

North Western Synod Newsletter



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The Induction of the Revd Mark Cowling to the Bolton & Salford Missional Partnership



12th September at 7.30pm Church at the Centre Tonge Moor

> Starkie Road Tonge Moor Bolton BL2 2ED

Please RSVP by 5th September to Kerry Later Office@nwsynod.org.uk











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 28th 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 8th 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).

Greater Manchester South Missional Partnership

Prayers in the Park

To begin the Season of Creation on 1st September a group from the Greater Manchester South Missional Partnership planned to have "Prayers in the Park" in Manchester's beautiful Fog Lane Park.

Our last Missional Partnership away day had sparked off the idea that we explore different ways of doing worship, that might encourage a wider range of people. After, earlier in the year, holding a workshop on "outdoor worship" this event was to try out some of the ideas that we had explored.

The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration to pray and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to listen and care for our common home. The Celebration begins 1 September, the Feast of Creation, and ends 4th October, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology. This year's theme is "To hope and act with creation"

Unfortunately, just as the event was about to begin, the heavens opened with a torrential thunderstorm. This serves as a timely reminder that, in the partnership with creation, human beings are not really in charge.

After sheltering in Cornerstone Church for a little while, the rain had begun to abate, and, with coats and umbrellas, we trapesed over to the park to begin the service, a little later and wetter than we had planned.

Different parts of the park gave us cause for reflection:-



- The closed "pets corner" a place to lament.
- The duck pond, a chance to reflect on our actions and how they affect other creatures- through floating duck food.
 - The sensory garden- wonder at the beauty of creation and the different ways we sense it.
 - Tiger wood- a place for quiet contemplation/ stillness.
- The aspens and capulas- our connection to the

wider world.

The playground- our hopes for the future.

Special thanks go to:

- The planning team from the Missional partnership who led the event.
- Cornerstone URC for providing us with shelter from the storm and refreshments.
- The "Friends of Fog Lane Park" who look afer this beautiful park.
- Everyone who came.



We left feeling refreshed, and are minded to repeat this, perhaps next year. We will all be reflecting on the question: "Can we use the lessons learned here to enrich the worship of our own local churches?" Why not try "prayers in the park" in a park near you. It was lots of fun! Liz Delafield



St George's URC



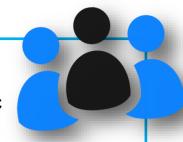
At its recent Guild Meeting at St. George's URC in Carlisle attendees heard about the vital work of the GNAAS (Great North Air Ambulance Service). The presentation was given by Deborah Usher who is a member of St. George's. She became a volunteer for the GNAAS after hearing a similar talk at the church herself and recently took up a full-time position with the organisation. Her husband Douglas is also a member of St. George's and works as a GNAAS volunteer.

Deborah explained how the service provides pioneering pre-hospital care to hundreds of severely injured or ill patients every year. Its work is vital in rural areas such as Cumbria where people can be injured in remote, difficult to access areas, many miles by road from the nearest hospital. It operates two helicopters and emergency cars all through fund raising. The Guild which includes members of both St. George's URC and the nearby Border Kirk (Church of Scotland) were fascinated by the presentation asking many questions after the presentation.

We are not NHS-funded.



Save the dates



- Quiz Night –14th September (7:30pm), Ashton on Mersey URC (Advertised in events section)
- NW Synod Family Fun Day -14th September
- Discover Acorn, Invitational Church with Michael Harvey -14th September (Advertised in events section)
- North West Pilots Camp -13th -15th September
- 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, 8th 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



In case you might have missed it, we will have our Autumn Ministers Away Day at the beautiful Brockholes Nature Reserve in Preston.

We know people are still getting back from summer holidays, but if you could give a quick reply to let us know whether you plan to attend, so we can plan for numbers and dietary requirements that would be helpful. We need final numbers by 10th September to deputyclerk@nwsynod.org.uk As for what . . .

