**Elders training and support in a time of change**

**Spring 2025**

*“There is nothing like the local church when it is working right. Its beauty is indescribable. Its power is breath-taking. Its potential is unlimited. It comforts the grieving & heals the broken in the context of community. It builds bridges to seekers & offers truth to the confused. It provides resources for those in need & opens its arms to the forgotten, the downtrodden, the disillusioned. It breaks the chains of addictions, frees the oppressed, & offers belonging to the marginalised of this world.” Bill Hybels*

Volunteer Elders have led churches since bible times, well before ordained Ministers. As Trustees of our churches under charity law, we are responsible for ensuring the church is well-run and safe. Yet we may neglect our crucial role - to ensure that appropriate worship and spiritual development takes place in accordance with URC theology.

Elders give their time willingly, are highly valued by their congregations, elected by church members and ordained for life, whether serving or non-serving.

URC Southern Synod is keen to support elders in their spiritual leadership role, particularly where they are without a stipendiary Minister. Half day courses are being offered across the Synod area for groups of elders to explore together the challenges and rewards of this aspect of their role. Developed by Revd Andy Twilley and Nigel Macdonald, the training is bible based and highly interactive.

Sessions last around 4 hours including breaks and discussion time either on a Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon and aim to equip elders with ideas, material and objectives to discuss together at future meetings.

More details on the web here <https://southernsynodurc.org.uk/elders-training/>

Or contact Sue Eardley, Secretary to the Synod Ministries Committee secretary@stpaulsurc.org.uk 07971 068887