

**Minutes of the meeting of the Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed Church held on  
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at Christ Church with Trinity, South Ella.**

1. **Welcome**  
The Minister, The Rev Chris Dowd, welcomed Synod to South Ella and gave the House Notices.
2. **Synod convened**  
Synod was convened by the Chair, Mrs Val Morrison.
3. **Greetings**  
Mrs Val Morrison greeted everyone and welcomed The Rev Alan Crump to his first Yorkshire Synod meeting and also new representatives from Herringthorpe and Longcauseway.
4. **Present**  
There were 61 Lay people, 19 Ministers, 4 Retired Ministers and 1 CRCW.
5. **Apologies**  
Apologies were received from 17 Lay people, 13 Ministers, 1 CRCW and 10 Retired Ministers.
6. **Minutes**  
The minutes of the Synod meeting held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by Mrs Morrison.
7. **Matters Arising**  
Since the meeting in March, Synod had met on two other occasions. On Saturday July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017 at Headingley St Columba, Leeds, at 3.00 pm for the induction of The Rev Clare Davison to Headingley St Columba United Reformed Church and Leeds Ministry and Mission Enabler and again on Saturday September 16<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 2.30pm at Bilton Grange United Reformed Church, Harrogate for the induction of The Rev Alan Crump to the Joint Pastorate of Bilton Grange and Knaresborough URCs
8. **Agenda**  
Since the Synod papers went to press, there had been further developments regarding people willing to serve the Synod in various ways and there would be some additional resolutions when it came to changes in personnel serving the Synod in the afternoon.
9. **Synod Notices**  
The Synod Clerk asked representatives to take note of the information received with the Synod mailing. This included a postcard with information about the Youth Assembly in January next year, a postcard from the Joint Public Issues Team in Yorkshire (JPIT) and there was also some information on the Churches Mutual Credit Union.
10. **Date and Place of the next Synod meeting**  
The next meeting of Synod would be at 7.45 pm on Thursday October 26<sup>th</sup> at Cottingley for the Commissioning Service for The Rev Tony Lee who will be working with the church in the local community and on the Cottingley Estate. Synod would then meet again two days later at 2.00pm on Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup> 2017 at St Andrew's, Roundhay, Leeds, for the induction of The Rev Tim Lowe to St Andrew's.

The usual pattern of meetings on the second Saturday in March and the second Saturday in October would then continue with the March meeting being on Saturday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2018 at a place yet to be determined. The October meeting will be on Saturday October 13<sup>th</sup> 2018.

## 11. Appointment of Tellers

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

Mrs Judith Garthwaite, The Rev Jamie Kissack, The Rev Zaidie Orr and Mr Rod Morrison.

## 12. Opening Worship

The Rev Chris Dowd led the Synod in the opening worship on the theme of the parable of the sower.

## 13. The Reformation 500 Years On

Professor Clyde Binfield gave a very informative talk on Martin Luther and the Reformation which he said was the greatest theological fault line in European civilisation, the outworkings of which were still with us now.

## 14. Introducing Discipling Presence

Mrs Val Morrison introduced a short video clip, "Introducing Discipling Presence" from The Rev Elizabeth Clark aimed at those in rural ministry. "A Discipling Presence" is a joint publication by the Methodist and United Reformed Churches which supports those living and serving God in the countryside and which is available from Methodist Publishing for £3.49 plus p&p.

## 15. The Synod's Green Apostle

The Synod's Green Apostle, Mrs Alex Jowitt, said she had been in touch with all the churches in the Synod to alert them to the URC's Environmental Policy. The aim was to encourage churches to become Eco Churches and to reduce emissions by 40 per cent by 2020. It was also possible for Synods to become an Eco Synod, the first step being to register with Eco Synod. This was just the very first step on the road towards becoming an Eco Synod and did not commit the Synod to anything. Mrs Jowitt proposed the following resolution, **Resolution 29**:

*Synod authorises, the Synod Green Apostle, Mrs Alex Jowitt, to register the Yorkshire Synod with Eco Synod - recognising that this is the first step towards becoming an Eco Synod.*

The Rev David Coote said he was not opposed to the resolution but he felt it was unfair for it to come to Synod without prior notice and he moved that the resolution be not put. The motion was seconded and carried overwhelmingly. Mrs Morrison said the issue would come back to the March Synod.

