

North Western Synod Newsletter

Living Stones for a Living Church



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For your Prayers

Living Stones for a Living Church

In many communities, buildings which can act as a hub for community life are at a premium. Perhaps most importantly, this has impacted on places where people can simply come together to meet with friends or to access community based support and advice services. A consequence of this is growing issues of social isolation. Similarly, local community groups find it increasingly difficult to find affordable places to meet or to work from.

Often local churches are one of the few, if not the only, place in particular communities which could offer a space to respond to these and broader community needs, for example around affordable housing and homelessness.

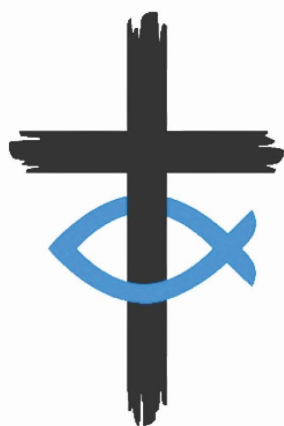
Recently, the Synod was asked to lead a meeting of the URC's Church Buildings Forum looking at how churches could make better use of their buildings to respond to the needs of local communities. As part of this with the support and contribution from four of our churches we produced a short film, showing different ways in which church buildings can be used with the community and shared something of the motivations and benefits of using their buildings to respond to needs in their local communities.

We hope it may provide you with some inspiration about how your buildings could be adapted to respond to needs in your local community.

The video can be [streamed here](#)

Mike Hart

Transformation Director



The
**United
Reformed
Church**
**North Western
Synod**

The United Reformed Church North Western Synod
cordially invites you to

**The Ordination and Induction of Maria
Lee & Induction of the Rev'd Barnabas Shin
to the Bolton & Salford Missional
Partnership**

Saturday 20th July

2.30pm

St Andrew & St George's

Bolton

BL1 2BX

Please RSVP by 5th July
to Kerry Later office@nwsynod.org.uk

Please let me know if you have any dietary requirements

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85930013197?
pwd=20ZsABQx3iBOaQkYqtXHbERLUBqn4O.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85930013197?pwd=20ZsABQx3iBOaQkYqtXHbERLUBqn4O.1)

Meeting ID: 859 3001 3197

Passcode: 188911

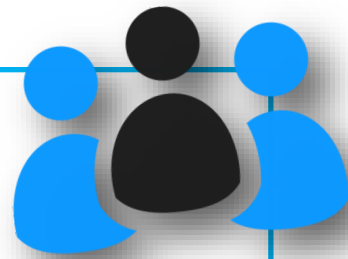
Richmond Poppies launch event



Churches in Bewcastle attended a special event at Carlisle Castle on June 8th. Organised by the Northern Region of the Donkey Breed Society, the event launched the display of purple Richmond Poppies, part of its work to commemorate all animals and birds involved in war work. Bewcastle has a long connection with these military animals and Bishop John gave a short address reminding us of the bond between all God's living creatures. Heather Armstrong and Barbara Smith, members of the Knowe URC Church pictured looking at the poppies, are both descendents of men who served in the Westmoreland and Cumberland Yeomanry cavalry regiment in the First World War. Their pictures and stories feature in a

booklet about animals in military service produced as part of the project.





Save the dates

- An Extraordinary Synod Meeting will be held via Zoom at 7.30pm on Thursday 20th June 2024 to agree North Western Synod's response to the United Reformed Church proposals for future payments to the Ministry and Mission Fund. To view the Synod Meeting papers for our Extraordinary meeting held on 20th June 7pm click [here](#)
- NW Synod Family Fun Day—14th September (Advertised in events section)
- North West Pilots Camp—13th—15 September (Advertised in events section)
- South Area Elder Enrichment Day 21st September

Synod Family Fun Day and NW Pilots Camp

Following on from the success of last year's Children Together Event at Blackpool Zoo, the North West Pilots, in conjunction with the Synod Children & Youthwork Committee and The Quinta Centre, are organising this year's Synod Family Fun Day.

If you have any children, youth groups/organisations, or families at your Church they are all invited to join us at Quinta on the Saturday for the Synod Family Fun Day.

The Synod Family Fun Day on Saturday is running as part of the NW Pilots Camp that is taking place at Quinta the same weekend (Friday 13th – Sunday 15th). You are more than welcome to join the NW Pilots for the entire weekend at their camp.

For more information and booking details, posters are advertised on the next pages.