- we will worship together;
- we'll connect with each other as friends and colleagues;
- share about upcoming events and opportunities for learning;

and I'll share what I've learned about "Living with the Sermon" drawing from my forthcoming book by that title.

Grace and Peace,
Rob Hoch-Yidokodiltona (Training and Learning Mentor)

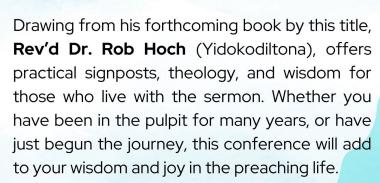
Living With The Sermon by Revd Dr Rob Hoch-Yidokodiltona

LIVING WITH THE SERMON:

SIGNPOSTS ON THE FOOTPATH OF PREACHING

MINISTERS GATHERING Thursday 26th September

Venue: Brockholes Nature Reserve Preston New Rd, Samlesbury, Preston PR5 OAG



Register by email: deputyclerk@nwsynod.org.uk



Revd. Dr Rob Hoch

During the ministers gathering on Thursday the 26th September, Rob plans to share what he has learned about "Living with the Sermon Signposts on the Footpath of Preaching"— drawing from his forthcoming book by that title.

The book is due to be released at the beginning of September, Rob therefore hopes to bring it hot off the press to the Ministers Gathering, for those who would like to purchase it at a discounted rate.

You can also contact Rob directly at learningmentor@nwsynod.org.uk should you wish to make enquiries about his book.

Synod's labyrinth

The Synod's labyrinth is accessible to all churches and user groups, providing a timeless and person-centered approach to faith and spirituality. Measuring 7 meters by 7 meters, it is designed exclusively for indoor use. Churches may utilize the labyrinth independently. Alternatively, Mrs. Karen Grayson and Rev. Daniel Harris are available to lead retreats upon request. For further information, please contact Rev. Daniel Harris at Daniel.harris@nwsynod.org.uk.



LABYRITH PRAYER RETREAT

COME AND SHARE A TIME OF PRAYER AND CONTEMPLATION WHILE WALKING OUR LABYRINTH.

SATURDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 11.00 - 2.00

HALLFOLD URC HALL ST WHITWORTH OL12 8TL REFRESHMENTS AND A SPACE TO CHAT WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE HALL.

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL KAREN AT HALLFOLDURC@GMAIL.COM

Safeguarding Training

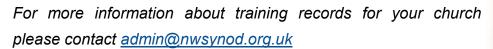
Face to face Intermediate Safeguarding training

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 19th Oct 2024 10:00 - 13:00 at Short Street

30th Oct 2024 11:00 – 12:00 at The Dandelion





Online Intermediate Safeguarding Training

9th Sept 2024 14.00-16.00

4th 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.

8th Oct 2024 Module 1&2 12.00-15.00

To register and book a place please contact admin@nwsynod.org.uk

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)

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

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



Discover Acorn - Invitational Church

Attention churches in the Central & Southern Areas!

Your chance to discover Acorn on Saturday 14 September for yourself! Michael Harvey, international speaker and founder of Back to Church Sunday, is working with the Synod 2024-26 to create a culture of invitation in our churches. After a pilot study over the past 3 months, we're ready to start rolling it out more widely.

It's "quiet evangelism" in the form of a 15-word prayer ... and already, there are people in our churches because a few members have committed to praying that prayer daily.

Come along to Bamford Chapel & Norden URC (Norden Rd, Bamford OL11 5PQ) on Saturday 14 September, 10 am - 1 pm. The session will finish by 12.30 pm. You're invited to bring a packed lunch and chat further while you eat it, if you wish.

