

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

**Minutes of the ninety-third meeting of the National Synod of Wales of the  
United Reformed Church held on Saturday 14th October 2017  
at Pavilion Mid-Wales, Spa Road, Llandrindod Wells**

**Attendance:**

Attendance cards returned indicated: 81 people present.

Of these, 58 were voting members (31 church representatives, 11 serving ministers, 2 CRCWs, 10 Synod Post Holders, 0 Co-opted and 4 ecumenical guests) and 23 were non-voting attendees (2 retired ministers and 21 visitors).

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Revd Jason Askew, (Bridgend United Area), Revd Julia Bartholomew (Bay of Colwyn Pastorate), Revd Stephen Best (Cardiff + Tongwynlais), Revd Sam Caton (Transitional Minister), Revd Phil Challis (Barry), Pat Davies (LLMB), Mike Dugdale, (Tyddyn Street, Mold), Revd Colin Foreman (Retired Minister), Revd Teddy Kalongo (Bridgend United Area), Revd Shelagh Pollard (Retired Minister), Revd Gethin Rhys (Cytûn), Malcolm Scott (Tabernacle, Holywell), Revd Malcolm Shapland (Retired Minister), Revd Martin Spain (Landsker Pastorate), Phil Tuckett, (Elfed Avenue, Penarth), Verena Walder (Tabernacle, Mumbles) and Mair Weigh, (St. John's, Buckley).

**Apologies were noted from the following ecumenical guests:**

Denise Harris	Roman Catholic Church
Jennie Hurd	Methodist Church, Synod Cymru
Marcus Robinson	PCW
Stephen Wigley	The Methodist Church in Wales

**1. Opening Worship was led by the Moderator.**

During the course of worship the following elders who had died since the last Synod Meeting were remembered:

Geoff Cooper	Carmarthen Road, Swansea
Lew Day	St. John's, Tenby
Phillip Edwards	Beulah, Cardiff
Myfanwy Higgins	United Church, Rhyl
Anne Hughes	Beulah, Cardiff

Getta Jarrold	Castle Street, Abergavenny
Idris Jones	Canton Uniting, Cardiff
Lilian Llewellyn	Beulah, Cardiff
Pauline Esme Morgan	Ebeneser, Pontnewynydd
Dennis Richards	Beulah, Cardiff
John Richards	Tyddyn Street, Mold
Betty Smith	Temple, Gowerton
Roy Wallace	Rhos-on-Sea
Enid Williams	St. David's Uniting Church, Pontypridd

## 2. Introductions and Notices

The following ecumenical guests were welcomed:

Patrick Fitzgerald-Lombard	Roman Catholic Church
Brian Matthews	Presbyterian Church of Wales
Ian Morris	Methodist Church, Synod Cymru
Phillip Poynor	The Methodist Church in Wales
Sandra Ward	Church in Wales
Jeff Williams	Union of Welsh Independents

It was noted that **the Revd Dr Robert Pope** had moved from the University of Wales Trinity St. David's a teaching role at Westminster College, Cambridge.

The following Elders had been Ordained since the last meeting of Synod:

Sheree Daly	United Church in Rhyl
Valerie Dayton	Cwmbran
Joan Jones	United Church in Rhyl
Sian Jones	Canton Uniting, Cardiff
Steve Phillips	Canton Uniting, Cardiff
Barbara Reece	Cwmbran

The Synod Clerk drew attention to:

- a) Bookstall and Fairtrade Stall.
- b) Mailings available for collection by local churches.
- c) 2018 Synod Year Book, which will be issued in Spring 2018.
- d) General Assembly 2018: Invitation extended for those who would like to be part of the Synod cohort to General Assembly to be with the Synod Clerk by 31st December 2017.
- e) Nominations invited from churches for Moderators of General Assembly 2020-22 by 31st December 2017 (see pages 32-34 of the

Synod Reports).

### 3. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Minutes of the meetings held on Saturdays 4th, 11th and 25th March, and that held on Saturday 1st April 2017 were approved without amendment and signed as a true record.

### 4. **Matters Arising**

None.

### 5. **Revised Synod Structure**

Following comments and clarifications, the following Resolution was passed by consensus:

#### **Resolution 1:**

**Synod Meeting adopts the revised structure outlined in Reports to Synod and asks that the new structure be reviewed by the appropriate body three years from implementation.**

The Moderator thanked Adrian Bulley and all those who have been involved in the consultation process. Subsequent to Resolution 1 being passed, Resolution 1a was also passed by consensus:

#### **Resolution 1a:**

**Synod Meeting appoints the Revd Kathryn Price as Convener of the Mission and Discipleship Board for three years with effect from 1st January 2018.**

Kathryn Price drew attention to the need for someone to fill the role of Mission and Discipleship Board Secretary – any suggestions/nominations to be sent to the Synod Clerk by e-mail.

### 6. **Walking the Way**

Kathryn Price gave a presentation about Walking the Way. Kathryn drew attention to resources available: leaflets, a book entitled: 'Holy Habits' and on the URC website ([www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk)), prayers and short films are available for download. KP reported there will be a gathering for ministers in April 2018 and spoke about the new 'Stepwise' training scheme which will replace Training for Learning and Serving (TLS) and will be particularly suited to those wanting to step forward and take on a leadership role in their church. There is a Walking the Way Steering Group

and Simon Peters has been appointed Walking the Way Co-ordinator, starting his appointment in the New Year. The Steering Group invites sharing of ideas/questions from churches.

