



The **United Reformed Church**
National Synod of Wales

Yr **Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig**
Synod Cenedlaethol Cymru

Cyfarfod Synod y Gwanwyn
Spring Synod Meeting

Saturday 16th March 2024

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85868296766?pwd=WRIW1ObTAGL8QPgO73xCqqK5VmlqBF.1>

Meeting ID: 858 6829 6766

Passcode: Synod12

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

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Contents

Section 1:	Meeting Arrangements	page 4
Section 2:	Synod Support Team Meeting	page 5
Section 3:	Synod Pastoral Committee	page 7
Section 4:	Mission and Discipleship Board	page 8
Section 5:	Finance and Property Board/Trust Company	page 9
Appendix A:	Nominations Report	page 10
Appendix B:	Standing Orders for Virtual Meetings of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church	page 17

1. Meeting Arrangements

SESSION 1

09:00 – 09:30

Gathering in breakout rooms for conversation

SESSION 2

09:30 – 10:30

Opening Worship and Commemorations

Notices

Apologies

Minutes of Autumn 2023 Synod Meeting ([2023 Autumn-DRAFT-Minutes](#))

Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Whole People of God

Lay Worship Ministry

Training and Synod Stepwise

SESSION 3

10:40 – 11:30

Hearing the voices of Children and Young People

General Elections – making your voice heard

Eco news – listening to the Earth

SESSION 4

11:40 – 12:30

Rural news

Ecumenical Ministry

Ecumenical celebrations

Reports to Synod

Closing worship

2. Synod Support Team

FOR NOTING:

2.1 **General Assembly 2024**

The following will represent the National Synod of Wales at General Assembly 2024 (Friday 12th – Monday 15th July):

Minister/CRCW

Ian Kirby
Julie Kirby
Martha McInnes
Johnny O’Hanlon
David Salisbury
Kate Wolsey

Elder/Lay Person

Chris Atherton
Jo Harris † TBC
Wendy Marston-Phipps
Megan Price
Bethan Trott
2 x under 25s TBC

† ≤25

2.2 **Representatives to the General Assembly**

There are vacancies for lay and ordained representatives to the General Assembly. General Assembly will take place at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire DE55 from Friday 12th to Monday 15th July 2024. All the costs of attending are covered, including travel, accommodation and meals. A leaflet – ‘They’ve asked me to be a Member of General Assembly’ – which gives an overview of the role and obligations of being a member, as well as the work of the General Assembly itself, can be viewed and downloaded here: bit.ly/2IkaqHe. Please contact the [Synod Clerk](#) as soon as possible if you feel you are being called to serve in this role.

2.3 **Moderator of General Assembly 2025-2026**

No nominations were received by the deadline of Wednesday 3 January 2024.

FOR INFORMATION:

2.4 **Synod Membership**

The Synod may co-opt up to twenty-four additional members, being people with a particular role or responsibility within the Synod. Those who are at present co-opted members of Synod for the duration of their respective appointments are as follows:

Ian Lloyd-Parry (Convener of FPB)
Megan Price (Synod Clerk)
Judy Harris (CYDO)

Revd Gethin Rhys (Cytûn National Assembly Policy Officer)

Philip Rickards, Jill Shelton, Mathias Tchatchoua and Verena Walder (Local Church Leaders)

2.5 **Appointment of New Moderator**

Revd David Salsbury has been appointed as the new Moderator of the National Synod of Wales. David will be inducted into the role by Revd Tessa Henry-Robinson, Moderator of General Assembly 2023-2024, on Saturday 6 April 2024 at Beulah URC, Cardiff. All are welcome – more information can be found on the [Synod website](#).

2.6 **Nominations**

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

3. Synod Pastoral Committee

FOR NOTING:

3.1 **Synod Ecumenical and Interfaith Strategy**

The new Synod Ecumenical and Interfaith Strategy, agreed at our Autumn 2023 Synod Meeting, can now be found on the Synod [website](#).

