



The
United
Reformed
Church

THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 1 May 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

Rejoice and Sing Live at Coventry Central Hall from 12 noon on Saturday 3 May 2025 www.bit.ly/reform-live

Dinner Dance at Grange Park URC on 3 May 2025 4-9pm

Designing for the Future on 7 May 2025 at The Lumen Centre 11

Book : training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

FaithTalk Webinar, An Evening with Trey Hall Wednesday 7 May 2025 at 7pm Please email mission@urc.org.uk for the link

Latte, americano or espresso? Exploring God through café style worship.' Tuesday 20 May 2025 7:30pm via Zoom

rgolding23@gmail.com

Buildings for Mission Forum Webinar: Inventive Use of Spaces

Tuesday 20 May at 7.30pm. mission@urc.org.uk

From Lament to Action: Church service five years after George Floyd's death on Sunday 25 May 2025 15:00-16:30. Doors at 2pm.

Location: St John's Church, Waterloo

Waterloo Road London SE1 8TY. Book [here](#)

Thames North and Southern Synod Youth Residential 29 May-1 June 2025 www.bit.ly/residential2025

Eco Day on Saturday, 7 June 9:00am – 4:00pm Location:

St Albans Greenwood AL2 3HG. Please check the news each week for more on what's on.

Love your Burial Ground Week, National Cemeteries Week & Churches Count on Nature Saturday 7th - Sunday 15th June 2025.

[Find out more here.](#)

Holy Communion Presidency Training 9 June 2025 7:30-9:30pm via Zoom Contact Julian Templeton training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

IOPT in Focus: Antisemitism Wednesday 18 June 2025. For the Zoom link commitmentforlife@urc.org.uk

Christian Aid's 80th Anniversary Service at Westminster Abbey 12 June 2025 at 12pm

Jazz Vespers 25 June 2025 19:00 at the American Church in London music@amchurch.co.uk

The Theology, Rhythm and Feeling of Hymns in Worship on Saturday 28 June 2025 10:30 to 12:30 at The Lumen Community WC1H 9RS lpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Bradwell Pilgrimage Saturday 5 July 2025 10am-3:15pm www.bradwellpilgrimage.co.uk

Aspiring to More Taster Sessions Saturday 12 July 2026 at 10:30 to 15:30 at The Lumen and Tuesday 2 September 2025 at 19:30 to 21:30 via Zoom training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Disability Awareness Sunday – 28 September 2025

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

150th Anniversary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches 12 July 2:00pm at the American International Church, Tottenham Court Road. Free tickets can be reserved here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1257520550819?aff=oddttdtcreator>

News



On Sunday the Moderator preached at Gants Hill United Reformed Church in Ilford with the service being led by their Minister, Revd Sujeeth Kumar.



Trinity URC Upminster

A Note from the Green Apostles



Plant scientists at Cambridge University are working towards creating a zero carbon future by conducting research into plants that are likely to respond to climate change, or could be used in the fight against the effects of climate change. Since records began the top ten warmest years for the UK have all occurred since 2002. Summers are likely to get hotter and drier, winters warmer and wetter. Plants are already responding to these changes, for example, snowdrops appear almost two months earlier than they used to and oak trees come into leaf a month earlier. Plants can help to mitigate the rise in temperatures globally. They can also contribute to increased biodiversity. So if you have space for planting, however small or large, it's prudent to go for planting that is going to help combat the effects of climate change.

Perennial plants are particularly useful for insects, such as bees and butterflies, as the plants become established in a space, appearing year after year. Those with hairy or glossy leaves fare better in hot dry weather. Examples include Mahonia, Escallonia, Penstemon, Hebe, Hellebores, Geranium, Verbena and Echium. Ferns are also hardy, as are ornamental grasses, such as Miscanthus and Molinia. All these plants can be enhanced annually by adding summer bedding, which provides added colour for our interest and extra sustenance for wildlife.

More suggestions in Part 2 next week!

