

# THE METHODIST CHURCH IN WALES – THE WALES SYNOD

Seventh Meeting of the Synod held on Saturday 13 September 2014

at Theatr Hafren, Newtown, Powys

Present: Rev Dr Stephen Wigley (Chair) Rev Rosemarie Clarke (Synod Secretary)  
114 members and 11 visitors as recorded elsewhere

Apologies/Dispensations: as recorded by the Secretary

Opening devotions were led by Rev Catherine Reynolds with musical accompaniment by Mr Peter Swindale.

## 1. WELCOME

Rev Sue Lawler, Superintendent Minister of the Welshpool & Bro Hafren Circuit, welcomed the Synod to the Circuit.

The Chair, Rev Dr Stephen Wigley, welcomed the following new ministers to the Wales Synod:  
Rev Carole Challis and Rev Phil Challis Rev Phil Poole and Deacon Lisa Rathbone  
Rev Rachel Wheeler Rev Paul Martin  
The Rev Carole Challis briefly responded on their behalf.

Ecumenical visitors, Mrs Ruth Henrikson (URC), Mrs Dorothy Reeves (Moderator for East Presbytery and Chair of SE Board of PCW) and Canon Aled Edwards (Chief Executive Cytûn) were also welcomed to the Synod.

Synod was informed that the young people of the Synod, meeting elsewhere in the building in the Youth Forum, would be joining Synod for closing devotions.

## 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 £187-34 was later collected.
- (b) Rev Roy Watson, Mrs Anne Davies and Rev Les Jones were appointed as scrutineers.
- (c) Members were requested to collect the Circuit bags before leaving
- (d) Correspondence

The Secretary was directed to send greetings to:

Mrs Joyce Stewart	The Methodist Church in Sierra Leone
Mrs Eleanor Weatherspoon	Mrs Ruth Dickinson (Churches Together Bookshop)
Ms Gwyneth Leigh	Mr Jack and Rev Lin Healey
Mr Graham Illingworth	Revd Dr David Easton
Rev Dave Hutton	Rev John Anderson
Mrs Sandra Williams	Relatives of Rev Ian Waugh

## 3. APPOINTMENTS TO SYNOD

Synod agreed the appointments of representatives and officers as set out in the Handbook and amendment sheet, noting two further amendments: The removal of the names of Mr Derek Painter and Mr Andrew Mathieson and addition of the name of Mrs Janice Rhodes at page 11 (Circuit Representatives for Welshpool and Bro Hafren) and the correction of a telephone number.

## 4. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONFERENCE 2015

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

Those elected: Rev Rosemarie Clarke	Rev Peter Holwell	Rev Les Jones
Deacon Viv Gray	Miss Eleri Birkhead	Mr Graeme Russell
Mr Manu Tuipulotu	Mrs Mary Williams	

## 5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 14 SEPTEMBER 2013

The minutes had been distributed and were agreed to be a true record with one minor correction.

## 6. MATTERS ARISING

The response of the Conference to the 2013 memorial was dealt with elsewhere in the agenda. An amended modified constitution was presented to the Synod and unanimously agreed.

## 7. WELCOME TO THE METHODIST YOUTH PRESIDENT

Miss Megan Thomas was welcomed by The Chair and the Synod broke into spontaneous applause. Megan spoke of her roots in mid-Wales and explained the dual responsibility of her role in enabling young people and taking their voice to the wider church. Particular emphases of her work during the year would be to take forward the Young

People's Mental Health initiative which her predecessor had worked on, and to inspire young people to take seriously the direction given in 1 Timothy 4:12 and recognise what they had to give to the church.

