



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

**Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig
Synod Cenedlaethol Cymru
The United Reformed Church
National Synod of Wales**

Spring Synod Meeting

**Saturday 3rd March 2018
Pavilion Mid Wales, Spa Road,
Llandrindod Wells LD1 5EY**

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1. Notices for the Day

1.1 **Directions:**

By rail:

Llandrindod Wells railway station is on the Heart of Wales Line which runs between Swansea and Shrewsbury. From the station it is less than ten minutes on foot to Pavilion Mid Wales by walking along Station Crescent, Middleton Street and Spa Road.

By road:

Pavilion Mid Wales is very well sign-posted from the A483 (the main north-south road through Llandrindod Wells). Access is along Spa Road (A4081) which is one way (heading north-westwards). Turn left off Spa Road immediately before The Church of the Holy Trinity and the Grand Pavilion will be seen immediately ahead.

1.2 **Car Parking**

There is free car parking on site, in front of Pavilion Mid Wales, along the access road leading to the Bowling Club and behind the Bowling Club itself. If the onsite parking should be full, there is additional parking available in the town centre (continue up Spa Road and turn right at the top into Park Crescent). There is a charge for town centre parking which can be reclaimed by using your expenses claim form.

1.3 **Food and Drink**

Please bring a packed lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided on arrival and during the lunch break.

1.4 **Young People**

Arrangements are being made for a parallel session for young people at this meeting. If you are planning to bring any young people to Synod Meeting, please contact Judy Harris so that the necessary arrangements can be put in place (cydo@urcwales.org.uk).

1.5 **Visitors**

Everyone is welcome to attend and participate in the Synod Meeting, although only members of Synod will be able to vote.

1.6 **On Arrival**

- a) **For Synod representatives:** Please collect a name badge, a printed copy of the Synod papers (if you require one) and an expenses form. You may claim the cost of public transport, or car travel at 25p per mile. Please travel with others if possible. Please complete your expenses form with your bank details and leave it in the box before you leave: payment will be made electronically

soon afterwards. If you would like the Synod to claim Gift Aid on your expenses, please complete the section on the reverse of the form. Please exchange your attendance card for a voting card, which should be returned at the end of the meeting.

- b) For visitors: Please collect a name badge and a printed copy of the Synod papers (if you require one).

1.7 **Photographic Permission**

Permission is required for any photographs taken during Synod meeting to be shared. Forms for this purpose will be given out as necessary.

1.8 **2018 Year Book**

There will be mailings for churches and Ministers to collect containing the 2018 Synod Year Book.

1.9 **Forthcoming Synod Meetings are as follows:**

Saturday 20th October 2018	Pavilion Mid Wales, Llandrindod Wells
Saturday 2nd March 2019	to be arranged
Saturday 29th June 2019	'Big Day Out' Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground
Saturday 19th October 2019	to be arranged



2. Agenda

It would be helpful to those involved – but by no means essential – if any questions on the reports could be supplied in advance to the Synod Clerk.

- 10.15am** **Gathering and Refreshments**
- 11am** **Worship, including the Induction of the Revd Gareth Dyer as Training and Development Officer (South), led by Simon Walkling**
- Commemorations and Ministerial Anniversaries**
- Introductions and Notices**
- Minutes of Autumn 2017 Synod Meeting (<https://goo.gl/C2RE1c>)**
- Matters Arising from the Minutes**
- Bible Study, led by the Revd John Proctor, General Secretary**
- Stepwise**
- Christ Well, Swansea: Alzheimer’s Friendly Church and Memory Choir**
- God Bless the NHS: Cross-Wales Walk, Phil Wall**
(see <http://godblessthenhs.org.uk/>)
- Local Churches and Personal Data**
(see <https://urc.org.uk/GDPR.html>)
- 1pm** **Lunch**
- 2pm** **Racial Justice Advocate, Beverley Humphreys**
- Synod Priorities**
- Walking the Way: Living the life of Jesus today**
(see <https://www.urc.org.uk/our-work/walking-the-way.html>)
- Reports to Synod**
- 3.30pm** **Closing Worship led by Simon Walkling**

3. Synod Officers' Meeting

3.1 The new Synod Officers' Meeting met for the first time on Wednesday 17th January 2018.

3.2 **Synod Purpose, Priorities and Strategy**

A process of consultation aimed at updating the current Synod Priorities has commenced.

3.3 **Mutual Accountability**

Officers considered how they could be accountable to each other, and ensure that individual work plans reflect the purpose and priorities of the Synod.

