

The Broadsheet

Broadway URC



December/January 2026



To know Jesus better and to make Him better known

Letter from the Minister

The current issue of Reform magazine, the national periodical of the United Reformed Church, contains a thought-provoking article by Michael Hopkins, Moderator of Wessex Synod, on URC attitudes to Holy Communion. The article notes the three traditions that came together to form the URC had different practices regarding frequency of Communion. The Churches of Christ believed Holy Communion was so important it should be celebrated every Sunday as the main act of worship. Presbyterians believed Holy Communion was so important it should be celebrated as a special occasion once a quarter. Congregationalists tended to adopt a middle position of celebrating Communion monthly. It is the monthly pattern of Holy Communion that seems to have become the norm in the United Reformed Church. Hopkins is not entirely satisfied with this 'one

size fits all' solution. He writes, 'compromise can dilute the spiritual gifts of different traditions. The "family birthday" pattern of quarterly celebration preserves a sense of solemnity and expectation. The "weekly family meal" pattern normalises Christ's presence and nourishment at the centre of our life together. Both instincts can teach us something vital.'

As a Minister of Word and Sacrament serving four churches, my current experience is that I participate in Holy Communion most weeks. It is during the sharing of the bread and wine that I feel most fed by Jesus and so I can relate to the idea of Communion as a "weekly family meal". I can also relate to the idea of Communion as a special occasion. When I served as an Elder of St Andrew's URC in Ealing, there was a strong expectation that elders should set an example by making a special effort to be present for the monthly Communion service. I feel uneasy however when I hear comments suggesting a Communion service is something that can be deferred, or even dispensed with altogether, if it is not convenient on a particular Sunday.

During services of Holy Communion we not only hear about Jesus; we also experience his presence in the sharing of bread and wine. At the present time it is the closest we can get to having Jesus physically present with us. We participate in Communion as guests of Jesus. Whatever our frequency of Communion, let us therefore give it the priority it deserves. Yours in Christ, Iain

Tree Festival

Nine local groups have again decorated trees inside the church which will be open to the public to coincide with the two late shopping nights on 28th November and 5th December 4-8pm and the corresponding Saturday afternoons 2-4pm. Please tell you friends and bring them along. There will also be an advent scene in the vestibule. Any donations will be sent to the Leprosy Mission fund for building a new bathroom at one of their hospitals.

Christmas Card

It was decided at the church meeting that a large card will be displayed in the hall for people to sign instead of sending individual ones which are often left undelivered in the pigeon holes.

Again any donations will go to the Leprosy Misson.

Letter from Diana Miller

My husband Alan died on 17th May and Rev Kathryn did a lovely service at the Flatbury Crematorium in June and Marion played the organ. My son Jonathan and daughter Karen

talked lovingly about their Dad. Some of the ladies of the church were there and I was glad they came to the wake in Bredan. I have received so much support and am very grateful.

Report from Synod business meeting 23rd October 2025

Steve Faber, the Moderator opened the meeting with prayer.

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 15th March were before everyone and agreed. There was one matter arising which was re Synod Grants. Further changes to Synod Grants were being proposed:

- 1) These would increase the level of financial support to local churches.
- 2) Widening the criteria in a number of instances.
- 3) Seeking to ensure there is a missional focus for all grant applications.
- 4) Ensuring that the application process is simpler.
- 5) Evaluating a church's own resources in considering the level of Synod support.

This proposal was approved.

Synod Executive report this highlighted the movement of ministers, the Revd Samuel Silungwe was inducted to the Mid Staffs Ecumenical Pastorate of Trinity Church Stafford and St John's Church Stone, this was a 7 year appointment.

The Revd Debbie Brown was inducted to Ansty Rd and Baginton Rd URC's in October 2025 in addition to Foleshill Road, Keresley URC's and Sherbourne Community Church, creating the new Coventry pastorate.

Matthew McDade the Synod Property Officer was finishing on 20th October 2025.

The Executive also noted the death of Dr Anthony (Tony) Jeans on 16th September 2025. Tony served the Synod as Deputy Synod Clerk, Property Committee Convenor and Chair of Trust.

Emma Wright, Synod Communications Officer has updated the Synod website, www.urcwestmidlands.org.uk and this is now live.

Church Life Review – Background papers can be found at <https://urc.org.uk/church-lifereview-group/> An extraordinary meeting of General Assembly will take place in November to consider proposals relating to CLR outcomes and a document will be made available.

Creating a Vision for the West Midlands Synod – in line with the vision, applications for Pioneer Ministry posts were approved for Blakenall URC and in Northfield Birmingham where a new worshipping community is coming together. There have been appointments to these two roles. **The Safeguarding report** was received as was the Ministry Development Report and the Missional Discipleship Development Report.

The Report was received from the **Trust Board and the Resources and Compliance Committee** which included the Annual Financial Statements.

It is envisaged that the Synod Manse Fund will have grown to £10M after the current round of sales and acquisitions. This is clearly in excess of any realistic demands on the fund and it was agreed that a new decision be made to re-designate them for alternative purposes.

It is therefore proposed that £7M be re-designated as follows:

- 1) £1.152M be added to the Denomination Projects Fund, to meet the costs of contributions to the National Church Life Fund.
- 2) £2.0M to be added to the Fund to meet the costs of mission support to local churches.
- 3) £3.848M to be added to the fund for church property grants.

Church Life Fund – The special General Assembly in November will consider a package of Church Life Review proposals, including the establishment of a Church Life Fund created from contributions from Synods. Plans for the use of that fund cover the following:

- a) Shared services, available to Synods and local churches.
- b) Grants to support the employment of lay workers for local churches.
- c) Grants to encourage the creation of new, additional communities of worship.

The 2024 accounts were accepted. Then the resolutions to reallocate £7M from the Synod Manse Fund was agreed. The proposal; to establish a national Church Life Fund was endorsed. It was also agreed to create a Synod Fund of £3.9M to meet the costs of contributions to the Church Harvest Life Fund over a 3 year period to be reviewed thereafter, and that the 2026 Budget be accepted.

The Meeting closed with prayer.



Harvest

A very successful Festival service was held in September with the gifts donated to the

Broadway Food Bank

Services for December and January

Sunday services start at 10.30 and everyone is invited to stay for refreshments in the hall after the service.

December Duty Elder Christine Browne
7th Rev Dee Brierly-Jones Holy Communion
14th Methodist Miss Hilary Johnson

January Christine, Kathryn
4th Rev Kathryn Louch HC
11th Rev Brian Clarke

21st 3pm Carol service Rev Iain McLaren

18th Rev Iain McLaren Church meeting

28th Service in the hall

25th Rev Stephen Froggatt Methodist
covenant service with HC

Church Secretary

Kathryn Louch

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Please send articles for the next Broadsheet by 19th January to
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