NW Synod Family Fun Day @ The Quinta Centre, nr Oswestry



Tag Archery

Inflatable Obstacle Course



Swimming



Frisbee
Golf



Arts &
Crafts

Board Games



And Much
Much, More
besides

Saturday 14 September 2024 - 10am to 4pm

Cost: £5 per person (Non-Refundable)

Revised closing date for bookings is 31st July 2024.

**For further details and booking form please contact
David Normington (davidnorm@talktalk.net) or Anne Hatch
(annehatch48@virginmedia.com)**





North West Pilots Camp

*(incorporating the NW
Synod Family Fun Day)*



**@ The Quinta Centre, nr
Oswestry**

**Open to any child aged 5 to 18
(and their families/leaders) that
are connected to the URC in anyway.**



**The camp is taking
place in Severn
Lodge, part of the
Quinta site, on**



Friday 13th to Sunday 15th September 2024



**Cost (subsidised by
NW Pilots):
£40.00 per Pilot
£60.00 per Non-Pilot**



**Revised closing date
for bookings is 31st July 2024.**

**For further details and booking form please contact
Anne Hatch (annehatch48@virginmedia.com) or
David Normington (davidnorm@talktalk.net)**



Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher (AALP) Taster Evening



**NORTHERN
COLLEGE**



Are you thinking of exploring a call to worship leading
and lay preaching?
Curious about what the course is like?
Join us on Zoom.

Thursday 27th June, 7.00– 8.30 p.m.

Covering the following aspects of the program:
Team delivery- meet some of the team
Give-it-a-go sessions
Q and A

Hosted by Meg Warner (Northern College, Manchester)

Enquiries and booking essential:
megan.warner@lutherking.ac.uk
(by the 22nd of June. Zoom link will be sent out on booking)

For more about the process regarding becoming a AALP;

<https://urc.org.uk/urc-ministries/the-process-to-become-an-assembly-accredited-lay-preacher/>

South Area Elders' Enrichment Day

To book please contact office@nwsynod.org.uk

ELDERS' ENRICHMENT DAY 2024 SOUTH AREA

Venue: The Alma Lodge Hotel,
Stockport, SK2 6EL.

Date: 21st September 2024
Time: 10am-3pm

Refreshments from 9:30am and lunch is provided

RSVP: Kerry Later office@nwsynod.org.uk
by 13th September 2024

Free onsite parking. Bus route 192. Nearest train station: Davenport.

Discipleship

You are invited to join the
congregation of

Besses o' th' Barn URC

at their closing service on
Saturday 29th June 2024, 2.30pm
followed by refreshments

For the purposes of the post-service refreshments we would like an idea
of numbers. If you would like to
attend please contact:

Revd Richard Bradley on
richard.bradley@nwsynod.org.uk
01706 369622 // 07483 155807



Safeguarding Training

**Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility**

Face to face Intermediate Safeguarding training

More venues, dates and times will be arranged in the autumn to fit in with the holiday season. Churches will be sent updated reminders of outstanding training.

For more information about training records for your church please contact Katherine Adewumi at admin@nwsynod.org.uk

Online Intermediate Safeguarding Training

3rd July 2024	12.00-14.00
6th Aug 2024	6.30-8.30
9th Sept 2024	14.00-16.00



Foundation Safeguarding e-Learning

Any person with a role in a URC church that has not completed URC safeguarding training in the last 3 years is required to complete the Foundation e-learning as a minimum, ideally individually, but it can be facilitated in small groups if people do not have access to the internet, a computer/ device or both.

You must have completed Foundation training before you can do Intermediate training. Follow this link: [Foundation Safeguarding Training](#)

Online Advanced Safeguarding Training

Advanced Training

This training is:

Mandatory for people who are leading groups involving adults and/or children in churches.

Recommended for Church Safeguarding Coordinators and all other people in leadership roles.

Online Church Co-Ordinator's Safeguarding Training

This is a 2-hour online training course for URC Church Safeguarding Coordinators, to help them in their role and to understand their responsibilities. Also, an opportunity to network with others, discuss issues and concerns and ask question to clarify policy and procedure.

10th Sept 2024 18:30-20:30

URC Denominational (Church House lead) Safeguarding Training for 2024 *(please click on the link for further information)*

[URC Denominational Safeguarding Training 2024 \(urc.org.uk\)](https://urc.org.uk)

Safeguarding Contacts:

Yvette Hansbury-Robinson is the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

For General safeguarding queries, relating to safeguarding training and DBS please email the safeguarding team on admin@nwsynod.org.uk

For queries relating to safeguarding policy & procedure and safeguarding allegations/concerns, please contact Yvette on:

Email: safeguarding@nwsynod.org.uk

Mobile number: 07827-390299

Online Taster Event



This is an opportunity to connect, find out more and ask questions about the '**Community of Pioneers**' and the '**Certificate in Pioneer Mission**' programme that is run by the 'Newbigin Pioneering Hub.

