

North Western Synod Newsletter



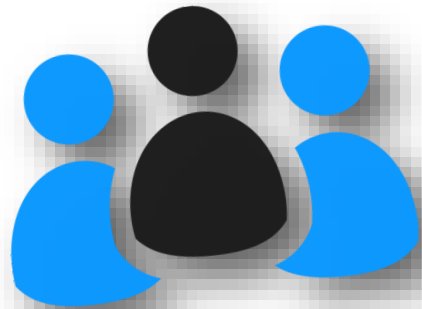
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Announcing!!

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**



Remembrance Service at the White Church

As usual our Remembrance Service ends with prayers around the Peace Pole.

This year two “Tommy” figures stood on guard By day they were hardly noticed, but at night they became illuminated , as if on guard. Reminding us that wars and troubles take place by night as well as by day.

“ We will remember them “

From Val Atkinson at The White Church



Heald Green Goes Even Greener

The URC in Heald Green has just gone even greener. They have done this by having solar panels fitted to the roof of the church hall, and ensured that, by using a local company, they kept their carbon footprint as small as possible while the work was undertaken.

Heald Green United Reformed Church, began considering green issues several years ago, ensuring that their building and surroundings were as environmentally sustainable as possible. This involved improving the insulation of the existing building; moving to using more and more environmentally-friendly cleaning products, paper towels and toilet tissue; changing their energy supplier to a 'green' provider; turning part of the grounds into a wild-flower area; growing fruit and vegetables in the grounds; providing food, water and shelter for birds and wildlife; and hosting the community beehives, which are managed by the local bee-keeper. All this resulted in the church receiving a Bronze EcoChurch Award in 2023.

In working towards a Silver Award, the latest action has been to install solar panels on the roof of the church hall, linked to battery storage, so that any excess electricity which is generated during daylight hours can be stored and used later to provide power during evening events. One of the church leadership team commented "We are delighted with our new solar panels. The installation was quite straightforward and we are already able to monitor the energy being generated. It means our electricity bills will be lower, and that will help us keep our fees down for the community organisations which hire our premises, as well as being good for the environment. It's a win-win situation. This is what our faith means to us – not only serving those who come to worship on a Sunday, but demonstrating our care and concern for our community and the wider world."



Whitehaven URC—Warm Space

Whitehaven URC have set up a warm space every Wednesday from 10am to 11.30am to provide visitors with a hot drink, cakes, biscuits and company. In addition they are giving away blankets and warm clothing to help people through the winter. The generosity of the congregation in donating these items has been amazing!



Kendal URC is taking part in the Kendal Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival

Kendal URC is taking part in the Kendal Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival. We have sponsored a tree in aid of The Ripple Effect, a charity we have become involved in thanks to our Silver Eco Church status

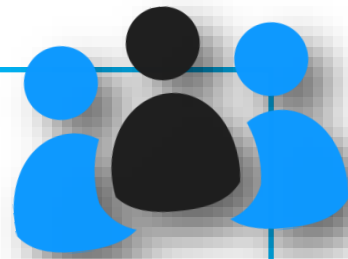


News from Edgeley Community Church

Four members from Edgeley Community Church attended the 'Leading Your Church Into Growth' Conference at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick on 25th to 27th November.

Barbara Aspinall reported 'We found this course to be extremely encouraging and doable within any church. We also enjoyed the wonderful food at the Hayes and were well looked after. If anyone is interested, the conference will be back again in November 2025. Thanks to Mersey Synod for hosting this.'





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—10am to 2pm—Windermere Carver
- 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
- Spring Ministers Away Day—1st March 2025
Venue—The Storey, 2 Meeting House Lane, Town Centre, Lancaster, LA1 1TH

Lancashire Carers Sing Christmas!

For more information, to download a hymn sheet or register a venue click [here](#)



It's beginning to look a lot like....

Lancashire Carers Sing Christmas!
Wednesday 18th December Midday



Live from the Studios of BBC Radio Lancashire Blackburn



Calling all Carers at Christmas

A special broadcast sharing
the stories of those who offer
care for others at Christmas



With the combined Lancashire Bands of
The Salvation Army, the Blackburn People's Choir
and special guests



Join the service live at midday or
Hold your own local event at
a time or venue of your choice with
BBC Sounds



Download the carol sheet
Register a venue at:

<https://www.ctlancashire.org.uk/lancashire-carers-sing-christmas-2024/>



United Christian Singers performing at Trinity Audenshaw Church

From Lesley Rolls—Member at Trinity Audenshaw

'The United Christian Singers, a mixed voice choir rehearse at Trinity Church, Audenshaw. Some of our members sing with them (me included), we give free concerts during Advent and around Easter, at many Churches in the Manchester area.

