



**Book of Reports for the Autumn 2020**

**Synod Meeting on**

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October 10am &  
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 10am

Dear Friends

This year's Autumn Synod Meeting promises to be very different – and possibly, quite challenging! The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic which led us to cancel the March Synod Meeting remains an obstacle to us all, and rather than end up with no Synod Meeting at all, we have gone 'virtual'. I know that you will all be understanding if the technology doesn't quite enable us to live up to the expectations we have for our Synod Meeting, but hope that despite the lack of normal interaction, you still find our meeting constructive, informative and even uplifting!

As you know, we are holding the Synod Meeting across two Saturday mornings, with three Q&A sessions (each one repeated as a daytime and evening session) in between. One of the benefits that we hope might come from this new experience, is allowing a wider number of our local Church members to share in the discussions that take place during a Synod Meeting.

During this year, we have welcomed four new Ministers to our Synod – including two who have been ordained into their first ministries – and I am grateful to Rev Daniel Harris, Rev Jacky Embrey, Rev Lee Battle and Rev Janet Calderley who between them, will be leading the two acts of worship which open and close our Synod Meeting.

We also, of course, welcome Rev Brian Jolly who, whilst being well known to all in the North Western Synod, attends this Synod Meeting for the first time in his new role as Moderator.

We express particular thanks to Mike Hart, Synod Treasurer, for all his additional work in stepping into the role of Interim Clerk over the past year.

I am grateful to the Mission Mentors, for their input and sharing of some good news stories from the new Missional Partnerships.

Whilst this format for Synod Meeting will be new and strange for us all, I hope that you are able to consider prayerfully, the papers within the Book of Reports and their implications for our ministry and mission together in our own local Churches. I also hope that you find opportunity to question and discuss, as you give thought to our way forward, and that you are able to participate fully in our debates.

On the next page you will find a copy of the letter which the Interim Clerk distributed following the cancellation of the March Synod Meeting, and which explained the steps the Synod Executive took on behalf of Synod Meeting in those circumstances.

I look forward to our 'virtual' meeting over the coming weeks.

Tim Hopley

Synod Clerk

29 April 2020

To: Synod Representatives, Ministers

Dear Friend,

I hope in the current circumstances you are keeping safe and finding new ways to engage with friends in your church and more widely.

I am writing to update you on the position on the matters that were scheduled for discussion at the Synod Meeting following a discussion with the Synod Executive Committee, who are empowered to act on behalf of the Synod Meeting during periods when it is not able to meet.

On behalf of the Synod Meeting, with one exception, the Committee supported all the resolutions set out in the book of reports. They have asked officers to continue to keep them up to date on progress on key issues, particularly on the purchase of a new synod office which continues to move forward, and on the growing collaboration across the five Northerly Synods. All the nominations for service on Committees and representation at General Assembly were agreed.

The one exception was that the Committee whilst supporting the principle of the small Mission Grants asked that consideration of implementation should be delayed until the end of "Lockdown". They have similarly indicated that the

release of other grants for mission purposes, including manse monies, should only proceed in exceptional circumstances at this time.

The Committee has asked the Synod's Green Apostles, Rev Kate Gray, Rev Daleen Ten Cate, and the Rev Rosalind Selby to continue to develop material on the Synod Eco Policy for consultation with local churches at an appropriate time before the next Synod Meeting.

### **Induction of Brian Jolly as Synod Moderator**

You will be aware that the morning session of the March Synod Meeting was to have included the Service of Induction of Brian as our Synod Moderator. Because of the continuing uncertainty over when large gatherings will be permissible, no decision has yet been made about when Brian's induction will be held. As soon as news is available it will be shared with you.

With the best wishes of all the Synod Officers and Staff



Mike Hart  
Interim Synod Clerk

## Important Information

### Apologies

**Even though we are virtual this year, could you please send apologies to Synod office if you are not able to attend the meetings on the 10<sup>th</sup> October and/or 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020. These should be sent to [office@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:office@nwsynod.org.uk) or telephone 0161 789 5583**

### Voting Card

The manner of voting will be different this year, and there will not be any physical Voting Cards. Details of how the votes are cast using 'Zoom' will be explained nearer to the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

### Q&A Sessions

The Q&A sessions will be conducted using 'Zoom'. Where possible, please email any questions you have about any of the reports in this booklet in advance to [admin@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:admin@nwsynod.org.uk).

Please be aware that the Q&A sessions will be recorded and uploaded to the North Western Synod YouTube website. This will enable others who cannot attend the live sessions to watch and listen into the Report discussions.

### Bookshop

In normal times, we would have the 2021 Prayer Handbook and URC Diaries available to purchase. Unfortunately, this year that will not be possible. We would therefore ask you to order them directly from the URC Bookshop at Church House in London. You can order online at <https://urcshop.co.uk/> or telephone on 020 7916 8629.

## Agenda

### Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October

You can view this part of Synod Meeting on our YouTube site:

<http://bit.ly/NWSynod>

10.00am

Welcome

Opening worship led by Rev Daniel Harris and Rev Janet Calderley

Ministerial movements and Deaths

Good News Stories

Introduction of Reports

Closing Prayers

### Question and Answer Sessions

The link for ALL the sessions listed below is the same. The link, and log in details are below:

<https://zoom.us/j/8423054445?pwd=Vnk2WVgzc0V4OU40d0lqbWlrK3Vtdz09>

Meeting ID: 842 305 4445

Passcode: Pf23j4

### Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October

10.30 – 11.30am

**Synod Review Report (Pages 22 - 26)**

Online Question and Answer/Discussion meeting

### Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October

10.30 – 11.30am

**Other Reports (Pages 27- 39 & 52 - 58)**

Online Question and Answer/Discussion meeting

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October**

10.30 – 11.30am **Finance Reports (Pages 40-51)**

Online Questions and Answer/Discussion meeting

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**

7.00 – 8.00pm **Finance Reports (Pages 40-51)**

Online Questions and Answer/Discussion meeting

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November**

7.00 – 8.00pm **Synod Review Report (Pages 22-26)**

Online Question and Answer/Discussion meeting

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November**

7.00 – 8.00pm **Other Reports (Pages 27- 39 & 52 – 58)**

Online Question and Answer/Discussion meeting

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November**

10.00am Welcome and Opening Prayers

Review of Reports and consideration of Resolutions

Closing Act of Worship led by Rev Jacky Embrey and  
Rev Lee Battle

Adjournment

**North Western Synod of the United Reformed Church  
Minutes of the Synod Meeting on Saturday 12 October 2019  
at Carver Uniting Church, Windermere**

**Constitution of the Synod Meeting and opening worship**

1 Rev 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.

2 Worship included prayer and reflection, together with recognition of the following ministers:

- since the last Synod Meeting:
  - Andy Littlejohns had been commissioned as a Church Related Community Worker and inducted to Chorley
  - Rev Karen Le Mouton [Methodist] had been welcomed to serve Christ Church, Longridge
  - Rev Sarah Knebel [Methodist] had been welcomed to serve Wharton & Cleggs Lane
  - Rev Pam Noonan, who had served at Kendal, had retired
  - Rev Nigel Adkinson had moved to East Midlands Synod having served at Radcliffe, Stand and Farnworth
  
- before the next Synod Meeting:
  - Rev Nick Mark will retire from his ministry in Cumbria.
  - Rev Sarah Moore will move from her ministry in Cumbria to serve as the Transition Champion for the Synod of Scotland.
  
- ministers residing in the synod who had died since the last Synod Meeting:
  - Rev Alan Cole
  - Rev Gwen Thomas

## **Children & Youth**

3 Leo Roberts and Ann Hatch spoke about ***Friends on Faith Adventures, Gathered Youth Groups, Pilots*** and the **Youth Assembly**. The Synod Meeting expressed its thanks for their presentation.

## **Good News stories**

4 Rev Jim Williams and Peter Melvin shared news about the foodbank which is hosted by **St Anne's United Reformed Church**. It provides a vital service in the community and has been a great blessing to the church.

5 Nick Andrews and Lucy Foster [Pioneer & Development Worker] shared news about the ways in which **Kendal United Reformed Church** is in the process of redeveloping its premises in order to be better equipped to respond to missional opportunities in the town.

