

This year our theme was All are welcome. The biggest change was the new venue for Youth Assembly – King's Park, Northampton. We needed to make sure Youth Assembly was welcoming to all. Being a venue where all areas are off the chill out area was great for accessibility and making it easier to find your way around. We had a range of activities, to appeal to a wide range of people, from workshops and craft to sports and forest church, with an emphasis on taking time to breathe and connect with God and others.



Lisa Adjei shared an excellent keynote highlighting different cultures and backgrounds to help the message of inclusiveness. Worship was lead by Helen Everard

and the scratch youth band, and we were honoured to have the Moderator of the General Assembly Tim Meadows share communion with us. He challenged everyone not to ask 'who is my neighbour' but to BE the neighbour needed for anyone. Late night entertainment was a ceilidh which was a great opportunity for people to get to know each other and have a laugh at the same time. Karaoke was as popular as ever.

The weekend concluded with the induction of Maya Withall as URC Youth Assembly Moderator, and the new URC Youth Executive.



Update on Youth Assembly 2024 resolution on Honest Church campaign

Since last year Youth Executive has encouraged URC churches to engage with the Honest Church campaign by the Student Christian Movement. See <https://bit.ly/4kWUUCu>. This means churches are being open and honest about themselves and the welcome they offer, and helps people find churches they can connect to fully as themselves.



Update on Youth Assembly 2024 resolutions on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory

These resolutions fed into the work of Mission Committee who brought a number of resolutions to General Assembly condemning the ongoing violence and supporting those working for a just peace, including acts of solidarity and offering education opportunities around the URC to deepen understanding of the history and issues.

Youth Moderator and Youth Executive review

This review took place over the year, we thank Jon Steel for this work. See <https://bit.ly/4iNuUYq>. To summarise, the review presented alternative structures to make the role of Synod Rep more synod-focussed and set up a separate task group to plan Youth Assembly; and decided not to pursue a paid role for the URC Youth Moderator but rather to reshape the role.





Youth Assembly 25 motions

1. Changes to the Youth Executive Structure

Youth Assembly accepts the URC Youth Review report and would like to place on thanks to all of those involved. Youth Assembly encourages Youth Executive to trial the suggested recommendations from the report until YA26, under the current handbook and framework, before then feeding back and bringing suitable motions to YA26.

Proposer: URC Youth Executive. This was passed by consensus. For details see <https://bit.ly/4iNuUYq>

2. Encouraging the URC to be involved in the Welcome Directory

Youth Assembly encourages local churches to work with the Welcome Directory to help prison leavers with rejoining faith communities. Youth Assembly also asks the Mission Committee, with the help of URC Youth, to bring a resolution to General Assembly to support this.

Proposer: Jadan Tynan
GA & AE Representative;
North Western Synod
Seconder: Maya Withall
URC Youth Assembly
Moderator Elect; Synod of Scotland. This was passed by consensus.



Kacie
Hodgson,
Maya Withall
and Heather
Moore

Incoming URC Youth Assembly Moderator – Maya Withall

I can already anticipate that this year on youth exec is not going to be like any other! While I am nervous about the changes to the youth exec following its review, I am also excited about the opportunities these changes will bring. My hope for this year is that young people in the URC will feel more connected and able to engage with the youth executive in ways they couldn't before, and that youth exec can enable young people to get involved in the URC on a broader level. Most of all, I am looking forward to working with the new Youth Executive to plan an amazing Youth Assembly 2026! I am also eager to explore what work we can do at a more localised level through our Synod reps.

A key focus for me this year will be the environment. I hope we can be more mindful and considerate about sustainability in our planning of Youth Assembly and make it a more environmentally friendly event. Beyond that, I want to explore how we can encourage young people to inspire their local churches to consider their role in climate change and their environmental impact in what they do.



Since Children's and Youth Work played such a big part of how I came to be involved in the URC I'm passionate about how we can help more young people engage with the URC – not just locally but at a national level. I look forward to my many train journeys (and how much I can crochet along the way!).

Most of all, I'm just excited to be Moderator – challenges and all. This is something I have wanted to do since joining Youth Executive at the age of fourteen, and I hope the year doesn't pass too quickly. More than anything, I want to make the most of my time and do everything God is calling me to do in God's Church.



Outgoing URC Youth Moderator – Heather Moore

Five years ago, I attended my first Youth Assembly. I didn't know it at the time, but that event and the people behind it would grow to be one of the most important things in my life, and in my journey with God. And I could never have predicted that five years on, I would be gearing up to lead the event as the Youth Moderator.



“Youth Assembly for me is the place where I truly understood that the Christian faith could apply to someone like me. Where I discovered just how much God loved me just as I am, and learned that we are all fearfully and wonderfully made in God's image, including the parts that I really didn't like about myself.

