

Newsletter

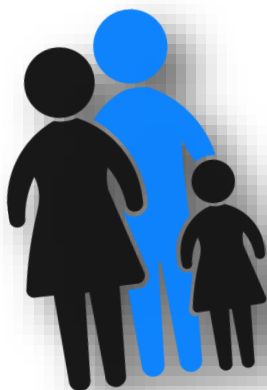
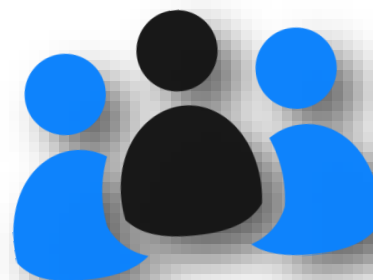
Extraordinary Synod Meeting—Tuesday 18th July 2023



- Clare Downing Induction as Moderator
- Chorley URC—Tree planting at Clare's Induction
- Blackford Bridge URC— Coffee Morning
- Forton URC
- Heald Green URC

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- Blackburn with Darwen Refugee Week Programme
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News & Opportunities

- Education funds for Lay Preachers



** Repeated items

For your Prayers

Extraordinary Synod Meeting - Tuesday 18th July 2023

Synod Executive wishes to call an Extraordinary Synod meeting to take place, by Zoom, on the evening of Tuesday 18th July 2023 starting at 7pm. Please save this date, and join the meeting if you are able to do so.

The main piece of business is a continuation of the very productive and useful conversations which began at our Spring Synod as we consider how best to deploy the ordained ministers available to us within North Western Synod.

Synod will be invited to consider the appointment of an Ecumenical Mentor whose focus will be on ecumenical partnerships around the North West. We are fortunate to have a number of LEPs (Local Ecumenical Projects) within the Synod; 'God for All' and the South West United Area, in Cumbria are exciting and positive opportunities to develop work with our ecumenical partners; opportunities to work together across the wider Synod with ecumenical partners are ever present and could be developed as we work more closely – all of which could benefit from a dedicated Ecumenical Mentor supporting and encouraging that work.

Synod will also be asked to think about appointing a Transitional Minister – someone who would be available to help a church or group of churches, or Missional Partnership anywhere within the Synod when a particular need arises. Examples are where a particular project is being undertaken which would benefit from additional input from a Minister; situations where a particular congregation or Partnership is struggling and needs some intensive support from a Minister; periods when a Partnership is in vacancy, between the departure of a Partnership minister and the call of a new one....the possibilities are extensive, and exciting.

There will be more detailed information coming out about these thoughts over the next few weeks in readiness for the meeting, along with a Zoom link as the date approaches.

Please do try to attend this meeting if you are able to do so.

Tim Hopley

GOOD NEWS



Induction of our new Moderator



Last Saturday Chorley URC was packed, and others joined the Livestream from their homes, to welcome Revd Clare Downing as the new Moderator of North Western Synod. The sun shone, and a sense of celebration and joy was palpable as people gathered from all around Synod and beyond to mark this special occasion.

Revd Dr John Bradbury (General Secretary), Revd Fiona Bennett (General Assembly Moderator) and Clare all arrived at Chorley earlier in the day to see some of the work at Chorley's award winning 'Repair Café' and to be interviewed by BBC Lancashire before the service started.

Methodist, Baptist, Anglican and Salvation Army colleagues, along with the Mayor of Chorley, welcomed Clare to the North West during the service. John Bradbury preached on Luke's account of the disciples walking the road to Emmaus when Jesus fell into step with them along their way and joined them on their journey. If you were not able to be there, and didn't manage to watch the livestream, the induction was recorded and you can watch it [here](#).



Following the service, John, Clare and Fiona all planted trees in the church garden.



Chorley excelled with the weather; with a wonderful choir; a lively band and a gifted organist making the singing of all the hymns moving and uplifting. Chorley URC's hospitality continued afterwards with refreshments for all, and a chance to catch up, chat and meet Clare.



Sincere thanks to everyone who made the day a great success – and a warm welcome to Clare as she begins her three year role as Moderator of North Western Synod. May it be a happy, rewarding and encouraging time for her, and for all of us.