The **next online taster event**, with the opportunity to ask questions on zoom with Rev Dr Ash Barker, will take place on: **Thursday 27 June at 7-9pm**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2844925967>

Meeting ID: 284 492 5967

Could God be calling you to step out in faith in new ways to see your God-given dreams in your local community

flourish in faith, hope and love?

Do you See...

- New possibilities?
- A way where there is no way?
- Ideas for mission in your community that just might work?
- A new community of disciples where there is none?
- How your local community can flourish in God's love and shalom, but know this can't happen alone?

If you can see even a glimpse of any of these, then come and be part of the **Newbigin Pioneering Hub**, see if your hopes can be realised together with us, achieve a Certificate in Pioneering Mission.

This opportunity is now open to **Ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the URC**. Come along to the taster session and find out more. You can use your **EM3 funding** for the certificate course.

Would you join us in this new venture? Enquiries to ministries@urc.org.uk

Fill in the application form to apply for 2024-25 programme.

Application Closing Date : Friday 6 September 2024.

Course fees paid by : Saturday 14 September 2024. Costs: CMS Certificate of Pioneering programme: £600 includes six modules or £300 for an approved URC or Congregational Federation Participant.

Community of Pioneers community membership: £24 annually (free for programme contributors).

Newbigin Pioneering Hub Lodge Road Community Church 143-4 Lodge Road, Winson Green Birmingham B18 5B

More information and application form can be found here on the URC website: <https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/more-about-ministry/newbigin-pioneering-hub/>

Manchester Roofbreaker Network

By the roof or door? - disability inclusion

Do you have a passion for disability inclusion within your church? We believe that disabled people should be a full part of church and Christian life. We invite you to join us on the journey to make that happen.

Through the Roof

Find out who we are and how we help support and resource churches with disability inclusion. Hear more about the ABC model - Access, Belonging and Commission and what it could look like in your church.

Guest Speakers

Lynn McCann, founder of Reachout ASC and volunteer Disability Advisor for Diocese of Blackburn. Lynn will be speaking on **The Autistic and ADHD Experiences in Church.**

Chich Hewitt - retired minister living with sight-loss. Involved in Disability charities and convenor of the Disability Task Group - Diocese of Manchester. Chich will speak on **Sight loss in church life.**

Refreshments will be available

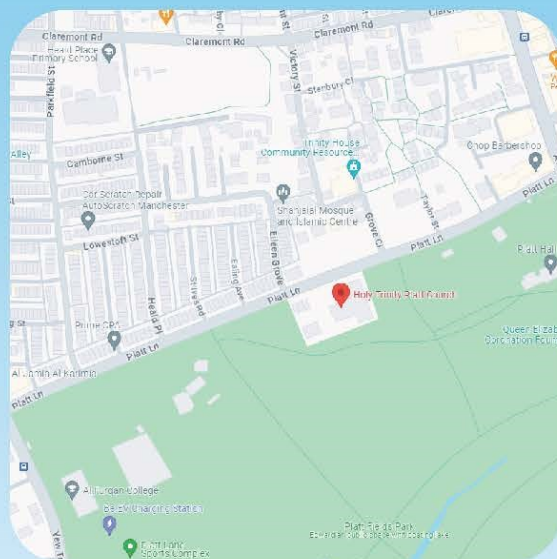
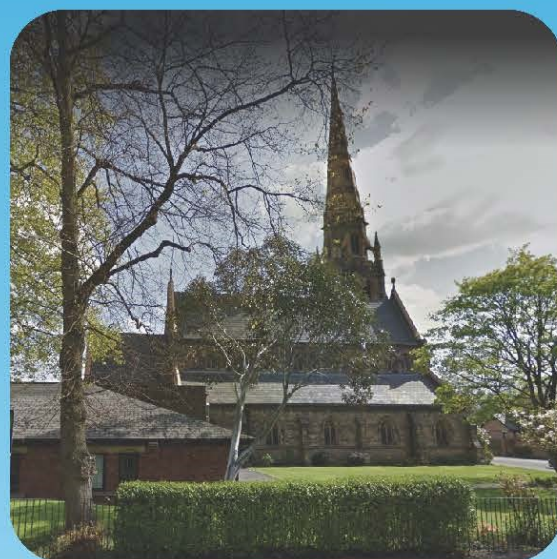
Parking is available at venue.
Buses - 111, 733, 781, 41, 42, 42A, 42B, 42C, 43, 142, 143, 147

Please let us know if you have any access needs.

