



# Southern Synod News

Welcome to the latest edition of Southern Synod News. This month we have some new people joining the Synod as well as important information about upcoming Youth and Children's events.

We would love to hear from you! If you have any exciting upcoming events you wish to advertise, or would like to share good news from your local church we would love to include it in the next edition. Please send items for the next issue to Ross ([office@urcsouthern.org.uk](mailto:office@urcsouthern.org.uk)) by Monday 24th February 2025.

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## Latest News

### **Dates for your Diary: Synod Together**

Spring Synod Together will be taking place on **8th March 2025** at East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon, CR0 5LP. Papers and timings will be circulated closer to the event.

The Autumn Synod Together will be held on 18th October 2025.

### **Annual Church Returns due by 28th February**

We're now over half way through Annual Church/Safeguarding Return time and the deadline is fast approaching. Thank you to everyone who has completed their returns already. For those who haven't yet started, please log in to the portal and get started as soon as possible. If you have any questions or need assistance please contact Ross ([office@urcsouthern.org.uk](mailto:office@urcsouthern.org.uk)) or Lauren ([modpa@urcsouthern.org.uk](mailto:modpa@urcsouthern.org.uk)), we're happy to help.

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## Changes in Southern Synod



### **Jo Patterson is our new Mission and Development Officer!**

We are very excited to announce that Jo Patterson has been appointed as Southern Synod's Mission and Development Officer!

"Serving in South London for nine years, my work as a Church Related Community Worker - or CRCW as we're better known – has been diverse, challenging and rewarding. Throughout my ministry, I have actively engaged with community groups of all sizes and types, working collaboratively to facilitate successful group work on Vision, Mission, and more. My passion is to enable local churches to envisage creative mission relevant to their own individual context, using existing gifts from within the congregation whilst, where possible, proactively engaging with local communities.

Let's grow in our discipleship and our mission together, all for the Kingdom of God."

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### **Welcome to Mark Rigby!**

We are delighted to announce Mark Rigby will be joining the Synod Team as a Training Consultant. Mark will initially be working with Elders around our new training package and in bringing to light the Synod Strategy chosen by Synod Together in October; “Renew, Reimagine and Reorder”.

Mark is an Elder of Tonbridge URC, and a Synod Accredited Lay Preacher. In his "day" job he produces technical reports for the Criminal Justice System, distilling often complex matters into material easily understood by ordinary jury members.

Mark is passionate about empowering and encouraging people wherever they are in their faith journey and in using technology as a tool for Mission.

He is married to a URC Minister, they have two daughters and live in the centre of our Synod, making it easier to get around to visit you all.

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**Upcoming Training and Events**

## 2025 URC Youth Assembly!

The 2025 URC Youth Assembly is taking place from 7th-9th March 2025 at Kings Park Conference Centre, Northampton, NN3 6LL.

This will be a fun weekend where you can have your say, make friends and find fellowship.

Worship - Bible Study, music, prayer spaces, late night communion.

Youth Decides - discussion on issues that matter to us, leading to action and engaging the wider church.

Workshops - grow your skills and thinking while exploring the theme.

Entertainment - campfire, karaoke, sports, games and more.

Early Bird tickets (available until 1st December) - £120.

Regular tickets (2nd December-2nd February 2025) - £150.

Please speak to your local church or Synod for help with funding.

This is open to Year 10 pupils up to 25 years inclusive.

To book contact [children.youth@urc.org.uk](mailto:children.youth@urc.org.uk).

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### **The Hiding Place is being performed at Horsham URC**

Horsham URC are hosting the hit show, '**The Hiding Place**', which tells the fascinating true story of Corrie ten Boom and her family in their struggle to save Jews from the Nazis during the Second World War.

**When? Thursday 6th February 2025  
7.30pm**

**Where? Horsham URC, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2RG**

To book go to:  
[www.jumblebee.co.uk/HPHorsham](http://www.jumblebee.co.uk/HPHorsham)

### **Trinity Lent Lecture at Trinity Church, Sutton**

#### **"Luke the Historian"**

Trinity Church, Sutton are hosting a Trinity Lent Lecture this year, led by Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler, Secretary of the Methodist Conference.


In the opening verses of the Gospel According to Luke the writer suggests that, although not an eye witness himself, he has researched his material thoroughly in order to write "an orderly account.....that you may know the truth". Do join them as Dr Hustler explores Luke the Historian.