Chorley URC—Tree Planting at Clare's Induction

After her induction on Saturday, Rev Clare Downing, along with Rev Dr John Bradbury and Rev Fiona Bennett took a few minutes to plant trees in the gardens at Chorley URC. These three apple trees will, in the fullness of time, provide food, shelter and shade for wildlife and humans alike.

The trees are part of a gardening project at Chorley where, with Council funding, raised beds are being created and existing green areas improved. People from across the community will be able to learn new skills in gardening and cooking and eat the produce grown.

More fruit trees will be added later in the year, along with fruit bushes and perennial plants, creating a beautiful, biodiverse and nectar rich green space accessible to the local community.



Blackford Bridge URC—Coffee morning

The Blackford Bridge URC held a successful Community Coffee Morning on 10th June, which brought in about 50 visitors including children. There were cakes and sandwiches on sale, alongside drinks. A raffle was held and books and cards were sold. Some new faces were welcomed and by popular request the event will become monthly. Next date will be Saturday July 8th at 10.30. Visitors are always welcome. The event raised £202 for church renovation.

Keith Bentley



Forton URC

FORTON URC is a Grade 2 Listed Building. It has a traditional layout with pews and a step up area for Communion table, lectern and keyboard. The Ukulele Group from Garstang moved aside the table, lectern and keyboard to make the perfect stage for their musicians. The central aisle of the Church was used for dancing. The passage from the Church to the Schoolroom led the dancers back round into the Church. Song sheets were provided for Community singing and of course the traditional cup of tea to finish a very enjoyable afternoon.

Sent by Joyce Holden Elder at FORTON URC



Heald Green URC



Bee excited ...

There's an exciting buzz around at Heald Green URC! A few months ago, we were approached by a local Bee Keeper who was looking for a site to start a community apiary and thought the grounds behind our building would be suitable. After discussions with the Elders and Church Meeting, Health and Safety considerations, a Risk Assessment and written agreement, and consultations with the neighbours, we were excited that the project finally got the go-ahead.

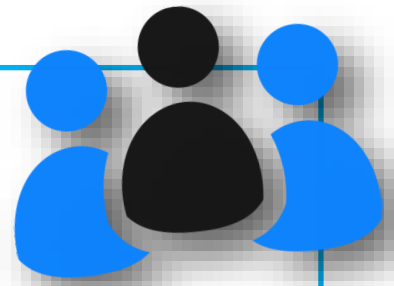


Having the three bee hives in our grounds fits well with our EcoChurch developments and our desire to build links with our local community. In addition, the bees are busy pollinating the apple trees that we planted last year to mark the 50th anniversary of the URC, and we might even have some honey to harvest later in the year.



Save the dates

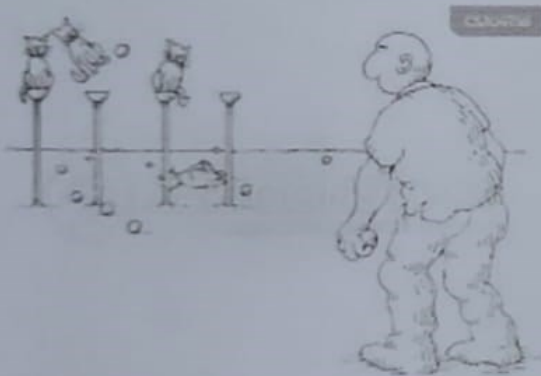
- **Extraordinary Synod Meeting—Tuesday 18th July 2023**
- **Minister's Away Day at Brockholes—16 September 2023**
- **Legacies of Slavery: A Guided Walk through Manchester—21 October 2023**



ALBION CHURCH GARDEN PARTY & FAMILY FUN DAY



SATURDAY 17TH JUNE
10.30AM TO 3PM



Fun games and side stalls

BBQ & cafe



Candy floss



www.AlbionURC.org.uk

Albion Church, Stamford Street East, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 6QQ

United Reformed Church members show support to coffee morning event during the Refugee Week in Blackburn

On 22 June, Community Harmony Project (CHP - Blackburn) will celebrate Refugee Week through the Coffee Morning at the Quakers Meeting House, Blackburn. Theme of the event is 'Compassion.' Some members of the local United Reformed Churches will attend the event to show their support to the refugee initiatives in Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

The event will be an opportunity to celebrate Refugee Week, to listen to the encouraging and resilient voices of asylum seekers and refugees. It would also be a time to recognise the services of refugees' locally. The Mayor of Blackburn, Councillor Parwaiz Akhtar, will give an award to a refugee who showed compassion to the destitute people.