For more information, or to book your space visit bit.ly/TTRManchester



**Manchester
Roofbreaker Network**



**10AM - 12.30PM
SATURDAY
6TH
JULY**

**Holy Trinity
Platt**
Platt Lane,
Fallowfield
M14 5NF

The Lancashire North Missional Partnership is hosting a production of "I am Mark"

7th September at 10.30am in Lancaster



"I am Mark". Discover the Jesus you've never known!

Click the link to book your free tickets! <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/i-am-mark-discover-the-jesus-youve-never-known-tickets-901509247427>



Grants advert



The Children and Youth Committee have recently announced our grant availability for activities across our Synod. We are now excitedly waiting for applications to come flooding in to support the great Children's and Youth work across our area.

Do you have a Messy Church that could do with some new equipment? Or a Lego Church or Godly Play group that would benefit from some new bricks or characters? Perhaps you have a young person who is struggling to attend a residential? Grants can be made towards the costs of resources, attendance at events, materials and travel.

The Children and Youth grants are here for you! Whatever your idea or need take a look at <https://nwsynod.org.uk/children-youth-work-committee/> for more information and give Leo a call or email (cydo@nwsynod.org.uk) and let us know how we can help.

Grants of under £150 can be submitted at any time, Grants of between £151 and £1,500 will be dealt with twice a year, at the meetings of the Committee held in March and September.

Dream On Greenbelt Festival

A great opportunity for any adults looking to enjoy the Greenbelt Festival while supporting the Youth provision [Buy tickets - Greenbelt](#)

DREAM ON GREENBELT FESTIVAL

ARTISTRY × ACTIVISM × BELIEF 22-25 AUGUST 2024 – KETTERING, UK



Are you aged 18+?

Do you enjoy supporting 12 - 17 year olds?

Have experience, gifts, skills to share?

Then volunteer on the URC run

Opportunity comes with festival benefits, training, and support.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT TEAM



Children's Workers Conference

URC Children's Workers Together THE CONFERENCE

Exploring how we work with children together

Inspirational speakers

Variety of workshops

Wide range of resources

Networking

opportunities

Worship together

Friday 1 to Sunday 3
November 2024

Save the date



Ripon College,
Cuddeston OX44 9EX

Cost £150 per person
Bookings open from
1 May 2024

URC Children's Workers Together – THE CONFERENCE: exploring how we work with children together

In response to popular demand, URC Children's and Youth Work are holding our first ever Children's Worker Conference from 1-3 November 2024 at Ripon College, Cuddeston, Oxford OX44 9EX.

If you are actively engaged in children's ministry within the URC, whether as an employed worker or on a voluntary basis, this weekend is for you. It's a chance to share together, to be inspired and informed, to worship together, and to consider how we might increase opportunities for child participation, mutual storytelling, and creativity.

Bookings opened on 1 May 2024 and places will be allocated to allow a fair distribution of synods represented, with a waiting list in operation until June 1, when any remaining spaces will be allocated. From 1 June we will also be taking bookings for day visitors.

Costs will be £150 for residential and £35 per day for day visitors. Funding is available from North Western Synod.

The synod has 2 places available - if you are interested in attending, please email Leo on cydo@nwsynod.org.uk

Holiday Club Material

Welcome to Sparks and Stories - a free downloadable resource for those running holiday clubs for children aged between 5-11 years of age.

Tying in with our theme for the year, **Story Story Story**, we are gathering round the campfire, wrapped in our cosy camp blankets and armed with steaming mugs of hot chocolate and marshmallows on sticks to toast in the flames, as we listen to and share stories of Jesus together. What stories did Jesus tell and what stories were told about him? How does his story mingle with our stories? Let's find out.

This material is not designed to be prescriptive, although you may use it that way if you wish. Nor is it designed to be exclusive; feel free to swap and change the ideas included here for ones you think more suitable for your groups. It is written as a five-day plan but you may decide to do a one-day extravaganza, a club once a week through the holidays, or maybe just select a couple of the sessions to do on two or three days in the week.

