



The
United
Reformed
Church

THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 10 July 2020.

If you would like to keep your inbox clear, feel free to unsubscribe at the bottom of the page. Please circulate this widely so that these great events and opportunities can benefit as many as possible. Blessings.



multicultural church
intercultural habit

Global Partnerships and Justice

Do Black Lives Matter in the URC? An Open Zoom Event with Wale-Hudson- Roberts and Patricia Akoli **July 14th, 2.00-3.15pm**

'For too long, black communities have borne the brunt of systemic injustices, impacting their health, their finances, their education, their prospects, their lives'

The URC's Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries and CRCW, Karen Campbell, will be hosting this online forum exploring the question: **Do Black Lives Matter... in our world... in our society... in our churches... in the URC?** You are invited to join in what we hope will be a lively and informative discussion.

Please email veronica.daniel@urc.org.uk for more details and to register your interest.

Our Speakers:



Wale Hudson-Roberts is the Justice Enabler for the Baptist Union of Great



Patricia Akoli has been a member of the United Reformed Church since

Britain. He is also the pastor of John Bunyan Baptist Church in Cowley, Oxford. Before this, Wale was the pastor of Stroud Green Baptist Church, North London, for 7 years before becoming the Racial Justice Co-Ordinator for the Baptist Union. Wale regularly writes for the Keep the Faith magazine, and other magazines. He serves the Baptist World Alliance as their lead on racial justice issues.

childhood. She works in the arts sector, and thoroughly enjoys the challenge of youth and community focused projects. Some of her most recent work involves planning and delivering youth projects for URC congregations in Tottenham and Ilford, and delivering Diversity Awareness Training at URC Church House.

Webinars on Israel and Occupied Palestine Territories.

The United Reformed Church's (URC) interfaith relations team has organised two General Assembly-linked webinars focusing on Israel and Occupied Palestine Territories.

At the first, to be held on **14 July from 7-8.15pm**, a panel will share their experiences of an URC educational visit to the region in 2019 via Zoom. Introduced by Derek Estill, former URC General Assembly 2018-20, and Katie Henderson, URC Youth Assembly Moderator 2019-20.

The second event takes place on **21 July from 7-8.15pm**. Author and keynote speaker, the Revd Dr Munther Isaac, Pastor of the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem and Academic Dean at the Bethlehem Bible College, will be speaking live from Bethlehem.

Time will be allocated at both events for audience questions. To take part, please contact [Carole Sired](#). Follow this link for more information:

<https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3519-take-part-in-digital-discussions-about-israel-and-palestine.html>

FIRST OF A SERIES OF THREE ONLINE EVENTS

Communion in the light of Covid

An evening of ecumenical exploration of how the lockdown period has influenced our understanding of Communion.

Confirmed speakers:



Revd Dr John Bradbury



Dr Sara Parvis



Dr Matthew Sailsbury



Revd Dr Elizabeth Welch

THURSDAY 16 JULY 2020 | 6-7.30PM BST

To book your tickets visit: www.thetablet.co.uk/events

Included in the ticket price is a complimentary digital copy of Dr John Bradbury's recent paper's entitled:- Pastors at Adoration and 'Covid 19, the Church and Holy Communion - 15 Theses: United and Reformed.'

This discussion will take place via Zoom. You will need to download the Zoom app onto your device to be able to join the call. Full details of how to join the call will be sent in the days before the event.

Reform
NEW CHURCHES INDEPENDENCE



Easing out of Lockdown - what next?

The Revd Carla Gosch-Miller has written a new reflection on the Coronavirus pandemic:

"15 weeks on, as we begin to ease out of lockdown, I wonder what your reaction was to the news that churches could open again for private prayer and then for public worship at the beginning of July?

If the Twitter-sphere is anything to go by then it is, as would be expected, a very mixed experience, with some really glad and able to be back in church again, and others more cautious or unable to open up for various reasons. But whatever your situation, just coping with the experience of the past 15 weeks will have been exhausting on a personal and professional level, as well as psychological and emotional..."

Click [here](#) for more.



