



THAMES NORTH SYNOD NEWS ROUNDUP

Welcome to our News Roundup for 4 October 2024.

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

Blessings.

Events

A Quiet Day at the End of a Season of Creation Saturday 5 October 11am-3pm at Cores End URC minister.trinity.coresend@gmail.com

Ministry Enquirers' Conference on Saturday 5 October 2024 from 9:30am to 12:30pm on Zoom. Email ministries@urc.org.uk

JustMoney Conference, Saturday 5 October 9:30am - 1:30pm <https://justmoney.org.uk/>

Cups on a String on Sunday 6 October 2024 7:30pm Southdown Performing Arts Centre Harpenden AL5 1QQ

Bible Teaching Day on Saturday 12 October 2024 10am-3pm at Amersham Free Church admin@amershamfreechurch.co.uk

World Worry & Climate Crisis saturday 12 October 2024 10:30am <https://meditatiocentrelondon.org/events/>

Lectio Divina 12 October 2024 10:00am-3:00pm Church of Christ the King at 29 Bramley Road, Oakwood, N14 4HE. cockfosterscs@rcdow.org.uk

The Gathering 17 October 2024 10am-3pm at Romford Baptist Church RM1 3BL chris.bolster@cteel.org.uk

Discipleship Matters Wednesdays 23 October and 27 November 2024 3pm or 7:30pm <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96647460063?pwd=dnhRWGtIK2tQdUpPUGo0OXRwTWRMUT09disc@urcthamesnorth.org.uk>

Youth Get Together 26 October 2024 10:30am to 4:00pm at The Lumen Community cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Employed and Volunteer Children's Workers Event Ripon College Friday 1 November to lunchtime Sunday 3 November 2024. Contact Lorraine at cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Inter Faith Theological Advisory Group conference on Thursday 14 November 2024 at 11am at EC4V 5DE <https://ctbi.org.uk/conference->

[dancing-with-diversity-14-nov-2024/](#)

Introduction to Godly Play on Saturday 16 November 2024 at 10am

Contact Lorraine at cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Spiritual Abuse Webinar Wednesday 27 November 2024 1:00-3:00pm

Register [here](#).

News

Silver Eco Church Award



A selection of the Amersham Free Church 'eco committee' which has spearheaded the process which has been ongoing now for a few years. Many members of our congregation have been involved and we were delighted that our church has just received the silver award from A Rocha. It was formally presented by our minister the Rev Ian Green at our Harvest Festival service on September 29th.

A joyful and illuminating hymn-singing event



Last Saturday morning, 28 September, fourteen people gathered at The Lumen Community to hear the Revd Anne Sardeson's presentation based on her book *50 Hymns for 50 Years*. Anne, who now ministers to three churches in Essex, was formerly Training and Development Officer for Thames North Synod. It was a thoroughly participative presentation, with all present invited to sing 10 hymns originating from the 16th to the 21st centuries, which Anne introduced. The accompanist was the Revd Francis Ackroyd, who also shared with us his experience, as a then young Minister, of how radically different some of the new tunes and words seemed in the 1960's.

Anne also shared a hymn that she had written during the pandemic lockdown Christmas of 2020. In response to personal loss and populist claims that Christmas had been "cancelled", Anne's hymn began: "It's hard to hear the angels sing when everything is different, it's hard to think of any news that's good. But Christmas is still here, and God is very near, for God remains when everything is strange."

Anne also included the hymns of three other Synod hymn writers: the Reverends Heather Whyte, Sue McCoan, and Dominic Grant. The first two were present at the event and introduced their hymns. Although Dominic could not be present, we sang a hymn he had written, which is the one on the screen in the photograph. It was an altogether joyful event, with Anne's illuminating introductions complemented by the glorious colours shining through the south-facing Fourmaintraux stained glass window.

Prepare Your Buildings for Winter: Essential Maintenance Tips



As winter approaches, it's crucial to ensure your buildings are ready to withstand the colder months. Simple maintenance checks and repairs can make a significant difference. [The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings](#) (SPAB) has compiled a list of their top ten tips to help you get started:

- 1. Check for Blocked Downpipes:** Inspect during heavy rain to identify any leaks. In dry weather, look for stained brickwork.
- 2. Clear Ground Level Gullies and Drains:** Ensure these are free of debris and clean them out if necessary.
- 3. Autumn Cleaning:** Remove plants, leaves, and silt from gutters, hopper heads, flat roofs, and drainage channels. A spring clean is also advisable to catch any debris that may have accumulated.
- 4. Manage Vegetation:** Cut back or remove any potentially damaging plants from behind downpipes.
- 5. Inspect Rainwater Pipes:** Use a hand mirror to check for splits and cracks in old cast iron and aluminium pipes, which can often go unnoticed.
- 6. Install Guards:** Fit bird and leaf guards to the tops of soil pipes and rainwater outlets to prevent blockages.
- 7. Refix Gutters:** Ensure gutters are properly aligned and not discharging water onto walls.
- 8. Replace Damaged Sections:** If any sections are beyond repair, replace them with materials that match the originals—often lead or cast iron in older buildings.
- 9. Regular Painting:** Keep cast iron components painted to prevent rust.
- 10. Safety First:** Avoid undertaking high-level maintenance work. Always seek professional help.

For more tips and hints, visit the SPAB website: [SPAB Maintenance Week](#). Taking these steps now can help protect your buildings and ensure they remain in good condition throughout the winter.

Join the Synod's Annual Gutter Maintenance Programme!

We invite churches that have not yet signed up for the [Synod's Annual Gutter Maintenance Programme](#), a grant scheme organised by the Resources Committee, to do so now. This programme includes a one-off access survey and an annual gutter cleaning service.

For more information, please contact Assistant Property Officer Sacha McArdle at sacha.mcardle@urcthamesnorth.org.uk or call 07708 470576.

Don't miss this opportunity to keep your church in top condition!

What's On

Youth Get Together Saturday 26th October



A GATHERING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM URC
THAMES NORTH & SOUTHERN SYNODS

FOOD

SCAVENGER HUNT & CHALLENGE

WORSHIP

10:30AM - 4:00PM

THE LUMEN COMMUNITY, LONDON WC1H 9RS

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL (Y7) TO AGE 25

CONTACT YOUR CYDO TO BOOK

Thames North - Lorraine Downer cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Southern - Tom Hackett cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk



The Gathering

17th October
10am- 3pm

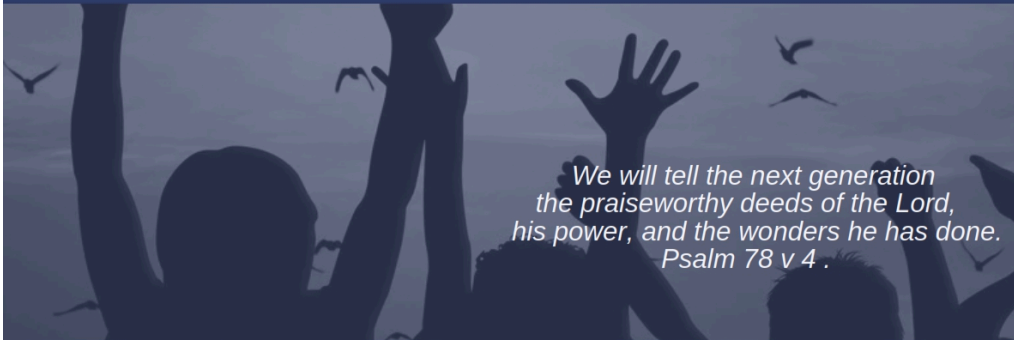


Venue: Romford Baptist Church,
Main road, RM1 3BL

Theme: Children and Youth.

Speakers:

Revd Alan Moss (Pioneer Minister)
Pastors Mark & Claire Barford (AOG)
Compassion UK
Faith in Schools
KICK
(Transforming lives through Sport)
Mustard Seed Team



*We will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord,
his power, and the wonders he has done.
Psalm 78 v 4 .*

Free Admission and Buffet Lunch included.
RSVP for Catering Purposes to chris.bolster@cteel.org.uk
Parking Available - Up to 40 Spaces.

[For the programme see here.](#)



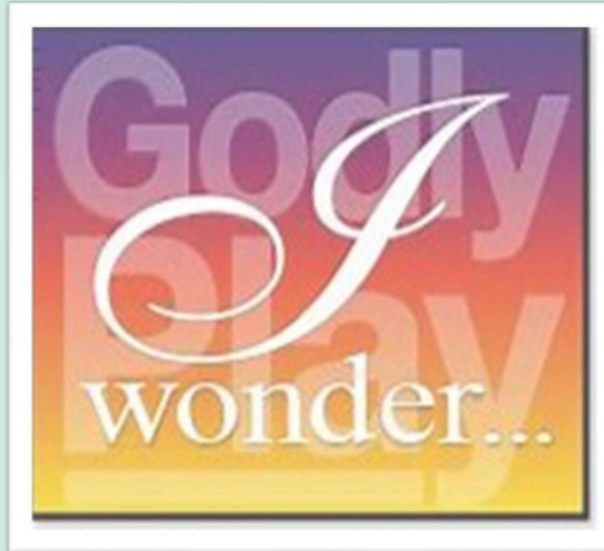
An Introduction to Godly Play

Exploring Childhood Spirituality

An opportunity to experience a whole Godly Play session, followed by two sessions each exploring a different Godly Play story genre.

