

*The*  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**  
**Yorkshire**

## **Papers for the Meeting of Yorkshire Synod**

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> (on Zoom) and Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October

Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury



# Contents



Calling Letter	1
Agenda	3
Budget for 2022	4
Environment Policy	7
Environment Policy Annex	10
Reports	25
Supplementary Letter	39
Resolutions	40
Becoming a Missional Synod – A Discussion Paper	43
Synod Welcome Letter from Longcauseway Church	45
Parking Directions	46



The  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

**Yorkshire Synod**  
Somerset House  
St Paul's Street  
Morley  
Leeds  
LS27 9EP

Synod Moderator  
Synod Clerk  
Treasurer  
Property Officer  
Trust Secretary

Rev. Jamie Kissack  
Tim Crossley  
Rev Simon Copley  
Jane Bunyan-Murray  
Alastair Forsyth

e-Mail: [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk)  
Website: [www.urcyorkshire.org.uk](http://www.urcyorkshire.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0113 289 8490

**To All Members of Synod**

September 2021

Dear Member of Synod,

**Meeting of Synod on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at 6.30pm and on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at 10.00am.**

Attached (or enclosed if you have requested physical papers) are your invitation to and literature for the next meeting of the Yorkshire Synod which will be chaired by the Moderator, The Rev Jamie Kissack. The invitation to Synod is extended to anyone from our churches who wishes to attend so please pass on this to those who would be interested.

This meeting is different, as I explained in the earlier communication, in that this Synod meeting will be a two-fold one. As we emerge from the past year and a half from the restrictions caused by the on-going Covid-19 pandemic the means by which we have met as Synod have been fluid to say the least. From having to cancel the March 2020 meeting, to the wholly digital meetings of October 2020 and March 2021, this autumn's meeting will be another step into the unknown. Therefore, in a similar way to the Synod in March 2021 we are splitting the meeting; one part online using the "Zoom" digital conferencing platform, the other part being a physical meeting to be held at Longcauseway church in Dewsbury. I am extremely grateful to the Elders and Members of Longcauseway for allowing Synod to use their premises. Following the success of digital literature being sent out to a selected group of Synod members this means of sending out information and literature for these meetings has now become the default, so if you require hard copy please contact the office at the number above, or e-mail [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk).

The first part Synod will go live on Zoom from 6.00pm on Thursday 7th October on this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83789751572?pwd=S1p5ZTVwa3hXcFhSaE1tV1hTRDhudz09>

Meeting ID: 837 8975 1572, Passcode: 308041.

The meeting is due to start at 6.30pm and I hope we will be able to conclude no later than 9.00pm. Items for the agenda include Legacies of Slavery/Anti-racist church being presented by the URC's equalities team, the Synod's response to the Ministers' Pensions challenge and the challenges presented by the URC's Jubilee 2022 programme. I invite those full members of Synod to amend their names on Zoom prior to the meeting by placing a V in front of it, and this will also be used to discern those eligible to vote as well as aiding the collation of the attendance roll.

The second part is at Longcauseway church, Dewsbury, will commence at 10.00am and finish by 1.15pm or thereabouts, and will be very much worship orientated. It will allow our "new" Moderator to lead worship in person (at last) and it will allow members of Synod the opportunity to renew and to make new friendships in a real setting rather than in a digital one. The agenda will include a follow-up to Thursday's Jubilee 2022 challenge discussion, we will be invited to adopt a formal Synod Environmental policy, we will be kept abreast of the Synod's IT strategy and we will have the opportunity to receive all our committees' reports, the 2022 budget and all the other regular items

which makes Synod what it is. The day is a shorter one than usual as catering at present is an area yet to return to the same levels as 2019. However, refreshments will be available at the start and at the end of the meeting. In your literature you will find a directions letter to help you on your journey to Longcauseway, an expenses form which you can either return digitally or fill in and leave in the designated boxes at Longcauseway, and all expenses will be paid by BACS. One thing that is slightly different is that Synod Representatives will be issued with a coloured voting card on arrival at Longcauseway. For those unable to attend and would like to watch the proceedings live, this will be available on this YouTube link: <https://bit.ly/urcyorkshireyoutube>

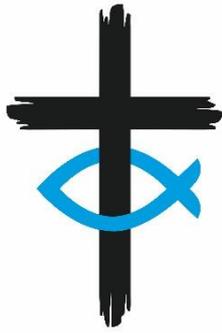
As you will see from the accompanying agenda the format may look like we haven't changed much in the way we do things, but there are some subtle changes. Although there are two sessions, the emphasis this time has been placed firmly on worship, so the business sessions this autumn are being kept to a minimum. The Synod Council report will expand on this and will introduce those areas that do attract resolutions. Key areas are the Synod's response to the Ministers' Pension Fund challenge, the adoption of a Synod Environmental Policy and the creation of two joint committees with Northern Synod.

We would welcome any feedback after the events to see how you have fared with this hybrid version of Synod. Suggestions on how we may improve in the future would be useful; whether a split meeting is to Synod's taste, or whether we return to a whole day format (public health status permitting). Whatever the case I am already planning where we may look to meet in March 2022.

Finally, please pray for those preparing for the meeting as well as the Moderator and others who will present reports and resolutions during the day. I look forward to seeing you on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October.

*Tim Crossley*

Synod Clerk



The  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

## AUTUMN MEETING OF YORKSHIRE SYNOD

THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30pm via the  
“Zoom” digital platform  
and SATURDAY 9<sup>th</sup> October at Longcauseway  
Church, Dewsbury from 10.00am.

To join Zoom Meeting: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/83434793837>  
To Livestream physical meeting: <https://bit.ly/urcyorkshireyoutube>

Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 via Zoom	
18.00	Admission into forum
18.30 – 18.45	Welcome and Worship 
18.45 – 19.30	<b>Legacies of Slavery/Anti-Racist Church</b>
19.30 – 20.00	<b>Yorkshire Synod response to URC Pensions challenge</b>
20.00 – 20.45	<b>Jubilee 2022 Challenge</b>

Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury	
9.30	Refreshments & opening of live stream
10.00	Synod Convenes Jamie Kissack
10.05	<b>Welcome.</b> Led by the Clerk Including Apologies, Minutes of the Synod meeting held 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 on Zoom Online platform, Matters Arising, Agenda, Synod Notices, Date and Place of the next Meeting.
10.15	<b>Worship</b> Led by the Moderator 
11.00	<b>URC Jubilee, the Yorkshire Response</b> The follow up
11.30	<b>Synod Life</b> Committee Reports 2022 Budget Report from General Assembly, Report from LYCiG Stepwise Certificate notifications, Appointments and Retirements Resolutions
12.00	<b>Eco Strategy</b> Green Apostle – Mrs Alex Jowitt et al to present new Synod Eco Policy and update on Eco Church/Eco Synod.
12.30	<b>Synod IT Strategy</b> Covering Website, communication and support to churches
13.00	<b>Closing Worship</b> including in Memoriam. 
13.15	<b>Departure</b>

## URC Yorkshire Synod Budget for 2022 - Summary

Summary	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Gain/Loss	Notes
<b>Income</b>				
Total Income (normal)	£239,285	£289,033	£49,748	
Property Income (always projected)		See below		
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Core Office Costs	£291,780	£299,686	-£7,906	To run office and core staff
Core Committee/Officer Costs	£31,309	£37,120	-£5,811	To run Officers/Committees/Safeguarding and Safeguarding training
Synod Property Costs	£16,647	£27,696	-£11,049	To maintain Synod Properties (other than office)
<b>Total core costs</b>	<b>£339,736</b>	<b>£364,502</b>	<b>-£24,766</b>	
Development/Training/Mission	£150,810	£142,765	£8,045	Youth/children, training/development, evangelism etc
Contingency	£15,000	£5,000	£10,000	Increased for 2021 because of Covid uncertainty
<b>Total Development costs</b>	<b>£165,810</b>	<b>£147,765</b>	<b>£18,045</b>	
<b>Expenditure overall</b>	<b>£505,546</b>	<b>£512,267</b>	<b>-£6,721</b>	

<b>Shortfall income v. Core costs</b>	<b>£75,469</b>
<b>Shortfall income v. Core + Dev costs</b>	<b>£223,234</b>

<b>Property Income - projected</b>	<b>£1,355,000</b>
Little Lane Manse	250,000
Little Lane Church	250,000
Greasborough	60,000
Pickering	185,000
Christchurch Hull	300,000
Eccleshill	250,000
Doncaster Shopfront	60,000

## Income (Normal)

Income	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Gain/Loss	Notes
CIF Investment	34,587	36,755	2,168	No change in investment levels/return remains the same
Investment interest	173,113	205,394	32,281	investment level changed in 2022 and 2023 but return remains the same
Aberdeen Walk, Scarborough	22,950	22,950	0	No change predicted
Little Lane Property income	4,685	0	-4,685	Little Lane being sold
Short-Term Interest/Other	3,950	1,054	-2,896	Decline in interest value predicted/no donations budgeted
Synod Levy	0	22,880	22,880	Reintroduced @ £10 pm
<b>Total Income (normal)</b>	<b>£239,285</b>	<b>£289,033</b>	<b>£49,748</b>	

## Expenditure

Expenditure (Core)	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Gain/Loss	Notes on difference (Includes + 3% inflation in most cases)
<b>Core Office Costs</b>				
Salaries	244,857	244,017	840	After Jan/Feb 2021 employer pension contributions reduced from 25.1% to 22.8% Safeguarding Officer salary added here (was under Development costs last year)
Office Property	17,978	21,638	-3,660	Repair costs (+2.5k)
Office Function	21,560	26,424	-4,864	Database (+ 0.5k)/Recruitment (+1k)/Website (+1.5k)/IT Maintenance etc (+£1.2k)/ Equipment (+0.7k)
Audit/Accountancy	7,385	7,607	-222	
<b>s/t</b>	<b>£291,780</b>	<b>£299,686</b>	<b>-£7,906</b>	
<b>Core Committee/Officer Costs</b>				
Synod Committees	16,790	19,222	-2,432	Safeguarding training and IT Group added here (was under Development costs last year)
Synod Officers	14,519	17,898	-3,379	Safeguarding expenses added here (was under Development costs last year)
<b>s/t</b>	<b>£31,309</b>	<b>£37,120</b>	<b>-£5,811</b>	
<b>Synod Property Costs</b>				
Property: surveys, legal etc	5,986	5,652	334	
Property: maintenance etc	10,661	22,044	-11,383	More properties to maintain
<b>s/t</b>	<b>£16,647</b>	<b>£27,696</b>	<b>-£11,049</b>	
<b>Total core costs</b>	<b>£339,736</b>	<b>£364,502</b>	<b>-£24,766</b>	

Expenditure (Development)	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Gain/Loss	Notes on difference
CYP Officers	68,040	76,320	-8,280	Maternity leave finished
CYP Activities	18,500	21,140	-2,640	Additional Wilderness apprentice/Less training
Evangelism/Church Growth	6,303	6,600	-297	
Training/Development Officers	12,414	8,000	4,414	Our recruitment policy is unclear - regard this as contingency
Training/Development activities	11,611	15,265	-3,654	£4k new Elders training/+£3.8k Lay preachers/-£4k to reflect less DO-led events
IT Development task group	4,320	0	4,320	IT group completed most development - ongoing work moved to CORE costs above
Digital Divide Project		6,000	-6,000	New Moderator-led project
Safeguarding	19,598	0	19,958	Moved to CORE above/Reconciliation moved to Ministry Support below
<i>Big Day Out</i>	4,200	4,500	-300	Large scale event didn't happen in 2021 - now scheduled for 2022
Ministry Support/Reconciliation	5,824	4,940	884	Peter's House reduced/Reconciliation work added here
<b>s/t</b>	<b>£150,810</b>	<b>£142,765</b>	<b>£8,045</b>	
<b>Contingency</b>	<b>£15,000</b>	<b>£5,000</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	
<b>Total Development costs</b>	<b>£165,810</b>	<b>£147,765</b>	<b>£18,045</b>	
<b>Total Expenditure Core + Development</b>	<b>£505,546</b>	<b>£512,267</b>		

### Other Expenditure - Synod Support to Churches and wider URC

Expenditure (Grants)				
Synod Mission Fund	150,000	170,000	-20,000	
VINO Grants	100,000	162,100	-62,100	£65.5k property/£16.6k Training/£80k of unallocated
Welfare Grants	7,000	7,210	-210	
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>£257,000</b>	<b>£339,310</b>	<b>-£82,310</b>	
<b>Ministers Pension Fund</b>	<b>£350,000</b>	<b>£100,000</b>	<b>£250,000</b>	The 2021 figure was unknown when 2021 budget drawn up
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£1,112,546</b>	<b>£950,445</b>	<b>£162,101</b>	

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Policy is a statement of intent for the United Reformed Church, Yorkshire Synod, *agreed* by synod at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021. The policy uses as its basis the teaching and word of God and his Son, Jesus, that requires of us to be good stewards of the Earth in all its abundance for now and for future generations.
- 1.2 In being good stewards, we aim to reduce our carbon footprint, reduce waste, recycle wherever possible and purchase wisely enough for all to live. In doing so, we aim to protect the Earth's land, flora and fauna, oceans and atmospheres to bring equilibrium to all God's creation.
- 1.3 This policy is intended to be a supportive and active document for Synod, churches and congregations for application within each setting and community. The annex offers guidance and links to some useful sites for churches to dip into as needed.
- 1.4 In referencing Biblical teaching and the URC Environment Policy updated in May 2019, Synod proposes to work towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030, acknowledging the love of God for us and all creation and recognising recent developments in Earth Sciences and declarations of climate emergency. Hence, the Policy and Annex will be reviewed annually.
- 1.5 Synod encourages churches to have regard for the 10 Statements of Mission of Vision 2020, including care for God's creation in regular worship and teaching.

