

Minutes of Autumn Synod meeting

- 1 The Synod Clerk welcomed all present online, and in person, to the meeting. Synod Clerk also welcomed Ecumenical colleagues and declared the meeting as formally constituted.
- 2 The Synod Clerk invited the Synod meeting to appoint Revd Clare Downing, Moderator of General Assembly to chair the meeting.
- 3 Revd Dr Kirsty Thorpe and Revd Elizabeth Gray-King led the meeting in worship.
- 4 Synod Meeting remembered ministers who had died since the Autumn Synod:
 - Revd Kenneth Hall
 - Revd Glyn Eatock
 - Revd John Griffiths Hetherington
- 5 Synod meeting also heard of churches which had closed since the Autumn Synod:
 - Whalley Road, Accrington
 - Patricroft
 - Chapel Street and Hope, Salford
- 6 Synod Meeting said farewell to ministers who have left Synod since the meeting in October 2021:
 - Revd Dave Fraser
 - Revd Liz Jewitt
 - Revd Dave Harkison
 - Revd Janet McLeod (Methodist)
 - Revd Zena Smith (Methodist)

- 7 Synod Meeting welcomed two new ministers to Synod:
- Revd Jonnie Hill
 - Revd Adam Woodhouse
- 8 The Minutes of the meeting of 17th April 2021 were agreed
- 9 The Synod Clerk presented the Executive Report, which incorporated reports from the Executive and Pastoral Committees. Resolution 1 was moved as follows:

Synod Meeting concurs with the appointments of Derek Estill as Convenor of Lancashire Area Pastoral Committee until Autumn Synod 2022, and Ken Snaith as Lancashire Area Lay Preaching Commissioner

Resolution 1 was carried with 0 votes against.

- 10 Resolution 2 was moved as follows:
- Synod extends Rev Dr Marion Tugwood's term as Synod Pastoral Convenor until Spring Synod 2022**

Resolution 2 was carried with 1 vote against

- 11 Revd Dr Lesley Husselbee addressed Synod in relation to the work being undertaken by the Facilitation Group. Some questions from the floor were answered by Revd Elizabeth Gray-King, who confirmed that the questions being asked by the Group are intended to provide an opportunity

for all opinions and comments to be aired. The process for analysis of the responses will feedback to Synod. Resolution 3 was moved as follows:

Synod meeting welcomes this work and is looking forward to sharing in the report from the Facilitation Group. The outcome of the consultation will make an important contribution to our thinking and to the decisions which Synod will need to take about its future.

- 12 Resolution 3 was carried with 0 votes against
- 13 Revd Mike Walsh addressed Synod regarding the Renewed Beginnings programme.
- 14 Jean Mullineux, Chair of Trust, presented the Resources and Trust Committee reports, particularly addressing the proposed action to be taken by North Western Synod in response to the deficit of the Ministers' Pension Fund.
- 15 Resolution 4 was put to the meeting:

The North Western Synod recognises that the extra prudence now required in the valuation of the Ministers' Pension Fund ('MPF') has created a substantial deficit in that Fund; and acknowledges that, although the United Reformed Church Trust Ltd ('URC Trust') on behalf of the United Reformed Church has an obligation to meet the deficit on the MPF, it does not have the

resources to do this on its own and that this challenge requires a URC family solution.

Resolution 4 was passed with 0 votes against

- 16 Lawrence Heath-Moore, Mission Mentor for Central Area, sought assurance that support would be provided to ministers who might face challenges as a result of these difficulties with the Ministers' pensions. Revd John Piper confirmed that pastoral care to those affected is a high priority through this process. Giles Robinson sought clarification that these resolutions dealt only with the contributions which North Western Synod were making, as part of the whole denomination's response.

- 17 Resolution 5 was moved:

The Synod notes that as part of a collective agreement across the URC Family, the Directors of the URC (NW Province) Trust intend to agree to make payments totalling £550,000 to the URC Trust for the sole purpose of funding the pensions of ministers and church related community workers in the period to 31st December 2024, and to make a provisional offer to the URC Trust of £640,000 over the period to 31st December 2030 noting that these amounts will only be asked for if

subsequent actuarial valuations of the MPF demonstrate that these are necessary: The Synod notes that any of these funds that are ultimately not required for this purpose will be returned

18 Resolution 5 was passed with 0 votes against

19 Mike Hart, Synod Treasurer, presented the Finance Report.

20 Resolution 6 was moved:

Synod notes and adopts the recommendations contained within the Finance Report.

