



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Children's and Youth Work

The United Reformed Church
86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT



Welcome to the March 2024 update from your support team in Children's and Youth Work for the United Reformed Church.

Dear Friends,

The all-churches mailing is on its way! So you should be getting your hands on our themed resource for 2024 Story, Story, Story – enjoy! It is also available online here <https://bit.ly/URC-all-age-themed-resource>.

Don't forget there is also a linked holiday club resource here https://bit.ly/SPARKS_HC.

We encourage you to have a year of sharing stories – listening deeply to the stories of others, exploring Bible stories afresh, sharing your own story and testimony of God at work in your life, and helping children and young people find themselves within God's BIG story.

As you journey through the Easter story this year may you be renewed, refreshed and re-storied as Christ's friend and follower, confirmed in your calling and strengthened in your faith.

Sam Roberts



MEET THE NEW YOUTH ASSEMBLY MODERATOR AND MODERATOR ELECT

January 2024 saw Youth Assembly being held at Whitemoor Lakes for the last time as it moves to a new date and new venue next year. Based around the theme of Story Story Story, Youth Assembly attracted young people from around Britain, a significant number of them being there for the first time.

It marked the end of Philippa Osei's year as Youth Moderator, with Heather Moore now taking up the role and Maya Withall being voted in as Youth Moderator Elect, while Jadan Turner was elected as Assembly Executive and General Assembly rep.

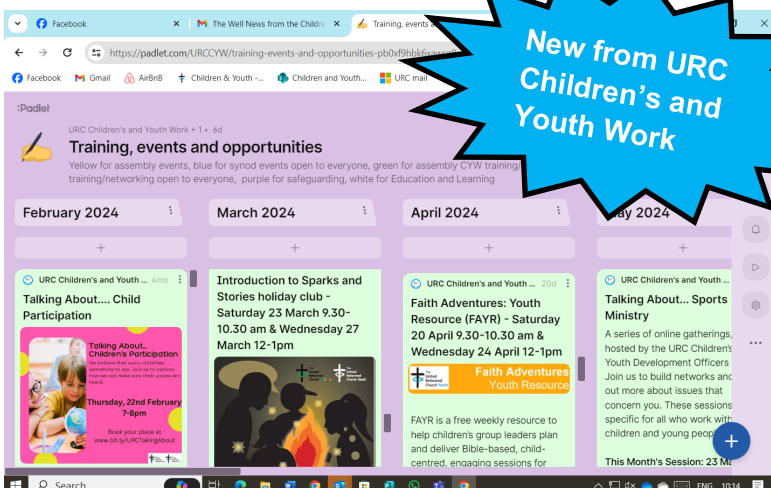
You can read all about this year's Youth Assembly in the Round Up magazine which was sent to all URC churches in the recent mailing and is also online <https://bit.ly/YA-roundup-24>



**New from URC
Children's and
Youth Work**

The Children's and Youth Work team across the Assembly and synods have launched a new calendar where you can see all the URC events and training relevant to your ministry among children, young people, young adults and families, including those offered by Safeguarding and Education & Learning.

Take a look on <https://bit.ly/URCCYWcalendar>



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG ADULTS MAKING THE HEADLINES IN THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Christ Church Stocksbridge in Yorkshire Synod has gained recognition in the Children and Youth Friendly Church Scheme. The church has involved children in tree-planting and land reclamation, litter picks, planting and growing plants, and sourced funding for a paid worker for the toddler group.



Christ Church Stockbridge has also sourced and provided around 15 new and used laptops for children at the high school living in low-income households, and built a thriving junior church, raising attendance from a couple of attendees to a regular number of 10-12 children aged 0-13.



Meanwhile, 14-year-old Alice Bagshaw from Wessex Synod was the recipient of the Lundie Award for February 2024. Alice was one of a group of students to travel to Sri Lanka for ten days in support of the charity Ocean Stars Trust. Students were tasked with raising money for the trust and Alice raised a phenomenal total of £3343.32. Another worthy recipient of a medal and a financial award to spend on Children and Youth as she sees fit.

January saw an extraordinary Lundie Award being made to a family of four from Southern Synod. Phoebe (15), Zoey (12), Elon (8) and Gideon (4) Leung moved with their parents two years ago to iKetholo Children's Village in KwaZulu -Natal, South Africa www.ikhethelo.org/, home for nearly 50 orphaned and vulnerable children.



Although their parents are the volunteers, the children help with all the activities in the children's village, from supporting at the daily homework club to introducing the local children to imaginative play. They work together as a team to share God's love with children who have experienced trauma in their lives and keep their home church up to date with regular news.



Two Pilots were awarded with Master Mariner awards at Steeple Bumpstead on 7 January. Yvonne Campbell, the General Secretary of the Congregational Federation, made the presentations to Ella Rosbrooke and Elsie Matthew-Jones, who have been exemplary Pilots for over five years.



Do you know anyone 25 or under who is playing their part in the mission of God and deserves recognition?

Why not nominate them for the Lundie Memorial Award?