Download for free from [Holiday Club Materials - United Reformed Church](https://www.urc.org.uk/holiday-club-materials)

Remember: If you are running a holiday club this summer, a grant is available from the URC Children and Youth Office to help with costs/resources. Email Leo (cydo@nwsynod.org.uk) for details – **and remember to invite him to visit!**



Talking About... Sports Ministry



Even if you do not consider yourself “sporty” or are uninterested in sport there are undeniable opportunities to connect with children and young people in your community through sport are significant as sport is a crucial part of our social fabric. This summer of sport will include the Olympics and UEFA Euro’s taking place. This month’s Talking About... invites you to discover some potential approaches through direct involvement in coaching and indirect through chaplaincy.

Thursday 27th June 7-8pm

Sign up here to join the online session: www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout

National URC - Impressions of the United Reformed Church

Photos of our church buildings are being invited for the 2025 URC Calendar.

The calendar, which is again being supported by Edwards Insurance, is titled Impressions of the URC. Church buildings are very special places, and so **we're asking for your photos of them**, and with the skills of the URC graphics team, will turn them into works of art, from simple line drawings to pictures inspired by the works of famous artists – the possibilities are endless. Please send landscape photos for preference, but square and portrait photos are welcome. High quality photos at 300dpi, JPG or PNG file format, including the name and location of the church and the name of the photographer. Please email them to [Andy Jackson](#). If photos are submitted, the photographer is granting the URC permission to use the photographs in print and digitally and to edit them. The calendar will be available on the URC Bookshop from September.

Click [here](#) for more details. Deadline for entries is the end of June.

Reading Partners Project at Oasis Media City UK

Do you want to:

- Help young people to read?
- Learn how to teach reading?
- Support your local area?
- Receive free training?



Then please read on.....

We would like to draw your attention to an exciting opportunity to make a real difference in our community. Here at [Oasis Academy Media City](#), we take pride in improving the opportunities for young people to be able to pursue their dreams in becoming responsible, respectful citizens.

Research consistently shows the correlation between literacy levels, in particular reading, and better quality of life. This is one of the reasons we have set up our **Reading Partners Programme**. The programme aims to train and support adults, from all walks of life, in improving the reading abilities of younger people in our school community.

There is **no requirement to have any previous experience** or assisting with reading or otherwise, as all **training will be provided for free and delivered by professionals**. This will benefit not only the children taking part in the programme, but also you, who will build confidence in reading but also your skill in teaching reading.

If you wish to become part of this programme and change the lives of young people, while making strong community ties and developing your own skills and experience, **please use the QR code or click [here](#) to register your interest**.

The expression of interest window will close on **7th July 2024**.



Reading Partners

Free Training!

Be a part of real change in our community!

We are seeking volunteers from all walks of life and with all capabilities to be a part of something special. Become a Reading Partner and help a young person grow and develop their literacy skills. This is a great opportunity to take an active role in the community and gain skills and experience. All training is provided by qualified professionals and is free of charge.

Scan the QR code or go to the website on the link below to answer a few questions and register your interest.

<https://forms.office.com/e/sWyh3FWZL5>

Venue: Oasis Academy Media City, Unit 4 King William, Salford M50 3UQ

Dreams, Hopes & Aspirations for a Just Society: Towards a People's General Election Manifesto 2024



As we prepare for the general election in the UK on the 4th of July 2024, it is time for responsible citizens in our communities to understand and unravel the realities of our times, to be at the forefront of sensitizing our communities to be politically engaged and strive for a just society, where justice, equality, inclusiveness and liberation will thrive and be celebrated.

Today the British Political landscape is complex with the gap between the 'haves and have-nots' ever widening, the cost-of-living crisis deepening with economic inequality on the one hand, and on the other vulnerable communities being pushed into further marginalisation. These communities include people with disabilities, people seeking refuge and sanctuary, people of migration, people struggling with housing crisis, people discriminated by race, colour, gender, sexuality, and young people.

The global contexts of ongoing conflict, war, geo-political tensions, ecological crisis, poverty and hunger call on the British electorate to choose leaders wisely as their decisions on global issues are important.

If politics is about 'polis' people and polity, and if elections are about choosing those who can serve the 'polis', now is the time to redeem and reclaim politics as our public civic tool where democracy for a just society is affirmed. In such a context, we the people of UK, who feel called to building a just society nurturing peace, love, justice, fairness, dignity and equality in the public sphere, are envisaging a creative political space where people's dreams, hopes and aspirations for a better society are heard, shared and voiced out.

This creative political space will be a space with a preferential option for those on the margins, airing their voices, concerns and issues of life today. Through this process a people's general election manifesto for 2024 will evolve, and will be shared with the citizens of the public sphere in the hope of sensitizing the electorate and therefore see the election of candidates who will address these life issues.

