
News from the NW Synod 25th January 2017

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1: Moderators Snapshot On Sunday evening I had the privilege of preaching at a joint pastorate ecumenical service (at Ashton-on-Mersey URC in the pastorate with Sale URC, with Revd Brian Acty leading the worship in the snapshot). For many of our congregations in the Synod the focus on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a great opportunity for gathering with local ecumenical sister congregations to reflect on the call of Christ to be one, and for prayer together for our common mission in each community. It was an uplifting time at Ashton-on-Mersey URC through the focus on the CTBI prepared materials, with the particular input for this year coming from Christians in Germany. The German churches involved in preparing the materials focused on the Scripture reading in 2 Corinthians 5:14-20, and the theme of *Crossing Barriers*. Please pray for:

- continued opportunities for prayer with our ecumenical partners in our communities
- a willingness in each community for sister congregations to seek fresh opportunities for sharing their life and witness in a unified way “that the world may believe”
- encouragement for those in Christian leadership in their work involved in Crossing Barriers, whether at a national, regional, or local level
- every member of our congregations to have a heart for developing strong relationships with our sisters and brothers in other churches, that we might support, encourage, and pray for one another to bear fruit of the Kingdom of God



2: Jesus at the Movies Jesus has been portrayed in many ways in film; controversial and



comforting, disturbing and frustrating. We will explore how four different films have presented Jesus by watching the film and by having a short discussion after each one to see how the depiction helps, or hinders, our understanding of Jesus.

Wednesday 1st February: Godspell Written in 1971, this controversial musical, presents the parables partly through reworked traditional hymns. Jesus and the apostles are presented as

hippies which raised some eyebrows.

Jesus at the movies - **Gatley URC, Elm Road, Gatley, SK8 4LY. 7pm (Refreshments) 7.15 (Film) All are welcome.**

Thursday 9th February Jesus Christ Superstar Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Weber wrote this in 1970 as a rock opera focusing, in particular, on Jesus' relationship with Judas and Mary Magdalene. Some felt it wasn't faithful to the Gospels and focused too much on Jesus and Judas as conflicted revolutionaries.

Thursday 16th February Son of Man This 2006 film sets Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection in modern day South Africa. The film: stimulates thinking and uses musical beat, rapid rhythms, alternation of several styles and original shots to ensure that the film is always stimulating. Nothing is obvious in it; the story as we know it is turned upside down.

Tuesday 28th February The Passion of the Christ Mel Gibson's 2004 film was controversial for its detailed portrayal of the torture and crucifixion of Jesus. It draws on a reconstruction of the Passion by a Germany mystical nun and uses Latin and Aramaic dialogue. Not for the faint hearted!

3: Albion United Reformed Church Stamford Street East, Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL6 6QQ

Organ Recital

By

Geoffrey Coffin

Sponsored by Manchester Organists' Association

Sat. 28th January 2017 at 7.30 pm.

Admission £6. You can pay at the door.

4: Review of the Global Partnership between the NW Synod of the URC the Chaiyi Presbytery of the PCT in Taiwan There has been a Global Partnership between the North Western Synod of the URC and the Chaiyi Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan (PCT) since 2007. Between 2007 and 2011 activities included 4 exchanges (2 each way) and a visit by the NW Synod Moderator. In 2007, a group of four lay people from Lancashire Area visited Chaiyi Presbytery and there was a return visit of ministers from Chiayi in 2008. In October 2009, four lay people, age range 17 to 64, went to Chiayi and visited churches, schools, a university and a hospital as well as the PCT offices in Taipei. A group of five ministers and one lay person visited the NW Synod in November 2010 and as well as attending Synod at Penrith, visited projects at a number of local churches in the Synod. Richard Church, the Synod Moderator, also visited Chiayi and the PCT annual Assembly. The partnership was reviewed and renewed in 2011 and is now due for review and possible renewal.

In July 2015 6 young people from North Western Synod and 3 leaders visited Taiwan. They were hosted by the Chaiyi Presbytery of the PCT and helped at holiday clubs in local churches and visited Chaiyi City, Ali Mountain, Tainan and Taipei. In July 2016 8 young people and 2 leaders came from Taiwan to the North West. They spent the first week in local churches – Darwen, Sedburgh, Bolton and Bamford and Norden. They were involved in holiday clubs, Messy Church, work with old people, work with refugees and leading worship. During the second week they visited the Windermere Centre, had a trip to London and visited Church House and of course spent a few days in Manchester.