3.2 **Ecumenical Ministry Application**

The Synod has submitted an application for an Ecumenical Ministry post, to be based in the Mid Wales region. These new posts, aimed at underserved ecumenical contexts, were agreed at General Assembly 2023 and fall outside synod deployment targets. More information can be found in [General Assembly Paper 14](#).

FOR INFORMATION:

3.3 **Ministerial Changes**

Revd Julia Bartholomew retired on 31 January 2024. Rhos on Sea is now a “plus” church within the North Wales region.

3.4 **Vacancies**

A vacancy has been declared in the reformed Valleys Pastorate, comprising St David’s Uniting Church, Van Road, Hope and Market Square, and Bethany Ystrad Mynach.

4. Mission and Discipleship Board

Mission and Discipleship Board continues to meet on Zoom but we also plan to meet in person at least once a year.

FOR NOTING:

4.1 **Eco-Church**

If any churches are either registered for A Rocha's Eco-Church award or have been granted an award, please let the Synod's Green Advocate Eileen Newington know (greenadvocate.urcwailes@urc.org.uk)

4.2 **Synod Stepwise**

As the Synod continues to run the Faith Filled Worship Stepwise stream on-line, it is hoped to run another on-line Faith Filled Life stream, but it would also be good to be able to extend this to local churches and regions – watch this space.

FOR INFORMATION:

4.3 **Eco Roadshows**

With the push to meet net zero targets by 2030, Synod will be running regional roadshows to help churches (and all Synod buildings) meet these targets.

4.4 **Youth and Children**

Youth Assembly will be moving to a new venue next year, Kings Park Conference Centre in Northampton.

It is also hoped to arrange a Synod Youth Executive to help the voices of young people be heard across the Synod.

At this year's Youth Assembly, a resolution was passed encouraging churches to sign up to the Student Christian Movement's Honest Church Campaign:

honestchurch.org.uk

4.5 **Mission Committee**

Mission Committee met at the end of February / beginning of March.

We received updates on amongst other things, the Net Zero Task Group, Legacies of Slavery and Anti-Racist Training.

Much of our time was spent on the current levels of poverty in the UK including a presentation from North-Western Synod.

The Let's End Poverty, (letsendpoverty.co.uk) initiative was looked at along with the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) focus on poverty, jpit.uk/poverty-in-the-uk

5. Finance and Property Board/Trust Company

FOR NOTING:

5.1 **Daphne & Bethan Fund**

Grants from the Daphne & Bethan Fund were made in November to Christ Well URC to help with school uniform costs, to Judy Harris for the Cardiff Children's Event, to the United Church in Rhyl for Christingle bags and to the Landsker Pastorate for Advent packs.

Grants from the Daphne & Bethan Fund were made in December to Judy Harris for Advent packs, the Cardiff Youth Weekend and the Swansea Children's Event.

5.2 **Health & Safety Fund**

A grant from the Health & Safety Fund was made in November for urgent repairs to the Dee Estuary Pastorate Manse.

5.3 **St David's Uniting Church**

In January, St David's Uniting Church received in principle approval for a grant from the Church Building Fund and a Mission & Development Fund grant and repayable grant towards the refurbishment of the Castle Square building in Trefforest.

5.4 **Rivertown URC**

A development grant from the Mission & Development Fund was made in January to Rivertown URC towards their building redevelopment project.

FOR INFORMATION:

5.5 **Christchurch, Fairwater**

The sale of Christchurch, Fairwater, was completed in December.

5.6 **Crundale URC**

The closure resolution from Crundale URC was received and approved in January.

Appendix A: Nominations Report

Synod Support Team

Synod Moderator

David Salsbury

From 1 April 2024

Synod Clerk

Megan Price

2022 –

Trust Company Secretary and Synod Treasurer

Chris Atherton

2006 –

Training and Development Officer

Jason Askew

2020 –

Children and Youth Development Officer (CYDO)