There will be ample opportunity to discuss key elements of the Godly Play approach to childhood spirituality. The group size will be small, which is ideal for exploring all your questions.

This day is open to anyone and is especially designed for those who have little or no previous experience of Godly Play. Suitable for children's leaders, youth leaders, teachers, ministers, chaplains, or anyone interested in childhood spirituality.



This event is free of charge to anyone connected with The United Reformed Church or LEP Congregation.

Please let us know of any access requirements you have when booking. Tea, Coffee, and light refreshments will be available, please bring your own lunch. You may also like to bring a cushion to sit on, as wherever possible we like to sit on the floor for Godly Play, although this is not essential.

If you have any questions, please contact Lorraine Downer

cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

07716 640 575

Saturday 16th November 2024

The Lumen Community, 88 Tavistock Place, London
WC1H 9RS.

10am arrivals & refreshments for a prompt 10.30am start.

The event finishes at 3:30pm.

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cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Good Money Week and New Edition of the Greener Fairer Banking Guide for Churches



If you or church are investigating how to green your finances as part of your climate mission, a new resource has been published to mark Good Money Week which may help you navigate through this complex area.

The JustMoney Movement has released a new edition of the Greener Fairer Banking guide for churches, to coincide with this year's Good Money Week (30 September – 6 October) which culminates in Good Money Sunday this Sunday 6 October. Churches are being encouraged to review their finances to ensure that their banking and investment choices correspond to their values and mission. Among the various ethical questions to be considered, many of the UK's major banks are involved in financing the fossil fuel industry and deforestation. There other options available that choose to invest positively in sustainable, planet-friendly options and are more supportive of the needs of churches and charities.

The updated guide compares four of the more ethical banks with current accounts suitable for churches and charities in the UK, including an analysis of the banks' climate policies. The guide can be downloaded for free here: <https://justmoney.org.uk/resources/new-greener-fairer-banking-guide/>

Spiritual Abuse Webinar



Wednesday 27th November 1.00pm – 3.00pm

URC Safeguarding is delighted to be hosting a one-off webinar with Dr Lisa Oakley focusing on Spiritual Abuse.

Dr. Lisa Oakley is an Associate Professor at the University of Chester. She is also the Chair of the National working group for abuse linked to accusations of witchcraft and spirit possession and the Church of England Task and Finish Group on Spiritual Abuse and acted as a core participant to the independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Lisa has conducted research into issues of faith, safeguarding and abuse for the past 16 years. Her doctorate was on the topic of spiritual abuse and in 2013 she co-authored a book entitled *Breaking the Silence on Spiritual Abuse*. In 2019 a further book was published entitled *Escaping the Maze of Spiritual Abuse. Creating Healthy Christian Cultures*. Lisa has presented on these topics nationally and internationally.

Please do register [here](#) and join us for this event.

**Groundbreaking theatre this Sunday
for your congregations**

RIDING LIGHTS
THEATRE COMPANY

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR GOOD



SOUTHDOWN PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE
HARPENDEN AL5 1QQ
SUN 6TH OCT, 7:30 PM
TICKETS: £15. CONCESSIONS £10
BOX OFFICE: RIDINGLIGHTS.ORG/CUPSONASTRING



I wanted to ask you to let your church know about the groundbreaking play that is happening this Sunday in Harpenden.

It's called 'Cups on a String' and is by the Riding Lights Theatre company and the children's charity TLG. This warm-hearted and moving new play, developed from remarkable true stories is challenging, surprising and beautifully hopeful!

Cups on a String blends theatre, live music and digital technology to take you into the heart of the friendship between Heather and Joe, and promises to be a great evening out. It is so relevant during this mental health crisis.

The play champions how young lives are being given hope again - and that the local church can have a role in that.

I am writing to ask you if you could get it in your church news - so that your church have the opportunity to experience this moving and inspiring performance on Sunday.

• **It's happening this Sunday; 6th October, 7.30pm (Southdown Performing Arts centre, Harpenden, AL5 1QQ)**

You can book tickets here: [Cups On A String | Riding Lights](#)

Transforming Lives for Good is partnering with Riding Lights Theatre Company to tour 'Cups on a String' to venues across the UK for 8 weeks in autumn 2024, offering a powerful and moving evening of theatre, and we'd like to invite you to book a performance. See the website for all UK venues. [Cups On A String | Riding Lights](#)

Joe's eleven and home is hard. School is even harder. He breaks stuff: pencils, chairs, rules. One thing he won't break is his silence.

