

**The Methodist Church in Wales
Synod Policy committee**

Minutes of the meeting held at Newtown Methodist church
Saturday 16 June 2012

Present: Rev Stephen Wigley Chair
John Atkinson, Pauline Barnett, Martyn Boyce, Rosemarie Clarke, David Easton, Richard Gillion, Chris Gray, Jack Healey, Alan Jenkins, Graham Illingworth, Andrew Mathieson, Sandra Powell, Trevor Pratt, Richard Sharples, Gordon Sollis, Ann Thomas, Roy Watson, Alf Williams, Frances Williams, John Wiseman
Ann Cashmore Minute Secretary

The Chair welcomed new substitute members to the meeting – Martyn Boyce and Frances Williams
Opening devotions were led by Rev Stephen Wigley.

12/12 Apologies: Pauline Barnett, Richard Hodgson, Peter Holwell, Martin Lougher, Verity Phillips, Alf Williams

13/12 Minutes

The following amendments were proposed to the minutes of the meeting of 18 February 2012:

Present:

Chris Gray, not Chris Grey

6/12 Line re: Prestatyn, should read supernumerary, not superintendent.

14/12 Other business not covered by Agenda

Local Preachers – Roy Watson

Heritage – Andrew Mathieson

Memorial on the use of alcohol on premises used as community rooms – John Atkinson

15/12 Matters Arising

08/12(c) Fruitful Field

Stephen reported that the Conference report was on-line and a preliminary conversation had been held at Y Cyngor on 13 June. The three recommendations were in the areas of Pathways, People and Places. Wales was considered to be a region and would have its own dedicated team. The importance of Welsh language training had been emphasised. Quite a lot of information was not available at the present time and Conference decision was required before details became clear.

04/12(c) Pattern and Purpose of Synod - paper previously distributed

This paper was to be presented to Synod in September. During discussion the meeting heard a suggestion that two discussion groups be held during Synod which members could attend to enable them to feel more involved in the workings of Synod. Another suggestion was that Synod be held on a Sunday to give more weight to the importance of Synod and dispel the feeling of disconnection church and circuit members had towards the meeting.

The meeting AGREED that SO412, covering the constitution of Synod, be included in the paper for Synod, that the suggestion of a Sunday meeting be included and that the title be changed to "Purpose and Pattern of Synod". A copy would be appended to the distributed minutes.

05/12(b) Vale of Glamorgan Circuit memorial to Conference

John Atkinson requested that a Synod representative be prepared to dispute the Committee decision at Conference. Stephen stated that this would involve the memorial being taken out of the block vote and that a Synod representative was not the right person to speak to the memorial and that as it was a Circuit memorial there could not be the expectation that a Synod representative should respond to it.. The matter was referred back to the Circuit which initiated the Memorial

16/12 Establishing Synod Policy

(i) Revised Constitution previously distributed paper

Trevor Pratt outlined the reasons for the revision, stating that the paper clarified the current practice within Synod of one Chair and three Assistant Chairs. The meeting AFFIRMED the revision with the addition of the Preamble to SO48A2, Revised paper to Synod for decision

(ii) Revised Rural Life Policy and Rural Life Officer Job Description

both papers previously distributed

Stephen clarified the changes in both documents. The meeting AGREED the changes. Andrew raised the issue of tourism, stating that the documents did not mention tourism, although the Rural Life Officer had a certain amount of input into Welsh tourism through the Royal Welsh Show and other events. He recognised that the present rôle could not take on the responsibility and Stephen noted the need for tourism to be included in Wales Synod thinking. Synod website would be amended to reflect the changes in the Rural Life Policy.

17/12 Implementing Synod Policy

(i) General

(a) Safeguarding

Mr Peter Ackerley and Rev Susan McIvor reported on the present situation regarding the foundation module of the Safeguarding training. This would be followed by leadership training due in August 2015. Susan outlined the outcome of the President's Enquiry Report and the need to tighten up all existing procedures and implement them where they were not in place. Peter gave a brief report of the Past Case Review. Overall there was a need to take stock and progress. The role of the District Safeguarding would be enhanced and details were to be approved at Conference. The current post holders would also undergo a review, bearing in mind that Susan was a minister and would eventually move from her present Circuit. .

Stephen had attended the Chairs' meeting where Safeguarding had been discussed and, subject to Conference agreement, the financial implications would have to be met. The Enquiry had not considered the cost implications.

Susan and Peter confirmed that those who had taken a Safeguarding course for other bodies, such as an Education Authority, were still required to take the Methodist Church course.