Judy Harris

2014 –

Safeguarding Officer

Diana Taylor

2021 –

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Judy Harris

Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Martin Spain

2021 –

Moderator's PA, Office Manager and Cashier

Joel Sainsbury

Property Officer and Assistant Company Secretary

Claire Boot

Finance Assistant

Gaynor Morgan

Administration Assistant

Maggie Kirkbride

Synod Office Chaplain

Stephen Best

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	Paul Robinson
East Wales	Branwen Rees
Cardiff and Penarth	Martha McInnes
Valleys and Vale	<i>vacant</i>
Swansea	Verena Walder
Pembrokeshire	Stella Hayton
Mid Wales	<i>vacant</i>
Bridgend United Area	Richard Gillon
Brecon Beacons	Julie Kirby

Northern College (co-opted) Graham Adams

Ex officio

Training and Development Officer

Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Lay Preaching Advocate

In attendance: Synod Chaplain, representative of the Youth and Children Working Group

Finance and Property Board

Convener	Ian Lloyd-Parry	2008 – 2026
Secretary	Property Officer	
Members:	Sheila Jones	2018 – 2027
	Lyn Oelmann	2018 – 2024
	Alison Tansom	2021 – 2027

Ex officio

Trust Company Secretary and Synod Treasurer

Office Manager and Cashier

Property Officer

Mission and Discipleship Board

Convener	Branwen Rees	2021 – 2026
Members:	Julia Bartholomew	2021 – 2026
	Judith Dolben	2018 – 2026
	Martin Spain	2021 – 2026

Ex officio

Training and Development Officer
Children and Youth Development Officer
Representative to URC Mission Committee
Green Advocate
Rural Advocate

Synod Office Management Group

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

Wales District Council

Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (Convener)
Synod Clerk (Secretary)
Synod Moderator
Synod Treasurer
Together with others drawn together relevant to the location of the church being considered.

Safeguarding Reference Group

Safeguarding Officer (Convener)
Deputy Safeguarding Officer
Trust Secretary
Pat Davies
Lyn Evans
Liz Jones
Bethan Trott

Other Appointments

To General Assembly Councils/Committees/Panels, etc.

Nominations Committee	Synod Clerk	
Mission Committee	Branwen Rees	2018 – 2026
Assembly Commission for Discipline Panel		Martha McInnes
Disciplinary Investigation Panel	Martin Spain	
Interfaith enabling group	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations	
Safeguarding Committee	Safeguarding Officer	

To other URC networks, etc.

Green Advocate	Eileen Newington	
Rural Church Advocate	Julie Kirby	
Lay Preaching Advocate	Maggie Kirkbride	
PLATO	Property Officer	
URC Youth Representative	vacant	
Synod Mission Enabler	vacant	
Pilots Officer	Children and Youth Development Officer	
Stepwise Co-ordinator	Training and Development Officer	

Appointments made by General Assembly

Resource Sharing Task Group	Chris Atherton (secretary)	
Net Zero Task Group	Judy Harris (for URC Children) Eileen Newington (for Synod Green Apostles)	
Panel for General Assembly Appointments	Paul Robinson Megan Price	
Ministries Committee Leadership in worship advocate	Maggie Kirkbride	

Children's and youth work committee

Paul Robinson (convenor)

Equalities Committee

David Salsbury (secretary)

Finance Committee

Chris Atherton

URC (Wales) Trust Company Limited

Convener Ian Lloyd Parry

Company Secretary Chris Atherton

Assistant Secretary Property Officer

Trustees:

Trust Appointed:

Colin Grimes annual appointment

Ian Lloyd-Parry annual appointment

Synod Appointed:

Chris Byrne 2021 – 2024

Ian Kirby 2018 – 2026

Diane Moverley 2021 – 2024

Sandra Wallace 2017 – 2026

1 vacancy

Synod Panel for Interviewing Ministerial Candidates

Co-ordinator: Training and Development Officer

Members:

Julie Kirby

Kathryn Price

Christine Roberts

Jill Shelton

Ecumenical Appointments Made by Synod

Christian Aid	Ceri George	2019 – 2024
Commission of Covenanting Churches	Synod Moderator Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Pat Davies	2018 – 2025
Commission of Covenanting Churches – Faith and Order Group	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations	
Cytûn Trustee	Synod Moderator <i>changing to</i> Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations at the Cytûn AGM	
Cytûn Racial Justice Network	Megan Price	
Cytûn Laser Group	Chris Atherton	
URC/PCW Liaison Group	Synod Moderator Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Lynda Bull Mike Dugdale Wendy Tansill Mathias Tchatchoua	2020 – 2025 2017 – 2025 2021 – 2025 2020 – 2025
URC/Methodist Liaison Group	Synod Moderator Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Noel Davies Colin Harrison Stella Hayton	2021 – 2025 2016 – 2025 2021 – 2025
Church in Wales Governing Body	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations	
Covenanted Baptists	Officer for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations	

Appendix B: Standing Orders for Virtual Meetings

Standing Orders for Virtual Meetings of General Assembly of the United Reformed Church

1. Records of Virtual Meetings

- 1.1 Any streaming and/or recording¹ of Virtual Meetings does not replace the formal minutes of the meeting and the decisions made. Formal minutes shall continue to be maintained and retained.

2. Operating Procedure

- 2.1 The Virtual Meeting will commence when the Moderator opens the meeting, within the requirements set out in the Rules of Procedure.
- 2.2 At the start of any meeting the Moderator shall make reasonable efforts to confirm that members can hear and be heard during the Virtual Meeting. The meeting will not start until the Moderator is satisfied that all is in order.
- 2.3 Where available video as well as audio should be normally used during Virtual Meetings. Where video is not available, or it is not safe for the attendee to use video, then audio only may be used.
- 2.4 The Virtual Meeting will finish when the Moderator formally closes the meeting.

3. Managing contributions from members during Virtual Meetings

- 3.1 All microphones should be set to mute at the start of the Virtual Meeting, apart from the Moderator and any (co)host(s). Microphones should only be unmuted when a participant is speaking.
- 3.2 The Moderator has absolute discretion to pause or adjourn the meeting at any time, and to remove any virtual attendees from the meeting if their conduct falls short of the expected standards in church.
- 3.3 In all but the smallest meetings, it is helpful if the Moderator is not also the host. The host may be a staff member(s) or volunteer(s) who are not a member of the meeting in the same way that such people may assist with stewarding a physical meeting.

4. Voting on items during the meeting

- 4.1 All decisions shall preferably be made by using any built in voting mechanism in the Virtual Meeting software, otherwise the Moderator will ask each individual member to raise their hand, either physically or using built in features, or to confirm verbally their agreement.
- 4.2 Voting shall normally use built in voting mechanisms, but where this causes a difficulty with more than one person joining a meeting from the same location in order for each person to have a vote then each person should log in on a separate device, or by telephone, or another piece of software used for voting. In a very small meeting, where the Moderator can see everyone on the screen at once, it may be possible to resolve this informally.
- 4.3 Voting on any motion whose effect is to alter, add to, modify or supersede the Basis, the Structure and any other form or expression of the polity and doctrinal formulations of the United Reformed Church, is governed by paragraph 3(1) and (2) of the Structure.

5. Attendance

- 5.1 All Virtual Meetings are required to meet any previously agreed quorum for meetings, where such a quorum has been specified.
 1. Meetings should not normally be recorded, in order to comply fully with both safeguarding and data privacy policies.

6. Interpretation of Standing Orders

- 6.1 Where the Moderator is required to interpret any Standing Orders in light of the requirements of a Virtual Meeting, they shall take advice from the Clerk before making a ruling. The Moderator's decision in all cases shall be final.

7. En bloc business

- 7.1 The Moderator, Clerk, and General Secretary shall together decide which items of business shall be taken en bloc. Placing business in the en bloc category does not imply anything about the importance of any item of business, merely that those planning the meeting think that it may be possible to agree the business without discussion. Any members wishing to have items removed from en bloc business should notify the Clerk by a stated time in advance of the meeting. If three or more members have so notified, then the business shall be added to the agenda of the meeting, otherwise en bloc business shall be voted upon without any discussion.