Heather's fifty-seven. She's got a comfortable life and a comfortable home. But her comfortable world is about to be turned upside down as she and Joe spend an hour a week together. Every week. For a year. Where will this journey of hours and weeks take them?

Cups on a String is a warm-hearted and moving new play, developed from remarkable true stories. It's about playfulness, listening and laughter, and how risk-taking and trust can lead to growth and transformation.

Discipleship Matters



Wednesdays 23rd October, 27th November 3pm or 7.30pm

The link is the same as ever <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96647460063?pwd=dnhRWGtlK2tQdUpPUGo0OXRwTWRMUT09>

All our welcome to come for some conversation and encouragement

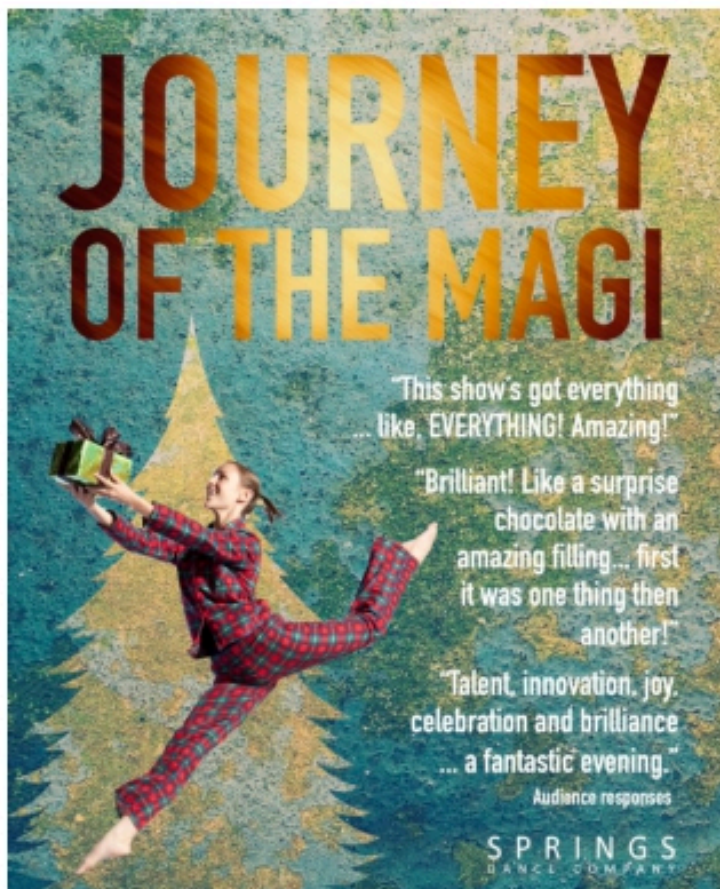
Yours

Eddie

Revd. Eddie Boon

Synod Discipleship Enabler

www.discipleseveryday.com



NOW BOOKING FOR 2024

Share the joy and wonder of Christmas with your local community through this fast-paced, brilliantly-witty yet poignant performance. Springs is taking bookings from churches for performances between November 22nd and December 22nd 2024.

Watch now:

[youtube.com/watch?v=qlQmZj6hDoE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qlQmZj6hDoE)

"Absolutely fabulous show. Wonderful mix of fun, wit, and meaning. It made me laugh and it made me cry all in a couple of minutes." Richard, Poynton Methodist Church

"The show was wonderful and it was such a thrill to have the hall buzzing – everyone was captivated." Sue, Central Hall Methodist Church, Walsall

"... the best of both worlds: a vibrant piece of entertainment and an opportunity to step back, to reflect, and to refocus." John, Moortown Baptist Church

Webpage:

springsdancecompany.org.uk/productions/journey-of-the-magi

All we need for the performance is a clear flat space of around 7m x 7m, on which we lay our dance floor. Springs provides the lighting, sound equipment and set and needs 6 hours in the space to set up for the show before the performance start time. □

Journey of the Magi is enjoyed by children and adults alike, and can be accompanied by a workshop or series of workshops in theatre, church, school or community settings. □

The fees for *Journey of the Magi* are:

- For a weekend performance (Friday – Sunday): £1250
- For Monday or Tuesday: £1050
- For Wednesday or Thursday: £1150

Plus a donation towards the travel costs.

