



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

SYNOD MEETING

AUTUMN 2024

Saturday 12 October 2024, 11.00 am – 15.30 pm

Hybrid

Attendance: 58 people in person and 12 people were on zoom

Apologies for absence were received from:

Diane Brain, Margery Davies, Yvonne Gulley, Neil Kirkham, Monica O'Dea, Malcolm Shapland, Nick Sissons, Verena Walder, Rose Ward, Meryl Williams

Ecumenical apologies were noted from:

Cynan Llwyd (Cytûn), Revd Dr Ian Morris (Methodist Church, Synod Cymru)

1. **Opening Worship and Commemorations**

Opening Worship was led by Revd David Salsbury, Moderator and the readings were by Bethan Trott.

Ministers and Elders who have died since last Synod Meeting:

David Allen-Oliver	Elfed Avenue
John Chambers	Gilwern U.R.C.
Doris Jeremy	Keyston
Revd Ian Kirby	Brecon Beacons pastorate
Margaret Perrott	St Andrews
Revd Ivor Rees	retired
Philip Richards	Parkminster
Annette Thomas	Ebenezer Upper Chapel
Margaret Weatherill	City URC
Margaret Webb	Van Road

Ministerial anniversaries:

Colin Edward Claridge Richards	65 years
Irfon James	55 years
Shirley Mountcastle	35 years

Jaeyeon Yoo (known as Daniel)	30 years
Marueen Frances Roberts	30 years
Christopher Coe	25 years
Adella Joy Pritchard	25 years
David Yeo Poulton	20 years
Peter Graham Blackband	20 years
Branwen Sarah Rees	10 years
Julie Dawn Kirby	5 years

2. **Introductions and Notices**

The following ecumenical guests were welcomed:

Revd Gethin Rhys	Cytûn National Assembly Policy Officer
Revd Dr Noel Davies	Undeb yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg
Anna Jane Evans	Presbyterian Church of Wales
Venerable Alan Jevons	Church in Wales
Andrew Kleissner	South Wales Baptist Association
Dawn & Brendan Mason	Congregational Federation in Wales
Carole Rakodi	Religious Society of Friends
Parch Maggie Rich	Baptist Union of Wales
Lt Col Jonathan Roberts	Salvation Army

Appointments within the Synod:

Joanna Harris has been appointed as Finance Administrator following the retirement of Ms Gaynor Morgan

Ministers moving within the Synod since last Synod meeting:

Paula Parish has resigned from the Bridgend Uniting Area

Revd Stephen Best has retired

Revd Kate Wolsey has been Ordained and Inducted as Transitional Minister for the Pembrokeshire region

Revd David Jones (PCW) will be Inducted to the Alun Vale pastorate on Saturday 26 October.

Ministers moving into the Synod since last Synod meeting:

n/a

Elders ordained since last Synod meeting:

Anne Coles, Colleen Rowan	St Davids Uniting Church
Janice Holt, John Griffiths, Marion Griffiths	St John's Flint with Bagillt
Mary Houghton	Keyston
Hilary Prosser	Rhyl

Notices

There will be a reflection available from Cytûn soon and information will be circulated shortly.

The Synod had been saddened by the death of Revd Ian Kirby, Brecon Beacons Pastorate, in August. Revd Julie Kirby offered her thanks for all the support she had received during that time. Julie, and all the Brecon churches, will be held in our prayers.

3. Minutes of the Spring 2024 Synod Meeting held on zoom

The minutes of the meeting held on zoom, on Saturday 16 March 2024 were approved with two amendments (a sentence in , Eco Update was changed, as requested by Eileen Newington – ‘A church can remain on the old scheme, if they are working on an award to 2025, and then the new scheme starts’ and David Yeo Poulton’s name was corrected) and signed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

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

Chris Atherton (Trust Company Secretary and Synod Treasurer) thanked Gaynor Morgan, who had retired at the end of August, for all her hard work in her role as Finance Assistant in the Synod Office. She had always been very careful and committed in her work.