## 16. Announcements

- **Youth Workers:** Mrs Val Morrison announced that the Synod's two new youth workers would be available to meet and talk with people during the lunch break and also at the end of Synod.
- **Mission Learning Community:** Mrs Val Morrison drew attention to the Yorkshire Synod Mission Learning Community event on November 4<sup>th</sup> 2017 at Stainbeck United Reformed Church.
- **Bookstall:** Phil Burnham, based at CLC Bookshops, Sheffield, who was providing a bookstall at Synod for the first time outlined the services he was able to offer.
- **Palestinian Handicraft Products:** The Rev Barry Parker gave information about the Fairtrade goods and Palestinian handicraft products available during the lunch hour.
- **Vespers:** The Rev Alison Micklem announced that there would be Vespers to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation at St Columba's, York, on Sunday October 29<sup>th</sup> at 4.30 pm. She also still had some copies of her book, "Looking for a Voice", available.

## 17. Lunchtime adjournment

Mrs Val Morrison said Grace and Synod adjourned for lunch.

**18. Walking the Way “Voices to hear”**

Mrs Morrison introduced a three minute video in which a number of people answered the question “what do you expect to see in the life of someone who says they are a Christian?”

**19. The Heritage Lottery Fund**

Mrs Sheila Duncan, The Synod Trust and Property Secretary, reported on a recent presentation by the Heritage Lottery Fund in which they outlined recent changes affecting grants for churches. There was now a more flexible approach and there was no longer a separate scheme for listed buildings. It was now open to any church to apply for funding whether listed or not. They had moved to an outcomes approach and would look at what difference a project would make to heritage, to people, to attitudes and to the community when deciding whether to make a grant or not. Churches which were previously ruled out were now able to apply. Further information was available on the HLF website.

**20. The Northerly Synods Listening and Reconciliation Service**

The Rev Dr James Coleman said a team of suitably qualified people had been established to help congregations deal with difficult situations. Where things were getting heated, a neutral presence could help to move things forward and help a congregation navigate difficult situations. The service was being launched across the northerly Synods. There would be need for/request for more volunteers in the coming months and information would be circulated to churches in the next few weeks.

**21. The Safeguarding Report**

The chair moved Resolution 30:

*Synod receives the report of its Safeguarding Advisor*

The resolution was passed unanimously

Mrs Geraldine Sands, the Synod Safeguarding Advisor, spoke to her report saying the Yorkshire Synod was doing well compared with the rest of the URC and we had a full complement of safeguarding policies in place. Five leadership training courses had been held across the Synod and the first “train the trainer” session would be held in November. She also drew attention to a Domestic Abuse training session to be held at St Columba’s, York on December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 11.00 am to 2.30 pm.

**22. Introduction to the Synod Pastoral Elders**

The Pastoral Committee had produced a leaflet containing a picture of each Synod Pastoral Elder, a brief biography and details of how to contact them. The Synod Pastoral Elders are available to help with any pastoral matters that a church may have and are the first point of contact for advice and support. The leaflet was commended to Synod.

**23. Induction of the Children and Young People Development Practitioners**

Mrs Val Morrison presided over a short service of induction for Stefanie Hoyle and Megan Tillbrook who were inducted as Children and Young People Development Practitioners to the Synod.

Stefanie and Megan then introduced to Synod the young people who had been attending a parallel youth event at South Ella. The young people gave their feedback on a weekend youth event held at Marrick Priory in September. It was clear from the number of young people who spoke that the weekend had been very well received and that they had already developed a very good relationship with Stefanie who had helped organise the weekend.

It was also clear that both Megan and Stefanie were full of excitement and enthusiasm at the prospect of working in the Synod and that the young people were equally excited.

**24. Walking the Way “Walking with Trippy”**

Mrs Morrison introduced a second short video on Walking the Way – this time an animation featuring Trippy, a talking foot.

