

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed Church held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at St Andrew's, Roundhay United Reformed Church, Leeds**

### **1. Welcome**

Mrs Sheila Telfer, the Church Secretary at St Andrew's, welcomed Synod to Leeds and gave the House Notices.

### **2. Synod convened**

Synod was convened by Mrs Val Morrison.

### **3. Greetings**

Mrs Morrison welcomed back Mr Chris Reed, the Synod Clerk, following a time off sick. Mrs Morrison also welcomed everyone including new representatives and those at Synod for the first time Mrs Rosie Buxton, The Rev Jo Clare-Young, The Rev Heather Pollard, The Rev Roberta Topham, The Rev Peter Cross and five lay people.

### **4. Present**

There were 65 Lay people, 24 Ministers, 6 Retired Ministers, 2 CRCWs and 1 retired CRCW.

### **5. Apologies**

Apologies were received from 5 Lay people, 8 Ministers and 3 Retired Ministers.

### **6. Minutes**

The minutes of the Synod meeting held on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by Mrs Morrison.

### **7. Matters Arising**

Since the meeting in March, Synod had met on a number of occasions.

It met first on Sunday April 29<sup>th</sup> at 6.00pm at Headingley St Columba United Reformed Church for the induction of The Rev Samantha Sheehan to "Generation Y" and Universities Chaplaincy Ministry in Leeds.

It then met at 2.00pm on Wednesday May 16<sup>th</sup> at Stainland and Holywell Green United Reformed Church for the induction of The Rev Angela Lawson to serve that church as a non-stipendiary minister.

It met again ten days later at 2.00pm on Saturday May 26<sup>th</sup> at Moldgreen United Reformed Church for the induction of Mrs Rosie Buxton to Church Related Community Work Ministry in the Huddersfield Churches.

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, Synod met in Scarborough for the ordination and induction of The Rev Jo Clare-Young to serve at Emmanuel St John's, Scarborough, St Andrew's, Scarborough, and Flowergate, Whitby.

And finally, on October 6<sup>th</sup>, Synod met at New Hope United Reformed Church, Halifax, for the induction of The Rev Heather Pollard, to the Halifax and Upper Calderdale Pastorate of the United Reformed Church – (Heath, Luddendenfoot, New Hope and New Providence churches)

### **8. Agenda**

There were no additional items.

### **9. Synod Notices**

The Clerk asked that Synod representatives to take note of the information they had received with the Synod mailing.

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

Synod next meets on Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup> 2019 at Moldgreen, Huddersfield, and thereafter it will continue with the usual pattern of meeting on the second Saturday in October and the second Saturday in March.

**11. Appointment of Tellers**

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

The Rev Simon Copley, The Rev Zaidie Orr, Mrs Sheila Telfer and Mr Willie Duncan.

**12. Opening Worship**

Led by The Rev Tim Lowe, the minister at St Andrew's.

**13. A Crisis and an Opportunity**

Introduced by The Rev Jason McCullagh with further input from The Rev Alison Micklem, The Rev Jamie Kissack, The Rev Ashley Evans and The Rev Simon Copley. On-going work in this area will now be referred to as Vision and Opportunity and should be underpinned by prayer. Several myths regarding the status and future of the churches in the Yorkshire Synod had been revoked by this piece of work to which 49 churches had replied. Synod plans to release a substantial sum of money in loans and grants, provide advice regarding fundraising and provide companionship to Mission and Care Groups. Support will be given to churches needing to close. Due to the age profile of the URC members of the Yorkshire Synod there is a narrow window of opportunity to implement change. Any churches who had not responded or would like to send in further comments were asked to do so by 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Discussion will continue and further proposals will be brought to future Synods for consideration.

