

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN WALES – WALES SYNOD

Sixth Meeting of Synod held on Saturday 8 September 2012

at Hope Community Church, Newtown, Powys

Present: Rev Dr Stephen Wigley (Chair) Rev Rosemarie Clarke (Synod Secretary)
126 members and 4 visitors as recorded elsewhere.

Apologies/Dispensations: as recorded by the Secretary

Opening devotions were led by Gauri Taylor-Nayar and Cathays Methodist Community Choir.

1. WELCOME

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

The Chair, Rev Dr Stephen Wigley, welcomed new ministers to Wales Synod and Rev Beverley Ramsden responded on their behalf. New lay representatives identified themselves, and the Chair welcomed ecumenical representatives Archdeacon designate of Montgomery, Ven. Dr Peter Pike (Church In Wales) and Rev Sally Thomas (URC Ecumenical Officer) and explained that the young people of the Synod who had come to the Youth Forum, running parallel to Synod would be joining us later and leading the closing worship.

2. ADMINISTRATION

- (a) The Synod Secretary announced notices of a general and administrative nature.
- (b) Envelopes had been provided for the offering for the Methodist Ministers' Children's Relief Association. A total of £268 was later collected which rose to £312 with the addition of Gift Aid.
- (c) Synod agreed the appointment of Roy Watson, Sandra Powell and Gareth Edwards as scrutineers for the meeting.
- (d) Members were requested to collect the Circuit bags before leaving.
- (e) Correspondence. Synod asked that letters be sent to:
Rev Anthony Gregory on the death of his wife
Mrs Peggy Vernon on attaining 100 years
Rev Ian Waugh on the death of his mother
Rev Neville Stewart on his on-going ill health

3. APPOINTMENTS TO SYNOD

Synod agreed the appointments of representatives and officers as set out in the Handbook and addendum sheet.

4. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONFERENCE 2013

Revs Rosemarie Clarke, Cathy Gale, Alan Jenkins, Deacon Stephen Roe, Messrs Peter Ackerley, Graham Illingworth, Hugo Potieger and Mrs Mary Williams were elected. It was noted that Deacon Lorraine Brown would commence a three year term as a Conference Elected member at Conference 2013.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 10 SEPTEMBER 2011

Synod agreed the minutes. The Chair confirmed the intention to make minutes available electronically and on the web site in the future, with paper copies only provided on request. .

6. MATTERS ARISING

Chairs Invitation Process. The Chair expressed his appreciation for the support he had received during his first five years, the confidence expressed in his leadership by the invitation to serve for a further five years from September 2013 and the way the invitation process had been carried out. **Going for Gold.** Attention was drawn to a display showing how churches throughout the Wales Synod had been involved in the events celebrating the Olympics. **Cardiff Bay Chaplaincy.** The chaplain at Cardiff Bay was now in post and was encouraging the chaplaincy to long term planning, beyond the term of his appointment.

7. REPORT ON CONFERENCE 2012

Luke Curran outlined the ethos of Fruitful Field, explaining the structure and staffing which is to be implemented for training, and the likely impact in Wales. In particular Synod learnt that the Wales Training Network will cease to exist at the end of this church year but precise details of what will be in place including the personnel, had not yet been determined. Details of the process for establishing future funding for Wales should be available by the end of September 2012. Rev Rosemarie Clarke briefly covered other business of Conference, directing Synod to the reports available on the Methodist Church web site and also updating Synod on memorials that they had sent to Conference in 2010 and 2011. Items mentioned included The Education Commission Report, the modified senior leadership of the connexional team and the search for a Connexional Secretary, the Ecclesiology of Emerging Expressions of Church, the Larger than Circuit Working Party which would report to Conference 2013 and Faith and Order matters relating to the Lord's Supper and the reaffirmation of baptismal vows.

A request for a one page summary of Conference business to be made to Circuits for inclusion in newsletters, etc. was considered. Synod expressed its mind that this would be helpful and the matter was referred to SLT for further consideration.

Memorials from Synod

Rev John Atkinson reported that the Vale of Glamorgan Circuit had sent a memorial to Conference 2012 but had not yet received a copy of Conference's reply. The Assistant Synod Secretary undertook to contact the Memorials Committee on the circuit's behalf.

8. PURPOSE AND PATTERN OF SYNOD

Synod undertook a review of the current pattern of Synod meeting by considering three alternative options for the future:

Option 1 retain the current pattern of one Synod per year;

Option 2 return to a pattern of two Synods per year;

Option 3 retain an annual meeting of Synod, but add regional sessions in Spring.

A paper outlining the advantages and disadvantages of each option had been previously circulated and the Chair, Synod Secretary and Graham Illingworth, Assistant Synod Secretary introduced the business with a brief resumé of the options. Following group discussions, and some individual reporting, Synod indicated that the present option of one Synod was the most popular but it was clear that a significant number of people wished to explore the regional option. It was agreed that Synod Leadership Team would further consider the potential for regional gatherings in addition to one Synod and bring proposals to Synod Policy Committee to which authority was delegated in this matter.

9. SAFEGUARDING

Sue McIvor and Amy Adams performed a humorous dialogue which reported the extent of work undertaken during the past year in implementing the Creating Safer Space training module. 1,500 people had attended at 30 venues throughout Wales Synod; 10 trainers had completed the course and 6 were still in training. Synod members were urged to pass on their thanks to the circuit and local church Safeguarding Officers.

10. PRESENTATION ON PIONEER FX PROJECT IN COLWYN BAY

Gavin Mart outlined his work in Colwyn Bay and introduced the poet, Martin Daws who explained his role in the project and performed two of his poems.