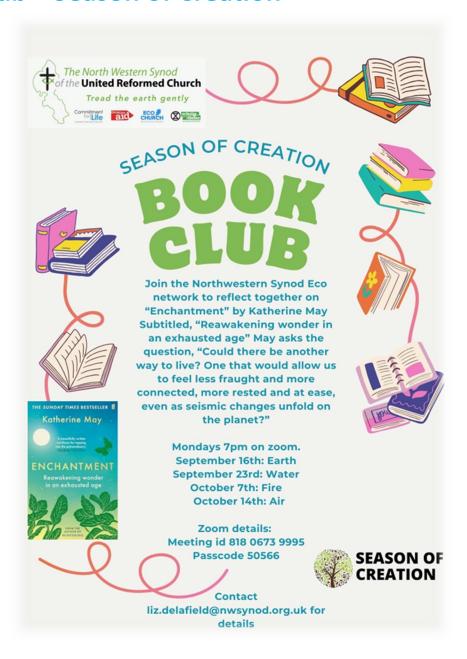
Although it's aimed at the Central and South Areas (there'll be later sessions in other Areas), everyone is welcome. Please register with Kerry (office@nwsynod.org.uk).

We look forward to seeing you there.





Book Club—Season of Creation



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 <u>link</u> to where you can buy the book 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: <u>liz.delafield@nwsynod.org.uk</u>

Dreams and Realities—Lets End Poverty

I'm writing to invite you to the Manchester launch of the amazing **Dreams and Realities** exhibition 7pm - 8.30pm on Tuesday 17th September at Methodist Central Hall, Oldham Street Manchester M1 1JT

Dreams and Realities is a collection of nine portraits of people living on the frontline of poverty, who are all members of a community choir in Sheffield. Painted by Stephen Martin, who has himself lived on the frontline of poverty for over 15 years, every painting includes something of each person's reality - and something of their dreams. Come and be challenged and inspired! The evening will include an interview with Stephen and poetry performed by people living on the frontline of poverty in Greater Manchester.





Hope URC Denton

Stockport Rd, Denton



Saturday 28th Sept 7.00pm



including potato pie supper

Please contact John Brown to book your team 07485 294468 Johnbd.brown@btinternet.com

A Thread through history—Providence New Mills

The exhibition is open to the public from Fri 22nd November. All enquiries please contact: providenceurc@nwsynod.org.uk



A THREAD THROUGH HISTORY

Coming to Providence URC from Friday 22nd November.

Knitted and crocheted, an 80 metre 3D depiction of 6th June 1944 in wool art to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

www.thelongestyarn.com



Church Elders' Enrichment Day: South area



Please book your place on Elders' enrichment day. We would like numbers for catering as soon as possible please, with Kerry on office@nwsynod.org.uk

We are also opening this day to:

- Anyone in a church leadership position, even if they are not an elder. (This may be of particular interest to those in your pastoral team)
- Those in the Lancashire or Central area who missed the day in their own area. (Cumbria area will be hearing about their opportunity very soon)
- Ministers (Including active retired ministers)

The focus of the morning will be exploring the role of elders in pastoral care, with Michael Hopkins (via video). This is far wider than pastoral visiting and includes all elders whatever their role. It includes how to care for ourselves and each other. The afternoon includes exploring the practical application of that theme, looking at a number of scenarios and reflection on Jesus' model of compassionate leadership.

There will also be opportunities to pray, reflect, converse and eat together.

There will be copies of Michael Hopkins book, Pastoral Care in Practice available at a reduced cost of £10. (We will not have a facility for card payments so please bring cash)

Having already run this course in Lancashire and Central areas, here is some of the feedback we are receiving:

"It helped me see that we do some things right with our pastoral care but also made me realise where we can improve and develop it. An excellent day, thanks to the team."

"The subject was relevant to our everyday lives."

"It was interesting and very encouraging. It is also good to talk to people from other churches."

[&]quot;I valued the chance to share experiences with other Elders and Synod Mentors."

Summer Fair at Chorlton Central

Sunday 8th September, 3-5pm, Chorlton Central Church

Join us on Sunday Afternoon for our one-of-a-kind Summer Fair. It's an opportunity to experience the wonderful variety of groups that meet at Chorlton Central - from Balalaika players to environmental activism, there's something for everyone:

- Plant stalls
- Bric-a-brac bargains
- Free printing with Extinction Rebellion (XR)
- Delicious homemade cakes and cream teas
- Chorlton Refugee Aid information
- Stalls selling crafts
- Free trial balalaika workshop
- Performances of music and choirs
- Information about letting the building and groups and classes you might like to join
- Children's activities with face painting, games and crafts, and more!

