

**Minutes of the meeting of the Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed Church held on  
Saturday 11th March 2017 at The Bridge Church, Otley.**

**1. Welcome**

The Minister, The Rev Jason McCullagh, welcomed Synod to The Bridge 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. The Rev Ashley Evans introduced Caroline Pathak, the Host Evangelist at Northcliffe, Shipley and the Synod Clerk introduced Mrs Hayley Brook who became the Synod Office Finance Manager at the beginning of January.

**4. Present**

There were 72 Lay people, 22 Ministers and 10 Retired Ministers.

**5. Apologies**

Apologies were received from 12 Lay people, 8 Ministers, 1 CRCW, 8 Retired Ministers and 1 Student.

**6. Minutes**

The minutes of the Synod meeting held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Moderator.

**7. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**8. Agenda**

Additional information had been received since the Synod papers were prepared and there were some extra items in the afternoon. Following the Committee resolutions after lunch there would be a PowerPoint presentation from Church House on Walking the Way, followed by a short promotional video on the national Big Day Out at Warwick Castle in May. There would also be some additional resolutions in the Synod Council Report regarding changes in personnel serving the Synod.

**9. Synod Notices**

The Synod Clerk asked representatives to take note of the information received with the Synod mailing and also the information placed on seats which included the latest edition of "Over the Wall", the publication of the Five Northern Synods.

There was also information on the Keld Festival at the end of April; the Women's Anglo-German Gathering 2017 at the beginning of August and a letter from Katherine Hogg, the Regional Co-ordinator for Christian Aid regarding 60 years of Christian Aid week. Finally, there was a list of Synod Committee meeting dates.

**10. Date and Place of the next Synod meeting**

The next meeting of Synod would be on Saturday July 22<sup>nd</sup> at Headingley St Columba for the induction of the Rev Clare Davison to a 50 per cent ministry at Headingley St Columba and 50 per cent Ministry and Mission Enabler with Leeds Mission and Care Group Partnership.

The Synod would meet again the following week on Saturday July 29<sup>th</sup> at the Emmanuel Institute of the University of Leeds for the ordination of Sal Bateman and the induction of both Sal Bateman and Kate Hackett to the Generation Y Special Category Ministry.

The usual pattern of meetings on the second Saturday in October and the second Saturday in March would then continue with the October meeting on Saturday October 14<sup>th</sup> at Christ Church, South Ella and the March meeting on Saturday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2018 at a place yet to be determined.

#### **11. Appointment of Tellers**

The following were appointed as tellers for this meeting of Synod:

Mr David Figures, The Rev Alison Micklem, Mrs Val Morrison and Dr David Robinson

#### **12. Opening Worship**

The Moderator, Rev Kevin Watson, led the Opening Worship which also incorporated the Moderator's report. His message was that we needed to be Spirit led. The recent American Presidential elections and the EU Referendum had exposed deep divisions in a society that was turning its back on Christian values. Now was the time for a generosity of spirit and to come back to Jesus.

We should seek what God wants and He will show us the way. People will come with the gifts that are needed. We might even have to invest more if God says it is needed. We should let go of buildings that have become a hindrance.

It was wrong to highlight areas of weakness in churches and as a Synod we had begun to explore AI (Appreciative Inquiry). He was hearing more and more amazing stories of helping the most desperate and needy and sharing the gospel.

Jesus would show us the way. He trusted completely in God and so should we. We needed to let go and see where Jesus is leading us.

During the worship, Synod also heard from Katherine Hogg, Regional Organiser for Christian Aid which was set up 60 years ago to help and support refugees after the Second World War. Today there were still thousands of refugees in need of help and support. She showed a PowerPoint presentation in support of the work of Christian Aid and Christian Aid week in May.

Mrs Anne Parker spoke briefly about Commitment for Life which she had been involved with for the whole of the 25 years it had been running. She said the involvement of the United Reformed Church in Yorkshire had helped save so many lives and had changed thousands for the better.

#### **13. Constance Coltman**

A short film celebrating the centenary of the ordination in 1917 of Constance Coltman, the first woman to be ordained into the ministry of the Congregational Union of England and Wales was shown.

After the screening, Mr David Figures said we should also celebrate the northern pioneers: Margaret Fullerton who was ordained in 1927 and Constance Clark, ordained in 1930 who both ministered in Leeds and Kathleen Hendry, ordained in 1932, who ministered near Rochdale.

#### **14. Announcements**

1. The Rev Ashley Evans gave details of Hope 2018 and announced that copies of the Hope 2018 brochure were available for churches to take away.