There will be a quiz and lighting the Peace & Harmony Candle. International food will also be served.

More than fifty people from different walks of life (councillors, members of local charities and concerned citizens) will attend the event.

Refugee Week

COMMUNITY HARMONY PROJECT
CIC
Service by the community for the community

Funded by:
Lancashire County Council

COFFEE MORNING

THEME

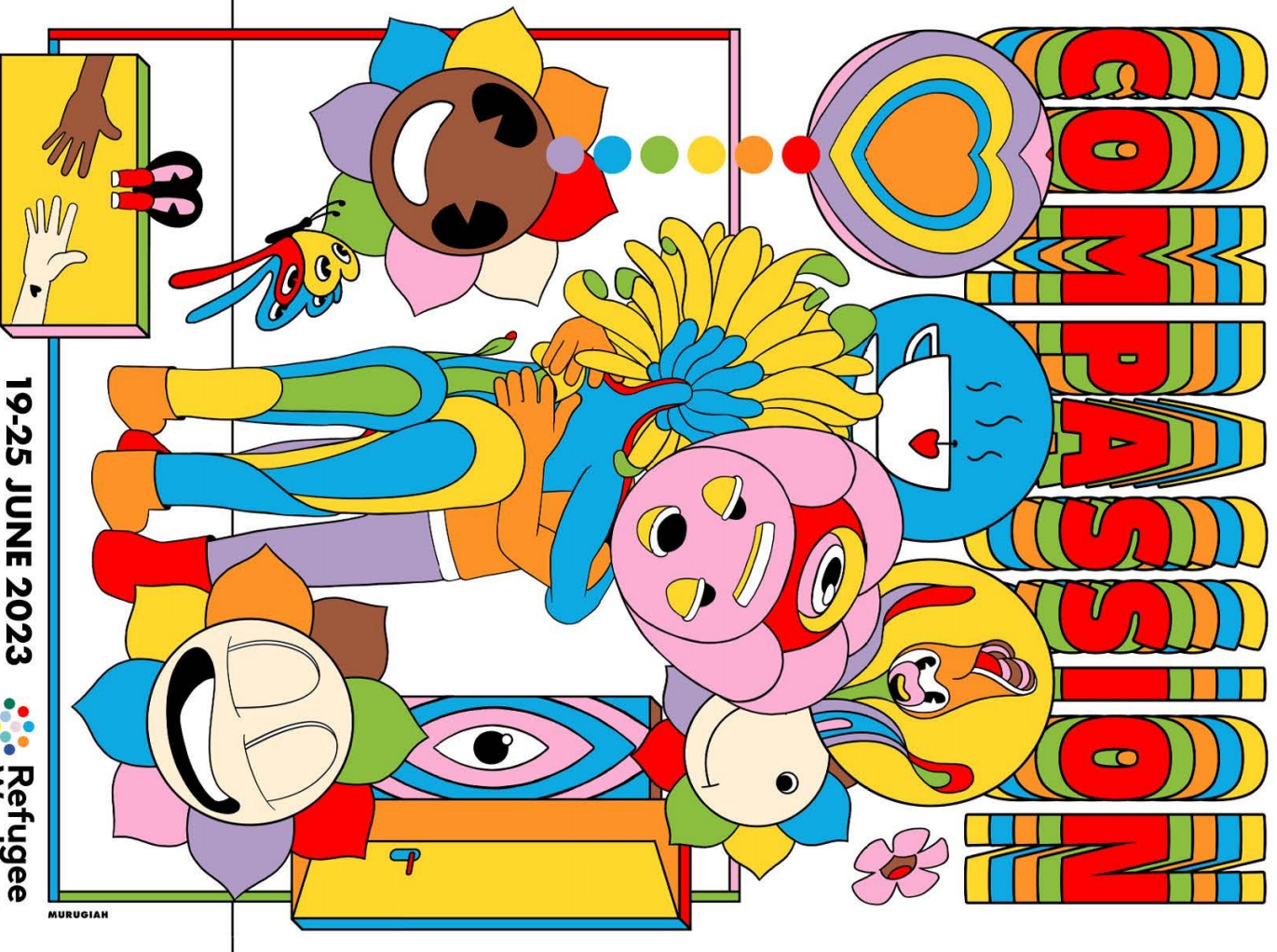
COMPASSION

Thursday, 22 June 2023
10 am to 1 pm
Quakers Meeting House, Blackburn
Paradise Lane, King Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LY

PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACE.