8. Business requiring discussion

- 8.1 It is not possible to use Consensus Decision-Making in its normal way during a Virtual Meeting, since Consensus Decision-Making relies upon the Moderator being able to sense the mood of the meeting and the members which requires senses not available in a Virtual Meeting. However, all meetings should still be conducted in the spirit and ethos of seeking consensus.
- 8.2 At any time during the debate, the Moderator may use the procedure indicated in Standing Order 4.1 to hold an Informal Straw Poll, which may be held purely to discern the mood of the meeting without making any decision. The Moderator may invite members to speak in the order they see fit. The Moderator may ask if anyone who has not yet contributed wishes to speak.
- 8.3 All decisions shall be made by vote, using the procedure set out in Standing Order 4.1. The Moderator, Clerk, and General Secretary shall together decide in advance which items of business require a simple majority, and which require a two thirds majority.² This Standing Order does not override any other provision for a specific majority set out elsewhere in the Standing Orders, particularly Standing Orders 10.12, 10.13 and 10.14.

9. Presentation of business

- 9.1 All reports of committees, together with the draft motions arising therefrom, shall be delivered to the General Secretary by a date to be determined, so that they may be circulated to members in time for consideration before the date of the Assembly meeting.
- 9.2 A Synod may deliver to the General Secretary not less than twelve weeks before the commencement of the meeting of the Assembly notice in writing of a motion for consideration at the Assembly. This notice shall include the names of those appointed to propose and second the motion at the Assembly.
- 9.3 A local church wishing to put forward a motion for consideration by the General Assembly shall submit the motion to its Synod for consideration and, if the Synod so decides, transmission to the Assembly, at such time as will enable the Synod to comply with Standing Order 9.2 above.
- 9.4 A member of the Assembly may deliver to the General Secretary not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting of the Assembly a notice in writing of a motion (which notice must include the name of a seconder) to be included in the Assembly agenda. If the subject matter of such a notice of motion appears to the General Secretary to be an infringement of the rights of a Synod through which the matter could properly have been raised, the General Secretary shall inform the member accordingly and bring the matter before the Business Committee which

2. For example, agreeing the minutes of the previous meeting might reasonably be taken on a simple majority, whereas a major strategic decision with significant financial implications requires a greater level of support than a one vote majority.

shall advise the Assembly as to the procedure to be followed.

- 9.5 Proposals for amendments to the Basis and Structure of the URC, which may be made by the Mission Council or a committee of the General Assembly or a Synod, shall be in the hands of the General Secretary not later than 12 weeks before the opening of the Assembly. The General Secretary, in addition to the normal advice to members of the Assembly, shall, as quickly as possible, inform all Synod Clerks of the proposed amendment.
- 9.6 It shall not be in order, whether in en bloc business or any other decision-making, to move a motion or amendment which:
 - 9.6.1 contravenes any part of the Basis of Union, or
 - 9.6.2 involves the Church in expenditure without prior consideration by the appropriate committee, or
 - 9.6.3 pre-empts discussion of a matter to be considered later in the agenda, or
 - 9.6.4 amends or reverses a decision reached by the Assembly at its preceding two meetings unless the Moderator, Clerk and General Secretary together decide that changed circumstances or new evidence justify earlier reconsideration of the matter, or
 - 9.6.5 is not related to the report of a committee and has not been the subject of 21 days' notice under Standing Order 9.4, or
 - 9.6.6 simply reaffirms existing work.

The decision of the Moderator (in the case of 9.6.1, 9.6.2, 9.6.3, 9.6.5, and 9.6.6) and of the Moderator with the Clerk and the General Secretary (in the case of 9.6.4) on the application of this Standing Order shall be final.

