

## **1. Constitution of the Synod Meeting and opening worship**

Rev'd John Piper, who had been invited to chair the meeting by the Synod Executive Committee, welcomed members of the Synod Meeting. He constituted the meeting and led the meeting in worship.

Worship included prayer and reflection, together with:

- ▶ recognition of ministers who had recently moved into the synod:
  - Revd Bob Warwicker and Revd Janet Lees moved into this synod in January from Yorkshire on retirement
  - Rev'd Paul Critchley [Methodist] is now serving the Lighthouse Community Church in Lancashire Area
- ▶ recognition of ministers who will retire before the next Synod Meeting:
  - Rev'd Brian Acty, currently ministering with our churches in Ashton on Mersey and Sale, who will retire from stipendiary ministry in May
  - Rev'd Pam Noonan, who will retire from non-stipendiary ministry in Kendal in July
  - Rev'd Alan Poolton, who will retire from stipendiary ministry in August; Alan currently serves our churches in Cheadle Hulme and Bramhall and recently has had some oversight at Wilbraham St Ninian's, Chorlton
- ▶ recognition of ministers who will be moving from their current work within the synod before the next Synod Meeting:
  - at the end of March Rev'd Dr Catherine Lewis-Smith will conclude her ministry with our churches in Darwen, Lancashire; Catherine will continue to reside within this synod
  - Rev'd Stuart Nixon has served at Media City UK Church, our Synod Mission Project partnership with Oasis in Salford, as a Special Category Minister for the past 5 years; Stuart has accepted a call to a new ministry in Mersey Synod which will begin in June of this year
- ▶ recognition of Ordination Jubilees of ministers residing in the synod:
  - during this year Rev'd Iain MacKenzie and Rev'd David Westhead celebrate 50 years since their ordination, and Ron Lewis, Rev'd Dr Jack McKelvey and Rev'd Dr Stanley Russell 60 years since their ordination. [These ministers are to be invited to attend the October 2019 Synod Meeting to celebrate their ministry.
- ▶ remembrance of and thanksgiving for the life and ministry of:
  - Rev'd Hugh Neems, a retired minister who had served with the London Missionary Society in the Samoan Islands and in Halifax
  - Rev'd Arnold Harrison, a retired minister who had served in this synod in Darwen, Bramhall and as Clerk, and as Moderator of Yorkshire Synod
  - Mrs Kathleen Seddon, a member of Worsley Road, Swinton who had served widely within this synod and elsewhere, including for many years as a governor of the Congregational College, Manchester and chair of its board.

## **2. Minutes of the October 2018 Synod Meeting**

These were agreed as a correct record.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

## **3. Good News story**

Alison Dalton, Church Related Community Worker at the Building Bridges Project, Tonge Moor United Reformed Church, Bolton and Christine Cooke [church secretary] spoke about the exciting work of the project over the past 10 years and the mission opportunities it had incorporated. The Synod Meeting expressed its thanks for this report.

## **4. Executive Committee**

The Clerk presented the written report, and this was received by the Synod Meeting with thanks.

The Clerk spoke about three matters not included in the written report:

- i. The significant additional workload for synod officers, staff and others resulting from the decisions of the Synod Meeting to:
  - adopt our Missional Discipleship Strategy,
  - develop Missional Partnerships
  - implement the Synod Manse Scheme and the payment of ministers expenses by the synod.

This additional workload had resulted in delays and hiccups in the service provided by synod officers and staff to local churches. Steps were being taken to remedy the situation but a quick fix was not available. The Clerk expressed thanks to those who were working underpressure, and thanked the Synod Meeting for its understanding of this situation.

- ii. The inadequacy of the synod office accommodation, which was of increasing concern. The Executive Committee and Trust were exploring how more appropriate facilities might be provided in the future. A further report on this matter will be provided as soon as possible.
- iii. The Clerk had written to all members of the Synod Meeting in February concerning matters referred by the General Assembly. Members of the Synod Meeting had been given details of these matters and were asked to inform the Clerk by the beginning of March if they wished to propose at this meeting that any of these matters 'be not proceeded with' by the General Assembly. No such notification had been received. Therefore the Clerk would be advising the General Secretary that this Synod Meeting is content with the matters referred to it by the General Assembly.

The Clerk moved resolution 1.

