

Note: Items headed in grey have appeared in the newsletter previously

## Pastoral News

Congratulations to **Helen Garton**, from Thames North Synod, who has accepted a call to Oxford: St Columba's and Cumnor. Helen's Induction will be on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July (venue to be confirmed).

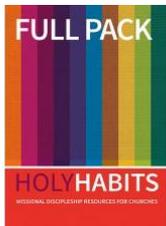
Congratulations to **Richard Bittleston**, who has, with the agreement of Aston Tirrold, been appointed to serve there at 25% for a period of two years in the first instance. Richard's induction will be on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March (time to be confirmed).

Update – **Duncan Goldie** who will be inducted to Sherborne & Shaftesbury with oversight of Mere URC and Wincanton Methodist Church will be inducted on 21<sup>st</sup> April at Cheap Street Sherborne.

## Area Gatherings – February 2018

### Topic: Walking the Way – taking the next step.

These meetings are open to all church members to come and meet together as we explore Walking the Way.



We hope to have a set of the Holy Habits booklets available to look at to help churches decide how to use it and whether to [order](#) their own copies.

Please publicise these meetings in your church.

6.30 for a 7pm start – finished by 9.15pm

Area	Date	Venue
South West	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">Fordingbridge</a>
North West	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">Oxford: Collinwood Road</a>
North East	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">Woking</a>
South East	Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<a href="#">Fareham URC</a>

## Has your Church a Resolution for Synod?

Synod meetings are the forum for local congregations to bring areas of concern for discussion in the wider church.

If your church would like to bring a Resolution or discussion item to March Synod, please notify the Synod office by 13<sup>th</sup> February.

If you would like to discuss a possible resolution please contact the Synod Clerk:  
[clerk@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcwessex.org.uk)

## Racial Justice Sunday – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Resources for Racial Justice Sunday are now available [here](#)

## Good News Stories for March Synod

Has something exciting or inspiring happened in your church over the past few months?

Have you taken any action as a result of the Fair Trade and Dementia Friendly Resolutions we passed at November Synod?

If the answer to either of these is “yes”, why not share it for the benefit of others?

Contact Sue Brown ([clerk@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcwessex.org.uk)) by 17<sup>th</sup> February and we'll try to include your story at Synod.

## New URC Secretary for Church and Society

The URC has a new Secretary for Church and Society, to work with the URC Mission Team and the Joint Public Issues Team.

**Simeon Mitchell** started in his new role on 8<sup>th</sup> January and brings to it rich experience of working with Christian Aid, All We Can (the former Methodist Church Relief and Development Fund), Results UK and the Fairtrade Foundation. In these varied roles he has been involved in campaigning and education work on national and international social, political and economic issues, major policy research, strategic leadership and marketing and developing resources.

Simeon can be contacted on [simeon.mitchell@urc.org.uk](mailto:simeon.mitchell@urc.org.uk)

## SS Windrush Celebration – can you help?

A message from Michael Jagessar - URC Global & Intercultural Ministries (Mission)

Given our ‘multi-cultural church, intercultural habit’ commitment, the United Reformed Church has an opportunity this year to celebrate the arrival of a generation who inspired a cultural change that has enriched our nation.

In June 2018 it will be the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the SS Windrush with the over 300 people from across the Caribbean who helped rebuild the country after the Second World War. The Windrush Generation has had a profound impact on the evolving culture of our Church and Society, and we want to encourage the Church to take the opportunity to remember and celebrate the historic event.

As a contribution to the celebration we (GiM-URC) would like to produce a film: *Longing to Belong*, which will be accompanied by a discussion paper/bible study highlighting the challenges the Windrush Generation have had to overcome, and those they are still confronting today.

To produce the film, though, is costly and so we need to raise around £5,000 to make

this a reality. So we are kindly asking all Synod RJ and Intercultural Coordinators to approach their Synod to consider making a contribution towards the amount. Synods are asked to give as they are able. It may be the case that a congregation or an individual in a Synod may wish to make a contribution. We would welcome that as well. We appreciate that funds are limited, but this is an opportunity to show our support and appreciation for this generation and its progeny who continue to be a growing inspiration to the Church.

The script for the film has been written by Richard Becher, who wrote 'When Truth is Blind' as part of the United Reformed Church @home in a strange place project. That film was the work of Kevin Snyman who is also collaborating with Richard on his second film. Kevin also worked on the Constance Coltman film last year and has been involved in many other productions in the past.

The script of *Longing to Belong* is currently going through numerous editing and consulting with relevant persons. It will be an excellent contribution to present and future generations. I am encouraging support of this project.

Already Global and Intercultural Ministries and the West Midlands Synod have given their commitment to contribute to the production of the film.

Your kind and generous consideration in progressing the appeal to and through your Synod would be greatly appreciated.

With all good wishes and blessings

## News Update

News Update is seeking anything of interest for the denomination as a whole from across the country – and the nations.

Any news/photos/event information for the next edition should be sent to:

[ann-marie.abbasah@urc.org.uk](mailto:ann-marie.abbasah@urc.org.uk)

Future dates for receipt of copy are:

**March edition:** Deadline Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February

**April edition:** Deadline Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March

**May edition:** Deadline Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April

You can subscribe to News Update via the link on the URC website.

## Churches Together in England – General Secretary vacancy

Churches Together in England are seeking a new General Secretary (lay or ordained). Details about the post are available [here](#)

Closing date: 12 noon on Monday 12th February 2018

## Churches Together in Oxfordshire AGM

The Churches Together in Oxfordshire AGM is going to be at The Café, UTC Oxfordshire, Greenwood Way, Harwell, OX11 6BZ on March the 19th at 7.30.