(b) Synod Enabler – Ethnic Minorities

Rev Irfan John joined the meeting and gave a review of his work in the four areas of his remit:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| asylum seekers and refugees | ethnic minorities |
| advocacy | circuit minister |

He thanked Synod for the support and love he and his family had received during his time in Wales and was grateful for the encouragement and assistance he had been given. In April this year the third Urdu Conference had been held which was attended by the Vice President of Conference, Mrs Ruth Pickles. There was a "Welcome Christians" programme which helped asylum seekers to convince the Home Office officers that they

were Christians. A fourth annual picnic would be held on 27 July at Langland beach. Irfan was personally involved with street evangelism and had contacts with Street Pastors and was called from time to time to translate for Pastors. With the success of placing Bibles in public libraries in Swansea, Cardiff, Newport and Wrexham in 12 languages, he was now involved in providing story books for children. He was very appreciative of the food given for use by homeless ethnic minorities in the cities and was grateful for the support of his wife and four children in all his activities.

David was concerned about students in Aberystwyth and asked if a brief leaflet setting out what the church was could be prepared, preferably in "Chinese." World church was recommended as the best place to obtain information.

Stephen thanked Irfan for his report and all his hard work during the last four years.

(c) Re -invitation process for Synod Enabler – Ethnic Communities
paper previously distributed

Stephen reported that the grant application to Connexion to continue Irfan's work had been successful and the recommendation was to re-invite Irfan for a further 3 year period from September 2013. Irfan was very pleased to receive the news and accept re-invitation, which was CONFIRMED by the meeting. It was recognised that Synod would need to work on future funding streams if the post were to continue beyond 2016.

(d) Finance and Future of Ellen Turney Trust

Jack reported on behalf of Richard that income was on target and there were no current concerns.

The Ellen Turney Trust had been inherited from North Wales District on amalgamation and was originally for "Women's Work". The trust was held by TMCP and Richard felt that it was too small to continue and suggested that it be wound up. The obvious successor was Methodist Women in Britain and they had a project, "Children Unite" which was eligible to receive the trust monies. As trustees the meeting needed to recommend a course of action and therefore AGREED that the trust be wound up and the money be passed to MWiB for their project.

(e) Nominations Committee

Trevor reported that the Nominations Committee was a standing committee and needed appointing for the coming Connexional year. It required the meeting to agree changes. That Rev Rosemarie Clarke replaces Rev. Andrew Williams, Graham Illingworth be a fully active member of the committee and not just convenor; and that Arfon Williams of Synod Cymru would be a participating observer. The meeting AGREED these changes.

The Committee is:

Rev Rosemarie Clarke

Rev Lin Healey

Rev Sue Lawler

Rev Una McLean

Deacon Lorraine Brown

Mr Graham Illingworth

Miss Linda Davies

Mr Eric McDonald

Mr Tony Wiley

Substitutes:

Mrs Helen Judge

Mrs Meryl Thomas

Mr Derek Scanlon

Mrs Sandra Powell

(f) Youth Work Action Group

Richard Sharples reported that there were one young people serving in Cardiff, under the "One Programme" with two more due to start in Bangor and Wrexham. This programme would not continue for a further three years, subject to agreement by Conference.

Several groups were attending Greenbelt in August, but unfortunately the residential weekend had been cancelled due to lack of support.

The YWAG consisted of Richard Sharples, Verity Phillips, Felicity Jepson-Randall, Stephen Roe and Amy Adams and it was felt that young people should be part of the group. However, this was difficult because they found work or went to higher education.

Richard expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Group to Ian Thomas for his work with the young people of the Synod and thanked Cardiff Circuit for releasing Ian to do this important work. Another member of the Group was needed. Richard requested that

SPC give the Group powers to invite three young people to attend the meetings, approximately three times a year. It was envisaged that they would travel with existing Group members. The meeting AGREED.

Jack reported that "The Lab" was run in Newport by James Henley and Richard would contact him.

The next meeting of the Youth Forum would be at Synod on 8 September.

Trevor volunteered to speak to Richard about the possibility of some funding for those attending the Youth Assembly, with £500 recommended as the sum to be allocated.

Stephen reported that so far two people had expressed an interest in a conference for young (25-45 years) emerging lay leaders.

(ii) Property

Jack reported that the consents process was undergoing trials for up-dated software which would be more user-friendly.

The supplement to Schedule A regarding energy would now be part of the Statistics for Mission return.

The Connexional priority fund for grants was closed at present, but grants were available for building schemes where there was growth: grants were not available for delayed maintenance.

Asbestos in manses was an issue under the Landlord & Tenant Act and inspections were needed. Further information could be obtained on leaflet T12 – "Technical Guidance Note".

Bonner Trust

This fund had recently increased considerably following the death of Ann Bonner and bequest from her estate. However, delays were due to the property having to be sold and the intervention of HMRC who initially raised questions about inheritance tax because they were not convinced of validity of the Trust as a Methodist charity. All problems have been sorted out and the deed and rules amended accordingly. The deeds and rules were being amended accordingly to include more young people and the Trust could then be used to support Synod youth work. It is anticipated that the fund would stand at over £250,000 when the estate was settled.

(iii) Manses

All the reports were up-to-date and Mary had expressed her thanks and appreciation to Circuit Stewards for their work. Synod Charitable Trust could be asked for grants to help with work in manses but the application to David Tilley must be made before work commences. Stephen expressed his thanks to Mary Williams and her helpers.