10. The business

- 10.1 If notice has been given of two or more motions on the same subject, or two or more amendments to the same motion, these shall be taken in the order decided by the Moderator on the advice of the Clerk.
- 10.2 A report presented to the Assembly by a committee or Synod, under Standing Order 9.1, shall be received for debate, unless notice has been duly given under Standing Order 9.4 of a motion to refer back to that committee or Synod the whole or part of the report and its attached motion(s). Such a motion for reference back shall be debated and voted upon before the relevant report is itself debated. To carry such a motion two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. When a report has been received for debate, and before any motions consequent upon it are proposed, any member may speak to a matter arising from the report which is not the subject of a motion.
- 10.3 During the meeting of the Assembly and on the report of a committee, notice (including the names of proposer and seconder) shall be given to the Clerk of any new motions which arise from the material of the report, and of any amendments which affect the substance of motions already presented. During the course of the debate a new motion or amendment may be stated orally without supporting speech in order to ascertain whether a member is willing to second it.
- 10.4 No motion or amendment shall be spoken to by its proposer, debated, or put to the Assembly unless it is known that there is a seconder. The only exceptions to this are motions presented on behalf of a committee, of which printed notice has been given, and the procedural motions in Standing Orders 10.13, 10.14, and 10.15. The procedural motions in Standing Orders 10.13, 10.14, and 10.15 may be moved and spoken to without the proposer having first obtained and announced the consent of a seconder. They must, however, be seconded before being put to the vote, and precedence as between the procedural motions is determined by the fact that after one of them is before the Assembly no other motion can be moved until that one has been dealt with.
- 10.5 A seconder may second without speaking and, by declaring the intention of doing so, reserve the right of speaking until a later period in the debate.
- 10.6 An amendment shall be either to omit words or to insert words or to do both, but no amendment shall be in order which has the effect of introducing an irrelevant proposal or of

- negating the motion. The Moderator may rule that a proposed amendment should be treated as an alternative motion.
- 10.7 If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved. If an amendment is rejected, a further amendment with a different outcome may be moved.
- 10.8 An amendment which has been moved and seconded shall be disposed of before any further amendment may be moved, but notice may be given of intention to move a further amendment should the one before the Assembly be rejected.
- 10.9 The mover may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly, alter the motion or amendment proposed.
- 10.10 A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Assembly. Any such consent shall be signified without discussion. It shall not be in order for any member to speak upon it after the proposer has asked permission to withdraw unless such permission shall have been refused.
- 10.11 Alternative (but not directly negative) motions may be moved and seconded in competition with a motion before the Assembly. It shall be for the Moderator, on the advice of the Clerk, to rule when motions shall be considered as alternatives under the Terms of this Standing Order.
- 10.11.1 When such draft alternative motions have been received by the General Secretary, the Moderators may ask the General Secretary to convene a meeting (physical or virtual) of the proposers, to ascertain if it may be possible to agree on a single draft motion to put before the Assembly, or to clarify the areas of disagreement.
- 10.11.2 If the Assembly has alternative motions before it, each proposer shall be given the opportunity to present their motion in an order decided by the Moderator.
- 10.11.3 After any amendments duly moved under Standing Orders 10.6, 10.7 and 10.8 have been dealt with and debate on the alternative motions has ended, the movers shall reply to the debate in reverse order to that in which they spoke initially. The first vote shall be a vote in favour of each of the motions, put in the order in which they were proposed, the result not being announced for one until it is announced for all. If any of them obtains a majority of those voting, it becomes the sole motion before the Assembly.
If none of them does so, the motion having the fewest votes is discarded. Should the lowest two be equal, the Moderator gives a casting vote.
The voting process is repeated until one motion achieves a majority of those voting.
- 10.11.4 Once a sole motion remains, further discussion is permissible and votes for and against that motion shall be taken in the normal way and in accordance with Standing Order 4.
- 10.12 In the course of the business any member may move that the question under consideration be not put. This motion takes precedence over every motion before the Assembly. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded and the proposer of the motion or amendment under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule. Should the motion be carried, the business shall immediately end and the Assembly shall proceed to the next business.
- 10.13 In the course of any discussion, any member may move that the question be now put. This is sometimes described as "the closure motion". If the Moderator senses that there is a wish or need to close a debate, the Moderator may ask whether any member wishes so to move; the Moderator may not simply declare a debate closed. Provided that it appears to the Moderator that the motion is a fair use of this rule, the vote shall be taken upon it immediately it has been seconded. When an amendment is under discussion, this motion shall apply only to that amendment. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. The mover of the original motion or amendment, as the case may be, retains the right of reply before the vote is taken on the motion or amendment.

