

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN WALES – WALES SYNOD

Seventh Meeting of Synod held on Saturday 14 September 2013

at Hope Community Church, Newtown, Powys

Present: Rev Dr Stephen Wigley (Chair) Rev Rosemarie Clarke (Synod Secretary)
124 members and 3 visitors as reported
Apologies/Dispensations: as recorded by the Secretary

Opening devotions were led by the Aberystwyth band, Deacon Sam Taylor and Rev James Patron Bell

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 the following new ministers to Wales Synod:

Rev Jarel Robinson-Brown	Rev Roger Hides and Deacon Sara Windsor-Hides
Rev John Anderson	Rev Catherine Lewis
Rev Kofi Amissah	Rev Lorette Hinson
Rev Lesley Noon	Rev Siperire Mugadzaweta

and Rev Lesley Noon replied on their behalf.

Rev Christopher Tolley, Tenby United church (URC) was also welcomed to his first Synod

New lay representatives identified themselves and were also welcomed to Synod.

The following ecumenical visitors were welcomed:

Canon Rev Sue Huyton, Rector of Gwersyllt, St Asaph diocese of the Church in Wales

Rev Sally Thomas, Ecumenical Officer of the URC Synod of Wales

Synod was informed that the young people of the Synod, meeting in the Youth Forum running parallel to Synod, would be joining Synod later in the day.

2. ADMINISTRATION

The Chair introduced Rev Chris Gray to Synod and the meeting confirmed his appointment, as Assistant Chair for the South West area, by standing vote. Chris was then commissioned for this role in a short responsive liturgy.

The Synod Secretary announced notices of a general and administrative nature.

- (a) Envelopes had been provided for the offering for the Methodist Ministers' Children's Relief Association. A total of £304.30 was later collected which rose to £344.30 with the addition of Gift Aid.
- (b) Roy Watson, Sandra Powell and Les Jones were appointed as scrutineers for the meeting.
- (c) Members were requested to collect the Circuit bags before leaving
- (d) Correspondence

The Chair reported that a letter was being sent through Y Cyngor to The Church in Wales on their Synod's approval of the appointment of women as Bishops.

The Secretary was directed to send greetings to:

Rev Will Morrey

Mr Eric McDonald

Rev Dr Timothy Mark

Rev Douglas Williamson and his wife, Pamela

Mr David Tilley.

3. APPOINTMENTS TO SYNOD

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

4. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONFERENCE 2013

Representative requirements were: 3 presbyters; 4 lay people.

Those elected: Rev Rosemarie Clarke

Rev Anne Ellis

Rev Prof Teddy Kalongo

Mr Peter Ackerley

Mr Graham Illingworth

Mr Hugo Potgieter

Ms Mary Williams

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 8 SEPTEMBER 2012

The minutes had been distributed electronically and were available on the web site. The minutes were agreed to be a true record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Item 12 - Youth representative to SPC. The election for this post was on the Youth Forum agenda for the day.

Item 18 - Christians Together Bookshop. Rev Mark Rowland reported that he had been appointed to the management committee of the shop.

7. REPORT ON CONFERENCE 2012

Synod Representatives Deacon Stephen Roe and Mr Hugo Potgieter summarised their impressions of Conference and thanked Synod for appointing them as representatives.

Youth Representatives Ms Abby Watterson and Ms Roxanne Bainbridge, both of Buckley & Deeside Circuit, who had attended Conference 2013 as representatives from the Youth Assembly, gave an encouraging report about their experiences at Conference. Both of them spoke of what they had gained from attending Conference including the confidence to stand up in front of Synod. Abby had been appointed as a One Project Participant in Wrexham and Roxanne would be one of three young people travelling to Nicaragua in November. Methodist Children and Young People in Britain have pledged to support two teams from Nicaragua to the Street Child World Cup in Brazil in 2014 and Roxanne's forthcoming trip was linked to that commitment.

8. WELCOME TO THE NEW SYNOD CYMRU CHAIR

Rev Jennie Hurd was welcomed by The Chair and warmly received by Synod. Jennie spoke of her deep love of Wales and the Welsh people, her hopes and aspirations in her new role, the desire to strengthen relationships and her confidence that in seeking first God's Kingdom everything else would fall into place.

The revised date of the Ministerial Retreat was announced as 7-9 January 2014 which would be jointly led by The Chairs of the two Synods.

9. THE GATHERING PROPOSALS

Rev Cathy Gale introduced the process for responding to the proposals to Synod, which was already underway.

Rev Mark Rowlands proposed a Memorial (see below), seconded by Rev A James Patron Bell.

Rev Trevor Pratt, Y Llywydd (President) of Y Cyngor, proposed that the Memorial "be not put", seconded by Rev Cathy Gale

Synod voted on the procedural motion that the vote "be not put" - For 51 Against 61 Present and eligible to vote 126. The motion was lost.

The vote for the Memorial was then taken: For 73 Against 23 Present and eligible to vote 126.

The motion was carried

10. WALES TRAINING NETWORK and new LEARNING NETWORK

The Chair gave thanks for the work of Wales Training Network, and especially the role of Mr Luke Curran and Ms Amy Adams.

Luke responded, thanking Synod for its support during the time of transition. Luke reported that he and Amy would be continuing to work with Synod in the new Learning Network with the expectation that a Welsh speaking colleague would be appointed to their team by January 2014. He further reported that candidates will now train via Queens Foundation in Birmingham and that the Learning Network would be responsible for delivering new courses for churches as they were rolled out across the connexion.

