

**Minutes of the meeting of the Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed Church held on
Saturday 12th March 2016 at The King's Way Church, Ossett.**

- 1. Welcome**
The Minister, The Rev Mike Jones, welcomed Synod to The King's Way Church and gave the House Notices.
- 2. Synod convened**
Synod was convened by The Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson.
- 3. Greetings**
The Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson, welcomed everyone and greeted those attending Synod for the first time.
- 4. Present**
There were 75 Lay people, 31 Ministers, 7 Retired Ministers and 2 students.
- 5. Apologies**
Apologies were received from 10 Lay people, 4 Ministers, 1 Church Related Community Work Minister and 8 Retired ministers.
- 6. Minutes**
With some minor corrections, the minutes of the Synod meeting held on Saturday 10th October 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Moderator.
- 7. Matters Arising**
The Synod Clerk reported that since the meeting in March, Synod had met on one other occasion on Saturday January 23rd 2016 at The Bridge Church, Otley for the induction of The Rev Jason McCullagh to The Joint Pastorate of The Bridge Church, Otley and The Burley in Wharfedale United Reformed Church.
- 8. Agenda**
The Synod Clerk reported that there were a number of additional resolutions on the supplementary paper that had been distributed prior to the meeting. The Regional Pilots Officer, Alan Kendall, would be showing a short video after the lunch break and there would also be a celebration of the service given by Jubilee Ministers.
- 9. Synod Notices**
The Synod Clerk gave the notices and asked Synod representatives to take note of the information they had received with the Synod mailing and also that found on their seats. He also advised representatives that there was no bookstall as the volume of sales was not viable and the minister from Skipton who usually staffed it was unavailable.
- 10. Date and Place of the next Synod meeting**
The next meeting of Synod would be on Saturday 8th October at Holme, Bradford and then on Saturday 11th March 2017 at The Bridge Church, Otley.
- 11. Appointment of Tellers**
The following were appointed as tellers for this meeting of Synod:
Mrs Val Morrison, The Rev David Pickering, Mrs Jenny Poulter and Dr David Robinson
- 12. Opening Worship**
The Rev Dr Rosalind Selby, Principal of Northern College, led Synod in opening worship interspersed with Bible study on the feeding of the five thousand.

The story was about looking at what you had and putting it into the hands of Jesus prayerfully to see what God did with it. The whole story was about abundance. God's provision was amazing and we should celebrate God's abundant provision.

13. **Jesus Shaped People**

The Rev Canon Gordon Dey, the team leader for Jesus Shaped People, explained that JSP was an adventure that was now motivating about 70 churches.

It was a whole church discipleship adventure. It was not for a small group within a church but for the whole church. The church had to get its vision right before starting on its mission and the vision was for our churches to be more like Jesus. What Jesus made important we must make important.

There were five areas which Jesus made important:

- Teaching
- Prayer
- People (particularly the marginalised, children and people on the edge)
- Leadership
- Prophecy

Jesus shaped People was a 15 week programme which needed to be owned by the church with three weeks devoted to each of the five topics. God was not calling us to go to church. God was calling us to be his church, said Canon Dey.

14. **Training for Learning and Serving (TLS)**

The Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson, presented Mrs Terasa Raddings with a TLS certificate for having completed Pathway 2: Equipping for Service.

The Synod Development Officer, The Rev Dr James Coleman, said that TLS was coming to an end and a letter explaining what was happening had been sent to all church secretaries. The new emphasis was on discipleship and the recognition that there was a need to energise and refresh the whole people of God.

He was not sure what was going to emerge but it would be something to galvanise the whole church. We were entering a period of transition but there would be a route for accrediting lay preachers.

15. **Announcements**

Yorkshire Big Day Out: This will be at Flamingo Land on Saturday 10th September 2016 and Alan Kendall said it was a whole church adventure for the whole family. He asked for ticket orders (or at least some idea of numbers) to be in by April 1st and also put out an appeal for team members to help on the day.

Pilots: Mr Alan Kendall reminded Synod that Pilots was now in its 80th year. He asked for memories to be sent in from all churches which had had a Pilots Company. The Rev Janet Lees had written a special hymn to celebrate the 80th year.

