital content featured in our bi-monthly Worship Together and Children & Youth magazines, as well as on our website.

As a growing charity, we offer opportunities for future role development and the chance to make a meaningful impact in church ministry.

This is a part-time position, requiring 28 hours per week, with flexibility to work in a consistent weekly pattern that aligns with other team members for collaborative working. The role will primarily be home-based, with some travel within the UK for meetings.

The salary for this position ranges from £25,000 to £30,000 per year, fulltime equivalent. This is a permanent position, subject to a successful probationary period of 6 months.

If you are passionate about resourcing and equipping the Church to engage all ages with the Bible, worship, communion, and mission, and you possess the necessary knowledge and experience to thrive in this role, we invite you to access the application form, job description, and notes for candidates from our website:

www.rootsforchurches.com/recruitment.

The closing date for applications is midnight Sunday, 14th September 2025.

Advert for members of the Accreditations Sub-Committee

Do you have a passion to support people who release the church in its local community to flourish in faith, hope and love? Then this could be the opportunity for you!

Ministries Committee is looking for a member for its Accreditations sub-committee to replace a member who has moved into another role. The member will need to have working knowledge of the formal ministries of the United Reformed Church.

The Accreditations sub-committee plays a vital role in supporting and creating new opportunities in shaping posts to be recognised as Church Related Community Work projects or Pioneering posts including current Special Category ministries, in approving certificates for ministers from partner churches both at home and abroad to serve with us, and in analysing trends in the Rolls of Ministers of the Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers, Elders, Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers and Assembly Accredited Lay Pioneers.

If interested in making an application or nomination, please email ministries@urc.org.uk for an application form.

Closing date: 8th September 2025

Advert for Assessment Board Convener

Volunteer Opportunities: Join our Team!

Do you have a passion for discerning what God is saying about Call and vocation? Then this could be an opportunity for you!

The Ministries Committee is looking for a Convener for the Assessment Board to replace its current convener who will complete their term at the July 2026 General Assembly. The convener will need to have a working knowledge of the formal ministries of the United Reformed Church, and of the training programmes for the formation of Ministers of the Word and Sacraments (MWS) and Church Related Community Work (CRCW). Training will be provided, particularly in a period of 'shadowing' the current convener in the run-up to July 2026.

The Assessment Board plays a vital role in the discernment, assessment and selection of students for training for MWS and CRCW. Its assessors

are drawn from ministers and lay members of the URC.

If you feel you have the gifts and graces to serve in this way, please email ministries@urc.org.uk for the full role description and if interested in making an application or nomination, please email ministries@urc.org.uk for an application form.

Closing date: 8th September 2025

Advert for Ministries Committee members

Volunteer Opportunities: Join our Team!

Does developing the strategy and supporting the work of the Ministries Committee excite you? Then this could be an opportunity for you!

The Ministries Committee is looking for two lay members to be part of its new committee agreed at General Assembly 2025. Member will need to have a working knowledge of the formal ministries of the United Reformed Church and support of their training programmes.

The Ministries Committee carries the General Assembly responsibility and care for the formally accredited ministries of the United Reformed Church namely the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, Church Related Community Work, Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching, Locally Recognised Worship Leading, Assembly Accredited Pioneering both lay and special category.

This responsibility includes all lifelong learning for these accredited ministries including funding and other educational elements.

We are looking for lay members with expertise in education particularly adult, higher, or theological education who can bring a critical and constructive voice to group discussions.

If you feel you have the gifts and graces to serve in this way, please email ministries@urc.org.uk for the full role description and if interested in making an application or nomination, please email ministries@urc.org.uk for an application form.

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If you feel you have the gifts and graces to serve in this way, please email ministries@urc.org.uk for the full role description and if interested in making an application or nomination, please email ministries@urc.org.uk for an application form.

Closing date: 8th September 2025

Synod Property Officer - West Midlands

The United Reformed Church (West Midlands) Trust seeks to appoint a part-time Synod Property Officer (21 hours per week)

Part-time salary: £29,316 (based on £48,860 full time equivalent)

Closing date for applications: noon on Monday 8 September 2025

Interviews will be held in the week beginning 15 September 2025

We are looking for an individual to provide technical expertise on buildings and property in support of Synod Officers, members of Synod Committees and local churches.

The successful candidate will be working to a wide brief and is expected

to undertake a range of duties including, but not limited to, advising and initiating action on property issues in local churches, overseeing quinquennial inspections and manse inspections, and providing advice on property-related matters to Synod Committees.

We are looking for someone who:

- has experience of property matters either through extensive operational management or through the practice of a relevant profession, while holding appropriate qualifications at higher or professional level
- has some knowledge of charity procedures
- is a team player and is used to working collaboratively
- possesses effective oral and written communication skills
- possesses sound IT skills
- has a willingness to work within the Christian ethos of the United Reformed Church
- can work flexibly with some evening and weekend work

In return we can offer a friendly, supportive and flexible working environment, five weeks' annual leave and a contributory pension scheme.

[Download the Job Description](#)

[Download the Person Specification](#)

[Download the application form](#)

For more information, please contact Lindsay Peniston at the URC (West Midlands) Synod Office in Yardley, Birmingham B26 1TW. Tel: 0121 783 1177. **Email:** moderators@urcwestmidlands.org.uk

We do not accept CVs and require candidates to fill in an application form to ensure we consider each person on equal terms. We follow United Reformed Church Safer Recruitment Policy and Practice.

Safeguarding Training

Synod Training Dates 2025

To book a place on any of the training listed below, please email safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

In person training is TBA and will be limited due to the timescales within my role and existing cover period.

E Learning

Foundation Training and Safeguarding Coordinators Training are available as e-learning courses.
Simply follow the links below to access the courses.

Foundation Safeguarding Training

<https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/course/view.php?id=24>

Safeguarding Coordinators Training

<https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/course/view.php?id=70>

Advanced Safeguarding Training

Part 1 - Tuesday 16th September 2025 - 6.30pm – 9.00pm

Part 2 - Tuesday 23rd September 2025 - 6.30pm – 9.00pm

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