
News from the NW Synod 24th February 2016

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1: Moderator's snapshot It was a great pleasure when I was leading worship at Cleveleys URC this week, with a small Brownie parade for the first time in a couple of years, to be able to present a certificate for long service to one of their members. In the centre of the picture is Cynthia Longden who is an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher being presented with flowers and a decorated cake after the service. We thought Cynthia had been a lay preacher for 60 years. In fact it turns out to be 64 years! We expressed our gratefulness to Cynthia for responding to God's call in her life to preach and for her faithfulness in serving God in this way through those 64 years. We wish Cynthia every blessing as she continues to walk closely with her Lord.

Please pray

- for all who are called to serve in leading worship and preaching
- for us as a Synod as we look to support those called to this form of ministry & as we explore ways of encouraging a new generation of those called to lead worship
- for the work across our 135 churches in the Synod with children and young people, for their leaders, and for the sharing of the Christian faith with them through our Church communities.



2: Devotions for Lent Following the success, and wide take up, of the Advent and Christmas devotions sent out by the North West Synod Andy Braunston and Lis Mullen are working together to get a team of people from the North Western and Northern Synods to write some daily devotions for Lent. These will be sent out by email to those who sign up and also placed on the Northern Synod website. They will run from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday (we hope to have another set for Easter to Pentecost).

If you would like to sign up for these please go to <http://eepurl.com/bKR8mz> and fill in the form

3: Raising Awareness of Hate Crime in Tonge Moor The Building Bridges Project is a partnership project led by Tonge Moor URC (Church at The Centre), Tonge Children's Centre and various other Tonge Moor organisations



Recently Bolton Safe Partnership encouraged us to raise awareness of hate crime during the week of the 8-14th of February 2016, therefore Building Bridges, and others, involved the primary schools, churches, uniformed organisation and other youth groups within

Tonge Moor in a poster design competition.

The overall winners came from Moorgate Primary school

One winner said "Our class learned a lot about hate crime through this competition and it's very important." Whilst another added: 'we made our poster colourful with paint splashes and it's fantastic to have won.'

Their poster was professionally printed off and displayed around Tonge in various community locations during Hate Crime Awareness Week.

We had so many entries which were of such a high calibre that the judges felt we needed to value more than the one winning design so they chose some runners up from:

- Castle Hill Primary School
- Bolton Borough Youth Council
- Castle Hill Young People's Centre
- Tonge Moor Primary School

These designs were then adapted into a design for a pop up banner

There were also two posters that were so informative that we felt they should be turned into leaflets for our intercultural celebration fun day which we are planning for the summer holidays.

Alison Dalton, Church Related Community Work Minister, Building Bridges
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4: Mark's gospel by Paul Gee on Friday 18th March at Amani Centre Paul Gee tells the gospel with an immediacy which surprises, challenges and engages the audience.

Paul uses the Shakespearian language of the authorised version, but because his performance is delivered without text, he captures the freshness and excitement of the oral tradition.

In the unfolding of the story, Jesus is shown to us not only as the son of Man, but also as a very real person: warm, passionate, approachable and witty. And also capable of the all-too-human qualities of irritation and frustration!

In this abridged version of Mark's gospel, we are presented with a compelling drama which invites the audience to question and look with fresh eyes.

Please reserve a place at bob.j.day@googlemail.com

Admission free 18th March 7.30pm, Amani Centre, Moss Lane East, M16 7DG. After the performance there will be food with a Middle Eastern theme. Collection for Red Cross.

5: Thanksgiving Service - Revd Professor Alan Sell I am writing to inform you that the Thanksgiving Service for the Revd Professor Alan Sell will take place on Thursday 3rd March, 2:15pm at Christ the Cornerstone church, 300 Saxon Gate West, Milton Keynes, MK9 2ES.

Thoughts and prayers are with the family at this time.

6: Clerk for North Western Synod *Following the death of Kath Cross, Andy Braunston has served as Synod Clerk since March 2014. The Synod is now seeking nominations for an elected Synod Clerk to serve from October 2016 with a hand over period until October. **The closing date for nominations is 14th March 2016. Nominations should include why the nominator thinks the person has the necessary gifts and skills for the role and have the permission of the nominee.*** Application forms will then be sent to the nominees for them to complete.

Context

The Synod Clerk is elected from among the members of the Synod; and co-opted to the Synod if not a member when recommended for appointment. The duties relate to the functions of the Synod as set out in the Basis of Union and the Synod Guidelines. The term of office is normally three years with the possibility of a further term of three years. The position may be held by an ordained or lay person. The Clerk normally works at home and a laptop computer is provided, but regular attendance at the Synod Office is required. The Clerk must have good IT skills and be familiar with, or willing to learn, Outlook's email and diary functions. Travelling and other expenses are reimbursed. The workload of the clerk depends on what is going on within the Synod and if a Synod meeting, or Assembly, is near. On average the Clerk can expect to spend a day a week on Synod business.

The Clerk will be expected to develop a direct and mutually supportive relationship with the Moderator and an understanding of the responsibilities of the other Synod officers. She or he should have a reasonable understanding of the United Reformed Church as a whole and of current ecumenical and inter-faith developments and be willing and competent on occasion to represent the Synod or Assembly.

Duties & Responsibilities

- Lead on organisation of content and context of Synod meetings working with the Moderator and Executive Committee.
- Act as advisor to the Moderator, officers and Synod members on process issues and matters pertaining to the Basis of Union and Standing Orders especially at Synod Meetings
- Ensure appeals panels are convened in accordance with URC procedures.
- Attend Executive and Synod Resource Committee meetings, taking the minutes of the Executive.
- Take minutes of Synod meetings.
- Attend monthly Officers Meetings
- In consultation with the Moderator, prepare the agenda for the Synod Executive.
- Line manage the Office Manager/Moderator's PA and Assistant Secretary.
- Deal with regular correspondence and information directed to the Synod by the General Secretary or senior staff of the United Reformed Church, relating to General Assembly matters, Assembly committee programmes, Mission Council, etc.
- Serve as one of the Synod representatives to General Assembly. The Clerk has responsibility to oversee the arrangements for the Synod's representation at General Assembly and ensuring that representatives are briefed.
- Attend biannual meetings of the Synod Clerks.
- Serve as one of four NW members of Mission Council which meets twice a year for residential meetings.