10.14 During the course of a debate on a motion any member may move that decision on this motion be deferred to the next Assembly. This rule does not apply to debates on amendments since the Assembly needs to decide the final form of a motion before it can responsibly vote on deferral. The motion then takes precedence over other business. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded and the proposer of the motion under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule or that deferral would have the effect of annulling the motion. To carry this motion, two-thirds of the votes cast must be given in its favour. At the discretion of the Moderator, the General Secretary may be instructed by a further motion, duly seconded, to refer the matter for consideration by other councils and/or by one or more committees of the Assembly. The General Secretary shall provide for the deferred motion to be presented again at the next Meeting of the General Assembly.

11. Timing of speeches and of other business

- 11.1 Save by prior agreement of the Business Committee, speeches made in the presentation of reports concerning past work of Assembly committees which are to be open to question, comment or discussion shall not exceed five minutes.
- 11.2 The Assembly may meet in parallel sessions or Breakout Rooms to consider the past work of Assembly committees for questions and comments. Any draft motions arising therefrom must be dealt with in a plenary session of the Assembly.
- 11.3 Save by the prior agreement of the Business Committee, speeches made in support of the motions from any Assembly committee, including the Mission Council, or from any Synod shall not in aggregate exceed 15 minutes, nor shall speeches in support of any particular committee or Synod motion exceed 5 minutes, (e.g. a committee with four motions may not exceed 15 minutes). The allowed an aggregate of five minutes, unless a longer period be recommended by the Business Committee or determined by the Moderator.
- 11.4 Each subsequent speaker in any debate shall be allowed 3 minutes unless the Moderator shall determine otherwise; it shall, in particular, be open to the Moderator to determine that all speeches in a debate or from a particular point in a debate shall be of not more than a different specified number of minutes.
- 11.5 When a speech is made on behalf of a committee, it shall be so stated. Otherwise a speaker shall begin by giving name and accreditation to the Assembly.
- 11.6 Secretaries of committees and members of staff who are not members of Assembly may speak on the report of a committee for which they have responsibility at the request of the Convenor concerned. They may speak on other reports with the consent of the Moderator.
- 11.7 In each debate, no one shall address the Assembly more than once without the permission of the Moderator, except that at the close of each debate the proposer of the motion or the amendment, as the case may be, shall have the right to reply, but must strictly confine the reply to answering previous speakers and must not introduce new matters. Such reply shall close the debate on the motion or the amendment.
- 11.8 The foregoing Standing Order (11.7) shall not prevent the asking or answering of a question which arises from the matter before the Assembly or from a speech made in the debate upon it.
- 11.9 An invited speaker, whether speaking to a draft motion or not, may address the Assembly for such period of time as may be agreed by the Business Committee.

12. Questions

- 12.1 A member may, if 2 days' notice in writing has been given to the General Secretary, ask the Moderator or the Convenor of any committee any question on any matter relating to the business of the Assembly to which no reference is made in any report before the Assembly.

- 12.2 A member may, when given opportunity by the Moderator, ask the presenter of any report before the Assembly a question seeking additional information or explanation relating to matters contained within the report.
- 12.3 Questions asked under Standing Orders 12.1 and 12.2 shall be put and answered without discussion.

13. Points of order, personal explanations, dissent

- 13.1 A member shall have the right to call attention to a point of order, and immediately on this being done any other member addressing the Assembly shall cease speaking until the Moderator has determined the question of order. The decision on any point of order rests entirely with the Moderator. Any member calling to order unnecessarily is liable to censure of the Assembly.
- 13.2 A member feeling that some material part of a former speech by such member at the same meeting has been misunderstood or is being grossly misinterpreted by a later speaker may request the Moderator's permission to make a personal explanation. If the Moderator so permits, a member so rising shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.
- 13.3 The right to record in the minutes a dissent from any decision of the Assembly shall only be granted to a member by the Moderator if the reason stated, either verbally at the time or later in writing, appears to the Moderator to fall within the provisions of paragraph 10 of the Basis of Union.
- 13.4 The decision of the Moderator on a point of order, or on the admissibility of a personal explanation, or on the right to have a dissent recorded, shall not be open to discussion.