Trauma-informed Ministry in a time of COVID

delivered by the *Tragedy and Congregations* Team

The Revd Dr Carla Grosch-Miller
The Revd Hilary Ison
Professor Christopher Southgate

Since 2017 the team has delivered 20 training days in various settings for Anglican and URC groups. We have provided a range of resources as the COVID crisis has unfolded. We now offer half-day Zoom meetings with groups of 12 ministers. These will provide:

- opportunities to articulate experience of the COVID crisis
- a chance to make connections between these reactions and trauma theory
- explorations of the dynamics of communities after a tragedy
- biblical resources for addressing our current situation
- To book one or more meetings please contact Chris Southgate at c.c.b.southgate@ex.ac.uk

We normally ask a contribution of £100 per meeting towards staff costs. Please let us know if this extent of contribution is a problem. To see more of the group's work, look at the project book *Tragedies and Christian Congregations: a practical theology of trauma* (Routledge, 2019). This is also available from Professor Southgate (£30 p&p). Or look at our website tragedyandcongregations.org.uk for recent blogs and meditations.

This project has received funding from the Templeton World Charities Foundation Inc., and is now in receipt of a grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation (in association with Sarum College).

Updated Government Guidance

The government's guidance on how places of worship may now open, for limited permitted activities, in a manner that is safe and in line with social distancing guidelines can be found

via the following link -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>

Importantly, the guidance notes that:

'This guidance is of a general nature and should be treated as a guide. In the event of any conflict between any applicable legislation (including the health and safety legislation) and this guidance, the applicable legislation shall prevail.'

The guidance applies to places of worship when being used for a religious purpose or in preparation for a religious purpose.

Where a place of worship's premises is used by other user groups, only those activities permitted by law should take place. Businesses which cannot yet operate are listed on the [business closures page](#) accessibly via this link -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close>

For permitted uses of a place of worship not included in the guidance, you should refer to the specific guidance on the www.gov.uk website, including:

- Meetings or small gatherings, as now permitted in other [multi-purpose community settings](#) - relevant guidance available via this link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities#permitted-activities-in-multi-use-community-facilities-signposting-to-relevant-guidance>
- At this time, venues should not permit indoor performances, including drama, comedy and music, to take place in front of a live audience. However, rehearsals and broadcast performances, without a live audience, can take place. Venues should take account of the [Performing Arts guidance](#) in organising outdoor performances

As previously highlighted, all guidance remains under review and may be updated at any time in line with the changing situation

Let's celebrate: children and young people in the URC

Children's and Youth Work Committee and URC Youth invite you to 'Let's celebrate: children and young people in the URC' on Wednesday 15 July from 7pm to 8pm. This is a General Assembly online fringe event open to everyone - follow the link below for more information:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lets-celebrate-children-and-young-people-in-the-urc-tickets-111150552294?>

"Whatever Next ?" Exodus 7, 8 and 14



URC Children's and Youth Work team are delighted to bring you **Week 14** of this exciting new resource. This is available on the URC website <https://urc.org.uk/resources-for-children-and-youth> or from [here](#).

Families on Faith Adventures @ home is designed to support families of all generations as they experience, explore and express faith together through the week. It is a 'pick and mix' of activities, games, prayers and challenges based around a story from the Bible and draws on materials from our non-uniformed children's groups Pilots and FOFA.

Advice to churches about coronavirus

The United Reformed Church (URC) is offering advice and resources from a variety of sources about the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. Follow this link for the latest advice and resources: <https://urc.org.uk/coronavirus.html>

Thames North Synod Office Plans

The Synod and Trust office staff will be working from home from now until further notice. Someone will go in a couple of times a week to deal with any post coming in, but we need to be aware that even this may not be possible in the future, depending on government advice.

We ask therefore that you contact us by email only where possible. We are still able to pick up your phone calls, but only if you leave a voicemail message, which is forwarded to us at home, from where we will get back to you as soon as possible. In the event that you do need to send documents by post, please contact either Muna Levan-Harris or Keith Berry at trust@urcthamesnorth.org.uk for all Thames North Trust matters, or Colleen Fraser at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk for any Thames North Synod matter.

We will be keeping in touch with you from home, via email, the website and our newsletter, so keep a look out for our updates and messages.

You may follow this link for a number of items of information

relating to Covid 19
<http://urcthamesnorth.org.uk/news>

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