6 The Synod Meeting expressed its thanks for these presentations.

## **Bible study & worship**

7 Rev Dr Adam Scott led the meeting in Bible study and worship.

Bible study focussed on Luke 17:11-19. A psychological reading of this story of the healing of the ten lepers invites us to think about the importance of gratitude in our daily lives. As a Synod, we are in the process of adapting to significant change as we respond to the challenge of being church in contemporary culture. This process can create a sense of anxiety and uncertainty. Whilst being mindful of these legitimate emotional responses, we can also learn to respond to the many good news stories within our Synod (past and present) with gratitude. Whilst this can be difficult, a response of

gratitude is central to the Good News of God's love which embraces all people. The traditions of the Church, and current psychological theory teach us that gratitude is something we can learn and practice, rather than being just an emotional response. So, we can be encouraged to think of practical ways of being grateful in our church communities. If psychological research is to be believed, the spiritual discipline of the practice of gratitude can promote happiness, increase well-being and help us cope in times of change. The challenge is to consider how gratitude can enable us to grow and develop as a Synod in healthy and holy ways.

8 Worship included prayerful reflection on Luke 17:11-19, recognition of and thanksgiving for the following ministers, and the sharing of news regarding the nomination process for a new Synod Moderator.

Rev Dr Catherine Lewis-Smith who had recently completed her Education for Ministry Stage 2 [EM2].

Rev J David Westhead and Rev Iain MacKenzie, this year celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their ordination.

Rev Ron Lewis, Rev Dr Jack McKelvey, and Rev Dr Stanley Russell, this year celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their ordination.

Mike Hart read the following statement from the Convenor of the Nominating Group and the General Secretary regarding the nominating process for a new synod moderator:

*The Nominating Group for the Moderator's post in North Western Synod recently fulfilled its task of bringing a name forward to serve as the next Synod Moderator. The Group, which included four representatives of Synod and four*

*experienced people from other parts of the URC, met in Manchester last Monday. Three applicants had been shortlisted. After careful interviews with these people, and thorough deliberation afterwards, the Group agreed to nominate the Revd Brian Jolly. Brian's name will now come before the URC's Mission Council next month, where the nomination may become a formal decision of the Church.*

*Brian impressed the Group with his long ministerial experience in the Synod, his extensive knowledge of its people and churches, his commitment to service, and the high level of respect and trust that he has gained from many around him in the context of complex and weighty responsibilities within the URC and beyond. It is anticipated that his appointment would begin on 01 January 2020, and run until 2024, when he will retire. In that ministry of up to five years, Brian would expect to help and support the Synod's churches as they engage with the Missional Discipleship strategy, so that changes agreed in the last few years can bed in securely, and the churches can go confidently forward in new patterns of service and relationship.*

*Val Morrison, Convenor of the Nominating Group  
John Proctor, General Secretary*

## **Cumbria**

9 Rev Sarah Moore provided an overview of ecumenical developments in Cumbria, especially the **God for All** initiative. She then introduced Rev Jane Maycock, who spoke about her work with lay and ordained people in Cumbria in support of the development of Mission Communities, and Rev Dr James Tebbutt, the recently appointed Chair of the Cumbria Methodist District.

## **Green Apostle**

10 Rev Kate Gray spoke about the developing aspects of her work as the recently appointed Green Apostle for this synod.

## **Minutes of the March 2019 Synod Meeting**

11 These were agreed as a correct record.

12 There were no matters arising from the minutes.

## **Executive Committee**

13 The Clerk presented the written report, and this was received with thanks.

14 In response to a question from the floor, the Clerk confirmed that the review referred to in the written report would benefit from significant objective input from outside of this synod.

15 Further to the written report, the Clerk requested permission to introduce two further matters, concerning the synod office accommodation and the closure of three local churches in the synod.

### **i) Synod office accommodation**

Further to the report made to the March 2019 Synod Meeting, that work was being undertaken on the possibility of relocating the Synod Office, the Clerk explained that this work is ongoing but has not advanced far enough to bring a detailed report to this meeting. It was anticipated that the matter would be much further advanced by the March 2020 Synod Meeting. In the meantime, the Executive Committee would be working in

tandem with the Synod Trust with a view to securing new accommodation appropriate to the synod's needs.

ii) **Church closures**

Rev Dr Kirsty Thorpe spoke about the life and witness of **Union United Reformed Church, Offerton, Stockport**, following which the Clerk moved Resolution 5.

***Resolution 5: Synod concurs with the resolution of the Church Meeting of Union United Reformed Church, Offerton, Stockport, that the church should close; gives thanks to God for the life and witness of the church; and asks God's blessing for those who now have to find a home in another local church.***

**Resolution 5 was carried with 0 votes against.**

[There were no abstentions]

16 Dr Michael Pickles spoke about the life and witness of **Bolton Road United Reformed Church, Darwen**, following which the Clerk moved Resolution 6.

***Resolution 6: Synod concurs with the resolution of the Church Meeting of Bolton Road United Reformed Church, Darwen, that the church should close; gives thanks to God for the life and witness of the church; and asks God's blessing for those who now have to find a home in another local church.***

**Resolution 6 was carried with 0 votes against.**

[There were no abstentions]

17 Rev Nick Mark spoke about the life and witness of **Brampton United Reformed Church**, following which the Clerk moved Resolution 7.

**Resolution 7: *Synod concurs with the resolution of the Church Meeting of Brampton United Reformed Church, that the church should close; gives thanks to God for the life and witness of the church; and asks God's blessing for those who now have to find a home in another local church.***

**Resolution 7 was carried with 0 votes against.**  
[There were no abstentions]

18 Prayers were offered in thanksgiving for the life and witness of these churches, and for those who were seeking alternative places for worship and fellowship.

#### **Resources Committee and Trust Management Committee**

19 The Synod Treasurer presented the written report of the Resources Committee and Trust Management Committee, which was received with thanks.

20 The treasurer spoke to and moved Resolution 1.

**Resolution 1: *Synod receives the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts for 2018.***

**Resolution 1 was carried with 0 votes against.**  
[There were no abstentions]

21 The treasurer spoke to and moved Resolution 2.

**Resolution 2: *Synod receives the Management Accounts for 2019 and the Budgets for 2020 to 2022.***

**Resolution 2 was carried with 0 votes against.**  
[There were no abstentions]

22 The treasurer spoke to and moved Resolution 3.

***Resolution 3: Synod notes the outcomes from the consultation and the support for the introduction of the arrangements for Ministers' expenses and Housing Costs to be administered by the Synod Office on behalf of Missional Partnerships.***

**Resolution 3 was carried with 0 votes against.**  
[There were 4 abstentions]

23 The treasurer spoke to and moved Resolution 4.

***Resolution 4: Synod notes the progress on the implementation of the Synod Manse Scheme and thanks local churches and synod staff for their support in the implementation process.***

**Resolution 4 was carried with 0 votes against.**  
[There were no abstentions]

### **Safeguarding Reference Group**

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

### **Ministries Committee**

25 Rev Martyn Coe presented the written report of the Ministries Committee, which was received with thanks.

### **Area Pastoral Committee Reports**

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

27 It was agreed that the Executive Committee would act of behalf of the Synod Meeting to consider any proposed updates to the membership of these committees.

### **Vote of thanks**

28 Thanks were expressed on behalf of the Synod Meeting to the folk of Carver Uniting Church for their warm welcome and hospitality.

### **Closing worship**

29 Rev John Piper led the meeting in closing worship.

# **Reports for the Autumn 2020 Synod Meeting**

## **Synod Executive Committee**

Secretary: Tim Hopley

1 The members of the Executive Committee are the convenors, or sometimes other representatives of the various synod committees, together with the Moderator, Clerk Treasurer and the synod representative serving on the Assembly Mission Committee. The committee has met on seven occasions since the date of the March Synod Meeting. The Executive Committee acts on behalf of the Synod Meeting during the period between meetings.

2 At its meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, the Committee considered the business that had been intended to be discussed at the March Synod Meeting. Mike Hart's letter of the 29<sup>th</sup> April provided information about the decision to proceed with the recommendations with the exception of that regarding small mission grants.

## **Work of Synod Committees**

3 At these meetings since the last Synod Meeting the Executive Committee has received reports and updates from the various committees of the synod, and considered the various matters included in their reports to this meeting.

