



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 22 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

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 ipa@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>

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

News





On Sunday afternoon a memorial service for Revd John Walker, who died at the age of 98 earlier in the year, was held at Walkern and Sandon United Reformed Church where he ministered for 10 years as a Non Stipendiary Minister. The service was led by Revd Tony Ruffell who delivered the address. The Moderator and Revd Stan Chatikobo (the minister of the church) along with church members and John's great nephew also took part in the service. After the service afternoon tea was served in the beautiful grounds of the Chapel.

**Visit by the Evangelical Church of
the Czech Brethren**



The Synod were pleased to host two Ministers, Michael Pfann and Ondrej Zikmund from the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren. Following a few days spent in London they joined the Ministers and Local Leaders from Eastern and Thames North Synods for their Spring School. They are pictured with the Moderator and Training Development Officer.





Last Sunday the Moderator led worship at Christ Church, Hitchin in North Hertfordshire. One of the larger churches in the Synod, it is a URC/Methodist Church - it was formed from two Methodist Churches and a URC, building on a completely new site in the centre of Hitchin. With a wide age range the Moderator introduced them to interactive morning prayers starting with stretching to praise God (see picture). It was lovely to see the older folk from the Methodist Home which is situated next door enthusiastically joining in with the prayers and the actions for Our God is a great big God. The worship was enhanced by a Worship Group (including a versatile pianist and organist) enabling a range of contemporary songs and traditional hymns.

Spring School





Over 40 ministers and local leaders from Eastern and Thames North Synods gathered last week for the annual Spring School at the beautiful Highgate House Conference Centre near Northampton. The theme was Inter-related: Church as a community of difference. Hannah Fytche led the Bible Studies based on Romans inviting ministers to engage with Paul's letter in a fresh way.

Other speakers inspired the group covering Intersectional, Intercultural, Intergenerational, the Cross and the Crossroads. The threads were brought together by Robin Barden. Worship was led by the Moderators and other individuals. A quiz and a sing along of Assembly Bangers provided some light hearted entertainment.

A Note from the Green Apostles



The green team is delighted that David Britton from Operation Noah will be the key speaker at our Eco Day on 7th June.

We know that some people will have other commitments that day but there is an excellent opportunity to hear about one of Operation Noah's thought provoking and inspired campaigns on 2nd June - The Green Investment Declaration- [click here for more details.](#)

The Green Investment Webinar

On Monday 2nd June, 13:00-14:00 BST, Operation Noah is teaming up with friends at JustMoney Movement to welcome Christophe Borysiewicz from Rathbones Greenbank and Paul Whitehouse from the Quakers in Britain for an inspiring lunchtime conversation about church investment in climate solutions. This is the latest in our series of conversations exploring the Green Investment Declaration for churches and faith institutions.

Christophe brings years of experience managing ethical and green funds for church and charity clients, and Paul has led the Quakers, through his role as Treasurer and trustee, as they've moved funds into innovative solutions to the climate crisis.

Register [here](#) to join the webinar, and please do pass on this invitation to financial decision-makers in your church or organisation.

**Street Fathers-Luton launched to
safeguard youth & tackle street
crime**



David Jonathan (Grassroots) reports in this week's Luton News Faith Matters Column:

Last year, there were approximately 50,000 offences involving knife crime in England and Wales. It is a significant concern, particularly for the safety and well-being of our young people. Deaths caused by knife crimes in Luton in recent years have brought Luton's diverse faith communities and public sector agencies to work together in tackling the issue.

Roselyn Forde, a member of St Andrew's Church on Biscot Road in Luton, has actively volunteered in the local community over the years. In the last few months, she has worked extremely hard to bring together individuals, communities and organisations to launch a local community-led initiative called 'Street Fathers-Luton'.

[Read more here.](#)

Jazz Vespers Update

Duke Ellington's Second Sacred Concert

Register now
for a free
ticket



Wednesday 25th June
19:00

URC Festival Choir
and big band

Free and Open to All



American
International
Church



JAZZ
VESPERS

Music.
Reflection.
Improvisation.

American International Church
15th September 2024

Singers Wanted!

