

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN WALES – THE WALES SYNOD

Eleventh Meeting of the Synod held on Saturday 16 September 2017

at Theatr Hafren, Newtown, Powys

Present: Rev Dr Stephen Wigley (Chair) Rev Rosemarie Clarke (Synod Secretary)

115 members and 5 visitors as recorded elsewhere

Apologies/Dispensations: as recorded by the Secretary

Opening devotions were led by Revs Robert Balfour, Judith Holliman and Ruth Lownsbrough who had been ordained at the Methodist Conference 2017, held in Birmingham.

1. WELCOME

The Chair, Rev Dr Stephen Wigley, welcomed the following ministers newly stationed in the Wales Synod: Revs Frieder Kreschnak, Alana Lawrence, Richard Parkes, Linda Pearce, Andrea Sims, Laurie Smith and Deacons John Brobbey and Janet Smith. Rev Richard Parkes briefly responded on their behalf. Those who had undertaken new responsibilities within the Synod: Revs Les Jones, Catherine Brobbey, Flis Randall, Sue Lawler, Bob Thomas, Phil Poole, new lay members of Synod and visitors, Rev Sally Thomas (URC) and Rev Roger Faulkner (Open Doors) were also welcomed to the Synod.

The young people of the Synod, met elsewhere in the building as the Youth Forum.

2. ADMINISTRATION

The Synod Secretary announced notices of a general and administrative nature.

- (a) An offering for the Methodist Ministers' Children's Relief Association was to be taken as the Synod retired for lunch. A total of £405.42 including gift aid was later collected.
- (b) Members were requested to collect the Circuit bags before leaving
- (c) An enquiry regarding the location of Synod equipment was made
- (d) An explanation was given regarding the format of the attendance list which was then circulated
- (e) Correspondence

The Secretary was directed to send greetings to: Revs Phil and Carol Challis, Rev Paul Donnison, Liz King, the brother of Gwyneth Leigh, Rev Alan and Mrs Rosemary Cliff, Rev George and Mrs Janet Courtenay.

The Chair offered prayers for Rev Otto Wade, former member of the Synod, and all in the Caribbean in the wake of the recent hurricanes, and undertook to send a greeting to him by e-mail, on behalf of the Synod.

3. APPOINTMENTS TO SYNOD

The Synod agreed the appointments of representatives and officers as set out in the Handbook and amendment sheet with the additional circuit representatives Barry Jordan (Bridgend), Janet Hughes (Conwy & Prestatyn) and Alison McBain (Newport and Lower Wye). Revs Roy Watson, Catherine Lewis and Mr Ken Bailey were appointed as Scrutineers. The Secretary brought Synod's attention to the notice relating to data protection on the back of the amendments sheet and asked every member of Synod to write or e-mail the office confirming consent for their details to be included in the directory. At this point voting forms for Synod representatives to Conference 2018 were distributed.

4. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONFERENCE 2017

Representative requirements were: 3 presbyters; 1 deacon, 4 lay people.

Those elected were:	Rev Rosemarie Clarke	Rev Beverley Ramsden	Rev Nick Oborski
	Deacon John Brobbey	Ms Michele Jones	Dr Jean Ware
	Mr Martin Rees	Ms Emily Roe	

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 17 SEPTEMBER 2016

The minutes had been distributed and were agreed to be a true record. The Secretary shared the response of Conference to the two memorials which had been sent from the Synod, and its appointment of the Rev Dr Stephen Wigley for further two years from 1st September 2018. The Synod broke into spontaneous applause.

6. REPORT ON CONFERENCE 2017

The Synod watched a video which gave an overview of the work of the Conference. Deacon Lisa Rathbone, first time representative to Conference, gave an account of her impressions of the experience. The Secretary reported on the presidential theme 'Day by day; the rhythm of mission and discipleship' The Chair drew Synod's attention to the triennial statistics as a challenge to be addressed, directing the Synod to the Methodist Church website for further information. The new Synod Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Officer, Rev Delyth Liddell, addressed Synod stressing the aim of her work was not just about eliminating discrimination but welcoming all. She also invited those interested in this area of work to contact her with a view to forming a Synod EDI group.

7. UPDATE ON SAFEGUARDING

Jane Ellis, Safeguarding Officer (north), reported on changes to the e-mail contact arrangements for the Synod Officers, the replacement of the Safeguarding Handbook 2010 with Policy Guidance accessible via the Methodist Church website, and the change of registered body for the processing of DBS checks at the end of the year. Sandra Oborski was welcomed to the Synod, in her absence, as Synod Safeguarding Officer based in the south of the Synod

8. UPDATE FROM LP SECRETARY

Peter Swindale encouraged the Synod to celebrate the contribution made to Sunday worship by local preachers in a tangible way which expresses gratitude to those concerned. Thanks were expressed to Amy Adams for her assistance in launching the Worship: Leading + Preaching course, and attention was drawn to the need for Continuing Development In Ministry and the possibilities that the course offered for existing preachers in that regard.

9. NEWS FROM THE CIRCUITS

Neath Port Talbot Circuit. Deacon Viv Gray spoke of a women's group which was reaching the missing generations. Beginning as a Girl's Night Out, it had developed into something more spiritual and the number of participants was continuing to grow.

Vale of Glamorgan Circuit. Rev Phyl Fanning reported on the circuit's involvement with Citizens Wales, taking action for justice with the local community. Mr Fanning shared a number of examples of the issues that had been tackled, and events organised which brought empowerment to the local community.

