
News from the NW Synod 28TH October 2015

- 1: **Youth Visit to Taiwan (Week one)**
- 2: **Photos of our congregations**
- 3: **Can your Church offer help to refugees fleeing Syria**
- 4: **Forton Harvest Service**
- 5: **Safeguarding Sessions**
- 6: **Calling all preachers of God's Word!**
- 7: **Death of the Revd Gerald Edwin Fergus Bowerman**
- 8: **Poulton URC - Worship jamming**
- 9: **Synod Resource for Advent and Christmas**

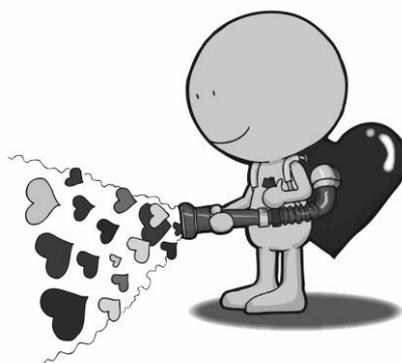
1: Youth Visit to Taiwan (Week one) 19 hours after leaving Manchester Airport 3 leaders and 5 young people landed in Taiwan at 4pm in Taiwan but 9 am in the UK. We met up with Dan, the last member of our group who had only flown from Singapore after visiting his brother there and Stephen, his wife Sophia and Joy, their daughter who were our hosts for the visit.

After eating at the airport we caught the high speed train to Chaiyi Province. Most Presbyterian Churches in Taiwan seem to have accommodation and we stayed in the church accommodation where we were to attend a meeting rather like our Synod meeting the next day.

At the meeting Connie gave a greeting on behalf of the group and we learnt to say "Ping An" – "Peace be with you". After the meeting we split into 3 groups to go and help with holiday clubs, or summer camps as they are called, at 3 different churches. Connie, Katy and I went to Shulin where they were starting the second week of their holiday club which ran from 10am until 5pm. The topic was "Love" – love you, parents, siblings, friends, enemies, nature, God and then the action it leads to. We were given two t-shirts with the club logo on which were washed each night for us by the minister's wife.

The day was very structured starting with action songs, then games followed by a story and discussion in small age groups. We were each allocated to help with a group. We learnt new games (one of which went down well at God Squad). After lunch the kids went to 2 of 4 activities – Art, Craft, Cooking and English – we were helping with the last of these. On the last Saturday the kids shared what they had been doing and on the Sunday took part in the service. On Sunday evening we and all 30 young helpers, were treated to a sumptuous Chinese banquet.

The pastor was a brilliant cartoonist and the sessions were greatly enhanced by his drawings



During the week we were there we attended a moving service dedicated to mission among the indigenous people. From Eric, our translator, we heard about the work of Shulin church. When their minister came in 2008 there were only 8 people attending worship. They encouraged him to work with young people. There are now two services on a Sunday, one geared towards young people with a total attendance of about 140. They do much work in the community. As well as the holiday clubs, they run computer classes, health lectures, clinics, guitar classes, an exercise group and homework clubs

We were also taken to some tourist sites -the golden bat sanctuary, a ukulele factory and a pottery centre where they were huge fun models and we could paint our own Christmas tree decoration.

Addie, Alison and Georgia went to Linnei Church. Their impressive work in the community was done through 2 coffee shops one beside the church and one in a nearby university town. These shops were called "What's Up" which is similar to the Taiwanese word for "church".

The camp ran every afternoon from Wednesday to Saturday. Wednesday morning was spent in preparation which included blowing up balloons ad infinitum, fortunately with a machine. Wednesday afternoon and 50 children arrived and divided into 5 groups. We each worked with a different group painting T-shirts, balloon modelling, drama, lots of singing and dancing based on a Christian version of the three little pigs. Addie as usual was involved in the drama. I am told he was an awesome donkey. Alison and Georgia told the children the story of Easter using a PowerPoint presentation to get the kids to make appropriate crowd noises. Addie gave a talk on Redemption using the aeroplane/rocket/cross origami that Addie had used at Messy Church (similar to Joanne and Sarah's activity in their joint service)

All the kids from the summer camp attended the Sunday service to share what they had been doing. The three of us from the UK were asked to give their testimonies. Alison's included a ballet dance. On hearing one of the young leaders wanted to learn ballet, Alison gave her her ballet shoes. Addie was so proud of the way Alison threw herself into everything that he sent an email to Carole and Frank to tell them.

Each morning the minister and his family took us and some young people to visit local places of interest. There was the Formosa Times Museum where we learnt a little of the culture of Taiwan, the puppet museum, a towel factory where we made little animals out of flannels and the What's Up Cafe in the university town which the church use as a mission to the students. The highlight visit was to the night markets (not in the morning, of course!) which are the place to be in the evenings in Taiwan – those chicken kebabs were to die for!

In 2016 6 to 8 young people from Taiwan will visit the UK North Western Synod. We will try and give them as warm and generous welcome as we had in Taiwan. Churches that run holiday clubs will be needed to host and involve a couple of Taiwanese young people. Hopefully Bamford Chapel and Norden URC can be one of those churches. Watch this space and be prepared.....

To be continued next month

If anyone is interested in World Church links to contact Barbra Redmond on addiebarbara@redmonds.me.uk.