3.4 **Candidacy and Vocations**

The need for opportunities for people within the Synod to consider vocations (whether to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments, Church Related Community Work Ministry, Lay preaching, Lay leadership, or other expressions of ministry) is recognised.

3.5 **Communications**

Whilst reviewing the Synod Newsletter at each meeting, the Officers have commissioned work on a Synod Communications Strategy for its next meeting.

3.6 **General Assembly 2018**

The following will represent the National Synod of Wales at General Assembly (Friday 6th – Monday 9th July 2018):

Ministerial	Lay
Jason Askew	Chris Atherton
Adrian Bulley	Judith Dolben
Ian Kirby	Jo Harris (<26)
Kathryn Price	Isobel Henson (<26)
Branwen Rees	Victoria Turner (<26)

3.7 **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding practice is reviewed at each meeting.

3.8 **Nominations**

The up-to-date (at the time of the compilation of these papers) report of Nominations is included at [Appendix A](#).

3.9 **Nomination of Moderators of General Assembly 2020-2022**

No nominations were received by the deadline of Friday 5th January.

3.10 **Synod Moderator Review Panel**

The Synod Review Panel completed its work in December and submitted its report to the General Secretary for the consideration of the Assembly Review Panel. The Assembly Review Panel is scheduled to meet in Cardiff on Wednesday 14th February. A verbal report of their conclusions and recommendations will be given to Synod Meeting.



4. Synod Pastoral Committee

4.1 The Synod Pastoral Committee is scheduled to meet for the first time on Tuesday 13th March 2018. This report covers matters from the final Synod Elders' Meeting, held on 5th December 2017.

4.2 **Synod Elders**

The Synod is grateful to all those who have served as Synod Elders over the nine years of their operation.

4.3 **Training and Development Officer (South)**

Following advertising in November/December 2017, six applications were received. After shortlisting and interviews, the post was offered to the Revd Gareth Dyer who has subsequently accepted and will commence in post in mid-April. Gareth is a Baptist Minister with extensive experience both of local ministry and of education and

training, including a Post Graduate Certificate in Education for Lifelong Learning. Gareth will be inducted as part of the opening worship at Synod Meeting.

4.4 **Concurrence** has been given to:

- a) The call of the Revd Sue Fender to Hartlepool and Teesdale in the Northern Synod.
- b) The call of the Revd Peter Noble to a 50% ministry at Llanfair, Penrhys for three years effective 1st December 2017. The Induction took place on Monday 29th January 2018.
- c) The call of Mrs Rosie Buxton to the Huddersfield CRCW Post in the Yorkshire Synod.
- d) The call of the Revd Branwen Rees as East Wales Regional Minister with Cwmbran, Pontnewynydd and Ynysddu. The Induction is to take place on Saturday 21st April 2018.

4.5 **Reviews** have been completed for:

- a) The Revd Daniel Yoo (Non-stipendiary Minister – Hanover, Llanover)
- b) The Revd Stephen Best (Non-stipendiary Minister – Cardiff Transitional Team and Bethesda, Tongwynlais)
- c) Mr Phil Rickards (Lay Leader – Edwardsville)
- d) The Revd Brian Matthews (Minister – Presbyterian Church of Wales – Salisbury Park URC, Wrexham.

4.6 **A More Able Church?**

Qualitative interviews have been completed with ten people in ministry (serving and retired) within the National Synod of Wales. The results of those interviews have been analysed and reflected upon by the More Able Church Steering Group. Further questions have now been asked of a sample of local churches and chapels within the Synod as part of a mapping exercise. The reflections from phase one are currently being tested with those in ministry in other Synods.

4.7 **Synod Mission Projects**

Agreement has been given to a paper that proposed that, where a remaining congregation is unable to sustain the organisation of being a fully-fledged United Reformed Church, it might – under certain circumstances, and when the situation meets certain criteria – be possible for the church to become a Synod Mission Project.

4.8 **The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

Consideration has been given to the terms of the GDPR, which comes into effect in the United Kingdom on 25th May 2018, and the

implications for local churches. Advice and materials for local churches, prepared in consultation with others by the Deputy General Secretary (Admin and Resources) have been produced and are available from the URC website (see <https://urc.org.uk/GDPR.html>). The materials were circulated to church secretaries, treasurers and serving Ministers within the Synod in early February.

In terms of the Synod's own holding of personal data, a Data Privacy Statement has been compiled in compliance with the GDPR. This document has been made widely available through the Synod website (see <https://goo.gl/GEAjAJ>) and the Synod Newsletter, by e-mail and letter.