10. YOUTH EXCHANGE FROM JAMAICA

Members of the group shared something of their experience via a video presentation. Gareth Bennett spoke of good sharing at all levels, positive feedback beyond what could have been anticipated, and the challenges that the young people had set for themselves as a result of the exchange. Thanks were expressed to all who had made the exchange possible.

11. UPDATE ON DLMN

Delyth Wyn Davies spoke of the success and blessing being received in Wales and across the connexion through 3Generate which continued to grow both in number and in depth, and appealed for volunteer help.

The need to nurture and encourage young leaders was highlighted and the Synod's attention was drawn to the opportunities available through Aurora Training and the One Programme.

Amy Adams reported on the forthcoming 'reImagine Forums' taking place in October in the north and south of the Synod, and Bible Month training for 2018 and which would take place in Cardiff.

12. OPEN DOORS

Rev Roger Faulkner spoke briefly about Open Doors and their work with persecuted Christians, encouraging members of the Synod to learn more by visiting his stand over lunch.

13. METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN (MWIB)

Mrs Norma Boocock and Mrs Ronnie Dean, characterising the work of MWIB as creative spirituality and social justice, provided details of forthcoming events.

14. REPORT FROM POLICY COMMITTEE

A paper which summarised the work undertaken during the year had been circulated previously. The Synod confirmed the recommendations of the Synod Policy Committee for the closure of churches at Nant-y-Glyn (Conwy & Prestatyn), Blaenrhondda and Wesley Abercynon (MGM) and Eastbrook (Vale of Glamorgan), and the Chair led the Synod in prayer.

15 REPORT ON THE WORK OF Y CYNGOR

The Synod received a paper (previously distributed) which summarised the work undertaken during the year. Notice was given that a new lay representative to Y Cyngor was being sought.

16. THE CINAMMON NETWORK

Mandy Bayton gave an overview of the rationale of the network and work they are engaged in, identifying four strands to their approach: For Cinnamon recognised projects (being community projects which have the potential to be replicated elsewhere), the provision of an advisor, up to £2,000 matched seed funding, and training for project leaders. Material to undertake a faith action audit to help churches be more confident in what they have to offer was made available.

17. ECUMENICAL MATTERS

Rev Cathy Gale spoke about the way in which the Commission for Covenanted Churches in Wales was taking the work forward. Having been unable to recruit a Covenant Development Officer the three aspects of the job had been split. The research element was being undertaken by a group of the commissioners as a community of learning. In particular they sought to interrogate the question. 'What were the original intentions of the covenant and are they still relevant?'. The administrative work was also being fulfilled by some of the commissioners but the development aspect of the original post, now a part time position, remained unfilled.

Ms Gale also reported that the Commission's Faith and Order Panel had been asked to consider what is already possible concerning the interchangeability of ministries and what more may be done especially in areas of shortage of ministry.

The Chair drew the Synod's attention to a paper which had been presented for wider discussion to the 2017 Conference entitled Mission and Ministry in Covenant and a short time for questions and comments followed.

Rev Gordon Sollis rose to offer thanks on behalf of the sponsoring body to all who had been involved with the now dissolved Cardiff Bay Chaplaincy.

18. NEWS FROM THE CIRCUITS

Newport and Lower Wye Circuit. Rev Gordon Gresswell spoke of the work at Ty-sign, an area of urban deprivation. Using a manse attached to the church three young people have been living in community. With the newly appointed mission enabler they are seeking to connect with young people, running job clubs and outreach activities by living amongst the people and enabling them to worship through a fresh expression of church.

Llanelli and Carmarthen Circuit. John Birch spoke of the Lantern Centre in Llanelli and its transformation from a property with a number of serious issues to the vibrant hub that it is today. Notably after the initial work of making the building sound it was the schoolroom where outreach could more easily take place that was prioritised for the next phase of work.

Amelia Methodist Trust Farm Deacon John Brobbey spoke of his early impressions as chaplain at the farm and its work as a therapeutic community.

19. YOUTH FORUM

Twenty five young people and young leaders gathered in Youth Forum. They reminded the Synod that this was the sixth Youth Forum and that it was amongst a number of ideas first explored by the Synod Youth Wales Action Group (SYWAG) which had been taken up by 3 Generate and shared across the connexion. The Welsh Synods are also the first to engage in a youth exchange. The experience of the youth exchange organised jointly with Synod Cymru had fostered a desire among the young people of the two synods to work more closely together. Accordingly as a result of their discussions they expressed their intention to take a proposal to the policy committees of the two synods to change the name of SYWAG to *momentwm*. Affirming the values and vision of SYWAG their hope was that *momentwm* would take forward what young people want with stronger objectives and clear goals formulated by the young people themselves. A video was shown of the Youth President, Tim Annan, reflecting on the work of the two Synods after having been present at the Abernant Weekend during the Jamaica exchange, recognising worth of challenge offered in a nurturing environment he commented that had been one of the highlights of his presidential year.

20. CLOSING WORSHIP was led by those who planned and led the Jamaica Exchange and included testimony of some of those who had participated in it and in particular the Abernant weekend, and thanksgiving for the blessings received by the venture. Musical accompaniment was provided by Rev Jarel Robinson-Brown.

21. THE NEXT MEETING of the representative session of the Synod was confirmed as 15th September 2018 at Theatr Hafren, Newtown, Powys.