18/12 SPC Business

(a) Sabbaticals

There were no sabbaticals to approve at present. Gordon Sollis had presented his 500 word report on his visit to Sierra Leone and he was willing to visit churches and Circuits to talk about his experiences.

Alan wished to defer his sabbatical due to the stationing process and he was recommended to contact Mrs Dorothy Cresswell, the secretary.

(b) Local Preachers

Roy reported that due to illness Stephen Boxall had requested a two year extension. The meeting AGREED.

(c) Heritage

Andrew reported on the work at Pentre Llifior (near Berriw) and the service on 28 September when Rev Lord Griffiths would speak. Several local people were connected to Lord Griffiths and they were looking forward to his visit.

The final section of Wesley Way was in hand. The inclusion of Thomas Coke in the Brecknock Society heritage trail was going ahead. Information was displayed in Brecon museum and some buildings in the town had plaques commemorating chapels, whilst

others on original chapel sites did not have plaques. Andrew had met with the mayor of Brecon to discuss the development of chapel heritage and there was an enthusiasm within the town.

In Devauden Green a statue had been proposed and after some reservations a site in a garden with a plinth and statue made by local people would be installed. Devauden was on the Monmouth Trail and people were eager to include the area in the venture.

A draft outline document on chapels, churches and monastic buildings had been prepared by CADW and was available on-line. Tourism now formed a large part of income in Wales and visiting churches and places of worship was often on the list of things to do when people visited the country. Tourists now came to look for ancestors/stories.

David Easton had been instrumental in setting up the Methodist Historic Society in Wales and Gordon reported that the Tondu Ironworks was undergoing conservation with Lottery funding.

19/12 Chair's Business

Stationing

Preparation for the next round had already started with the possibility of two probationer appointments in Wales Synod.

Three probationers would be ordained at Conference in Plymouth: Peter Taylor, Ann Ellis, Hugh John Wilson and Teddy Kalongo would be accepted into full Connexion.

Mapping a Way Forward

Stephen shared with the meeting some thoughts from Rev Cathy Gale regarding the reconfigured Circuits and the need for reflection, looking at the lessons learned, and the good and bad aspects of the exercise. He requested that the SPC look at this issue and take stock at a future meeting. AGREED

New Circuit Officers

The names of new officers should be passed to Judy at the Synod office as soon as possible.

20/12 Matters to and from related bodies

(i) Y Cyngor

Graham gave a resumé of the meeting held on 13 June and reported that Rev Jenny Hurd had been appointed Chair of Synod Cymru from 2013. Jenny would shadow Patrick Slattery for a year before his retirement.

Rev Trevor Pratt had been re-appointed as Chair – Y Llywydd – of Y Cyngor for a further two years.

The Methodist Church was again acting as chair of the Commission for Covenanting Churches in Wales and Eluned Williams would be appointed from November 2012 for two years.

21/12 Ministry Issues

Chaplaincy

Roy Watson reported that there was now a chaplain at the ASDA store in Brynmawr. ASDA have a policy of having a chaplain in all their stores. The Corus site in Ebbw Vale had been re-used for a Sixth Form College and under the auspices of SACRE a combined ecumenical chaplain had been appointed.

Gwent Hills & Vales Circuit had been invited by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon to hold a service in Brecon Cathedral on 21 October.

Dyfed/Powys police force, had appointed a chaplaincy team which was formally launched on Friday 15 June. The team included Alan, Ian Waugh, and Ian Morris from Synod Cymru.

Trevor reported that Rev Rosemarie Clarke and Rev Robin Fox, from Buckley & Deeside Circuit, were members of the ecumenical chaplaincy team at Deeside College.

22/12 Ecumenical Matters

"The Gathering"

13 October 2012

speaker: Rev Dr Olaf Tviet

The booklet had been distributed and more copies would be available at Synod in September. Each member of the SPC together with a second member from each Circuit would be eligible to attend and the date for names to be sent to Judy was the end of June. Other names of people wanting to attend should go to the Cytûn office. Further details would be discussed at Synod in September.

St Johns, Colwyn Bay

Conversations and negotiations were underway to transfer St Johns Ecumenical United Church to Rydal school as managing trustees. In order to do this, SPC had to formally approve that the Ecumenical church council be set up as a Methodist Church Council, as managing trustees, in order that the transfer could be affected. The meeting AGREED

23/12 Other Business

Stephen thanked Gordon Sollis for his hard work and enthusiasm as Ecumenical Officer during the life of the Synod.

Ann Thomas and Pauline Barnett would also be retiring from the meeting and were thanked for their input and service.

Trevor Pratt would retire as Synod Secretary after the current meeting and Stephen expressed his thanks for Trevor's presence at all the meetings and sent good wishes for the future.

2411/12 Date of next Meeting

Saturday 27 October 2012 at Newtown Methodist church, meeting to commence at 10.30am.

Future meetings would be held on:

Saturday 16 February 2013

Saturday 15 June 2013.

The meeting closed with the Grace.