*[Annex 1: URC Environment Policy. Annex 2: net zero carbon. Annex 3: Statement Ten of Mission, Vision 2020]*

### 2. Why is Good Stewardship important?

- 2.1 From the beginning of the Biblical message, we were appointed by God to be good stewards of Earth, to nurture and care for all creatures just as it is God who loves us. God also gave us responsibility to care for all creation and enough for us to live by and be blessed through all good things.
- 2.2 In recent times we have been profligate with earth's resources and exploited others, leading to catastrophic loss of biodiversity and massive increase in harmful greenhouse gases that have adversely impacted those who contributed least to climatic crisis and having fewer resources to combat significant changes.
- 2.3 For that reason, Synod maintains its ethical stance on investment, including divestment from fossil fuels, illegally logged wood, products from unregulated sources and avoiding plastics from petroleum and unsustainable sources wherever possible.
- 2.4 For that reason, **Synod declares a climate emergency** and promotes changes that will aim to mitigate unsustainable losses to God's natural world.

*[Annex 4: notes on COP 15 and COP26]*

### 3. How will we achieve Good Stewardship?

- 3.1 Synod commits to achieving Gold Standard as an Eco Synod by 2030
- 3.2 Synod commits to managing Synod investments positively towards a greener environment, and to encouraging local churches to do the same.
- 3.3 Synod commits to reducing its carbon footprint by
- adopting a policy of 'recycle, reuse, repair' where-ever possible; also, renew, rethink, resell, reduce, refresh.
  - prioritising the use of video conferencing for meetings where appropriate, rather than travelling for meetings and encourages local churches to do the same.
- 3.4 Synod commits to including consideration of the environmental impact in all its decisions, and to encourages local churches to do the same.
- 3.5 Synod appoints one or more Green Apostles to work across the Synod to champion environmental mission inherent in the Policy.

3.5.1 Among other duties, the Green Apostle(s) will sign up the Synod to Eco Synod, monitor and report regularly on progress and gather an Environment Task Team to support them in their work.

3.5.2 The Synod Green Apostles and Environment Task Team cannot achieve its purposes alone. The active support of churches is needed. To aid this process Synod encourages churches to appoint an individual or group to:

- Develop a Church Environment Policy that operates across all of church life
- Sign their church up to Eco church, if not already signed and to guide progress through bronze, silver and gold levels.
- Report regularly to elders and to church meeting on how the church's Environment Policy is being met.
- Participate in environment meetings with The Task Team and share with champions from other churches.

*[Annex 5: Green Apostle's remit Annex 6: Eco church explained.]*

#### **4. Achieving Eco Targets in Church and Beyond**

4.1 Synod encourages all churches to ensure there is wide participation across all aspects of church life when setting eco targets. What unites us as church and people is the need to live as children of God in all our prayerful decisions.

4.2 Church's Policy should cover and consider areas such as worship, young people, elderly, user groups, maintenance, buying goods and services, finance, and utilising space, in all cases respecting and involving the local and wider communities.

4.3 Eco church helps churches and individuals to achieve its environment goals by encouraging each church to have an active and current Environment Policy that operates across all of church life.

*[Annex 7: Guide to being Greener]*

#### **5. Review and Accountability**

5.1 The Synod Green Apostle(s) will

- report bi-annually to Synod, ensuring the Policy is maintained annually and kept up to date
- liaise with churches through their appointed environment representative(s)
- Work with the Synod Environment Task Team to set targets for one, two and five years, to be reviewed annually.

5.2 The work of the Green Apostle(s) and Synod Environment Task Team is accountable to Synod Council

*[Annex 11: 1, 2 and 5 Year Targets]*

#### **6. Education and finance**

6.1 To help churches tackle the climate emergency and to mitigate unsustainable loss to God's natural world, **Synod commits to**

- offering support and advice on best practice to churches as needed
- providing an annual budget to the Synod Environment Task Team, managed by the Green Apostle(s).
- providing financial support to churches through a dedicated Green Fund for projects designed to decrease their carbon footprint in line with Statement 10, Vision 2020.

*[Annex 8: websites to support worship, property, community and global outreach.*

*Annex 9: Review of Carbon calculators]*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Synod Moderator      Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Yorkshire Synod Environment Policy

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Synod Moderator

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Green Apostle

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex to URC Yorkshire Synod Environment Policy 2021

### Annex 1 URC Environment Policy: esp. Section 2.6 and Section 5

[https://urc.org.uk/images/mission/church\\_and\\_society/Resources/201905\\_URC\\_Environmental\\_Policy.pdf](https://urc.org.uk/images/mission/church_and_society/Resources/201905_URC_Environmental_Policy.pdf)

Synod asks churches to always ensure they have a current URC Environment Policy in their Eco portfolio. In presenting the URC Policy we are conscious of on-going change:

*The science has become more definite in its assertion of a Climate Emergency since the 2019 Policy was approved, with associated deadlines moving on. We are now asking churches to be zero carbon by 2030.*

### URC Youth achieve climate emergency action at Mission Council

**United Reformed Church (URC) Youth are celebrating that the wider denomination has officially recognised the climate emergency.**

URC Youth presented a resolution, which subsequently passed, at Mission Council, the executive body of General Assembly, held digitally on 10 July 2020.

<https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3536-urc-youth-achieve-climate-emergency-action-at-mission-council.html>

### Annex 2 Net Zero Carbon

“In June 2019, parliament passed legislation requiring the government to reduce the UK’s net emissions of greenhouse gases by 100% relative to 1990 levels by 2050. Doing so would make the UK a ‘net zero’ emitter. Prior to this, the UK was committed to reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% of their 1990 levels, also by 2050.

**What does ‘net zero’ mean?** Net zero refers to achieving a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. There are two different routes to achieving net zero, which work in tandem: reducing existing emissions and actively removing greenhouse gases.

A *gross-zero* target would mean reducing all emissions to zero. This is not realistic, so instead the *net-zero* target recognises that there will be some emissions but that these need to be fully offset, predominantly through natural carbon sinks such as oceans and forests. (In the future, it may be possible to use artificial carbon sinks to increase carbon removal, research into these technologies is ongoing.)

When the amount of carbon emissions produced are cancelled out by the amount removed, the UK will be a net-zero emitter. The lower the emissions, the easier this becomes.

**Why is the government trying to achieve net zero?** In May 2019, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), a non-departmental public body that advises the government on the climate, recommended that the UK should aim to be net zero on all greenhouse gases by 2050. This

would keep the UK in line with the commitments it made as part of the 2016 Paris Agreement to keep global warming under 2 degrees". Institute for Government.

**Synod recommends** churches and Synod aim to achieve net zero emissions by 2030. We believe this can be achieved with forethought and whole church cooperation.

**Carbon neutrality** refers to achieving net-zero carbon dioxide emissions. This can be done by balancing emissions of carbon dioxide with its removal (often through carbon offsetting) or by eliminating emissions from society (the transition to the "post-carbon economy"). It is used in the context of carbon dioxide-releasing processes associated with transportation, energy production, agriculture, and industry.

Although the term "carbon neutral" is used, a carbon footprint also includes other greenhouse gases, usually carbon-based, measured in terms of their carbon dioxide equivalence. The term climate-neutral reflects the broader inclusiveness of other greenhouse gases in climate change, even if CO<sub>2</sub> is the most abundant. The term "net zero" is increasingly used to describe a broader and more comprehensive commitment to decarbonization and climate action, moving beyond carbon neutrality by including more activities under the scope of indirect emissions, and often including a science-based target on emissions reduction, as opposed to relying solely on offsetting. Wikipedia

**See also Annex 7 A Guide to going Greener**

**Annex 11** sets out suggested one, two and five year plans for guidance in each church.

### **Annex 3 URC Vision 2020 Statement 10 of Ten Statements**

[https://urc.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/mission/documents/vision2020genlassembly\\_report.pdf](https://urc.org.uk/what_we_do/mission/documents/vision2020genlassembly_report.pdf)

**Statement 10: The integrity of creation:** We will be a Church that has taken significant steps to safeguard the integrity of creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth. The changing climate and its consequences for all life on planet earth cannot be over emphasised as the most significant underlying issue of our time. Being an intergenerational community of faith that trust in the God of creation past, present and to come, it is vital that the Church recognizes the reality present in environmental debates. We must not neglect science. Our churches, reflecting faith in God the creator and sustainer of life in all its fullness, must discover the radical voice of care for the earth ... supported by the way we live. [abridged and altered].

#### **Some suggested local Indicators:**

Carrying out an environmental audit and implementing the resulting action plan.

Giving voice to the God whose life and love is expressed in all creation through worship, Bible study and prayer.

Involving children and young people in activities focusing on care for the environment.

Production of a piece of community artwork celebrating the Creator God.

#### **Synod Indicators**

The number of Eco-churches<sup>a</sup> with clear environmental action plans.

Developing and implementing plans to become an 'eco-Synod'.

The number of churches receiving training and support on issues of climate justice and environmental care.

<sup>a</sup> See: Eco-churches at A Rocha - <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

### **Assembly Indicators**

Significant year-on-year cuts to the URC's carbon footprint.

The development of a FURY strategy responding to the challenge of climate change.

See also Annex 1 on Youth Assembly Resolution, passed at Mission Council 2020

## **Annex 4 Further Reading - COP 15 and COP26 [as at July2021]**

The 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 21 was held in Paris in 2015. It was the 21st yearly session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Conference negotiated *the Paris Agreement*, a global agreement on the reduction of climate changes, the text of which represented a consensus of the representatives of the 196 attending parties. According to the organizing committee at the outset of the talks, the expected key result was an agreement to set a goal of limiting global warming to "well below 2° Celsius" compared to pre-industrial levels. The agreement calls for zero net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions to be reached during the second half of the 21st century. In the adopted version of the Paris Agreement, the parties will also "pursue efforts to" limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C. The 1.5 °C goal will require zero emissions sometime between 2030 and 2050, according to some scientists.

**COP26.** The United Nations Climate Change Conference in November 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/cop26>

**UK enshrines new target in law to slash emissions by 78% by 2035** The UK's sixth Carbon Budget will incorporate the UK's share of international aviation and shipping emissions for the first time, to bring the UK more than three-quarters of the way to net zero by 2050. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-enshrines-new-target-in-law-to-slash-emissions-by-78-by-2035>

## **Annex 5 Synod Green Apostles**

*Key aspects of the role*

Green Apostles will endeavour to:

- be well informed on the issues, programmes and campaigns around climate change;
- be proactive in highlighting the issues in their synods by offering to speak to churches and synod meetings/groups;
- provide regular updates on action and resources at synod meetings and in other ways;
- take a leading role in supporting the synods as they seek to implement aspects of the Environmental Policy particularly addressed to synods, as follows:

- ❖ encourage their churches to gain 'Eco-Church' status (in the case of churches in England and Wales) or 'Eco-Congregation' status (in the case of churches in

Scotland); in so doing they will encourage churches to see the positive benefits in terms of the financial savings that environmentally-friendly practices can bring;

- ❖ develop and implement plans to become 'Eco-synods';
- ❖ ensure that their buildings, including manses, are environment friendly through the use of energy-saving technologies and by identifying and using renewable sources of energy as appropriate;
- ❖ encourage their churches to work in collaboration with, or initiate, local transition or sustainability groups;
- ❖ encourage their churches to receive training and support on issues of climate justice and environmental care;
- ❖ appoint one or more 'Green Apostles' to monitor progress on carbon reduction in their synod (if preferred this role could be differently named, for example 'Sustainability Ambassador');
- ❖ draw up an 'environmental charter' along the lines of that adopted by North West Synod in 2015.

The role of 'Green Apostles' will have increased significance as they work with the synods to implement the new Environmental Policy for the United Reformed Church which was received and adopted by the General Assembly in July 2016, [amended 2019]. The policy is a statement of intent, providing a basis for appropriate action while recognising the efforts many churches have already taken to reduce their carbon footprint. Church and Society will be sending a mailing to all churches in early September with a copy of the policy and related information.

The Environmental Policy and the resolution passed by General Assembly can be found on the Church and Society Resources page: <http://www.urch.org.uk/cs-resources.html> under 'United Reformed Church Policies'.

Note: The Assembly resolution included the setting up of a task group to monitor the URC's progress towards meeting its commitment to reduce its carbon footprint. This group might also review the role of Green Apostles. [2016]

## **Annex 6 Eco church explained**

**Eco Synod, Eco church links and key goals A Rocha:** Eco Synod is an award programme that helps Synods to look at their own environmental impact as well as encouraging local churches to participate in Eco Church. Synods progress partly according to the number of congregations in their area achieving the Eco Church award at different levels.

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

Details on Eco Synod and Eco Church are found at:

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/denominational-awards/eco-synod/>

**Eco Synod status** will be given to your Synod when it has:

**Registered its intent to become an Eco Synod**

**Commissioned an individual or group** - To coordinate progress within the Synod.

**Written an environmental policy** - that has been agreed by the Synod meeting. This should include points on travel, the environmental maintenance of its manses (where appropriate) and a commitment to reducing Synod carbon emissions (taking into account the recommendations contained within the 2019 updated URC Environmental Policy).