We are performing 'Little Lion, Little Lamb' on 14th December 2024 at 3pm at Trinity.

For more information please click [here](#).

Blue Christmas Event at re:new—Barrow in Furness

re:new

In the community, By the community, For the community

Blue Christmas

The grief and pain of life do not have to be forgotten at Christmas, but can sit alongside the hope and light at the heart of the Christmas message

Monday 16th December

Come and help us to decorate our tree by creating your own heart.

You're Invited to join us at 12pm or 5pm to share in a short time of reflection.



The Methodist Church



Altrincham URC — Knitted Bible Exhibition

Joseph and his brothers



The Knitted Bible Exhibition

**at Altrincham United Reformed Church
(corner of Cecil Road and Ashley Road),**

Hale. WA15 9NT

Sponsored by Churches Together in Hale

**36 Bible scenes complete with an explanation
of each story. Every day 1pm to 3pm from
Saturday 4th January to Friday 10th January 2025**



Healing the paralysed man



Palm Sunday

Free of charge. Refreshments provided.

(Small donation for refreshments appreciated)

**All ages welcome including parties from
churches**

For further information or to book larger parties please contact:

Sue Jesson jessonsusan@gmail.com 07973 391154 or

the Church Office office@altrinchamurc.org.uk 0161 929 9747

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.

Sacrament Training Dates

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



SACRAMENT TRAINING DATES

Communion training 8th January @7pm (online)

Sacrament training (Baptism & Communion)
4th March 2025 10am - 2pm (venue tbc)
Lanscashire Area

Sacrament training (Baptism & Communion)
1st April 10am - 2pm Carver Uniting Church

TRAINING WITH
REVD ROB HOCH YIDOKODILTONA

PLEASE CONTACT KERRY TO BOOK OFFICE@NWSYNOD.ORG.UK
LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

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.

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. The text on the poster includes: 'INVITATIONAL CHURCH WITH MICHAEL HARVEY', 'Acorn' in a large script font, 'ACORN ROADSHOW', '18 JANUARY 2025', 'OASIS HUB, MEDIACITY, KING WILLIAM STREET, SALFORD QUAYS, M50 3UQ', '10 AM - 1 PM', 'BRING YOUR OWN PACKED LUNCH. REFRESHMENT WILL BE PROVIDED ON ARRIVAL', and the logo for 'The North Western Synod of the United Reformed Church' at the bottom left. The photograph 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

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 \(urc.org.uk\)](#)

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

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

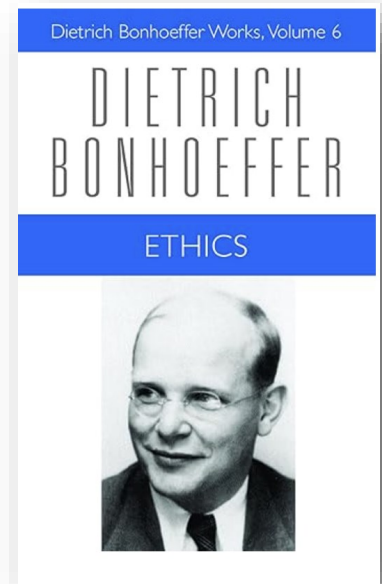
- Dec 10, 2024 12:00 PM
- Jan 14, 2025 12:00 PM
- Feb 11, 2025 12:00 PM
- Mar 11, 2025 12:00 PM
- Apr 8, 2025 12:00 PM

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

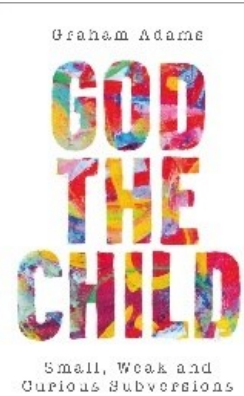
"Christ did not, like an ethicist, love a theory about the good; he loved real people. Christ was not interested, like a philosopher, in what is "generally valid," but in that which serves real concrete human beings. Christ was not concerned about whether "the maxim of an action" could become "a principle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

