



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 22 March 2024.

Please circulate this widely so that the great events and opportunities here can benefit as many as possible.

Blessings.

Events

'Everyday Faith - Everyday Fruitfulness' on Saturday 13th April 10am-1pm at Lumen <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/urc-thames-north-synod>

Synod Discipleship Matters with Eddie Boon Join Zoom Meeting [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96647460063?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96647460063?pwd=dnhRWGtIK2tQdUpPUGo0OXRwTWRMUT09)
[pwd=dnhRWGtIK2tQdUpPUGo0OXRwTWRMUT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96647460063?pwd=dnhRWGtIK2tQdUpPUGo0OXRwTWRMUT09)

Meeting Wednesday 17 April 2024.

Celebrating 850 Years of the Waldensian Movement Thursday 18- Saturday 20 April 2024 g.morton50@ntlworld.com

Young Adults' Gathering Saturday 27 April 2024 10:30am- 4pm
Lumen Community

Godly Play Wednesday 1 May to Friday 3 May 2024
trainingpa@urc5.org.uk

Thames North & Southern Synod's Youth Residential Thursday 30 May - 2 June 2024 Whitemoor Lakes, Alrewas

Living Stones for a Living Church on Monday 21 May 7:30pm and Monday 4 June 7:30pm. Email mission@urc.org.uk

Thames North Eco Day Saturday 8 June 2024 10am - 4pm at Vine Church Ilford

Synod News



Jesus washing the disciples' feet

We received this report on **"The Narrow Road"** held at Hertford URC.

'I am very happy to report that we were at full capacity and really could not have squeezed another visitor in as staging and lighting also took up a considerable amount of space. We had approximately 110 people attending with some travelling quite a distance. We have had many comments from other local churches thanking us for putting on this production as part of our combined journey towards Easter and saying how they found the Play very moving and thought-provoking.

It was quite amazing how four Actors took us through the life of Jesus in an hour and a half without a change of background, just by using simple props. It was helpful to have a knowledge of the Bible to keep up with these dramatic snapshots, as seen by travellers on a narrow road, who were also acting as the characters in each of the scenes. A very skilful use of a small area and a small cast who made it all so believable.'

The crucifixion





Commemorative Trowel – returned to Ealing Green Church

Back in January 2023 I received a letter from the Netherlands, with some photos of a commemorative trowel, from the laying of the foundation stone of Ealing Congregational Church. The accompanying letter explained that this trowel was in the possession of a Mr. Paul Sanders, he assumed it was ours and would we like it back? After a few emails to each other, it was agreed that he would return it in person, when he was next in the UK. Then in December last year Paul emailed again and offered to come to Ealing in March.

The day arrived, and Paul came to the church with his family – his wife, daughter and her husband – along with the trowel, safely stowed in a wooden box. I invited them into the church, and imagine my delight when I saw the beautiful commemorative trowel in person. The photos Paul had sent had been water damaged in the post, and the real object is quite beautiful.

The centenary booklet issued by Ealing Congregational Church in 1960, confirms the inscription on the trowel. The booklet says that in 1859 the old Grove Chapel (built in 1822, where the Grove School stands today) was sold and the present site acquired. The corner foundation stone was laid on 3rd November 1859, by the Rt Hon David Wire, Lord Mayor of London. The new building was erected on the site of a house which formerly belonged to a 'great Puritan Divine', Dr John Owen. Our fathers indeed claim to have built on good foundations! By the way, you can still see the foundation stone to the left of the doors, although the inscription is sadly eroded.

I showed the family the church space, and then over coffee we discussed some of the history of the church, and of Ealing, and they explained that it was really quite difficult to find us, as Ealing Congregational Church no longer exists. The trowel had been in the possession of Paul's father, and they do not know how he came to have it; although he did work in London while docklands was being redeveloped, and maybe he came across it at that time. The family had decided to take a trip to London for a holiday and return the trowel to us in person. What a remarkably generous thing to do! I know that you will all be thrilled to have such an important piece of our history returned to us, and how kind to do so in person.





I am sure that you will all wish to join me in thanking Paul and his family for the care and attention they have taken in tracking us down, and then handing over in person this trowel, which presumably has some value as a historic item. Thank-you!