4 The Committee has received regular updates from Synod Officers on the work being undertaken by Synod staff and officers to support local churches, their ministers and church officers during the current circumstances. We are grateful to all for their roles in these new and challenging times.

## **Synod Office**

5 In January, members of the Synod Meeting were circulated an update on the development of a new Synod Office. As the report

indicated the current office at Patricroft URC has served the Synod well for over 30 years, but no longer meet current needs in terms of:

- flexible and adequate meeting areas;
- waiting and “touch-down” facilities for field staff and those attending meetings
- spaces for confidential conversations
- appropriate office space and facilities, and
- accessibility

6 The current restrictions requiring workplaces to be “Covid Secure” have reinforced those issues and the current office is only able to operate on a limited basis. In particular, it is not possible to hold any meetings in the offices.

7 Acting on behalf of the Synod Meeting, the Executive Committee indicated its support for the purchase of new offices for the Synod in the Quays area of Salford. The Trust has also agreed to proceed with the purchase and at the time of writing, it is hoped that completion on the purchase will be achieved in the next couple of weeks. A programme of work to ensure that the offices are configured appropriately to the Synod’s needs and to address issues of accessibility requirements for people with disabilities is being developed and Tenders will be invited as soon as the purchase is complete. It is likely that the move will take place in the first quarter of next year. The Committee will continue working with the Trust Management Committee to play an active role in this development and ensuring that such a move will help Synod staff improve the support they are able to offer to local churches.

## **Office staffing**

8 There have been a number of changes in the Synod Staffing since the report for the March Synod Meeting. In July we welcomed Tracey Booth, to the team on a temporary basis to provide support to the Trust in managing the risk assessment responsibilities for

church buildings and to coordinate the provision of support and advice to local churches around responses to the changing rules and circumstances necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic. In August, Claire MacIntyre joined us as the Office Manager with responsibility for the day to day work of the Synod Office. Finally, at the beginning of September, Tim Hopley started as the Synod Clerk and Operations Manager. We welcome Claire, Tim and Tracey to the team and thank them for their contribution to the life and work of the Synod.

### **Appointments to Synod roles and Committees**

9 Since the last Synod Meeting acting on behalf of the Synod Meeting, the Committee has approved the following appointments

#### **Synod Clerk**

10 Tim Hopley to serve as Synod Clerk

### **2M13 Church of the Epiphany, Droylsden**

11 Synod Executive in March discussed longstanding concerns about the URC's continued ability to support the LEP at Church of the Epiphany, Droylsden. It was agreed, with reluctance, to serve notice to our Church of England and Methodist partners of our plans to withdraw from the Sharing Agreement. Notification of this decision was deliberately delayed until September, once the local Joint Management Trustees had resumed meetings. Discussions will take place to reduce the negative effects of the URC's decision on the life and ministry of the Anglican and Methodist congregations. The Synod Meeting will be updated on this development at its next meeting.

# Synod Review

## 1. Introduction and Background

12 At its meeting in October 2019, the Synod Meeting accepted a report that the Synod Executive had commissioned a review of Synod capacity, process and structures. The aim of the review is to improve the advice, support and leadership available to ministers, churches and Missional Partnerships. Consistent with the views expressed at that meeting, the Executive Committee subsequently asked Mel Campbell, Synod Clerk Northern Synod to lead the review.

13 The initial phase of work documenting current structures and processes has now been completed and the purpose of this report is to update the Synod Meeting on progress and to seek support to implement outcomes from that phase of the review. This includes opportunities for the Synod and local churches to contribute to the details of how the vital linkage between the Synod and individual local churches can be improved. Further work to develop operational practices and processes will be taken forward as part of the move to the new Synod Office.

14 During the first part of the year, Mel met with Synod Staff, Officers and Committee Members to seek their views about our current structures and how well they met the needs of both the Synod in meeting its responsibilities and our abilities to provide effective support to local churches. This research has formed the basis of subsequent discussions over the summer within Executive Committee and the agreement to the proposals that are presented in this report.

## 2. Why Review?

15 A key starting point for our consideration of any changes has been to affirm the principles of what any new structures or process should achieve. Our discussions have identified three key principles that have guided our thinking. These are that we must:

- **Focus on Missional Discipleship**, and particularly how that is expressed through the life and work of local churches
- **Use our resources well**, particularly those provided by our people, both those who are paid and those who willingly volunteer, and
- **Explore new ways of working**, not least in responding to the changed needs of our churches and communities

16 At a more practical level, this means that in our proposals both in this phase of the review and in subsequent work, our aim is to ensure that our ethos requires us to be:

- Rooted in the local – that is that the mission of the local church and the needs of its community are central to our thinking
- Focussed on our mission to those communities and being missional disciples
- Responsive in our support for local churches and their leadership, both lay and ordained
- Willing to learn from each others' experience and expecting to build on strengths and good practice
- Effective in our use of resources, human, financial, and buildings
- Innovative in our approach to develop solutions to addressing real problems, and
- As a Synod expecting to provide and secure high quality services to meet the needs of local churches and free them for mission.

### 3. Proposals: Central Synod Committees

17 It was clear from the initial work, that a key aspect of our current Synod structures that did not effectively reflect our principles is the pattern of Synod Committees. In particular, they lack a coherent focus on Missional Discipleship, and are burdensome in terms of the demands they place on the capacity of willing volunteers. In some instances, there is a lack of clarity about the relative remits of Committees and indeed the potential for duplication, and decision-making routes are not always clear and expeditious.

18 Our proposal is to replace the current Committees with four Synodwide Committees:

- Synod Executive
- Congregations and Ministries Committee
- Mission Development Network, and
- Assets (and Trust) Committee

19 The new **Synod Executive Committee** will have the oversight of all aspects of the strategic and operational life of the Synod, and the powers where needed to act on behalf of the Synod Meeting.

20 The **Congregations and Ministries Committee** will take responsibilities for Pastoral matters affecting churches and ministers, including deployment and vacancies; Ministerial development (Lay and Ordained) and support and guidance in challenging circumstances.

21 The **Mission Development Network** will provide a focus for the continued development of missional discipleship across the Synod and its local churches. It would build on our learning from the current Missional Discipleship project, and also other networks such as the Green Apostles.

22 The **Assets and Trust Committee** will have the lead responsibility for the effectiveness of our use of resources, including

the employment of Synod Staff, and the operation of the Manse Scheme

23 Our proposal is to migrate to these new Committee structures following this Synod Meeting. This will be overseen by the Synod Executive Committee. In order to provide continuity whilst this happens, the work of the Synod Pastoral Committee and the Ministries Committee, together with their membership will be dealt with through the new Congregations and Ministries Committee. The work of the Missional Discipleship Committee will transfer to the Mission Network and the work and membership of the Synod Resources and Trust Management Committees would be taken forward in the Assets and Trust Committee.

24 The Synod Executive Committee will report back to the next Synod Meeting on the implementation of these arrangements, the finalised terms of reference and appointments to these Committees.

#### **4. Proposals: Connecting with Local Churches**

25 A key focus of our discussions has been about how best to ensure that the connection between the Synod and its constituent churches is strengthened.

26 One aspect of this, particularly with Missional Partnerships now being in place, is the continuation of Area structures. Our current Area Pastoral Committees place a significant meetings burden on Synod Officers and local volunteers, with over half the meetings of Synod Committees being of APCs. Although some Areas have managed to continue to appoint to key roles, others have struggled significantly to recruit with an adverse effect on their capacity and ability to connect effectively with local churches and provide support particularly at points of challenge. This has also led to inconsistency in their approach to decision making and communication within Synod structures.

27 Our thinking has also been influenced by the success of the Mission Mentors in providing an effective link between the Synod and local churches. Clearly, the focus of those roles is on mission development in local churches and this needs to be retained particularly in the current circumstances.

28 The Executive therefore propose to establish a network of Congregation and Ministries Advisers. The role of the Advisers will provide pastoral and problem solving support to local churches and particularly their church officers. The role will complement the work of the Mission Mentors in providing a clear link between the Synod and individual churches. In particular, their regular dialogue with local churches will be expected to inform the new Congregations and Ministries Committee of matters of concern to those churches.