QUIZ
DISCUSSION
REFRESHMENTS

CONTACT
M: 07874866321
E: communityharmonyproject@gmail.com



Blackburn with Darwen Refugee Week Programme 2023

Event	Date/ Time	Location	Ticketing
Homes 4 Ukraine Celebration	Saturday 17th June 1:30pm - 4:30pm	The Bureau Centre for the Arts Penny Street, Blackburn, BB1 6HQ	Limited tickets available via https://bit.ly/45T9C55
Compassion Conference	Monday 19th June 9:30am - 1pm	Blackburn Cathedral Cathedral Close, Blackburn, BB1 5AA	Book your free ticket via Eventbrite https://bit.ly/3oTrhcs
Read, Rhythm and Rhyme Storytime 'Lily and the Polar Bears by Ijon Shebari'	Wednesday 21st June 10:30am - 11am	Blackburn Central Library Town Hall Street, Blackburn, BB2 1AG	Feel free to drop-in
International Food Festival	Wednesday 21st June 11am- 1pm	Wesley Hall, Feilden Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LQ	Limited tickets available via ARC Blackburn. T: 01254 690282
Refugee short films	Wednesday, 21st June to Saturday 24th June 12pm - 4:45pm	Blackburn Museum, Museum Street, Blackburn, BB1 7AJ	Feel free to drop-in during Museum opening times
Community Harmony Project Coffee Morning	Thursday 22nd June 10am - 1pm	Quakers Meeting House, Paradise Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LY	Book your free ticket via Eventbrite https://bit.ly/3qCC0hd
Kairos -'Compassion in Action' film screening	Friday 23rd June 1pm - 3pm	Kairos Hub, 46 King Street, Blackburn, BB2 2DH	This is a drop-in but you can register your interest via Facebook. https://fb.me/e/1dCwMD5Uy
Community Harmony Project- Picnic	Saturday 24th June 10am - 4pm	Lake District	By invitation via Community Harmony
Storytime and crafting	Saturday 24th June 11am - 11:30am	Darwen Library, Knot Street, Darwen BB3 3BU	Feel free to drop - in
Compassion crafting	Saturday 24th June 12pm -4pm	Blackburn Museum, Museum Street, Blackburn, BB1 7AJ	Feel free to drop - in during Museum opening times
Connect Hub - Family Fun Day	Sunday 25th June 12pm - 4pm	Blackburn Central High School Haslingden Road, Blackburn, BB2 3HJ	Register your place by text - 07827 181 844

MURUGIAN

**WINDRUSH
DAY 2023**

TRINITY COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Amani Centre
Moss Lane East
(opposite the Kath Locke Centre)

22nd June 2023 is the 75th Anniversary
of the arrival of the Empire Windrush in Britain.

Trinity Community Church grew out of various churches
in Moss Side, Hulme and Old Trafford.
Within these churches there have been
(and still are) many wonderful people
who came to Britain from the Caribbean over the years.

In acknowledgement of and in gratitude for the immense
contribution they have made to our church,
our community and our country,
we are unveiling a plaque at the Amani Centre on
Thursday 22nd June
6.30 for 7.00

If your grandparents, parents or relations were members of Baptist
or United Reformed Churches in Moss Side, Hulme or Old Trafford
or were involved with the Hideaway Youth Project
we would particularly like to invite you to join us
in celebration of their lives.

There will be food and music and a chance to share memories.
(Bring some pictures!)

For more information ring Gabrielle on 0161 226 3258
or email tccmside@gmail.com
(it would help to get some idea of how many are coming)
and do spread the word to others!



NW Synod Children Together @ Blackpool Zoo



Does your Church have ANY children's activities, organisations or families (including grandparents and great grandparents!)?

