

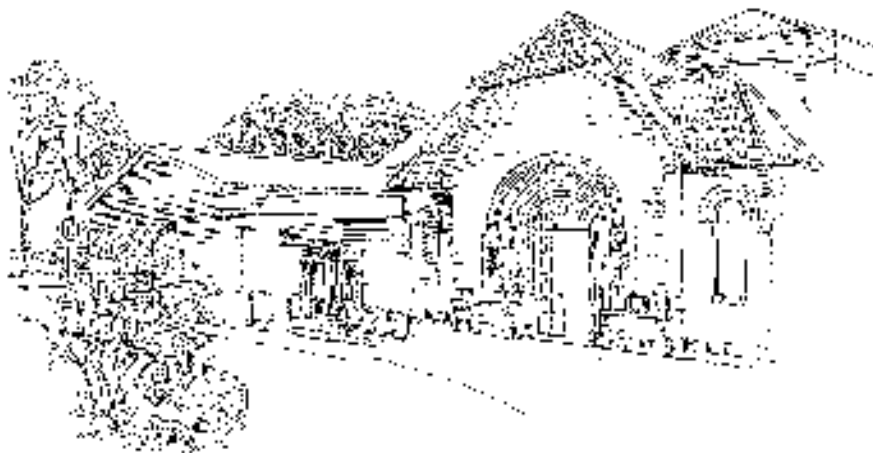


The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Sherwood

1 Edwards Lane,
Nottingham,
G5 3AA

www.sherwoodurc.co.uk



The Newsletter

April to May 2017
Easter to Pentecost

Christ the Lord is risen today

Ministers Letter

Synod Meeting



The 2017 Spring Meeting of the East Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church was at the end of a familiar drive away for me and Tricia up the A46 to Lincoln. It was held at St Columba's on Brent Road, a church planted in what was then a newly developing suburb by the Anglican, Methodist and URC denominations, and draws its shared ministry from them. The buildings are smaller than Sherwood's and so the best term to describe the meeting is 'cosy'.

As they do not have video installed, I took portable equipment and set up the computer, projector and screen, and a monitor for the Moderator's table. I had created the presentation (using Libreoffice) during the week from the Agenda and papers for synod, from presentations sent by two other contributors, and downloaded a couple of videos that needed to be shown.

Synod began by introducing us to Revd. John Motswai and Revd. Keleneilwe Kgerathwa from the Botswana Synod of the United Congregation Church of Southern Africa. They hold the posts equivalent to the Synod Moderator and Synod Clerk in Botswana. After explaining that they were wearing a

vest, shirt two jumpers and a coat because they were very cold (while we were stripping down to our shirt sleeves!), they told us that the church in Botswana faced similar problems to the URC, and it was good to come and learn and share experiences. Our Moderator, Peter Meek, said that UCCSA is a good model for us to learn from because as independent congregational churches they express their independence in interdependency – an attitude between local churches that is not that common in the URC.

Synod itself was comparatively lightweight in its content. We had two inspiring guest contributions.



The first was from Revd Kevin Watson, one of the two Moderators of our General Assembly who delivered a prophetic address entitled "God is saying 'come back to my son' "

He began by asking "Are we not just digging our own grave?" by trying to make a future for the United Reformed Church?

In many ways churches do dig their own graves. They do this by: clinging to buildings that have long since become impractical; by clinging on to (favourite) ministers from the past (is that what the memorabilia and those books of photos are for at the side of the church?); by gripping on to positions of control; by seeking ministry for their own ends, not Christ's ends, always asking 'what are we *getting out of* this?'.

The Christian faith, he reminded us, is about the way of resurrection. Resurrection follows some sort of death.

I thought of John 12:24, "In all truth I tell you, unless a wheat grain falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies it yields a rich harvest." (New Jerusalem Bible"

Kevin reminded us that Jesus calls us to journey with him to Jerusalem, with all the excitement and all the pain that that involves. Dare we? He compares it to the experience many, ministers in particular, face when they retire – downsizing. A friend and colleague had just gone through this and told him that there were three questions they had to ask about everything in their home:

1. What do we have that we have to keep because we absolutely need it in order to live in this new place?;
2. What do we have that we want to keep because of its sentimental significance in our lives, because it is fundamental to who we are?;
3. What do we have that we can and should get rid of?

The church, nationally, regionally and locally has moved into a new place, whether it likes it or not. It needs to ask these three questions. It needs to respond to Gods call to 'come back to my son'.

