

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

## Synod Day 2021

Following the discussions at March Synod, the Children and Youth Work Committee is in the very early stages of considering the venue and content of a Synod Day in 2021. We have created a brief survey (just 4 questions) to gather views and opinions about a Synod Day and would be grateful if you could let us know your thoughts by completing the survey at the link below. We'd be pleased to hear the views of all ages as this will be an all-age event. Please do pass on this request to others in your church who may not receive "Sharing the Vision".

The survey is available at - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GPVHDNX>

All responses are anonymous - we'd be grateful if we could receive comments by the 15th July.

## From M&M Secretary – Peter Pay

With immediate effect I now have a dedicated email address for all M&M enquiries being: [mm@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:mm@urcwessex.org.uk)

My personal email address remains for all lay preaching enquiries.

Mr Colin MacBean will be assisting me with my role while I am Lay Moderator of General Assembly, and he is contactable on the same email address:

[mm@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:mm@urcwessex.org.uk)

Letters for 2020 requests will be sent to each church very shortly.

Peter Pay

## Employment Adviser Penny Thatcher – change of hours

Penny will now be working on Monday and Tuesday each week between the hours of 8.30am and 4.30pm.

## Annual Trustees Reports

Some churches who are registered charities have asked if there is any guidance to help them write their Annual Trustees Report. There is a pro forma on the central URC website, but it's well hidden away in Finance within 'Church Accounts under SORP 2005'

Quick link [here](#)

Some of you may find this link helpful.

## United Service hosted by Andover URC

We may be a small church (average attendance 12-15), but when Andover Churches Together was looking for a host for a community service, our representative suggested we take a turn. Her enthusiasm became contagious.

'Serving the World' became the theme to mark the end of Christian Aid Week and we invited a Christian Aid speaker. Enlisting readers and musicians from several other churches (we usually use a music machine), we took our role as hosts seriously and prepared a tasty spread for 60. Much to our surprise almost 100 people arrived! The welcome, music, message, worship and hospitality added up to a wonderful experience for everyone. We collected overflowing baskets of postcards directed to the Chancellor regarding the writing off of Sierra Leone's debt and donations for Christian Aid and Andover Churches Together. We may have run out of service sheets and hymnals, but all were filled with the Spirit and left full of joy and goodies!

Take a look at the photos from the day [here](#)

## Commitment for Life Service – Sarisbury Green

On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July at 10.30am Rev Dr Kevin Snyman, Programme Officer, will be leading morning worship at Sarisbury Green United Reformed Church bringing us up to date with everything that is happening in the various programmes and our link with Christian Aid. The service will include Communion and everyone is welcome to join us for this presentation. David Meatcher Tel:01489 572718

## Commitment for Life and Christian Aid

*Commitment for Life* would love their partner churches or representatives from your church to join them and Christian Aid on **Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> June**, when they come together with thousands of others in **London's Westminster**. The purpose is to celebrate our faith in action, lobby our politicians - to end the UK's contribution to climate change and pass ambitious laws that create a healthier environment for nature and people, especially those affected in the partner countries that *Commitment for Life* supports. For further information please see the following link

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/thetimeisnow>

If you are able to join us in person, for this unforgettable day of action, please do let us know, so we can co-ordinate meeting up etc. [Suzanne.pearson@urc.org.uk](mailto:Suzanne.pearson@urc.org.uk)

## From Church & Society

### Our Political Situation

Earlier in the year, the Church and Society Group expressed its concern about the divisiveness evident in the current political situation in our country. Since then things have got worse – the political and BREXIT situation is more uncertain than ever but, more importantly, the differing camps are further apart than ever. That original statement bears repeating! <http://wessexsynodurc.org.uk/?s=BREXIT>

**Homelessness** is a major issue everywhere, and increasingly so. It is an issue which Churches in some places seek to tackle. IBEX locally have been researching and thinking about this, and have published some thoughts on their website about it:

<https://www.ibexsouthcoast.org.uk/single-post/2019/02/09/The-Theology-behind-Homelessness> . They are also aiming to publish something similarly about the very closely related issue of housing.