**25. The Moderator’s Report**

Mrs Morrison moved **Resolution 1**

*Synod receives the report of its Moderator.*

The resolution was passed unanimously

As the Moderator was unable to be present because he was attending another Synod meeting in his capacity as Moderator of General Assembly, there were no questions.

**26. Synod Council Report**

The Synod Clerk moved **Resolution 2**

*Synod receives the report of its Council.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

As there were no questions, the Clerk moved **Resolution 3** which was referred to in the report

*Synod agrees to the setting up a Human Resources Group to be responsible for overseeing all matters relating to staff and employment. The group normally to consist of the Synod Clerk, the Synod Treasurer and at least one other with experience of HR matters.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

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

The Clerk drew attention to appointments made by Synod Council, acting on behalf of Synod, since the last meeting of Synod.

A number of people had agreed to the Synod in various capacities and the Clerk moved Resolutions 4-10 en bloc.

**Resolution 4**

*Synod appoints Mrs Ailsa Johnson and Mrs Emmanuelle Bastide-Wilson to serve on the Safeguarding Committee for a three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 5**

*Synod appoints Mr Alex Walker and Mrs Susan Lord to serve on the Children and Young People Committee for a three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 6**

*Synod appoints Mrs Christine Hall to serve as secretary to the Ministries Committee for a three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 7**

*Synod appoints Miss Jill Fletcher to serve on the Ministries Committee as Worship Development Officer for a three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 8**

*Synod appoints Mrs Alex Jowitt to serve on the Property Committee for a three- year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 9**

*Synod appoints Mrs Kathy Webb to serve on the Pastoral Committee as a Synod Pastoral Elder for the Eastern Area of the Synod for a three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 10**

*Synod appoints The Rev David Coote to serve as Ecumenical Officer for the Eastern Area of the Synod for a three-year term to September 2020.*

The resolutions were passed unanimously.

There were a number of people who had agreed to serve a second term and the clerk moved Resolutions 11 to 18 en bloc.

**Resolution 11**

*Synod thanks Mrs Ruth Roddison for her services to the Children and Young People Committee and re-appoints her for a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 12**

*Synod thanks Mr Derek Thomson for his services to Synod Council and re-appoints him for a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 13**

*Synod thanks Mrs Sue Ripley for her services to Synod as Convenor for the Yorkshire Assembly and re-appoints her to serve a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 14**

*Synod thanks Mrs Judith Drake for her services to Synod as the Ecumenical Officer for the Bradford/Aire Valley area of the Synod and re-appoints her for a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 15**

*Synod thanks Mr Steve Armitage for his services to the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee and re-appoints him to serve a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 16**

*Synod thanks Mrs Heather Raistrick for her services to Synod as Convenor of the Safeguarding Committee and re-appoints her to serve a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 17**

*Synod thanks The Rev Frank Kissack for her services to the Ministries Committee as Special Category Ministry representative and re-appoints her to serve a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 18**

*Synod thanks Mrs Pauline Mewis for her services to the Pastoral Committee as the Retired Ministers Link for the Eastern Area of the Synod re-appoints her to serve a second three-year term to September 2020.*

The resolutions were passed unanimously.

A number of people were standing down, having completed their terms of office and the clerk moved Resolutions 19 -26 individually.

**Resolution 19**

*Synod thanks Mr Adam Woodhouse for his services to Synod as a member of the Children and Young People Committee and wishes him well for his training for the ministry.*

**Resolution 20**

*Synod thanks Mrs Janet Virr for her three years of service to Synod as a member of the Safeguarding Committee.*

**Resolution 21**

*Synod thanks Mrs Janet Howse for her three years of service to Synod as a member of the Safeguarding Committee*

**Resolution 22**

*Synod thanks The Rev Peter Poulter for his services to Synod during the past three years as a member of the Pastoral Committee and Synod Pastoral Elder for the Bradford/Aire Valley area of the Synod.*

**Resolution 23**

*Synod thanks The Rev Simon Swailes for his services to Synod over five years as Ecumenical Officer for the Eastern Area of the Synod.*

**Resolution 24**

*Synod thanks Mr Roderick Garthwaite for his continuous services to Synod first as Convenor of the Property Committee and then as a member of the Committee.*

**Resolution 25**

*Synod thanks Mrs Pat van Lemmen for her services to Synod as minutes secretary to the Ministries Committee and also as the lay representative on the committee.*

**Resolution 26**

*Synod thanks the Rev Margaret Herbert for her services to Synod as the retired ministers link for the Southern Area of the Synod.*

The resolutions were all passed unanimously.

