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1: Moderators snapshot This week the Ministers of the Synod met together at Barton Grange Hotel for a day looking at "Future Patterns of Ministry within North Western Synod". At the March Synod this year we recognised that the issues of deployment that face the URC have implications for what ordained stipendiary ministry is available, but that this is not the only ministry we have available. The Synod has a very rich resource of ministry within every local congregation and we spent part of the day considering how we can as a Synod resource that local ministry. The Learning and Ministries Committee has already begun doing the work necessary for bringing a proposal to the October Synod about providing a Synod development team who will work to support local patterns of ministry across our congregations. The ministers also considered the support that they might be able to offer in the short term in order to provide some transitional forms of ministry in specific ways to other congregations, and those present were both willing to explore this but also recognised how this is something which will only happen through a spirit of grace where both ministers and congregations respond with a generosity to see ministry shared within the Synod. ROADSHOWS will be happening around the Synod in June and July for Elders and ministers to attend together. Please see the dates in the newsletter and book one of these in your diary. These roadshows will both provide vital information for Elders as well as helping us to develop together the future patterns of ministry for our congregations.



2: The M&S Energy Community Energy Fund is back for 2016



We're pleased to announce that the M&S Energy Community Energy Fund is returning with £350,000 to distribute to community groups across the UK this summer.

It's part of the continued commitment from M&S Energy to enable more communities in the UK to generate renewable energy and become environmentally and financially sustainable.

Over 136 projects entered in the competition last year, generating over 52,000 votes in a close-run campaign, resulting in 21 project winners from around Great Britain benefiting from our fund.

Ed Davey, the former Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, joined River Cottage founder Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and a panel of experts to decide on the 5 additional judges' discretion prizes.

There's £12,500 up for grabs in each M&S region across Great Britain to use towards the installation of a renewable technology and generate energy for your community building.

Whether you're a community energy group, a sports club or simply an organisation that wants to have a positive impact on the environment, we want to hear from you.

What do I need to do to apply?

Applications are open online now please visit <https://www.mandsenergyfund.com/> you have until 31st May 2016 to tell us all about your project to be in with a chance to win funding.

A tip to support your application preparation:

1. Make sure Planning Permission or Permitted Development Rights has been approved prior to application
2. You will need to submit cost quotes from your installer so have this document ready to upload

3: Safeguarding sessions by now, every church will have had the opportunity to attend a safeguarding session to familiarise themselves with the new material from the URC. We are aware that some churches have not yet taken that opportunity leaving themselves at risk.

There are three further sessions planned:

Tuesday, May 17th, Rose Hill URC (19:15)

Thursday, 19th May, Bank Top URC (19:30)

Thursday, 14th July, Leyland URC (19:30)

No further sessions are planned. If you are unable to attend any of these sessions and need one for your church, please contact Leo Roberts (cydo@nwsynod.org.uk)

4: Cumbria Minister joins trip to Greek Refugee Camps The Revd Sarah Moore (Cumbria Area President) has been invited to join a group of women Church Leaders who are travelling to Greece to visit female refugees in the makeshift refugee camps on the Greece/Macedonia border and on the island of Lesbos. Around a dozen women in leadership in British and Irish churches will be in the group that will be an official delegation from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and will be in Greece between 23 and 27 May.

Please pray for the group as they travel to Greece, and for everyone that they will meet. If your church or community group would be interested in a visit from Sarah over the summer or autumn to learn more about this first-hand experience of the refugee crisis, please make contact with her directly via sarah.moore@nwsynod.org.uk or 01539 724567.