**Gained the appropriate levels of local church registrations and Awards for Eco Church**

- Bronze Eco Synod: 10% of local churches registered; 5% of local churches awarded
- Silver Eco Synod: 20% of local churches registered; 10% of local churches awarded
- Gold Eco Synod: 30% of local churches registered; 20% of local churches awarded

**Achieved the relevant Eco Church Award level** - For its Synod offices (where appropriate) and land (where appropriate)

**Embedded environmental issues** - Having sought to ensure that environmental issues are integrated within the discipleship development provision of the Synod, including continuing ministerial education.

**Managed Synod investments ethically** - With due consideration of the environmental implications of those investments, taking into account the [2019 updated URC's Ethical Investment Guidelines on Climate Change Issues](#).

**Worked with other Synods, denominations and/or faith groups** - To encourage greater environmental action, including promoting Eco Church as a helpful tool

**Established the habit of recording and celebrating individual environmental initiatives**

## **Annex 7: A less than exhaustive Guide to being Greener, based on headings in Eco church**

Environment Task team recommends to following two webpages to help with recording and monitoring your church and personal carbon footprints. More in Annex 8

<https://climatestewards.org/> - for the church audit and assessment

<https://carbonfootprint.com/calculator1.html> - for personal analysis

### **Worship and Teaching**

All God's creation at heart of life	Host Eco events – egg hunts, bird, flower or insect counts
Prayers for creation, community, humanity	Meals or cakes with Fair trade ingredients
Time out with Children as learning experience – explore rural landscape	Sharing worship material
Meeting/chatting with neighbours	Celebrate Christian events with neighbours
Tending God's garden	Shared coffee morning in the street, front or back garden
House groups with Eco material	Include prayers from environment sources in personal worship
Eco groups for children	
Reading and sharing	

### **Buildings**

Eco survey or Thermal survey: identify heat loss/cold spots	Insulate roof space, incl. flat roof 300mm insulation in loft. Do not compress
---	---

Check windows, doors, floors for draughts  
 Breathable “sock” at open chimneys  
 Repair missing or poor mortar  
 Lime mortar for stone-build with no cavity  
 Replace missing roof slates  
 Repair water ingress/leaks as they occur  
 Make a safe and welcoming threshold  
 Instal LED bulbs  
 Insulate hot and cold water tank  
 Install cover for key holes + letter box  
 Research with Energy Saving Trust etc  
 Team up with neighbours on a shared project, e.g. windows, doors, solar, insulation  
 Ensure paved front gardens drain well  
 Grant funding for specifics e.g. insulation  
 Off-set excess emissions

Insulate under the floorboards  
 Insulate walls internally or externally  
 Check for continuous damp proof course  
 Double or triple glaze windows  
 Review energy provider for ‘Green Option’  
 Seek out green options for energy, building materials, insulation, maintenance, paint  
 Independent valves on each radiator  
 Set zero emissions target for 5 or 10 years  
 Make plan to achieve set target  
 Monitor energy and water use + plan to reduce  
 Solar gain as home heat support and cooling mechanism.  
 Ensure through air circulation on hot days  
 Shade windows to cool a room  
 Turn off appliances rather than on standby

## Land

Favour insects over insecticides  
 Peat free compost  
 Feed birds  
 Plant and seed share or swop  
 Bat or bird boxes  
 Let the spring grass grow, mow pathway + cut in autumn  
 Scatter wild flowers  
 Scope to install renewables  
 Collect and use rainwater in water butts  
 Allow air behind planting against a wall to prevent damp build up.

Make a compost heap  
 Grow vegetables relative to available space  
 Tool sharing scheme  
 Help a neighbour as needed  
 Create wildflower meadow  
 Work towards organic gardening  
 Adopt a ‘no dig’ policy  
 Water vegetables only with can or hidden drip hose *timer?* [rather than sprinkler]  
 Water during cooler periods of day  
 Celebrate harvests, climate Sunday  
 Plant a tree or trees

## Community and Global Engagement

Let a neighbour use some of your spare garden for growing vegetables  
 Is there scope at a locally for your garden expertise?  
 Do you need to off-set some of your carbon emissions with: tree planting, toilet twinning, sustainable farming projects, water on tap scheme, tools for farmers for developing world  
 Support charities in environmental mission  
 Host meetings (at church) with invited speaker on an eco topic

Start a car share  
 Walking crocodile to school  
 Start or participate in Local farmers market  
 Tend a patch of spare land, [check with Council] – weed, plant bulbs, wildflowers  
 Responsible recycling  
 Donate unwanted items to charity  
 Help a neighbour with a garden  
 Respond positively to local issues, waste collections, transport, roads etc  
 Suggest a green scheme to local councillors  
 Host hustings (at church) posing questions on environment issues

## Lifestyle

Rethink, Reinvent, Redefine – WRAP UK  
Love food. Hate waste – WRAP UK  
Reuse, Recycle, Repurpose, Reduce, Repair  
Walk/cycle instead of car on short journeys  
Take regular walks  
Car sharing to church  
When replacing gas boiler consider non-fossil fuel alternatives or add air source heat pump to gas system  
Look for grant funding or eco loans  
Develop affordable action plan at home for 2-5 years hence  
Aim for improvement in air quality and reduced emissions  
Review every purchase from alcohol to meat to toothpaste. Is it Fairtrade, organic, local, ethical, Eco friendly and sustainable?  
Avoid: plastics generally, clothes from sweat shops, excess packaging  
Recycled plastics may be useful – fencing?  
Switch off electrical goods when not in use  
Ditto lighting  
Assess carbon footprint of leisure activity  
Consider the environment in any purchase  
Collect rainwater for watering in the garden  
Microplastics come from synthetic clothes in washing. Avoid or wash carefully.  
Select clothes to last not 'wear and throw'  
Recycle or repurpose old clothes  
Turn down thermostat by 1°C  
Porch as barrier to heat loss  
Measure personal carbon footprint.

Limit flights to essential only – even work ones may not be necessary  
Celebrate Earth day or Christian Aid week at home  
Replace older appliances when no longer energy efficient  
Buy highest energy rated appliance where appropriate  
Use bus or train instead of car  
Electric vehicle to replace older diesel or petrol car may be cost effective  
Work from home some days a week  
Add extra layer of clothes and lower thermostat  
Buy seasonal and local food  
Animal friendly cosmetics & other goods  
Avoid food waste  
Cook at home and eat together  
Knit or sew to make something for the home or yourself  
Enjoy picnics without debris  
Make gifts for birthday or Christmas  
Install a sand [egg] timer in the shower  
Install a brick or sack in the water cistern for reduced flush  
Use less water; add a nozzle to taps  
Drink tap water where safe to do so  
Recycle unwanted furniture to charity  
Shop at charity shops for all sorts  
Put washing outside rather than tumble dry  
Ethical banking and investment  
Read articles/books on sustainability

And a paper from **Eco Congregation Scotland**: Greening Church Buildings - <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Greening-Church-Buildings.pdf> Extract from Eco-Congregation Scotland publication:

## Ideas for Action: GREENING CHURCH BUILDINGS

<b>Question</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
Do you read your energy meters?	<i>The first step to good energy management is to know how much energy you use. <b>Read your meters</b> monthly and report the figures to Kirk Session or Board.</i>
Do you keep records of your energy use?	<i>Keep a record to <b>check your bills</b> and to compare year on year performance. Ensure you have not been charged more than 5% VAT and are not paying CCL (Climate Change Levy) on your bill.</i>
Do you let your energy company know your energy use?	<i>For many accounts you can supply your own readings to ensure your bills are accurate. Do check you are not receiving inaccurate or estimated bills from your supplier.</i>

### What tariff are you on?

<b>Question</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
Have you considered joining the Church's Utility Purchasing Scheme?	<i>Compare your current tariff with the tariff available through the General Trustees.</i>
Who supplies your gas/electricity/oil or other fuel?	<i>If you are not in the Church of Scotland Utility Purchasing Group and have stayed with same supplier for years it may be worth considering changing.</i>

### Where do you go for advice?

<b>Question</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
Have you had an energy survey of your building recently?	<i>The Energy Saving Trust (EST) can provide free advice and may be able to carry out a survey of your building: contact them at the telephone number below.</i>
Do you know the carbon footprint of the energy used in your church buildings?	<i>You can find out using the simple calculator on the Church of Scotland website.</i>
Do you have a plan to manage your energy use?	<i>If you know how much energy you use and have had an energy survey draw up a plan to help you manage and reduce your energy use.</i>

## Annex 8: Some websites to support worship, property, community and global outreach

### **Carbon calculators** (for a review of Carbon Calculators, see Annex 11)

- <https://360carbon.org/> 360<sup>0</sup> - Calculates Church footprint
- <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator1.html> Carbon Footprint calculators for Individuals and Small Businesses
- <https://carbonsavvy.uk/calculator/> Carbon Savvy - Calculates Your share of national infrastructure emissions
- <https://www.climatecare.org/calculator/> Climate Care carbon calculator – focuses on off-setting

- <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/nature-environment/energy-buildings/content-section-2.4.1>  
Technical paper on how to Calculate the total heat loss of a house
- [https://carbon-calculator.climatehero.me/?source=GoogleAdwords&gclid=EAlaIQobChMIisHK3LG18AIV45PVCh1LnQsQEAAAYAiAAEgJ3BPD\\_BwE](https://carbon-calculator.climatehero.me/?source=GoogleAdwords&gclid=EAlaIQobChMIisHK3LG18AIV45PVCh1LnQsQEAAAYAiAAEgJ3BPD_BwE) Climate Hero calculator – shows how to improve on what you are already doing
- <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/> Questionnaire style to find environmental footprint
- <https://www.lner.co.uk/tickets-savings/the-best-way-to-travel/carbon-calculator/> LNER Best Foot Forward – compares environmental impact of modes of transport
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/carbon-calculator> The MacKay carbon calculator - provides a model of the UK energy system (for educational purposes)

### **Greening our buildings**

- [www.ired.co.uk](http://www.ired.co.uk) Thermal Imaging Surveys
- <https://greenchristian.org.uk/carbon-footprinting-green-christian-workshop/> Carbon Footprinting – a Green Christian Workshop
- <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Greening-Church-Buildings.pdf> Eco Church Scotland – greening church buildings
- <https://wrap.org.uk/about-us> WRAP promotes and encourages sustainable resource use through product design, waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and reprocessing of waste materials.

### **Worship resources**

- <https://www.wwdp.org.uk/> World Day of Prayer
- <https://www.climatesunday.org/> Climate Sunday an initiative calling on all local churches across Great Britain & Ireland to hold a climate-focused service on any Sunday before COP26 (November 2021).
- <https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3785-could-you-hold-a-climate-sunday> Reform magazine article - Could you hold a Climate Sunday?
- <https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/prayer-guide/> Green Christian – Prayer Guide - contains lots of useful links about a range of related issues

### **Politics and Campaigning**

- <https://thetimeisnow.uk/> Use your voice to tell politicians that you want a cleaner, greener, fairer future at the heart of plans to rebuild a strong economy.
- <https://www.reform-magazine.co.uk/2021/04/a-good-question-protest-how-far-would-you-go/> Reform magazine article - Protest: How far would you go?
- <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/what-is-fairtrade/> Fairtrade - one simple way to spark change

- <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week> Christian Aid Week
- <https://ukcop26.org/> Information about the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 1 – 12 November 2021 which the UK will host.

### **Campaigning and support groups**

- <https://www.climatestewards.org/> Carbon Stewards
- <https://operationnoah.org/> Operation Noah - a Christian charity working with the Church to inspire action on the climate crisis
- <https://christianclimateaction.org/> Christian Climate Action - a community of Christians supporting each other to take meaningful action in the face of imminent and catastrophic anthropogenic climate breakdown - Direct action, public witness for the climate
- <https://christianclimateaction.org/get-involved/regional-groups/> Christian Climate Action – link for local groups
- <https://greenchristian.org.uk/> Green Christian: a community of ordinary Christians from all backgrounds and traditions, who, inspired by faith, work to care for Creation through prayer, living simply, public witness, campaigning and mutual encouragement
- <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/> The Climate Coalition - the UK's largest group of people dedicated to action against climate change
- <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/faith-members> The Climate Coalition – faith members
- <https://www.permaculture.org.uk/> A network empowering people to make the right choices for a sustainable future using a design approach based on understandings of how nature works
- <https://www.permaculture.org.uk/whats-going-on/transition-towns> The Permaculture Association - The Transition Towns network
- <https://greeneruk.org/> Greener UK - a coalition of 12 major environmental organisations, with a combined public membership of over 8 million
- <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/about-us> Christian Aid - a global movement of people, churches and local organisations
- <https://www.earthhour.org/> Earth Hour - one of the world's largest grassroots movements for the environment.
- <https://globaloptimism.com/> Global Optimism exists to catalyse transformative actions in our world. Founded by Christiana Figueres - Global Optimism works to inspire and catalyse stubborn optimists around the world, to rise to the next level of our abilities, because it's necessary to do so, and because together, we can.