**Fairtrade shops.** We have asked on here before for details of shops which operate on an ethical basis, specialising in selling Fairtrade goods and the like, and thank you to those who have brought things to our attention. We are currently considering where best to hold this information, which still needs updating at the moment.

But we are also considering expanding it. This means trying to identify for example

- Where Fairly traded goods can be bought online.
- Possibly trying to identify locally where examples exist of the recent surge in outlets which specialise in selling “loose” goods – where people bring their own containers and avoid the use of single use plastics

So if anyone knows of anything, do contact [davidwrighton34@btinternet.com](mailto:davidwrighton34@btinternet.com) . And we would rather hear about it twice than not hear about it at all.

Talking of packaging, you may be aware that Waitrose have recently launched a trial at one of their stores (in Oxford) to provide unpackaged foods.

Newsround article: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/48509356> .

We can't help thinking this will spread!

It should be mentioned that other supermarkets have done similar things in the past, and probably still do!

And the link here is deliberately to a CBBC (Children's television) Newsround report, partly to emphasise that young people are taking these issues extremely seriously, and partly because the article covers other issues as well – did you know that Aldi offers the highest percentage of sustainable fish products?

Other articles available:

Guardian article: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jun/04/waitrose-launches-packaging-free-trial>

BBC news article: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-48498346>

The Church and Society Group is aware that Traidcraft aim to sell in large quantities which sometimes local reps can't handle. Shop Equality in Eastleigh –

<http://www.thefairtradeshop.org.uk/> - not only sell online, but also offer to supply schools, Churches and similar.

You may be aware that the Traidcraft organisation has been having trading difficulties lately. But please keep **supporting** Traidcraft.

## Westminster College – Windows of Opportunity

The latest edition of Windows of Opportunity is available [here](#).

This is a three times a year information sheet coming out in February, June and November. It offers a few words from the director of Church Resource Development, Peter Ball, and a list of upcoming events and training opportunities at Westminster College.

## Mansfield College Commemorative Service

On 29<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm Mansfield College hope to commemorate two distinguished reconcilers and former students, Revd Geoffrey Beck, one time minister at Summertown Oxford and first Warden of the Chapel of Unity in Coventry Cathedral and Revd Dr Alex Boraine, leading advocate with Archbishop Desmond Tutu of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. All welcome.

The preacher is Revd Dr Donald W Norwood of this Synod

[donald.oxonecumenics@gmail.com](mailto:donald.oxonecumenics@gmail.com)

## Part-Time Trust Officer vacancy - West Midlands Synod

Job advert available [here](#)

## HOPE Together June Newsletter

Available [here](#)

## JPIT June Newsletter

Job advert available [here](#)

## September Area Gatherings – Topic update

We will be looking at 2 very different aspects of “Using Resources well”

- Finding Resources: Learn more about how to raise funds and access grants for your church projects
- Using Resources wisely: How can we and our churches work towards zero carbon emissions?

Area	Date	Venue
South West	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Southbourne, Bournemouth
North East	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	High Cross Church, Camberley
North West	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	tbc Aston Tirrold
South East	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	tbc Avenue St Andrew's Southampton

6.30pm for 7pm start – finish by 9.15pm

## 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:

**July/August edition:** Deadline Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June

**September edition:** Deadline Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August

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

View the latest New Update [here](#)

## 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

#### TRIO Resource Pack available to loan from the Synod Office.

TRIO is a financial stewardship programme for churches which has proven success in a wide variety of demographic settings in encouraging generosity in giving. Contact the Synod Office if you would like to borrow a loan copy of the TRIO resource pack.

#### Mental Health First Aider Training – two-day course

**On Mondays 7 & 14 October 2019 at Petersfield URC.** 9.15am – 5pm. This is a two-day training course resulting in a Mental Health First Aider qualification. Participants must attend both days to complete the course and gain a certificate. Places are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment. [Further information.](#)

#### Church Secretaries' Day

**Saturday 19 October 2019** at Fleet URC. 10.30am – 2pm.

The day will be an opportunity to explore together, safeguarding practice and how this impacts your church. This will be facilitated by the Synod Safeguarding Officer. There will be a time for sharing good practice and a question and answer session.