29 Clearly, we want if possible for the role to reflect the views of local churches about the needs for guidance and as such there is an opportunity over the next few months for the views of local churches to influence the detailed role description for these positions. In the light of any views, the Synod Executive will finalise details of the role and begin the appointment process. This will be reported back to the next Synod Meeting, with the implementation process completed by Summer 2021 at which point the work of the Area Pastoral Committees will be complete.

### **Resolution Number 1**

Synod Meeting agrees to the principles for the new Synod structures as set out in section 2 of this report and:

- to the implementation of the new Synod Committees as outlined in section 3, and
- to support the creation of the role of Congregations and Ministries Advisers as set out in section 4 and to request a report back to the next Synod Meeting on the agreed arrangements
- to note the target to complete these changes by Summer 2021

## **SYNOD PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

Convenor: Marion Tugwood

30 The committee has met three times with its full agenda and once to consider the matter of deployment of ministers since March 2020.

31 The committee works closely with the Area Pastoral Committees and thanks are due to the Conveners and members of those committees who undertake much of the care and support of local churches and Missional Partnerships. Special thanks are due to Margery Pitcher who, as well as continuing to hold the role of Area Secretary has been acting Convener for the Lancashire Area Pastoral Committee during the period of the Synod review.

32 Ordinations and inductions have proved challenging in this time of Coronavirus and the resulting lockdown. Both Rev Lee Battle (South Manchester Missional Partnership) and Rev Daniel Harris (Rochdale, Bury and North Manchester Missional Partnership) had their services of Ordination and Induction delayed, but Synod was able to call on IT expertise to offer two online services that were wholly appropriate. We are pleased to have Lee and Daniel ministering among us.

33 Both Rev Janet Calderley and Rev Jacky Embrey await their induction services and the dates will be circulated when they are known.

34 We are delighted to have two students from Northern College undertaking placements in the Synod; Jonnie Hill and Kate Hunt are working with local congregations and in Missional Partnerships to gain experience and offer their gifts and talents to the life of the church.

35 The Special Category Ministry post at Oasis Media City, Salford has been reviewed and the SCM subcommittee have agreed a further five years of work under the SCM programme in Salford. This opportunity for pioneer ministry is on the table of the Moderators' meeting.

36 Missional Discipleship Mentors - the team of Mission Mentors in the South of the Synod have been working together and in their respective areas to encourage churches in mission and discipleship throughout the pandemic. As well as making good use of Zoom, the mentors have offered many innovative ways for churches to continue their life and witness. Currently our friends in Cumbria receive similar assistance through their mission communities and the God for All programme; the Area Pastoral Committee working with the Synod Pastoral Committee is looking at ways to introduce a Mission Mentor to the county. Churches will have heard from the Moderator that the Central Area Mission Mentor, Rev Darren Holland, is to take up a new role working for the Methodist church. We are very sorry to say farewell to Darren, who has been an inspiration to many and an integral part of the team; we pray for his future ministry and trust that we will maintain contact with home.

37 Missional Partnerships in Oldham and Tameside, Lancashire East and Lancashire South were ready to share in Commissioning Services, but due to lockdown these did not take place. The Pastoral Committee agreed that instead of waiting until large gatherings could take place, these Partnerships would be deemed commissioned so that they could both begin to work with their Partnership ministers and, when all church profiles were ready, be put on the national vacancy list with new opportunities for ministry. These Partnerships will hold celebration services in due course, including the commissioning promises. Following the national "life After Lockdown" conference, there have been a series of mini-conference in the Areas which have generated ideas for the future,

Whilst we remain largely locked down, as much as possible will take place on Zoom and via paper.

38 Local churches across the Synod have made every effort to be salt and light in their communities some engaging in exciting pieces of work to provide food to those in need, support to those struggling with lockdown and Zoom children and youth work. It has been inspiring to see churches offer truly excellent pastoral care to their members. Newsletters and telephone calls, Zoom and the postal service, as well as socially distanced pastoral conversations on many doorsteps have all been used to maintain contact and to continue to be church throughout this difficult time.

39 As well as taking a keen interest in the life of the Areas of the Synod and in the development of the Missional Partnership and especially the working of the Steering Groups the Pastoral Committee has considered the question of presidency at the sacraments in principle and in practice among our churches. There has been much discussion about Good Order in the church and this continues to be an area of church life that we keep under consideration. The advent of Missional Partnerships raises questions concerning the current regulations and a working group is expecting to present a paper to the Faith and Order Committee of the national church during 2021.

40 With the news that our deployment quota was to change, the Pastoral Committee undertook a review of the posts that we had listed as new opportunities for ministry on the national vacancy list. Following our June meeting, the Moderator and Convener consulted with the Area Conveners and held an extraordinary meeting to align ministry in our Missional Partnerships with the quota for our Synod. Many factors had to be taken into account and after adjustment, the new deployment figure was sent to ministers, elders, members of the Synod meeting and Steering Group members ahead of this meeting.

41 The committee has been a part of the Synod Review process, considering how the ways in which we do the business of church may best serve the local congregations and build God's kingdom. As at our meetings, we pray for the life and work of the local churches in the Synod, the places where Jesus is seen in His followers and where the seeds of the kingdom take root.

## **CUMBRIA AREA PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

Pastoral Convenor: Martyn Coe

42 We are pleased that the exec agreed to support the God for All Vision Refresh resolution. This refocussing brings a new emphasis on social and environmental matters and a reaffirmation that God for All is a part of all that we are doing together. GfA as refreshed allows the URC and Methodist churches to be certain that they are meeting national and regional priorities for environmental concern and personal mission and discipleship through the local focus of Mission Communities.

43 Churches have generally coped well through lockdown and it is a testimony to the commitment of ministers and elders that so many congregations have been as well connected and cared for as they have been. A personal observation would be that our understanding of what church is coupled with the role which Elders have of sharing in Pastoral Concern and care meant we were as well equipped as we could be in this time and have, perhaps, fared better than some of our partners.

44 We have been pleased even during lockdown that the Revd Becca Gilbert has been able to join us as Pioneer Minister in the Western Dales. A Church of England Priest, Becca is funded and authorised by the URC Methodists and Church of England to explore new ways of discipleship and church in an area where our last building has closed.

## **LANCASHIRE AREA PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

Pastoral Convener: Vacant

### **Area Pastoral Committee**

The Area Pastoral Committee currently comprises:

Miss Margery Pitcher (Secretary), Mr Gordon Bell (Finance Officer), Revd Liz Jewitt (Ecumenical Officer), Mr Ken Snaith (Pastoral Review Co-ordinator), Mrs Lynn Lonsdale (Co-opted Member), Revd Michele Jarmany (Co-opted Member), Synod Officers *ex officio*.

45 Each committee member is linked with a group of churches and contacts the Church Secretary prior to an APC meeting, through which the churches may raise issues or share good news stories to be brought to the meeting. Meetings since March have been held via Zoom.

### **Ministerial and Pastoral**

46 Revd Janet Calderley has begun work in the West Partnership and it is hoped that her Induction Service may be held when larger gatherings are allowed in churches.

47 Retired Ministers, Lay Preachers & Worship Leaders have been asked about their availability for leading worship during the current situation and the responses have been forwarded to Church Secretaries.

### **Missional Discipleship**

48 Daleen Ten Cate, Missional Mentor, has been leading regular online Communion Services and Coffee mornings for each of the partnerships and also led Stepwise groups online. The three Mentors also led an online Elders conference.

## **Missional Partnerships**

49 The Commissioning services for South & East Partnerships have been deferred for the time being.

## **Church Life**

50 Most normal activities have been suspended during the pandemic although some have been able to continue online. Various churches have been providing services via Zoom, Facebook, DVD, printed copies, phone-in etc and these have been much appreciated. Several churches will continue these once services are resumed in their buildings. 21 churches have set a date for re-opening for worship, some of which have already done so. Elderly congregations and frequently changing Covid-19 restrictions have led some churches to postpone resuming services in church.

51 The refurbishment of the Chorley church building is almost complete, providing an adaptable space with full technology features. This has led to interest from potential hirers. The plans for the Hollinshead Centre have been modified to include part of the original buildings.