What's On

SYNOD ECO DAY 2025



Theme: Indoor and Outdoor

**Key Speaker: David Britton, Campaign Officer,
Operation Noah**

7 June 2025 10.30am-4.00pm

**St Albans United Reformed Church, Watford Road, St
Albans AL2 3HG**

Contact: Colleen modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Save the date! For more information and booking contact Colleen at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk or Book [online](#)

There will be a wide range of workshops for those on, or considering starting, the Eco Church Journey. Full programme will be confirmed in May. If you have any particular topics you would like information on, please let us know. If you would like to share the story of your Eco Church journey, either as a workshop or a display, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Thames North Synod – Eco Day 2025

Draft Programme:

10.30 am – registration and coffee

11.00 am – Opening worship – Outdoors – led by St Albans URC worship

team

11.30 am – Key Speaker - David Britton, Campaign Officer, Operation Noah – (Including Q&A Session)

12.30pm – Lunch (bring packed lunch)

1.30pm – Gather for Singing

1. 40 pm – Workshop 1

2.20 pm – Workshop 2

3pm – Closing worship – Revd. George Watt and St Albans Worship Team

3.30pm – Tea

Workshops:

- Operation Noah - Church Land TBC
- Sustainable flower arranging – St Albans Abbey Flower Guild
- Buildings
- Situation in Bangladesh – how to respond with Church Land
- Green Psalm writing
- Sustainable planting
- Ecochurch – exploring the new survey

Ongoing throughout the day all age activities to include:

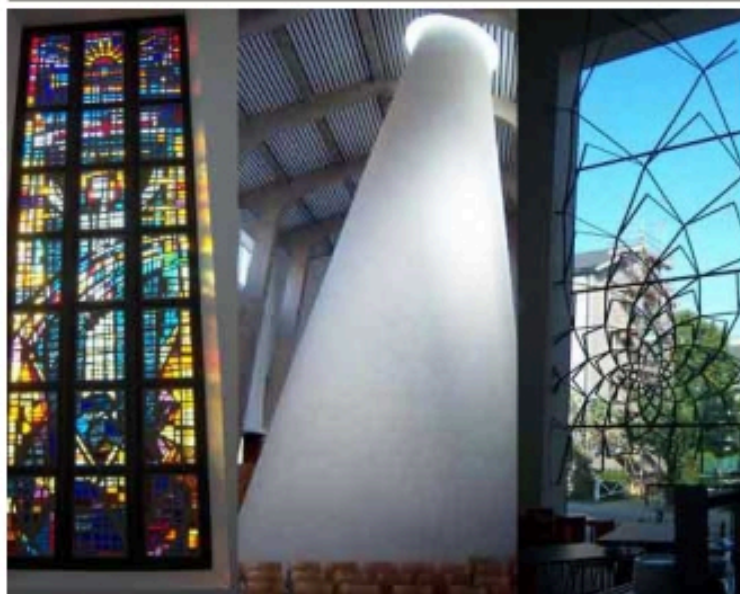
- Range of activities from The Wildlife Trust
- Carbon counting game
- Outdoor meditation stations
- Games in the meadow – quoits, Giant Jenga, boule etc.



Designing for the Future

Creating Sustainable and Beautiful Buildings

Thames North Synod & Eastern Synod



Date: 7 May 2025

Venue: The Lumen
Centre, 88 Tavistock Place
London WC1H 9RS
(in person only, lunch provided)

Time: 11am–2.30pm

Booking: Email:

training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

including any dietary restriction

Join us for a workshop

focused on reimagining church spaces for the future. This session explores how buildings can be more than structures—they are vital tools for gathering, mission, and nurturing faith. We'll dive into the broader concept of sustainability, emphasising that net-zero carbon targets are just one part of the equation. Learn how to design spaces that balance environmental responsibility with flexibility, ensuring they serve the needs of your community for generations to come.

Discover the principles

of delight, commodity, and firmness as a guide for creating beautiful, functional, and sustainable buildings. We'll discuss practical strategies for reducing carbon footprints, improving accessibility, and aligning your space with your mission. Whether you're planning a new building or adapting an existing one, this workshop provides actionable insights to create spaces that reflect your values and meet your church's evolving needs.