This year V & N for Voyagers and Navigators, the older members of Pilots, would be taking place from August 1st – 4th at St Cassian's Centre in Kintbury, near Hungerford, Berkshire.

He also commended to Synod "Let Justice Flow" - an introduction to social justice produced in partnership by Christian Aid, Commitment for Life, Pilots and the URC. Nick Robinson, one of its authors was a Pilots leader from Yorkshire.

Commemorative Quilts: Mrs Gwen Smithies drew attention to the commemorative quilts which were on display around the room. These had been produced by the Sheffield Churches to remember the First World War and record the impact it had had on family life. There was also a booklet on sale.

Annual Elders Conference: Mrs Val Morrison said the 5th annual conference would be on Saturday 23rd April 2016 at St Andrew's, Roundhay, Leeds on the theme of discipleship. The speakers would be The Rev Dr John Bradbury from Westminster College and The Rev Kevin Watson, Moderator of the Yorkshire Synod.

Yorkshire Assembly: The Clerk gave notice of the Yorkshire Assembly, which would be held at the Spa Complex, Scarborough on Wednesday 11th May 2016, starting at 11.00am. The speakers would be The Rev Michael Mewis and The Rev Janet Lees. Worship would be led by The Rev Alison Micklem and there would be a musical item by The Jelly Rolls, a group of young people associated with St Andrew's, Scarborough.

Lay Preachers Day: The Synod Development Officer, The Rev Dr James Coleman, gave notice of the first Lay Preachers Day to be held on October 15th 2016 at St Andrew's, Roundhay, Leeds. The Speaker for the day would be The Rev Dr Rosalind Selby.

16. Lunchtime adjournment

The Moderator said Grace and Synod adjourned for lunch.

17. Pilots

The Regional Pilots Officer, Mr Alan Kendall, presented a short video about the Pilots organisation.

18. The Northerly Synods Consultation

Following brief discussion, the Moderator moved Resolution 27:

Resolution 27

The Yorkshire Synod supports the continuing process of shared work across the Northerly Synods of the URC and:

- *continues to support the work of the 'being the church' task group as it seeks to enhance our understanding of being the church learning from colleagues and friends in the northerly synods.*
- *undertakes work phases 1,2 and 3 recommended by the Human Resources task group and recognising Church House is not in a position to provide the on-going HR support required by synods and churches, it enables Synod Council to put these HR arrangements in place.*
- *continues to support the Northerly Synods safeguarding task group and collectively develop safeguarding practices in ways that reduce duplication of time and resources.*
- *continues to support the Listening and Reconciliation task group as it develops ways to work alongside churches in difficult situations, helping them to deal honestly with the conflict they experience and offers £500 to support the development activity.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

19. Safeguarding

Mrs Heather Raistrick spoke to the additional paper which had been circulated. She said a lot of work had been undertaken and training had been offered across the Synod but there was a need for a professional person for day to day work. In Yorkshire there was a need for one-and-a-half days per week and in Northern Synod there was a need for one day per week. The Treasurer, The Rev David Coote, said there had been talks about a budget for this and the money was already in place. The salary for a full time post would be in the region of £36,000 to £40,000 per year but Yorkshire would pay for the equivalent of one-and-a-half days per week. Heather moved resolution 28.

Resolution 28

Synod agrees to support a joint appointment or other arrangements with Northern Synod, to fulfil statutory Safeguarding requirements and authorises the Synod Safeguarding Group to oversee the process on behalf of the Yorkshire Synod.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

20. Trust Matters

The Synod Treasurer, The Rev David Coote, informed Synod that two years ago counsel's opinion had been sought in order to clarify Trust Company responsibilities for local church property. Some small adjustments to ways of working would need to be made and guidance for local churches was being produced nationally. Synod would be kept informed.

21. Jubilee Ministers

The Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson, led the Synod in a prayer of thanks for ministers in Yorkshire who were celebrating jubilee anniversaries this year.