Find out more about the Lundie Memorial Award and Children and Youth Friendly Church scheme on

<https://urc.org.uk/your-church/family-friendly-church/>

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH WORK

PRAYER PROMPTS FOR 4-8S AND 8-12S

In response to a suggestion from the URC Guide and Scout Fellowship, a new resource has been developed to help encourage children to pray, whether individually or leading a group prayer. These lovely cards have attractive illustrations which can be used as a stimulus for prayer and on the reverse are a few words, accompanied by Widgit symbols, to provide some words they might use in their prayers.

The cards are available online as a downloadable resource for you to print <https://bit.ly/Child-prayer-cards> and also available free of charge on request from the Children's and Youth Work office for use with URC children's groups. We hope soon to be able to offer the download in Welsh too.



SPARKS AND STORIES is the new holiday club material from URC Children's and Youth Work. Tying in with the annual CYW theme of Story, Story, Story, the 2024 holiday club invites you to gather round the campfire, marshmallows on sticks and hot chocolate in hand, and share in the greatest story of all.

As usual, the resource is supported with appendices helping you adapt the material for younger children, young people, intergenerational groups and vintage holiday club. Once again, grants of £50 or £100 will be available to support you if you choose to run a holiday club in 2024.

Find this and all our previous holiday club materials on <https://bit.ly/URC-holidayclub>

And all your useful paperwork templates on <https://bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork>

EASTER ENCOUNTERS

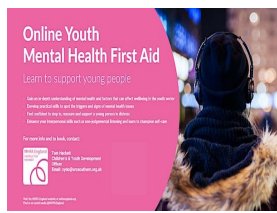
Planning intergenerational worship, prayer stations or simply looking for children/youth resources for your groups? The **FAITH ADVENTURES** writing team has compiled a resource on the events of Holy Week with activities for all ages, including accounts to read, prayers, and simple crafts, with suggestions for under fives too.

<https://bit.ly/Easter-Encounters>



Illustration from lambsongs.co.nz

Free and subsidised training and opportunities from the URC for the URC



Online Youth Mental Health First Aid training for people living, working and volunteering with young people age 8-18.

A few spaces remaining for this course held on 11, 12, 18 and 19 March 2024
18:30 - 21:30

(You will need to attend all four live sessions for the full duration to complete the course)

Visit bit.ly/march2024mhfa for more information and to register. Subsidised for people associated with the URC.

ECCE is an international gathering of like-minded people who come together every three years for an in-person conference and hold an online gathering annually in the intervening years. Join colleagues from across Europe who engage in and support children's ministry in schools and churches.

The free online gathering takes place on 22 May at 5pm and will include worship, networking opportunities, and our own Judy Harris as keynote speaker on the topic of creating space for children to play and be creative. Book on https://bit.ly/ECCE_online



European Conference on Christian Education
ECCE
Online Gathering
Join us on 22 May 2024
5pm UK, 6pm Central Europe, 7pm Eastern Europe



TALKING ABOUT

March's session of this monthly online gathering, run by our team of children's and youth work professionals around the synods, is postponed due to a clash with Maundy Thursday services, but will be held on **25 April 2024** when the theme will be Uniformed Organisations. Sign up now on Eventbrite <https://bit.ly/Talking-About>

Free online opportunities to explore the new resources from the URC to support your engagement with children and young people.

Take an hour on a Saturday morning (9.30-10.30am) or Wednesday lunchtime (12-1pm) to refuel and refocus your ministry. Make yourself a cuppa and settle down to meet the creators, ask questions, explore how things might work in your setting and chat with others doing similar work.

Holiday clubs:

Saturday 23 March 9.30-10.30am & Wednesday 27 March 12-1pm

Faith Adventures for Children Together (FACT):

Saturday 6 April 9.30-10.30am & Wednesday 10 April 12-1pm

Faith Adventures: Youth Resource (FAYR):

Saturday 20 April 9.30-10.30am & Wednesday 24 April 12-1pm

Regenerational: all ages worshipping together:

Saturday 27 April 9.30-10.30am & Wednesday 1 May 12-1pm

Pioneering new ways of being church:

Wednesday 8 May 12-1pm & Saturday 11 May 9.30-10.30am

Where Are The Young People?

Saturday 18 May 9.30-10.30am & Wednesday 22 May 12-1pm

Prayer Prompts for Children:

Saturday 8 June 9.30-10.30am & Wednesday 12 June 12-1pm

For more information or to register, go to: <https://bit.ly/find-out-sessions>

'Find out more' about
URC Children's and Youth
Work

The United Reformed Church Children
The United Reformed Church Youth

URC Children's workers together: THE CONFERENCE

- Inspirational speakers
- Creative and themed workshops
- Resources to explore
- All interspersed with opportunities for worship and chance to network and share ideas and encouragement.



Ripon College
Cuddesdon, Oxford
OX44 9EX

1-3 November 2024

Cost £150 per person
Bookings open from
1 May 2024

SAVE THE DATE !

MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW ON FACEBOOK



Merchandise from URC Children and Youth

Drawstring bags £2.50

Cloth badges £1 youth and 80p children

(p&p extra)

From children.youth@urc.org.uk

URC CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH WORK ONLINE

Facebook https://bit.ly/URC_CYW_FACEBOOK

Website https://bit.ly/CYW_RESOURCES

YouTube <https://bit.ly/URCCYW-youtube>

Pinterest <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/URCCYWD/>

Faith Adventures Facebook group

https://bit.ly/FACT_FB

GODLY PLAY CONFERENCE

St Mary De Crypt Church,
Gloucester

Enrichments and evening social
event: Friday 28 June

Full Conference: Saturday 29
June [https://www.godlyplay.uk/
events/godly-play-uk-conference-
2024/](https://www.godlyplay.uk/events/godly-play-uk-conference-2024/)



Resources and events offered by other providers

WEBINAR SERIES FROM FRONTIER YOUTH TRUST



Following on from the success of the Elephant in the Room Webinar Series last year, Frontier Youth Trust launched a new series of webinars from January 2024. The theme for the new series is 'Taking Risks in Youth Work' as seen at the FYT stand at the National Youth Ministry Weekend in November 2023.

The webinars will be hosted via Zoom on the last Wednesday of each month (except in May) from 12:30 to 1.30pm. There is no need to register - just turn up on the day. The Zoom login details will be the same each month Meeting ID: 898 7381 0406, Passcode: 208531.

YOUTH CULTURE AND TRENDS REPORT FROM THE BOYS' BRIGADE.

Working in partnership with Youthscape, the Boys Brigade have released a new report to mark their 140th Anniversary last year. Entitled **Youth culture and trends** the report explores two main questions: What shifts in culture and society

define the experience of being a young person today? What are the primary ways that young people's lives have changed over the last ten years? It focuses on health and wellbeing, identity, values and beliefs, behaviours and lifestyles, relationships, education and the future, and the impact of Covid-19. You can download a copy of the report on <https://boys-brigade.org.uk/youth-culture-and-trends/>



CHILDREN AT THE TABLE is a campaign from five leading children's charities – Action for Children, Barnardo's, The Children's Society, the National Children's Bureau and NSPCC. Ahead of the impending general election, they want to make sure the next government puts young people's needs and voices at the heart of decision making. Watch the video here: <https://bit.ly/Child-table> and visit <https://childrenatthetable.org.uk/> to find out more.

THE MAURICE AND HILDA LAING CHARITABLE TRUST offers grants to support fresh expression ministries with children and young people, nurturing children and young people in the Christian faith - helping them to explore, and grow in, Christian faith and to support organisations, primarily those inspired by Christian faith, offering practical support to those in the U.K. who are disadvantaged, vulnerable and / or socially isolated, with a particular focus on helping families and young people at risk, prisoners and ex-offenders, particularly women in the justice system, the homeless and refugees. Applications can be submitted at any time if your church has a project which the trust might support. <https://www.laingfamilytrusts.org.uk/>

LOOKING AHEAD - for your diaries or your prayers

February 2024	All church mailing including copies of Story, Story, Story resource book
23&27 March 2024	Find out about Holiday Clubs
28 March 2024	Talking About ... Uniformed Organisations
6&10 April 2024	Find out about Faith Adventures: Children Together
20&24 April 2024	Find out about Faith Adventures: Youth Resource
25 April 2024	Talking About LGBTQ+

Next Bi-Monthly Update : early May 2024

Please note: If you no longer wish to subscribe to the bimonthly newsletter from URC Children's and Youth Work, please email children.youth@urc.org.uk to request that your name is removed from our mailing list.

You can **contact us** by email on children.youth@urc.org.uk or phone on 020 7916 8683. Our website is <https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/children-young-people>, Facebook bit.ly/URC_CYW_FACEBOOK or you can use good old snail mail.

AND FINALLY If you have received this as a paper copy or by a friend forwarding it to you and you would like to be added to our mailing list, please do sign up here: bit.ly/URCCYWbimonthly Our Data privacy note is here: <https://urc.org.uk/privacy-policy/>

Easter is coming soon!

In addition to our Faith Adventures: Easter Encounters <https://bit.ly/Easter-Encounters>, check out these lovely resources from other Children's ministry providers



The Bible Society have partnered with Hope Together's ALIVE: Families https://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/399115/Alive_Easter_2024.aspx to create a range of material available online or to purchase.

Order the wonderful children's Easter booklet *The Awesome Easter Surprise* (available in several languages), watch the free accompanying videoanimation and download the brilliant I Spy and Snack activity sheets for children. All designed to share the good news that Jesus is alive! <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/resources/collections/easter-resources/the-awesome-easter-surprise-resources/>



Scripture Union has a range of resources aimed at sharing love of Jesus at Easter with the 95% of children in England and Wales not engaging with a church. These include their attractive "Jesus Died for Me?" booklet, a poetic retelling of the Easter story with intricate illustrations to colour. <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/share-love-jesus-easter>



Godventure has a whole range of seasonal activities for Lent and Easter available on their website here—<https://godventure.co.uk/activities/seasonal/>

Godventure also provides various printed or downloadable resources which you can obtain from <https://godventure.co.uk/product-category/seasonal/lent-and-easter/>