*Facilitated by Julian Templeton,
Sacha McArdle and Cliff Patten.*

Email: training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

The Theology, Rhythm and Feeling of Hymns in Worship



The Theology, Rhythm and Feeling of Hymns in Worship

A Workshop led by Julian Templeton and Francis Ackroyd

When: Saturday 28 June 2025, 10:30 – 12:30

Where: The Lumen Community, 88 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RS

The number and type of hymns available to worship leaders and worshippers today is vast. What criteria does a worship leader use to select hymns? This workshop will include a discussion, with sung examples, of hymns that might be selected for their theology or rhythm or feeling, and how these hymns shape the moments of worship.

Participants are invited to select 3 hymns, 1 in each category:

- A hymn selected for the theology/message of its words
- A hymn selected for the rhythm of its music
- A hymn selected for the feeling it evokes

and to email the selected hymns to Julian
training@urchthamesnorth.org.uk by 21 June.

Julian and Francis will note all the hymns submitted, and from these will choose some that we will sing together in the workshop. Hymns can come either from published hymnals or from online videos, so long as you identify their source. If you don't wish to select hymns yourself, please come to the workshop anyway.

To attend this free Thames North Synod Preachers' Circle Event
Please email Ola Lawal, Lay Preaching Advocate,
lpa@urchthamesnorth.org.uk

The Reverends Francis Ackroyd and Julian Templeton are both musically trained and have made congregational and choral singing a significant feature of their ministries.

Holy Communion Presidency Training



For Elders seeking first-time authorisation to preside
at the sacrament of Holy Communion

via Zoom
Monday 9 June 2025
7:30 to 9:30 pm

Contact: Julian Templeton, Training and Development Officer
Email: training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk



The next webinar, An Evening with Trey Hall, is at 7pm on Wednesday 7 May. Trey is the Director of Evangelism and Growth at the Methodist Church and will be helping us to grapple with the question: Faith Talk and Church Growth: How does prayer make a difference? Come and join us for a relaxed conversation praying and talking about our faith with others.

Please email mission@urc.org.uk for the link.

Save the date for the next webinar, on Tuesday 23 September at 7pm.

**Disability Awareness Sunday – 28
September 2025**



Join churches across the UK in marking Disability Awareness Sunday – a time to celebrate God’s image in every person! – and download the new resource pack from disability charity Through the Roof (www.throughtheroof.org).

“My hearing had gone... my legs wouldn’t move: God’s image was still in me.”

This year’s free resource, Made in God’s Image, features Emily Owen, an award-winning author who became deaf at 21 and now lives with multiple disabilities. In her video and resource, she shares how God looks at the heart (1 Samuel 16), not outward ability.

All matter as ALL are in God’s image

No matter our challenges, we’re all ‘wonderfully made’ in God’s image – and when churches fully welcome disabled people, everyone is blessed. Sadly, 72% of disabled people in the UK report facing negative attitudes. Joining church can be a challenge. That’s why this matters.

Use the official date, 28 September – or any Sunday – to spark conversations and take a step towards disability inclusion.

FREE resource for churches!

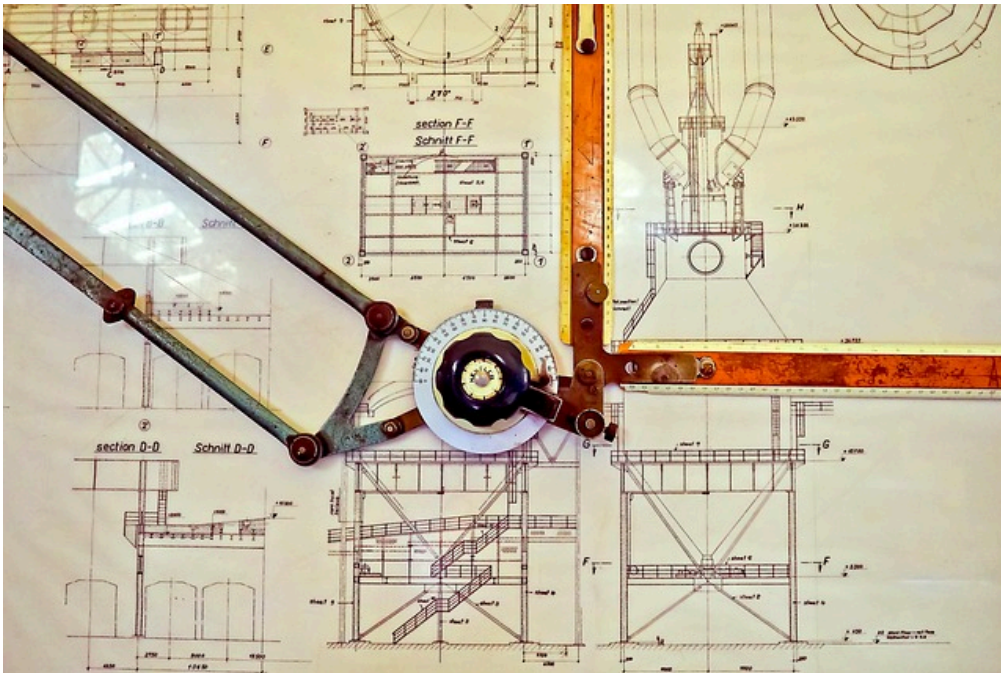
The free downloadable pack includes Emily’s video, songs, prayers, sermon ideas, and handouts reminding us ‘All are made in God’s image’.