Celebrating 50 years in the ministry:

- The Rev Hugh McKee
- The Rev David Batchelor
- The Rev David Hill
- The Rev David Wiseman
- The Rev Michael Cruchley

Celebrating 70 years:

- The Rev Anthony Green

22. Greenbelt Festival 2016

Since 1974, Greenbelt has equipped and re-energised Christians to be imaginative and effective disciples in the local community. Greenbelt and the United Reformed Church have signed an agreement making the URC an associate sponsor of the festival for the first time and a short promotional video of the festival was shown.

Greenbelt has been described as a collision of the arts, faith and justice. This year's festival is being held from August 26th to 29th at Boughton House, near Kettering. Further information can be found at www.greenbelt.org.uk.

23. The Moderator's report

The Moderator moved resolution 1

Resolution 1

Synod receives the report of its Moderator.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

The Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson, said that God had not forsaken us. If the UK had the same ratio of ministers to church members as in Malawi then we would have only ten ministers - we in the UK were blessed. He said that Mission Council would be looking at the issue of deployment in October. In Yorkshire we had developed "Many are called" and the exploration of discipleship was the most exciting development in the United Reformed Church at the moment.

24. Synod Council Report

The Clerk moved Resolution 2

Resolution 2

Synod received the report of its Council.

The resolution was passed unanimously. There were no questions.

Mrs Jenny Poulter introduced Resolution 26 which was concerned with resourcing a manse for the Generation Y minister. This arose from the work of the Resources Task Group recently formed by Synod Council with a remit to examine and provide options for the resourcing of Synod mission including the delivery of initiatives developed under "Many are Called".

Resolution 26

Synod agrees the Resources Task Group recommendations that:

- 1. Unless a suitable property owned by a URC church can be rented (which seems unlikely), a manse should be purchased for the Generation Y minister.*
- 2. In the first instance, churches in the Leeds area should be approached to ascertain if they have manse funds or other funds they wish to invest for five or ten years in order to purchase a suitable property.*
- 3. Should funding from (2) above be inadequate or non-existent, Synod should make up the shortfall or fund in full the purchase of a suitable manse with money from the Albion Fund.*
- 4. Synod Council is authorised to arrange for 1 – 3 above to be actioned with responsibility for the final decisions being delegated to Synod Council.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

25. Committee Reports

The Clerk moved Resolution 3.

Resolution 3

Synod receives the reports from its committees, Development team and Pilots officers.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Reports were received from the following:

1. Ministries Committee:

As part of the Ministries Committee report, Rod Morrison and The Rev Ashley Evans gave examples of how "Many are Called" is developing. Rod Morrison spoke of the need for ministry on the ground where people are and of making connections with the people around you and working with partners who are not themselves of the Christian faith.

Ashley Evans said we needed to plan for growth because if we were not leading our churches into growth, where were we leading them? He spoke of the four Ps (Presence, Proclamation, Persuasion and Prayer) and of the invitation (I'm going; It's going to be good; Do you want to come with me?). He hoped to offer a 'Leading Your Church into Growth' course in November.

2. Pastoral Committee:

The report was presented by The Rev Peter Jordan, Administrator to the Pastoral Committee. A section of the report dealt with a change of name for Bolton Villas and the Synod Clerk proposed resolution 29.

Resolution 29

Synod agrees to the request from Bolton Villas Bradford to change its name from Bolton Villas United Reformed Church to Bolton Villas Family Church.

A vigorous discussion followed in which opposing views were expressed. It was said that the term "family church" could make a single person feel unwelcome; that the majority of our churches had United Reformed Church in the title and that we should not drop it.

The Rev Ashley Evans, minister at Bolton Villas, said most people did not know what the URC was and that it has put one family off coming to church. He believed the term family church would help the church in its mission.

It became clear that there would not be agreement on the resolution and it was moved by The Rev David Coote, and seconded by Mrs Pauline Mewis that the motion be not put. This was overwhelmingly carried and resolution 29 was withdrawn.

