

## **Workshop 1:**

### **Climate Crisis and Ecological Emergency – what can Christians do? Focus on ‘Lifestyle’ and ‘Community and global engagement’ areas of Eco Church.**

As we hear more about the climate emergency and have personal experiences of more extreme weather events, this session will help us think through how we can move from climate concern, or even anxiety, to positive mission-focused engagements with our church members and our wider communities. With Revds. Melanie Smith and Mark Meatcher and John Davey, members of the Synod Eco Core Group. Each ‘green’ workshop is a standalone session, so please attend any or all. They draw their focus from the sections on the Eco Church questionnaire – details about Eco Church are available on the resources table, but please feel free to any member of the Synod Eco Core Group at any time.

*Facilitators: Melanie Smith, Mark Meatcher, John Davey (Green Apostles)*

### **Evangelism for Beginners**

The word ‘evangelism’ can seem scary and yet evangelism is essential to help people to come to faith. This workshop aims to show that it doesn’t need to be scary. Sally and Andrew will share gentle, non-confrontational ways of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and show some useful resources. Our Mission Development Officers, Sally and Andrew Willett, have lots of experience to lead this workshop and they hope that if you go on it you will leave thinking ‘I can do this’.

*Facilitators: Andrew & Sally Willett (Synod Mission Development Officers)*

### **Reducing our age range**

How do we grow younger as a church? Not because there are tasks to be done, but because we want to share the love of Jesus with those in our community. How do we create worship that is engaging for younger people? This will mean changes to existing worship or creating new worship spaces. How can we find ways to connect with people in our community, those on the fringes of our church, who are starting their faith journey? What would reducing the age range of your church look like for you?

*Facilitator: Helen Laird (Children & Youth Development Officer) and Isaac Irvine (Synod Youth Representative)*

### **Pioneering: thinking differently about church**

*How can we reimagine the ways we celebrate our faith and live as light within our local neighbourhoods?*

As traditional models of church decline across the Western world, we believe this is a pivotal moment - a season for imagining what the future of church might look like. Where is God already at work in our communities? How can we, as people of faith, join in with what God is doing - nurturing new expressions of worship and growing communities that reflect God’s love and justice in everyday life?

*Facilitator: Anji Barker (Synod Pioneer Cluster Leader)*

### **Shine Your Light**

Imagine 200,000 Christians mobilised to take the message of Christmas beyond the church building. Well, that’s the vision of *Shine Your Light*, a national initiative running for the last two years. This workshop will be led by Dr. Jonathan Oloyede, leader of the project and Convenor of the National Day of Prayer and Worship. You can come and be inspired and learn about the excellent resources you can use, pray for the initiative and register to be part of this movement.

*Facilitator: Revd Dr Jonathan Oloyede (National Day of Prayer UK)*

## **Workshop 2:**

### **Grant streams**

Learn about the many ways in which the Synod can provide financial assistance to your local church and hear about proposed changes to improve that support. You'll be able to find out more about who you can talk to about your project or idea, and learn about the key things to bear in mind when making a successful grant application. There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions.

*Facilitators: Karen Wise (Synod Finance Officer) and Steve Powell (Synod Treasurer)*

### **Introduction to Growing your Church**

Do you want your church to grow? If the answer is 'yes' then this is the workshop for you. Churches can grow numerically, spiritually and in outreach, hopefully all three! In this workshop the 'Leading Your Church Into Growth' (LYCIG) programme will be introduced and if you are interested in using it in your church then our Mission Development Officers can help you do that. This programme is 'doable' for any of our churches in the Synod and a number of churches have been using it.

*Facilitators: Andrew & Sally Willett (Synod Mission Development Officers)*

### **Lay Presidency**

Who should preside at communion? How does a church discern pastoral necessity? How are decisions made in the Ministry Development Committee? What are the training requirements? An open forum for discussion on URC policies and procedures, and their practical outworking given our new reality of multi-church pastorates. Copies of the Synod policy will be available (also available here: <https://www.urcwestmidlands.org.uk/synod-policy-documents.html>).

*Facilitated by Revd Melanie Smith (Synod Training & Development Officer and Pastoral Consultant)*

### **Local Church Safeguarding – How Can I Help?**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and involves so much more than having an up-to-date policy. Synod Safeguarding Officer, Donna, is here to help on all matters safeguarding. However, this workshop will also challenge each individual to ask the question... 'How can I help?' Together, we will explore the benefits of developing an environment in which safeguarding the vulnerable is embedded into our culture and practice. We will consider the barriers to safeguarding and begin the journey to find realistic solutions.

*Facilitator: Donna Gordon (Synod Safeguarding Officer)*

### **Greening your Buildings and Land - Focus on 'Buildings and energy' and 'Land and nature' areas of Eco Church.**

From changing the lightbulbs, through energy surveys, to creating a wildlife garden (or planter!). Discover what practical steps can we take to green our churches, as well as exploring possible grants and funding. Each 'green' workshop is a standalone session, so please attend any or all. They draw their focus from the sections on the Eco Church questionnaire – details about Eco Church are available on the resources table, but please feel free to any member of the Synod Eco Core Group at any time.

*Facilitators: Andrew Mann-Ray & Alison Smith (Team ministers in Wolverhampton & Smestow Brook), Elaine Roberts (Wombourne URC), Matthew McDade (Synod Property Officer)*

### **Workshop 3:**

#### **Forest Church – an introduction - Focus on the ‘Worship and teaching’ areas of Eco Church.**

A practical session, which will immerse ourselves in a Forest Church style worship. We will also share experiences of Forest Church in a real forest and in an urban church field, including considerations such as risk assessments. With Kim Baker and Revd Melanie Smith. Each ‘green’ workshop is a standalone session, so please attend any or all. They draw their focus from the sections on the Eco Church questionnaire – details about Eco Church are available on the resources table, but please feel free to any member of the Synod Eco Core Group at any time.

*Facilitators: Melanie Smith, Mark Meatcher, John Davey (Green Apostles)*

#### **Growing your Church part 2**

Leading your church into growth (LYCIG) is a helpful programme for local churches to grow. A number of people in the Synod have been introduced to it previously, or in Workshop 2, an ‘Introduction to growing your church’. This workshop will take you deeper into the programme, so that you will be better able to implement it in your church. This workshop is also suitable for those who have started LYCIG in their church but have questions about how it is working.

*Facilitators: Andrew & Sally Willett (Synod Mission Development Officers)*

#### **Intergenerational Worship**

Intergenerational is different to all age, intergenerational is more impactful, it isn’t just about all-ages being together, it is about everyone learning with and from each other. It requires everyone to understand children and young people as spiritual beings and that we can learn from one another. Intergenerational worship creates elements where everyone can share and learn together, thus building and deepening relationships across the whole church.

*Facilitator: Helen Laird (Synod Children & Youth Development Officer) and Isaac Irvine (Synod Youth Representative)*

#### **Pioneering: thinking differently about church**

*How can we reimagine the ways we celebrate our faith and live as light within our local neighbourhoods?*

As traditional models of church decline across the Western world, we believe this is a pivotal moment - a season for imagining what the future of church might look like. Where is God already at work in our communities? How can we, as people of faith, join in with what God is doing - nurturing new expressions of worship and growing communities that reflect God’s love and justice in everyday life?

*Facilitator: Anji Barker (Synod Pioneer Cluster Leader)*