11. ONE PROJECT VISIT TO ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Matt Collins gave a PowerPoint presentation of a One Project visit to Palestine to see at first hand the injustices and hardships in the country. His overriding feeling on his return was that now he knew what was happening he – and everyone – was responsible and should work to gain justice and peace in the region.

12. REPORT FROM SYNOD YOUTH WORK ACTION GROUP

Rev Richard Sharples outlined the programme that SYWAG had organised through 2011/12: Youth Forum, 3Generate, sleepover (simultaneously in 3 locations) and support of attendance at Greenbelt. It was their intention to repeat the pattern in 2012/13 with the addition of a second sleepover event.

Rev Verity Phillips presented the following **Notice of Motion** to Synod:

"In the light of the recommendations made at Conference that young people be encouraged to sit on all levels of our meetings, Synod invites the Youth Forum to elect one (or two) of their number to sit on SPC in addition to existing SPC representatives in order that the perspective of their generation be fairly contributed to all of our policies and decisions, with immediate effect." Proposed by Rev Verity Phillips Seconded by Rev Richard Sharples Synod unanimously agreed, requesting that **two** young people be elected.

Further/Higher Education The Synod Secretary reminded ministers that permission should be sought from young people before names were forwarded to the chaplains of colleges/universities.

13. REPORTS FROM CIRCUITS

Wrexham Tim Guy reported on the apparently negative situation of reducing the number of stipendiary ministers, but spoke with enthusiasm and excitement about the mixed ministry team that was emerging with a lay minister, lay workers and active supernumeraries volunteering to work alongside the remaining 2 presbyters and a paid administrator (4 hours a week).

Buckley & Deeside Rev Trevor Pratt reported on the effects of the Holiday Bible Club held for many years in part of the circuit. Youth work had grown from nothing to 16 young people going to Greenbelt in a couple of years. Early attempts at building youth work had been less successful. Synod members in similar circumstances were urged not to give up hope and keep trying. Thanks were offered for Synod's support in helping these young people to go to Greenbelt and other events.

Pembrokeshire

Deacon Janet Jenkins spoke of the concern of a young church member for the people who lived in the flats opposite the church and who did not have gardens and the vision for the plot of land outside the chapel, which had now become a reality. A vegetable garden had been created, then flowers had been planted and now children

from the local special needs school regularly helped in the garden and it had become a point of contact with the community.

14. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Jennifer Crook, Connexional Team, gave an interactive presentation on the subject of equality and diversity. This covered the key principles underpinning an Equality and Diversity theological statement which is unlikely to be finalised until Conference 2015, and the preparation of a toolkit.

15. ECUMENICAL MATTERS

Rev Gordon Sollis reported on the forthcoming Commission of Covenanting Churches in Wales event "The Gathering" at the University of Aberystwyth. A lot of work had gone into the preparing for the event and further discussion papers would be given to delegates for use within their denominations. Rev Cathy Gale had distributed letters to delegates during Synod and underlined the importance of them returning their registration slips by 14th September as requested.

16. REPORTS FROM POLICY COMMITTEE (SPC) AND Y CYNGOR

The Assistant Synod Secretary presented these reports. Synod received a report, previously circulated, summarising the work of SPC. It was emphasised that the minutes of all meetings of SPC can be found on the Synod website and that items can be placed on the agenda by contacting him at least 4 weeks before any meeting, meeting dates being published in the Synod Handbook. **Synod Constitution** Several corrections to the previously circulated paper detailing a written constitution were brought to Synod's attention. The constitution was necessary to reflect the different structures under which we operate as a Methodist Section 48A District and to set out procedures for any amendment or termination of this status. Following a short discussion, the constitution was agreed unanimously by Synod with the Chair undertaking to clarify the intended scope of the term 'lay employees'. **Y Cyngor** Synod received a report, previously circulated, on the work of Y Cyngor which detailed its responsibilities, the pattern of each meeting and a summary of some of the topics discussed during the year.

17. WORLD CHURCH REPORT

Rev Lin Healey thanked all those who participated in the Synod questionnaire and stated that a "Global Family Experience" resource was now available for use in churches. Methodist World Mission leaflets were also available.

18. GENERAL

Christians Together Bookshop The Chair reported that a Methodist representative was desired on the Cardiff based Churches Together Bookshop management team and encouraged people to volunteer.

Lay Workers Thanks and good wishes were expressed to Janet Hughes and Ros Jones, long-term lay workers in the Conwy & Prestatyn Circuit, who were to retire during the connexional year.

Thanks The Chair thanked Rosemarie Clarke for her efficiency in her new role as Synod Secretary. He then expressed his personal appreciation, and that of the whole of Synod, to Rev Trevor Pratt for his hard work during the many years he had acted as Synod Secretary, both in the North Wales District and the Wales Synod.

Web site Jack Healey reported that the Synod website was in the process of being upgraded and a website manager was being sought. Anyone interested in taking up this role was encouraged to contact him.

19. YOUTH FORUM

Rev Felicity Randall gave a brief outline of the Forum's activities during the day and introduced the Youth President, Hayley Moss who then addressed Synod. She was encouraged by the number of young people present at the Forum and spoke of her role in the Connexion; to represent the young people of the Methodist Church at various functions and committees including the Methodist Council and Conference and to be an encouragement to young people to play a full part in the work of the church.

The Youth Forum then led the closing devotions which included an action poem delivered by the whole group alongside Martin Daws.