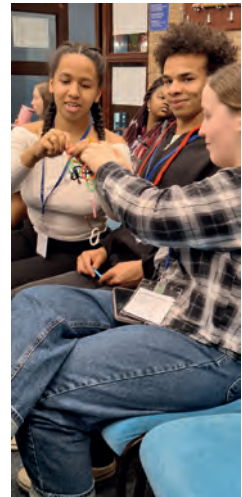
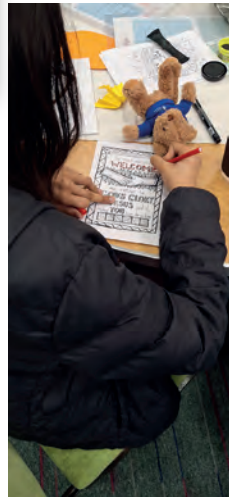
Heather Moore, Outgoing Moderator

Getting to serve as Moderator has been a joy, a privilege and a blessing. I have had some truly incredible experiences, come to learn and really appreciate the way the URC functions, and how much young people are valued.

This role has transformed my life, I've developed skills like leadership that I didn't think I possessed, met some amazing people, and been to some incredible and thought-provoking events. Getting to work with and lead the Youth Executive was one of the reasons I was drawn to the role of Moderator in the first place. I love this group because, not only do we get to work towards a great event, but I get to see young leaders grow throughout the year, and I get to make some great friends. Youth Exec is such a special group because to me it epitomises how the URC values its young people; empowering them to grow in their ministry and to speak out in faith about the things that matter to them. To God be all glory, honour and praise.

Comments from YA25 Will, Inclusion Activist for Frontier Youth Trust (FYT) Workshop leader

I attended the URC Youth Assembly on Saturday, 7 March. This was my first time at this event. In the run-up to the event, I was impressed by the amount of pre-information available, including pre-meet zooms and the link tree. Although this information was all aimed at youth participants, it was helpful to me as a workshop leader. The event was a demonstration of youth empowerment and voluntary participation. Young people given the opportunity to talk and vote on the things that are important to them. Participation levels in all activities seem high, but it was made clear that everything is optional, so resting, taking time out or catching up on school work are all just as valid as the programme. I was asked to deliver a workshop on creating safe spaces, the young people that joined my workshop were all keen to learn, joining in and asking questions relevant to the theme.



Jay – Youth Assembly participant

My time at YA 2025 this year was **fun**, **exciting** and **engaging**. It made my voice feel heard and **appreciated**. I spent lots of the weekend playing **games** and spending time with other people. The workshops were **interesting** and **eye opening**. I simply enjoy creating a **safe place** workshop.

The whole weekend I feel like I could be myself without being judged.



The
United
Reformed
Church Youth

2025 Youth Assembly
7-9 March at Kings Park, Northampton:
All are welcome



URC Youth Executive 2025

URC Youth Assembly Moderator – Maya Withall

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URC Youth Assembly Moderator Elect –

Kacie Hodgson urcyamodelect@urc.org.uk

URC Youth Assembly Executive & General Assembly Representative – vacant

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Equality & Diversity Representative – vacant

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Champion for Younger Youth – Eve Thomason

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Synod Representative:

Northern – Alvin Mark

North Western – Blessed Mutimwii

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Mersey – vacant

Yorkshire – vacant

East Midlands – Billy Logan

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West Midlands – Isaac Irvine

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Eastern – vacant

South Western – Jessica Gough

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Wessex – vacant

Thames North – Christine Ntim

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Southern – vacant

Wales – vacant

Scotland – Michael Smith

Ex Officio

Youth Assembly Clerk – Reuben Watt

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Chaplain – Zeerak Shahbaz

Head of Children's and Youth Work –

Sam Richards sam.richards@urc.org.uk

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Our work is made possible through the generous giving of local churches to the URC Ministry and Mission Fund. children.youth@urc.org.uk

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Youth Assembly 2025 YOUTH Perspectives Session Facilitated by Jon Steel – summary

What do young people in the URC want?

Personal discipleship – resources and support to develop prayer, deeper closeness to God, knowing God is with you in all circumstances.

More young people encouraged to become involved in leading worship in local churches.

Local churches to reach out to their local communities in new ways and show their welcome to all – opportunities for people to experience the life of the church (eg breakfasts, events with the community); encouraging pioneering; creating public art spaces (eg graffiti board on outside of church).



Local churches to reflect on their approach to diversity, and consider how to enable neurodiverse people to fully engage, including in leadership roles.

URC to engage more with technology, making resources available online and sharing Christian values on social media, facilitating people's awareness of social issues including LGBTQ+ – young people could help!

Support in understanding different views and engaging with politics and justice issues. How to take action and having resources and support to do this.

Search for URC Youth on Facebook and Instagram



See you next year!

Youth Assembly 2026
27 February to 1 March
Kings Park, Northampton
Wise Words