

# **North Western Synod Newsletter**

• Adam Woodhouse Farewell Service



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- News from Cheadle Hulme
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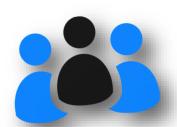


#### Children & Youth

- URC Youth Assembly 2025
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- KNOW AND GROW Makaton course for churches

# **News & Opportunities**

Wanted!





Adams Fairwell Service

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US AT WESTBURYGARDENS URC AS WE SAY FAREWELLTO ADAM

SUNDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER AT 2:30PM

WESTBURY GARDENS URC, WESTBURY GARDENS, BLACKBURN BB1 1XF

FOLLOWING THE SHORT SERVICE
WE WILL BE HAVING
REFRESHMENTS AND CAKES.

WE HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US FOR THIS CELEBRATION

# **Ordination and Induction of Stephanie Atkins**



Greater Manchester South Missional Partnership

North Western Synod of the URC

invites you to the service for the

Ordination & Induction of Stephanie Atkins

at Gatley United Reformed Church

#### Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 2.00 pm

Presiding Minister: Revd. Clare Downing - NW Synod Moderator Preacher: Revd. Dr. Robert Pope – Westminster College

Please reply asap and by 8<sup>th</sup> September at the latest to: Hilary Grierson at hilarygrierson@yahoo.co.uk

The service will be live streamed (youtube @gatleyurc) and followed by refreshments.

Gatley URC, Elm Road, Gatley, Cheshire, SK8 4LY

Parking also available at Gatley Primary School, Hawthorn Road, SK8 4NB

Our Missional Partnership churches are

Altrincham, Ashton-on-Mersey, Bramhall, Cheadle Hulme, Cornerstone (Burnage and Parrs Wood), Gatley, Heald Green, Trinity Cheadle (Meth/URC).

# **News from Cheadle Hulme URC**

At Cheadle Hulme URC we have created a wilderness area from waste land for our Pre-School group to participate in Forest School (with an element of Eco-Church). Here is the Moderator in the Wilderness with Rev Stephanie Atkins, the new partnership minister, and 2 Elders.



# **Cumbria news—Knowe Church Bewcastle Outing**



This year, The Knowe URC started a series of Poetry Afternoons: held in the village hall, people from the church and wider community bring along poems, prose or songs associated with a chosen seasonal theme. However, to mark the end of summer, they decided on a trip to Dumfries & Galloway. Here they visited the Henry Duncan Savings Bank Museum started by this Minister and prolific writer in 1810 to give ordinary workers access to a banking system. This tiny building then inspired the trustee savings banks around the world. Henry was a contemporary of Revd William Lauder, the first Minister at the Knowe whose relative still worships there.

The group then went onto the nearby Ruthwell Kirk whose famous cross is a 'sister' to Bewcastle Cross and is decorated with scenes from the bible and in Anglo-Saxon runes. When deciphered in 1840, the runes were found to be the text of an Old English poem, the Dream of the Rood, which tells the story of the Crucifixion from the cross's point of view. Revd Lisa, read some extracts to the group of a contemporary version of the poem. Mhairi, the fantastic guide for the museum and church noted the bit of the poem she finds moving is where the tree wants to topple itself to save Christ but as Christ meets his fate willingly, the tree decides it will stay beside him and bear him.

The next stop was the Brow Well visited by the poet Robert Burns to take the waters just as his health declined. Michael, the Knowe's organist is a lifelong Burns fan and recited his poem Ode to a Mouse from memory at the side of the well. The day finished by sharing food and conversation at The Metal Bridge Inn named after the bridge built by Thomas Telford to connect Scotland and England in 1820. Lisa says, "the poetry afternoons have been a wonderful way of sharing discussions about life and creation and enjoying friendship and hospitality with our community, the outing was a great way to continue this together."

Revd Lisa Moore Wilson – Minister of The Cumbria Missional Partnership







### **St Georges URC Carlisle**

St. George's URC in Carlisle has seen growing ecumenical interest in its Christian Meditation Group and was recently featured in the summer edition of the Diocese magazine The Way (article reproduced by kind permission of The Diocese of Carlisle)

www.nwsynod.org.uk The Way, Summer 2024

# When did you last stop to have silent time with God?

#### Meditation has roots 'deep within' Christianity

By Dave Roberts

"WE LIVE in a busy world. There is a lot going on. Even when we pray, we often do so actively, rather than just resting and enjoying God's presence." The Rev Lisa Moore-Wilson

reflects on the demands of every-day life – even our faith life – and the importance of simply stopping, breathing and being with God in

It's for that reason that the Our briat reason that the Cumbria Missional Partnership URC minister – who presides at St George's URC in Carlisle city centre – has teamed up with musician and celebrant Diana Raven to beauth of Chicking and Carlotter of the Car launch a monthly Christian

launch a monthly Christian meditation group at the church. Lisa explains: "Both Diana and I are members of Christian Medita-tion in Cumbria's steering group and had been separately wanting to start such a group. When we both became aware of that we decided to launch the monthly meetings.