Entrance is free - we can't wait to see you there!



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 26th (7-8pm) as we explore these questions with members of the Roofbreaker team from www.throughtheroof.org

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



New venue with twin rooms and menu choices Kings Park Conference Centre, Northampton, NN3 6LL

A fun weekend to have your say, make friends and find fellowship

Worship - Bible study, music, prayer spaces, late night communion

Youth Decides - discussion on issues that matter to us - leading to action and engaging the wider church

Workshops - grow your skills and thinking while exploring the theme

Entertainment - campfire, karaoke, sports, games and more

£120 early bird until 1 December / £150 from 2 December until 2 February 2025

Please talk to your church and synod about help with funding.

Open to Year 10 / S3 students up to 25 years inclusive.

Book your place today:

https://linktr.ee/URCYouthAssembly or contact children.youth@urc.org.uk



Here's a taste of Youth Assembly 2024
Just scan the QR code, or visit:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1npXCWKfO0

For all young people with a connection to the United Reformed Church including:











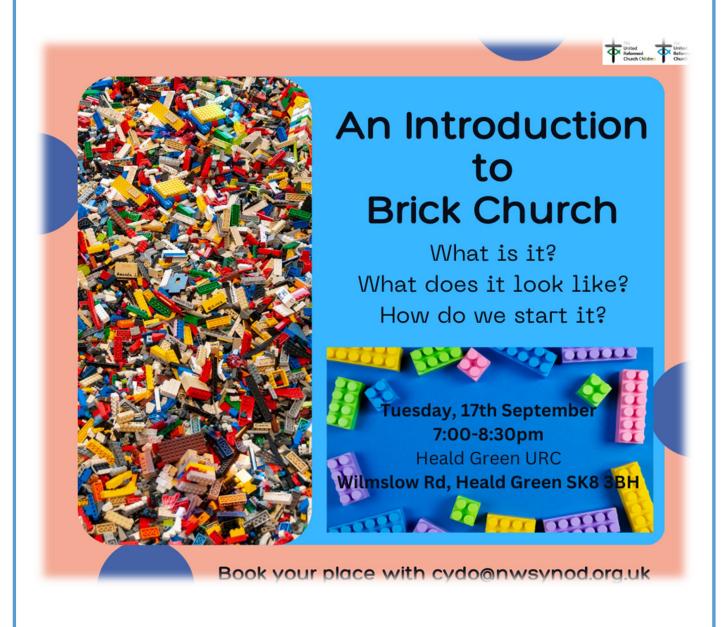




An Introduction to Brick Church

Tuesday 17th September 7pm – 8.30pm at Heald Green URC.

To book your place contact cydo@nwsynod.org.uk



Step into the Story



Due to phenomenal demand over the last five years, the 2024 Advent Packs from the URC Children's & Youth Work and Communications Teams are available to pre-order. Delivery will be from mid-October to early November, and the deadline for orders is later this week.

The URC family Advent packs invites people to 'Step into the Story'. There is an original story book, a book full of inspiring activities and an A4 sticker advent calendar to engage children and their families with the Christmas story.

This year the focus is on Christmas as everyone's story – with traditions, crafts and recipes from around the world to enrich the celebration. The packs are designed for local URC churches to give away to families they have connection with. They come in A5-sized envelopes which are left unsealed so that churches can add their own material and invitations.

There will be an A2 sized poster for churches to display and ideas for linking church activities to the packs. Orders will be dispatched to arrive in early November to give churches time to share them before Advent Sunday on December 1, 2024.

For further details and costs, visit the Advent Packs page on the URC Bookshop website: https://urcshop.co.uk/the-urc-2024-advent-packs-step-into-the-story/

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.