A group consisting of Barbara Redmond, Global Links Co-ordinator, Angela Bogg, representative from the Synod World Church Group, Stuart Nixon, Synod Executive representative and Alison Greaves, one of the young people involved in the Youth Exchange.

The group are asking for comments from churches about the partnership on the following: -

What is valuable about the partnership?

What involvement have churches had with the partnership?

If they have not been involved why is this?

Any new ideas for the partnership in the future

Please email your comments to

Barbara Redmond at addiebarbara@redmonds.me.uk

5: Revd Arnold Dawson We have been informed by Margaret Humberston that sadly her father, retired minister, Revd Arnold Dawson died peacefully yesterday morning the day before his 94th birthday.

Arnold was minister at Felling 1959 – 1961; Ryton-on-Tyne 1961 – 1966; Winlaton 1964 – 1966; Thornaby-on-Tees 1966 – 1972; Cottingham & Newland, Hull 1972 – 1985 and Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1985 – 1988.

There are no funeral details at present.

Wendy

Northern Synod Office

6: Next Ruach Training Day - January 2017 which is happening on Saturday 28 January 2017 in Tunbridge, Kent.

Ruach Cards are for Christians who want to reach people who are spiritually searching with God's love for them.

The Ruach Blessings cards, is a bible based, Jesus focused ministry, supported by Church Leaders from different denominations. It's mission is to meet and engage with people on their spiritual journey and to provide opportunities for them to hear God's heart for them, to encounter God and the Holy Spirit.

If you can make this date and are interested in attending, please let Katrina know by email, so she can send you confirmation of your place. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to pass this on to anyone that you feel might be interested and who it might be appropriate for.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Katrina on: -Katrina Moss (Co-creator, Ruach Cards) info@ruachcards.co.uk, www.ruachcards.co.uk

COURSE: Understanding and Interpreting Ruach Blessing Cards

Date: Sat 28 January 2017

Venue: New Life Church Centre, Speldhurst Rd, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 0JA

Time: 9.30am-4.30pm

Cost: £60 (includes full set of cards worth £29.99)

Lunch: Tea & Coffee will be provided, but please bring lunch.

The Training day includes practice time for each reading and:

- Practical exercises and feedback after each session.
- Introduction to the Ruach Cards
- How to introduce the cards
- Ruach Waters and their key meanings
- Insight Reading: Healing Waters
- Ruach Colours and Symbols and their key meanings
- Insight Reading: Past, Present, Future
- Ruach Birds, Trees & Numbers and their key meanings
- Insight Reading: Four Winds of Change
- Cover, accountability, unity and the spiritual arena
- Practical tips when using the cards
- The Way Forward

Comments from people attending previous Ruach training courses:

"Very worthwhile - a valuable tool in outreach. Thanks for creating them!"

"I loved every bit of it"

"Excellent, I would certainly recommend it"

"This is a blessing to me from God. I really appreciate that you made it so honouring to who God is"

7: Church Returns 2017 Please can I remind you that the deadline for the Church Returns is 31st January.

If you have already completed and sent your form back to the Synod Office, please ignore this note.

Many thanks for all your help.

Kind regards

Kerry

8: Shaw & Heyside URC are holding a Gift Weekend Coffee Morning on Saturday 4th February. The address and postcode are as follows: - Rochdale Road, Shaw, Oldham, OL2 7JH.

9: Invitation to an event about the Church of England and United Reformed Church conversations



Did you know...

about the informal conversations between the Church of England and the United Reformed Church?

The conversations took place over three years between 2013-16 and were co-chaired by the Rt Revd James Newcome (CoE) and the Revd Nicola Furley-Smith (URC). Among other issues, the conversations group discussed:

- Divine and Human Relations
- Old and New styles of ecumenism
- How decisions might be made together
- The sharing of ministries and ministers
- Unity, memory and identity

Come to an informal gathering with the Revd Nicola Furley-Smith, URC Co-Chair of the dialogue to learn more about the discussions, and how the outcome of this work helps us in Cumbria as we move forward together in God for All.

This event is open to all, although a particular invitation is extended to members and elders of the United Reformed Church in Cumbria and to our ecumenical partner colleagues, churches, circuits, cores, parishes and benefices who expect to be working with URC fellowships in their Mission Community.

When? Monday 27th February 2017 at 7.30pm (refreshments from 7pm)
Where? Carver Uniting Church, Lake Road, Windermere, LA23 2BY
Booking Please email the Revd Sarah Moore if you wish to attend revsarahmoore@me.com
Cost Free - donations gratefully received towards the cost of this event

The report can be accessed online at <http://tinyurl.com/zj2radu>



The **Methodist** Church

