

26-28 January 2024  
Whitemoor Lakes



### Story, Story, Story

There are many different ways stories impact our lives, including our story with Jesus. Throughout the weekend we explored listening to others' stories and telling our own, as well as the means of receiving stories, including ears to listen, eyes to watch and mouths to speak. We hope it allowed everyone present to explore sharing their stories and encouraged them to create more stories with God in their hearts.

With a significant number of new people, Youth Assembly 2024 was a totally fresh event as well as being the last to be held at Whitemoor Lakes. With a wide range of workshops, from drama and craft (where you could create a self portrait of yourself) to short form video and Bible study, Youth Assembly offered its participants an opportunity to explore their story as well as God's story. In our numerous worship sessions, and through two amazing keynote notes from Rosalind Selby and Tessa Henry-Robinson, we were able to ponder our place in God's story but also God's place in ours, as well as what it means to be created in God's image.

There were opportunities to learn more about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with a live link up with Samuel in Jerusalem for a workshop and Bible study.



Hilarious late night entertainment by poet Harry Baker and a mix of different late night activities including Godly Play, Lego Church, sports and games, meant there was plenty to do in the evenings. The weekend came to a close with the induction of the new Youth Executive, who will pave the way for a different Youth Assembly in our new venue: Kings Park Conference Centre in Northampton.

You can enjoy the worship playlist and find Rosalind's keynote talk here:  
[www.linktr.ee/urcyouthassembly2024](http://www.linktr.ee/urcyouthassembly2024)

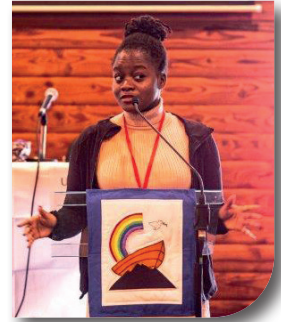


"The skills I have gained over the past two years as Mod Elect and then Moderator will serve me well going forward."

Philippa Osei, Outgoing Moderator

### Outgoing Moderator: Philippa Osei

It's the end! I am both relieved and grateful and also sad to be leaving this pivotal period of my life so far. I came to this role reluctantly, not seeing what others saw in me and how much I had to give. Through the encouragement of my friends here at Youth Assembly, I took it on and do not regret my decision.



I've done so much this year, from organising Youth Assembly to attending Greenbelt and hosting events at the youth tent. I've been to Palestine and Switzerland for ecumenical events, which have brought me closer to my faith and have expanded my mind so much.

As an executive, we have been all over the country (even to Scotland!). It's safe to say I am all travelled out! It has been an immense privilege working with my Youth Exec members, who have been my friends and supporters this entire year. I know you are going to do an amazing job next year.

I give all the glory to God who has seen me through this year and YA2024. See you next year with a blue lanyard.

Philippa Osei



## Updates on resolutions and discussions from 2023 were shared:

- Disability Awareness task group – developing conversation starters for churches to use, which will be available on the URC Education and Learning Hub later this year
- Quiet Spaces task group – worked with Alex Clare Young to create guidance on URC website: [www.urc.org.uk/your-church/family-friendly-church/](http://www.urc.org.uk/your-church/family-friendly-church/)
- Support for those affected by substance misuse and mental health awareness led to the creation of a poster for churches to download: [www.bit.ly/48d1ixN](http://www.bit.ly/48d1ixN)
- Equalities and Diversity Representatives now sit on URC Equalities Committee
- Gender and Sexual Identity Discrimination task group has established good working relationships with Open Table Network, Inclusive Church, One Body One Faith, Switchboard, Stonewall and The Proud Trust to create a resource which will go on the URC website later this year
- URC Youth helped shape the resolution passed at General Assembly 2023 affirming the human dignity of transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming people
- URC Youth worked with Mission Committee on the resolution passed at General Assembly 2023 endorsing measures for ecumenical working and resource sharing
- Youth Assembly was reminded that they now have the ability to nominate candidates for the role of General Assembly Moderator.

**“It was great to be an ecumenical guest at the URC’s youth event. Being able to share their faith was extremely powerful.”**

Willoughby Densham, Quaker Rep



Story  
STORY  
STORY

What will you discover?

[www.bit.ly/URCYouth](http://www.bit.ly/URCYouth)  
[children.youth@urc.org.uk](mailto:children.youth@urc.org.uk)  
 Search for URC Youth on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

## URC Youth Review

Youth Assembly 2022 required the Youth Executive to form a task group to review the running of the Youth Executive as well as the wider URC Youth, including racial diversity. This group was to comprise six to eight people, including a chair who was not to be a member of the URC Youth, to report back to URC Youth Assembly with their findings.



Thanks were expressed to Fran Kissack (chair) and the review group for all their work. The Review findings and recommendations were shared:

- Consider having more motions submitted in advance
- Suggest having workshops that inform debate, and having ways to explore issues outside of formal debates
- Consider whether other events are needed for URC Youth
- Consider if the role of Youth Moderator has become too big
- Suggest developing support for members of Youth Executive
- Suggest having clearer expectations of Synod Youth Representatives
- Suggest involving those outside Youth Executive more in working groups
- Recognise that racial diversity in roles is a denomination-wide issue rather than specifically URC Youth issue, and note progress made in this regard.

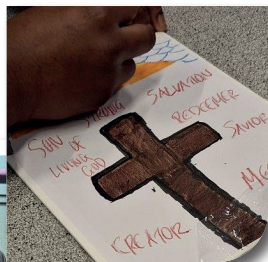
The Youth Executive have already taken the following steps:

- Encouraging motions to be submitted in advance
- Greater variety of discussion formats and opportunities, eg holding ‘cake and



debate' late night session for more open debate

- In conversation with other denominations about another youth event
- Rewritten the guidance for Synod Youth Representatives
- Will discuss responsibilities and support options with the new Youth Executive
- Improving communication between the CYDO+ team and Youth Executive
- Will be inviting non-Youth Executive to join working groups, especially those following up on motions.