The trowel is currently in the safe, stored in its wooden box, if you'd like to see it in person, please ask Colin or Helen on Sundays, or I will be happy to get it out during the week.

I also have a scan available of the centenary booklet, if you'd like to see it in greater detail. Drop me an email to the church office on office@egchurch.org.uk and I'll be happy to forward that to you.

Sarah Hunter, Church Office Manager.

A Lent Note from the Green Apostles



Over Lent the Synod Green Team has been encouraging you to be active for the environment. As a final reflection we ask you to consider the water you drink and use and its part in the environment around you.

World Water Day is held annually on 22 March as a means of focusing attention on the importance of fresh clean water and good sanitation across the world. There are huge global challenges and we can learn more through charities like WaterAid, Christian and Tearfund. Many churches have got involved with Toilet twinning and this is a brilliant way of exploring the issues and supporting poorer communities across the world – either as a church or individual. See the website [Home - Toilet Twinning](#).

There are also issues closer to home. It is good to reflect on our own use of water and consider collecting rainwater in a water butt for use in the garden. Find out more about your local river or stream, what state it is in and whether there is a group protecting it. If you are involved in such a group do send us a photo to minister.trinity.coresend@gmail.com

Terry Hinks



Churches, chapels and meeting houses are impressive, exciting and surprising places.

Whether seeking quiet reflection access to critical community services, a warm welcome, a place to worship, or a space to explore, we believe they should be loved and supported. Available to all.

Working together with churches across all four nations, we help to maintain these wonderful historic buildings and keep them thriving today, and tomorrow.

Keep an eye on the Thames North website and future newsletters to find out more about what they are doing and what they can do for your church.

Free upcoming training for you to be a part of

From fixing the roof to finding ways to attract more visitors, looking after a church building can involve a wide range of challenges, but we are here to help. Thanks to National Lottery players, through our National Lottery Heritage Funded projects, Cherish and Treasure Ireland, we are able to offer even more support to churches, chapels and meeting houses in every corner of the UK.

This includes through our extensive training programme – both in person and online. Whether you need help with applying for grants, opening your building up to visitors, or developing new income streams, [check out our training to find a session that's right for you.](#)

Learn the best ways to open your church to visitors



The latest heritage crime report from Historic England shows that heritage crime had increased. However, research from Ecclesiastical Insurance shows that an open church is safer than a locked church. Want to find out more?

Join Ecclesiastical Insurance online from 2-3pm on Tuesday 19 March. If you want to open your church more to the community and visitors, but are worried about safety and security, then this free session will guide you through all you need to know. You can find out steps to take to protect your building and there will be the chance to ask any questions, too.

[Sign up for your free place](#)

Energy Grants

A message to churches from the synod:

We listened on Saturday at the Treasurers' Meeting and as a result have extended the last date for Energy Grant applications from 31st March this year to 31st March 2025. This applies to churches who have been adversely affected by Gas, Oil or Electricity increased costs. We appreciate

that this can be a problem for those churches coming off a fixed contract in 2023/4.

Please send applications to macpheemartyn@aol.com or dr.jpwise@gmail.com.



What's On

Have Your SAY!



Are you 18 – 30 years old?

Come and share your experience of Church and explore what the Church of the Future might look like.

Young Adults Gathering

on Saturday 27th April 2024 10:30 – 4pm

at Lumen Community, Kings Cross.

WORSHIP **POLITICAL** Spirituality

Resourceful *imaginative*

MEMBERSHIP Exploring Hallelujah **prayer**

Uncertainty **RELATIONSHIP**

TRANSFORMATION *INSPIRE* Passion

Disconnected *VISION*

Kingdom Building

UNHEARD BELIEF
connection Valuable
Passion OPINIONATED
Disconnected
POLITICAL
USELESS
Resourceful
prayer
Optimistic
displaced
supportive
RELATIONSHIP
Exploring
WORSHIP inclusive
OUTSPOKEN
involvement
ENCOURAGED
ENGAGEMENT
Disappointing
BELONG
transition Spirituality
TRANSFORMATION
Uncertainty
self-centered



THAMES NORTH & SOUTHERN SYNODS YOUTH RESIDENTIAL

Thursday 30th May – Sunday 2nd June 2024

Join other young people for 4 days of outdoor activities, games, creative workshops, and biblical discussions.