The next government must put people on the margins at the centre of their vision. This will deliver a real change for the betterment of all people and communities. This general election is a chance for the citizenry to strive for a just society. It is not about personalities, but about policies, where justice issues will be the guiding principles in making our country and our planet a better place to live.

Who is invited?

People with lived experiences and people who are committed to building solidarity for justice and are willing who to share their dreams, hopes and aspirations for a just society are invited.

When?

On Saturday, the 15th June 2024 from 10-3pm with lunch at Heaton Moor United Church

For more details:

raj.patta@methodist.org.uk

david.hardman@methodist.org.uk

General Election Resources

With a General Election on the very near horizon, and called in the speed that it has been, it may feel like there is little time to respond or prepare.

General elections are Kairos moments. In the Bible Kairos moments are decisive times, a crossroads.

It is important that's churches and individual Christian disciples, we engage with the democratic process, and encourage both participation and decision making based on the values of the Gospel. In many of our communities there will be people who need our support to have their say (for example to get registered, get some ID, or to apply for a postal vote if needed).

This is also a great opportunity for churches to be seen engaging in the civic and public life of our communities, for example by holding hustings and other community listening events.



The Joint Public Issues Team, our ecumenical 'think tank' on the church response to the growing issues of social, political and global injustice, has produced some very helpful resources to support us in responding with our ecumenical partners to see what is possible. It may be challenging the candidates standing in your constituency to focus on issues that matter to us or it could be hosting a hustings. All that you need is contained in the link here -

[Elections – Joint Public Issues Team \(jpit.uk\)](http://jpit.uk)

Alongside this another initiative spearheaded by JPIT is the Let's End Poverty campaign. In anticipation of a General Election the team made it a priority to call all candidates to respond to the growing tide of poverty that is blighting so many lives on our doorsteps in the UK. So often political parties pledge to build a 'strong economy' as though it is the solution to all the problems. As we have seen so many times a so-called strong economy is not always, or often, a fair economy which benefits everyone.



Along with other reps from the URC, I attended an online rally last week where Let's End Poverty launched their resources. These are designed to help Christians and churches frame the questions that can challenge those who hope to lead us, and those who will be elected, to put poverty at the heart of their campaign and the future agenda of government.

This of course fits with our belief in God's heart and bias for the poor that both informs and directs us as a denomination.

More information and resources can be found on the website. The link is here -

[Home - Let's End Poverty \(letsendpoverty.co.uk\)](https://letsendpoverty.co.uk)

One area of poverty sadly not addressed by Let's End Poverty is that faced by people seeking asylum and refuge in the UK, many of whom face destitution.



City of Sanctuary UK

City of Sanctuary UK have produced some resources to help us stand with and campaign for those who it is likely will only be referred to under the banner of 'net migration' in the coming few weeks and probably rarely, if ever, in a positive and humane light.

A link is here for more information -

[The General Election: how to step up - City of Sanctuary UK](#)

If you do not have digital or internet access to the resources please feel free to contact me or your Mission and Discipleship Mentors and we can get hard copies to you.

It would be great to find ways of standing together with our brothers and sisters in Christ as well as those of other faiths as we respond to the imminent election. To quote the late Jo Cox, 'We are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us.' This election is an opportunity to celebrate that and champion it as we hold those who seek public service, as well as ourselves who will elect, to account.

Important dates

Hold these dates in your prayers. Remember that often the most vulnerable in your communities may need support coming up to these dates to make sure they can vote.

- 13th June: Deadline to register to vote.
- 14th June: Deadline to apply for a postal vote.
- 19th June: Deadline for proxy votes and voter authority certificates.
- 4th July: Election Day (Remember people will need to bring ID with them)

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:

- the continued growth of church mission
- For the Churches who are facing difficult decisions about the future of their fellowships and buildings
- A prayer for the General election

God of love and justice,

At this time of decision making for our country,

Fill our politics and our debates with listening, kindness and truthfulness,

Give integrity and honesty to those standing for public office,

May this campaign period be one of peace and respect for one another.

May the voices of the most vulnerable be heard.

As each of us discerns prayerfully on the way we should vote, may our decisions come from the values of the Gospel: Love, justice, peace, hope, and the flourishing of all creation.

And, whatever the outcome of this election, may we continue to engage prayerfully within our community and with our political representatives, to work together towards the common good.

Amen

Liz Delafield

Mission and Discipleship Mentor (South Area)

