

North Western Synod Newsletter



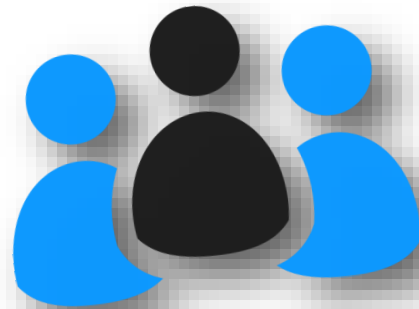
- [New Synod Helpdesk](#)

Good News Stories

- [Induction of Rev Kate Gray](#)
- [Coffee Morning at Fairhaven URC](#)
- [Community Faith Walk in Carlisle](#)
- [Greater Manchester South Retreat Day](#)
- [Church Member Speaks Out on Social Housing](#)
- [Wilbraham St Ninian's Welcomes New Members](#)
- [Hurst Nook Tots reaches 1,000 children!](#)
- [NW Synod Podcast](#)

Events

- [Save the Dates](#)
- [Communion training online](#)
- [People Like Us Event](#)
- [Conversations at the Crossroads enrichment day](#)
- [Away Day with Odd Arts](#)
- [Acorn Roadshow Central / South Area Update](#)
- [Safeguarding Training](#)
- [Theology Reading Group](#)
- [Envisioning Worship Conference](#)
- [Festival of Nativity Cribs - Forton URC](#)
- [Gatley Christmas Fair](#)
- [Christmas at Albion with Gordon Stewart](#)
- [Bramhall + Woodford Christian Aid —Brass Band Concert](#)
- [Worsley Road URC—Christmas Events](#)
- [Bolton & Salford MP—Children's Christmas Party](#)



Children & Youth

- [Talking About... Unpacking Advent with Children](#)
- [URC Youth Assembly 2025](#)

News & Opportunities

- [Social Metrics Commission and Let's End Poverty](#)



Announcing!!

New Synod Help Desk

Number

 **08000 903 903**

We're pleased to announce we now
have a new **FREE PHONE** number

We have also launched a new help desk
email address:

 **helpdesk@nwsynod.org.uk**



Induction of Revd Kate Gray—Sunday 24th November 2pm at the Dandelion Community

Join us at the Dandelion Community or if you are unable to attend in person, please join on Zoom:

Manchester and Salford Urban Mission is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84359976327?pwd=ME9WA822QIIDhG4i0xqHj0YLVcVpRw.1>

Meeting ID: **843 5997 6327**

Passcode: **241124**



**Sunday 24th
November at 2pm**

Manchester and Salford Urban Mission
and The North Western Synod
Warmly invite you to the
Induction of the Revd Kate Gray
and the Celebration of all our
Churches & Community Partners
which will be followed by celebrations and
a hot buffet dinner

Travel Arrangements



Public Transport via

Tram: to Wythenshawe Town Centre is just a short walk from Oatlands Road.

Bus: The 43 bus to Manchester Airport stops 2 minutes away.

Travelling by car:

Parking is limited at the church, but on street parking is available within a short walking distance.

The Dandelion Community is on the corner of Oatlands Rd and Portway

Oatlands Road, Woodhouse Park, Wythenshawe M22 1AH

Special Coffee Morning at Fairhaven URC

This special Thursday Coffee Morning was held on October 17th, to raise awareness and support for the charity Breast Cancer Now.

The theme was “Wear it Pink” and it was very well borne in mind with those present wearing Pink socks, pink jumpers, pink ties, pink shirts, ... earrings, we even had pink cakes, pink in profusion! Our church secretary Ruth, shown here was well and truly “In the Pink”!

Funds were raised through a raffle and steeplechase-draw as well as donations.

Thanks go to all who supported the cause by raising £ 335.60.

Val Atkinson—Fairhaven URC

The White Church



Community Faith Walk in Carlisle



As part of its Bridging Faiths events this year, Carlisle One World Centre recently organised an afternoon Community Faith Walk around various places of worship in the city. The Minister and some members of St. George's URC support the work of COWC and were delighted to offer to be the start point on the walk. Reverend Lisa Moore Wilson gave a short introduction about the URC before offering a prayer of blessing for those

doing the walk. The group then visited several Christian places of worship including the Quaker Meeting Rooms, Anglican, Catholic and Methodist Churches, the Cathedral, the Border Kirk and Salvation Army as well as the local Mosque and the Uma Kadampa Meditation Centre. In several places, a member of the place of worship gave a short talk about their beliefs and activities. There was also a moment to take an iconic photo on a bridge to illustrate Bridging Faiths! The day ended at the Buddhist Centre which kindly provided refreshments for the walkers. The day attended by people of many denominations and faiths was greatly enjoyed as people found out more about each other's faiths and worship styles and the things we have in common.