"I've always been interested in things like meditation and yoga; practices that traditionally people may not think of as being Chris-tian. But they have their roots deep within the Christian faith.
Jesus prayed with people, but he
also took himself off to pray in quietness as well."

The Christian Meditation Group The Christian Nethitation Croup

- 'A Quiet Space in the City' - has
been meeting for about a year,
with between eight and 12 people
coming together in the church for
an hour. Usually, participants sit in
a semi-circle, and begin with some form of spiritual exercise such as walking meditation, breath prayer, Lectio Divina (a method of praying with the Scriptures) or Taize chanting.

A 20-minute period of silent meditation then follows with a focus on a particular mantra— 'Maranatha' which means 'Come Lord'. After that, people are invited to share personal reflections before refreshments. The group is made up of people from various denominations as well as those who are not regular church attenders.



Quiet space: Diana Raven, left, and the Rev Lisa Moore-Wilson have set up a Christian meditation group that meets on the first Thursday of the month in Carlisle PICTURES: DAVE ROBERTS

#### OF MEDITATING AS PART OF A GROUP

DANIEL THORBURN, 40, attends the Quaker Meeting House in Carlisle city and is also a

member of the meditation group.

"I meditate myself so I thought it would be interesting to do so within a group setting. I've only ever done Quaker meetings so I thought it would be good to do something which is more church based.

"One of the things I like about

mix things up; there's always something different every time and so it's broadening my

experience.
"Meditating as part of a group is a lot different to doing it at home. Sitting in silence as a

group has a very different feel.
"One week we all went on a
meditative walk, then we came
back and sat in silence for 20 minutes. I found that very

minutes. I found that very powerful and very affecting.
"It would be nice to see this group grow in size. I think it's more effective the more people there are; it's a little like a multiplier effect."

The REV KATHLEEN REALE runs her own meditation group from her home in Dalston and attends the monthly meet-

ings at St George's URC Church. She was a deaconess and among the first women to be ordained in 1994.

"I have been meditating for 25 years and it has taught me to know and love myself and therefore free me to know and love everybody else.

"I don't get angry or upset. I get

sad with the way of the world, but I think meditation is a way of us knowing ourselves. That is the answer; we have to know who we are. The spiritual side of us is

the one which is part of eternity.
"I meditate twice a day on my
own but it is important to be with a group, if possible, at least once a week. It's just like praying with other people. "One of the wonderful things

about meditation is that you can be with anyone, of any faith or no faith at all, because there are no words to divide you. You are just together, sitting with the being that we call God, reaching out and being ourselves.

"There's definitely a sense of warmth and connection which is warmi and connection which is built through sharing in medita-tion," Diana says. "I pray that this group provides a tool for people to feel a sense of connection to God."

Lisa concludes: "Through meditation you can become more self-aware. From a Christian point of view that helps you become more God-aware and there's a greater understanding of our interconnection with everything.

"There's something quite powerful about meditating in a group. There's a real energy to it and an unspoken connection. I'd love more people to experience knowing and feeling God's presence in this way."

The Christian Meditation Group

meets on the first Thursday of the month at 3pm at St George's URC on West Walls in Carlisle.

For more details, contact the Rev Lisa Moore-Wilson at lisa.wilson@nwsynod.org.uk

"The great thing about meditation is that it crosses any divide between denominations," Diana adds. "Anyone can take part without feeling that their own brand of Christianity has been 'compromised' in any way."

Lisa adds: "It can complement who they way the property in tradition."

whatever your Christian tradition is. Likewise, it can appeal to people who don't go to church for a traditional Sunday service. It provides them with an opportunity to come and have some quiet time

with God but in a different way."

The group has loose connections to the World Community for Christian Meditation UK. The first Christian Mediation Centre was opened in 1975 by founder John Main who believed that meditation was relevant to all helping create community and a path to spiritual growth.

It's that same sense of medita-

tive community that Lisa and Diana are both keen to see grow in Carlisle.

# Chorlton Central—A Wonderful Summer Fair





Thanks to everyone who made our **Summer Fair** so lovely, despite the inclement weather! Eleven different groups who use our church were involved with **stalls**, **workshops**, and **performances** from **balalaika** to **British Sign Language**. There were lots of fun children's activities & crafts, and plenty of lovely food to boot! What a great opportunity to meet all the people who call Chorlton Central home.

