



The  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

**EGLWYS DDIWYGIEDIG UNEDIG  
SYNOD CENEDLAETHOL CYMRU  
THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
NATIONAL SYNOD OF WALES**

## **SYNOD MEETING**

**AUTUMN 2023**

**Saturday 14 October 2023, 11 am – 3.30 pm**

**Held in person at the Priory Centre, Abergavenny and on Zoom**

**Attendance:** 51 people were present at the meeting and 18 on zoom

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Julia Bartholomew (Rhos-on-sea URC), Stephen Best (Chaplain to the Synod Office), Claire Boot (Synod Property Officer), Jennifer Cox (Ebenezer), Judith Dolben (Salisbury Park), Revd Richard Gillion (Trinity, Porthcawl), Louise Gough (Sketty), Lyn Oelmann (Cwmbran), Wendy Roberts (Sardis), Malcolm Shapland (Bethany, Ystrad Mynach), Revd Nick Sissons (St Paul's United, Penmaenmawr), Verena Walder (Tabernacle, Mumbles), Vivien Williams (Trinity, Llanidloes), Kate Wolsey (Ministerial Student)

**Ecumenical apologies were noted from:**

Major Roger Batt (Salvation Army), Revd Mark Fairweather-Tall (South Wales Baptist Association), Judith Morris (Baptist Union of Wales), Revd Nan Powell-Davis (Presbyterian Church of Wales)

1. **Opening Worship and Commemorations**

Opening Worship was led by Maggie Kirkbride (Lay Preaching Advocate).

2. **Recognition for Locally Recognised Worship Leaders**

Maggie Kirkbride announced that 5 people from North Wales had applied for recognition as Locally Recognised Worship Leaders. They had all completed the Stepwise Faith Filled Life and Faith Filled Worship courses, completed assessed services and some other necessary work to complete their applications.

They were:

Sheila Kavanagh - Rivertown

Doreen Jennifer Jones -Horeb, Dyserth

Carolyn Ridding -Rhos-on-sea

Donna Jones- Mold

Peter Fawcett – Rhos-on-sea

They will be presented with their certificates in services in their area in December.

### 3. **Introductions and Notices**

#### **The following ecumenical guests were welcomed:**

Revd Dr Noel Davies	Undeb yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg
Revd Siôn Brynach	Cytûn
Parch Jeff Williams	Undeb yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg (President)
Andrew Kleissner	South Wales Baptist Association
Revd Dr Ian Morris	Methodist Church, Synod Cymru
Anna Jane Evans	Presbyterian Church of Wales (Zoom)
Venerable Alan Jevons	Church in Wales
Tim Moody	Baptist Union of Wales
Captain Kathryn Stowers	Salvation Army
Christine Trevett	Religious Society of Friends

#### **Elders who have died since last Synod Meeting:**

Patrick Hickey	City URC
Denzil Jeremy	Keyston Chapel
Margaret Jones	Tyddyn Street, Mold
Millie McQuade	Canton Uniting Church
Mervyn Phillips	Tyddyn Street, Mold

#### **Ministerial anniversaries:**

Alan Luther Willcocks	60 years
Keith Edmund Jones	55 years
Marc Emlyn Dummer	40 years
Peter Clive Noble	40 years
Arnold Seth Brown	30 years
Ruth Whitehead	30 years
John Hayton	25 years
Stella Catherine Hayton	20 years

#### **Appointments within the Synod:**

Maggie Kirkbride	Administration Officer
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#### **Elders Ordained since last Synod Meeting:**

Richard Edge	Canton Uniting Church
Eva Elliott	Canton Uniting Church
Alison Lintern Gittens	City URC
Alison Price (Treasurer)	Bethany, Ystrad Mynach
Emma Thorpe	City URC
Maggie Kirkbride	Stow Park

#### **4. Announcement of New Moderator**

Megan Price was pleased to announce that the Revd David Salsbury had been nominated to serve as the Moderator of National Synod of Wales and he had accepted that nomination. He then spoke to the meeting.

#### **5. Emergency Resolution on Israel and Palestine**

Resolution X was proposed by Jo Harris and passed unanimously

##### **Resolution X:**

**The United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales expresses concern and condemns all acts of violence and retaliation. We stand for peace and unity and pray for the victims of the attacks in Israel and Palestinian - victims caught in the violent crossfire of retaliation. We echo the words of our Christian siblings - The Patriarchs and Heads of churches in Jerusalem:**

**As custodians of the Christian faith, deeply rooted in the Holy Land, we stand in solidarity with the people of this region, who are enduring the devastating consequences of continued strife. Our faith, which is founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ, compels us to advocate for the cessation of all violent and military activities that bring harm to both Palestinian and Israeli civilians...**

**It is our fervent hope and prayer that all parties involved will heed this call for an immediate cessation of violence. We implore political leaders and authorities to engage in sincere dialogue, seeking lasting solution that promote justice, peace, and reconciliation for the people of this land, who have endured the burdens of conflict for far too long.**

#### **6. Minutes of the Autumn 2023 Synod Meeting at the Hotel Metropole, Llandrindod Wells**

The minutes of the meeting held on zoom, on Saturday 18 March 2023 were approved with one amendment (Malcolm Shapland had nominated Martha McInnes in Item 12) and signed as a true record.