All are welcome, there is no charge.

**When? Tuesday 18th March 2025 7:30pm.**

**Where? Trinity Church Sutton, Cheam Road, SM 1DZ**


[www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk/lent-lecture](http://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk/lent-lecture)




Equipping you to cooperate with the Holy Spirit

# The Power of Prayer

*Doing the work of prayer that shapes the future*



**9th - 13th April 2025**  
 St Andrew's URC, Canterbury, CT1 2UA  
 Wednesday mid-morning to Sunday lunch time



## The Power of Prayer

Jesus prayed, and he taught his followers to pray. But many think they are simply "not good" at prayer, and yearn to go deeper in their walk with God.

Perhaps you want to grow in intimacy with Christ through contemplative prayer? Maybe you are looking to receive vision and pursuing this through prayer? Do you want to grasp the vital role of intercessors?

This conference will give you Biblical foundations and practical instruction to help you grow in both personal and corporate prayer that is led by the Holy Spirit.

The teaching content is vital, but growing in prayer comes as the Holy Spirit leads the group into prayer. Much time is actually spent in prayer and then reflecting together on what has happened as we consider:

- Nurturing intimacy with God
- Keys to praying with power
- The "Moses" work of intercessory prayer
- Vision and prayer that advances God's Kingdom

*Join us for this life-changing event, and discover how much more God can do in and through you!*

### What's Involved?

- Corporate worship and prayer, responsive to the activity of the Holy Spirit
- Systematic teaching, rooted in scripture and grounded in the realities of life
- Intentional transition from teaching to practice, helping participants learn through personal experience
- Debriefing, to deepen understanding and insights, and to model accountability

*"It has been such a revelation and completely transformed the way I think about prayer!"*

This is the third in a series of six training events that equip Christians to fulfil the Great Commission and advance the Kingdom of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### Booking your place

Full details and booking form online:  
[www.dunamis.org.uk/canterbury](http://www.dunamis.org.uk/canterbury)

For enquiries about this event please contact Val Cannon:  
 E: [val@dunamis.org.uk](mailto:val@dunamis.org.uk)



## Dunamis Project - The Power of Prayer

The Dunamis Project are running another event at St Andrew's URC, Canterbury, CT1 2UA from the 9th-13 April 2025.

This is the third in a series of six training events that equip Christians to fulfil the Great Commission and advance the Kingdom of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

To book your place go to <http://www.dunamis.org.uk/canterbury>

## You are invited to Youthscape Essentials, all round training for every volunteer youth leader.



We are going to learn and pray in a community with a shared heart and hope for young people and for God.

Each of the 10 sessions includes:

- 1 insight into youth culture to explore
- 1 practical skill to try out together
- 1 area of Christian character to reflect on

We always start with the voice of a young person through a special recorded video, and we close by being sent out in hopeful prayer.

Whether you have been involved in youth ministry for years or you are thinking of getting involved, Youthscape Essentials is the place for you.

Running online, monthly, from Tuesday 25th February to Monday 24th November 7pm to 9pm.  
 For a list of dates please contact [cydo@urcmerseysynod.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urcmerseysynod.org.uk).  
 To book go to <https://www.youthscape.co.uk/yse/register> or use the QR code and enter course code 1245085.




## Youthscape Essentials Event

"Youthscape Essentials is an innovative course for volunteers and paid youth leaders that increases your skills and understanding about working alongside young people today. Whether you're running a community project, a church youth group, or occasionally helping out on a Sunday morning, the course is designed with you in mind! It's not about the numbers of young people attending, it's about putting God at the centre of your youth ministry.

It's ten sessions covering 30 topics. The topics are divided into;

- **Insights into Young People**
- **Skills for Youth Work**
- **Developing Character.**

You'll listen to young people, learn from professionals, participate in practical exercises and take time to deepen your own faith. It makes no assumptions about your experience, age or background. It's accessible to those starting out as volunteers, but deep enough to stretch those who have been working alongside young people for longer.

Join members of the 5 Northerly Children and Youth Team online as we reflect and learn together through 2025. Each session is standalone, but we would like you to join in with as many sessions as you can. To book your place visit [www.youthscape.co.uk/yse/register](http://www.youthscape.co.uk/yse/register) and enter the course code 1245085.

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