## Save the dates



- Ministers Gathering at Brockholes Nature Reserve, Preston 26th September
- Autumn Synod 5th October at Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YW 10.30am.
- Theology Reading Group—beginning on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> of October, from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. by Zoom. (advertised in events section)
- South Area Elder Enrichment Day 21st September
- Ordination & Induction of Stephanie Atkins 28th September (Advertised in events section)
- Sacraments Training -1st October (10am to 3pm), North Western Synod (Lunch provided, if attending full session)
- Communion training 8 January 2025 (7pm by Zoom)
- Sacrament training at Lancashire & Cumbria 4th March 2025 (Venue TBC)

## **Sacrament training**

Sacrament training will be offered to those seeking either (1) communion (morning) or (2) baptism (afternoon) or (3) both (full day). This satisfies the Synod requirement for authorisation and for refreshment of training (every 3-years). Please let us know if you will be staying for lunch. Contact Kerry to book. office@nwsyod.org.uk



# Save the Date: Theology Reading Group

If you're thirsty for some deep reading in small portions with supportive community, consider joining the new Theology Reading Group which will be meeting on the second Tuesday of every month, beginning on Tuesday, 8th of October, from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. by Zoom.

Zoom Meeting: Theology Reading Group

Time: Oct 8, 2024 12:00 PM London

Every month on the Second Tue, until Apr 8, 2025, 7 occurrence(s)

- Oct 8, 2024 12:00 PM
- Nov 12, 2024 12:00 PM
- Dec 10, 2024 12:00 PM
- Jan 14, 2025 12:00 PM
- Feb 11, 2025 12:00 PM
- Mar 11, 2025 12:00 PM
- Apr 8, 2025 12:00 PM







Join Zoom Meeting

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87627415144?pwd=fgqlZa8wq7urkRYSGPFllXrAZhbRxJ.1

Meeting ID: 876 2741 5144

Passcode: 476014

To start we will be reading, during the session itself (no advance reading required) from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Ethics which can be purchased from Amazon here at for around £27 in paperback or £24 as Kindle. Please do get this translation, as we will engage in group reading before sharing our responses, questions, and take-aways from each session.

This is for anyone who wants to take seriously the reality of Christ and Christ's reconciling work in our world.

We will read aloud as a group and then, share our reactions (as we are willing) to the reading in about 3 minutes or so each, before opening to more general conversation. Interested? Please confirm your planned attendance by emailing me, Rob Hoch-Yidokodiltona at learningmentor@nwsynod.org.uk.

""Christ did not, like an ethicist, love a theory about the good; he loved real people. Christ was not interested, like a philosopher, in what is "generally valid," but in that which serves real concrete human beings. Christ was not concerned about whether "the maxim of an action" could become "a principle of universal law," but whether my action now helps my neighbor to be a human being before God. God did not become an idea, a principle, a program, a universally valid belief, or a law;[102.] God became human."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

# **Safeguarding Training**

#### **Face to face Intermediate Safeguarding training**

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

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.

1st Oct 2024 12:00 - 15:00 at Chorley URC 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024 10:00 - 13:00 at Short Street

30<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024 11:00 – 12:00 at The Dandelion

For more information about training records for your church please contact <a href="mailto:admin@nwsynod.org.uk">admin@nwsynod.org.uk</a>



#### **Online Intermediate Safeguarding Training**

4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024 18:00-20:00

#### 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

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.

Although, if you have completed the Intermediate Safeguarding training, you are also welcome to attend.

8<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024 Module 1&2 12.00-15.00

To register and book a place please contact <a href="mailto:admin@nwsynod.org.uk">admin@nwsynod.org.uk</a>

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)

#### **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 <a href="mailto:admin@nwsynod.org.uk">admin@nwsynod.org.uk</a>

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

Email: <a href="mailto:safeguarding@nwsynod.org.uk">safeguarding@nwsynod.org.uk</a>

Mobile number: 07827-390299

# D Cafe

Starting on Tuesday 24th Sept Then every Tuesday, 10-12

Times are to be trialed at first with a view to extend

Serving tea, coffee, hot chocolate, biscuits, t-cakes and toast

(Lunch options may be introduced at a later date)

Please come and support us at Edgeley Community Church, Entrance via Old Chapel St, SK3 9JL

# Chatty Cafe



Starting on Friday 27th Sept Then every Friday, 10-12

Times are to be trialed at first with a view to extend

Serving tea, coffee,
hot chocolate, biscuits,
t-cakes and toast
(Lunch options may be introduced at a later date)

