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## News from the NW Synod 4<sup>th</sup> January 2017

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### Happy New Year from all at the Synod Office

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- 1: **Moderators Snapshot** As we mark Epiphany, a moment of revealing light in the travels of the



Magi, my snapshot was taken just before Christmas on a visit to Whitehaven URC on the west coast of Cumbria. This thoughtful stained glass creation greeted visitors into the Church – and with the bread and wine pointed to a deeper and far-reaching significance beyond a manger scene which otherwise is packed away until Advent in 11 months' time.

So join with me in praying for

- the follow up by all out congregations with those who, like those wise men, visited over the Christmas season so that they can understand more deeply the impact of the light of Christ for their lives
- the fresh opportunities within this New Year for each of our congregations to explore their God-given mission through new ventures within their community
- all those who preach the Gospel week by week – that they may continue to be inspired and empowered by the move of the Holy Spirit
- the growth of discipleship within each member of our congregations, not simply as a New Year's resolution but rather with a resolve to be more faithful to Christ's call upon our lives every day of our lives. And I wish you all a very happy and blessed New Year.

## 2: **Heritage Advent at Bamford Chapel and Norden URC**

A Knitted Christmas Tree was the highlight of our festivities on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December. Our church was opened for the Community to come and view the successful renovation of our sanctuary. 216 years of our heritage was exhibited through physical, visual and electronic means.

The theme for our Christmas Trees was Heritage, the trees designed by groups from within the church family. Our highlight was the knitted tree, an idea gleaned from Reform Magazine. A total of approximately 550 squares and knitted decorations made up our 6-foot tree. What a waste of wool you say! Well no, come January we shall be converting the squares into blankets for the Manchester Homeless.

## 3: **Kendal URC Carols by candlelight**



Our large hall was full to capacity with our own congregation, their friends and neighbours, with people who come to our regular meetings and with friends from the Methodist Church for our carols by candlelight.

People were greeted at the door with an offer of hot chestnuts. Sitting round tables laden with Christmas titbits, they were served hot “mulled wine” as they tried their hand at Christmas origami and other introductory activities.

We then sang our traditional hymns and told the Christmas story in different ways. Old and new members took part in our meditations and prayers and finally the ministers shared what Christmas really did mean to them.

All who came enjoyed the celebration. Perhaps some who do not usually join with us, may find their way to join with us to worship Emmanuel, God with us on Christmas morning.

4: **News at Chorlton Central URC** The Syrian meal at Chorlton Central Church raised £642, not £160, as reported in the last Newsletter.

5: **Advertising two Westminster College posts** Director of Studies in Church History and Doctrine (The current postholder has accepted a call to pastoral ministry)

Director of Church Resource Development (A new post designed to support lay and congregational development)

information on the Westminster College website:

<http://www.westminster.cam.ac.uk/rcl/about/working-at-westminster>

The closing dates for applications for both posts is Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,  
Revd Fiona Thomas  
Secretary for Education & Learning, United Reformed Church

**6: Revd Ronald Herbert Young** It is with deep regret that I have to tell you that the Reverend Ronald Herbert Young, a retired minister, died on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

Ron lived in Inchbrook in Gloucestershire. He was ordained in 1953 and served at in the Baptist Ministry until 1984 then Ross-on-Wye and Whitchurch from 1984 until 1995. Ron was presented with a certificate at the March 2014 Synod for 60 years since his ordination.

The funeral arrangements are not yet known.  
West Midlands Synod Office

**7: Revd Alan James Frost** It is with deep regret that I have to tell you that the Reverend Alan James Frost, a retired minister, died on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

Alan lived in Gloucester with his wife, Mary. He was ordained in 1960 and served at Mount Pleasant, Pontypool 1960-66; Stockport Central 1966-70; Stockport Group 1970-73; Gerrards Cross 1973-88; St Andrew's, Ealing 1988-98.

The funeral arrangements are not yet known.  
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