#### 8. REPORT ON CONFERENCE 2014

**The Rev Professor Teddy Kalongo** gave a resumé of the business of Conference 2014. In doing so he spoke of the creativity of the daily devotions and occasions of worship during the Conference and the presence of the Holy Spirit felt at those times. In particular the following were brought to the attention of the Synod: The General Secretary's Report – realising the main thing (evangelism) in the light of the statistics for mission; Changes in the personnel structure; Boycott, Divestments and Sanctions - encouragement to observe two years' time and space to think, study and pray before any further memorials or reports on those issues; One Mission – integration of world and local missions with the establishment of a Forum from 2015 where all Districts would be represented to explore issues including Fresh Ways of Being Church, Evangelism, Community Action and Mission Beyond our Shores; Support for the 'no more page 3' campaign; Conference's direction to all District Policy Committees to ensure that a full review of current buildings and societies be conducted against the criteria of vitality, vision, location, and available resources which will lead to a significant revision and broadening of the 'master-plan' in SO 962. The review should propose a sustainable, long-term plan for buildings and societies within the district which can sustain effective ministry by presbyters, deacons and lay people.

**The Chair** summarised the response to the Working Party on Marriage and Civil Partnerships and the current position of the Methodist Church, highlighting the opportunities for discussion on these issues which would be available in the Synod.

#### 9. NEWS FROM THE CIRCUITS

**Cardiff Circuit - Trinity Project** Ms Chloë Marong, Project Coordinator, gave an insightful presentation about the route to becoming an asylum seeker and the way in which the Trinity Project (a circuit project) which engages with groups including asylum seekers and their needs, had begun and was developing with support from ecumenical partners and outside agencies. In the discussion following, tribute was paid to the foundational work of Rev Irfan John, and recognition of the severe difficulty of accessing the available help was brought to the attention of Synod.

**Wrexham Circuit - Mission through the Arts** Rev Richard Sharples spoke of the renaissance of art space in Wrexham the exhibition area that Regent St Church had made available for the display of artists' work and the efforts which were ongoing to increase the profile of the church as an arts venue in the town. The town was looking forward to the forthcoming arrival of the Methodist Arts Collection. Work had been undertaken to produce a bilingual guide highlighting the links to Wales with the items in the Collection in collaboration with Mrs Delyth Wyn Davies and Synod Cymru. Synod was exhorted to see engaging in the arts as a vehicle for mission.

#### 10. MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP LEARNING NETWORK

Synod was introduced to Mrs Delyth Wyn Davies, the newest member of the team, through a conversation with Mr Luke Curran in which Delyth shared something of her considerable experience which equipped her for the role. Attention was drawn to leaflets which had been distributed highlighting the first point of contact for different areas of responsibility. Synod heard that the new connexional website for Learning and Development was due to come live in November 2014. Amy Adams spoke about Meet pray love ([www.meetpraylove.co.uk](http://www.meetpraylove.co.uk)) an initiative to promote intentional living to support community oriented discipleship. Amy appealed for two or three groups to volunteer to pilot an Advent Resource and evaluate it. Luke brought news of the new eight module Worship Leading and Preaching course which will be available from September 2015 and that the Faith and Worship course will co-exist alongside it until 2020. An interactive session followed using Lego which gave Synod an insight into how its use could encourage more imaginative and participative meetings. Luke's availability to facilitate the use of Lego Serious Play in the local setting was publicised.

#### 11. NEWS FROM THE CIRCUITS

**Swansea and Gower Circuit –Homeless Project** Rev Howard Long explained the basis of the project which provides a night shelter for up to 12 referred guests offering a two course meal, a bed for the night, and breakfast next morning. The churches staff the project each night with the Methodist Church taking responsibility for Saturday night. Mr Huw Davies described a new project for a three day a week drop in centre called Ogaf Adullam (Adullam's Cave – I Sam 22), based in Brunswick Methodist Church, which will open on 1st October with the support of 30 volunteers. Huw gave a powerful personal testimony about the necessity for support to be available on a daily basis and shared an expanding vision of meeting the extensive needs of prison leavers, asylum seekers and addicts.