5. Mission and Discipleship Board

- 5.1 The new Mission and Discipleship Board is scheduled to meet for the first time on Thursday 26th April 2018.

6. Finance and Property Board and Trust Company

Synod Treasurer

6.1 Mission Development Fund

FPB approved the following grant applications: £20,000 for the outreach project at Stow Park, Newport; £20,000 for the United Church in Rhyl to develop the next 3 years of work at the ASK Centre; £5,500 for the trial run of the Creative Arts Project at St John's Tenby; and an emergency Health and Safety grant of £1000 approved for Christchurch, Fairwater. Work continues to support the *Heart of Senghenydd* project. It was agreed that the funds held within the MDF for emergency Health and Safety works would be moved into a separate investment account with any accrued interest returned to the MDF.

6.2 Jessie Munroe Fund

FPB noted that a grant of £384.40 had been awarded by the local management committee to provide a presence at the Pembroke Show.

6.3 Livingstone Trust Fund

One grant of £1,936.76 was awarded to cover eligible expenses incurred in a visit to South Africa.

6.4 Charity Commission new guidelines for Independent Examiners

These have been advertised via the Synod Newsletter.

6.5 Synod Support for Church Building Projects

In the interests of clarity and transparency, the accountants had recommended this document necessary for related party transactions. FPB and Trust approved the paper which is available on request from the Trust and Property Officer (trust@urcwales.org.uk).

6.6 A paper on **Synod Mission Projects** was commended by FPB and Trust

6.7 FPB approved the financial viability of creating a 50% lay post for the **Training and Development Officer South** (TDOS) and confirmed that the 2018 budget had the capacity to cover costs; and approved underwriting the expenses associated with a 50% scoped post at **Penrhys** for three years from 2018

Trust Company Secretary

6.8 Energy Act 2011

A minimum energy efficiency standard will be required where any church is letting a manse. An Energy Performance Certificate to band E is necessary.

6.9 Custodial Funds:

Trust approved the request from **Bailey Street, Brynmawr** to release funds to cover 2 years of Ministerial expenses subject to a commitment to produce Mission plan outcomes before release of the balance.

A further request from **Senghenydd and Abertridwr URC** to release fund to church was received. It was agreed that this would be considered once a viable project had been evidenced. A letter of comfort to confirm match funding available from the Church could be provided for submission to potential partners and funders.

Trust approved the release of £2,849 to **Tabernacle, Holywell** for purchase of a Digital Hymnal and installation of energy efficient lighting with further details to be provided for cost of storage cupboards and new Notice Board

6.10 Trust approved formal resolutions provided by Geldards regarding **Wallace Family Bequest; Star Street Fund and Revd John Morris Charity**; to enable the funds to be released.

6.11 Employment Matters

Trust approved the appointment of Revd Gareth Dyer to the post of **TDOS** subject to satisfactory references, and was asked to issue a contract.

It was agreed to explore the adoption of **Personal Development Reviews** for Synod Officers and staff employed by Trust.

Further work was agreed to consider the creation of a new, combined **Trust Secretary and Synod Treasurer** voluntary position.

6.12 The following **transactions** have been completed by the URC (Wales) Trust Co Ltd:
Covenant on 7 Greenhill Avenue, Tenby

Property Officer

6.13 North Wales

Northop URC held a closing service on 5th November 2017. Wales and West HA have conducted a feasibility study on the land and are progressing plans to purchase the site for affordable housing development.

6.14 East Wales

FPB and Trust declared the manse at **24 Tone Close, Bettws** redundant and directed the Trust to dispose of it. Sale of land at **Libanus, Ebbw Vale** was approved, subject to receipt of church resolution.

6.15 South Wales

FPB and Trust approved the request from **Beulah, Cardiff** to re-let the

manse

City URC 's resolution to renew Rights to 33 Windsor Place for a 20 year term was approved

The manse at **8 Barquentine Place, Cardiff** was declared redundant and will be sold

6.16 **Swansea**

Uniting Church in Sketty resolved to declare the **Bethel URC** site redundant. FPB approved, subject to receipt of resolution and Trust directed to take forward disposal.

6.17 **Pembrokeshire**

Tabernacle, Pembroke held a Rededication Service in December 2017 to celebrate completion of building works.

6.18 **Mid Wales**

Consequent upon the decision to discontinue the post of Rural Officer FPB and Trust approved disposal of the manse at **2 Pentrosfa Road, Llandrindod Wells**.