## **CENTRAL AREA PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

Committee Convenor: Richard Bradley

### **Missional Partnerships:**

#### **Bolton and Salford**

52 Since October 2019 - 5 steering group meetings have been held and held the partnership was commissioned on Sunday 12th January 2020 at Worsley Road URC with Revd. Dr. Adam Scott as preacher. It was a great celebration attended by well over 100 people from all the churches and beyond and was followed by an afternoon tea. Revd. Ruth Watson was commissioned at that service as the partnership minister. The occasion was greatly inspirational and there is now a very positive feeling amongst all those attending as they move forward as a partnership. In preparation, they have had meetings devoted to “What does worship look like in a Partnership?”, “What does pastoral care look like in a Partnership?” led by Adam Scott and “How do we tell people what a partnership is and does?”.

#### **Bury, Rochdale and North Manchester**

53 The Steering Group for the Missional Partnership continues to meet and discuss the mission of the Partnership. Recent meetings have been given to the exploitation of a call to a candidate from Westminster College. That resulted in a ‘preach with view’ weekend on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> January. Daniel Harris attended two social events on the Saturday and led morning and afternoon worship in two churches on the Sunday. Church meetings were held, and a call was issued to Daniel who accepted the call. Daniel was ordained and inducted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020.

54 Since the last Synod we have had 2 “Café Style New Songs Services” both held at Bamford Chapel and Norden URC. Seventy people attended the service in November and about fifty people attended the January one. We had set dates for the remainder of 2020 looking to have one every other month, although Covid intervened. We hope to be able to resume these services when circumstances allow.

### **Oldham and Tameside**

55 The Steering Group have met and although Convened at present by Revd Dr Marian Tugwood the Revd Sheila Coop has taken the convened the meetings during Marian’s time off. The Steering Group are working towards a date in April for their commissioning. This Missional Partnership is currently served by two Stipendiary ministers - Revds Graham Tarn and Ruth Wollaston. Revds David Ireland and Sheila Coop are also serving as non-stipendiary ministers within churches in this Missional Partnership. David serving Union Street, Oldham and Sheila Coop serving Macedonia Mission Project.

### **People and Local Church Situations**

56 **Revd Mark Bates** will be moving to the Mersey Synod to serve the Churches of Trinity with Palm Grove, Marlowe Road and St Andrew's Meols. We thank Mark for his service to the Central Area as he has served ‘The Vision Pastorate’ in Bolton and we wish him God’s blessing as he moves to pastures new.

57 **Alison Dalton** has come to the end of her term as a CRCW. We thank her for her service to Church at the Centre, Tonge Moor and assisting in other parts of the Synod also. She has been an

asset to the Central Area Pastoral Committee in recent years too. We wish her God's blessing in whatever God calls Alison.

58 **Stand URC Church building:** has now been sold.

### **Trinity URC/ CE LEP Cheetham Hill**

59 Discussions continue between the North Western Synod and the Archdeacon of Manchester about the fellowship and church building at Trinity.

### **Albion Fellowship**

60 The three churches of Albion, Charlestown and Hurst Nook URCs have decided, after much discussion, to cease to be one church worshipping in three places to being three separate churches. They will continue to work together for mission in Ashton Under Lyne.

### **Thank you**

61 Thanks to everyone who sits on the APC, for their dedication, commitment and hard work in assisting people, and churches to enable the work of the kingdom to continue.

## **SOUTH AREA PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

Pastoral Convenor: Kirsty Thorpe

62 The Committee has met once since its March meeting, using Zoom, in September. However, despite not seeing each other in person, a lot of people have been sharing information and giving mutual support among the South Area churches. Missional Partnership Steering Groups have helped to keep people in touch with news from other churches.

63 Site visits to resolve property problems and telephone conversations about church finance or grant applications have continued. Thanks are due to everyone who has been part of this important work.

1. South Area Pastoral Committee meets next, using Zoom, on Monday November 9<sup>th</sup>.
2. We are delighted that Colin Fox has begun to serve as South Area Property Officer and Hilary Grierson as committee Secretary.
3. Dave Fraser, South Area Mission and Discipleship Mentor, has offered training, social and workshop events both during and since lockdown. These have helped to resource the local churches and their Elders. He and the Revd Alison Termie ran a successful Stepwise group online this summer.
4. Lee Battle's ordination to serve Manchester South Missional Partnership took place on July and Revd Annette Haigh left to take up ministry in Yorkshire Synod at the end of August.
5. The Revd Annette Haigh moved to her new ministry in Yorkshire Synod in August.

## 6. Other news in brief:

- Hatherlow Sunday School hall is currently being marketed. Ways of improving the facilities in the church building continue to be explored.
- Marple Bridge still faces important questions about its buildings.
- Synod Executive took a decision about the URC's future involvement in Church of the Epiphany, Droylsden at its meeting in March which is now being implemented.
- The Pilots company of the former Union Church, Stockport, has kept in touch with families during lockdown. It has received a grant from the Synod Trust to fund its future work.
- Ashton on Mersey has received a Synod grant to replace the church roof.

## **RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Convener of Resources Committee and Chair of Trust Management Committee: Jean Mullineux  
Company Secretary: Tim Hopley

### **Membership and Responsibilities of Committees**

64 The Resources Committee and continues to act on behalf of the Synod on matters of property and finance.

65 The Trust Company is the Trustee of each of the buildings of local churches in the Synod including the Church, Church buildings and Manses. The Elders meeting of the local Church acts under delegated authority of the Trust.

66 The Elders meeting of each local church is the Trustees of the funds and assets of the local Church but not its buildings.

67 The Trust Company is the Trustee for all the Synod's assets.

68 The Trust Management Committee acts on behalf of the Trust Company.

69 The Synod Resources Committee and the Trust Management Committee expresses its thanks to Philip Jones whose term of office ended at the beginning of this year and welcomes Alan Haigh as a Trustee and finance representative for South Area. Normally Synod Resources and Trust Management Committees meetings are held concurrently six times a year, since lock down it has been useful to meet on a monthly basis.

## **FINANCE REPORT**

Mike Hart: Synod Treasurer

70 The Trust Management Committee monitors the finance work undertaken by the Synod Treasurer and Synod staff. As Charity Trustees, the members of the Trust Management Committee carry the legal responsibility for the Synod's finances. However, the primary responsibility of the Trust and of the Committee is to carry out the policies of the Synod as approved at meetings of Synod. The following information is provided as a way of keeping members of Synod informed and as a way of being accountable to them.

### **1. Annual Report and Accounts 2019 (Last Year)**

71 Pages 48 & 49 Accounts 2019 Extract to this report provides an extract from the Annual Report and Accounts for the United Reformed Church (North Western Province) Trust Ltd for 2019. These were agreed by the Trust Management Committee at its Annual General Meeting in September. The Trust's accounts include the income and expenditure relating to the work of the Synod.

72 The audited and published accounts of the Trust have to be presented in the format required by the Charity Commission, by relevant legislation, and in accordance with current financial reporting standards applicable to charities. Members of Synod may be relieved to be reminded that the legal responsibility for the Trust accounts resides with the Trust Management Committee. A full copy of the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts can be found on the Synod website.

73 There have been some significant changes to the Accounts this year to accommodate the implementation of both the Synod Manse Scheme and the arrangements for the payment of Ministers' expenses and Housing costs through the Synod Office. These are managed through separate Designated Funds, and these account

for the significant movement in this area of the accounts since the 2018 accounts.

74 The Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) on page 48 shows the income and expenditure for the year and a comparison to 2018. Focussing specifically on the Unrestricted Funds which account for the day to day work of the Synod, this shows operating costs for the year were £825,000 with a small loss of £60,000. It is important to recognise that a significant proportion of the income in the year came from one-off items such as the sales of closed church buildings. The Balance Sheet on the following page, shows that the Trust had unrestricted reserves of £4.949m at the end of the year. Total reserves including holdings in the Manse Fund amount to £16.742m. The creditors figure of £4.568m shown in the Designated Funds column in the Balance Sheet represents the liabilities owed to local churches for grants arising from the implementation of the Manse Scheme. These have now been vested with the relevant local churches.

## **Resolution Number 2**

### **Synod Meeting notes the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts for 2019**

## **2. Mission and Ministry Fund 2021**

75 My thanks to local Church Treasurers who responded to the request over the summer for information to help in the calculation of M&M contributions for 2020. The initial assessments have now been distributed to local churches.