Kevin told us the story of one congregation. It's church was magnificent and huge. It had been built at a time of competition with the local baptists who were also building in the town. It has within it the best church organ in the country (according to Reginald Dixon, the Blackpool Tower organist who gave a concert on it). It's foundations were pride. Later they built a huge Hall with a wonderful stage in order to put on a spectacular pantomime (which they did just once!). Its foundation was ostentation. For many years the congregation put all of its effort into the struggle of maintaining this edifice, until one day, the organist (the one

with the most to loose) said 'stop! We must stop everything, and learn to become a living Christ centred church rather than a memorial preservation society. They stopped, they gave up their church, their organ and their halls, and for ten years they relied on Christ as they built anew. He held them together and carried them through to a resurrection experience – their new foundation was God's son.

Kevin said "You have heard the phrase "Let go, let God". Now is the time, so lets go, and let's go with God. We are not digging a grave, we are planting something new - because it shows we have hope for the future.



The other guest presentation was from Mr Dan Morrell, a university undergraduate and our Youth Assembly Moderator. In his talk entitled "*If only they knew*" he told us that 'young people' (aged 0 – 25yrs) comprise 1/3 of the membership of the URC – so much for thinking we are an ageing denomination!. Despite our declining numbers, we are not declining as a church; but we are facing a big

change. Part of the challenge is to give the church to our young people; part of the challenge is to give the church to the people in our community.

These young people, he told us, are keen and full of passion for Christ and the URC, and want to be involved in shaping the denomination locally and nationally. They would, *if only they knew* they were accepted and trusted in doing so. That is up to us – welcome goes deeper than a welcoming 'Hello'. That also applies to the people the church really exists for – those not yet a part of it. The big problem is that we expect they are going to waltz into our churches. They might, *if*

only they knew who we are and what we are about. Making it possible for them to know is our job, but it will require a radically different way of being open to them. We have to re-think the question “what is church?” and be open to the answer that it might actually be something quite different from a free church hymn sandwich!

In the “Good News Stories” we heard from Westgate New Church who had gone through a process of giving up on some of their aged buildings and starting something new by redeveloping the soundest but least impressive part.

Under the Pastoral Group Report, Synod was asked to adopt a new Deployment Policy, and this gave rise to the most discussion at this Synod. The last policy, a decade or so old, does not work in the place we now find ourselves in.

One comment was that there was very little about working ecumenically in the new document. The response was that in the current ecumenical climate, this is not practical even though it is always at the forefront of our thinking. We can not work ecumenically if the other denominations do not want this.

Another part of the debate was about whether we should focus on Mission or Growth. Are we about promoting the Church or Jesus, and is there really a difference?

Whatever happens, said one contributor, we need to accept that the role of the minister has to change as they become more like a Mission Enabler than a Pastor. One minister pointed out that most if not all ministers have been pastorally trained, and entered the ministry called to be a pastor. Those skills of ‘pastoral ministers’ need to be recognised and used, and re-training given when the ministers role is not so pastoral in nature.

Tricia spoke about Pilots and the Big Day Out (see later).

Graham Galeb, a retired Church Related Community Worker, told us of the formation of a new Synod JPIC Group (Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation). If anyone is interested see me.

Synod ended in a celebration of Holy Communion (using a set of communion glasses from Sherwood because of the numbers) and I took down the computer, projector and screen, the monitor from the Moderator's table, and all the cables, packed them into their boxes, and drove back to Nottingham just in time to heat up a ready meal for tea.

I was pleased not to have to lead worship on the following day.

David

Family News

Mavis Seed would like to thank all friends who have been in touch and sent cards during her recent knee operation. We are pleased to report that she is recovering well, and we look forward to welcoming her back amongst us before too long.

Carol Foot also thanks everyone for their prayerful support. Yet again she has had a spell in hospital with a chest infection, but is back home again at the time of writing.

Pam Richmond is at home after her eye operation and having a few weeks convalescence. We hope the op will turn out to have been a success.

It is good to see **the Hey family** back in church – they bring three children to brighten up our Sunday Mornings!

Please continue to hold everyone in your prayers.

What's On!

Regular & Future Events

June 24 Sherwood Art Week Craft Fair

July 22: Concert: Lace City Chorus
– Nottingham's world class Acapella ladies choir.

Talking on the Way – an hour of discussion on and around Christian issues. This is an open group – you are invited!
Second Wednesday 2.30pm – 4.00.

Light Refreshment – an afternoon get-together with a speaker. Drop in to befriend or be taught (or both)!
Fourth Wednesday 2.30pm – 4.00.

Saturday Coffee – come and enjoy a chat over a cuppa and a biscuit and raise funds for Christian Aid. 10.00am – 12.00

The Reformed Players present

Third Week in August

a comedy by Peter Gordon

27th, 28th, 29th April 2017 at 7.30pm

Tickets £4 on the door inc. programme, tea/coffee & biscuits

The action takes place on a somewhat run-down seaside caravan site dominated by the expert but inadequate caravanner Neville and his warring wife. Can a communal barbecue boost 'camp spirit' and restore harmony among a variety of characters also holidaying in the third week in August or do things really start to hot up?