Open to all ability levels

Rehearsals: Wednesday 11 June 19.00-21.00

Wednesday 18 June 19.00-21.00

Saturday 14 June 11.15-13.30

Contact music@amchurch.co.uk for more information

What's On



In a fortnight, we will be welcoming Great Big Green Week 2025, when a million people – just like you and me – will come together to be part of a wave of actions for friends and family, climate and nature.

The theme this year is 'let's swap together for good'. We can all make small swaps, large swaps and swaps that change the system, to make our communities better.

By coming together, we'll also send a message loud and clear to our politicians and decision makers that we need to swap old ways for better ways now.

In this spirit, Faith for the Climate is collaborating with Quakers in Britain for a two-part series of webinars on how we can swap false climate solutions for real climate justice.

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June): Spotting false solutions"
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1 (Thursday, 5 June): Spotting false
solutions</strong></span></a>
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June): Identifying real solutions"
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2 (Wednesday, 11 June): Identifying real
solutions</strong></span></a>
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Speaker Event 2025

London Churches Refugee Fund

Charity number
1121108

Thursday 19 June 2025 at 6:30pm. The Right Reverend Rose Hudson Wilkin (Bishop of Dover) and speakers from some of the frontline charities supported by the London Churches Refugee Fund. Email: info@lcrf.org.uk Website: lcrf.org.uk

At St Pancras Church, Euston road, NW1 2BA
f/b Meeting and Greeting w Refreshments



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.





The
United
Reformed
Church Youth



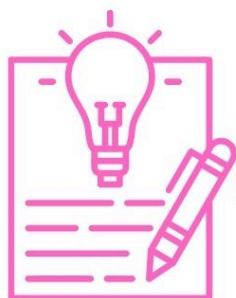
THAMES NORTH & SOUTHERN SYNOD

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.

From Lament to Action: Church service 5 years after the death of George Floyd – Sunday 25 May at 3pm at St John's Church, Waterloo, London



From Lament to Action

The Racial Justice Advocacy Forum invite you to From Lament to Action, a dynamic and prophetic Ecumenical Service to mark the Fifth Anniversary of the Killing of George Floyd.

Sunday, 25 May at 3pm

St John's Church, Waterloo Road, London SE1



All are invited but registration via **Eventbrite** is required.

Light refreshments will be available.



The co-celebrants include bishops Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Mike Royal, and Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson.

The programme includes Christ's Hospital School Gospel Choir and organist Wayne Marshall, OBE.



RJAF
THE RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY FORUM

This is a special church service to remember and reflect on the tragic death of George Floyd in 2020. The service provides an opportunity to reflect, mourn, and discuss how people can turn their grief into meaningful action.

The co-celebrants include the Anglican Bishop of Croydon, Rev Dr Rosemarie Mallett, CTE President Rev Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson and CTE

General Secretary Bishop Mike Royal. The programme also features Christ's Hospital School Gospel Choir and organist Wayne Marshall, OBE.

This in-person event aims to unite communities and inspire positive change. More about this event, and a piece by Richard Reddie, Director for Justice and Inclusion at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, which reflects on the significance of the anniversary of the murder of George Floyd can be found [here](#).

If you would like to attend this special service please do book at this [link](#).

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

Thy Kingdom Come – Thursday 29 May to Sunday 8 June 2025




This year marks the 10th anniversary of Thy Kingdom Come, the global ecumenical prayer movement for evangelisation occurring annually from Ascension to Pentecost. This year the season of prayer runs from 29th

May to 8th June 2025.

To celebrate this decade of praying together, Thy Kingdom Come this year takes as its focus The Lord's Prayer. As well as a range of resources there will be some special anniversary content available as this time of prayer draws near. For more information visit www.thykingdomcome.global.

You can read more about the ecumenical highlights of Thy Kingdom Come over the last decade [here](#) and if you have any ecumenical activities taking place in your area this year to mark Thy Kingdom Come please do let me know as we would love to share these with others.



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](#) or the [CTE website](#). For more information email [here](#).

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?

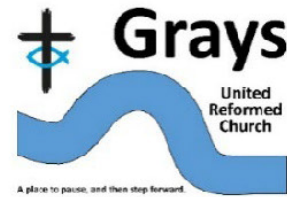
Apply for full details to St Andrew's URC Chesterfield

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

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](#)