Quaker Meeting Room



Uma Kadampa Meditation Cen-

Revd Lisa Moore Wilson – Minister of The Cumbria Missional Partnership

Greater Manchester South Retreat Day: Chapel in the Fields



Before the busyness of Advent and Christmas, members from the Greater Manchester South Missional Partnership held a retreat day. The theme was “winter.”



There were reflections on how winter, in the natural world, is a time of rest and slow growth beneath the surface, and the need to allow ourselves the same times of rest and restoration.

In the beautiful surrounding of Chapel in the Fields, participants were invited to take time in quiet reflection. There was also warmth and fellowship over making evergreen wreaths, a reminder of the constancy of God’s love in every season, and over a delicious soup lunch. The day was completed by sharing communion together.

Everyone left feeling refreshed and renewed.



Church Member speaks out on Social Housing

A United Reformed Church Member, Zoe, from The Dandelion Community Wythenshawe, is in the Manchester Evening News and is speaking at the Houses of Parliament this week. She is part of the Manchester Social Housing Commission chaired by the Bishop of Manchester. Zoe has been waiting to move to smaller more appropriate housing for over 3 years. She sees the need for social housing as a priority for her and many thousands of people across Manchester and the UK. This is part of her faith: wanting to make an impact to make change and work with people and organisations who are doing the same.



Read the article in the Manchester Evening News [here](#).

Wilbraham St Ninian's Welcomes 6 New Members

On Sunday 17th November 2024, Wilbraham St Ninian's welcomed 6 new members through Baptism and Declaration of Faith. It was a special joint celebratory service for the morning and afternoon congregations.



Hurst Nook Tots reaches 1,000 children over 20 years!

Marilyn Piper and Phyllis Harrison are proud to announce that they have registered their **1,000th** child after 20 years of running Tots...!

Weekly meetings, playing indoors and out, going to the seaside, going to the farm, having parties, singing rhymes and all really enjoying themselves.

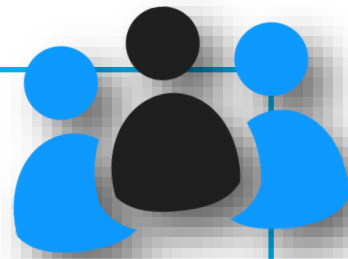


North Western Synod Podcast



In this occasional NW Synod Podcast, Revd Dr John Bradbury, General Secretary of the United Reformed Church, sits down with Lawrence Heath-Moore to talk about the Church Life Review and what the churches might expect to emerge from the second stage of the project.

[Click here to listen.](#)



Save the Dates

PLEASE NOTE:

Lancashire and Cumbria Sacrament training will now be on different dates and venues.

- Communion Training — 8th January 2025 (7pm by Zoom)
- Sacrament Training Lancashire Area — 4th March 2025 (Venue TBC)
- Sacrament Training Cumbria Area—1st April 2025 (TBC)
- Youth Assembly 2025 — 7th-9th March 2025
- Away Day with Odd Arts: Here and Now Radicalisation — 20th March 2025 — 10am-2pm — The Village Hotel, Captain Clarke Road, Hyde, SK14 4QG
- 1T4 at Whitemoor Lakes in Staffordshire—2nd-4th May 2025
- Acorn Roadshows in your area — Save the Dates — Venues to be confirmed
 - 18th January 2025 — South / Central Hub — 10am — 1pm
 - 25th January 2025 — Lancashire
 - 1st February 2025 — Cumbria

Communion Training online

To book a place please contact Kerry office@nwsynod.org.uk



ONLINE COMMUNION TRAINING

TRAINING WITH
REVD ROB HOCH-YIDOKODILTONA
8TH JANUARY 7PM

8TH JANUARY 7PM
PLEASE CONTACT KERRY TO BOOK OFFICE@NWSYNOD.ORG.UK

Zoom link will be sent on booking.