76 The overall contribution and allocation to local churches is based on the approach agreed by Synod in October 2017:

*“Synod agrees that the future targets for the total annual amount to be raised by this Synod for the Ministry and Mission Fund should be calculated as follows:*

*For 2019 and beyond, the annual target should be calculated as the target for the previous year adjusted by the percentage change in membership numbers plus 3%.”*

77 Reflecting the decline in membership the overall contribution will reduce by 1% for 2021 compared to 2020 to approximately £1.65m. A similar approach has been taken to the Synod Levy. The charge for Ministers' Expenses has been set at the same level of £30 per member/regular worshipper as in 2020. Clearly within this overall approach the amounts for each local church will increase or decrease dependent on their own situation and particularly any changes in their membership numbers or capital balances.

78 Section xxx of this report includes proposals to support church with the payment of their assessment for 2021. This support, if agreed, is only for 2021 and Churches will be expected to meet their assessment for 2022 in full.

79 Over the summer, the Synod Executive and the Trust Management have held some wide ranging discussions about the short and medium (5 year) financial planning for the Synod. These discussions have included consideration of a long term budget plan, and reshaping the offer of Grant's to local churches to provide greater clarity and better fit with current needs and circumstances in local churches. Initial proposals about the latter will be shared with local churches for consultation in the next few months.

80 The discussions also focussed on the immediate challenges facing the Synod and local churches in responding to the situation and related uncertainty that now face us. On that basis the Committees have discussed and agreed a budget for 2021, with a commitment to setting a long term plan during the next 12 months. Alongside that the Committees have agreed an investment in support for local churches in addressing the financial situation that the prolonged closure of church buildings has left many of our

congregations. This will be complimented by an investment at Synod level to provide access to other support over the next 12 months. The total costs of up to £750,000 would be met from accumulated reserves.

### **3. Post Covid Support**

#### **Issues raised by churches**

81 I am grateful to the Church Treasurers who responded to the survey about the impact of “lockdown” undertaken as part of the M&M assessment process. The responses to that survey highlighted that the issues that were having the biggest impact on local church finances were the loss of income from lettings / hirings and from special fundraising events. A number of you, whilst recognising its importance to the church, also expressed concerns about the impact of the payments to the Ministry and Mission (M&M) Fund as the largest single item of your expenditure.

82 Collectively, there is a strong commitment from both the Trust Management Committee and the Synod Executive Committee to ensure that the Synod uses some of its accumulated reserves to help local churches rebuild their mission at this time. That commitment is offered in the context of the principles agreed by the Synod’s meeting a number of years ago for the use of its resources:

- that our priority is God's mission;
- that the strong should help the weak; and
- that we belong to each other under God.

83 Therefore, the contributions from Synod reserves are particularly focussed on churches with lower levels of reserves. Our expectation is that churches who benefit from higher levels of accumulated reserves will in general be able to draw on some of those reserves to help them through this time. Nonetheless, I believe that these proposals will enable most of our churches to

access financial support from resources held by Synod to support their work at this difficult time, in part through simplifying access to a level of Manse Grant resources where this is available to individual churches.

84 In constructing this package, we have tried explicitly to respond to the two particular sources of concern expressed by local churches:

- the loss of income from third parties during church closures in 2020, and the impact of M&M payments on church finances for next year

85 The table on the next page sets out five criteria where churches would be able to access resources held by Synod. This support will be available by application by churches who meet the relevant qualifying criteria, and churches will be able to receive support for all of the areas in which they are eligible, e.g. a church with reserves of less than £50,000 would be able to apply for financial support under both criteria c) and e). Applications for support for losses of income in 2020 will need to be supported by details of losses in lettings/hirings income and from special events.

### **Table 1: Financial Support for Local Churches 2020 and 2021**

86 The following elements of financial support would be available to qualifying churches on application and in the case of item c) on receipt of information quantifying actual levels of losses in 2020.

#### **Support for M&M in 2020**

- a) Churches in receipt of M&M Loans whose reserves from their 2019 accounts are less than £50,000 can apply to have their loan converted to a grant.

## **Support for losses in 2020**

- b) Churches in receipt of a Manse Grant can request the release of up to £16,000 or their total grant (whichever is the lower) to address losses incurred during 2020.
  
- c) Churches who are not in receipt of a Manse Grant (or whose Manse Grant is less than £16,000) and whose reserves from their 2019 accounts are less than £50,000, can apply for a grant to a maximum of £15,000 (including the Manse Grant) for quantified losses in lettings or fundraising income.

87 Both of these would be paid net of any arrears of M&M accumulated during 2020

## **Support for M&M in 2021**

88 This support will be for one year only and churches will be expected to meet their assessment for 2022 in full.

- d) Churches whose reserves from their 2019 accounts are less than £20,000 can apply for Synod to contribute 50% to their combined M&M Assessment (M&M, Synod Levy and Ministers Expenses) for 2021. Churches wishing to apply for this support will not be permitted to appeal against the assessment for 2021.
  
- e) Churches whose reserves from their 2019 accounts are between £20,000 and £49,999 (inclusive) can apply for Synod to contribute 25% to their combined M&M Assessment (M&M, Synod Levy and Ministers Expenses) for 2021. Churches wishing to apply will not be permitted to appeal against the assessment for 2021.

## **Note on definition reserves**

89 *“Reserves” means the adjusted capital value agreed by Synod from the Church Accounts and the M&M Financial Return and used*

*in the M&M Assessment adjusted for the balance of their grant from the Synod Manse Scheme.*

90 The Church accounts for 2019 must have been received by the Synod Office to be eligible for support.

91 At this stage we anticipate this support being a one-off package of financial support to cover pressures on church finances in 2020 and 2021. In particular churches should plan on the basis that they will be expected to meet their full M&M assessment for 2022.

92 The estimated costs of this support to Synod reserves are £650,000 and the proposals would provide access to financial support in recovering from the Covid-19 lockdown of church buildings to an estimated 92 churches across the Synod.

### **Support for Synod Activities**

93 The balance of £100,000 would be retained to support Synod Level activities. An initial £15,000 would be allocated to support additional staffing costs incurred in managing the Trust's responsibilities in respect of church buildings at this time. The balance would be available to support programmes of support for groups of local churches and where appropriate targeted to specific church issues. Initial priorities would be the development of programmes of support to help churches address issue of poor Mental Health and responding to issues of isolation and loneliness in their community.

### **Resolution Number 3**

Synod Meeting agrees

- to support the proposals above to make grants available to local churches in response to the impact of the closures of church buildings; and

- to note the Trust's commitment of £750,000 from accumulated reserves to support these grants and Synod led support programmes

## **Budget 2021**

94 The table below Budget 2021 (pages 50 – 51) sets out the proposed budget for 2021.

95 The budget includes provision in full for current staffing and provision to recruit to provide additional capacity to manage Property Issues and to SCM posts in Salford and Cumbria.

96 In terms of office provision, the budget includes additional provision for the running costs of the new office, and for transitional costs for the first part of the year when it is likely that the Synod will have residual responsibilities for the current office.

97 The budget assumes significant income from the sales of surplus properties and a contribution from general reserves of £200,000 for 2021. The long term plan will consider how to reduce the reliance on these one-off sources of income whilst preserving the value of services that the Synod is able to offer to local churches

### **Resolution Number 4**

The Synod Meeting notes the budget for 2021 agreed by the Trust Management Committee

## **Thanks**

98 I am grateful to David and Ryhana for their contribution to the work of the Synod Finance Team, and for the numerous improvements that have been achieved across a range of our finance work in that time; whilst dealing with the new challenges of the Synod Manse Scheme and the financial arrangements for Missional Partnerships.