3. Property Committee.

4. Financial Resources Committee.

5. Mediation Service.

6. Pilots.

7. Listed Building Advisory Committee.

8. Keld Project:

Mr David Figures presenting the report said Keld was a point mission project between the Yorkshire and Northern Synods. It was a place truly apart with a "profound atmosphere". The ministry of presence was being maintained and extended and work was underway to restore the adult institute as a well-equipped meeting place for seminars and training. Help was needed to bring this new facility to as many people as possible.

9. The Development Officer.

26. Changes in Personnel serving the Synod

The Clerk drew attention to the following appointments recorded in the Synod papers which had been made by Synod Council since the October Synod.

- The Rev Matt Stone to serve on the Ministries Committee.
- Mrs Pat Van Lemmen to serve as minutes secretary to the Ministries Committee.
- Mrs Alex Jowitt to serve as Yorkshire Synod representative and Trustee on the Leeds General Purposes Fund.

The Clerk moved the following resolutions

Resolution No 4

Synod appoints The Rev Jason McCullagh to serve as Convenor of the Pastoral Committee for a three-year term to March 2019.

Resolution No 5

Synod appoints The Rev Alison Micklem to serve as Convenor of the Ministries Committee for a three-year period to March 2019.

Both resolutions were passed unanimously.

A number of people had agreed to serve in new positions and the Clerk moved resolutions 6–9.

Resolution No 6

Synod appoints The Rev Ashley Evans and Mr Alex Walker to serve as members of Synod Council for a three-year term to March 2019.

Resolution No 7

Synod appoints The Rev Dr James Coleman and Mrs Pauline Mewis to serve as Yorkshire representatives on Mission Council for a three-year period to March 2019.

Resolution No 8

Synod appoints Mrs Jenny Poulter to serve as the Church Life Review Co-ordinator for the central area of the Synod for a three-year term to March 2019.

Resolution No 9

Synod appoints Mrs Valerie Jenkins to become the Synod Link for retired ministers in the Bradford/Aire Valley area of the Synod for three years until March 2019.

The resolutions were passed unanimously.

A number of people had agreed to serve a further term and the Clerk moved resolutions 10 – 15.

Resolution No 10

Synod thanks The Rev Tony Lee and Mr Simon Loveitt for their services to Synod as members of Synod Council and re-appoints them for a further three-year period to March 2019.

Resolution No 11

Synod thanks Mr Stephen Gooder for his services to synod on the Financial Resources Committee and re-appoints him for a further three years to March 2019.

Resolution No 12

Synod thanks Mr Alan Kendall for his services to the Children and Young People Committee and re-appoints him to serve a further three years to March 2019.

Resolution No 13:

Synod thanks The Rev Nick Percival for his services to the URC Retreats Group as the Synod Link and re-appoints him to serve as URC Retreats Group Synod Link for a further three years to March 2019.

Resolution No 14

Synod thanks Mr Alan Kendall and Mrs Janet Kendall for their services to the Synod as Regional Pilots Officers and reappoints them for a further three years to March 2019.

Resolution No 15

Synod thanks Miss Jean Russell for her work as Religious Advisor to Sheffield University and nominates her to serve a further three-year period to March 2019.

The resolutions were passed unanimously.

There were a number of people to be thanked and the Clerk began by moving resolution 16 which was passed by acclamation.

Resolution No 16

Synod thanks The Rev David Pickering for his service to Synod as Convenor of the Ministries Committee and as one of the Yorkshire representatives on Mission Council and wishes him well in his new role as Moderator of the National Synod of Scotland.

The Clerk then moved resolution 17 which was also passed by acclamation.

Resolution No 17

Synod thanks The Rev David Coote for his services to Synod as Synod Treasurer over the last five years.

At this point, the Trust and Property Secretary, Mrs Sheila Duncan asked permission to speak. This was granted and she drew attention to the fact that we had been unable to find anyone to take over as Synod Treasurer from The Rev David Coote. She urged people to go away and think carefully about the current situation which left the Office Manager, Mr Bill Marland, and herself in a very exposed position with no one to refer to for advice and guidance when financial issues arose. She asked Synod for its prayerful thoughts.

The Clerk moved the following resolutions individually. All were passed by acclamation.