People Like Us: Poverty, Social Class and Trauma

A conversation between Darren McGarvey and Miriam Taylor—Friday 17th Jan 2025, 4.00–6.00pm, Online



Increasing inequality and the rise of trauma are both markers of our time. We all have experienced the signs of traumatic rupture that can exist between social classes, both in the UK and elsewhere. From a relational perspective, the roots of trauma lie not in individuals and their lifestyles but in the social conditions of their lives. And so, how we make sense of the links between poverty, social class and trauma will be the starting point for this conversation between two writers from different backgrounds. Is it inevitable that the enduring and cumulative stress of poverty leads to traumatic reactions? What is it like for people from working class backgrounds to access services that are shaped by a paradigm that derives from privilege? These issues and more will be moderated by Ed Fellows in what should be a thought-provoking webinar. This session is aimed primarily for mental health practitioners and others in the helping/coaching professions.

Cost: £30 standard fee, £20 trainees, free for unwaged.

Bookings: Please click [here](#) for information.

All bookings will include 3 months on demand replay access if you can't attend the event live.

SPEAKERS:



Darren McGarvey is a writer, columnist and hip hop recording artist, who has made regular media appearances as a social commentator. Darren grew up in Pollok on the south side of Glasgow, and has lived through extreme poverty, addiction and homelessness. His first book “Poverty Safari” was published in 2017, and was an instant bestseller and critical hit,

making the Sunday Times top ten bestseller lists and receiving plaudits from national newspapers and magazines. He won the prestigious ‘Orwell Book Prize’ in 2018. Darren’s latest book “The Social Distance Between Us” was published in 2022, serialised on BBC Radio 4 and led to him giving a prestigious “Reith Lecture” in November 22 on the “Freedom From Want”. He was recently inducted as Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature which deemed his books on social inequality to be of ‘outstanding literary merit’. Darren’s current campaign is ‘Trauma-Industrial-Complex’, and he is writing a book about trauma in contemporary culture.



Miriam Taylor is a partly retired Gestalt therapist, trainer and writer. Her early education was in the private sector and she experienced years of profound abuse in her childhood. Specialising in trauma work, she has written two groundbreaking books, the first now in its second edition. She has gone on to teach trauma in many countries and to present at conferences. Her plenary presentation at the 2018 IAAGT conference in Toronto was titled ‘In the Face of Trauma’ and in 2019 she delivered a keynote speech on ‘The Context of Trauma’ at the PACFA conference in Sydney. She is interested in the intersections of trauma and social justice,

and the relational implications of them. She is on the leadership team of Relational Change.

Conversations at the Crossroads

Enrichment Day—South and Central Area

To book please contact Kerry at office@nwsynod.org.uk



Conversations at the crossroads

**An enrichment day for elders, worship
leaders and other church leaders.**

What now for lay leadership in the URC?

8th February 2025 10am-3pm

Luther King House, M14 5JP.

South and Central Area

Lunch provided.

Book your place with Kerry as soon as possible.

office@nwsynod.org.uk

Away Day with Odd Arts: Here and Now Radicalisation

To book a place please contact Kerry at [.office@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:office@nwsynod.org.uk) by 13th March—please let us know of any dietary requirements.



A W A Y D A Y W I T H

Odd Arts: Here and Now Radicalisation

Invitation open to Ministers and Lay Leaders



**Venue: The Village Hotel, Captain Clarke Road Hyde
Cheshire SK14 4QG**

When: Thursday, 20 March 2025.

Start time: 10 a.m with Odd Arts programme to begin at 10:30am.

**Lunch will be served and this will be followed with a debriefing session
(led by Revd Dr Rob Hoch-Yidokodiltona)**

finish time: 2 pm.

Limited places (26) first come, first served.

To book a place please contact Kerry Office@nwsynod.org.uk by 13h March also letting us know of any dietary requirements.