6.19 **Synod Manse Policy**

This will be reviewed recognising a need to consider incorporating a House for Duty policy and capital and maintenance work required on properties held for Synod appointed posts.

6.20 **Synod Property Committee**

Form 3A issued 20 October 2017 to **Tabernacle, Llanvaches** to replace boiler and install new radiators

7. Ecumenical Officer

- 7.1 Whenever I am asked to meet with churches to offer support in exploring the potential for an ecumenical partnership, which isn't often enough but that's another matter, I always begin with 'why'? - why are you considering this? I stress that the prime reason should always be a shared vision for mission and engaging with their community. Sometimes, thankfully, it is but there are also times when the move is driven by lack of resources, human and financial, to continue separately. This can and sometimes does have a positive outcome but I would suggest it is not the wisest starting point. I have always and will always encourage churches to be turned outward, to look beyond their buildings to the needs of their community and whether joining as one will be a means to better engaging with this. That is not to suggest for one moment that churches ever 'take' Jesus to their wider community. Rather we meet Jesus who is already active there, beyond the limits of any formal structure and who wants us there as well.
- 7.2 This was brought home to me on my recent sabbatical visit to South Africa where I was invited for the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. A minister friend there spoke and summed up mission in one succinct sentence - 'Mission is being relevant to your community'. Of course, aspiring to this doesn't necessarily require joining with other churches, nor does it preclude working together creatively in informal ways. The point is, when we sometimes feel weary and daunted by the challenge, sharing with others can realise energy and enthusiasm that enables us to more creatively fulfil our potential. As a well-known African proverb I am fond of quoting puts it,
- If you want to go fast, go alone;
if you want to go far, go together*
- 7.3 Now that I am back there is much to catch up with and a busy time ahead, not least our new Synod structure. I'm optimistic that the new Mission and Discipleship Board will encourage, inspire and support all our churches in their missional journeys.
- 7.4 One thing that relates to this which I am aware we do not have a full picture of is how many of you host other congregations. Many of our buildings are used for worship by other churches, often ethnic minority ones and usually on a Sunday afternoon or evening. If this is you, could you please let me know. Working with the Racial Justice Network for Wales, we're hoping to map these and encourage stronger relationships.

- 7.5 I'm pleased to report that Cytûn has now advertised for the post of Faith, Order and Witness Facilitator which will include time working with the Commission of Covenanted Churches as we wrestle with the challenges of interchangeability of ministry and organising the ecumenical presence at the Urdd, Royal Welsh Show and National Eisteddfod.
- 7.6 I continue to represent us on the Interfaith Council for Wales and would like this to have a higher priority. If any of you are involved with an interfaith group or recognise the potential for starting one, I would be very happy to attend a meeting.
- 7.7 As we prepare to meet in March I am encouraged by the number of ecumenical guests who will be with us and look forward to gaining from their wisdom and insight.

Appendix A: Nominations Report

Synod Officers

Synod Moderator

Simon Walkling

2012 – 2019

Synod Clerk

Adrian Bulley

2015 –

Synod Treasurer

Chris Atherton

2017 – 2019

Ecumenical Officer

Sally Thomas

2017 – 2019

Training and Development Officer (North)

David Salisbury

2015 – 2020

Training and Development Officer (South)

Gareth Dyer

2018 –

Children and Youth Development Officer (CYDO)

Judy Harris

2014 –

Synod Office Staff

Moderator's PA, Office Manager and Cashier

Helen Stenson

Trust and Property Officer

Suzanne Cole

Finance Assistant

Gaynor Morgan

Meetings Support

Fiona Ryder

Synod Boards and Committees

The Synod Moderator and Synod Clerk are ex-officio members of all Boards and Committees

Synod Pastoral Committee

Representatives of Regional Pastoral Committees:

North Wales	David Salsbury
East Wales	Branwen Rees (w.e.f. 4/2018)
Cardiff and Penarth	<i>vacancy</i>
Valleys and Vale	SPI Lewis
Swansea	Neil Riches
Pembrokeshire	Mollie Neate (interim only)
Mid Wales	Brian Clarke (interim only)
Bridgend United Area	Jason Askew
Usk/Wye	Derek Price

Ex officio

Training and Development Officer (North)

Training and Development Officer (South)

Ecumenical Officer

Lay Preaching Officer

Finance and Property Board

Convener Ian Lloyd-Parry 2008 – 2019

Secretary Trust and Property Officer

Members:

Sheila Jones

Lyn Oelmann

Graham Powell

Liz Tadd

Ex officio

Synod Treasurer

Office Manager and Cashier

Trust Company Secretary

Trust and Property Officer

Ecumenical Officer

Mission and Discipleship Board

Convener	Kathryn Price	2018 – 2020
Secretary	David Poulton	2018 – 2020
Northern College (co-opted)	Graham Adams	

Members:

Judith Dolben
Sarah Edwards
Paul Robinson
Daniel Yoo

Ex officio

Training and Development Officer (North)
Training and Development Officer (South)
Ecumenical Officer
Children and Youth Development Officer
Representative to URC Mission Committee
TLS (Stepwise) Co-ordinator

Synod Office Management Group

Synod Clerk (Convener)
Office Manager (Secretary)
Synod Treasurer
Trust Company Secretary

Line Managers' Meeting

Synod Moderator (Convener)
Together with those in the Synod with line management responsibilities for officers and staff.

Listed Buildings Advisory Committee

Convener and Secretary	Colin Grimes
Members:	Susan Clayton
	Brian Hawker
	David McLees

Ex-officio

Trust and Property Officer

Other Appointments

Lay Preaching Officer	Richard Edwards	2018 – 2020
Synod Medical Officer	David Whyler	2002 –

To General Assembly Councils/Committees/Panels, etc.

Mission Council Representatives	Synod Moderator	
	Synod Clerk	
	Phil Wall	2018 – 2020
	Barbara Jones	2015 – 2018
Nominations Committee	Synod Clerk	
Mission Committee	Branwen Rees	2018 – 2020
Listed Buildings Advisory Cttee	Trust and Property Officer	
Joint Panel (Disciplinary)	Martin Spain	2010 – 2018
	Linda Elliott	2014 – 2018

To other URC networks, etc.

Health and Healing Adviser	Samantha Caton	2014 – 2018
Silence and Retreats	Paula Parish-Foley	2014 – 2018
Global Partners Rep	<i>vacancy</i>	
Rural Church Advocate	<i>vacancy</i>	
Racial Justice Advocate	Beverley Humphreys	2016 – 2019
PLATO	Trust and Property Officer	
Safe Church Adviser	Diane Moverley	2010 – 2018
Safeguarding Officer (C&YP)	CYDO	
Safeguarding Officer (Vul Adults)	David Whyler	2010 – 2018
URC Youth Representative	Jo Harris	
Pilots Officer	Judy Harris	
TLS Co-ordinator	Irene Clarkson	(until TLS ends)
Stepwise Co-ordinator	<i>vacancy</i>	

To wider Church in Wales

Christian Aid	Diane Moverley	2017 – 2020
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URC (Wales) Trust Company Limited

Convener	Ian Lloyd Parry
Company Secretary	Chris Atherton
Assistant Secretary	Trust and Property Officer
Trustees:	<u>Trust Appointed:</u>
	Colin Grimes
	Ian Lloyd-Parry
	Liz Tadd
	Sandra Wallace
	<u>Synod Appointed:</u>
	Ian Kirby 2018 – 2020
	Lesley Mower-Hill 2018 – 2020
	Ian Summers 2018 – 2020
	<i>vacancy</i>

Synod Representatives to Joint Synod Panel (Ministerial Discipline)

Co-ordinator:	Synod Clerk
Members:	Pat Davies
	Allan Morgan
	Ian Lloyd Parry
	Judith Negus

Synod Panel for Interviewing Ministerial Candidates

Co-ordinators:	Training and Development Officer (North)
	Training and Development Officer (South)
Members:	Kathryn Price
	Christine Roberts
	Jill Shelton

Ecumenical Appointments Made by Synod

Commission of Covenanting Churches	Synod Moderator
	Ecumenical Officer
	<i>vacancy</i>
Cytûn Trustee	Synod Moderator
Cytûn Racial Justice Network	Beverley Humphreys 2016 – 2019
Cytûn Wales and Europe Working Party	Peter Noble 2018 – 2020

URC/PCW Liaison Group	Synod Moderator	
	Ecumenical Officer	
	Brian Clarke	2018 – 2020
URC/Methodist Liaison Group	Chris Atherton	2015 – 2018
	SPI Lewis	2018 – 2020
	Synod Moderator	
URC/Methodist Liaison Group	Ecumenical Officer	
	Jason Askew	2018 – 2020
URC/Methodist Liaison Group	Colin Harrison	2016 – 2018
	Synod Moderator	
Church in Wales Governing Body	Ecumenical Officer	
Covenanted Baptists	Ecumenical Officer	
Union of Welsh Independents	Ecumenical Officer (appointed by Gen Sec)	