**14. The Synod YouTube Channel**

Introduced by Mr Alex Walker. The Yorkshire Synod Video Resources Group will launch YouTube videos containing biblically sound material, worship and mission material on 9<sup>th</sup> December. Facebook, Instagram and Vlogging will be used by Synod Officers and the Video Resources Group to stream material. The first video will focus on Luke 1 v 68 – 79 and contributions for the video should be sent to the video resources group by 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**15. Report from General Assembly**

Introduced by Mrs Val Morrison and given by Mrs Janet Virr. Janet reported on the content of the sessions at General Assembly expressing concerns about whether certain actions met with the URCs stance on equality and diversity, particularly in how remaindered business was handled. Sessions focussing on journeys and faith were more accessible than some of the procedures where the language and related discussion seemed 'heavy' or pedantic. Elders would probably benefit from training in preparation for General Assembly but should be encouraged to attend. The perception of Synod Representatives in the South of England regarding spirituality in the Northern Synods seemed disparate with the reality.

**16. Announcements**

- Mrs Sheila Duncan reminded Synod that Church Property is held in trust and whilst churches have the authority to decide how lettings are organised, churches could avoid a lot of hassle if they consulted the Synod at an early stage when problems arose or third parties approached them regarding matters that affected church property.
- Rev Jamie Kissack gave information about a visit to Palestine. There is space for one person to attend from Yorkshire Synod. Application Forms can be obtained from Church House by emailing [carole.sired@urc.org.uk](mailto:carole.sired@urc.org.uk). The closing date for the return of completed application forms is Tuesday 18 December 2018.

- Details were also given about a Christian Resources Exhibition to be held in Manchester on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
- Mrs Ann Coates informed Synod of the Mission Community Learning Day to be held at Gleadless URC on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Those intending to attend this training should contact Mrs Val Morrison at valmorrison7@btinternet.com.
- Rev Dr Jim Coleman announced that training – ‘A Taste of Appreciative Enquiry’ is scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December. Interested parties should contact him.
- Rev Barry Parker drew attention to the Fair Trade stall and explained payment could be by cash or card.
- Mr Alan Kendall invited churches with Pilot groups to feed into an upcoming review and those without Pilot groups to explain why they have not chosen to run such groups.

## 17. Lunchtime adjournment

Mrs Val Morrison said Grace and Synod adjourned for lunch.

## 18. Synod Council Report

### **Resolution No. 1**

*Synod receives the report of its Council.*

The resolution was passed unanimously

### 1. Synod Personnel:

The following three resolutions recommended by Synod Council were passed unanimously after some discussion. Two members of Synod felt there was no need for ‘Educated to degree level’ to be in some of the job descriptions. The Revd Zadie Orr suggested this could be overcome by adding the phrase ‘or equivalent.’

### **Resolution No. 3**

*Synod agrees to the appointment of a full-time paid Synod Clerk*

### **Resolution No. 4**

*Synod agrees to the appointment of a part-time Property Officer*

### **Resolution No. 5**

*Synod agreed to the appointment of a part-time Trust Secretary*

### 2. Moderator’s Appointing Group

Four people were willing to serve on the Moderator’s Appointing Group which will recommend a name to take over as Yorkshire Moderator when The Rev Kevin Watson retires in June 2020. The group will be made up of representatives from the Yorkshire Synod and the national church. The following resolution was passed unanimously.

### **Resolution No. 7**

*Synod agrees to appoint the following four Synod representatives to serve on the Moderator’s Appointing Group: The Rev Alison Micklem, Mr Chris Reed, Mrs Marguerite Sobol and Mr Alex Walker.*

### 3. Safeguarding

The Synod Safeguarding Advisor, Mrs Geraldine Sands, was unable to be present and the following resolution was passed unanimously.

#### **Resolution No. 24**

*Synod receives the report of its Safeguarding Officer.*

### 4. Shared Joint Panel for MIND

Synod unanimously approved the following resolution to enable the Northerly Synods to set up a Shared Synod Panel for the Ministerial Disciplinary Process:

#### **Resolution No. 8**

*The Synod of Yorkshire, meeting in plenary session on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of October 2018, resolves as follows:*

*1. To join with (Mersey, North Western, Northern and Scotland Synods) in constituting a Shared Synod Panel in accordance with paragraph B.2.2 of the Ministerial Disciplinary Process, which said panel shall come into being when all the sharing synods have passed an enabling resolution in the form contained in this Appendix and at a date to be agreed by the sharing synods ("the formation date"), at which date the Shared Synod Panel shall come into existence.*