### **Educational resources**

- <https://greenchristian.org.uk/carbon-footprinting-green-christian-workshop/> Carbon Footprinting – a Green Christian Workshop
- <https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/> Green Christian – General resources (includes worship)

- <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week/resources> Christian Aid Week - resources
- <https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Lets-talk-about-the-climate-emergency-PDF-.pdf> A pack of materials that has been produced as a resource for use by churches to get their congregations talking about climate change, care for creation and how Christians can engage with and support COP26 when it is able to come to Glasgow.
- <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/how-to-help/> Climate Kids is produced by the Earth Science Communications Team at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Targeting upper-elementary-aged children, the site is full of games, activities and articles that make climate science accessible and engaging
- <https://www.reform-magazine.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SQ-Feb-20.pdf> **Reform** – Small group study material from URC General Secretary

### **Joint Public Issues Team**

- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/> The issues identified
- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/TTWUD-Flourishing.pdf> a conversation starter - Why you can't solve the climate crisis without talking about the economy
- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/economy/> The Economy
- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/environment/> The Environment
- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/poverty-and-inequality/> The Marginalised - Poverty and Inequality
- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/peacemaking/> Peacemaking
- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/asylum-and-migration/> Welcoming - Asylum and Migration
- <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/politics-and-elections/> Politics and Elections

### **Further reading**

- <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/path-net-zero-overview/> On the path to net zero: an overview
- <https://ruthvalerio.net/publications/saying-yes-to-life-the-archbishop-of-canterburys-lent-book-2020/> Ruth Valerio's book "Saying Yes to Life" - perfect for individuals and groups to think, reflect, pray and be challenged together.
- [www.christian-ecology.org.uk/bap-env.htm](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/bap-env.htm) Baptist Union of Great Britain - A Vision for the Environment
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greta\\_Thunberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greta_Thunberg) Wikipedia article about Greta Thunberg
- <https://www.kateraworth.com/> Kate Raworth – Exploring Doughnut Economics

**There's more – add your own ideas and suggestions.**

## **Annex 9: Sample On-line Carbon Calculators**

## A review of some carbon calculators

All the following 'carbon calculators' are on-line with many free to use. Please note, any 'recommended' comment is from other sources and not Green Apostle or URC.

### Carbon footprint calculators

<https://www.climatestewards.org/> - for the church audit and assessment

<https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator1.html> - for personal analysis

360° <https://360carbon.org/> **RECOMMENDED for Buildings**

This calculator is useful to calculate a **Church footprint**

The best way to use this website is to sign-up for a user account so you can save your church's or non-profit's carbon footprint and track it over time.

Needs a fair amount of detailed information about usage including travel, and utilities as well as waste disposal

Creating new carbon footprints for organisations is dependent on having a user account.

**Carbon footprint individuals** <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator1.html> **RECOMMENDED for individuals**

This site gives carbon calculators for Individuals and Small Businesses

**Individuals** - Following your calculation, you can offset / neutralise your emissions through one of our climate-friendly projects.

Good for individuals. Needs a fair amount of detailed information about usage including travel, and utilities as well as leisure activities, food consumed, etc

**Small Businesses** – users must create an account first before accessing this facility (we did not wish to create an account, so we have not assessed this facility)

The facility is available with *three versions - Basic - Micro Business Version (single building), Premium - Small Business Version (single building), and Elite - Small to Medium Size Business Version (Multiple Buildings & Sites)*

**Carbon Savvy** <https://carbonsavvy.uk/calculator/>

This calculator calculates your share of national infrastructure emissions

The **taster calculator** takes just 1 minute and the **popular calculator** 5 minutes. Both are based on information that most people have in their heads. The **full calculator** requires having your fuel bills to hand and takes around 30 minutes, giving you the satisfaction of picking up the smallest of changes you make in your lifestyle.

Taster Carbon Calculator : Easy to use – based on **life-style choices** rather than numerical data

Popular Carbon Calculator : Easy to use – based on life-style choices with some **additional (numerical) details needed**

**Climate Care carbon calculator** <https://www.climatecare.org/calculator/>

By using this carbon calculator to offset your footprint, you'll be supporting best practice projects that help the environment and local communities worldwide.  
It calculates an amount you to pay to a "social justice" to offset your emissions  
A good idea but lacking in instructions and not easy to use.  
I would not recommend this calculator

**Open University** <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/nature-environment/energy-buildings/content-section-2.4.1> **TECHNICAL (quite advanced)**

A technical paper on how to calculate the total heat loss of a house; part of a free course on "Energy in buildings"

**National Energy Foundation** <http://www.carbon-calculator.org.uk/>

This calculator is designed to enable estimated carbon footprints to be calculated by most UK organisations  
Too complex and not appropriate

### **Personal Environmental Footprint 'Calculators'**

**Climate Hero Carbon Calculator** [https://carbon-calculator.climatehero.me/?source=GoogleAdwords&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIisHK3LG18AIV45PVCh1LnQsQEAAAYiAAEgJ3BPD\\_BwE](https://carbon-calculator.climatehero.me/?source=GoogleAdwords&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIisHK3LG18AIV45PVCh1LnQsQEAAAYiAAEgJ3BPD_BwE) **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

The questions are divided in three sections: **Housing, Travel** and **Consumption**

Based on life-style rather than numerical data, this calculator gives a comparison of your carbon footprint with world averages. More importantly it gives an analysis of what you are doing right to reduce your carbon footprint, and what you can do to reduce it further.

**WWF** <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/> **RECOMMENDED**

A questionnaire to find out how big your personal environmental footprint is compared to the world and UK averages. Questions relate more to **life-style rather than numerical data**, and do not depend on detailed figures

**LNER Best Foot Forward** <https://www.lner.co.uk/tickets-savings/the-best-way-to-travel/carbon-calculator/> **RECOMMENDED**

Not a footprint calculator but the user can instantly compare the environmental impact of any journey by train, car and plane by entering journey details. Results show just how little impact travelling by train has on the environment, compared to going by car or plane.

Simple to use and of educational value.

### **Environmental Pathways to Reducing Carbon Impact**

**The MacKay Carbon Calculator** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/carbon-calculator> **RECOMMENDED for educational purposes**

The MacKay Carbon Calculator from this government website provides a model of the UK energy system that allows you to explore pathways to decarbonisation, including net zero by 2050.

You need to scroll down to open the calculator My 2050

You can then find your pathway to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero by 2050 (-100% in the CO<sub>2</sub>e meter) by:

- choosing your level of ambition from 1 (minimum effort) to 4 (extreme effort) for each of the levers of decarbonisation, namely transport, buildings, industry, ccs & hydrogen, land, bioenergy & waste
- limiting the number of extreme Level 4s you need to a few you think are most important

## Further Reading

<https://globaloptimism.com/> - Christiana Figueres

<https://climatekids.nasa.gov/how-to-help/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greta\\_Thunberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greta_Thunberg)

<https://wrap.org.uk/about-us>

**URC Reform magazine:** <https://www.reform-magazine.co.uk/>

**Reform –** <https://www.reform-magazine.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SQ-Feb-20.pdf>

**Green Christian:** <https://greenchristian.org.uk/>

**Green Christian – Prayer:** <https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/prayer-guide/>

**Green Christian - Resources:** <https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/>

## Annex 10 Remit of Task Team 2021

- To prepare an environment policy that is faith based and science based, God centred and recognises the anthropogenic nature of climate change and its impact on the future of the world and all its inhabitants;
- To seek out best practice, research current science and recognise the precariousness of life on the planet during this century.
- To maintain contact with Tim, Synod Clerk and Jamie, Synod Moderator and Simon, Synod Treasurer and other key people in the formulation of the policy.
- Present a proposed Synod Environment Policy to Synod at its October 2021 meeting;
- To bring an accompanying proposal on the means of implementing the policy for all churches and congregations including a one, three and five year plan for the Synod.

## Annex 11 Suggested Targets for Years 1, 2 and 5 for Green Apostle and Churches

### Yorkshire Green Apostle with Task team with Framework for churches

2021	2022	2026
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. register Yorkshire Synod as an Eco Synod in 2021</li> <li>2. prepare and circulate an environment policy framework for churches.</li> <li>3. liaise with Synod support networks such as Communications Mission and IT.</li> <li>4. work towards achieving Bronze award as an Eco Synod in 2021 or early 2022.</li> <li>5. engage with and work with churches not yet registered with Eco church to support them in their journey.</li> <li>6. on-going support for churches already registered with Eco church towards achieving their next award, be that bronze, silver or gold.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. support churches as they work towards the introduction of an environment policy for their church and congregation</li> <li>2. work with churches as they undertake an environment audit of their church and church buildings and manse, as appropriate. Direct churches towards recommended easy to use, audit sites that encourage churches to record their energy and water use which can then be used to calculate an initial assessment of CO2 emissions.</li> <li>3. prepare and circulate a document for churches that will record energy and water use enabling churches to compare year on year reduction in CO2 emissions.</li> <li>4. encourage churches to appoint a Environment Champion who may create a church-wide team that will liaise across church groups offering training and support in collating information towards energy reduction targets for their church.</li> <li>5. communicate fully with Environment Champions individually and collectively to share achievement, problem-solving, best practice and proposals with will encourage and support churches' work in caring for God's creation. Schedule bi-annual event for sharing and caring.</li> <li>6. arrange an annual Green Apostle Team event for all environment champions/ Teams with a keynote speaker from URC national network or a speaker from an outside organisation such as A Rocha or other climate supporting organisation.</li> <li>7. work alongside other Synod committees such as Property and Finance in support of churches proposing or preparing submissions for grant or loan funding. Also, to support churches undertaking fund-raising for events in support of proposed environmental improvements to church property for which they are responsible. Proposals include, building repairs, alterations, green/clean energy installation proposal, water-saving measures.</li> <li>8. collate information from churches as it comes available</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. monitor change and progress across all churches and report to Synod on an annual basis.</li> <li>2. continue to support churches during their energy reduction and water-saving transition period</li> <li>3. assist churches in celebrating eco-achievements during the previous year or going forward.</li> <li>4. assist churches with media and press communications in celebration of eco-changes</li> <li>5. Prepare a 'progress party' of worship and celebration for 2026, then for 2030.</li> </ol>

## Synod Council Report

**Tim Crossley, Synod Clerk**

Synod Council has met twice in formal session since the 2021 March Synod meeting, in May 2021 and most recently in September 2021. It also met in an informal session in July 2021 where just the one item was discussed. As is its remit, Synod Council continues to ensure that the plans put in place by Synod and its officers are done so effectively. It continues to ensure that the churches of Synod are still supported through the Covid-19 pandemic and it is acutely aware of the wider pressures the United Reformed Church is facing, which led it to convene a meeting in July to discuss the challenges the denomination faced concerning the Ministers' Pension Fund. All this has been done to the best of Synod Council's ability, taking into account all aspects of church and Synod life. The challenges facing Synod Council, as we move out of a period of legal restriction to one where the responsibility of care rests with the individual (person or group), are being addressed continuously. I hope that the progress we have achieved throughout the Spring and Summer of 2021 can be built upon as we enter the autumn and winter of 2021.

As in March 2021, I would like to pay tribute to the staff in the Synod Office who are continuing to provide an excellent service despite the gradual transition from home working to one where there is a mix between home and office attendance. Somerset House is now partially open, with, I hope, a presence there on most days through the week. Meeting facilities are also available, but there are limits on the number of people who can attend (until the Covid-19 numbers are sufficiently low to allow a return to pre-March 2020 levels). At the most recent Synod Council meeting it was felt that the time was not yet right for a fully functional meeting facility to be available at Somerset House. However, the updated digital meeting system means that we can cope with hybrid meetings, thus reducing the risk of transmission and improving our environmental credentials. I hope that this way of working can become part of the fabric of Synod, as through this hybrid system of meeting there is an increased opportunity for attendance.

### **Flexible times - still**

This Synod's two-fold pattern is something that has been borne of our experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic. By being able to utilise the skills we have all developed in our on-line capabilities has meant that the Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October element to the agenda will not now be alien to us. It means that we can have detailed presentations – this time from the Legacies of Slavery/Anti-Racist team, from the Treasurer and on how we respond to the URC's Jubilee 2022 – as well as feeling as though we are united in our endeavours. The plan to meet in person at Longcauseway Church on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October comes from comments which requested that we emphasise the worship element of our Synod meetings. There are elements of business to attend to, but by dedicating a good third of the time we have to worship allows us to celebrate our unity in one and to celebrate the unity of the One who is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

So this October I hope that by still living in and working through flexible times we can be able to broaden the scope of our meeting, widen the franchise of those attending and extend the subject matter, as well as being able to worship together as a strong and vibrant Synod community.

These meetings of Synod is again being supported by the IT group; with Dan Morrell and Lawrence Heath-Moore at the helm I am confident that the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October will run as smoothly as the March 2021 meeting, with this link being the means to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83789751572?pwd=S1p5ZTVwa3hXcFhSaE1tV1hTRDhudz09>

and the link to watch the livestream of Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> proceeding being here:

<https://bit.ly/urcyorkshireyoutube>

Communication has been central to much of Synod Council's work. The Briefing – born of a desire to keep Synod informed and advised of changes in restrictions early in the pandemic – has become a vital means of spreading the word around Synod of not only Covid related advice, but of mission related events. Now that the Yorkshire Synod website is fully functional at <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/> the need for a weekly briefing has reduced, so the plan is for it to be published twice monthly, with the odd special as and when required. The uptake of the Website derived newsletter is progressing and I do urge those who can to sign up for it as soon as you can.

Moving onto the life of the Synod.

Synod has met just the once since March 2021, on August 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 at Central URC in Sheffield for the induction of Rev Barry Welch into the Sheffield Team pastorate. May I take the opportunity to welcome Barry to Yorkshire on behalf of the whole of Synod and pray that his time in Sheffield will bear much fruit.