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

**Resolution 31**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Mrs Heather Raistrick for her services to Synod through membership of the Children and Young People Committee and subsequently as the Convenor of the Committee.*

**Resolution 32**

*Synod appoints The Rev Steven Knaption to serve as acting-Convenor of the Children and Young People Committee until a permanent appointment can be made.*

**Resolution 33**

*Synod thanks Mrs Karen Gardiner for her services to Synod on the Pastoral Committee as a Synod Pastoral Elder for the Central Area of the Synod and appoints her to serve a second three-year term to September 2020.*

**Resolution 34**

*Synod appoints The Rev Fran Kissack to serve as a Synod Mission Council representative for a three-year term from March 2018 to March 2021.*

**Resolution 35**

*Synod thanks Mrs Ruth Sheldrake for her services to Synod as Church Life-Review Co-ordinator for the West-Calderdale and Huddersfield area of the Synod.*

The Synod Clerk said the despite the number of appointments that had just been made, there were still a number of vacancies that remained to be filled and both the Financial Resources Committee and the Property Committee were in need of new members with the necessary expertise.

The Synod Treasurer, Mr Justin Charlesworth, would also be stepping down by the end of the year. The Clerk said Mr Charlesworth who had a full-time job and was also the treasurer at his own church as well as being the Synod Treasurer was struggling to balance the needs of the treasurer's role with full time work. After a great deal of prayer, he had decided to stand down. Mr Willie Duncan who already serves on the Financial Resources Committee had indicated that he would be prepared to help out in the short term.

**28. Financial Resources**

The Synod Treasurer, Mr Justin Charlesworth moved Resolution 27.

**Resolution 27**

*Synod receives the Synod accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 and accepts the budget for 2018.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Moving Resolution 28, the Treasurer said the reduction in the Mission and Ministry Fund offer meant that the amount churches paid per member would remain the same as in 2017.

**Resolution 28**

*Synod agrees an offer of £1,025,000 to the 2018 Mission and Ministry Fund which is a decrease of £25,000 on the 2017 figure.*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

**29. In Memoriam**

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

- Rex Brearley, Christ Church, Stocksbridge
- Bill Emsley, Clayton West
- Norma Pugh, West Melton
- Bill Moss, Trinity, Barnsley
- Mark Rotchell, Christ Church, Stocksbridge
- Eric Harrison, Christ Church, Castleford
- Janet Neville, Cottingley
- The Rev Bill Frame, Headingley St Columba, Leeds
- Jim Pickersgill, Headingley St Columba
- Ken Robson, Salem, Burley in Wharfedale
- Judith Norris, Dore and Totley URC, Sheffield
- Brenda Hague, Dore and Totley URC

**30. Thanks**

The Clerk thanked Mrs Val Morrison for her leadership in chairing the meeting.

Thanks were also extended to everyone at Christ Church with Trinity for their hard work in preparing for and organising the day, for providing the music for worship, and to all those who had provided the hospitality during the day.

The Synod Office Staff – Sally, Anne and Hayley – were thanked for their hard work behind the scenes in helping to prepare the Synod papers and stuffing envelopes.

Finally, Mrs Morrison thanked the Clerk for his work in preparing for Synod and his work on the day.

**31. Closing worship**

The closing worship was led by the four young Time for God volunteers who have been provided with accommodation by the church called Peter’s House as the young people’s part of the Hull Area Team Jerusalem Project. With support from the Synod Mission Fund they are witnessing in the area. The church provides the accommodation and the Time for God volunteers provide the witness.

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