2: Photos of our congregations We need high quality photographs – in digital format – of our congregations for our new Synod website. The website will be less cluttered than our current one, easier to navigate and have photos of our congregations so we can visually see our Synod in all its diversity. Please email a picture of your congregation to Andy Braunston via clerk @nwsynod.org.uk

3: Can your Church offer help to refugees fleeing Syria If your church wishes to offer practical help to refugees fleeing Syria you may wish to make a donation to Church House (made payable to the URC Trust) in order to support the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon in providing schooling for Syrian refugee children living in camps in Lebanon.

4: Forton Harvest Service Our Harvest service is always the 2nd Sunday in October and followed by afternoon tea, with the gifts being donated to the Drop in Centre in Lancaster.

The Chairperson of the Friends of Forton URC Preservation Society described FORTON URC, which is in the FLAG Pastorate as "the little Church with a big heart in the community." Once again at Harvest time local schoolchildren and Beavers were welcomed into Forton URC.

They were amazed at the unusual and exotic vegetables grown in Forton, often from just tiny seeds. The importance of water in the growth of God's wonderful harvest was easily understood in Wyre, where water restrictions had only recently been withdrawn.

The Beavers, who normally have their meeting in Shireshead Scout hut, thoroughly enjoyed being in the Hall and Church. In response to Rainbow's question, "Why do we come to Church?" the Elders were privileged to hear spontaneous prayers spoken by the Beavers





5: Safeguarding Sessions Leo Roberts (Children and Youth Development Officer) has arranged a number of workshops for churches to familiarise themselves with the new safeguarding material published by the United Reformed Church. There is still space for more! If your church would like to host a session, please contact leo.roberts@ntlworld.com

More workshops will be announced as venues offer themselves.

Area	Date	Time	Venue
Cumbria	12/11/15	2pm	Cockermouth URC
Cumbria	12/11/15	7pm	Whitehaven URC
Lancashire	21/11/15	2pm	Burnley & Nelson URC
South	23/11/15	7:30pm	St Peter's Church
Lancashire	24/11/15	7:30pm	Elswick URC
Central	26/11/15	7:15pm	Charlestown URC
Lancashire	1/12/15	7:15pm	Bolton-le-Sands URC
Central	3/12/15	2pm	Radcliffe URC
Central	3/12/15	7pm	Radcliffe URC
Central	21/01/2016	7:15pm	Hurst Nook URC

It is important that you book in to a session so that Leo can ensure he has enough resources for each session. Please email him (using the email address above).

6: Calling all preachers of God's Word! With the advent of more affordable and more user friendly technology a growing number of churches are installing equipment to enhance virtually every aspect of worship. This places a greater expectation on preachers (lay & ordained) to be able to use it, especially if the Minister of the church you're preaching in uses it regularly.

If you have been considering whether you could or should use this type of technology in your preaching there is a course designed to help you understand the theory and practice of using it to enhancing you're preaching.

Booking details will be available shortly. But for now can I encourage you to note the dates and venue of the course in your diary?

18th - 20th April 2016

The URC Windermere Centre
Lake Rd
Windermere

Please Note: This is an ecumenical event open to all preachers so please pass this on to any colleagues who you know who might be interested.

Keep up to date with [*Technology in the Pulpit!*](#) for current information about the course.

Revd Rob Pickering (Course Coordinator)

7: Death of the Revd Gerald Edwin Fergus Bowerman It is with great sadness and shock that we have heard of the death of retired minister, Revd Gerald Edwin Fergus Bowerman, who died peacefully at home on Saturday 24th October.

Gerald has served in many parts of the country:

Churchtown, Southport 1970-76

Darlington 1976-83

Springfield, Mission 1976-83

Central, Torquay 1984-95

Yateley 1995-97

Camberley 1995-2002

also serving as a pastor to a church in France until his retirement to Leeds.

We keep his wife Ann and family in our prayers.

POULTON URC

WORSHIP JAMMING



FRIDAY NOV. 27TH 7-30PM

FREE PIZZA SUPPER

DON'T FORGET • FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27TH

**IF YOU CAN PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OR SING THEN COME AND
SHARE WITH US • BRING YOUR FRIENDS • COME AND WORSHIP OUR
LORD GOD WITH GREAT MUSIC & SONG**

ITS ALL HAPPENING AT POULTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, POULTON LE FYLDE, LANCS.

For further details contact Ken 01253 675641

9: Synod Resource for Advent and Christmas Advent and Christmas are busy times for everyone – with all the preparations, visiting family, and extra services which mark that time of the year it can be very hard to get space to think and reflect on the season.

In order to help create some space for reflection we have prepared a devotion for every day of Advent and Christmas. Each devotion will be emailed to those who sign up for them and consist of a hymn or song, a Biblical reading and a reflection. There will be a link so you can listen to the hymn or song on Youtube and the lyrics will be printed too. This series of 39 devotions will start on Sunday 29th November – the first Sunday of Advent – and continue until Wednesday 6th January – Epiphany.

They reflect a range of hymns and songs – familiar and unfamiliar and will help to give space to reflect and pray as we journey through this season together.

If you wish to receive them please sign up here

<http://eepurl.com/bCEnFb>

Future dates to look out for:

Ministers Winters School - Friday 29th - Sunday 31st Jan 2016 at Windermere Centre

Ministers Summer School - Monday 13th – Thursday 16th June at Windermere Centre