*2. In conjunction with the other sharing synods and no later than the formation date, to appoint persons onto the Shared Synod Panel in compliance with paragraph B.2.2.1 and one person (who maybe a panel member) to act as co-ordinator in compliance with paragraph B.2.2.3. Section O Page 61 of 61*

*3. To continue to maintain its Separate Synod Panel until the formation date, following which it shall cease to exist.*

### 19. Persons serving the Synod

Synod was asked to note that the following had agreed to serve and had been appointed since the March Synod by Synod Council acting on behalf of Synod:

- Mrs Terasa Raddings to serve as the Ecumenical Officer for the central area of the Synod and as the United Reformed Church link with West Yorkshire Churches Together for a three-year term to March 2021
- Mrs Alex Jowitt and Mrs Ailsa Jarvis to serve on the Generation Y Steering Group
- Rev Alan Crump to serve on the Synod Financial Resources Committee for a three-year term to March 2021.

The following resolutions were put to Synod:

#### **Resolution No. 9**

*Synod thanks Rev Peter Jordan for his service as Secretary of the Pastoral Committee and re-appoints him for one more year until October 2019.*

#### **Resolution No. 10**

*Synod thanks Mrs Judith Garthwaite for her service as Synod Pastoral Elder for the Southern Area and re-appoints her for one more year until October 2019.*

#### **Resolution No. 11**

*Synod thanks Rev Angela Hughes for her service as Synod Pastoral Elder for the Central Area and re-appoints her for one more year until October 2019.*

**Resolution No. 12**

*Synod thanks Mrs Elaine Merlin for her service as a member of the Financial Resources Committee and re-appoints her for a period of three more years until October 2021.*

**Resolution No. 13**

*Synod thanks Mr Willie Duncan for his service as a member of the Financial Resources Committee and re-appoints him for a period of three more years until October 2021.*

**Resolution No. 14**

*Synod thanks Mr Justin Charlesworth for his service as a member of the Financial Resources Committee and re-appoints him for a period of three more years until October 2021.*

**Resolution No. 15**

*Synod appoints The Rev Andrew Lonsdale to serve on the Synod Property Committee until October 2021.*

**Resolution No. 16**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Rev Michael Mewis for his services to Synod as Synod Pastoral Elder for the East Coast Area (North).*

**Resolution No. 17**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Rev Bob Warwicker for his services to Synod as Synod Pastoral Elder for the Huddersfield/Calderdale/SPACE area.*

**Resolution No. 18**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Rev Steven Knapton for his services to Synod as a CLR Co-ordinator.*

**Resolution No. 19**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Mrs Jenny Poulter for her services to Synod as a CLR Co-ordinator.*

**Resolution No. 20**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Mrs Marguerite Sobol for her services to Synod as a CLR Co-ordinator.*

**Resolution No. 21**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Rev Simon Copley for his services to Synod as a CLR Co-ordinator.*

**Resolution No. 22**

*Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Mrs Pauline Mewis for her services to Synod as the Retired Minister's Link Person for the East Coast Area.*

**Resolution No. 23**

*Synod wishes to place on record it thanks to Rev Bob Jones for his services to Synod as the Retired Minister's Link Person for the Central Area.*

Appointments made by the Synod Council were noted and thanks were expressed to the Personnel noted in resolutions 9 to 23.

Resolutions 9 to 23 were passed unanimously

## 20. Financial Resources

Willie Duncan explained points related to Synod Financial Resources

### 1. Key Facts and Figures

There had been a 16% decline in the number of churches in Yorkshire Synod and 44% in membership between 2004 and 2018.

### 2. The Budget for 2019

An explanation was given of the projected deficit of £694,668 in 2019 and £748,314 in 2020. This was a result of the staffing review and the need to appoint a Synod Clerk, Synod Property Officer and Trust Secretary and also due to the decision to extend the contracts for the Children and Young People's Development Practitioners. In addition £500,000 would be released in response to the Vision and Opportunity audit. Criteria for accessing the £500,000 would be given at March Synod. £50,000 would be released for transitional ministry for the Huddersfield URCs.