Chris then reported on the accounts of 2023 and the budget for 2025. The two resolutions were then presented.

Resolution 1: 2023 Accounts

The United Reformed Church (Wales) Trust Company Accounts were received by FPB and approved by Trust Company Directors, noting that all funds were operating within budget and that the last year of operation had returned to surplus. A summary is included at Appendix C. The full accounts are available upon application to the Treasurer (chris.atherton.urcwailes@urc.org.uk).

This was approved.

Resolution 2: 2025 Budget

The Synod General Fund Budget is presented for approval by the Synod Meeting. This can be found at Appendix D. In line with resolutions passed at previous Synod Meetings the budget is a balanced one. The request to Inter Synod Resource Sharing is at the same level as the 2024 Budget request which recognises the current financial pressures across the denomination. In seeking the same sum as 2024, the budget has drawn income from sales of redundant buildings to enable the levels of activity across the Synod’s priorities to remain the same despite increased base costs.

The meeting approved the budget.

Revd David Salisbury thanked Chris Atherton, Gaynor Morgan and Joanna Harris for all the work that goes on. A lot of time time is spent away and travelling to enable the financial works to continue.

6. A Rocha and Eco Church

Eileen Newington presented some slides for the meeting celebrating the 12 Bronze and 5 Silver awards that churches have gained as well as the Silver award for Synod Office. Eileen asked that churches keep her informed when they register and are awarded for their efforts. She was grateful for all the hard work that churches put in to Eco Church. Eileen publicised the Eco Roadshows that will be touring Wales over the next 6 months.

One had already been successfully held at Rivertown in North Wales and they looked forward to the other ones coming up. We then heard from two churches who have successfully become Eco Churches – Hall Street in Llanelli, Adella Pritchard, and City in Cardiff, Alison McQueen.

Delyth Higgins, Eco Church officer for Wales, then gave a presentation from A Rocha.

7. Safeguarding update

Diana Taylor, Synod Safeguarding Officer, presented a short update. Diana, along with Judy Harris, Children and Youth Development Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer, had been updating the safeguarding training to align the Synod with the new Wales standards. All training has now been grouped into A, B and C and everyone needs to complete updated training. This can be done only for Group A and there are online and in person training sessions available to be booked, the links are on the Synod website. Diana had also been busy ensuring that Group Practice 6 could be issued with the Wales standards and the terminology used in Wales.

Diana also reported that a drop in forum has been opened on the first Monday of each month, online, at lunchtime. This is available for help with safeguarding issues or questions. Contact Diana for the zoom link.

8. Christian Aid presentation

Mari McNeill gave a presentation on Christian Aid.

9. Legacies of Slavery – how do we respond?

Karen Campbell, United Reformed Church Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries, talked to the meeting about how churches can respond to this issue.

10. Reports to Synod

A Stepwise video was played and DS encouraged the Synod to consider signing up for any of the streams available. There are two new streams – Faith-filled Conversation and Faith-filled Environment. Wales is being considered to hold the pilot for Faith-filled Environment early next year. The requirement to have completed Faith-filled Life has been a stumbling block and there are possibilities that this requirement may be removed or shortened for some courses.

The various Reports to Synod were mentioned and:

3. Anyone interested in attending General Assembly was requested to contact Megan Price, Synod Clerk, as attendees were still needed. It was stressed that the social media for the Synod is available on Facebook and Instagram and to please use it.
4. Revd David Salsbury wished St David's Uniting well in their new church in Treforest.
5. Another More Able Church webinar will be presented on November 20th and will feature hearing loss.
6. A request for Trustees was made, please contact Chris Atherton.

Revd David Salsbury thanked everyone for attending and the Synod Support Team for all the work they had put in, alongside the caterers and Revd Paul Robinson who provided the piano accompaniment.

11. Closing devotions

Judith Negus from Abergavenny URC provided a reflection, hymn and prayer and the meeting closed with the Grace.

Synod meeting dates:

Saturday 15th March 2025

Saturday 18th October 2025