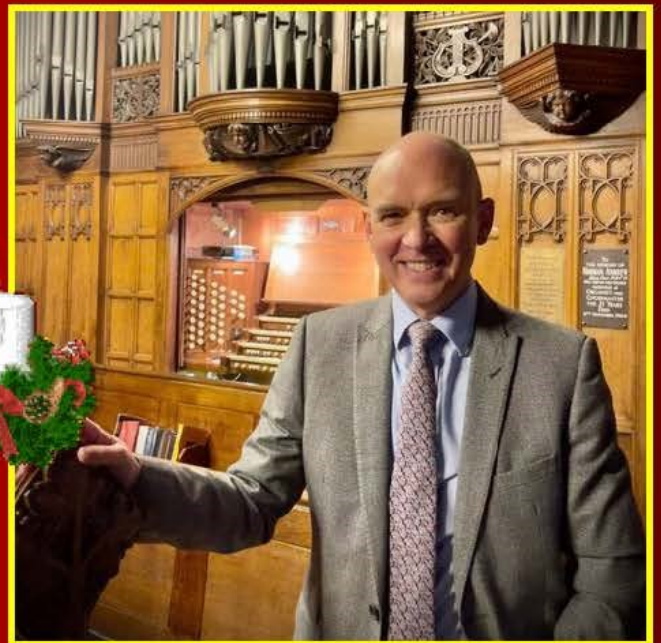
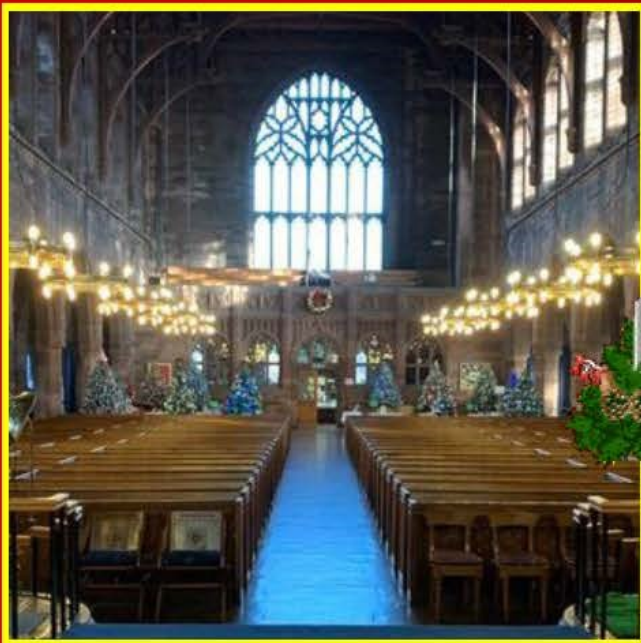
Christmas refreshments.

For further info or to lend a crib please ring 07912572895



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



Online Advent Retreat—3rd to 7th December 2024

Please click this link to book: <https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/events-and-retreats/>

Bookings will close at 21:00 on Monday 2nd December: the Zoom link will be sent to those who have booked later that evening.

Online advent retreat: Love, joy, peace and hope

3 December 2024 to 7 December 2024

Venue: Online

Price: £0



We'll gather for a period of prayer in the morning, and sessions of readings, reflections, prayer and sharing at lunchtime and in the evening, following the advent themes of love, joy, peace and hope.

The retreat is designed for people to be able to dip into. Some will be able to attend everything, but, if the diary doesn't make that practical, people are welcome to join in when they can. It can help to think of the retreat as the backdrop to their experiences of God in these days and the "drawing together" session on the Saturday evening will think about where we've encountered God during the week — in the sessions and in everything else we've been doing.

There are three sessions each day — 7.30-8.00am; 12.00–1.00pm and 7.00 – 8.00pm: - a period of prayer in the morning, and sessions at lunchtime and in the evening that will include reflections, time for prayer, and talking in the group. Please click the link below to book:

<https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/events-and-retreats/>

Bookings will close at 2100 on Monday 2 December: the zoom link will be sent to those who have booked later that evening.