#### **Resolution No. 2**

*Synod approves the 2019 budget as presented to the October 2018 Synod meeting*

The resolution was passed unanimously

### 3. Mission and Ministry Contributions

There would be no change to contributions.

## 21. Some Stories of Mission

### 1. Synod Mission Fund

- Stocksbridge Community Award – The Rev Ian Lucraft explained how with the help of £7,500 p.a. from the Synod Mission Fund and £10,000 from Methodist sources, Christ Church Stocksbridge had been able to establish The Meeting Place which was tackling isolation amongst Young Adult Males and other lonely or isolated people. The project was a joint winner of the Congregational Insurance Community Awards announced at General Assembly. Ian emphasised the need for the continued commitment from the Mission Fund Panel as statutory bodies and outside funders often required proof that future funding was secured.
- Hope 2018/Sheffield – The Rev Zadie Orr reported on a Mission based fun day that had been held in Sheffield on 28<sup>th</sup> July in response to Hope 2018. Synod watched a time lapse video of the event.

Both ministers thanked the Mission Fund Panel for the release of funding for these projects.

### 2. Synod Mission Fund Criteria

There had been a review of the criteria for and timing of Mission Fund applications. The main recommendations included the Mission Fund Panel meeting four times a year instead of twice; raising the maximum small grant award from £1,000 to £2,500 and abolishing the one application per calendar year restriction for small grants. Church groups would also be eligible to apply. A question was raised regarding the larger grants – 'What is the maximum amount for which churches can apply?' Chris Reed explained – technically, none, but to date, grants have not exceeded £100,000

#### **Resolution No. 6**

*Synod agrees to the recommendations for changes to the Synod Mission Fund outlined in the report of the Review Group 14" May 2018*

The resolution was passed unanimously.

**3. The Manor Project and CRCW Ministry**

Simon Loveitt (CRCW – Sheffield Manor Project) reported on this project. 2018 has seen the celebration of 30 years of CRCW ministry with work in 55 settings. Simon emphasised the value of this type of ministry and the need for people to candidate. Interested parties should contact Simon or Steve Summers, Development Worker for CRCWm in the URC. Simon outlined how, by closing and refurbishing a church, the Manor Project had been able to introduce a range of Mission based work – Stay and Eat Club, After School Clubs, Credit Union and less dependency on their foodbank. The aim was to wind up the food bank by 2020 and provide clients with better ways of managing when the impact of Universal Credit being introduced in Sheffield this year takes effect.

**4. Vocations – the journey through the candidating process**

Jenny Horton who is training for ministry spoke about the candidating process describing some of her studies e.g. TLS Foundation Course and Developing Community Experiences and Gateways into Worship. These enabled Jenny to become an accredited lay preacher. Jenny candidated to become a CRCW but the eventual outcome was acceptance for training as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. Jenny stressed that such journeys begin with a conversation and we should go and tell people if we think they should candidate at this time when there is a need for new ministers.

**22. In Memoriam**

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

- Lucille Biggins – The Michael Church, Sheffield
- Sheila Coy – Hall Gate, Doncaster
- Rev Geoffrey Tillison – The Bridge URC, Otley
- Jean Riddington – The Michael Church, Sheffield
- Raymond Copeland – The Bridge Church, Otley
- Margaret Beard – St Andrews Church, Penistone
- Rev Antony Tomlinson – St Andrew’s Church, Penistone
- Margaret Warwick – Dore and Totley
- Andrew McMurray – Headingley, St Columba
- Ronnie Ellis – Holme URC
- Kathleen Head – Central Sheffield
- Betty Burgin – Central Sheffield
- Audrey Ellis – Ravensthorpe with Hopton URC
- Betty Cooper – Ravensthorpe with Hopton URC

**23. Thanks**

Thanks were expressed to Mrs Val Morrison for her leadership during the day and everyone at St Andrew’s for their hospitality and hard work in preparing for and organising the day. Chris Reed also thanked the Synod Office staff for all the work they put in behind the scenes in preparation for Synod.

**24. Closing Worship**

The young people who had been meeting separately joined in with Rev Tim Lowe for the closing worship presenting the material and thoughts they had produced earlier in the day.

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