Informally, Synod does keep a watch on other significant events in the life of the Church and of individual churches. Two events come swiftly to mind. On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September saw the official opening of the new building at Idle Upper Chapel URC, the fifth building it has utilised since its foundation in 1660. On Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September saw the service marking Mr Alex Walker's work as Lay Pastor at South Leeds URC. Both these events are beacons of light in a period that has sadly seen some church closures within Synod. It is with regret though that the churches at Pickering (11<sup>th</sup> May 2021), Eccleshill (9<sup>th</sup> June 2021) and Christ Church with Trinity, Kirk Ella, Hull (30<sup>th</sup> September 2021) have closed since March. More encouraging is that the fellowships at Hall Gate and Intake in Doncaster have amalgamated (3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021) to form Ardeen Road URC, Doncaster and I hope that Synod wishes them all the best as they start a new chapter of faith in South Yorkshire.

### **General Assembly Meeting July 2021**

General Assembly 2021 met online from Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July through to Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Over the four days much was discussed in an environment that, although not strange to those who attended, in that it was held on the "Zoom" Conferencing platform, was strange in that the physical element did seem to be missing. Despite the numerous opportunities to meet in fellowship during Worship and in meeting rooms, much of the emphasis was on the business side of our denomination. In particular, the matter of the Ministers' Pension Fund was at the forefront of much discussion and two areas of church life have been referred to Synods for consideration. The reports and papers are available at <https://urc.org.uk/general-assembly-archive.html> and from the meeting two are resolutions, 39 and 40 relating to Ministerial Discipline and Safeguarding have been referred to Synods for consideration as they affect the Basis of Union. Although not being brought to this Synod I feel that Synod members need to be aware of the move and that they will form part of the meeting due to be held in March 2022. Therefore, I ask members of Synod to make themselves aware of the resolutions and that any resolution members may wish to bring at the March 2022 Synod are restricted to that they 'be not proceeded with'.

### **Synod Meetings 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

I would like to draw your attention to the accompanying Agenda paper that outlines the plan for the two sessions, the submitted committee and reference papers and the Resolutions paper, which lists the Resolutions on which decisions are required. Being aware that the business element of Synod is being split over two sessions in two places, the order in which these resolutions takes place is not necessarily to order in which they are presented here, in particular Resolutions 3 and 4 regarding the budget for 2022 and Resolution 5 regarding the response to the Ministers' Pension challenge. Similarly, the resolutions regarding Safeguarding Committee (Resolution 7), the Listed Buildings Advisory

Committee (Resolution 6) and the Environmental policy (Resolution 8) may not be in the order listed in the papers.

Although there are only papers submitted from six of our committee groups I can assure you that the work of those entrusted with the work of God within the Synod carried an apace. Pastoral Committee continues to work to ensure that the pastoral needs of the Synod are met. It is in constant conversation with churches, mission partnerships and informal groups as to how best their needs can be served by Synod. Similarly, the Property committee have been meeting regularly to ensure that the buildings we use are in good order, that churches are confident in using their buildings (especially through the pandemic) and is acutely aware that buildings are as much a part of our mission as any other aspect of church life.

At this Synod there are no plans to place any of the resolutions in “en-bloc” It may be that we take several resolutions together.

Therefore, the following resolutions are to be brought to Synod.

**Resolution No 1**

Synod receives the report of its Council  
and

**Resolution No 2**

Synod receives the reports from its Committees and Groups as presented in the attached papers where appropriate.

- i. Ministries Committee
- ii. Children and Young People’s Committee
- iii. Safeguarding Committee
- iv. Treasurer/Financial Resources Committee
- v. Listed Buildings Advisory Committee
- vi. Eco Group

The presentation by the Treasurer, Rev Simon Copley, is within the paper brought on behalf of the Financial Resources Committee as well as in the paper addressing the Pension Challenge.

The Pensions challenge will be addressed within the proceedings on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October, with the following two resolutions being brought to Synod.

**Resolution No 3**

Yorkshire Synod resolves to approve the decision of the directors of the United Reformed Church (Yorkshire Province) Trust Ltd to make to the URC Trust from 2021 to 2024 the payments as outlined in the Synod Treasurer’s Report, section 1b for the sole purpose of funding the pensions of ministers and church related community workers.

**Resolution No 4**

Yorkshire Synod approves the decision of the directors of the United Reformed Church (Yorkshire Province) Trust Ltd to make the following conditional offers to the URC Trust from 2025 to 2030 the payments outlined in the Synod Treasurer’s report, section 1b for the sole purpose of funding the pensions of ministers and church related community workers, noting that these amounts will only be asked for if subsequent actuarial valuations of the MPF demonstrate that these are necessary. Synod approves the temporary suspension, with immediate effect, of all policies in respect of proceeds from sale of properties allocated to the Synod Mission Fund. This suspension to be reviewed at the October 2021 Synod.

The Budget itself will be addresses on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October with the following resolution being brought to Synod

### **Resolution No 5**

Yorkshire Synod, meeting at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury on 9th October 2021 both receives and resolves to agree to the Synod Budget as submitted.

As has been outlined in the report from the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee, the pressures on both Northern Synod and Yorkshire Synod to provide an effective advisory group to comply with listed buildings legislation has led to the proposal to create a joint committee to cover both Northern and Yorkshire Synods. In the Synod literature are the report from the committee and the Terms of Reference and with this information they propose the following

### **Resolution No 6**

Yorkshire Synod, meeting at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury on 9th October 2021, resolves the following.

- a) Synod acknowledges with thanks its existing Listed Buildings Advisory Committee and agrees to form a new united Listed Buildings Advisory Committee, to fulfil its duties under the Ecclesiastical Exemption across the geographic areas of the Northern and Yorkshire Synods under [The United Reformed Church And The Planning \(Listed Buildings And Conservation Areas\) Act 1990 Procedure For Control Of Works To Buildings.](#)
- b) Synod adopts the terms of reference for the joint Listed Buildings Advisory Committee set out in the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee report the October 2021 Synods, and requests that any subsequent amendments be agreed by both synods.
- c) Synod appoints Steve Armitage, Peter Conwell, Sarah Dodds, Bill Flett, Liz Haestier, Robert Hoyle, Rev Andrew Lonsdale and John Niven to the joint Listed Buildings Advisory Committee, to serve from 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2024.
- d) Synod appoints the Northern and Yorkshire Synod Property Officers as members *ex officios* of the joint Listed Buildings Advisory Committee.
- e) Listed Buildings Advisory Committee reserves the right to co-opt additional members as necessary.

Similarly, the provision of Safeguarding oversight in Northern and Yorkshire Synods is being addressed. Currently the two Synods share Mr Matthew Knowles as Safeguarding Adviser and to streamline the lines of communication and management plans are being put in place to create a single committee to oversee this aspect of Synod life in accordance with the recommendations of "Good Practice 5", which General Assembly has adopted. Therefore, the Safeguarding committee propose the following

### **Resolution No 7**

Yorkshire Synod Safeguarding Committee recommends to Yorkshire Synod that formal discussions commence with Northern Synod to create a Joint Safeguarding Group.

Synod tasked itself at the March 2021 meeting to develop an Environmental Policy to both challenge itself to be more environmentally friendly and to challenge our constituent churches. Under the guidance of the Synod's Green Apostle, Mrs Alex Jowitt, the Eco group have worked tirelessly over the summer and have produced a suitable policy which is being presented to Synod. The accompanying policy as well as the Annex, which is flexible in its construct, form the basis on which we can develop as a "green" Synod. Not only does it unite us in striving for a cleaner planet with the URC nationally, it encourages partnerships with the Synod's. Moreover, it challenges us all to be aware of the changes we cause as a result of our actions. A key element in all this is assembling a group of Green Apostles through which this can be achieved, and with this in mind Synod Council proposes

### **Resolution No 8**

Yorkshire Synod, meeting at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury on 9th October 2021 both receives and resolves to adopt the Yorkshire Synod Environmental policy.

The following resolutions mark the people and events of Synod, in particular between March 2021 and October 2021. Sadly, there are more folk standing down than stepping up, but I hope that as we move out of these years of pandemic more people will hear the call to contribute to the on-going life of the Synod.

**Resolutions 9, 10, 11 and 12** give thanks for the work of Mrs Ruth Roddison on Children and Young People's Committee, Mrs Pauline Blackman on the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee, Rev Tony Lee as a Trustee of the Cottingley Project and Rev Matt Stone on Ministries Committee.

**Resolution 13** celebrates both previous and future service in that Rev Fran Kissack has agreed to continue for a further 3 years as one of our Assembly Executive representatives whilst **Resolution 14** recognises Mrs Terasa Raddings' commitment to working as a Synod appointed Trustee of the Cottingley project.

Sadly, we have permanently lost three of our churches since March 2021. Pickering URC, Eccleshill URC and Christ Church with Trinity URC Kirk Ella URC have all closed their doors this summer, **Resolutions 15, 16 and 17**, whilst the amalgamation of Hall Gate Doncaster and Intake URCs to create Ardeen Road URC, Doncaster is marked in **Resolution 18**. I am also aware that there are other churches whose names and witness may be brought to the next Synod meeting. I hope that you will share with Synod Council in the prayers granting them strength to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord as they journey through the next few months.

Finally, as I mention each time, there are always openings for people to help in the discerning the direction of the Synod. As I write there are vacancies on most of our committees, in particular on the Financial Resources and Property Committees. That doesn't mean to say that there are not places elsewhere in Synod which need fresh faces or within the URC as a whole. If you are called to help, please contact the Clerk at [clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:clerk@urcyorkshire.org.uk)

*Tim Crossley*

Synod Clerk

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Ministries Committee Report**

**Mrs Kathryn L Lonsdale, Convener**

Since my last report the work of Ministries has been mainly through zoom, email & telephone but as I write this report we look forward to our first meeting, since I became Convenor, at the Synod office 21<sup>st</sup> September.

### **Student completion of training**

It was a pleasure to join the induction & ordination of Rev Adam Woodhouse to Lancashire East Missional Partnership on 18<sup>th</sup> July. Please keep Adam in your prayers in his first year as an ordained minister.

### **Candidating for ministry**

We have no students in training this academic year. If you have anyone thinking about candidating for ministry please encourage them to get in touch with our new candidating secretary, Sally Duxbury, personal assistant to the Moderator.

### **Elders Development**

An elder's 24-hour conference at Wydale conference centre will take place 30<sup>th</sup> September – 1st October. This is being led by Rev Jamie Kissack, our Moderator, who has chosen for his theme "How shall we sing the Lord's song" an exploration of the psalms.

After positive feedback the Church Secretary zoom meetings will continue about 4 times a year. The next one is Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October 10am-11am.

The Elders Development Group have updated the United Reformed Church Elders resources and are planning some sessions to share this information. They are also discussing developing elders mentoring in Yorkshire and starting to plan next year's annual elders conference.

### **Worship Development**

Lay preacher's preparation for preaching zoom sessions have continued through the pandemic and due to positive feedback will continue on zoom. Our lay preachers planning group of myself, Jill Fletcher and Rod Morrison are planning a weekend conference for lay preachers and worship leaders at Wydale conference centre 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> July 2022. More information, including a booking form, will be available in the new year but please note these dates if you are interested in joining us.

After good feedback on last year's overview on Mark we have planned, for all interested

on Zoom 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> November

10.00am-11.30am repeated at 7.30pm-9.00pm

'An overview of Luke led by Lawrence Heath-Moore'

Lawrence Heath-Moore will lead a series of sessions on the gospel of Luke (the upcoming 'Year' in the revised common lectionary). The sessions will be interactive, informal, and set you up well for a year of preaching on Luke! Whether you're a seasoned preacher, minister, lay preacher, worship leader, elder, Bible study leader or just interested please book your place with the Synod office

[office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk) 01132 898490.

### **Stepwise**

The first group of 4 have successfully completed Faith-Filled Life. If you or any of your church members are interested in knowing more about Stepwise please contact our Stepwise Coordinator, Dr Lesley Coote.

### **Reviews**

This year we have instigated 5 reviews:

Leeds University Chaplaincy & 18-25

Elder in local leadership

Leeds Mission & Ministry Enabler

Churspacious Ministry

Huddersfield Church Related Community Worker

The latter 2 are still in progress

We thank the reviewers, post holders, management group members and other contacts for their time and input to these reviews during this year.

### **Yorkshire Lay Preaching and Worship Leading policy**

After the United Reformed Church General Assembly in July agreeing a new process for locally recognised worship leaders and assembly accredited lay preacher training this policy has been a major piece of work over the last few months. As I write this report the final draft is due for agreement at next week's meeting. It is encouraging that we are already getting enquiries for the locally recognised worship leader process and have had one applicant for the assembly accreditation course.

For both of these the applicants' local church support and approval is one of the requirements before any applicant is accepted, so we will contact you early in the process if any of your members show an interest in either of these callings.

We look forward to the coming year when we can move forward the work of Ministries meeting, partly still on zoom, but importantly starting to gather more in person for the various meetings, conferences and visits to churches we are planning.