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

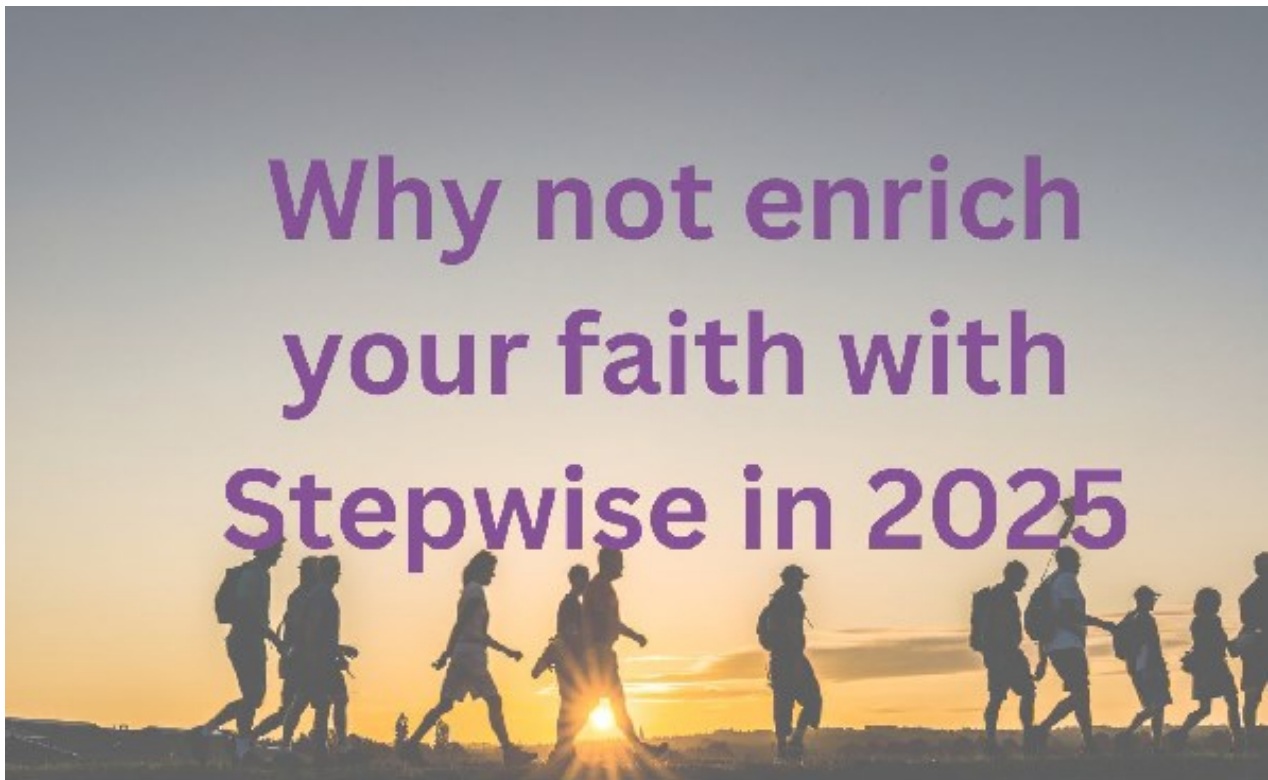
All children from the Partnership are welcome

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

Email: tgarsden80@gmail.com
07744787077- Tracy Garsden

What is on Offer with Stepwise in 2025

Contact liz.delafield@nwsynod.org.uk for more information and the Zoom link



Come to an introductory session on zoom to find out more.

- **Monday 20th January 7pm. Beginning Stepwise:** An introduction to Stepwise and to Faith filled life. For those new to Stepwise.
- **Monday 3rd February: Continuing your stepwise journey:** For those who have already done a stepwise course. A chance to catch up with other participants, find out about the different Stepwise streams and explore your next steps.

Contact liz.delafield@nwsynod.org.uk for more information and the zoom link.

Stepwise

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

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:



Church Life Review Administrator—London

Please send your application form to:

Human Resources, the United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT

Tel: 020 7691 9871 recruitment@urc.org.uk www.urch.org.uk/jobs



Administrator Church Life Review London

Fixed Term contract until March 2026
35 hours per week
£36,103 per annum

Are you ready to help support the Church on its important journey of change?

The Church Life Review (CLR) is a significant and important journey of change to fully review all aspects of the life of the denomination. In this role you will work closely with the Programme Manager on all administrative aspects of the CLR, playing a vital role in seeing that they are properly supported in their busy schedule.

You will be educated to A level or equivalent with GCSE passes (grade A-C) in English and Maths. You already have experience of PA and administrative work in an office environment and are highly organised, with excellent communication and interpersonal skills *and an ability to operate with discretion*.

We can offer you a flexible and friendly working environment; working from Church House and from home.

If you are interested in working with us and can meet the job requirements, please send your application form to:
Human Resources, the United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT
020 7691 9871 recruitment@urc.org.uk www.urch.org.uk/jobs

Closing date: 9 am, Wednesday 4 December 2024 Interviews: Tuesday 17 December 2024

South West Cumbria United Area are looking for a Pioneer Innovator

For more information, please contact the Lay Co-Chair at km.aldred@icloud.com



South West Cumbria United Area

are looking to recruit a

Pioneer innovator

38hrs per week to be worked flexibly including some evening and weekend work

Based at **re:new, 207 Dalton Road, Barrow in Furness**

Salary £30,000 per annum

South West Cumbria United Area is seeking to appoint a Pioneer, based in re:new, a charity shop and community hub located in Barrow in Furness. The Pioneer will support the cultivation of environments and opportunities for the development of new Christian communities in order to make a tangible difference to the local community.

We are looking for a practising Christian, passionate to share the gospel in an enthusiastic, inclusive and creative way.

For more information, please contact the lay co-chair on

km.aldred@icloud.com

Application by 12 noon 9 January 2025.

Interviews to be held January 2025.

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:

- The continued growth of church mission
- For the Churches who are facing difficult decisions about the future of their fellowships and buildings