Christian Aid Week 14th-20th May

In 1945 British churches founded Christian Aid to support refugees who had lost their homes and possessions in the Second World War. Twelve years later, Christian Aid Week was launched to help fund this ongoing work. Sixty years ago, Christians refused to stand by while people suffered in refugee camps. Sadly, we are only too aware that we are in the midst of another refugee crisis.

From the Israelites fleeing Egypt to Jesus fleeing Herod, the Bible is full of stories of people seeking sanctuary. Over and over again, we are told of God's concern for the stranger in the land. Our Church will be handing out donation envelopes on 14th May and these can be returned via the offertory bags on 21st May and 28th May. Our donations and our prayers make a difference to so many lives. We can play our part in answering God's call to love our neighbour.

Bev Lockyer

**'Big Day Out' at Warwick Castle
Saturday 20 May 2017**

The Pilots Big Day Out this year is in partnership with the denomination's **Feasts and Festivals theme for 2017**. On the Castle's Pageant Field will be activities, games and workshops will take place in various gazebos, creating a festival space throughout the day. On this beautiful site overlooking the river, good news and stories will tell of the role which feasts, festivals and celebration play in sharing the love, understanding, hope and peace of the Kingdom of God – both within the URC and beyond.

Main topics will be '**Come Dine with the URC: Who should the URC invite to the dinner table?**' and '**The World's Got Talent: What is there to celebrate in the world today?**' with speakers: John Proctor, URC General Secretar; Neil Thorogood, Principal of Westminster College; Kirsty Mabbott, Church Related Community Work minister at the CRCW project in Bettws, Wales; Paul Northup, Creative Director of the Greenbelt festival, Wayne Hawkins, Mission Secretary (Europe) for the Council for World Mission; and representatives from the Christian Aid Collective and Messy Church.

What Happened?

Christian Women's Fellowship Blessed Assurance – 90th Year Celebration

This year Doreen, Pam W, Joy, Tricia and myself travelled by taxi the short journey to the Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire. We suspected that the taxi driver was relying on his Sat Nav as we were not quite sure that he was taking us in the right direction as the route was not one we had travelled before.



Kate Bottley's shoes!

The guest speaker on Saturday was Revd. Kate Bottley who regularly appears on television and can often be heard on the radio. She is an Anglican Vicar with three churches in North Notts and she is also a chaplain at a Further Education college.

Currently she is taking a break from full-time ministry but continues to undertake some

church services and officiates at weddings and funerals. She hopes that during the brief window of media interest in her that she can bring faith to more people than she would be able to reach at her Sunday services.

Kate comes from a background of bold, brash women and she gave a very humorous introduction about how she became a Vicar. She was not from a church going family but started going to church because she liked the look of the Vicar's son. She admitted that she was a show off and loved an audience. However, she thought that God was using her extrovert nature to show that people of faith are just normal people who make mistakes and have doubts. Kate admitted that on some days she found it hard to walk the faith story.



Pam, Tricia, Doreen, Kate Bottley and Bev (Joy didn't make it)

We were reminded that God calls all sorts of people to serve him. We need introverts and also extroverts who don't always think things through before taking action. When she received some negative feedback for an unusual wedding

ceremony she had performed another cleric told her to risk everything for the gospel of Jesus. She wants to spread a gospel of normality and stressed that we have to be confident in what we believe and show people that Christians are like them. We just need to be more of who we already are and use the worst bits and the best bits of ourselves for the good of the Gospel.

The second part of her presentation considered women in the Bible and focused on her two favourite women – Rhoda in Acts 12:12-15 and the woman at the well from John 4:4-29. They were not perfect women but we could take encouragement from them.

On Sunday our bible study focused on images of God and the masculine use of language in the bible. We discussed God as “He”, God as “She” and God as a parent. Our leader Vicky gave us much to think about. The morning ended with a communion service in the chapel.

Over a 100 women attended the conference this year and it is hoped that this level of attendees will continue. The organisers are all volunteers and work very hard to make the weekend a success.