Odd Arts: Here and Now Radaclalisation

CENTRAL / SOUTH AREA ACORN ROADSHOW: UPDATE 18th JANUARY 2025



The image shows a promotional poster for the Acorn Roadshow on the left and a photograph of Michael Harvey on the right. The poster is white with blue text and features the Acorn logo (a blue square with three acorns) in the top left. Below the logo, it says 'INVITATIONAL CHURCH WITH MICHAEL HARVEY'. The word 'Acorn' is written in a large, blue, cursive font. Below that, 'ACORN ROADSHOW' is in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, followed by '18 JANUARY 2025'. The location is listed as 'OASIS HUB, MEDIACITY, KING WILLIAM STREET, SALFORD QUAYS, M50 3UQ' and the time as '10 AM - 1 PM'. A note says 'BRING YOUR OWN PACKED LUNCH. REFRESHMENT WILL BE PROVIDED ON ARRIVAL'. At the bottom left of the poster is the logo for 'The North Western Synod of the United Reformed Church'. The photograph on the right shows Michael Harvey, a middle-aged man with glasses on his head, wearing a blue and white striped polo shirt and a yellow lanyard, sitting at a wooden podium with a microphone.

Michael Harvey will be running an Acorn Roadshow on **18th January, 2025, 10am - 3pm at the Oasis Hub, MediaCity, King William Street, Salford Quays, M50 2UQ.**

The theme will be: **Creating a culture of invitation.** It builds on the sessions offered already (An Introduction to Acorn and Acorn as a Spiritual Practice for Pastoral Care), but you don't need to have done these to attend.

We will be engaging with our URC culture, asking how we can move from being a welcoming church only to being welcoming and invitational. We'll look at the barriers to being invitational and simple-but-profound steps to overcoming hesitation and reluctance, among other things.

How about putting together a group from your church to do a "pilot study"? You can support and encourage one another and Michael will work personally with the group.

Please register attendance with Kerry at office@nwsynod.org.uk by **13th January 2025**

Lawrence Heath-Moore — Central Area Mission Mentor

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility

Face to Face Intermediate Safeguarding Training

Wed 27th Nov 2024 13:00-15:00 Egerton URC

Please note time change to 13:00 start

To register and book a place please contact

helpdesk@nwsynod.org.uk



Online Intermediate Safeguarding Training

Wed 4th Dec 2024 18:00-20:00

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

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

New dates to be confirmed.

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.

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

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

Safeguarding Contacts:

Yvette Hansbury-Robinson — Synod Safeguarding Officer —

safeguarding@nwsynod.org.uk

General Safeguarding Queries — relating to safeguarding training + DBS, please email the Safeguarding Team on helpdesk@nwsynod.org.uk

Save the Date: Theology Reading Group

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

Zoom Meeting: Theology Reading Group

Every month on the Second Tues, until 8th April 2025

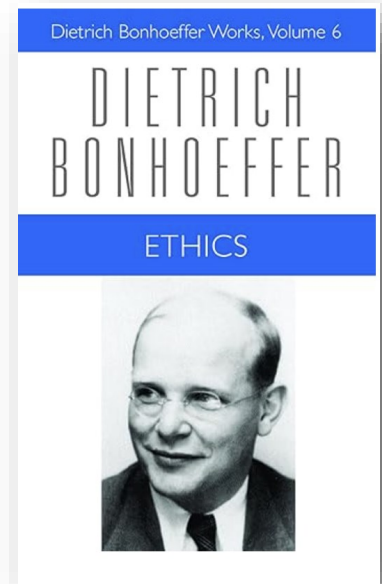
- Dec 10, 2024 12:00 PM
- Jan 14, 2025 12:00 PM
- Feb 11, 2025 12:00 PM
- Mar 11, 2025 12:00 PM
- Apr 8, 2025 12:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87627415144?
pwd=fqqIZa8wq7urkRYSGPFIIXrAZhbRxJ.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87627415144?pwd=fqqIZa8wq7urkRYSGPFIIXrAZhbRxJ.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](#) 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

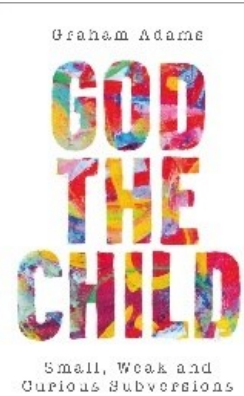
"Christ did not, like an ethicist, love a theory about the good; he loved real people. Christ was not interested, like a philosopher, in what is "generally valid," but in that which serves real concrete human beings. Christ was not concerned about whether "the maxim of an action" could become "a principle 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**

Envisioning Worship Conference



Envisioning Worship Conference for everyone interested in how worship affects mission



Theme: What if *God is Child?*

Dates: 11am on 8th March – 3.30pm on 9th March 2025

Venue: Luther King Centre, Manchester

Costs: Residential : £200
Non-residential : £120

Who is it for? Anyone intrigued by the idea of the childlikeness of God – in the midst of the smallest experiences; apparently weak but disruptive; curious, playful and imaginative; raging and dancing – and what this might mean for worship and mission. Anyone drawn to Bible explorations, creative workshops and more – and who is interested in imagining things differently.