Download your copy now:

🖨️ Get the free pack at: throughtheroof.org/forchurches/disability-awareness-sunday

🎥 Show the video. Pray together. Celebrate every member of Christ's Body.

Buildings for Mission Forum Webinar: Inventive Use of Spaces



The next webinar, **Inventive Use of Spaces**, is on Tuesday 20 May at 7.30pm. If you have examples that you would like to share with us, or would like to register for the link, please email mission@urc.org.uk.

Save the date for the next webinar, on Thursday November 20 at 11.30am.

Vacancies



adeyfield free church

www.adeyfieldfree.org.uk

01442 260175 admin@adeyfieldfree.org.uk



Adeyfield Free Church Hemel Hempstead

We are a church family that believes that church should not only be fun but also a place where lives are transformed by Jesus.

Families' Worker

To oversee our church ministry to children and families

We need an experienced families' worker:

- A permanent, part-time position of 25 hours per week
- To build upon the existing work with our children and families, enabling them to explore the Christian faith in creative ways
- To build relationships with groups meeting within the AFC Centre
- To expand our presence with families in the local community

Youth Worker

To oversee our church ministry to young people

We are looking for an enthusiastic youth worker:

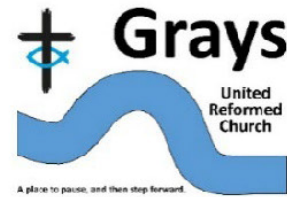
- A permanent, part-time position of 25 hours per week
- To build relationships with our young people, enabling them to explore the Christian faith in creative ways
- To create opportunities to build a positive difference in the youth in our community

For a job description please email admin@adeyfieldfree.org.uk

Closing date 31st May 2025



The Hive at Basildon URC
6 Honeypot Lane, Basildon SS14 2JZ
Grays URC
31 Bradleigh Avenue, Grays RM17 5XD



Community Outreach Worker

5-year, full time appointment

£24 – 28,000 per annum, depending on experience.

We are seeking an experienced person who is motivated to develop and support initiatives that aim to improve the lives and wellbeing of people in our communities.

The focus of the work is to assist and develop the existing activities, develop relationships with the wider communities, and to lead on local and social media advertising.

The successful candidate does not have to be a committed Christian but would be expected to be caring and empathetic and be comfortable working within the Statement & Nature of Faith of the United Reformed Church.

Church-based, with some working from home permissible.

The regular place of work will be either: The Hive at Basildon URC or Grays URC and reasonable travel expenses will be covered to travel to the other site. The role is shared, and the expected workload is to be 2/3 / 1/3 between Basildon / Grays.

An application pack can be accessed by emailing David Coaker on drcoaker@gmail.com

Only completed application forms will be accepted. No CVs.

Closing date for applications is by 5pm on Friday 30th May.

Interviews will be held on Thursday 12th June at Basildon URC.

As part of the interview, you are asked to prepare a ten-minute presentation on your choice of subject to cover the responsibilities of the role and to display the essential experience, skills and abilities listed in the person specification.