2. Mrs Pauline Mewis gave details of the Yorkshire Assembly on May 10<sup>th</sup> in the Ocean Room at The Spa, Scarborough starting at 11.30am

3. Mrs Val Morrison gave details of the annual Elders Conference at Roundhay, Leeds on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Church Secretary training to be held during the summer, and the General Assembly questionnaire which was available online until April 28<sup>th</sup>.

4. The Rev Alison Micklem announced the launch of "Looking for a Voice", a Hymnological autobiography by Caryl Micklem and herself on Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup> at St Columba's, York at 2.30pm.

5. Mr Alan Kendall provided details of the National Big Day Out at Warwick Castle on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

6. The Rev Barry Parker gave information about the Fairtrade goods and Palestian handicraft products available during the lunch hour.

7. The Rev David Coote reminded representatives that he and Mrs Sheila Duncan, the Synod Trust and Property Secretary would be staffing a Help Desk during the lunch break to answer churches' queries regarding the Trust Company correspondence that had recently been sent out.

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

The Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson, presented certificates to Adam Woodhouse (TLS Foundation Course); Anne Parker (Developing Community Experiences) and Linda McHale (Gateways into Worship). Immediately after lunch Jenny Horton who was unable to be present during the morning session received her Gateways into Worship certificate. Sharon d'Ambrosio has been awarded a Developing Community Experiences certificate but was not present to receive it.

Both Linda McHale and Jenny Horton are now Assembly accredited lay preachers.

**16. Lunchtime adjournment**

The Moderator said Grace and Synod adjourned for lunch.

**17. Mr Martin Imeson**

The Moderator, The Rev Kevin Watson, drew attention to the fact that Mr Martin Imeson, the lay leader at Providence Dacre was retiring at Easter and this was his last attendance at a Synod meeting. The Moderator thanked him for his work at Dacre and led Synod in a round of applause and appreciation.

**18. Committee Resolutions**

The Moderator moved resolution 9

**Resolution 9**

*Synod authorises the Children and Young People Committee to go forward with the plans outlined in its report to appoint two workers by autumn 2017.*

The resolution was passed unanimously

The Moderator moved resolution 10

**Resolution 10**

*Synod agrees that following the General Assembly decision in 2016, those nominated by local churches to preside at the sacraments will, after suitable training, be authorised for an initial period of five years, after which they will be encouraged to undertake a refresher course, which will also be offered to those already authorised.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

**19. Changes in Personnel serving the Synod**

The Clerk drew attention to the resolution passed by Synod Council since the last meeting of Synod:

*Synod agrees that either Mr Willie Duncan; the Synod Treasurer; or an approved representative of the Financial Resources Committee will chair the Investment Sub-Committee on behalf of the Financial Resources Committee.*

A number of people had agreed to serve again in various capacities and the Clerk moved Resolutions 4-6.

**Resolution 4**

*Synod thanks Mrs Val Morrison for her services to the Ministries Committee and appoints her to serve a further three-year term on the Ministries Committee until March 2020.*

**Resolution 5**

*Synod thanks Mr Peter Saxton for his services to the Property Committee and appoints him to serve a further three-year term until March 2020.*

**Resolution 6**

*Synod thanks The Rev John Jenkinson for his services to Synod as Convenor of the Welfare Committee and appoints him to serve a further three-year term until March 2020.*

The resolutions were passed unanimously  
Two people were standing down.

Mrs Ann Oldknow had come to the end of her term on the Financial Resources Committee and the Clerk moved resolution 7.

**Resolution 7**

*Mrs Ann Oldknow has completed her term of office on the Financial Resources Committee and Synod thanks her for many years of service.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Mrs Sheila Telfer had completed her second term of office as the Worship Development Officer and the Clerk moved resolution 8.

**Resolution 8**

*Mrs Sheila Telfer has completed six years as the Worship Development Officer and Synod thanks her for her services to Synod.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

The Clerk then moved a number of additional resolutions of which notice had been given in the morning.

The Rev Bob Jones had agreed to serve as the Retired Ministers' Link for the Central Area of the Synod and the Clerk moved resolution 11.

**Resolution 11**

*Synod appoints The Rev Bob Jones to serve as the Retired Ministers' Link for the Central Area of the Synod for a three-year term until March 2020.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

The Rev Geoff Ellis was willing to continue to serve on the Ministries Committee representing Self-Supporting Ministry and the clerk moved resolution 12.

