

The Methodist Church in Wales: Wales Synod

Minutes of Synod Policy Committee meeting in Newtown Methodist Church on 17th November 2018

Present: Rev Dr Stephen Wigley (Chair), Martyn Boyce, Rosemarie Clarke, Linda Davies, Rosemary Davies, Paul Donnison, Sandra Hanbury, Roger Hides, Graham Illingworth, Ruth Lownsborough, Flis Randall, Margaret Webber, Roy Watson

Apologies: Carole Challis, Richard Hodgson, Barry Jordan, Martin Lougher, Leslie Noon, Nick Oborski, Phil Poole, Judith Powell, Pat Preston.

Non-voting substitute: Kofi Amissah (for Nick Oborski),

In Attendance: Bob Gilston (Property Officer)

24/18 Opening devotions were led by the Chair with a reading from Mark 13: 1-8, comment and prayers from the Prayer Handbook

25/18 Welcome The Chair welcomed new members of the committee, Rosemary Davies, Linda Davies and Margaret Webber, along with Kofi Amissah.

26/18 Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2018 were agreed with minor amendments: deleting Roy Watson from attendees, and on page 3 amending Vicki to Vicky.

27/18 Matters Arising

- i) The Chair reported that the Synod Schemes and Grants Committee had amended their policy for large schemes in line with minute 17/18 iii
- ii) Margaret Webber – Methodist Council Representative, spoke briefly about her first impressions following her first attendance at the Methodist Council
- iii) In reference to the EDI item minute 19/18 iv it was requested that the statement template be provided in a format which can be amended to include the circuit/church name.

28/18 Establishing Synod Policy

Relationship between Wales Synod and Synod Cymru Graham Illingworth gave a summary of the responses received so far from those circuits who had already consulted about the outline proposals provided at Synod in September 2018. A number of issues had been raised which would be considered by the steering group, but the responses to date had been broadly in favour of the creation of a new Synod.

29/18 Implementing Synod policy

i) General

- a) **Finance:** Accounts and Synod Advance Fund. The meeting received the Synod accounts for the year ended 31st August 2018, and a report of the movements and ongoing commitments of the Synod Advance Fund.
- b) **Policy** The Synod Reserves Policy was agreed. Grateful thanks were offered for the work of the Synod Treasurer, Richard Hodgson. The meeting was informed that after seven years, Richard had given notice that he would like to be relieved from the office of Treasurer at the end of this connexional year and invited members to consider whether they knew of any likely candidates to fulfil that role.
- c) **Authorised Presbyters** Applications for authorised presbyters were agreed as follows: URC minister Neil Riches (Swansea and Gower), URC Minister Stella Hayton (South West Wales).

ii) Youth

- a) **Report from *Momentwm*.** Flis Randall reported that the youth weekend at Abernant went well and another one is planned for **19th-21th July 2019**. A *Big Day Out* is planned in the South Wales on **2nd February 2019**, and in North Wales date tbc.

Owain Morgan, having moved to Oxford, had left Momentwm Core Group and Revd Richard Parkes (Wrexham) and Ms Michele Jones (Buckley and Deeside) had joined. The Core Group had found a recent retreat helpful and planned further retreats.

Concern was expressed that there is generally poor take up for places at 3 Generate from Wales this year.

- b) **Youth Exchange** The planned Youth Exchange to USA postponed to 2019/20 with a return trip to UK in 2020/21

iii) Matters relating to Property –

- a) Bob Gilston, Property Officer reported that there was a growing emphasis led by the Connexional team to develop property strategies to support mission at all levels of the church. In order to support districts in their role in this, a special consultation was to be held to which it was expected that the District Property Secretary and two others would be invited.

Bob Gilston reported that he would be contacting circuits for any Quinquennial reports that had not yet been forwarded to him.

Margaret Webber, Council Rep. reported a special 5 year investment (21st Century Development Fund) with interest 2% above the rate on CFB deposit fund, was to be launched to enable the funding of key projects across the connexion, but initially the redevelopment of the Methodist Church House site.

b) Permission was given to cease worship at Aberfan (MGM) and sell the premises at an appropriate date. A further report was requested to be brought to SPC when the details are clarified.

c) **Trust 14508 Advisory Committee** Accounts will be presented to February SPC

c) **Manses Committee** No report. It was agreed to send a greeting to the convenor of the committee, Mrs Mary Williams who was recovering from surgery.

30/18 SPC Business

- a) **Mission and Evangelism.** A report, from the group appointed, offered three ways forward; a prayer initiative, the appointment of a group to take the work forward, and an encouragement to commit to a year of testimony. It was agreed to take the prayer initiative forward at a date to be confirmed. It was felt that the timing was not right to be adding to structures with the creation of a mission/evangelism group but that the suggestion be offered to those working on the proposals for a new Synod in Wales. It was noted that following the suggestion of the young people of the Methodist Church a year of testimony was to be launched in the near future with Connexional backing. It was suggested that alongside prayer, there was nothing to prevent any church/circuit from being invitational as well as welcoming and including testimony in its life.
- b) **Sabbatical proposals** from Revds Phil Poole, Flis Randall and Deacon Lisa Rathbone were approved.
- c) **Sabbatical reports** from Revds Rosemarie Clarke, Roger Hides and Deacon Stephen Richardson were received.
- d) **Safeguarding Training** Members of the committee are required to complete both the foundation and advanced training modules. Lay members in particular were asked to make this known to their Circuit Safeguarding Coordinators to ensure that they receive an invitation to the training when it is organised in their circuit.
- e) **Local Preacher.** Applications to extend the time 'On trial' beyond 5 years were sought for three local preachers in the Buckley and Deeside Circuit: Sylvia Davies, Patricia Earlam and Michele Jones. David Blainey, Rosemarie Clarke and the Chair were appointed to consider the applications.

31/18 Chairs Business

- i) **Stationing Update** Visits were taking place for three of the five available appointments. There had been no potential match for NLW and part time appointments were to be considered at the second stationing matching group.

- ii) **Pastoral matters** Concern was expressed for Judy Lister, Chair's PA, the husband and friends of Linda Bailey (GHV), circuit steward who had recently died, and Roger Palmer, Lay stationing representative who has continuing health issues.

32/18 Matters to and from related bodies

i) Methodist Council/Conference

Margaret Webber reported on Council items not already covered in the agenda, including discussions about extending scenarios that might be considered as replacement projects when the Connexional levy is applied to property sales. It appeared that much of the business of the Council was directed toward mission and property strategy, and the harnessing of available resources to enable mission at every level of the church.

ii) Connexion

There will be a visit to Wales from the President of the Methodist Conference, Michaela Youngson in January when she will lead a joint retreat for the ministers of Synod Cymru and the Wales Synod.

iii) Synod

Feedback was sought for September Synod. It was suggested that labels with name and circuit would be helpful.

iv) Synod Leadership Team

Chris Gray will fully resume Assistant Chair responsibilities in the north in January 2019, having 'sat down' in the summer.

v) Y Cyngor

33/18 Ecumenical Matters – nothing to report

34/18 Ministry Matters – nothing to report

36/18 Date of next meeting: 9th February 2019 at Newtown Methodist Church at 10.30am