Yours in Christ's service

*Kath*

## Children & Young People's Committee Report

Ruth Roddison, Convener

The last six months in the synod have seen us slowly emerging from lockdowns and restrictions. During that time, it has been great to be able to meet in person again with some church groups and workers, although most provision for children or young people has still been severely restricted. In the spring we decided to tentatively plan for more activity in the autumn and we are starting to see a positive response to this. Things will continue to develop as Megan returns to work from Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Things to celebrate:**

- Presentation of Joseph Hartley's (Longcauseway Church) Lundie Award.  
<https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/longcauseway-lundie-award-presentation/>
- Presentation of the first of the NEW format 'Children and Youth Friendly Church' scheme to Shiregreen URC.  
<https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/shire-green-urc-is-children-and-youth-friendly/>
- Youth Mental Health First Aid training course for church workers, as one way of addressing the mental and emotional health needs of young people after the last 18 months.
- 6 under-26 reps at General Assembly representing Yorkshire Synod (this must be a record?). They did the synod proud – well done Kai Weynberg, Dan Morrell, Megan Westgarth, Lydia Raddings, Aaron Wood, Jacob Lowe.
- Wilderness Pilgrimage day for young adults – as our usual weekend retreat had to be cancelled we met to walk along the Leeds canal to Kirkstall Abbey.
- Little Big Day Out (Sep 18<sup>th</sup>) – 120 adults and children enjoying a day out together at Gulliver's Valley, nr Sheffield.
- Synod Youth Weekend (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Oct) – a valuable opportunity for young people to get out and have some fun together and meet up with new people after the severe impact on their mental and emotional health of the last 18months.

### **Future things to look forward to:**

- 5 Northerly Synods 'Messy Church Meet-ups' on zoom
- 5 Northerly Synods 'Parenting for Faith' online course
- Youth Assembly 2022 <https://urcyorkshire.org.uk/event/urc-youth-assembly-2022/>
- Advent Retreat for church workers and volunteers

### **Things to pray for:**

- The children and young people who come to your church, are part of your family, or who walk past your window. Ask God to bless them, and to show you how to bless them too.
- People who work with children and young people in your church – the paid and volunteer workers, teachers, social workers and other professionals.
- For your church to be a more welcoming and caring place for children and young people.

Please get in touch if you want to talk about anything to do with children and young people and your church: [wilderness@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:wilderness@urcyorkshire.org.uk)

## **Safeguarding Committee Report**

**Matt Knowles, Safeguarding Adviser**

Since the last report there has been a significant rise in work undertaken by the Synod Safeguarding Adviser. This has been partly driven by the increased visibility of the role and the support provided to local churches as well as a rise in the number of safeguarding concerns that have needed to be dealt with.

**Safeguarding Training.** An all new intermediate training package has been created and this is being rolled out to Synod from September 2021. There has already been a large number of bookings made and further courses will be made available in 2022. Further Foundation (basic) courses are also being run to allow for those who didn't attend the last run of training dates as well as those that require a 3-year refresher.

**Annual church safeguarding returns.** The work surrounding this has had to be placed on hold due to the amount of work required to be completed on safeguarding concerns on a spontaneous basis. Once sufficient time is available then this issue will be returned to. 2021/22's returns will be completed on an amended form which will be supplied with a guidance sheet to assist churches to complete the forms correctly. In 2022/23 there will be the option to complete these forms online.

**Casework.** All aspects of Synod casework are up to date. There have been some serious and complex safeguarding concerns which have been dealt with by the Synod Safeguarding Adviser. Some of these have concluded but there are still several serious concerns ongoing. All churches involved have put safeguarding at the top of their list of priorities. In doing so they have mitigated the risk to children and young people to the best of their ability. There is no doubt that if they hadn't done this then we would have been facing much greater challenges. The Committee Convener is fully aware and updated with ongoing issues as is the Moderator when necessary.

**Yorkshire / Northern Synod Safeguarding Committee.** Work is ongoing to create a joint committee and several meetings are planned in the coming months to arrange terms of references etc. Both Synods are actively engaged in ensuring that the amalgamation improves safeguarding for both Synods whilst providing a support mechanism for the Synod Safeguarding Adviser to perform their role. Therefore, the Safeguarding committee bring Resolution 7 to Synod: *Yorkshire Synod Safeguarding Committee recommends to Yorkshire Synod that formal discussions commence with Northern Synod to create a Joint Safeguarding Group.*

**Safeguarding updates.** The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) produced the third report into child protection in religious settings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021. This report released by IICSA included findings relating to churches including the URC. Due to this report there are some quite sweeping changes expected and this will be brought to the committee's attention at that time. It is however recommended that members read this report to get a full understanding of failings in the past and how we need to act in the future to ensure these mistakes and lack of actions do not reoccur.

[Child protection in religious organisations and settings Investigation Report | IICSA Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#)

**Matt Knowles, Synod Safeguarding Adviser**

## Treasurer's Report

Rev Simon Copley, Synod Treasurer

### 1a - Pensions Challenge - the URC Position

The URC have been forecasting an overall deficit in relation to the Ministers Pension Fund of around £45 million from 10 years, 2021 to 2030.

All 13 URC Synods have been in internal discussions, in discussion with the URC's Risk Management Group (RMG) and in dialogue with each other but, essentially, each Synod has been asked to make an indicative offer to the MPF. This process culminated over the summer and the remarkable outcome is that the 13 indicative offers added up to £44.988 million, a shortfall of only £12,000.

In addition, the central URC Trust also offered £4.5 million making the total offer up to £49.488m. Also, the 2021 Valuation of the Pension Funds may be better than expected with the 2021-2026 target requiring £6m less than anticipated. (This is conditional on the Regulator's thoughts about the strength of our legal framework - our Covenant). Despite these promising developments the RMG will continue to assume an overall target of £45m from the whole denomination, in the interests of prudence.

As we progress, there will undoubtedly be variations in the extent to which all Synods can meet their indicative offers (or not!) as well as fluctuations in the 2024, 2027 and 2030 valuations. These will either reduce or increase the demand made of Synods across the URC. Any repayments as a result of reductions will be made, pro-rata in line with sums committed by various Synods.

The URC Trust has agreed to be the main conduit of payments and holding funds on behalf of Synods which will minimise legal and accounting complexities for Synod Trusts. The RMG have also done work on wording of resolutions for Trusts and Synods to pass. There is also work, in liaison with the Charity Commission, to ensure members of Synod are not in conflict of interest while considering the issues.

### 1b - Pensions Challenge - Yorkshire Synod's Proposed Response

The Yorkshire Synod's indicative offer (approved by Trust and FRC) to the MPF is £1.675 million over 10 years. We are asking Synod to endorse this approach.

This offer is made up of three distinct elements:

- a) We will continue to donate 20% of proceeds of sales of closed churches to the MPF. This is effectively a continuation of Synod current policy. The estimate is given in the table below and it is very conservative so, in reality we will probably be able to donate more to the MPF.
- b) We will offer an additional sum totalling £644,000, so we can make as generous an offer as possible. This additional amount is in line with the RMG's original suggestion (in August 2020) of what Yorkshire Synod might be able to offer in this way, based on their assessment of our assets at that time.
- c) We will, in time, encourage individual congregations to consider their own donations to the MPF (totalling £400,000 across Synod). A good proportion of these would, presumably, come from assets held in trust for churches by the YCU, but also from elsewhere if possible. We propose a total sum equivalent to around 5% of YCU assets which, at start of 2021 totalled £8.2 million (hence £400,000). NB this is an overall total and it will be up to each individual congregation to decide if, and how, to respond. All congregations will be invited to do so even if they have no assets held by YCU. The response would, hopefully, be determined in the context of a wider conversation about constructive use of assets for mission. NB: 9.6% of the £8.2m (£785k) has already reverted to Synod (or is estimated to do so) because of church closures this year - so Synod could take a lead in making contributions from this source.

The following table shows our proposed schedule of payments to MPF and this is replicated in the resolution before Synod.

Source/Year (£K)	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Total
20% of closed church sales (estimated)	264	14	14	14	14	57	57	57	82	58	£631
Additional commitment	86	86	86	86	86	43	43	43	43	42	£644
Donations from congregations (net)				80	80	80	80	80			£400
Total MPF commitment	350	100	100	180	180	180	180	180	125	100	£1,675

The reaction of the RAMG was that this was a “very generous offer”.

Note FRC are proposing that the offer be front-loaded to meet the immediate needs of the MPF in the early years of the challenge. The estimate of income from closed church sales is not necessarily tied to the actual time scale of closures (although it is related to our estimate of closures, over the whole 10 years)

The aspiration is to contribute £1.675 million in total. The overall commitment from Synod funds is £1.275 million. The commitment to be asked from congregations is an additional £400k and this will not be required until 2024 at the earliest and 2028 at the latest.

Any payment from property sales for 2021 that would normally be due to the MPF are included in our offer (although no actual payments have been made to the MPF in 2021, as yet).

### 1c - Pensions Challenge - Can we do it?

There are a huge number of factors in our projections with varying degrees of predictability and all subject to continual monitoring. Overall, our original estimate, over the 10-year period of the Pensions Challenge, is as follows:

Regular income (mainly investments and Synod Levy)	£3.521m
Regular Expenditure (core and development costs)	(£5,650m)
<i>Overall deficit</i>	<i>(£2.129m)</i>
Income from closed churches etc. (Net)	£3.454m
MPF Commitment (Synod’s direct commitment)	£1.275m

### **Overall Balance**

**£50,000**

This shows a very narrow margin of solvency. But by far the greatest contribution (and fluctuation) determining the viability of our response will come from the number and scale of property sales. There may be more (or less) property sales predicted and variations in price because of the property market. We have already, in 2021, seen more properties being sold than expected at higher prices than anticipated.

Also, not included are liquid and investment proceeds from assets of closing churches that will revert to Synod. Some assets have already done so (and others are estimated to do so) in 2021. Some of these will be from assets held by YCU. The figure for the year is still to be finalised.

Income from closed churches is also netted after disbursements to Synod Mission Fund so our scenario assumes running the SMF at a level in line with demand from churches for a few years (we are tracking funds that would normally be allocated to the SMF to inform any future investment in mission funding). We are also able to maintain our existing commitment to VINO funds that we originally decided, or proposed, to allocate.

Overall, we are likely, having made a generous offer to the MPF, remaining committed to SMF and VINO and still running Synod year-on-year at a deficit, to be in a position to invest more, strategically, in mission. Synod Council and FRC intend to look at this in greater depth and detail as the situation unfolds and bring information for discussion to a future Synod.

## **2 - Budget performance 2021**

Overall we are looking at a £25k under-spend on the budget originally set for 2021.

Income - Investment income is picking up again, generally and we predict an increase of about £11k in this source overall. Please note: we are still to make our appeal for voluntary contributions to the Synod Levy (after October) so that may yield some more income - but it is an unknown.

Expenditure - we still have a net under-spend, in the region of £14k. This is not going to be as much as predicted in the summer mainly because of additional spending on Safeguarding Officer's hours, website development and IT task group and increased costs of maintaining properties that we are in process of preparing for sale.

Under-spent items include a slight overestimate of staff salaries, zero call on our contingency fund, a very modest outlay on the Big Day Out (which turned out to be a little but enjoyable one), less Youth/Children and Development activity and not employing a Development officer this year.

## **3 - 2022 Budget**

This is attached for Synod's approval. The main points to note are:

Income - our Pensions Challenge projection made a quite optimistic assessment of our Investment Performance but we have adjusted this down by about £22k. Reintroduction of a Synod Levy will boost income although it may be less than originally expected.

Expenditure - This is very close to expectation overall although there are some variations within the detail, notably £6k set aside for a Digital Divide Project and £4k for more development of lay preaching. There is less expenditure on a Development Officer (although not reduced entirely to give us some leeway on progressing this).

The budget is presented slightly differently from last year in that ongoing IT support and all Safeguarding costs have been moved from Development to Core. The IT task group have moved beyond their initial excellent development stage and we need to reinforce the mind-set that Safeguarding is certainly not to be considered an "extra"!

## **4 - A note about current SMF and VINO commitments**

Synod Mission Fund - SMF currently has about £366k in uncommitted funds. In the next few years, I would propose to only allocate funds to the SMF to keep it topped up commensurate with the demand from congregations (£50k grants estimated for remainder of this year then £170k allocated for 2022, increasing incrementally thereafter). Otherwise funds are set aside unnecessarily.

VINO grants - There is £242k already allocated but as yet unspent and a further £200k allocated in principle but awaiting Synod decision as to the practical criteria for distributing it (So a total of £442k).

We have budgeted a £162k spend for 2022 but I don't see why Property Committee (and others) need be bound by budget constraints if needs are being presented. It is difficult to predict what might arise at what point and, again, we don't want funds to be tied up unnecessarily.

As Synod has made decisions in principle then we must assume that VINO money be treated as committed unless we decide otherwise. But we will need a decision on the £200k, eventually. Detailed proposals came from a combined group from FRC and the VINO task group, but the latter has not met during lockdown and their original proposal regarding the £200k was waylaid by the lockdown.

## **5 - Other issues**

Conversations are ongoing within Synod about how to support churches as creatively, flexibly and fully as possible, while encouraging congregations in their core purpose and best use of their assets. It is pleasing to hear of churches recovering lost income through insurance claims and beginning to recover giving in other ways as lockdown eases. But things are still uncertain.

## Listed Buildings Advisory Committee Report      Revd. Andrew Lonsdale, Convenor

I have to begin my report with a big thank you to David Figures and Clyde Binfield for their commitment and long service to this committee and our Synod. Thanks are also due to Pauline Blackman who has also stepped down from the committee and to those who continue to serve on it.

We have continued to support those churches who are exploring the ways in which their buildings can be adapted to improve their worship and mission activities and those who need to carry out difficult repairs and maintenance particularly with informal visits, discussion and professional advice prior to an application for the work.