Please come and support us at Edgeley Community Church, Entrance via Old Chapel St, SK3 9JL

# **Leading Your Church into Growth Conference**

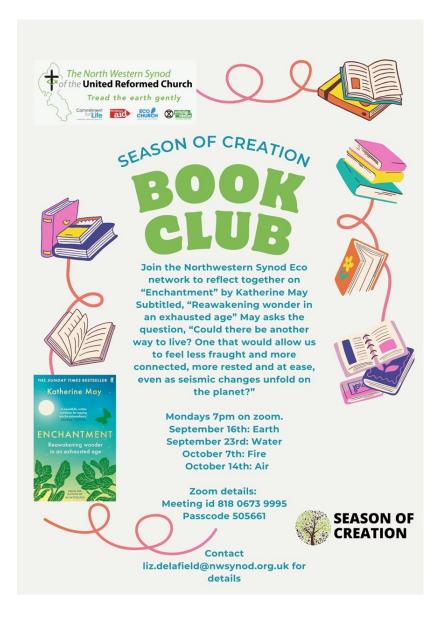
The North Western Synod, along with the other four northerly Synods, has 12 places for people in the Synod to attend.

If anyone would like to attend this annual conference of the five northerly Synods please contact Rachel, her email address is below

Any questions please contact Rachel or Revd Richard Bradley (Richard.Bradley@nwsynod.org.uk)
the Convenor of the North Western Synod Mission and Discipleship Committee and Network



## **Book Club—Season of Creation**



Apologies if you tried to join the book club using the pass code on the poster. There was an error. This is now correct.

Here's the zoom link for easy access:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81806739995?pwd=TF1olg0alJGl1rb1hHXn7uwUjT8jeC.1

Meeting id 818 0673 9995. Passcode 50566

Here's a link to where you can buy the book: <a href="https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Katherine-May/">https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Katherine-May/</a>
Enchantment--Reawakening-Wonder-in-an-Exhausted-Age/29636743

Or look for **Enchantment by Katherine May**, published Faber & Faber: ISBN: 9780571378357 in your local bookshop or library. Also available as an audio or ebook from the usual places

Email: liz.delafield@nwsynod.org.uk

### **Faithtalk**



Do you ever wonder how you can be comfortable sharing your faith with others? Are you worried you might be laughed at or dismissed or considered strange? Are you concerned you wouldn't know what to say if someone did want to know more? Join us for the second FaithTalk, a light-hearted conversation exploring how we talk about our faith.

# South Area Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Circle

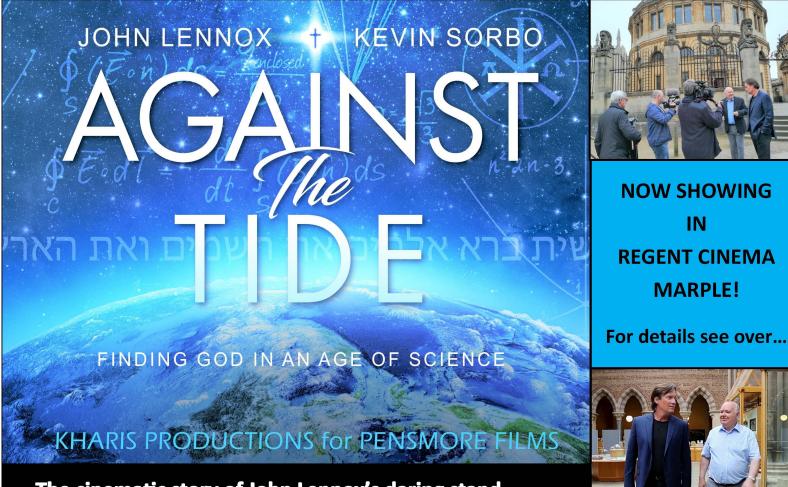


The next gathering of the South area preachers' and worship leaders' circle will be focusing on our preparations for advent and Christmas.

Open to anyone who is involved in planning or leading worship during this time.

Here's the link for easy access:

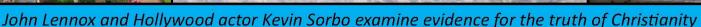
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89275458937?pwd=Kf8K3TdujKhPuS5Ab9hPCwrbCHHUQH.1



The cinematic story of John Lennox's daring stand against the rising tide of scepticism about belief in God



# AGAINST THE TIDE



Screening at: Regent Cinema, Marple Sunday 13th October 2024, 5.30pm

www.againstthetidemovie.org

Tickets £5

Available from your church contact or Allan Lochhead 07501 207 299 allan.loch@outlook.com





In 1910 there was a major mission conference in Edinburgh in preparation for which a questionnaire was sent to participants asking them where they worked, what were the religions of the people of that country and what were the critiques of Christianity made by other faiths?