#### Synod Quiet Day for All – *mindfulness day – places still available but going fast*

*Only a few places remaining, on a first come basis. Please wait for confirmation of your place before making payment. Thank you.*

**Saturday 26 October 2019 at Fleet URC.** A reflective day on “Mindfulness and Christian Spirituality” led by specialist Tim Stead. Exploring how mindfulness and Christian spirituality relate, including trying exercises in mindfulness which might enhance and enrich our spiritual life. Cost £15 which includes lunch. Places are limited, book now! [Programme and booking form](#) on the synod website.

#### Mission Shaped Church Day

**Saturday 16 November 2019 at Fleet URC. 10.30am – 3.30pm.** We are constantly faced with the challenge of mission in an ever-changing world. Join us again for this annual shared exploration into how to keep up.

#### New – Stepwise Facilitator Role Description

We are looking for people who can catch a vision of the church of the future and help facilitate those who are going to be part of leading us forward towards that vision. We are not looking for teachers, but people who can facilitate others' learning. If this sounds like you, please get in touch with one of the Synod Development and Support Officers, Mary Thomas and Ray Stanyon.

[Stepwise Facilitator Role Description.](#)

## Children's and Youth Events and Training

### Wessex Summer Camp 2019 – bookings close on 30 June

**Hurry! Bookings close on 30 June 2019 – £65 per person.** [Further details.](#)

**Date: 19 – 21 July 2019.** Wessex Summer Camp is moving to a fantastic new venue in the north of Hampshire – **Runways End Activity Centre, near Farnborough.** There will be all the best bits of camp that everyone has come to love, plus some new opportunities to look forward to. The theme this year is 'One Body'.

**New for 2019 ... Junior Camp** for those in school years 4, 5 and 6. This event will run parallel to the youth camp and will explore the same theme. Junior Camp will enjoy the excellent indoor accommodation at the venue.

### The Big Speak Out 2019 – Final booking reminder

5 – 7 July 2019 in Repton, Derbyshire. URC Youth Event for all young people age 11 – 18 years. Participants will be able to join in a variety of workshops, games, discussions, times of worship and fun activities with up to 49 other young people connected with the URC in some way. [Bookings now open.](#) Wessex Synod will cover the early bird price.

### Safeguarding Training – New Date

A full day's training for all those working with children, young people and adults at risk. Important for Ministers and Elders. Booking is essential. Further info on the posters.

At [Shanklin URC](#), Isle of Wight on Saturday 7 September. 10am – 4pm.

At the [Beacon Church](#), Canford Heath, Poole on Saturday 21 September. 10 – 4pm

At [London Street URC](#), Basingstoke, on Saturday 21 March 2020. 10am – 4pm.

### Paddington's Pilgrimage

If Paddington has been visiting your church, please let us know what he has been up to. Upload your photos to the Synod [Facebook](#) page.

## Prayer Calendar

The Synod Prayer Calendar is available on the Synod Website and also each month in this newsletter.

Please note that it is updated from time to time, for example when a church closes it will be removed from the list.

Please refer to the website/enewsletter before printing weekly prayer sheets to ensure the most up to date information. Thank you.

### July

7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trinity Church, Lower Earley, Reading</li><li>• Broadstone</li><li>• Gosport St Columba</li></ul>
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shanklin, Isle of Wight</li><li>• Marston, Oxford</li></ul>
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holy Family, Blackbird Leys, Oxford</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burton Green, Christchurch</li> <li>• Havant</li> </ul>
28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Peter's Guildford</li> <li>• Bitterne Park, Southampton</li> </ul>
<b>August</b>	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bordon</li> <li>• Summertown, Oxford</li> <li>• Trinity, Bournemouth</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Francis, Valley Park, Chandler's Ford</li> <li>• Trinity Church, Abingdon</li> </ul>
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pear Tree Green, Southampton</li> <li>• Park, Reading</li> <li>• Ferndown</li> </ul>
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blandford Forum</li> <li>• Normandy, Guildford</li> </ul>
<p><b>Items for the July edition to <a href="mailto:enews@urcwessex.org.uk">enews@urcwessex.org.uk</a></b>  <b>by 12noon on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July</b>  <b>Please submit news items in the form of:</b>  <b>a heading; date and venue details; a brief descriptive sentence and a website link.</b></p>	