**The Methodist Church in Wales: Wales Synod**

**Minutes of Synod Policy Committee meeting in Newtown Methodist Church on 14th March 2020**

**Present:** Revd Dr Stephen Wigley (Chair), Rosemarie Clarke, Linda Davies, Roger Hides, Richard Hodgson, Graham Illingworth, Barry Jordan, Gordon Gresswell, Bob Thomas,Margaret Webber, Paul Donnison, Janet Rees

**Apologies:** Martin Boyce, Rosemary Davies, Sandra Hanbury, Martin Lougher, Flis Randall, Pat Preston, Nick Oborski

**01/20 Opening devotions** were led by the Chair.

**02/20 Minutes** The minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2019 were agreed, with minor amendments, and signed by the Chair.

**03/20 Matters Arising**

**30/19Aberfan,** progress is slow due to legal complexities. Currently awaiting the response of The Scout Association.

**31/19 Albert Rd, Penarth** (Vale of Glamorgan) Last regular service is planned for 12th July. A service of thanksgiving for the Life and Witness of the church will be held on the evening of 19th July.

**04/20 Establishing Synod policy**

A revised policy for the extension of time on trial for Local Preachers’ was agreed.

**05/20 Implementing Synod policy**

1. **The Financial Accounts** for the year ended 31st August 2019 having been independently examined were approved
2. **The budget** for the year ended 31st August 2021 was approved. The allocation of Assessment across the circuits, with a 95% collar, was approved. Thanks were expressed to Mr Richard Hodgson, Synod Treasurer.

**iii)** **Matters relating to Property** –

**Barry Uniting Church**: Preparations to begin the construction of the new church building in March are being made with an anticipated opening in Autumn 2020.

**06/20 SPC Business**

1. A **Sabbatical proposal** from Revd Kofi Amissah was received and approved.
2. **University of South Wales Chaplaincy Support Company** Four of the five denominations involved have agreed. To the setting up of a CIO - waiting agreement from the Church in Wales.
3. Information was received concerning a **Momentwm exchange trip to America.**
4. **Applications for Authorised Presbyters** were approved for:

John Hayton (URC) – South West Wales

Lesley Jane Lawrence (Baptist) – Cardiff

The Synod Secretary reminded the meeting that only ministers from other denominations who have been granted the status of Authorised Presbyters could be

included in the handbook.

1. **Pontprennau LEP (Cardiff East)** Formal documentation relating to the running of the church had not been completed. The Circuit agreed that the Church Council should operate under SO 611 and asked Synod to confirm that request at its first opportunity. It was anticipated that a new sharing agreement would be agreed by the end of April 2020, an ecumenical vision for the church drafted and the constitution agreed by July 2020.
2. **Call to Prayer.** Revd Paul Donnison gave an update of progress including the production of a digital version of the scrapbook which had recorded the various prayer events around the circuits of the Synod.
3. **The allocation of circuit lay representation to the Synod** was approved (paper previously circulated)
4. **Recommendation to Synod to give permission to cease to meet and dispose of the premises was agreed in respect of:**

Bargoed Methodist Church (MGM) subject to the approval of the Circuit Meeting, with final services on 8th and 9th August 2020.

Snatchwood Road, Abersychan (GHV) subject to the approval of the Circuit Meeting with effect from 26th April 2020.

1. **Lay Authorisation to preside at Communion:** An application for Mr Clement Raymond (Neath Port Talbot) was received and approved.
2. **Presbyteral Synod.** The forthcoming Presbyteral session of Synod (25th March) was considered in the light of coronavirus. The meeting voted in favour of the meeting not going ahead.

**07/20 Chair’s Business**

1. **Stationing Update** Invitations had been made and accepted for the 3 appointments in the Wales Synod in stationing for 2020, and by the 5 colleagues in stationing. In 2021 there could be seven potential vacancies. It was agreed that the Stationing Briefing Meeting be held on 9th May despite the movement of the bank holiday to 8th May.
2. **Pastoral matters** The death of Mr Brian Foley, a former Area Officer in the Bridgend Utd Area was reported.
3. **Sabbatical** The Chair’s sabbatical is due in 2020/21. He informed the meeting that he was likely to take at sometime between February and June 2021

**08/20 Matters to and from related bodies**

1. **Methodist Council/Conference**

A report was given re the business discussed at the January ‘Council. Highlights of the business included:

* + agreement to the nomination to Conference of Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler to serve as Secretary of the Conference for six years from 1st September 2020.
  + Consideration of the governance structure of the Church to look for a Trustee body of 15-20 people rather than the current 350 members of Conference.
  + The idea of a levy on leases has been shelved for the time being.
  + Conversations about the interchangeability of ministry in Wales and Scotland to be initiated, whilst responses are awaited from conversations with the Church of England.
  + Good Practice Guidelines for Churches on Sexual Harassment were agreed.
  + An inspiring presentation on Membership and the Methodist Way of Life was given by Revd Dr Roger Walton.

Amongst the business to be discussed at the next meeting is further conversation about The Methodist Way of Life, Trusteeship and Evangelism and Growth resourcing mission plans.

1. **Matter to/from Connexion**

Plans for conversation on the Conference report, **God in love Unites us**. At the forthcoming Synod were discussed which included feedback from circuit conversations and the process to be followed regarding ballot votes.

The meeting reflected on the recent visit to the Synods in Wales by the Vice President and President of the Conference.

1. **Y Cyngor –** Update conversations with Synod Cymru – at the Cymru Synod meeting in April, two options will be offered for the future; either for the Cymru circuit to join a joint Wales Synod as a welsh-speaking circuit, or for individual ardals or areas to join up with existing circuits in Wales Synod. It is recognised that in both options that Synod Cymru would cease to exist as a separate Synod and the option would have to be worked out in agreement with the Wales Synod.

**09/20 Ecumenical Matters**

Methodist /URC Joint Liaison Group: **The Bridgend United Area** has been served by one URC and two Methodist ministers. The current URC minister has recently accepted a new appointment elsewhere. As the URC is undertaking a review of deployment, the shape of future provision of ministry in the Area is uncertain at this time.

**Christian Aid** is facing significant challenges and is looking to restructure across the United Kingdom and in particular its regional office and staff across Wales.

**10/20 Date of next meeting:** 13thJune 2020, 10.30am at Newtown Methodist Church