We are establishing a pattern of meetings each year so that any church needing to make an application for permission to do work will know the dates by which the application has to be made. This will enable the committee to both send the details to the appropriate statutory bodies for their comments and consider it before making recommendations to the Synod Property Committee.

Here are the proposed dates for the LBAC in 2022, with the Yorkshire Synod Property committee and Yorkshire Congregational Union committee of management for reference.

These dates are to be implemented for Yorkshire applications and will be brought to the joint committee if Resolution 6 is passed. Late applications will be held over to the subsequent meeting and the advice is to have any plans submitted well before the LBAC meeting date.

Application to be submitted to the secretary of LBAC (currently Yorkshire Synod Office) by	28 day statutory Consultation period ends	Date of the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee meeting	Proposed date of Synod Property Committee ( for information)	Proposed date of YCU & FRC ( for information )
28/01/2022	25/02/2022	03/03/2022	09/03/2022	15/03/2022
01/04/2022	29/04/2022	05/05/2022	11/05/2022	17/05/2022
27/05/2022	01/07/2022	07/07/2022	13/07/2022	19/07/2022
30/09/2022	28/10/2022	03/11/2022	09/11/2022	15/11/2022

We have also been involved in discussion with the four other northern Synods (Northern, Mersey, Northwest and Scotland) who, like ourselves, have been looking to recruit more members to their Listed Buildings Advisory Committees. The current proposal is to create a joint committee with Northern, utilising the following Terms of Reference as to how it will work and with the possibility that other Synod's may join us later. This will enable us to use the expertise from a larger group and ensure we give the support needed by our churches but we are still asking if anyone who has the appropriate experience would be willing to join the committee. Therefore, LBAC propose Resolution 6.

**Yorkshire and Northern Synods\***  
**Listed Buildings Advisory Committee**  
**Proposed Terms of Reference**

Name of group	Yorkshire and Northern Synods Listed Buildings Advisory Committee
Membership and appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A representative with a property advisory role from Yorkshire Synod</li> <li>▪ A representative with a property advisory role from Northern Synod</li> <li>▪ A minimum of two people with buildings, architectural or related experience.</li> <li>▪ A minister of word and sacrament.</li> </ul> <p>Ideally core membership will not exceed 10 people, and members may be co-opted for their particular knowledge, skill or role if it will support the work of the committee or requirements of the Synods.</p> <p>Where possible geographic representation and a balance of gender, ethnicity, lay and ordained interests will be sought, however this may not be guaranteed. The committee seeks to be inclusive and will attend to communication or other needs to assist full participation.</p> <p>*Note: members may be appointed after consultation with Historic England, relevant associations of local authorities and the bodies listed in the second schedule of the URC Acts. See <i>The United Reformed Church And The Planning (Listed Buildings And Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Procedure For Control Of Works To Buildings</i>. <a href="https://www.urc-northernsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Listed-Buildings-Control-Procedure.pdf">https://www.urc-northernsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Listed-Buildings-Control-Procedure.pdf</a></p>
Chairing	The chair will be agreed by the committee and affirmed by the Yorkshire and Northern Synods.
Frequency of meetings and quorum	<p>A minimum of four meetings in a calendar year, with a minimum of one meeting each year to take place in person.</p> <p>The meeting will be quorate for decision-making with 50% members present. Decisions and views can be submitted by committee members online before the meeting.</p>
Record of meetings	Minutes will be taken and circulated within 10 days and be available for the next meeting.
Reporting mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The joint LBAC is accountable to the Synod Property Committee on applications for consent. This is the Synod Executive in Northern Synod and the Synod Property Committee in Yorkshire Synod.</li> <li>▪ In practice the LBAC will also report to the relevant Trust committees in each Synod.</li> <li>▪ A formal report will be presented to Yorkshire and Northern Synods on the previous six months' activity by the nominated representative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Committee members will ensure their relevant Synod committees and groups are apprised of and kept up to date on all significant LBAC issues and those arising from the committee's activity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Committee members will be responsible for ensuring building applications which require LBAC approval are shared with the committee in a timely manner.</li> <li>▪ Committee members will share any learning or development opportunities with their Synods.</li> <li>▪ A committee representative will attend the URC Listed Buildings Advisory Group.</li> </ul>
<p>Functions and delegated authority</p>	<p>The Yorkshire and Northern Synods Listed Buildings Advisory Committee will be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advising Synod Trusts and/or Property Committees upon listed building applications received from URC churches in Yorkshire and Northern Synods.</li> <li>▪ Fulfilling the responsibilities and requirements of an LBAC as defined in <i>The United Reformed Church And The Planning (Listed Buildings And Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Procedure For Control Of Works To Buildings</i>. <a href="https://www.urb-northern-synod.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Listed-Buildings-Control-Procedure.pdf">https://www.urb-northern-synod.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Listed-Buildings-Control-Procedure.pdf</a> (link valid at August 2021)</li> <li>▪ Making arrangements for appropriate liaison with professional bodies, local authorities and heritage bodies.</li> <li>▪ Undertaking enforcement action in the case of unauthorised works to listed church buildings.</li> <li>▪ Reviewing the environmental impact of proposed works, and signposting to sources of advice about more sustainable materials and approaches.</li> <li>▪ Advisory functions can include and not be limited to explaining existing Synod policies, risk management and health and safety issues arising from listed buildings applications.</li> <li>▪ Providing guidance on listed buildings strategic issues to Synod Trusts, committees and councils as appropriate.</li> <li>▪ Proactively offering early advice and support to churches with listed buildings prior to any buildings applications being submitted.</li> <li>▪ To develop a supportive and developmental ethos for committee members, churches and Trusts regarding listed buildings.</li> </ul>

\*Note: The terms of reference can be modified to include other northerly Synods which in time, may also wish to become a member Synod of the Joint LBAC.



The  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

**Yorkshire Synod**  
Somerset House  
St Paul's Street  
Morley  
Leeds  
LS27 9EP

Synod Moderator  
Synod Clerk  
Treasurer  
Property Officer  
Trust Secretary

Rev. Jamie Kissack  
Tim Crossley  
Rev Simon Copley  
Jane Bunyan-Murray  
Alastair Forsyth

e-Mail: [office@urcyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:office@urcyorkshire.org.uk)  
Website: [www.urcyorkshire.org.uk](http://www.urcyorkshire.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0113 289 8490

**To All Members of Synod**

October 2021

Dear Member of Synod,

**Meeting of Synod on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 6.30pm and on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 10.00am.**

**Supplementary Literature and Covid-19 Precautions**

In addition to the literature sent out at the end of September there are some further documents that are relevant to the forthcoming meetings of Synod. Furthermore, this letter also has information regarding the Covid-19 protocols that we are adhering to during the meeting on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury.

Attached are two further documents that do have a bearing on the meetings of Synod. The first is an updated list of Resolutions, some of which have been amended to improve grammar and meaning, and the second is the paper "Becoming a Missional Synod". The Resolutions paper speaks for itself in that the formal wording is submitted to members of Synod for consideration during the two sessions. The "Becoming a Missional Synod" is to be referred to extensively in the Jubilee 2022 discussion sessions on both Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October and Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October. Digital copies of both documents will be available in the "Chat" function of the Zoom meeting on the Thursday session and a small number of hard copies will be available at the Saturday session. As ever, if you have any questions, please contact the Synod office in the usual manner.

The other part to this letter is to brief members of Synod and those attending of the protocols that will be in place whilst we meet at Longcauseway. In addition to any local requests by the church at Longcauseway we would request that facemasks be worn (covering both mouth and nose) whilst moving around the venue and when we are singing during the acts of worship. We also encourage the wearing of masks in the venue during the proceedings and that they are only removed when addressing Synod. A full announcement will be made when Synod convenes and I hope that members of Synod understand the reasons for this request, borne from a desire to keep ourselves and our neighbours infection free.

It only remains for me to say that I look forward to seeing you all on Thursday via this Zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83789751572?pwd=S1p5ZTVwa3hXcFhSaE1tV1hTRDhudz09> and on Saturday in person.

*Tim Crossley*

Synod Clerk

# Resolutions, Yorkshire Synod Meeting, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## Resolution No 1

Synod receives the report of its Council.

## Resolution No 2

Synod receives the reports from its Committees and Groups as presented in the attached papers where appropriate.

- i. Ministries Committee
- ii. Children and Young People's Committee
- iii. Safeguarding Committee
- iv. Treasurer/Financial Resources Committee
- v. Listed Buildings Advisory Committee
- vi. Eco Group

## Resolution No 3

Yorkshire Synod approves the decision of the directors of the United Reformed Church (Yorkshire Province) Trust Ltd to make to the URC Trust from 2021 to 2024 the payments as outlined in the Synod Treasurer's Report, section 1b for the sole purpose of funding the pensions of ministers and church related community workers.

## Resolution No 4;

Yorkshire Synod approves the decision of the directors of the United Reformed Church (Yorkshire Province) Trust Ltd to make the following conditional offers to the URC Trust from 2025 to 2030 the payments outlined in the Synod Treasurer's report, section 1b for the sole purpose of funding the pensions of ministers and church related community workers, noting that these amounts will only be asked for if subsequent actuarial valuations of the MPF demonstrate that these are necessary.

## Resolution No 5

Yorkshire Synod, meeting at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury on 9th October 2021 both receives and agrees to the Synod Budget as submitted.

## Resolution No 6

Yorkshire Synod, meeting at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury on 9th October 2021, resolves the following.

- a) Synod acknowledges with thanks its existing Listed Buildings Advisory Committee and agrees to form a new united Listed Buildings Advisory Committee, to fulfil its duties under the Ecclesiastical Exemption across the geographic areas of the Northern and Yorkshire Synods under [The United Reformed Church And The Planning \(Listed Buildings And Conservation Areas\) Act 1990 Procedure For Control Of Works To Buildings.](#)
- b) Synod adopts the terms of reference for the joint Listed Buildings Advisory Committee set out in the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee report the October 2021 Synods, and requests that any subsequent amendments be agreed by both synods.
- c) Synod appoints Steve Armitage, Peter Conwell, Sarah Dodds, Bill Flett, Liz Haestier, Robert Hoyle, Rev Andrew Lonsdale and John Niven to the joint Listed Buildings Advisory Committee, to serve from 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2024.
- d) Synod appoints the Northern and Yorkshire Synod Property Officers as members *ex officio* of the joint Listed Buildings Advisory Committee.

- e) Listed Buildings Advisory Committee reserves the right to co-opt additional members as necessary.

**Resolution No 7**

Yorkshire Synod accepts the recommendation of Yorkshire Synod's Safeguarding Committee and agrees to enter into formal discussions with Northern Synod to create a Joint Safeguarding Group.

**Resolution No 8**

Yorkshire Synod, meeting at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury on 9th October 2021 both receives and adopts the Yorkshire Synod Environmental policy.

**Resolution No 9**

Mrs Ruth Roddison has stood down as Convenor of the Children and Young Peoples Committee. Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Mrs Ruth Roddison for her years of service to Synod in this and other roles within the Children and Young Peoples Committee.

**Resolution No 10**

Mrs Pauline Blackman has stood down as a member of the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee. Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Mrs Pauline Blackman for her years of service to Synod in this role.

**Resolution No 11**

Rev Tony Lee has stood down as a member of the Trustee body of the Cottingley Project. Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Rev Tony Lee for his many years of service to the Cottingley Project on behalf of Synod. Synod in this and other roles within the Children and Young Peoples Committee.

**Resolution No 12**

Rev Matt Stone has stood down as Stipendiary Representative on the Ministries Committee. Synod wishes to place on record its thanks to Rev Matt Stone for his service to the Synod and the Ministries Committee in this role.

**Resolution No 13**

Synod thanks Rev Fran Kissack for her three years of service as Synod Mission Council representative and appoints her to serve a further three-year term until March 2024 as Synod Assembly Executive representative.

**Resolution No 14**

Synod appoints Mrs Terasa Raddings to serve as a Trustee to the Cottingley Project.

**Resolution No 15**

Synod records with sadness the closure of Pickering United Reformed Church on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Synod offers thanksgiving for the life and witness of its members over the years since its foundation in 1788 and most recently its work in the Ryedale area of Yorkshire.

**Resolution No 16**

Synod records with sadness the closure of Eccleshill United Reformed Church on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Synod offers thanksgiving for the life and witness of its members over the years since its foundation in 1823 and most recently its work in that part of Bradford.

**Resolution No 17**

Synod records with sadness the closure of Christ Church with Trinity URC, Kirk Ella, Hull on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Synod offers thanksgiving for the life and witness of its members over the years; Trinity since 1898, Christ Church since 1964 and together since 1993.

**Resolution No 18**

Synod records the amalgamation of Hall Gate, Doncaster United Reformed Church and Intake United Reformed Church to create Ardeen Road United Reformed Church, Doncaster. Synod offers thanksgiving for the life and witness the constituent churches and prays that the new church well in its future endeavours.