Venue: Whitemoor Lakes Alrewas Staffordshire.

Cost: £65

Age: 11 (must be in Year 7) – 16 years.

Including transport available from London.

Limited spaces available until Friday 3rd May 2024

Register online at: <https://bit.ly/residential-2024>

Further information: cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk



Venue: Whitemoor Lakes Alrewas Staffordshire.

Cost: £65

Age: 11 (must be in Year 7) – 16 years. Including transport available from London.

Limited spaces available until Friday 3rd May 2024

Register online at: <https://bit.ly/residential-2024>

Further information: cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

ART



in plain sight

As announced at our recent Synod meeting we are pleased to be able to pay for around five churches to host our Art in Plain Sight project for the next 2 years starting May 1st. A new print of art/photography will be displayed each month in a position in your church building where there is substantial footfall by the local community.

Expressions of interest to Eddie Boon via disc.enab@urcthamesnorth.org.uk please.

A red wooden Adirondack chair is positioned on a wooden dock. The dock is made of dark brown wooden planks and extends into a body of water. The water is dark with many small, light-colored ripples. The background is a soft-focus view of the water and the sky. The text is overlaid on the top left of the image.

'Everyday Faith - Everyday Fruitfulness'
URC Thames North Synod Conference
Sat 13th April
10am-1pm at Lumen

A reminder that we are looking forward to our URC Thames North Synod Conference **'Everyday Faith - Everyday Fruitfulness'** on Saturday 13th April 10am-1pm at Lumen, 88 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RS

Steve Rouse from LICC will be leading our morning and it promises to be a really good time of encouragement as we explore 'Discovering God's purpose in every season of life (especially in the senior years). You can watch a short 90 second introduction with Steve at <https://vimeo.com/922117229>

Arrivals on the day are from 9.30am and there will be a free buffet lunch at the end to bless you on your way.

The event is FREE you can find out more and book at:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/urc-thames-north-synod/t-avoekvx>

We do hope that you will see this as an important event to encourage your discipleship both personally and in your congregation and that you will book in and come along – why not bring a group from your church?

If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact me via disc.enab@urcthamesnorth.org.uk



Our Thames North Synod Prayer Labyrinth is now available for use in local churches. The Labyrinth, suitable for indoor use only, is 7m x 7m and comes with various other resources to use and guidance to help you bless your congregation and/or community. Delivery/handover arrangements can probably be made and there is no charge for use. Please contact Eddie Boon via disc.enab@urcthamesnorth.org.uk for more details and to book it out in the diary.

London Churches Refugee Fund



Apply for LCRF Grants up to £1,000 to support destitute asylum seekers in London

- We are now open for applications for our Spring 2024 Grants Round (nos 36)
- As usual refugee projects and organisation can apply for any work that directly addresses destitution among refugees or asylum seekers in London, whatever their country of origin.
- Applications must be made on the Round 36 Application forms which are available to download here and must be emailed back to us by Monday 29th April.
- The guidance notes have been very slightly updated and are available on the same page.
- We take this opportunity to thank you for the work that your project does, for the countless vulnerable people who have been helped by you and others like you.

The Chair and Trustees of LCRF



LIVING STONES FOR A LIVING CHURCH

buildings for the ministry of mission

Part 1: 21 May 7.30pm

with Revd Dr John Bradbury

Part 2: 4 June 7.30pm

Register for one or both at mission@urc.org.uk

Safeguarding Training

Thames North & Southern Synod Safeguarding Training- 2024
**Foundation and Foundation Refresher Safeguarding Training
(Approx 2 hours).**

15th April 7pm *ONLINE TRAINING*

14th June *IN PERSON TRAINING*

at St Andrew's Canterbury URC (Southern Synod) 10am-12pm

22nd July *IN PERSON TRAINING*

at Bromley by Bow URC- 41 St Leonard's St, London E3 3DH (Thames North Synod) 10am-12pm

3rd August *IN PERSON TRAINING*

at Lancaster Road- Lancaster Rd, Enfield EN2 0BS (Thames North Synod)
10am-12pm

September *IN PERSON TRAINING* location TBC

21st October 10am- 12pm *ONLINE TRAINING*

21st November 7pm – 9.30pm *ONLINE TRAINING*

Foundation E-Learning module

The Foundation training is also available as an E Learning which can be completed in your own time.