The United Reformed Church (North Western Province) Trust Limited

Company No. 1571090

Charity No. 511689

**Statement of Financial Activities**  
**Year Ended 31st December 2019**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowed Funds £	2019 Total Funds £	2018 Total Funds £
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>							
<i>Donations:</i>	2.1.1	99,485	-	225	-	99,710	99,106
<i>Investments:</i>							
Investment income	2.1.4	114,566	7,249	1,911	12,038	135,764	118,511
Bank and deposit interest	2.1.4	17,258	(7,666)	2,099	852	12,543	2,379
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>							
Charitable activities	2.1.2	-	-	-	-	-	400
<i>Other operating incoming resources:</i>							
Rent and loan interest	2.1.3	21,728	29,009	694	-	51,431	19,117
<b>Total Operating Income</b>		<b>253,037</b>	<b>28,592</b>	<b>4,929</b>	<b>12,890</b>	<b>299,448</b>	<b>239,513</b>
<i>Other incoming resources:</i>							
Cash & Investments Transferred from Closed Churches	2.1.5	70,269	-	-	-	70,269	9,399
Transfers from Local Churches to Manse Fund	2.1.5	-	5,673,376	-	-	5,673,376	565,168
Properties Transferred from Closed Churches	2.1.5	483,797	-	-	-	483,797	475,000
Profit/(Loss) on Disposal of Properties	2.1.5	(34,697)	2,488,287	-	-	2,453,590	294,373
Other Income	2.1.5	19,325	-	-	-	19,325	100
<b>Total Income:</b>		<b>791,731</b>	<b>8,190,255</b>	<b>4,929</b>	<b>12,890</b>	<b>8,999,805</b>	<b>1,583,553</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>							
<i>Raising Funds:</i>	2.2.1	11,322	-	143	886	12,351	10,640
<i>Charitable Activities:</i>	2.2.2						
Grants & Donations		175,270	1,303	36,008	-	212,581	228,114
Training		1,616	97,249	-	-	98,865	98,530
Special Category Ministers		37,298	-	-	-	37,298	52,830
Office Salaries - Charitable Activities		123,977	13,586	-	-	137,563	68,988
Property Costs		18,408	143,085	14,717	-	176,210	69,052
Mission		234,316	-	-	-	234,316	251,092
Area Support		7,428	198	-	-	7,626	8,703
Other Charitable Expenditure		28,523	333	3,850	-	32,706	23,194
Governance costs	2.2.3	186,548	-	-	-	186,548	165,507
<b>Total Operating Resources Expended</b>		<b>824,706</b>	<b>255,754</b>	<b>54,718</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>1,136,064</b>	<b>976,650</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure) on Operating Account</b>		<b>(571,669)</b>	<b>(227,162)</b>	<b>(49,789)</b>	<b>12,004</b>	<b>(836,616)</b>	<b>(737,137)</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure) before Transfers</b>		<b>(32,975)</b>	<b>7,934,501</b>	<b>(49,789)</b>	<b>12,004</b>	<b>7,863,741</b>	<b>606,903</b>
Net Transfers between Funds		(335,080)	332,764	14,320	(12,004)	-	-
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure)</b>		<b>(368,055)</b>	<b>8,267,265</b>	<b>(35,469)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,863,741</b>	<b>606,903</b>
<i>Other Recognised Gains/(Losses):</i>							
Investments - Unrealised	8	427,752	24,780	6,735	45,312	504,579	(377,065)
Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Property Revaluation	11	-	463,466	-	-	463,466	83,280
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>59,697</b>	<b>8,755,511</b>	<b>(28,734)</b>	<b>45,312</b>	<b>8,831,786</b>	<b>313,118</b>
Total Funds Brought Forward 1st January 2019		4,888,931	2,199,902	441,138	381,049	7,911,020	7,597,902
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward 31st December 2019</b>		<b>4,948,628</b>	<b>10,955,413</b>	<b>412,404</b>	<b>426,361</b>	<b>16,742,806</b>	<b>7,911,020</b>

The United Reformed Church (North Western Province) Trust Limited

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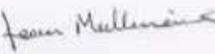
**Balance Sheet**  
**At 31st December 2019**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowed Funds £	2019 Total Funds £	2018 Total Funds £
<b>Fixed Assets:</b>							
Tangible Assets	11	8,793	8,998,074	-	-	9,006,867	3,524,722
Investments	12	3,385,865	422,884	56,281	372,026	4,237,056	3,334,373
Programme Related Investments	13	2,165	86,804	162,497	-	251,466	198,325
		<u>3,396,823</u>	<u>9,507,762</u>	<u>218,778</u>	<u>372,026</u>	<u>13,495,389</u>	<u>7,057,420</u>
<b>Current Assets:</b>							
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	14	25,930	43,766	-	-	69,696	19,992
Properties for disposal	15	452,860	4,449,900	-	-	4,902,760	625,000
Cash and Short Term Deposits		1,094,677	1,521,958	234,180	54,335	2,905,150	340,455
		<u>1,573,467</u>	<u>6,015,624</u>	<u>234,180</u>	<u>54,335</u>	<u>7,877,606</u>	<u>985,447</u>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	16	(21,662)	(4,567,973)	(40,554)	-	(4,630,189)	(131,847)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>1,551,805</u>	<u>1,447,651</u>	<u>193,626</u>	<u>54,335</u>	<u>3,247,417</u>	<u>853,600</u>
<b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>		<u>4,948,628</u>	<u>10,955,413</u>	<u>412,404</u>	<u>426,361</u>	<u>16,742,806</u>	<u>7,911,020</u>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year</b>		-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Assets</b>		<u>4,948,628</u>	<u>10,955,413</u>	<u>412,404</u>	<u>426,361</u>	<u>16,742,806</u>	<u>7,911,020</u>
<b>Funds:</b>							
Unrestricted Income Funds:							
General	18	4,948,628	-	-	-	4,948,628	4,888,931
Designated	18	-	10,955,413	-	-	10,955,413	2,199,902
Total		<u>4,948,628</u>	<u>10,955,413</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,904,041</u>	<u>7,088,833</u>
Restricted Income Funds							
Restricted Income Funds	18	-	-	412,404	-	412,404	441,138
Endowment Funds	18	-	-	-	426,361	426,361	381,049
<b>Total Funds</b>		<u>4,948,628</u>	<u>10,955,413</u>	<u>412,404</u>	<u>426,361</u>	<u>16,742,806</u>	<u>7,911,020</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by the Trust Management Committee on 18th September 2020 and signed on its behalf by

  
Mr M T Hart  
Synod Treasurer

  
Mrs J C Mullineux  
Chair

## URC North Western Synod

<b>Proposed Budget: Income &amp; Expenditure Analysis</b>	<b>2021 Budget</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
<b>Operational Expenditure</b>	£
<b>Synod Costs (legal requirements)</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>	
OP14 Salaries & honoraria	182,193
OP15 Synod office	47,640
OP18 Expenses: Synod committees & meetings	33,000
OP22 Professional: Audit	8,000
OP23 Professional: Legal	12,000
OP24 Professional: Investment management	6,000
OP25 Professional: Other	4,000
OP26 Miscellaneous	2,000
OP27 Insurances	5,500
Less Recharges to other funds	(77,332)
<b>Total Synod Expenditure</b>	<b>223,001</b>
<b>Property &amp; the Manse Fund</b>	
OP46 Property: Buildings	2,500
OP47 Property: Graveyards	18,000
<b>Total Property Expenditure</b>	<b>20,500</b>
<b>Local Church Support</b>	
OP14 Salaries & honoraria	91,804
OP15 Synod office	31,640
OP16 Area Support	7,000
OP23 Professional: Legal	8,000
OP24 Professional: Investment management	4,000
<b>Expenditure Local Church Support</b>	<b>142,444</b>
<b>Total Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>385,945</b>
<b>Investing in Priorities</b>	
<b>Support for Mission &amp; Ministry</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>	
OP36 Training: General Salaries	23,000
OP37 Training: Ministers & CRCW	17,000
OP38 Training: Elders & Members	25,000
OP39 Training: C&YP Salaries	53,550
OP39 Training: C&YP other	11,071
OP33 External Grants: Welfare	5,000
XX40 Property Grants to churches	
XX30 Mission Grants to churches	
<b>Expenditure Mission &amp; Ministry</b>	<b>134,620</b>

