

THE BRIDGE



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

May and June 2023 at Winchmore Hill United Reformed Church

URC CELEBRATES ITS JUBILEE

Members, ministers and friends of the United Reformed Church gathered in London on 15th April to mark the denomination's 50th anniversary.

Around 1,200 people attended the rail strike-postponed celebrations at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, the same place that English Congregationalists and Presbyterians gathered on 5 October 1972 to vote the URC into being.

Decorations created by members of the URC hung around the hall, a sounding trumpet heralded the beginning of the service, as in 1972, celebration of communion, and artwork from across the denomination was displayed in colourful presentation.

Led by the Revd John Bradbury, General Secretary of the URC, and the Moderator and Moderator-Elect of the URC General Assembly, the Rev Fiona Bennett and Rev Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, the service reflected the denomination's past, present and future, as well as its place in the world Church. Can you spot our Gillian in the front row of the choir?



The Rev'd Richard Church, former Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship) who, four years ago, helped to start conversations about how to celebrate the URC's 50th anniversary said, "It's great to be here and it's great to see that it's actually happened and I'm massively admiring the people who have gone through two false starts to get us to this point ...

... but then the URC is a church that's used to false starts! We thought we were being set up for the unity of the wider Christian body in the country and it hasn't quite worked out that way. So, this is a good 50th birthday party."

Former General Secretary the Rev'd Dr David Cornick, URC and Council for World Mission (CWM) scholar Victoria Turner, and the Rev'd Professor Jooseop Keum, CWM's General Secretary, each delivered a short sermon, and a specially formed Jubilee Choir sang 'Always trust the star that guides us on the way', Neil Thorogood's winning poem in the 50th Anniversary Worship Resources Competition, in a setting by Scott Stroman. Other music in the service also included Colin Thompson's competition-winning hymn, 'God of the Pilgrim Way'.

The range of those leading worship reflected all generations within the URC, both lay and ordained, including Church Related Community Workers and leaders of the URC Youth Assembly. Lundie Memorial Award winner Poppy Thorpe and trainee minister Joe Amoah read from scripture, while Karen Campbell, URC Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries, performed her own poetic cry of welcome – 'A table for all'.

The Revd Margaret Ali, Minister of Islington and Rectory Road URCs, said, "It's a pleasure to be here. I think I am adding colour to the URC because it's a diverse church and I represent diversity. That's what I am here for and praising God, and I'm able to do ministry wonderfully."

Two hundred and forty people also toured Church House, the URC's London office and Lumen URC to experience the wide-ranging life of the URC, represented by different ministries, exhibitions, and creative and learning opportunities for all ages.



The Rev'd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, Rev'd Dr John Bradbury and Rev'd Fiona Bennett, and the reception area at Church House. Watch the anniversary service here: <https://youtu.be/34bymAfzws0>

Visiting Church House, *Philippa Osei*, URC Youth Moderator 2023-2024 said, "It was brilliant. It was really nice to see different facets of Church in one place."

Heather Moore, URC Youth Moderator-Elect 2023-2024, added, "There was so much more there than I thought there was going to be and so much more that I didn't realise happened at Church House; you have Greenbelt, Trussell Trust, Commitment for Life; it was really good to see all of that at one time, in one space."



SUNDAY WORSHIP in Church is at 10.30 a.m. followed by time to chat over coffee.

Sunday 7th May **anticipates the Coronation** and the service will include **Holy Communion**.

Sunday 14th May and the beginning of **Christian Aid Week**

We look forward to welcoming Gerald Lee, a Methodist Lay Preacher in membership at St James' URC, Buckhurst Hill making his first visit to us. The freewill offering this week will be given to Commitment for Life, see below.

Sunday 21st May **Ascension Sunday**

The service will be led by Dr Paul Ashitey, Lay Preacher and Elder at Palmers Green URC

Sunday 28th May The **Day of Pentecost** (Whitsun)

Leading this special service will be Lay Preacher, Sandra Rose

Flowers this month have been given by Gillian West for family, by Jane Rayson for Mum, by Chris Bhangoo, by Bryant Ambrose for Charles Cave and by Margaret Brand for grandparents and brother.

Sunday 4th June **Trinity Sunday** and the service will include **Holy Communion**.

We will welcome Terry Silvey, Lay Preacher from Lancaster Road URC

Sunday 11th June

Our service will be led by Rev John Danso, an active, retired minister living in Ware and Interim Moderator in the Pastoral Call process for our group of churches.

Sunday 18th June and the beginning of the **Great Big Green Week**

We look forward to worshipping again with Gerald Lee from Buckhurst Hill.

Sunday 25th June

The service will be led by Rev Dr Emmanuel Frimpong an active, retired minister in our Southern Synod.

Flowers this month have been given by Beryl Leach in praise of friendship, by Dawn for June and Gillian, by Cliff and Sally for parents, and by Fiona for her birthday.

Sunday 2nd July when the service will include **Holy Communion**

We will welcome Chris Hall, Local Leader of our Ponders End Church

PASTORAL CALL

On Sunday 2nd April, members and interested friends of the three URCs in the South and East Enfield Pastorate joined together at Winchmore Hill URC for a joint church meeting to vote on calling the person whom we had met the previous weekend to be our Minister.

Each one of the three churches voted not to issue a call. Needing to reach the high bar of 85% voting in favour in all three churches, this was a very difficult process and there has been correspondence with the Synod Moderator about how we approach the next phase of the process.