If so they, and you, are invited to join us for a fun day out to Blackpool Zoo on

Saturday 30th September 2023

Cost: £8.50 for Children aged 3-15 (under 3's free)
£12.50 for Adults

The final closing date for replies is 9th September.
For further details and booking form please contact
David Normington (davidnorm@talktalk.net)
or Leo Roberts (cydo@nwsynod.org.uk).



Scouts



This event is being administered by NW Pilots.

URC Church Safeguarding Coordinators training



This is an online training course for all existing and new Church Safeguarding Coordinators (including Deputies) to understand their roles and responsibilities.

All United Reformed Churches are required to appoint a safeguarding coordinator for children and adults. Smaller churches may consider appointing one or two coordinators for a group of churches.

Understand how the role of the Church Safeguarding Coordinator can work with the leadership of the church to ensure that they can create a positive safeguarding culture

There are SIX sessions, all of which are the same, so please choose one which best suits you:

- Tuesday 20 June 2023 6.30-8.30pm
- Monday 3 July 2023 10.30am-12.30pm
- Wednesday 19 July 2023 6.30-8.30pm
- Thursday 3 August 2023 10.30am-12.30pm

Tuesday 15 August 2023 1.30-3.30pm

Please sign up for a session using the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/urc-church-safeguarding-coordinator-training-m-nw-synods-tickets-635482855327>

Other Safeguarding Training events in 2023 (click on the links for the PDFs to download and print):

[URC DDC verifier and Safer Recruitment training](#)

[National Safeguarding training 2023](#)

[Intermediate & Advanced Safeguarding training](#)

Further face to face Intermediate safeguarding training sessions are currently being finalised for each missional partnership, the dates and venues will be circulated in the next few weeks



Safeguarding

Advanced Safeguarding training will be taking place in the autumn.

Safeguarding Contacts

Julie Rafferty, is the Synod Safeguarding Adviser and is supported by Pauline Burke, who is the Safeguarding Administrator.

For General safeguarding queries, relating to safeguarding training, DBS and the annual church safeguarding returns, please contact Pauline on: safeguardingadminnwandm@urcmerseysynod.org.uk

For queries relating to safeguarding policy & procedure and safeguarding allegations/concerns, please contact Julie on: safeguarding@urcmerseysynod.org.uk or mobile number: 07376-053044

Glorious Grandparenting



Calling all grandparents!

Fun, challenging, inspiring, exhausting, the grandparenting years can mark a glorious time with our younger generations.

Come to a free workshop for grandparents of teenagers, children and pre-schoolers:

- * Enrich your relationships at different ages and stages
- * Share your faith – overcoming barriers
- * Celebrate the challenges and blessings.

Online session:

Monday 19 June 2023 from 7pm to 8.45pm

Lundie Award

The Lundie Memorial Award celebrates the good work a child or young person is doing for their church and community.

If you know a child or young person who is playing their part in the mission of God in their church or Synod, their local community or the wider world, please nominate them for a Lundie Memorial Award and help shine a light on their achievements.

Each month, a medal and certificate will be awarded to one of the nominated children and young people, along with a financial gift of £100 to be spent to benefit children and/or young people in the church, synod or local community, however the award winner chooses.

Nomination areas

Good work can be interpreted in many different ways, so there are no hard and fast categories for this award. Suggested nomination areas are:

- a young carer
- a young person running a holiday club
- a child volunteering at a dementia café
- a young person fund raising for a Messy Church outing
- a young person providing live music for services
- a child raising money for an overseas development project
- a young person training older people in the use of technology
- a child who turns up early every week to set out the chairs for a club
- a young person volunteering as a peer mentor at college
- anyone under 26 who is playing their part in the mission of God in any way

Making a nomination

Anyone under the age of 25 can be nominated and anybody can make a nomination at any time of the year.

To make a nomination, download and complete a nomination form ([Lundie Memorial Award - United Reformed Church](#)) and send it by post or email to cydo@nwsynod.org.uk

You will also need to get the nominee (and their parents if they are under 18) to sign the form to show they agree to you sending their details.

It would be great if you can send a good quality original sized photo of the nominee, preferably doing something connected with their nomination. If they win, this photograph may be used on the URC website or other publicity to celebrate their achievement.