Accommodation with local hosts may be requested. Many venues cover their costs by charging between £6 and £12 for tickets. □

For more information and to book for Advent 2024 contact our office on 07775 628442 or email: touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk. □

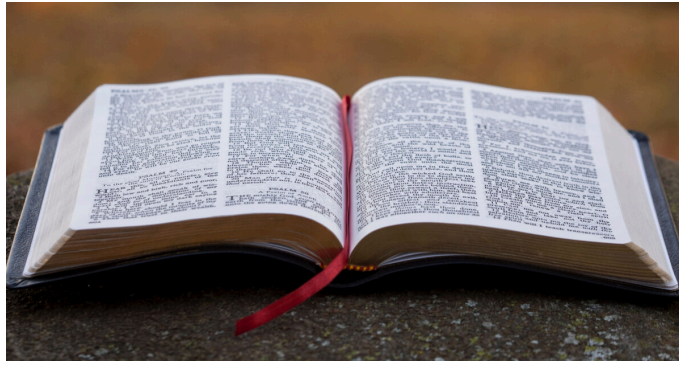
"...booking *Journey of the Magi* ... was one of the best decisions I have ever made. There is no way that, as a church minister, I could ever have even dreamt of taking people to the heart of Christmas in the way that *Journey of the Magi* did."

Rev Paul Timmis



Photo Roger Vaughan © www.springsdancecompany.org.uk 01127 Journey of the Magi 05

An exploration of Lectio Divina



Cockfosters Centre for Spirituality is delighted to invite you to a day retreat with **Michael Woodward on 12 October, 10.00 am – 3.00 pm.**

Lectio Divina, or 'divine reading' is a practice of contemplative prayer with the scriptures that has long been part of the Benedictine tradition. This day will provide a clear introduction and ample opportunity to explore how it can add richness to your spiritual life.

Michael has a wealth of Benedictine experience. He was the first elected leader of the Lay Community of Saint Benedict, which grew out of the Worth Abbey Lay Community. He has organised pilgrimages to Benedictine places, and runs regular retreats across the country.

You can find more details on our website [here](#).

To register your place, please email cockfosterscs@rcdow.org.uk or phone the parish office on 020 8449 6648.

We invite a donation to cover our speaker costs, refreshments and lunch, with a Concession for the unwaged and Parishioners of the Parish of Christ the King. Full Day £30 / Concession £20

Please forward this email to anyone you know who might be interested.

London Churches Refugee Fund Christmas Cards & Gifts 2024

Registered Charity 1121108

A Christmas Rose

'A Christmas Rose'
painted by artist Rozhan
from Iran



**'Holy Family with Guardian
Angel'** by artist Cathy Young
From 12C Psalter

- ❖ Two beautiful Christmas cards – images as above
 - ❖ A stunning Art Print: *"The Flight to Egypt"*
 - ❖ **Welcome Gift Cards:** These are purchased by you with a donation to LCRF. You then send the card to family, friends, or colleagues in lieu of a traditional present. The card says: *"My Gift to you this Christmas is a donation to the London Churches Refugee Fund"*
CLICK HERE to view and buy safely online
at lcrf.onlineweb.shop

The Congregational Lecture 2024

‘The Witnessings of the Spirit:
Experimental Religion and Heart Knowledge
in Seventeenth-Century Britain’.



At Westminster College, Cambridge
on Thursday 21 November 2024 at 5.30pm.

Lecturer: Alexandra Walsham, Professor of Modern
History and Fellow of Emmanuel College,
University of Cambridge.

Image from *The Heart of Man* Harrisburg, USA 1851

RSVP: admin@pondsquarechapel.org.uk

The 2024 Annual Congregational Lecture will take place at Westminster College, Cambridge on Thursday 21 November 2024 at 5:30pm. Professor Alexandra Walsham will speak on the theme of evangelical conversion as it manifested itself among some of the mid-17th century congregations in

London and Dublin, which emphasised the question of 'heart knowledge' and the experimental realisation of one's elect status as a visible saint.

Refreshments will be available before the event from 4:30pm. To assist with planning for the event, please email the Secretary of the Friends of the Congregational Library at admin@pondsquarechapel.org.uk , if you wish to attend.

The lecture is organised by the Congregational Library, part of the Congregational Memorial Hall Trust, half of whose trustees are appointed by the United Reformed Church.

Safeguarding Training

UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2024

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

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	

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



The United Reformed Church Safeguarding

www.urc.org.uk



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2025

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

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www.urc.org.uk



From the United Reformed Church Safeguarding Committee

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



[Unsubscribe here](#)

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