## **7. Finance and Property Board and Trust Company**

### **Resolution 2:**

**Synod Meeting receives the accounts for 2016 as summarised in Appendix A.**

Chris Atherton highlighted that for the third year running there has been a small surplus, which has improved the medium term performance. There being no questions, Resolution 2 was passed unanimously.

### **Resolution 3:**

**Synod Meeting approves the Budget for the Synod General Fund for 2018 as set out in Appendix B.**

CA presented a positive overview of the Synod General Fund for 2018 and highlighted the key contribution of Inter Synod Resource Sharing. There were no questions. Resolution 3 was passed unanimously.

### **Resolution 4:**

**Synod Meeting approves the Budget for the Synod Training Fund for 2018 as set out in Appendix B.**

Resolution 4 was passed unanimously.

### **Resolution 5:**

**Synod Meeting Synod approves the amendment of the Mission Development Fund policy to increase grants from £10,000 to a maximum of £20,000 over a two year period.**

This Resolution encourages churches to respond to mission initiatives and enables the Synod as 'parent body' to increase its support and improve match funding potential. Resolution 5 was passed by consensus.

## **8. Churches Mutual Credit Union**

Chris Atherton gave a presentation about the Churches Mutual Credit Union: a simple, fair and affordable means of both saving and obtaining credit. CA invited attendees to further explore the Churches Mutual Credit Union website: <http://cmcu.org.uk> which provides information

about membership. CA reported that URC Wales Synod is considering investing as a corporate saver. Hard copies of information are available from CA if required.

## 9. Eco Church

Alison Holland gave a presentation about the A Rocha organisation's Eco Church programme which enables local churches to commit to a brighter environmental future. Central to Eco Church is a free online eco survey which categorises steps churches can take to gain 'eco' status. Churches register online and through a 'points system' move towards bronze, silver and gold eco awards. The service is free. In the UK so far, 117 bronze, 22 silver and 3 gold awards have been issued.

## 10. Beulah URC, Rhiwbina

Eileen Newington gave a presentation on behalf of Beulah which has gained bronze Eco Congregation status (Eco Congregation being the precursor to Eco Church). Beulah seeks to weave environmental concerns into all aspects of church life. They had switched to a renewable energy supplier as a result of the Christian Aid Big Switch initiative.

**Young People:** a group of young people presented some of their ideas for making churches more eco-friendly: these included: reducing heating costs to conserve energy, recycling, encouraging wildlife around churches, conserving rain water, Fairtrade, car-sharing, walking to church, switching to a green energy supplier and using an ethical bank.

## 11. Rural Chaplain

The Revd David Salisbury presented this resolution on behalf of Pat Davies (Convenor of LLMB, who could not be present). DS thanked Chris Coe and Michael Cruchley for their contributions and Rural Officer/Chaplain over the years.

### Resolution 6:

**Synod Meeting resolves,**

- a) **To discontinue the post of Rural Chaplain.**
- b) **To encourage an ongoing ecumenical response to the needs of rural churches and chapels.**

Following comments and clarifications, Resolution 6 was passed by consensus.

## **12. Cytûn's Wales and Europe Working Party**

The Revd Jeff Williams gave a presentation about Cytûn's 'Wales and Europe Working Party' which focuses on bringing Christian values into the democratic process and protecting the rights of young, disabled, elderly and ethnic minority people as well as the environment. It is currently carrying out a 'public listening' exercise: hearings are scheduled for Bangor and Lampeter: JW invited people to get in touch with Cytûn if they would like to host a hearing in their area. Previous Cytûn reports can be viewed on the Cytûn website: <http://www.cytun.org.uk>

## **13. URC Youth Moderator**

Dan Morrell (URC Youth Moderator) gave a presentation on behalf of URC Youth. He said that the voice of young people needs to be heard because young people are passionate about the world and the community of the church and made a plea that priority should be given to welcoming children and young people into all levels of decision making. He emphasised that church should be a welcoming environment for children and young people to maximise learning and growth. In relation to making church more vibrant (and even challenging) Dan spoke about 'church without walls', Greenbelt and providing opportunities to share stories which can transform and make a difference. If anyone has stories please email Dan ([urcyamoderator@gmail.com](mailto:urcyamoderator@gmail.com)).

The Moderator reminded Synod that there will be Tri-Synod Youth event in November 2017 and that stories could also be shared via the monthly Synod Newsletter.

## **14. Good Grief**

Helen Stenson gave a presentation about Good Grief funeral training. Helen highlighted the need for individuals to consider taking up this opportunity given the reducing numbers of ministers. Helen spoke about how her own confidence has grown through the training she has received and reported that 12 had attended Good Grief training earlier this year. On Tuesday 14th November a mini Good Grief Conference will be held in Cardiff – some places still available. There will also be an overnight Good Grief course from Friday 19th to Saturday 20th January 2018 (in Llandrindod Wells). Please let HS know if you, or anyone you know, are interested in attending either of these events.

There were no additional matters raised from the printed reports.

The Moderator reported that following the collection held during the opening worship for the Madagascar Coach Disaster, in excess of £470 had been raised.

**Closing worship** was led by the Moderator, during which Richard and Sarah Edwards were presented with their TLS Certificates.

The meeting closed at 3.50pm.