For more information and to register, visit –
<https://northerncollege.co.uk/ewc-march-2025/>

**FORTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
SCHOOL LANE, FORTON. PR3 0AS**

FESTIVAL of



NATIVITY CRIBS

November 29th – December 1st

10.30am to 3pm

Advent Service Dec 1st 9.15am

Start Christmas here.

Come and see many different types of Nativity Cribs.

Christmas refreshments.

For further info or to lend a crib please ring 07912572895



Gatley Christmas Fair at Elm Road United Reformed Church

GATLEY
CHRISTMAS FAIR
AND SANTA'S GROTTO

AT ELM ROAD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
SATURDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 2024, 10AM - 2PM

Free Entry

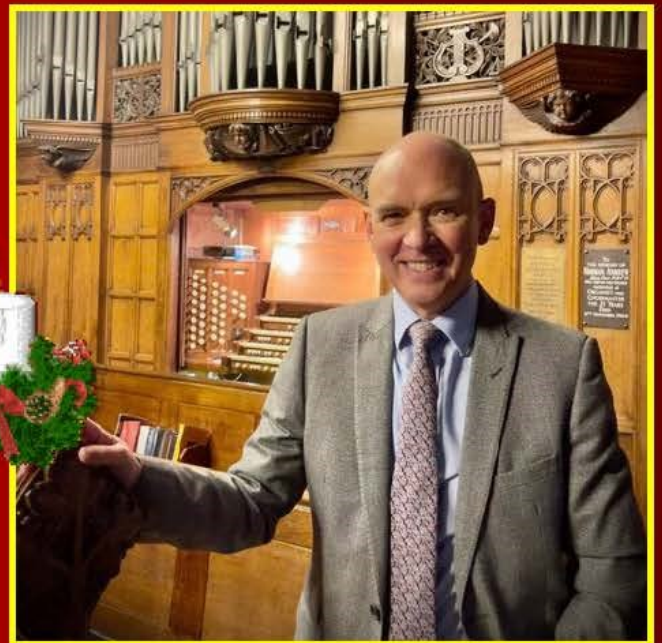
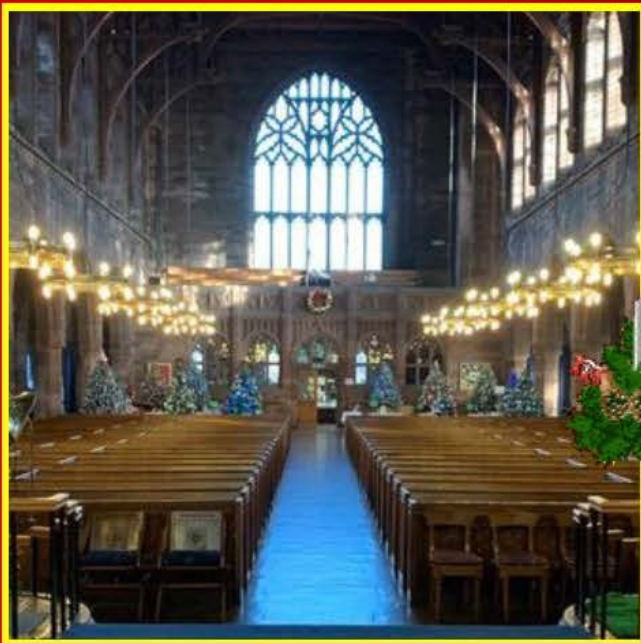
MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS IN HIS GROTTO

Children - £5 **Teens £2.50** **Adults - Free**

CHRISTMAS STALLS
MULLED WINE AND MINCE PIES
SAUSAGE BUTTIES SUPPLIED BY JACKSON O'MALLEY'S
(VEGETARIAN OPTION AVAILABLE)
FESTIVE MUSIC IN THE CHURCH
CHILDREN'S LUCKY DIP
CHILDREN'S GAMES
PAULINE'S CAKE STALL
HOT DRINKS
RAFFLE
TOMBOLA
TUCK SHOP

