



Children's and Youth Work Committee **Report to Synod, October 2024**

Submitted by Graham Purdye



*The good leave an inheritance to their **children's children**...*
Proverbs 13:22a

Members

Membership:

There have been a couple of recent changes to the committee with Lisa Boatri from Sedlescombe Chapel on the Hill and Rev. Keith Morrison joining us so there are currently 7 active members. Tom is valiantly covering the minute taking for which we are very grateful, but if anyone knows somebody in their church that may be willing to take on this role, please let me know. We are still looking at getting more involvement from young people in the Synod.

Recent Discussion Items, Events etc. – From CYDO – Tom Hackett

Mental Health First Aid

Youth MHFA training has continued to be offered. Recently delivered courses have included training for EM1 ministers at Westminster College and at Christ Church URC Chelmsford. Over the coming months we will focus on delivering the half day “Youth Mental Health Aware” course and are looking for local churches within Synod to host this training. MHFA England are currently updating the 2 day Youth MHFA course, which is due to launch in January 2025. Hopefully there will be new training dates from the end of January.

Youth Residential

The Joint Synod Youth Residential took place from 30th May – 2nd June at Whitemoor Lakes Activity Centre in Staffordshire. The programme included a mixture of outdoor activities (climbing, zip wire, raft building, canoeing), worship and workshops on the theme of “Story, Story, Story”. 12 young people attended the event, including 2 participants from Southern Synod. The leadership team also included 4 young leaders from URC Youth age range. This is the second year that we have ran this event together with Thames North Synod. Feedback from participants was very positive. During October half term we will be holding a day event where participants will be invited to gather and evaluate the event. The dates for 2025 Youth Residential are Thursday 29th May to Sunday 1st June 2025

Children & Youth Friendly Church Scheme

Recent presentations have been made at Reigate Park and Kingston URC. There are currently several churches working through the CYFC Scheme with the support of Synod CYDO.

Lundie Award Presentation

In August a Lundie Award presentation was made to members of the Leung Family, at Christ Church Tonbridge. The family members had just returned from South Africa, where they had been living and supporting iKhetelo Children's

Village. You can read more about their award nomination here - <https://urc.org.uk/siblings-on-south-african-adventure-gain-lundie-award/>

Greenbelt Festival – Youth Venues

This year was another positive year in Greenbelt Youth Venues. The youth engagement team facilitated the provision of the Den and Engine venues which were open throughout the festival for young people aged 12-17. The Den was a relaxed space where young people could hang out, with a range of activities available such as board games, craft activities and a café serving drinks, sweets and refreshments. The engine was a programmed venue, which included a range of workshops and activities featuring artists and contributors from the main festival programme. The venues were open throughout the festival from 10am-11pm each day. Positive feedback was received from young people attending the Den and Engine venues, as well as from parents/carers and from volunteers within the youth engagement team. The Youth Engagement Team is made up of volunteers, with 3 members of the CYDO+ team (Judy Harris, Phil Ray and Tom Hackett) acting as team leaders and venue managers. The volunteers included members from URC youth, including current URC Youth Assembly Moderator Heather Moore from Southern Synod.

Upcoming Events

URC Children’s Worker Conference – November 1-3, Rippon College, Oxfordshire OX44 9EX

A Gathering for all who work with children aged 0-12 that are in any way connected with the URC (volunteers and employed) in uniformed organisations, Pilots, Messy Church, junior church, children’s groups or any other setting. There are still a few last minute spaces available. Book now via link below.

<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/CYW-Childrens-Workers-Conference-booking-form.pdf>

Joint Synod Youth Gathering

Saturday 26th October 2024

10:30am – 4:00pm

The Lumen Community, 88 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RS

Open to young people in secondary school (Year 7) up to age 25 years, from Southern & Thames North Synods.

An opportunity to meet with other young people for games, food, discussion and worship.

Contact cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk to book.

Youth Assembly 2025 – March 7-9, King Park Conference Centre, Northampton

A weekend for all young people in school year 10 (age 14/15) up to age 25 years associated with the URC. Fully funded spaces available for participants from Southern Synod. Contact cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk for more info.

Youth Worker Project

- No new applications received since previous meeting.

Here is a brief reminder summary of the project. Aimed to find a way of practically supporting youth work in local churches. Project aims to support

churches in identifying young people from community to take on part time work within the local church. Idea came from fact that there are many young people on periphery of church who are sometimes forgotten and disengaged. This has been applied at Tolworth URC with employment of part time Youth Worker and has been successful. The technique helps to identify, support and nurture young people within the community. Tom has seen a growth in the youth workers confidence at Tolworth URC between visits.

Synod Youth Executive Report.

Zeerak fed back on recent youth executive meeting.

All are welcome is the URC Youth Theme for 2025.

Executive had conversation with John Bradbury about involvement of young people in URC, fruitful discussion with General Secretary.

Working to enact the 3 resolutions from URCYA 2024

Looking at advertising for different events – looking at how to communicate and advertise events to young people.

Looking to recruit new URC Youth Comms intern.

Looking at how to use social media to contact young people.

For the latest news and resources for your Children's & Youth Work, please follow this link. <https://urc.org.uk/resources-for-children-and-youth>

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

29th January 2025

(via 'Zoom')