## URC Youth Assembly 2024 Resolutions

**URC Youth Assembly encourages local churches to engage with Student Christian Movement's Honest Church campaign.**

Proposer – Heather Moore (Southern Synod)  
 Secunder – Daniel Raddings (Yorkshire Synod)

This motion was passed by consensus.

**Youth Assembly encourages General Assembly to request that the Mission Committee investigates and develops further connections and collaborations with just peace-focused organisations and Churches in Occupied Palestine and Israel.**

**In addition the URC encourages churches to educate congregations.**

Proposer – Philippa Osei (Thames North Synod)  
 Secunder – Jo Harris (National Synod of Wales)

This motion was passed by consensus.

**URC Youth Assembly instructs Youth Executive to work with Children and Youth**

**Work Committee to look at the roles and responsibilities of the URC Youth Assembly Moderator, and the potential for making this a paid role.**

**URC Youth Assembly also instructs Youth Executive to work with Children and Youth Work Committee to look at the roles and responsibilities of the Youth Executive.**

**URC Youth Assembly requests feedback from Youth Executive at Youth Assembly 2025 with their findings.**

Proposer – Reuben Watt (West Midlands Synod)  
 Secunder – Brandon Stein (Eastern Synod)

This motion was passed by consensus.

To find more topics and questions raised at Youth Assembly see:

[www.linktr.ee/urcyouthassembly2024](http://www.linktr.ee/urcyouthassembly2024)

## Tri-nation Event August 2023

The tri-nation event took place in August and was a seven-day residential, involving a total of 54 attendees from France, Germany, and the UK. The event included day trips to Cambridge, London, Eastbourne and Brighton.

We were based at Lee Valley and had different activities led by the leaders, which included team-building exercises;

allowing participants to mix and socialise with people from different countries.

Each evening ended with worship which was translated into English, German and French and included hymns in different languages.

Overall, it was a brilliant event, building and growing this relationship as well as sowing the seeds of faith for the future; furthering Christ's mission. It is so important that we gather at these events as one body to praise, worship and grow in faith and fellowship.



## URC Youth Executive 2024

**Moderator –**  
Heather Moore

**Moderator Elect –**  
Maya Withall

**Assembly Executive and General Assembly**

**Representative –** Jadan Turner

**Equality and Diversity Representative –** vacant

**Champion for Younger Youth –** vacant

**Northern Synod –** vacant

**North Western Synod –** TBC

**Mersey Synod –** vacant

**Yorkshire Synod –** Daniel Raddings

**East Midlands Synod –** Billy Logan

**West Midlands Synod –** Claire Kerrigan

**Eastern Synod –** TBC

**South Western Synod –** Jessica Gough

**Wessex Synod –** TBC

**Thames North Synod –** Christine Ntim

**Southern Synod –** Zeerak Shahbaz

**National Synod of Wales –** TBC

**National Synod of Scotland –** Michael Smith

**Supported by:**

**YA Clerk –** Reuben Watt

**Chaplain –** Helen Everard

**CYDO+ Trainer –** Lorraine Downer

**Head of Children's and Youth Work –** Sam Richards



## URC YOUTH ASSEMBLY 2024

### Jadan Turner (North Western) was elected Assembly Executive and General Assembly Rep

Jadan is 18 years old and currently a business admin apprentice at her local council, where she is developing skills in communication and understanding how larger organisations work.

In her spare time, she plays with a first section brass band and enjoys watching motorsports. She has attended General Assembly twice, and her confidence has grown from just being present and voting, to contributing to the discussions and asking questions.

“Having been involved with my local church and the wider Synod, I have developed a passion for the voice of the youth within the URC being heard, and to make sure that they feel empowered in the same way that I do.”

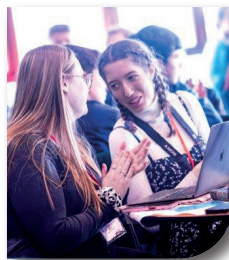
Jadan Turner, AE and GA Representative



### Maya Withall (Wessex) was elected Moderator Elect

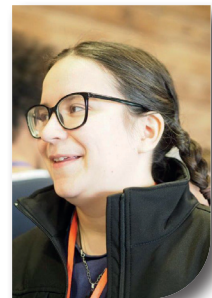
Maya is 17 years old and is studying English, Product Design and Geography. She plans to become an environmental lawyer. She became a Christian through her local Pilots Company, and has been part of the URC since she was seven. Maya has been Wessex Synod Rep on the Youth Executive for the last three years and the Green Apostle, engaging with the URC Net Zero task group and other environmental projects.

Maya enjoys reading, watching TV, and always has at least three crochet projects on the go. She can't wait to begin her work as Mod Elect with the new Youth Executive.



### New Moderator Heather Moore's plans for the next year:

“I'm thrilled to be taking over the role of Moderator for the next year. Youth Assembly moves to a later date and new venue, but this presents us with a fantastic opportunity to try new things with the programme and move the event in a new direction. In my role I also hope to strengthen our ecumenical relationships, hopefully with a new event for young people. Overall though, my hope is that Youth Assembly and other URC Youth spaces are a place where young people can gather in fellowship and grow in their relationship with God as their authentic selves.”



See you next year!

“Coming from a non-Christian background, the URC has been where I found and grew faith. I am passionate about enabling other young people to do this.”

Maya Withall, Moderator Elect

**Youth Assembly 2025**  
7 to 9 March  
Kings Park, Northampton  
All are welcome