## 1. Why do we need to be missional?

- 1.1 Most of the UK Church has seen a clear focus on ‘worship’ and ‘discipleship’ in our activity and resource commitment. ‘Mission’ has tended to be understood as the church’s activity abroad or involvement in ‘social action’ in this country (where it has often been distanced from ‘evangelism’). The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a growing realisation (beginning with returning missionaries such as Leslie Newbiggin and others) that the ‘mission field’ was in fact in this country. However the following decades of effort and good intentions have failed to significantly shift our attention and resources from our focus on worship and discipleship.
- 1.2 If we want to recover the missional life of our churches (and we must if we want to be a living body of Christ), we cannot just hope it will happen. Nor can we assume that if we get our worship or discipleship programmes right then mission will naturally follow. To become more missional churches we will need an intentional decision and commitment to shift our focus. This does not mean stopping (or necessarily changing) our worship and discipleship, but it does mean choosing to prioritise mission and seeing worship and discipleship as resourcing it.

## 2. What does it mean to be ‘missional’?

- 2.1 ‘Being missional’ is not a new programme for the synod to follow, and there is not a set of particular actions we can take to make it happen. ‘Being missional’ involves a shift in focus and developing a different mind-set to the one we currently share. ‘Being missional’ might be best expressed in terms of certain attitudes and approaches to our faith.
- 2.2 **Kingdom focussed:** The church’s mission is to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God by talking and being the kingdom for the people we meet - to bring God’s forgiveness, healing, reconciliation, justice, peace, and love in the world. Unfortunately we can easily fall into the habit of being inwardly focussed - on ourselves and on our churches. We are not here to keep our denomination going, our buildings open or our groups meeting. We exist to make God’s kingdom real for our neighbours. We need to make a conscious effort to look beyond ourselves.
- 2.3 **Following God ‘outside’:** God is bigger than the Church, and is at work in the world. God is not sitting in church waiting to meet people who might come in. We are called to join in with this ‘missio dei’ (mission of God) to help build God’s kingdom. This will mean stepping into the unknown through a process of listening to God and listening to our neighbours as we discern where God is moving in order to join in. This may lead us to be doing new things that we might not have done before and that might not look like ‘church’ to us.
- 2.5 **New forms of church:** There is a ‘culture gap’ between what we do in church and the world around us. We should not assume this equates to a spiritual gap. The church of Jesus Christ has looked very different at different times and in different places as Jesus is made ‘incarnate’ in the culture of a particular time and place. New parts of the body of Christ today may look very different to what we have known before – we can see a glimpse of this in things like ‘Messy

Church'. We might continue with church as we know it, but we must also encourage and be open to church in forms that make sense to the lives of other people around us.

- 2.6 **All of our responsibility** : This is the mission of the whole church, not just the ministers and elders. And it is our everyday mission, it is not just for Sunday mornings. As we look further we will need to encourage and develop all members of our churches, especially those who may have been gifted by the Holy Spirit as evangelists, prophets and apostles and who we may not have recognised as well as we do the teachers and pastors (Ephesians 4).
- 2.7 Being missional does not necessarily mean throwing out everything that we do and have been doing. BUT it does mean a shift in our perspective, a re-focussing of our attention and intention which might then lead to a deeper re-evaluation of our resources and structures.

### 3. How can we become a Missional Synod?

- 3.1 'Being Missional' does not mean starting a new programme or courses. We have good ones already in place that will serve the different needs of churches (Lycig, Inviting Forward, Faith-filled Life...). The shift to becoming 'missional' is more like changing the lenses in our glasses, rather than changing what we are doing. If different lenses help us to focus more on worship, discipleship or mission, now is the time to try our missional lenses out! Becoming more missionally-minded is initially a process of prayer and reflection. We listen to God and then go out and listen to our neighbours before we can start to discern what God might be doing around us that we might join in with.
- 3.2 We could imagine there are three threads to the process in the synod. There is the personal thread of the lives of the individuals in our congregations; the life and activity of each different congregation; and the organisation of the wider body of churches that make up the synod (and the support and resourcing that the 'organisation' offers). Each of these threads might follow a similar process of prayer, conversation, reflection and discernment to identify where God may be leading us to be more missional. This process takes time, the URC's jubilee year seems like a good time to engage in this as we seek to discern a future after Covid.
- 3.3 The process for all three threads might follow a similar pattern:

**Step 1** - awareness and understanding – engaging in conversations about where we are and where we could be or want to be if we were shaped around God's mission – a process of prayer, conversation and discernment – 'waiting dangerously'.

**Step 2** - evaluating how we might engage more with our communities and embody the kingdom; what is God prompting us to look at or try out, or stop?

**Step 3** - start missional experiments – identifying things to try out as a way of exploring what God is asking of us; putting them into practice and then reviewing them before taking next steps.



The Princess of Wales Precinct  
Dewsbury  
West Yorkshire  
WF13 1NH  
Tel: 07591582848  
Email: churchsecretarylcw@outlook.com

September 2021

Dear Member of Synod,

The fellowship at Longcauseway Church and SPACE (Spen and Calder Enterprise) extends a warm welcome to you and to all of Yorkshire Synod at our meeting on Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup> 2021.

Longcauseway Church is a Grade 2 listed Victorian building situated in a prominent position in the town centre of Dewsbury. We are a Local Ecumenical Partnership, United Reformed and Methodist with full Charitable registration.

We are emerging from lockdown having pressed the 'restart button' with mission plans and reviewed and refreshed activities which are now getting underway – come along on 9<sup>th</sup> and find out more!

There is level access to the church (suitable for wheelchairs / pushchairs etc) by the side door to the right of the main entrance and to the ancillary rooms by the use of a lift and we have an accessible toilet. The pews in the church are reasonably comfortable.

Unfortunately, there is no disabled parking near to the church except on double yellow lines for a maximum of three hours, however cars can drive onto the forecourt in front of the church to drop off and make arrival easier for disabled passengers. There is limited free parking in two of our nearby town centre church car parks; but a reasonably priced car park is easily accessed behind the Mecca Bingo Hall across the road. (Directions are with the map which can also be accessed on our website: [www.longcauseway.org.uk](http://www.longcauseway.org.uk). The cost of this will be reimbursed by the Synod Office. Please consider car sharing if possible.

We look forward to welcoming Synod to our church on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

Yours in Christ's name,

Jo Hartley  
Church Secretary

Charity number: 1143402



*One of the Churches in the United Reformed Church Spen & Calder Enterprise & North Kirklees and Morley Methodist Circuit*

## Parking & Directions

### Pay and Display

#### From Leeds

When A653, Leeds Road meets the ring road, turn Left.

Almost immediately follow the ring road to the right

Continue past Matalan and the Sports Centre, Dewsbury Minster will be on your left.

At the next set of traffic lights turn left. B6409 sp. Thornhill (B & Q on your right)

At the next lights turn left, the Car Park is straight ahead. The far car park is the cheapest.

#### From Wakefield

When A638 meet the ring road turn left

Continue past Matalan and the Sports Centre, Dewsbury Minster will be on your left.

At the next set of traffic lights turn left. B6409 sp. Thornhill (B & Q on your right)

At the next lights turn left, the Car Park is straight ahead. The far car park is the cheapest.

#### From Huddersfield

Enter Dewsbury following A644

Pass the Police Station and Bus Station on your left.

At the next set of traffic lights turn Right. B6409 sp. Thornhill (B & Q on your right)

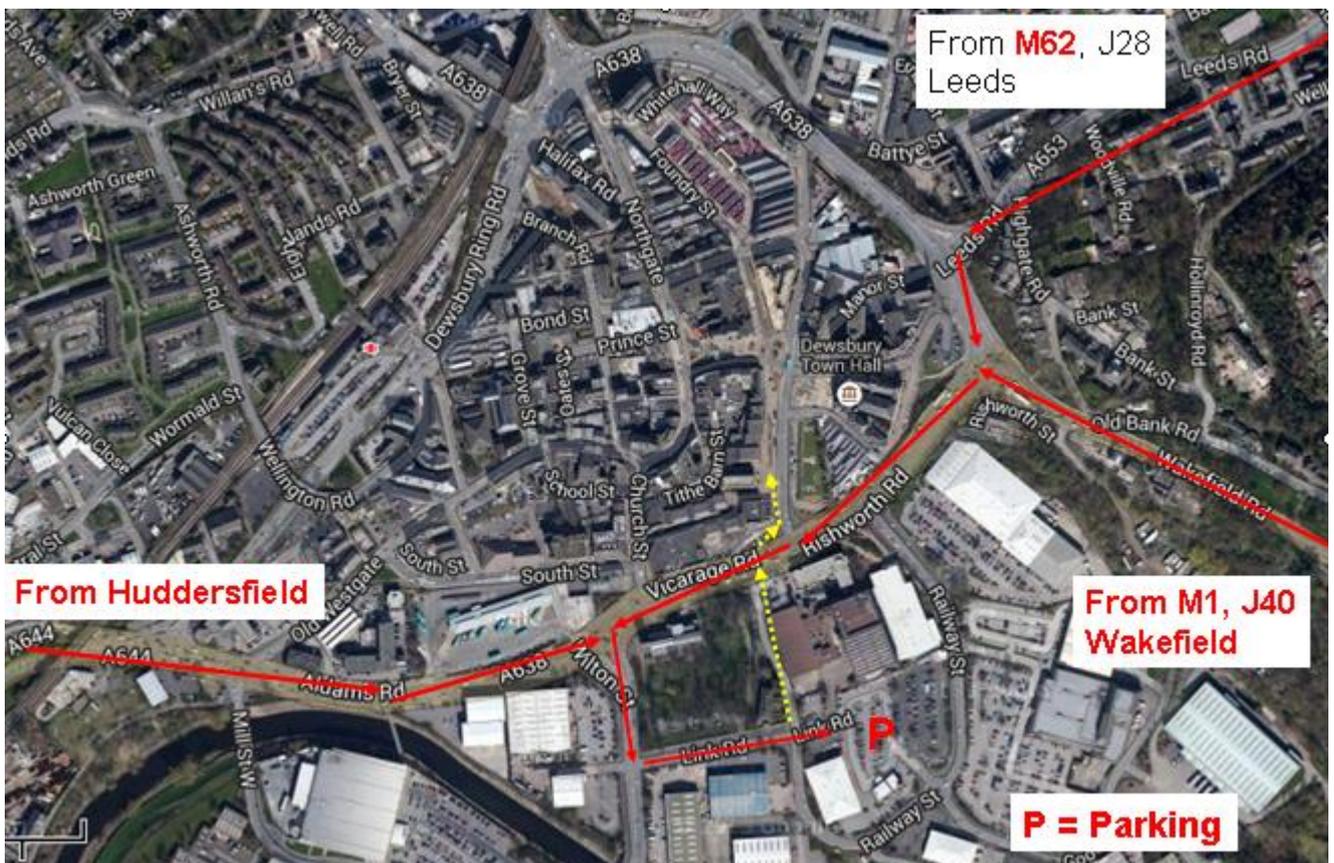
At the next lights turn left, the Car Park is straight ahead. The far car park is the cheapest.

Exit the Car Park and turn right onto Longcauseway. (Sports Centre on your right)

Cross the ring road and continue on Longcauseway.

The Church is on the Left hand side

**Route marked in yellow**



### Directions from Dewsbury Railway station

From the station forecourt

Cross the ring road

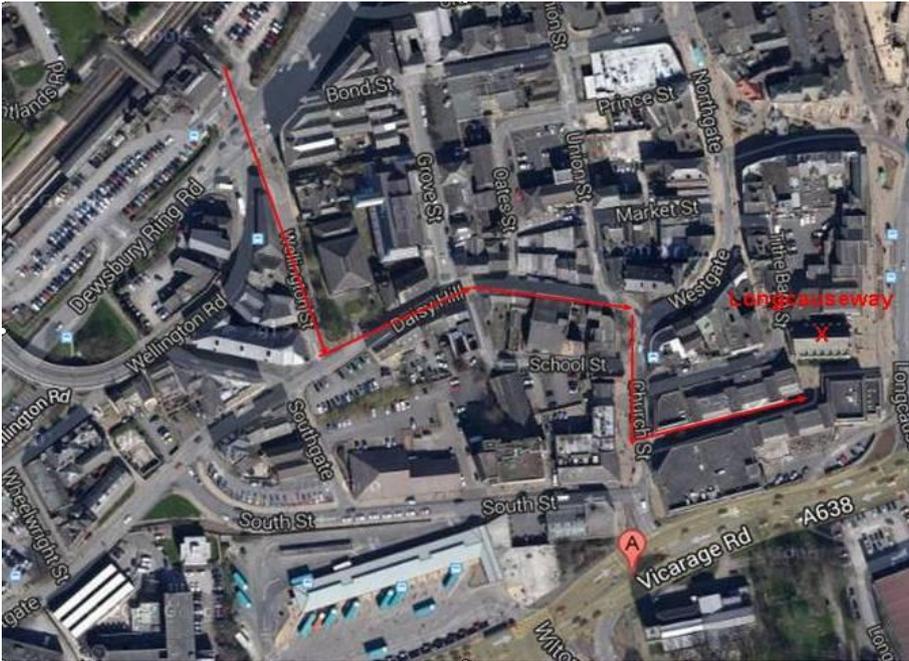
Proceed down Wellington Street (this is to the left of 'The Reporter@ building)

At the bottom of Wellington Street turn left on to Daisy Hill.

At the bottom of Daisy Hill, turn right onto Church Street.

Cross Church Street and turn left onto the precinct. (Boots will be on your right hand side)

Longcauseway is on the left hand side at the bottom of the precinct.



### Directions from Dewsbury Bus station

Exit the Bus Station and turn right on to South Street.

At the end of South Street turn left onto Church Street and cross the road.

Continue straight ahead down the precinct (Boots will be on your right hand side)

Longcauseway is on the left hand side at the bottom of the precinct.