Ali Boulton is speaking on 'New Housing, a Christian response'. She is involved Nationally with implementing initiative of Christians reaching into New Housing developments.

It would be great to hear from and support Ali at this event and you are all very welcome.

## Joint Public Issues Newsletter

The latest newsletter is available [here](#)

## Joint Liturgy Group of Great Britain - Weddings & Funerals conference

Shaping our Worship: Weddings and funerals

A conference hosted by the Joint Liturgical Group of Great Britain

All welcome!

Wednesday 7 March 2018 – 10.30am for 10.45am, close 4.00pm

at St Aloysius Parish Centre, 20 Phoenix Road, Euston, London NW1 1TA (next to Euston Station)

Cost: £25 per person, includes lunch

Email registration: [martin.foster@cbcew.org.uk](mailto:martin.foster@cbcew.org.uk)

Web: [www.jlg.org.uk](http://www.jlg.org.uk)

## Christians in Science

Encouraging informed discussion on science-faith issues and concern for the environment.

For the details of their upcoming meetings visit their website: <http://www.science-faith-issues.org/>

## TLS – Thanksgiving Service

A thanksgiving service for Training for Learning and Serving (TLS) at The Church at Carrs Lane, Birmingham on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018. Worship will begin at 11.30 am. More details [here](#)

## Area Gatherings – September dates

Area	Date	Venue
North East	Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup>	
South West	Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Parkstone
South East	Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup>	
North West	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup>	

## Upcoming Synod events

Bookings for all events and training courses to

Ruth Heine at the Synod Office

Email: [bookings@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:bookings@urcwessex.org.uk)

Tel: 023 8067 4513

### Development and Support Events in 2018

Further details in the [calendar](#) on the Synod Website.

- [Elders' Development sessions](#)
- [Mission Shaped Church](#)
- [Mental Health Awareness Day: reducing stigma, resourcing the church](#)
- [Day for Church Secretaries](#)
- [Facilitating Small Groups](#)

### Safeguarding Training

Information about safeguarding can be found on the synod website. Training is for all those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Also important for Ministers and Elders.

**Saturday 26 May 2018**

**at Andover URC**

10am – 4pm.

[Further details](#)

**Saturday 9 June 2018**

**at Windsor URC**

10am – 4pm

[Further details](#)

### Enquirers Events

In 2018 there will be two Assembly-organised Enquirers events for people interested in a range of ministries in the church:

Saturday 24 March 2018 – 10am-4pm @Luther King House, Manchester

Saturday 10 November – 10am-4pm @Westminster College, Cambridge

For enquiries please contact Vivienne Williams [vivienne.williams@urc.org.uk](mailto:vivienne.williams@urc.org.uk)

### Children's Days

These new look events are being developed to explore the Assembly theme of *Pilgrimage*.

Children's day (South)

'Beach Mission'

Saturday 2 June 2018

Children's day (North)

'Advent'

Saturday 1 December 2018

For ages 7 – 13 years. Save the dates and watch out for further details.

## Procedure for Authorisation of Elders and Lay Preachers

A [flowchart](#) describing the Wessex Synod procedure for authorisation of Elders and Lay Preachers as Lay Presidents at the Sacraments is now available on the website.

## Wessex Summer Camp

Date: 13 – 15 July 2018

Venue: Ferny Crofts Activity Centre in the New Forest.

Age: 11+ years.

Theme: Re:connect

A fantastic youth camp giving space to learn more about the Christian faith, who Jesus is, and explore how this impacts us and where we fit in.

## Mental Health Awareness Day – Reducing Stigma, Resourcing the Church

Following the success of the recent Mental Health Awareness Day in the SW, the day is being repeated in the northern part of the synod.

At Woking URC, on Saturday 28 April 2017, 10am – 4pm. Speaker, workshops, market place resources.

## << Final Reminder >> Training for DBS Verifiers

Saturday 10 March 2018

at London St URC, Basingstoke

10am – 12 noon. Arrivals and registration from 9.30am.

Trainer: from Due Diligence Checking Ltd.

Introducing the DBS Verifier's role description, explaining the Due Diligence Checking (DDC) online procedures, record-keeping for DBS verifiers and trouble-shooting problems that you have encountered.

## Synod Quiet Days for all

Saturday 19 May 2018

at Wisdom House, Romsey

To be led by Clare Downing

Theme: "Wait here" - preparing for Pentecost

Wednesday 26 September 2018

at Aston Tirrold URC,

To be led by Andrew Williams

Theme: 'Later life in all its fullness'

## Job Opportunities

There are two URC vacancies for the post:

Maintenance Surveyor and Assistant Maintenance Surveyor

Follow the link for more information: <https://www.urch.org.uk/vacancies/2546-maintenance-surveyor-assistant-maintenance-surveyor-retired-ministers-housing-society.html>

## Prayer Calendar

### March

4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bournemouth International Church</li><li>• Aston Tirrold</li></ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meeting of Synod</li><li>• Bishop's Waltham</li></ul>
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fordingbridge</li><li>• Reading: Grange</li><li>• Isle of Wight: Shanklin</li></ul>
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Womersley</li><li>• Weymouth: Radipole</li><li>• Southampton: Freemantle</li></ul>

**Items for the March edition to [enews@urchwessex.org.uk](mailto:enews@urchwessex.org.uk) by Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February**

**Please submit news items in the form of:**

**a heading; date and venue details; a brief descriptive sentence and a website link.**