Those questions are as relevant today as they were then.

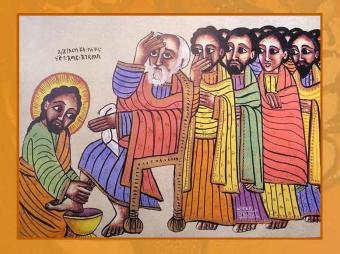
# Jesus seen in the light of other cultures and faiths



The Rev'd Dr John Parry will be giving four talks reflecting on this.

The first will consider how Jesus has been portrayed by Christians from various cultures.

The following three talks will explore how people of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh faiths have responded to the figure of Jesus Christ in the light of their theological critiques.



The talks will take place on the following Wednesday evenings in September and October 2024 at Cornerstone United Reformed Church, Burnage Lane.

September 25<sup>th</sup>, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> from 7.30-9.00 p.m.

Please email: cornerstoneurcsec@gmail.com if you would like to reserve a free ticket for these events

# **Cornerstone United Reformed Church**

111 Burnage Lane, M19 2WH (Corner of Burnage Lane & Crossley Road)

# Buildings for Mission Forum: Webinar Tuesday 12 November 11.30 – 1pm

Transforming your church building and its land: a close-up of one URC, a wide view of others

We will hear from a URC minister who has worked with her church through a major vision-led redevelopment, and from a Synod Green Advocate on some creative ways in which church land is being used for mission.

To register or to find out more, email mission@urc.org.uk



You think Christmas comes earlier every year? So does the advertising for URC Youth Assembly!

This year both the dates and the venue have changed. We are now meeting at Kings Park Conference Centre in Northampton (a coach will be arranged from Northampton train station to the venue) and we are meeting 7-9 March 2025.

The synod will pay the conference cost for any young people who may wish to come along and join other young people (year 10 and above) from all across the denomination.

Of course, they won't come if they don't know about it – so please share the information with them, and encourage them to book. Further details, and online bookings can be found at https://linktr.ee/URCYouthAssembly



# **Talking About... Disability**

# **Talking About...Disability**

How can we ensure that what we offer is genuinely accessible for all?



Join us as we explore the issue with members of the Roofbreaker team from ThroughTheRoof.org

with a special emphasis on intergenerational worship

Thursday, September 26th 7-8pm
Book your free place at www.bit.ly/URCTalkinAbout



We want to try and make sure that everything we offer as a church, from Sunday worship to groups and clubs, is accessible to everyone, of all ages and abilities.

What are the practical steps we can take to enable this?

What are the pitfalls we should try and avoid?

Join us online on September 26<sup>th</sup> (7-8pm) as we explore these questions with members of the Roofbreaker team from <a href="https://www.throughtheroof.org">www.throughtheroof.org</a>

Get you free ticket at www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout

# **KNOW AND GROW - Makaton course for churches**



As part of our drive to help churches become increasingly accessible and welcoming to all, URC Training is delighted to be able to offer subsidised access to the new KNOW AND GROW training, a Makaton course which focuses specifically on the signs you might use in worship and church-based groups. Makaton is a system of signing and using symbols to aid spoken and written communication.

Each course comprises two online sessions and you must be able to attend both. Sadly, due to limited spaces, we can offer this only to those associated with a URC church or LEP. The cost is just £18 to cover the printed manual which you will be able to keep.

Sessions are 9.30-12.30 on Friday 20 & 27 September, Saturday 21 & 28 September, Saturday 12 & 19 October

Book your place now on: Know and Grow Makaton course Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite

## **WANTED**

Edgeley Community Church are looking to start a Dementia Café and Chatty Café, however, whilst we have some "institutional" type tables, we could really do with some Café style tables. We don't mind if square or circular, but suitable for say 4-people to sit around comfortably.

If you know of any such tables going free (or for a very low cost) we'd be very happy to acquire them.

Please let me know and we will arrange transport as necessary.

And we'd be very happy to welcome you to come along and have complimentary tea/coffee and toasted teacake and join us for a chat.

Mike.aspinall@nwsynod.org.uk

Thank you

Mike Aspinall





## 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 <a href="mailto:office@nwsynod.org.uk">office@nwsynod.org.uk</a>.

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.
- Prayers for Revd Adam Woodhouse as he leaves Lancashire East Missional Partnership to start a new ministry in Yorkshire Synod, and as he and his fiancé make final arrangements for their wedding'