#### **7. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Nominations Report was approved in full with the following amendments.

Assembly Executive attendees:

Megan Price

Chris Atherton

Martha McInnes

Maggie Kirkbride

The following people whose terms expire this year have agreed to serve an additional term:

Finance and Property Board

Sheila Jones  
Alison Tansom

Mission and Discipleship Board

Julia Bartholomew  
Judith Dolben

Commission of Covenanted Churches

Pat Davies

**8. Finance and Property Board/URC (Wales) Trust Company**

**2022 Accounts**

Chris Atherton, Trust Company Secretary and Synod Treasurer, presented the 2022 accounts.

Resolution 2 was passed unanimously.

**Resolution 2:**

**Synod Meeting receives the accounts for 2022.**

**2024 Budget**

Chris Atherton presented the 2024 Budget, which was approved unanimously.

**Resolution 3:**

**Synod Meeting approves the Budget for 2024.**

**9. Synod Ecumenical and Inter-faith Strategy**

Martin Spain introduced the strategy to the meeting. He thanked all those who had contributed with comments. This document has been prepared to be used as a source document for churches to refer to when guidance is needed.

Resolution 1, was passed unanimously:

**Resolution 1**

**Ecumenical and Inter-faith strategy**

**Synod Meeting approves and adopts the Synod Ecumenical and Interfaith Strategy**

**10. General Assembly**

Megan Price explained about the visit to General Assembly (GA) this year. 16 people from the Synod attended, and there will be a video produced to explain what goes on for the benefit of churches to understand the process.

Next year's GA will be held at The Hayes conference Centre in Derbyshire from 12-15 July 2024. In Appendix G of the Meeting Papers is a nomination form for Moderator of General Assembly.

Resolutions from GA were read out:

Resolution 31: Poverty and Inequality in the UK

Resolution 73: Illegal Migration Bill

Resolution 21a/b/c/d: Affirming the human dignity of transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming people

### **11. Church Life Review**

Megan Price outlined the Church Life Review which was created by Mission Council and resulted in the THEOS booklet that was circulated to all churches earlier in the year. Penrhys was one church that was used as an example in the review. From this review came several papers to GA including Safer Recruitment and others. A PLATO book is available to help with templates. Resource sharing is to be encouraged both locally and nationally. There is an acceptance that Lay work is now needed even more to relieve the load on Ministers of The Word and Sacraments in our churches.

### **12. Children and Young People – events and resources**

Judy Harris announced that there are Advent resources available.

Holiday club resources will be available from January 2024

Youth Assembly was noted, it was important in helping young people feel less isolated.

URC Children are holding 2 events in Cardiff and Swansea. They are fun days with circus skills, games, food and cake.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November at Canton Uniting Church 10am – 3.30pm

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at Christ Well URC 10am – 3.30pm

### **Safeguarding and Good Practice 6**

Diana Taylor advised Synod that Good Practice 6 is now ready and paper copies will be sent out to all churches. There were a lot of appendices attached the Good Practice 5 and these are now available as resources. Some of the resources are in Welsh language. Diana advised churches that if they are in need of any help in regard to safeguarding, to contact her. Various issues such as mental health, cost of living, NHS may be challenging but she can highlight training to help deal with these. Mental Health First Aid training is available from Judy Harris.

### **13. Eco Synod update**

Eileen Newington was pleased that the National Synod of Wales had been achieved the Bronze Award. This has been attained through a lot of hard work throughout the Synod. The Synod Office had achieved a Silver Award. Eileen was grateful to Claire Boot, Chris Atherton and Judy Harris for all their help in working for these awards. The Bronze Award has also been achieved by City URC, Cwmbran URC and Dan Y Graig, Risca. A single-use plastic ban is coming in to force soon and churches need to check their cupboards and store rooms for these and ensure they are discarded or used before 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

Eileen identified various letters and campaigns that churches can sign up to, please contact her for more information. Christian aid particularly are wanting to mobilise churches to contact their MPs and lobby for action at COP28.

**14. Reports to Synod**

**Nominations Report**

No report was received.

**15. Closing Worship**

Led by Megan Price

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