Virtual Gathered Youth Group

VIRTUAL GATHERED YOUTH GROUP

Every Wednesday
7-8pm



Every Wednesday evening from 7-8pm(ish) our Synod CYDO, Leo Roberts, runs a 'virtual Youth Group' on Zoom with young people from across the synod.

The evening is aimed at 14-21 year olds and is full of games, discussions and general chat. If there are young people in your church who would like to join they would be more than welcome. They can access the session by clicking www.bit.ly/gatheredyouthgroup

Education funds for Lay Preachers (AALP or Synod Recognised) . . .

If you're a lay preacher (AALP or Synod Recognised) and you're interested in learning opportunities, there is a £300 sum allotted for your continuing development. Would you like to take advantage of a seminar? Reach out to Rob Hoch, learningmentor@nwsynod.org.uk for more information.

Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher Programme . . .

There's still time for you to register for the Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers programme which begins in the autumn. If you would like to pursue this opportunity, write to me for more information. Deadline for submission of registration documents is **30 June**. Please write Rob for more information.

Continuing Studies Fund for Ministers . . .

Any United Reformed Church minister who is eligible to apply for EM3 funding is also eligible to apply for support through the Continuing Studies Fund. The Fund is not available for ministers from other denominations working with the United Reformed Church.

This assistance is offered to help ministers serving in ways that are recognised by the United Reformed Church. The Continuing Studies Fund can be called upon after all EM3 sources have been exhausted, including sabbatical funding and "rolled-over" annual EM3 allowances.

A number of activities are eligible for support from the Continuing Studies Fund:

- Part-time study for higher degrees. Funds might, for example, be used towards the payment of fees, research expenses, or the cost of having the thesis bound in the requisite number of copies.
- Professional development programmes such as CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)
- The fund offers a maximum annual amount of up to £350 for a Bachelors' degree, Graduate Diploma, or professional development programme and up to £500 towards a Postgraduate Diploma, Masters or PhD. Repeat requests are allowed, throughout the duration of study.

Applications for this support should be made to the Secretary for Education by way of Rob Hoch, NWS Training and Learning Mentor. Forms can be submitted at any time, but the annual closing date for applications is **30 June**. Decisions are normally made in early July ready for the start of the academic year. Please write to Rob (learningmentor@nwsynod.org.uk) for application and information.

Decisions are normally made in early July ready for the start of the academic year. Please write to Rob (learningmentor@nwsynod.org.uk) for application and information.

Continuing Studies Fund for Lay Learners . . .

Lay applicants are now eligible to apply for support through the Continuing Studies Fund (CSF). This funding is not available to lay members outside the United Reformed Church working with other denominations. A number of activities are already eligible for support from the Continuing Studies Fund:

- Part-time study for higher degrees. Funds might, for example, be used towards the payment of fees, research expenses, or the cost of having the thesis bound in the requisite number of copies.
- Professional development programmes such as CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development).

The fund offers a maximum annual amount of up to £350 for a Bachelors' degree, Graduate Diploma, or professional development programme and up to £500 towards a Postgraduate Diploma, Masters or PhD. If the applicant is an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher, they can put their £300 annual grant towards this. Repeat requests are allowed throughout the duration of study.

Applications can also be made for a broad range of subjects, not just theological. For example, bookkeeping courses for treasurers and MS Word courses for secretaries will be considered.

There are five conditions to be met before a grant will be considered:

- The applicant must be someone who serves the URC in a voluntary capacity, needs to have been a member of a URC for at least two years and remain a URC member throughout the duration of the course.
- The application needs to be for a course from a recognised establishment.
- The applicant must explain how this learning will enhance or support their role/ ministry in a local church context.
- All the remaining funding needs to be in place before a grant is given.
- The form needs to be endorsed by both the local church and the Synod.

Applications for this support should be made to the Secretary for Education. Forms can be submitted at any time, but the annual closing date for applications is **30 June**. Decisions are normally made in early July ready for the start of the academic year. Please write to Rob (learningmentor@nwsynod.org.uk) for application and information.

For your prayers

In each newsletter we would like to share peoples situations and Churches who you might remember in your prayers. If you have any prayer requests to include in this section please send them to office@nwsynod.org.uk.

This week we invite you to pray for:

- For the congregations of churches which have decided to close, and for all those who are facing difficult decisions about the future of their fellowships and buildings