Volunteer Opportunity: Join the Congregational Fund Board as a Trustee

At the heart of the Congregational Fund Board lies a strong commitment to supporting ministers and students in times of financial need. This small yet impactful charity, with an annual income of approximately £20,000, offers vital assistance to aged and/or infirm ministers, ministers in training, and students facing sudden and unexpected financial challenges. The Board also provides annual study grants to students undertaking ministry training or higher-degree studies.

The Board is composed of both lay and ordained trustees and includes representatives from the Union of Welsh Independents, the Congregational Federation, the Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches, the Unaffiliated Congregational Churches Charities, and the United Reformed Church.

The Board is currently seeking a trustee to represent the United Reformed Church.

As part of the Board, this role offers an opportunity to actively contribute to meaningful decision-making and to support the vital work of the charity, shaping its efforts to assist ministers and students across the community.

Trustee to represent the United Reformed Church

Purpose: This voluntary role involves contributing to decision-making that directly impacts the lives of ministers and students across the UK.

Responsibilities:

- Participate in two annual meetings: the AGM in London (October) and a virtual Zoom meeting (March).
- Collaborate with Trustees throughout the year via joint email discussions to review applications.
- Ensure data protection and confidentiality in all aspects of the work.

Requirements:

- Must be a member of the United Reformed Church.
- Commit to a term of 4 years.
- While residing near London is not a requirement, closer proximity may help reduce travel expenses, which are funded by the Congregational Fund Board.

Independent Examiner Wanted -- Voluntary Role

The United Reformed Church, Broxbourne, is seeking a new qualified Independent Examiner to review and certify our Annual Accounts for submission to the Charity Commission and HMRC.

Our long-serving and much-appreciated Independent Examiner has recently retired, and we are now looking for someone to kindly step into this important role.

Time Commitment: Approximately 15-20 hours annually

Type of Role: Voluntary (if possible)

If you're able to help, or would like more information, please contact:
Amanda Harwood (Church Treasurer) Email:
Amanda.Harwo@outlook.com