Christmas at Albion with

GORDON ★
STEWART



*Presenting a programme of Christmas Music in the tree dressed atmosphere of Albion Church playing the famous **LEWIS ORGAN***

*Come along and join us for this Special Christmas Concert on Monday 16th December 2024 at 1-00pm
Admission **FREE** - With retiring collection*

*Albion United Reformed Church,
Stamford Street,
Ashton-u-Lyne OL6 6QQ*

www.albionurc.org.uk - www.gordonstewart.org



Bramhall & Woodford Christian Aid—23rd Nov 2024

To book a place, please contact Elley Noden at elley2011@hotmail.co.uk



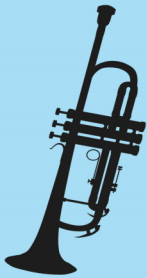
BRAMHALL & WOODFORD CHRISTIAN AID

presents

A BRASS BAND CONCERT

by

**Stockport Schools Senior
& Intermediate Brass Bands**



**On Saturday 23rd November
2024 at 7.00 p.m**



**At United Reformed Church
Robins Lane, Bramhall, SK7 2PE**

Refreshments Provided

Adults £7.00 | Student FREE



Proceeds to

**christian
aid**

Registered Charity Number 1105851

Worsley Road URC — Christmas Events



Come and join us this festive season at
Worsley Road United Reformed Church!



Service dates

Sunday 1st December

Advent Service



Sunday 8th December

Toy Service



Donations to St Paul's Church, Salford gratefully received!



Sunday 15th December

Food Bank Sunday



Festive donations to Salford Food Bank appreciated!



Sunday 22nd December

Nativity at 10:45am



Evening Carol Service 6:30pm followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Please come and join the festive celebrations throughout December!
Why not bring a friend along to share the festive fun?



Bolton & Salford Missional Partnership—Children's Christmas Party

To book a place please contact tgarsden80@gmail.com



Christmas PARTY

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE
Bolton & Salford Missional
partnership Children's Christmas
party

SATURDAY
7th
DEC

2-4pm @Rose Hill URC
Westborne Ave. Bolton
BL3 2HF

All children from the Partnership are welcome

Please let us know numbers and ages of the children and any
dietary requirements by 22nd Nov

Email: tgarsden80@gmail.com
07744787077- Tracy Garsden

Talking About... Unpacking Advent With Children

Talking About...Unpacking Advent With Children

Exploring the meanings behind the season



Thursday, 28th November, 7-8pm



Book your place at www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout

Are you under pressure to get your Christmas decorations down from the loft?

Order your turkey?

Put up the tree?

Make a list for Santa?

Well, hang on – it's not quite Christmas yet! To help us prepare for the birth of Jesus we have the season of Advent.

But how might we explore advent with children?

Joining us for this session are two of the writers of the United Reformed Church's Advent resource for 2024. They will share their thinking about how we can explore the themes of Advent with our children.

You can book your free place at www.bit.ly/URCTalkingAbout

Youth Assembly 2025

Book your place at www.linktr.ee/URCYouthAssembly



URC
YOUTH ASSEMBLY
2025

All are
welcome

Arrive as strangers, leave as friends

7-9 March 2025
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 you 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=L1npXCWKf00



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



Social Metrics Commission and Let's End Poverty

Hannah Fremont-Brown, Let's End Poverty Coordinator for The Methodist Church, has shared the following message with us:

In the last few days the Social Metrics Commission has reported that levels of poverty in the UK are the highest they have been this century—click [here](#) to view their report.

Now, nearly one in four people (24%) in the UK are struggling against poverty.

These statistics show us the scale of the challenge we are facing as we seek to end poverty in the UK, but also remind us that there are solutions to poverty that already exist. We can work together to build a greater consensus that tackling poverty should be prioritised by the government, and that our communities are ready to work together for change.

*As a movement of individuals and organisations committed to an end to poverty in the UK, this is another rallying cry to action through the movement **Let's End Poverty**.*

We've written a short blog on the Let's End Poverty website about the statistics, and why we need a movement to respond—please click on the link <https://letsendpoverty.co.uk/latest/news/time-to-act/>

For Your Prayers

In each newsletter we would like to share people's 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:

- Revd Kate Gray as she is inducted into the Manchester Salford & Urban Missional Partnership on Sunday 24th November at Dandelion Community
- The continued growth of church mission
- For the Churches who are facing difficult decisions about the future of their fellowships and buildings