Now the vacancy will be 're-declared' and we hope that new, potential candidates will express an interest and that we will consider prayerfully and find consensus.

Moving Stories

Committed to supporting our global partners **ZIMBABWE**

Bad Samaritan

Campaigners worry that the government's new Illegal Migrations Bill threatens to tear up the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, to which the UK was a signatory. "The UK's draconian asylum system divides families and ravages the mental and physical health of some of the world's most vulnerable people," says Global Justice Now. "There is no 'illegal' way to claim asylum."

Asylum is different to economic migration. Asylum seekers are protected under international law, and the UK has strict guidelines for the latter. The Joint Public Issues Team organised a response to the introduction of the Illegal Migration Bill, that reflected the parable of the Good Samaritan. It summarised the awfulness of the Bill by stating, "If ever there was a contemporary example of us ignoring our neighbour and walking by on the other side, this is it."

<https://jpit.uk/response-to-illegal-migration-bill>

Prayer

God of love, protect all asylum seekers around the world. Soften the hearts of hardened politicians. Pour compassion onto cynical lawmakers. Open our arms in welcome of strangers. Fill us with the unstinting generosity that we have found in the heart of Jesus.



Photo: by Ray Stanyon

This coming July, Kevin Snyman – Commitment for Life's Programme Officer – will be travelling to Zimbabwe to meet up with the Christian Aid country team. Kevin hopes to visit several Christian Aid/Commitment for Life partners across the country. The partners are on the ground, carrying out sterling work in support of the goals of climate mitigation, economic empowerment of the poorest, and gender equality rights for women.

Kevin will be travelling with the Revd Wilbert Sayimani, collecting photo, video and written stories that can then be shared with Commitment for Life congregations. If you'd like access to these resources, do let Suzanne know at commitmentforlife@urc.org.uk.

Thank you to all of you who support the work of Commitment for Life in Zimbabwe.

Christian Aid Week



Commitment for Life supports **Christian Aid week, 14th to 23rd May**, which will focus on Malawi to help farmers plant better seeds, secure a fairer price for crops, and build happier futures for their children.

For more information click here:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

An invitation to Enfield and East Hertfordshire LAG churches to start a worship band



- Location: Lancaster Road URC, Lancaster Road, Enfield, EN2 OBS.
- Time: 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm.
- First date: 2nd April.
- If you are interested contact Chris Marlow at: lag-rep@lancaster-road-urc.org.uk



THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

10th - 18th June, 2023

Click on this link: [GET INVOLVED IN THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK](#)

or browse for <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/get-involved/>

ECO TIP from Jill Nugent, Synod Green Team Apostle

Something to consider: My recent copy of Gardeners' World magazine has an article about cut flowers and the environmental impact associated with growing flowers for sale. As many of us have flowers for display in church I wonder if it's worth being attentive to what they are and where they have come from.

The article states that there are concerns about the high carbon footprint associated with the flower industry, linked to, for example, biodiversity loss and necessary transport. In the UK 85-90% of cut flowers on sale are imported, often wrapped in single-use plastic. So maybe we should take care to ensure our church flowers are not having too negative an environmental impact.

On the positive side perhaps could we make more use of locally grown flowers, natural 'bits' from our gardens and local areas or even colourful pot plants.

SOME MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Praying together for the churches and the needs of our area.
Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Grange Park

Normally first & third Tuesdays but the fourth in May:
2nd and 23rd May then 6th and 20th June, 10.30-11.15 a.m.

Forum meeting at 19.30 on **Wednesday 21st June 2023**,
Everyone welcome.

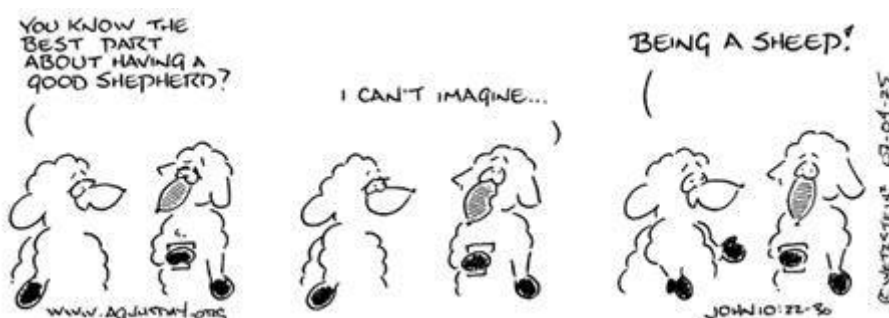
Zoom Link for all meetings (Meeting ID: 746 8020 4904 Passcode: 8zq1F7)

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/74680204904?pwd=TjJhQnBIYVVuUzNRY3ZXQTJ6MHEzQT09>

Elders Meetings are planned for 11th May and 8th June at 19.00 in the Chaplain Parlour, if needed.

The **Local Area Group** Steering Committee will meet on Thursday 18th May at 19.30, also in the Parlour. Nominated members only vote when necessary but members of all the churches are welcome to attend and join in discussion.

Copy deadline for news to share, please, Saturday 24th June.



Church Secretary: All enquiries should be made either by telephone to the Vestry answering service on 020 8882 4776 or by e-mail to WHURC@btconnect.com

Lettings: Speak to Dave on 077 8061 6040 or e-mail: Lettings@winchmorehillurc.co.uk

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