## Resolution 1 Membership of synod committees

### **Synod:**

- (a) notes the decision of the Synod Executive Committee [acting on behalf of the Synod Meeting] to appoint Rev'd Nick Mark to serve as Cumbria Area Finance Officer until the close of the Synod Meeting in March 2022;
- (b) appoints Rev'd Martyn Coe to serve as a member of Cumbria Area Pastoral Committee, and Hilary Grierson, Gina Gibson and Rev'd Mike Walsh to serve as members of South Area Pastoral Committee, until the close of the Synod Meeting in March 2022.

**Resolution 1 was passed with 0 votes against.**

[There were no abstentions]

## **5. Presentation of Child-friendly Church Award to Rose Hill Church**

Leo Roberts spoke about how welcoming and friendly churches are, or, sometimes, are not, and the nature of the Child-friendly Church Award. He invited John Piper to present representatives of Rose Hill Church with the award, which was well-deserved.

## **6. Stepwise**

Rev'd David Salisbury, *Stepwise* Programme Manager, was introduced to the Synod Meeting and invited to speak about *Stepwise* and lead worship. He provided an introduction to *Stepwise*, after which there was opportunity for comments and questions. Before sharing a time of worship, the Synod Meeting was able to experience how a *Stepwise* group operates.

## **7. The Keld Centre**

A written report, provided by Lis Mullen, a trustee of The Keld Centre representing North Western Synod, was received with thanks.

Rev'd Dr David Peel spoke about *The Keld Centre* in Upper Swaledale, and encouraged members of the Synod Meeting and the churches of the synod to use the opportunities and facilities provided by the centre.

## **8. Safeguarding Reference Group**

Julie Rafferty, Synod Safeguarding Officer, presented the written report, which was received with thanks.

The main task over next period will be to provide safeguarding training [basic and intermediate] for local churches.

Members of the Synod Meeting were encouraged to see that their church had completed its safeguarding return and forwarded it to the synod office.

## **9. Synod Pastoral Committee and Area Pastoral Committees**

Marion Tugwood presented the report of the Synod Pastoral Committee, which was received with thanks.

It was noted that all Missional Partnership Steering Groups, except one, will have met by Easter, and some are well advanced in their work.

It was anticipated that material about Missional Partnerships for church newsletters will be available shortly.

Training needs for Missional Partnerships and elders are currently being assessed.

Thanks were expressed to all worship leaders [lay preachers and others] who are serving our churches.

The reports of the Area Pastoral Committees were received with thanks.

In response to a question about the production of a new Synod Year Book, the Clerk explained that staff in the synod office had been promised access to a new central United Reformed Church data base. The availability of this facility to synods had suffered a significant delay, a consequence of which was that a new Synod Year Book was now long overdue. The Clerk undertook to ensure that, with or without access to the database, a new Year Book would be compiled before the October Synod Meeting.

## **10. Synod Resources Committee and Trust Management Committee**

Jean Mullineux and Mike Hart presented the report of the Synod Resources Committee and Trust Management Committee

Jean Mullineux proposed Resolution 2

### **Resolution 2 Synod Manse Scheme**

**Synod expresses its thanks to local churches for their support for the Synod Manse Scheme and to Synod Staff for their diligence in the development and implementation of the scheme**

**Resolution 2 was passed with 0 votes against.**

[There were no abstentions]

Mike Hart proposed Resolution 3

### **Resolution 3 2018 Management Accounts**

**Synod notes the Management Accounts for the year to 31 December 2018**

**Resolution 3 was passed with 0 votes against.**

[There were no abstentions]

Mike Hart proposed Resolution 4 and answered several questions.

#### **Resolution 4 Payment of Plan for Partnership costs**

**Synod notes the proposed principles for the management of Plan for Partnership costs and the consultation to be undertaken with local churches**

**Resolution 4 was passed with 1 vote against.**

[There were 4 abstentions]

#### **11. Report of the Synod Ministries Committee and Candidate Report**

Martyn Coe presented the written reports which was received with thanks.

#### **12. Good News Story**

Kirsty Thorpe spoke about the Wilmslow United Reformed Church Undercroft project operated in partnership with Life Church, Wilmslow. Following refurbishment the undercroft opened in February 2018. The project provides a lunch club, an afterschool café and a counselling service for children from Wilmslow High School. The Undercroft also provides a café facility on 2 mornings a week, which leads into the long established lunchclub. The Synod Meeting expressed its thanks for this report.

#### **13. Closing worship**

Closing worship was led by Rev'd Mark Bates and others.

#### **14. Vote of thanks**

Rev'd Martin Coe expressed the thanks of the members of the Synod Meeting for the welcome and hospitality offered by folk of The United Reformed Church of St Andrew and St George.

#### **15. Close**

The meeting closed with prayer.