Resolution No 18

Synod thanks The Rev Pauline Calderwood for her services to Synod as Convenor of the Synod Pastoral Committee since March 2014.

Resolution No 19

Synod thanks Mrs Ann Oldknow for her service to Synod as a member of the Synod's Investment Sub – Committee over a number of years.

Resolution No 20

Synod thanks Mrs Ann Coates for her services to Synod as a member of Synod Council over a number of years.

Resolution No 21

Synod thanks Mrs Tessa Henry-Robinson for services to Synod as a member of Synod Council.

Resolution No 22

Synod thanks Mrs Jenny Poulter for her service to Synod as one of Yorkshire's Mission Council representatives for the past six years.

Resolution No 23

Synod thanks Miss Margaret Atkinson who has completed her second term of office on the Synod Nominations Group for her services to Synod.

Resolution No 24

Synod thanks Mrs Fiona Weighton-Smith who has completed her second term of office on the Synod Nominations Group for her services to Synod.

General Assembly:

General Assembly takes place in Southport from 8th to 11th July 2016. Yorkshire has 14 members plus the Moderator. However, since the Yorkshire Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson, will be inducted as General Assembly Moderator at Southport, the Synod is allowed to appoint a 15th member to take his place.

The Clerk proposed **Resolution No 25**

Resolution No 25

Synod appoints the following as Yorkshire members of General Assembly 2016:

Lay:

*Pauline Mewis
Jenny Leck
Ron Sweeney
Chris Reed
Judith Drake
Marguerite Sobol
Abi Thomas
David Miall*

Ordained:

*Angela Lawson
Chris Dowd
Zaidie Orr
Janine Atkinson
Gwen Smithies
James Coleman
Alison Micklem*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Additional resolutions:

The Clerk had given notice in the morning of a number of additional resolutions which had been circulated on a supplementary paper. He moved the following resolutions from the supplementary paper individually:

Resolution No 30

Synod appoints The Rev David Coote to serve on the Investment Sub-Committee for a three-year term to March 2019.

Resolution No 31

Synod appoints The Rev Bob Heathcote to serve as the administrator for the Ministerial Accompanied Self-Appraisal Scheme for a three-year period to March 2019.

Resolution No 32

Synod thanks Mrs Val Morrison for her services to the Property Committee for the past three years as Convenor and reappoints her to serve a further three-year term as Convenor to March 2019.

Resolution No 33

2019. Synod thanks Ms Liz Haestier for her three years of service on the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee and reappoints her to serve a further three-year term on the committee to March

Resolution No 34

Synod thanks The Rev Mark Robinson for his services to the Pastoral Committee as a Synod Pastoral Elder for the west area of the Synod and wishes him well in his new role as Chaplain to the Moderator of General Assembly.

Resolution No 35

Synod thanks the Rev David Batchelor for his services to the Synod over a number of years as the administrator for the Ministerial Accompanied Self-Appraisal Scheme.

Resolution No 36

Synod appoints Dr John Cornell to serve as a member of Synod Council for a three-year period to March 2019.

The resolutions were all passed unanimously.

27. In Memoriam

The Moderator remembered in prayer, Ministers and Elders who had died since the last meeting of Synod.

- Jean Cook, Trinity, Barnsley
- Derek Collins, St Andrew’s, Sheffield
- Dilys Wigglesworth, Riddlesden
- Kathleen Brayshaw, Heckmondwike
- Simon T D Aizlewood, Wadsley, Sheffield
- Janet Thorpe, Wadsley, Sheffield
- David Gould, Wadsley, Sheffield
- Gordon Stanley, Ravensthorpe with Hopton
- Peter Brayshaw, Cottingley

28. Thanks

The Moderator expressed thanks to everyone at The King’s Way, Church, Ossett for their hard work in preparing for and organising the day and also to the Synod Office Staff – Bill, Anne, Sally and Hayley, who put in all the hard work behind the scenes stuffing envelopes and preparing the Synod papers.

29. Closing worship

The closing worship was led by members of The King’s Way Church, Ossett.

Signed.....Date.....