



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 15 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

Latte, americano or espresso? Exploring God through café style worship.' Tuesday 20 May 2025 7:30pm via Zoom
rgoldring23@gmail.com

Buildings for Mission Forum Webinar: Inventive Use of Spaces
Tuesday 20 May at 7.30pm. mission@urc.org.uk

The gift of my neighbour: learning from diaspora communities –
Saturday 24 May 2025 at 10.30am till 4.30pm

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

Open Prayer Meeting on Wednesday 4th June 11am to 12noon at Lumen

Synod 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=oddtcreator>

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

News



On Saturday the congregation and friends of St Margaret's, Finchley gathered for a service of rededication following the refurbishment of the church. It is now a bright, warm and welcoming building. The service was led by the Moderator and Revd Dr John Campbell wrote a lively hymn to the tune of Keel Row.



Pictured: Jane Walters (Church Secretary) the Moderator, Revd Dr Ann Jeffers (Minister) and Leslie Walters who was instrumental in overseeing the redevelopment.

Olga, a member of St Albans URC, remembers VE Day



Olga Hopkins, who served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force during the Second World War, reflects with pride on her service and recalls how she celebrated the announcement of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, 80 years ago.

[See her story in a video here.](#)

A Note from the Green Apostles



**THE
CLIMATE
COALITION**

Speaking truth to power

In 2019 Anna Barrett, Thames North Green Apostle, took part in 'The Time is Now' mass lobby organised by the Climate Coalition.

She says, 'We marched to Westminster to talk to our MPs about the need for action to preserve our planet. It was my first demonstration but I have attended several more since. Before one, a fellow church member said to me 'I hope you are not going to make a nuisance of yourself!' It was not my intention to do so, but I have come to a point where I feel I can no longer leave it to others speak for me - I feel compelled to add my own voice to the call for climate justice. So I will be joining again on the 9th July in 'Act Now - Change Forever' mass lobby for people, climate and nature - click here for more information [The Climate Coalition](#). If you do plan to come along please let me know via Colleen - it would be great to meet up!

I appreciate that demonstrating might not be everyone's bag but there are many ways in which we can add our voices to those calling to protect God's wonderful creation. Come along to the Synod Eco Day on 7th June 10.30-4pm when you can join in this afternoon workshop.

Effective campaigning for the climate by churches and individuals

A workshop to help you and your congregation grow in confidence in seeking political action for the climate.

Facilitated by Roo Stewart, Head of Public Issues for the URC and a member of the Joint Public Issues Team.

**Join in with Churches Count on
Nature 2025**



See what wildlife you can spot in your churchyard this summer by taking part in Churches Count on Nature Week (7 - 15 June).

Conservation charity Caring for God's Acre is encouraging everyone to join them in celebrating UK churchyards, cemeteries, and other types of burial grounds. Churches across the country will be hosting events, which can be registered with the charity. A series of midday webinars will also accompany the week, [find out more](#).



We're giving every church a voice with the National Churches Survey

Dear Supporter,

With your help, we are speaking up for churches. Our pioneering research has helped us to show the Government and the wider public why churches matter. It has been used by many MPs and policymakers; most recently in debates around The Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme, to highlight why these buildings need to be properly funded. But all of our reports rely on credible evidence.

This spring we are carrying out a survey – The National Churches Survey – to help politicians, the media, and the wider public better understand the challenges churches face and to highlight the vital work they do.

If you work or volunteer at a church, chapel or meeting house, we want to hear from you. Your response will provide essential evidence to build a clearer picture – to tell a stronger, more informed story about your church, and others like it, so that together we can address some of the biggest challenges facing churches and help ensure their future.

But if you don't, you can still help us. By letting others know about the survey and encouraging them to fill it in, you can make sure that we gather the evidence we need about all the amazing things that churches are doing.

Thank you for all of the ways that you are supporting our work. It makes such a difference.

Best wishes,
Claire Walker
Chief Executive

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

Lunch will be provided so please book and let us know if you will be joining us.

There will be a wide range of workshops for those on, or considering starting, the Eco Church Journey.

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 - please let us know when you book whether you will be joining us for lunch

1.30pm – Gather for Singing

1.40 pm – Workshop 1pm

2.20pm – Comfort break

2.30 pm – Workshop 2

3.10pm – 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 – support available from Thames North Synod
- Responses to the Climate Crisis Situation in Bangladesh
- Green Psalm writing
- Sustainable planting -
- Eco church – exploring the new survey
- Effective campaigning for the climate by churches and individuals

All age activities - Ongoing throughout the day to include:

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





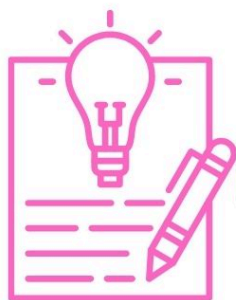
THAMES NORTH & SOUTHERN SYNOD

CREATIVE WEEK

TUES 5TH – SAT 9TH AUGUST 2025
LUMEN, LONDON – WC1H 9RS

**FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SECONDARY
SCHOOL (AGE 11–16)**

**CHOOSE FROM A RANGE OF CREATIVE
STREAMS INCLUDING
DRAMA, MUSIC, CREATIVE WRITING
MOVEMENT & DANCE, STAGE CRAFT**



REGISTER ONLINE AT
WWW.BIT.LY/CW-REGISTRATION



**COME AND WATCH OUR SHOWCASE
PERFORMANCE ON
SATURDAY 9TH AUGUST AT 4PM
ALL ARE WELCOME**

Creative Week is coming! Running from Tuesday 5th to Saturday 9th August 2025 at Lumen, London (WC1H 9RS), this exciting event is designed for young people aged 11–16 who are in secondary school.

Participants can choose from a variety of creative streams—drama, music, creative writing, movement and dance, or stage craft—and spend the week developing their talents in a fun and supportive environment. The week concludes with a special showcase performance on Saturday 9th August at 4 PM, open to all. Don't miss out—register online now at www.bit.ly/cw-registration

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@urcthamesnorth.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.

Creating New Christian communities in our Thames North Synod



It has been said many times that it is not that the church has a mission but rather that the mission of God has a church and we are part of that as we seek to use God given resources for mission in our area. You may be aware that we are seeking to progress our vision in Thames North Synod for creating new Christian communities and raising up and resourcing local workers to lead in this work. We have shared at previous Synod meetings about the offer of one of the new SCM pioneer ministers.


We are at this stage seeking to look, listen and pray as we discern the way forward in a number of potential places and contexts. You can read more about this in a paper recently sent out by George and Eddie which you can access
at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1II57N4ICgqa7E4bRfejOtsKW19rnHKbk/view?usp=sharing>

We would really like to mobilise the support, prayer, and feedback from all our people, churches, and groups around the synod so please get informed in this way. We are planning an open prayer meeting on Wednesday 4th June 11am to 12noon at Lumen and Refreshments will be provided. It will also be possible for you to join us online for this using <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84357083314?pwd=yYi8hmWVMQf3hv12aCAbpvPPINSNSs.1> Meeting ID: 843 5708 3314 Passcode: 133709

We would love this to be a really good number of people to pray so please make every effort to join us!

You can also make comments or suggestions using this link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdXoWXq0f0aICkgJk0gFUb3XMdE66pVVcFh3WuWeyVUiYG8Cg/viewform?usp=sharing> or by contacting us direct.

George and Eddie



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

Email: training@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

The gift of my neighbour: learning from diaspora communities

A day conference organised by the Society for Ecumenical Studies,
the Churches Together in England Racial Justice Working Group
and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Saturday, 24 May 2025
10.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.

The London Jesuit Centre, Farm Street W1K 3AH
Cost: £15 (lunch and refreshments included)

SPEAKERS



Dr Dulcie Dixon McKenzie



Rev Dr Israel Olofinjana



Fr Dominic Robinson SJ



Dionne Gravesande

[BOOKING AT HTTPS://THEGIFTOFMYNEIGHBOUR.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK](https://thegiftofmyneighbour.eventbrite.co.uk)

FOR INFORMATION EMAIL [SFES.SECRETARY@GMAIL.COM](mailto:sfes.secretary@gmail.com)

Speakers include the Director of the Centre for Black Theology, Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, Dr Dulcie Dixon McKenzie will deliver the keynote address: Biblical Interpretation: a Black theological hermeneutic, and the Director of the One People Commission of the Evangelical Alliance, Rev Dr Israel Olofinjana, will speak on: What's race got to do

with climate change? There will also be an ecumenical panel of speakers who will explore different models of ecclesiology. Closing worship will be led by Songshare. Songshare is a system of sharing, distributing and accounting for music created by Caribbean and African composers and writers throughout the churches of Britain, Ireland and beyond.

You can book [here](#) and more information about the day can be found in the flyer attached and at the CTE website.

Vacancies



Church Family Support & Outreach Worker

(18 hours pw)

F/T Salary circa £29k P/T Pro Rata

Are you a people person who enjoys making connections?

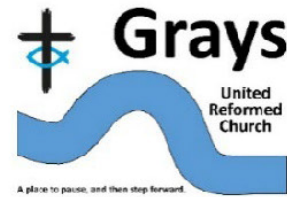
Apply for full details to St Andrew's URC Chesterfield

Revd Don Nichols standrewschesterfieldjob@gmail.com

by 23rd June 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.

Safeguarding Training



The poster for Spiritual Abuse Training features a blue header with the title 'Spiritual Abuse Training' in white. Below the title, the date and time 'Thursday 1st May 1.30pm-3.30pm' are written in red. The focus of the training is listed in black text: 'Defining Spiritual Abuse', 'Developing healthy cultures in Churches', 'Developing healthy relationships', and 'Responding to inappropriate and unhelpful behaviours'. To book, attendees are instructed to email Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk. On the left side, there is a graphic with 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', the website '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

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](#)