Amy gave a brief outline of the Creating Safer Space Leadership module and the opportunities available to complete it during the connexional year.

Mr Peter Swindale, Synod Local Preachers' Secretary, reported on the new course "Pathways for Worship Leaders and Local Preachers" which would be anticipated would receive approval after Easter 2014. It consists of four modules for Worship Leaders / Local Preachers to study plus a further four for those training as Local Preachers. Those already working through "Faith & Worship" could choose to continue on that course or move to the new modules. The modules may also be suitable for use in Continuing Local Preacher Development.

11. CONVERSATION WITH YOUTH FORUM – "WHAT MAKES A HEALTHY CHURCH"

Synod broke into groups, each of which included 2 or 3 members of Youth Forum. The groups considered three of the characteristics of a healthy circuit environment as described in the Conference Report 'Supporting ministers with Ill Health': 'Using our God given skills', 'Responsibility and appropriate pressure' and 'Being treated with Respect and Given Recognition'. The groups explored what these characteristics might look like in a church healthy for lay and ordained alike, and shared examples of good practice.

12. HADRIAN'S WALL WALK

Patrick, a Yorkshire terrier, aided by Rev Una Maclean encouraged Synod to contribute to his sponsored walk along Hadrian's Wall commencing on Monday 16 September 2013. Patrick was walking for "CALM", Action for Children and British Heart Foundation charities. Donations to his jar were invited.

13. SAFEGUARDING UP-DATE

The Chair thanked Rev Susan McIvor and Mr Peter Ackerley for their work, and reminded Synod that contact details for safeguarding officers, if any issue arose, are on the inside front cover of the Synod Handbook.

14. SUPREME COURT DECISION ON MINISTERS' EMPLOYMENT

The Chair reported that the Supreme Court had upheld the view that ministers' relationship with the Church was as officers rather than employees. He spoke about the Covenant relationship which ministers enjoyed with the

Conference as demonstrated in CPD and by the annual stationing of ministers, confirmed by letter from the Secretary of Conference. The Chair emphasised the importance of paying attention to codes of practice and guidelines to uphold that understanding.

15. METHODIST HOMES FOR THE AGED

Rev Andrew Norris, Chaplaincy Advisor for MHA gave a slide presentation covering the last 70 years of Methodist Homes, which showed clearly the advances in care, description of "elderly" and community support. He also thanked Ms Linda Davies, the retiring Synod representative, for her tireless work for MHA over many years.

16. MISSION IN OUR LOCAL SETTINGS

Rev Chris Gray gave a presentation from the Neath/Port Talbot Circuit about being in partnership with others, whether other churches, schools or community groups. The reported showed ways in which small initiatives could encourage and enlarge the church's presence in the community in which it is set.

Synod then had an opportunity to discuss the ideas presented and share their own stories, in small groups.

17. REPORT FROM POLICY COMMITTEE paper previously distributed

It was noted that one item of policy had been agreed during the year which related to the point at which formal consent for the sale of property would be given.

Synod attention was drawn to the lack of balance between lay/ordained and male/female members of the Synod Policy Committee and circuits were encouraged to think about that when making new appointments. Synod accepted the paper.

18. Y CYNGOR (paper previously distributed)

Synod received the paper.

19. METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN

Ms Mary Williams reported that MWiB was now two years old, and the title was still contentious. Giving a brief outline of the movement, bringing Network and the World Federation of Methodist Women together, she stated that a new logo had been designed which was a butterfly.

MWiB was involved in lobbying against trafficking and domestic/slave labour.

Mary stressed that grants were available for suitable social/community projects in local church/circuit areas.

Their special project is to support the Dalit people of India and MWiB has pledged to raise £50,000 over the next three years for the Church of North India for the project.

In Wales, the North retained its executive committee with an annual bilingual service, which this year would be held in Prestatyn. Ms Norma Boocock was the new President.

The South had no executive, but a quiet day had been arranged for June 2014 in Cathays and an autumn afternoon tea in Camarthen. The Swanwick Conference would again be held in June.

20. PILGRIMAGE

Rev Hugh John Wilson reported on a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land which he was leading, starting on 4 March 2014. There were still some places available for anyone wanting to join.

Synod closed with worship led by the Synod Secretary and the Aberystwyth band.

Memorial to the Conference regarding the Gathering reports

The Wales Synod is firmly committed to the unity of the Church according to the mind of Christ. It rejoices in the work of God in bringing Christians closer together. In that spirit, it reflects upon the October 2012 report of the Commission of the Covenanted Churches in Wales. It was able to consider the report in its representative session for the first time in September 2013, after the Conference of that year had received a report regarding the proposals and consultation upon them. With deep regret, Synod finds many of the proposals troubling, including the suggestion that its ministers should submit to some manner of further ceremony of the laying on of hands beyond their existing ordination. The Wales Synod therefore requests that the Conference:

(i) reaffirm that ministers in the Methodist Church are already ordained to the diaconate or the presbyterate of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and no further ordination to the relevant order is necessary or possible. While the Synod is ready to enter into conversation about future patterns of ordination, it requests the Conference to make clear that mutual acceptance of, and respect for, one another's ordained ministries are a pre-requisite of such conversations not their endpoint.

(ii) explore ways that the ordained ministry of covenant partners can be fully acknowledged within Methodist structures. To this end the Synod requests the Conference to explore the granting of *Authorised to Serve* or *Associate* status to all ordained ministers of the covenant partners in Wales, "as a symbolic gesture within the context of the Covenant, which could make a contribution towards the goal of visible unity." (Ecumenical Ordination report, paragraph 14, Conference 1996)