**Welshpool and Bro Hafren Circuit** When a vacant station was unable to be filled the Superintendent minister found herself with ten churches in her care. Rev Sue Lawler from that context, spoke to Synod about encouraging the churches to consider their discipleship, stewardship and mission and the way in which lay people were growing in confidence to take on tasks that they would formerly have looked to their minister to provide. Encouragement has come in various forms as the churches discern their own strengths in mission through heritage, music and

hospitality as well in the leadership of Bible Reading Fellowships. Sue encouraged Synod to see the opportunities in the things that appear at first to be problems.

## **12. PRESUMED CONSENT AND ORGAN DONATION**

The Chair introduced the forthcoming changes to the law regarding organ donation. Synod broke into small groups to consider the concerns and issues of different individuals in a given scenario. This was followed by an interactive conversation led by the Chair. Members of Synod were encouraged to use the material presented to them which included the booklet *Sharing the gift of life? A discussion and reflection on presumed consent and organ donation* produced by JPIT, to promote wide discussion of the issues in their churches.

## **13. ECUMENICAL MATTERS**

Rev Cathy Gale reported on a recent meeting of the Commission of the Covenanted Churches in Wales following the receipt of all the responses to the Gathering proposals for a Uniting Church in Wales. The Commission had discerned that there was still sufficient support to carry on working. A further meeting in October will determine what can be taken forward. As a representative from the Methodist Church in Wales on the Joint Implementation Committee of the Anglican/Methodist Covenant (between the Church of England and the Methodist Church) Cathy suggested that some of the stumbling issues were similar and she hoped that some joint thinking through issues of ministry and episcopacy would be possible.

### **2013 Memorial**

The response of the Conference 2014 to the memorial sent in 2013, regarding aspects of the Gathering proposals, was conveyed to Synod (<http://www.methodistconference.org.uk/media/232913/conf-2014-memorials.pdf> pages 5 & 6)

**SCLEPS** A number of resolutions in relation to Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships were presented to the Synod:

Following a review of LEPs established between 2007 and 2013 the following resolutions were agreed unanimously.

- 1 The Wales Synod designates as Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships; Hall St, Llanelli (Llanelli & Carmarthen), Barry Uniting Church (Vale of Glamorgan) and makes direction under SO 611(1) in respect of both of them.
- 2 The Wales Synod approves the dissolution of St John's Uniting Church, Colwyn Bay (Conwy & Prestatyn) as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships

Rev Phillip Poynor ( Ecumenical Officer) introduced new partnerships:

Rev Hugh John Wilson spoke of the growing togetherness of the congregations at Milford Haven. Rev Leslie Noon addressed Synod regarding Sketty and conveyed something of the enthusiasm of the congregation for the next step in their life together.

The following two resolutions were unanimously agreed,

- 1 i) This Synod designates Christ Church Milford Haven as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership and directs that the Methodist Church Council be constituted in accordance with SO 611(1).  
ii) This Synod approves the Constitution of Christ Church Milford Haven.
- 2 i) This Synod designates Sketty Methodist Church and Bethel United Reformed Church as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership and directs that the Methodist Church Council be constituted in accordance with SO 611(1)  
ii) This Synod approves the Constitution of Sketty Methodist Church and Bethel United Reformed Church.

## **14. REPORT FROM POLICY COMMITTEE** (previously distributed)

Synod accepted the paper which summarised the work undertaken during the year.

## **15. REPORT ON THE WORK OF Y CYNGOR** (previously distributed)

Synod received the paper. Thanks were expressed to the retiring Chair/Y Llwydd of Y Cyngor, Rev Trevor Pratt who had served in that capacity for both The Wales Synod and Synod Cymru.

## **19. METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN**

Mrs Mary Williams reported on various forthcoming events including a thank you lunch for women ministers to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the first ordination of women. New resources on the Dalits were to be published and a special day "Caste Away" was to take place at Codsall, Wolverhampton on 18th October.

Synod closed with worship led by Rev Les Jones with musical accompaniment by Rev Phil Poole.