## URC North Western Synod

<b>Proposed Budget: Income &amp; Expenditure Analysis</b>	<b>2021 Budget</b>
<b>Mission Projects &amp; SCMs Expenditure</b>	
OP41 SCM: Cumbria	3,750
OP42 SCM: Chorlton	8,850
OP43 SCM: Salford	3,750
<b>Expenditure Mission Projects &amp; SCMs</b>	<b>16,350</b>
<b>Wider Church Partnerships Expenditure</b>	
OP31 External Grants: University chaplaincy	25,000
OP32 External Grants: Ecumenical subscriptions	6,000
OP34 External Grants: Other	12,500
<b>Expenditure Wider Church Partnerships</b>	<b>43,500</b>
<b>Missional Discipleship Expenditure</b>	
OP49 Mission Salaries	147,060
OP49 Mission Other	25,000
<b>Expenditure Missional Discipleship</b>	<b>172,060</b>
<b>Total Investment in Priorities &amp; Partnerships</b>	<b>366,530</b>
<b>One-offs</b>	
XX32 M&M Support	
XX38 Contribution to pension funds	40,000
<b>Total One-offs: Pension Fund Contribution</b>	<b>40,000</b>
<b>Grand Total - Expenditure</b>	<b>792,475</b>
<b>Operational Income</b>	
OP01 Investment income	(90,000)
OP09 Synod stakes	(90,000)
<b>Total Income Operational Activities</b>	<b>(180,000)</b>
<b>Other Income</b>	
OP07 Grants: University chaplaincy	(12,500)
XX36 Disposal of fixed assets - realised	(400,000)
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>(412,500)</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(592,500)</b>
<b>Contribution from Reserves</b>	<b>(200,000)</b>
<b>Remaining Shortfall (Surplus)</b>	<b>(25)</b>

## **PROPERTY REPORT**

Convener: Mike Aspinall

### **Self –Assessment Questionnaires**

99 Thank you to churches who have submitted the SAQ's for 2020 so far, however, there are still some outstanding. The 2021 issue will be coming out soon. These are to help the churches and elders fulfil their obligations as management trustees of their church, they are a 'tool' designed to help churches. If you are having problems completing any part of the form, please contact me.

### **Quinquennial surveys**

100 The oversight of church buildings is important to ensure the fabric of the building is maintained.

101 Several churches have found in re-opening after lockdown, problems that have been festering away now creating a bigger problem than if dealt with earlier.

102 The organising of an Inspection cannot be ignored. Church Elders, as Managing Trustees of their church have an obligation to maintain the building. For Listed Buildings in particular this can have serious legal implications, although for all church buildings there are also Charity Commission implications if the assets of the Trust (e.g. the building) is not adequately maintained.

103 I realise this may throw-up work which you feel will create further problems for you but it is far better to know of problems than to think they don't exist. An updated list of approved surveyors was issued at the end of last year to respective Church Secretaries, and this is still relevant. However, if your church has mislaid please don't hesitate to contact me.

104 On receipt of the report please ensure you look carefully at the recommendation and action accordingly. If you feel you don't know how to respond please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

## **LBAC**

105 If you are in a Listed Church and intend to undertake any work whatsoever you **must** seek approval from the LBAC. This applies whether the work affects the specific area of listing or not.

Undertaking work without approval can lead to possible action from English Heritage and a substantial fine.

## **General**

106 If you are considering any work within your church, regardless of the value please inform your Area Pastoral Committee (APC). Any work having a value over £16,000.00 in any 12month period must be approved by your APC and Synod Resources Committee, prior to the work commencing. If you are unsure as to what to do or what could be done with your premises to meet your current needs, please don't hesitate to contact me.

107 If you have any queries on matters relating to church properties, grounds and graveyards, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may not have all the answers immediately but I will endeavour to find an answer whatever the query.

## **MINISTRIES COMMITTEE**

Convenor: Martyn Coe

108 Our hoped-for work has been delayed by general Covid disruption but also my own illness with it. Thanks go to those who have engaged with training and candidating processes during this time.

Things to note:

109 Ministers and preachers are encouraged to use their training grants or to find something specific in 2021 for which they would like to request a rollover of funding.

110 Ministers are encouraged to take up the funding offer for Spiritual Direction and to explore Pastoral Supervision as required by the national church.

111 We are working with other committees to develop a new post which will cover EM2 and EM3 training meanwhile I am dealing with training requests

## **CANDIDATE REPORT**

Candidates Secretary: Lesley Husselbee

### **Candidates for Ministry**

a. **Two people are candidating for Ministry:**

#### **1. NW Synod Students in Training for Ministry**

##### **a. Northern College Manchester**

- I. **Walt Johnson NSM** (Wilbraham St Ninian's URC)  
Northern College, Manchester
- II. **Kate Hunt SM** (St Anne's URC) Year 2
- III. **Jonathan Hill SM** Year 3 (Chorlton Central Church).  
Placement: Greater:
- IV. **Katherine (Katy) Ollerenshaw CRCW** Year 3/4  
(Edgeley Community Church, Stockport
- V. **Lee Battle SM** Year 4 (Wilbraham St Ninian's URC)  
(Lee has been called to the Manchester South  
Missional Partnership. Placement: Alsager and  
Ordination 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020.
- VI. **Sarah Fitton SM** Year 4 (Bamford Chapel) Called to  
Huddersfield group of churches: Ordination 18<sup>th</sup> July  
2020.

##### **b. Westminster College, Cambridge\***

## **SAFEGUARDING REFERENCE GROUP**

Synod Safeguarding Advisor: Julie Rafferty

Co-ordinator: Rev Brian Jolly (North Western Moderator)

Brian Jolly (North Western Synod Moderator), Rita Griffiths (Mersey Synod Clark), Lorna Griffiths, Julie Rafferty (Synod Safeguarding Advisor), Leo Roberts (CYDO – North Western), Steven Mitchell (CYDO - Mersey), Rev Tim Presswood (Baptist representative) Ros Ellison (minute taker)

### **Changes to membership**

112 Jacky Embrey, the former Mersey Synod Moderator and Reference Group Coordinator since its inception, has now moved to a new post in the North Western Synod and we thank Jacky for her invaluable contribution and commitment to safeguarding over the years.

113 Brian Jolly, the North Western Synod Moderator, has replaced Jacky as the Safeguarding Reference Group Coordinator.

### **Good Practice 5**

114 *“Good Practice 5 (GP5) - Policy and Good Practice guidance in safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk”* was published in January 2020, this guidance document significantly updates the previous guidance manuals of Good Practice 4. Paper copies of the guidance documents have been sent to all church safeguarding coordinators together with information outlining and clarifying key changes and procedures. Good Practice 5 familiarisation sessions were curtailed by the coronavirus, but online sessions are being planned for October and November, which will be circulated to churches and published on the website.

## **Safeguarding Strategic Plan**

115 In May 2019, Mission Council initially agreed the main objectives of the Safeguarding Strategic plan 2020 - 2025 as per the recommendations from the Past Case Review report. The Safeguarding Reference Group have established a small working party to consider how the objectives can be achieved and the best way to support churches to ensure that the requirements of the strategic plan are met.

**116 The United Reformed Church's (URC) Safeguarding team will launch the plan with an online conference on Friday 9 October 2020.** The symposium, hopes to bring together those who oversee and lead safeguarding in local churches and synods, takes place from 12.30pm to 2pm via Zoom.

## **URC training framework**

117 In March 2020, the URC employed a Safeguarding training and development coordinator, Penny McGee. Since her appointment, Penny has been working tirelessly to introduce a Safeguarding training framework, to ensure that there is consistency in the safeguarding practice of the URC and to support the overall goal that all church workers, both paid and voluntary, have a standard of safeguarding training that is sufficient to enable them to carry out their individual roles within the Church. The draft training framework document was sent out for consultation to several church safeguarding coordinators in each synod and this feedback has been fed back to Penny. In the meantime, it has been identified that different levels of safeguarding training is required dependent on role, starting with Basic training, progressing to Intermediate and then Advanced, with opportunity to attend more bespoke specialist training dependent on role and interest, such as Domestic Abuse, Modern Slavery, Trafficking etc..

118 A programme of Basic safeguarding training will start in October 2020, aimed at all church workers who have not received any safeguarding training within the last 3 years. The training will initially be delivered via Zoom, the dates and times will be circulated and will be published on the website

119 Churches are welcome to contact Julie Rafferty with safeguarding queries and concerns at [safeguarding@nwysynod.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@nwysynod.org.uk) or 07964-981262