Bev Lockyer

Diary

April

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Sat | 10:00 | Coffee Morning – Christian Aid |
| 2 | Sun | 10:30 | Morning Worship – Visiting Preacher |
| 5 | Wed | 11:45 | Prime Time |
| 6 | Thu | 10:30 | Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in |
| 8 | Sat | 10:00 | Coffee Morning – Christian Aid |
-

9	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - D.J.L
12	Wed	14:30	Talking on the Way - "Talking with God"
13	Thu	10:30	Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in
15	Sat	10:00	Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
16	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - Easter - Visiting Preacher
19	Wed	19:30	Elders' Meeting
20	Thu	10:30	Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in
22	Sat	10:00	Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
23	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - D.J.L
26	Wed	14:30	Light Refreshment – Patchwork Quilting
27	Thu	10:30	Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in
29	Sat	10:00	Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
30	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - D.J.L

May

3	Wed	11:45	Prime Time
4	Thu	10:30	Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in
6	Sat	10:00	Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
7	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - Visiting Preacher
10	Wed	14:30	Talking on the Way - "Talking with God"
10	Wed	19:30	Elders' Meeting
11	Thu	10:30	Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in
13	Sat	10:00	Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
14	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - D.J.L
14	Sun	12:00	Church Meeting
18	Thu	10:30	Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in
20	Sat	10:00	Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
21	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - D.J.L
24	Wed	14:30	Light Refreshment – Billy's Home
25	Thu	10:30	Chill-out – Carers and Tots drop in
27	Sat	10:00	Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
28	Sun	10:30	Morning Worship - Visiting Preacher

June

- 1 Thu 10:30 Chill-out
- 3 Sat 10:00 Coffee Morning – Christian Aid
- 4 Sun 10:30 Morning Worship - Pentecost - D.J.L

Rotas

		Flowers	Coffee
April	2		George and Margaret
	9		Pam and Doreen
	16	Pam Whitby	Jean and Christine
	23		George and Margaret
	30		Pam and Doreen
May	7	Pam Richmond	Jean and Christine
	14		George and Margaret
	21	Margaret McAdams	Pam and Doreen
	28		Jean and Christine
June	4		George and Margaret
	11		Pam and Doreen

Can you adopt a Sunday for the Flowers, perhaps to commemorate someone or some event, or simply just to support the church? Yes? Please make your offer to Sheila Waldron If any Coffee rota date is unsuitable for you please make arrangements to change with another group. Thank you

Magazine Deadline

Please submit **your contribution** for the next issue of Church News **by Sunday 12th March 2017 at the latest** to Pam (926 8044) or by email to David (revdjl@virginmedia.com) or Stefan (sherwood.urb@ntlworld.com),

Regular Weekly Events

at Sherwood U.R.C

Mon	10.00 – 12.00	Line Dance	M
	6.00 – 7.00	Taekwan-Do	S
	6.00 – 6.45	FitSteps Health and Fitness	M
	7.30 – 9.00	Singing for fun choir (term time)	M
	7.30 – 9.00	Yoga Class	C
Tue	9.30 – 2.30	Toddler Talk (sign language)	M
	3.30 – 8.15	Emma Cain Dance Class	M
	7.30 – 9.00	Sherwood Women's Institute (last Tue)	C
Wed	12.00 – 1.30	Prime Time Lunch Club (1 st Wed.)	G
		Talking on the Way discussion 2 nd Wed	C
		Light Refreshment – friendship 4 th Wed	C
	7.00 – 7.45	Zumba	M
	8.00 – 10.00	Revival Dance	M
Thu	11.00 – 1.00	'Chill Out' drop-in (term time) for under fives and their carers	M
	6.00 – 7.00	Taekwan-Do	S
	6.00 – 6.45	FitSteps Health and Fitness	M
	7.30 – 9.30	Reformed Players	M
	7.30 – 9.30	Beeston Big Band practice night	S
Fri	11.00 – 1.30	Stroke Club (fortnightly)	M
Sat	10.30 – 12.00	Christian Aid Coffee Morning	C

M: Main Hall; S: Sherwood Hall; G: Gallery; C: Church Garden Room

General Information

Minister: Revd David Legge, 0115 952 5759
Contact David for Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.

WORSHIP

Sunday Morning at 10.30 with activities for children.
with communion on the third Sunday of the month
Check inside the magazine for special services
which may be at other times.

Voluntary offerings maintain the work of the Church and details of planned giving can be obtained from Alison Taylor, Gift Aid Secretary (07757 311531)

Serving Elders of the church:

Christine Hyndman	840 2521	Pam Richmond	926 3310
Stefan Janiszewski	01623 750374	Karen Smith-Eccles	07921 468818
Sue Janiszewska	01623 750374	Alan Waldron	965 3283
Bev Lockyer	981 0960		

Church Officers

Church Secretary:	Stefan Janiszewski	07812 975625
Assistant Ch. Secretary:	Bev Lockyer	981 0960
Church Treasurer:		
Pulpit Supply Secretary:	Bev Lockyer	981 0960
Organist:	Marita Chambers	962 5700
Magazine Secretary:	Pam Whitby	926 8044
Flower Secretaries:	Sheila Waldron	965 3283
Church Stewarding:	Norman Parr & Pam Whitby	926 8044

Hall Booking *Send a text to* 0795 232 4912
or use the website: www.sherwoodurc.co.uk