The link is here:

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

To book on to this training, please email your name, church role, church and preferred date to

safeguarding@urcsouthern.org.uk or

safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Intermediate Safeguarding Training (Approx 2.5 hours).

14th June

IN PERSON TRAINING

at St Andrew's Canterbury URC- Watling Street, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2UA (Southern Synod) 1pm-3.30pm

22nd July

IN PERSON TRAINING

at Bromley by Bow URC- 41 St Leonard's St, London E3 3DH (Thames North Synod) 1pm-3.30pm

3rd August

IN PERSON TRAINING

at Lancaster road- Lancaster Rd, Enfield EN2 0BS (Thames North Synod) 1pm-3.30pm

September

IN PERSON TRAINING location TBC

25th October 10am-12pm ***ONLINE TRAINING***

29th November 7pm – 9.30pm ***ONLINE TRAINING***

Intermediate Refresher Safeguarding Training (Approx 2.5 hours).

12th June 6.30pm - 9pm

ONLINE TRAINING

13th September 6.30pm – 9pm

ONLINE TRAINING

Advanced Safeguarding Training (Approx 4 hours).

Saturday 13th July 10-3pm

IN PERSON TRAINING- location TBC

13th December 5pm- 9pm

ONLINE TRAINING



UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2024

Make your booking by emailing: Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk

Foundation Training can be accessed on the Learning Hub
bit.ly/3Txldm4

All training listed below will take place via Zoom

First date	Event	Second date
17 January, 2024 1:30pm	Domestic abuse	4 June, 2024 6:30pm
25 January 1:30pm	Safeguarding for Pastoral Workers and Elders supporting survivors	11 June 6:30pm
30 January 6:30pm	Modern slavery	8 October 1:30pm
31 January 1:30pm	Elders as Trustees	14 May 7:00pm
8 February 1:30pm	DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment	23 May 6:30pm
27 February 6:30pm	Substance abuse	3 October 1:30pm
6 March 1:30pm	Refugees and asylum seekers	17 September 6:30pm
18 March 6:30pm	Safeguarding for Ministers supporting survivors	25 September 1:30pm
18 April 6:30pm	Adult safeguarding	15 October 1:30pm
8 May 1:30pm	Spiritual abuse	11 November 7:00pm
28 October 6:30pm	DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment	4 December 10:00am
19 November 1:30pm	Online safety	



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

Vacancies



Casework Supervisor (Safeguarding)

Home Based

Permanent contract, 18 hours per week

Salary: £54,000 (FTE)

Are you ready to help support our Safeguarding Officers with case management and improve our Safeguarding practices?

In response to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) and the United Reformed Church's Past Case Review (PCR), we have identified the need for consistency and accountability in the work the safeguarding teams undertake across the denomination and at Synod level. This new role will offer support and advice to the Synod Safeguarding Officers (SSO), ensuring compliance and best practice across the denomination in its casework.

You are qualified to degree level in relevant fields or have relevant professional experience. You have experience in working with legislation and policies for safeguarding children and adults. You have excellent communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to develop, sustain and network relationships whilst able to analyse complex situations and advise appropriately.

We can offer you a flexible and friendly work environment: working from home, with occasional travel to Church House and Synods when required.

If you are interested in working for us and can meet the above requirements, please contact us/see our website for an application form (noting that we do not accept CVs):

Human Resources, the United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT

020 7691 9871 recruitment@urc.org.uk www.urc.org.uk/vacancies

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Friday 19 April 2024 Interview date: Thursday 2 May 2024

This post requires a satisfactory enhanced certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service.



ECUMENICAL FACILITATOR CHURCHES TOGETHER IN HERTS AND BEDS

Are you enthusiastic about Christians working together?

Are you an effective communicator and networker?

If so, this could be the right post for you.

£17,000 23 hours per week, Home Based

For an Information Pack, email Carol at beh34office@gmail.com

Closing Date for applications: 1 May 2024

Interviews: 9 May 2024 in Welwyn Garden City

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