**Resolution 12**

*Synod thanks The Rev Geoff Ellis for his services to the Ministries Committee where he has represented Self-Supporting Ministry and re-appoints him for a further three-year term to March 2020.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Dr Moira Gallagher had agreed to serve as the Synod's Interfaith Representative and the Clerk moved resolution 13

**Resolution 13**

*Synod appoints Dr Moira Gallagher to serve as its Interfaith Representative for a three-year term to March 2020.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Mr John Tilbury was stepping down as the Synod Interfaith Representative after an extended period and the Clerk moved resolution 14

**Resolution 14**

*Synod thanks Mrs John Tilbury for his services to Synod as its Interfaith Representative over many years.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Referring to resolution 8, Revd Dr James Coleman asked about a successor to Mrs Sheila Telfer as there was work that would need to be done. It was confirmed that a successor had not yet been found and the Moderator said he would have a discussion with Dr Coleman.

**20. Walking the Way PowerPoint**

The presentation outlined the Walking the Way theme. In the coming years, the United Reformed Church wants to place greater emphasis on discipleship and mission. The call to follow Jesus never stops. Discipleship is life-long. Walking the Way is there to support churches as they respond to God's call to discipleship and mission. Resources will be produced for the autumn Synods and there will be worship material for churches. Looking to 2018 there will be Lent materials and a new discipleship course will replace TLS.

**21. The Big Day Out**

A short promotional video for the National Big Day Out at Warwick Castle on May 20<sup>th</sup> was screened.

**22. Appreciative Inquiry**

The presentation began with a humorous sketch from The Rev Simon Copley and The Rev Steven Knapton which demonstrated a positive way of looking at some of the common concerns encountered in churches.

AI was a way of helping congregations to think about their life and build up confidence and would lead to a new style of Church Life Review in which churches talked about the positive. Synod representatives were asked to think of a time when they were shown appreciation and thanked and to consider what impact it had on them immediately and afterwards.

Simon said that AI was a way of encouraging people and helping them to ask what was the next small step they could take. AI could be used to help individuals, ministers and churches, as well as teams and groups.

The Synod AI Group, which is trialling AI in the Synod and would welcome questions and feedback, was introduced to Synod. The group members are Simon Copley, Jamie Kissack, Zaidie Orr, Emmanuelle Bastide-Wilson, Jenny Poulter, Derek Thomson, Kathy Webb and Steven Knapton.

**23. Reports**

The Moderator moved resolutions 1 – 3

**Resolution 1**

*Synod receives the report of its Moderator.*

**Resolution 2**

*Synod receives the report of its Council*

**Resolution 3**

*Synod receives the reports from its Committees, Development team and Pilots Officers.*

The resolutions were passed unanimously

The Committee Convenors were invited onto the platform, where with The Moderator and the Clerk, they were available to answer any question on their reports.

The Clerk reported that the reference to the retirement of The Rev John Campbell in the Pastoral Committee report was a little premature. Whilst he would soon be 65, he had not decided on a retirement date.

The Trust and Property Secretary, Mrs Sheila Duncan, responded to a question to the Property Committee regarding the sale of a cricket field and a graveyard. Mrs Duncan assured Synod that all records relating to graveyards were sent to the relevant County Archives and that any development of a cricket field would be subject to planning consents. The Rev Angela Hughes wished to make it clear that The Rev Clare Davison’s move to Headingley St Columba was 50 per cent at Headingley St Columba and 50 per cent to the Leeds Mission and Care Group Partnership.

**24. In Memoriam**

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

- Barbara Swift, former Church Secretary, Shiregreen URC, Sheffield
- Doreen Brunt, Hall Gate, Doncaster
- Mike Johnson, Church Secretary, Grove URC, Gomersal
- Joan Floyd, Elder, West Park, Leeds
- Joe Petrie, Elder, The King’s Way Church, Ossett
- Myfanwy Reid, St Andrew’s, Roundhay.
- Gilbert Atkinson, Flowergate, Whitby
- Jean Dickinson, Flowergate, Whitby
- Donald Hood, Headingley St Columba
- Beryl Thorpe, Kirkheaton United Church
- Eric Land, Dore and Totley URC, Sheffield
- Pat Nunn, formerly Longcauseway Church

**25. Thanks**

The Moderator expressed thanks to everyone at The Bridge Church for their hard work in preparing for and organising the day.

**26. Closing worship**

The closing worship was led by The Rev Jason McCullagh and The Rev Ashley Evans.

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