14. Admission of the public and closed sessions

- 14.1 Only those who are members of the meeting, staff members in attendance, or invited guests may join a Virtual Meeting. However, a meeting in open session may be shown as a live stream.
- 14.2 A closed session is one in which the business is highly sensitive. Only members of Assembly, the Legal Adviser, and any technical staff required to enable Assembly to function may be present. Neither content nor process may be divulged to non-members, save specific information authorised by the Moderator in consultation with the Clerk and the Legal Adviser. No social media in any form may be used during a closed session, nor to report upon such closed session. Any live streaming must be switched off. Minutes will be taken, but these will be held *in retentis* by the Clerk, and shall not be made available to non-members.
- 14.3 A closed session may be called for at any time in any decision-making mode, and voted upon by the Assembly, requiring a simple majority. This motion takes precedence over every motion before the Assembly. As soon as the member has given reasons for proposing it and it has been seconded, and the proposer of the motion or amendment under consideration has been allowed opportunity to comment on the reasons put forward, the vote upon it shall be taken, unless it appears to the Moderator that an unfair use is being made of this rule. Should the motion be carried the business shall immediately pause while non-members leave the meeting.
- 14.4 If a matter is known to be highly sensitive in advance, then the Assembly Officers, consulting the Legal Adviser if necessary, may announce in advance that a certain piece of business will be conducted in a closed session giving their reasons.
- 14.5 Members of Assembly who leave during a closed session may not be re-admitted.

15. Communications during the course of debate

- 15.1 The primary responsibility of members is to attend to the business and participate in the decision making. Those present must refrain both from posting on social media sites during business sessions and from commenting upon partially completed business. It is the responsibility of the communications committee's staff to make official announcements. This restriction is only in place when in session; those attending are free to join in the online debates during breaks and after the close of business in respect of business

that the Assembly has completed. Everything written and shared on social media sites at any time is the sole responsibility of the author, and is subject to the same defamation laws as any other form of written communication.

16. Record of the Assembly

- 16.1 A record of attendance at the meetings of the Assembly shall be kept in such a manner as the Business Committee may determine.
- 16.2 The draft minutes of each day's proceedings shall be made available in an appropriate form normally on the following day. They shall, after any necessary correction, be approved at the opening of a subsequent session. Concerning the minutes of the closing day of the Assembly the Clerk shall submit a motion approving their insertion in the full minutes of the Assembly after review and any necessary correction by the Officers of the Assembly. Before such a motion is voted upon, any member may ask to have read out the written minute on any particular item.
- 16.3 A signed copy of the minutes shall be preserved in the custody of the General Secretary as the official record of the Assembly's proceedings.
- 16.4 As soon as possible after the Assembly meeting ends, the substance of the minutes together with any other relevant papers shall be published as a "Record of Assembly" and a copy sent to every member of the Assembly, each Synod and Local Church.

17. Suspension and amendment of Standing Orders

- 17.1 In any case of urgency or upon proposal of a motion of which due notice has been given, any one or more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting, provided that three-fourths of the members of the Assembly present and voting shall so decide.
- 17.2 Motions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Clerk of the Assembly for report before being voted on by the Assembly (or, in case of urgency, by the Mission Council). The Clerk of the Assembly may from time to time suggest amendments.



The **United Reformed Church**
National Synod of Wales

Yr **Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig**
Synod Cenedlaethol Cymru

The National Synod of Wales is pleased to invite you to
the Induction of
Revd David Salsbury
as Moderator of the National Synod of Wales
of the United Reformed Church



on **Saturday 6 April 2024** at 2pm
with refreshments served after the service
at Beulah URC, Cardiff
1A Beulah Road, Rhiwbina, Cardiff CF14 6LT
and streamed live online

If you wish to join us in person, please RSVP at bit.ly/URCInduction
or email megan.price.urcwaless@urc.org.uk by Mon 18 March

*Beulah URC is a short walk from Rhiwbina Railway Station.
Please note there is no parking at the church.
Local arrangements for parking will be circulated in advance of the service.*