Job Vacancy

Deputy Lead Chaplain

Find out more at
www.ubectrust.weebly.com

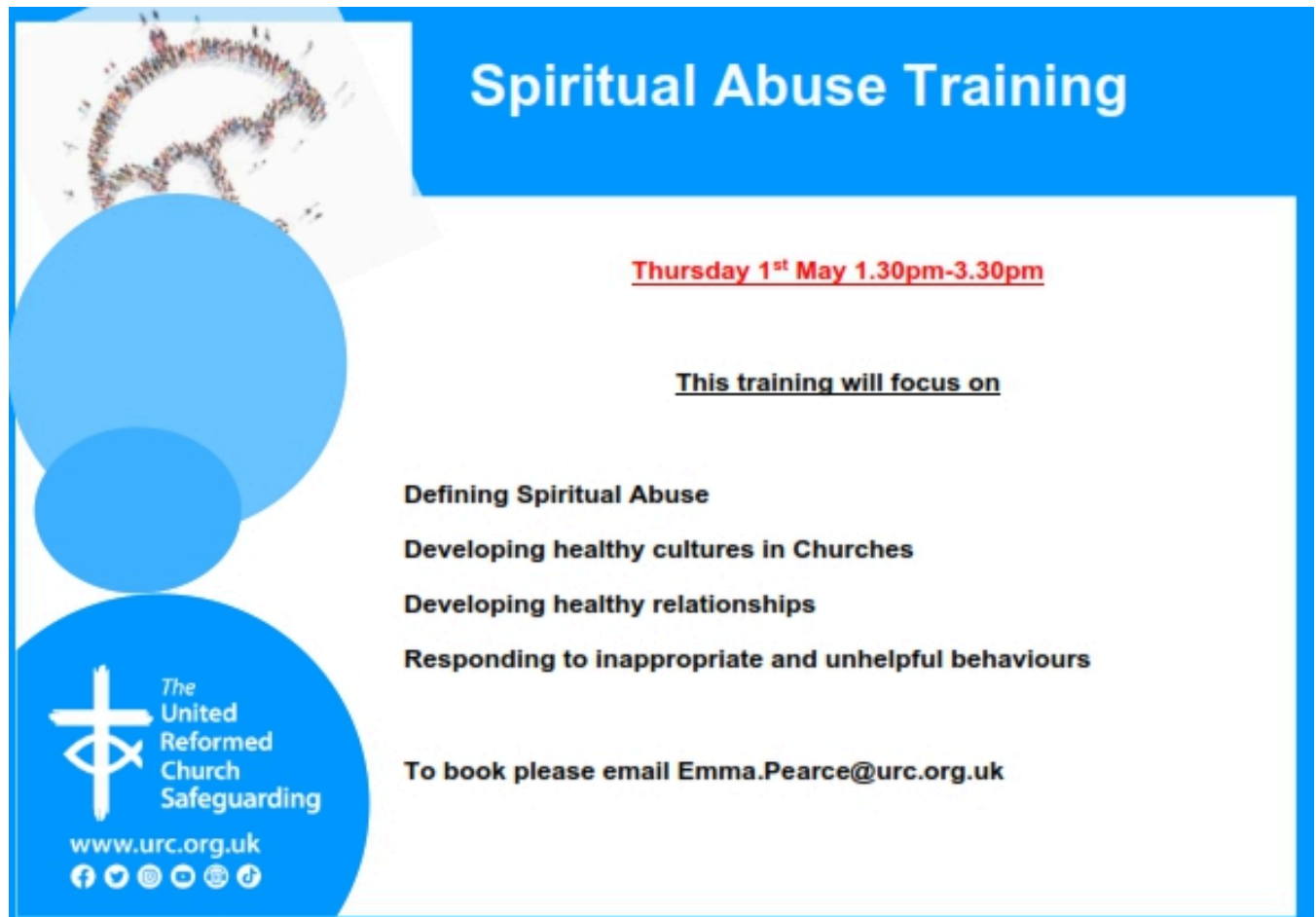


The University of Bedfordshire Ecumenical Chaplaincy Trust (UBECT) seeks to appoint a Deputy Lead Chaplain (part-time 30 hours per week over five days) to work alongside the Lead Chaplain(s) to co-ordinate and oversee the development of a vibrant Chaplaincy for the University, working closely with its Community and Faith team, Student Services and

Human Resources on initiatives to support student and staff well-being.

[Find out more.](#)

Safeguarding Training

A poster for Spiritual Abuse Training. The top right has a blue header with the title 'Spiritual Abuse Training' in white. Below this, the date and time 'Thursday 1st May 1.30pm-3.30pm' are written in red. The main body is white with a list of topics: 'Defining Spiritual Abuse', 'Developing healthy cultures in Churches', 'Developing healthy relationships', and 'Responding to inappropriate and unhelpful behaviours'. At the bottom, it says 'To book please email Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk'. On the left side, there are three overlapping blue circles. The bottom circle contains the logo of The United Reformed Church Safeguarding, which includes a stylized cross and the text 'The United Reformed Church Safeguarding', 'www.urc.org.uk', and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.

Spiritual Abuse Training

Thursday 1st May 1.30pm-3.30pm

This training will focus on

- Defining Spiritual Abuse**
- Developing healthy cultures in Churches**
- Developing healthy relationships**
- Responding to inappropriate and unhelpful behaviours**

To book please email Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk

The United Reformed Church Safeguarding
www.urc.org.uk
Facebook Twitter YouTube Instagram

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>

Zoom Intermediate Safeguarding Training

Monday 12th May 2025 - 6.30pm- 9.00pm

Thursday 5th June 2025 - 12.30 – 3.00pm

Saturday 2nd August 2025 - 10.30am – 1.00pm

Tuesday 16th September 2025 – 6.30pm – 9.00pm

Advanced Safeguarding Training

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

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



UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2025

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

All training listed below will take place via Zoom

First date	Event
14 January, 2025 1:30pm	Domestic abuse
23 January 7:00pm	Supporting survivors
4 February 7:00pm	Modern slavery
13 February 1:30pm	Elders as Trustees
4 March 7:00pm	Substance abuse
18 March 1:30pm	Refugees and asylum seekers
27 March 7:00pm	Adult safeguarding
24 April 1:30pm	Spiritual abuse
13 May 7:00pm	Online safety

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



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

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

This email was sent to {{ contact.EMAIL }} You received this email because you are registered with URC Thames North

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



[Unsubscribe here](#)