21 Resolution 6 was passed with 0 votes against

22 Mal Breeze (CRCW in Lancashire East Missional Partnership) proposed that the Synod Clerk sends a letter of support to the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan in light of the current situation. Revd Elizabeth Gray-King offered a pray for peace, patience, truth and justice in Taiwan.

23 The Synod Clerk, on behalf of Synod, thanked Jean Mullineux for her years of service as Chair of Trust and made a presentation of thanks to her.

24 The Synod Clerk, on behalf of Synod thanked Angela Bogg for her years of service on a number of Committees and made a presentation of thanks to her.

25 The Synod Clerk welcomed Aftab Mughal and Fozia Aftab as Racial Justice and Intercultural Advocates, and Aftab, additionally, as the North Western Synod Representative to General Assembly Mission Committee, and moved the resolution as follows:

Synod appoints Aftab Mughal and Fozia Aftab as Racial Justice and Cultural Advocates and further nominates Aftab Mughal as the North Western Synod Representative to General Assembly Mission Committee.

26 Resolution 8 was passed with 0 votes against
27 Welcomes also expressed to Lawrence Heath-Moore as Central Area Mission Mentor and Revd Dr Rob Hoch as Learning and Training Mentor; and to Professor Christopher Whitehead as Chair Elect to the Trust Committee and to begin his term of office in March 2022.

28 A video presentation on Eco issues was made, following which Revd Kate Gray addressed Synod before Resolution 7 was moved:

Synod Meeting accepts and adopts the Synod Environmental Policy

29 Resolution 7 was passed with 0 votes against
30 Julie Rafferty, Synod Safeguarding Officer, presented the Safeguarding Report.

31 The Synod Clerk presented Margery Pitcher as Locally Accredited Lay Preacher and Christopher

Whitehead as Nationally Accredited lay Preacher; Christine Holmes and Ann Gill had also achieved Locally Accredited Lay Preacher status and will be presented with their certificates on another occasion.

- 32 The Synod Clerk sent congratulations, on behalf of Synod, to Revd Anthony Burnham and Revd Margery Ayton for 60 years since Ordination and to Revd Donald Firth and Revd Brenda Willis for 40 years service since Ordination.
- 33 The Moderator thanked Wilmslow church for hosting the meeting and offering hospitality; Synod Executive for their work over the past months; Revd Elizabeth Gray-King for her work as Synod Pastor, to the Synod office staff and to the Tech Team who have enabled the meeting to take place.
- 34 Synod meeting expressed thanks to Revd Clare Downing for chairing the meeting, and for her support for North Western Synod over recent months.
- 35 Revd Kirsty Thorpe and Revd Elizabeth Gray-King led the meeting in closing worship.
- 36 The meeting was adjourned until 19th March 2022.

Minutes of Extraordinary Synod Meeting on 18th January 2022 via Zoom

- 1 Synod was invited to formally agree that Revd Clare Downing, Moderator of General Assembly, should chair this meeting, and this was passed unanimously.
- 2 Revd Clare Downing led the meeting in an opening prayer
- 3 The meeting was formally constituted.
- 4 The Synod Clerk presented the report for the proposal for a Nominations Committee, and moved the following resolution:

Resolution 1: Synod agrees to the creation of a Nominations Committee

- 5 Resolution 1 was carried with 0 votes against.
- 6 The Synod Clerk was able to advise Synod that Revd Ruth Wollaston had agreed to chair the Nominations Committee, and a further resolution was introduced and presented to Synod:

Resolution 1a: Synod appoints the Revd Ruth Wollaston as convenor of the Nominations Committee

- 7 Resolution 1a was passed with 0 votes against
- 8 Revd Martyn Coe presented the report proposing the reforming of the Mission and Discipleship

Committee by creating a Network and Steering Group.

- 9 Questions concerning the nomenclature of the Network and Steering Group were aired, and an amendment to the Resolution was proposed by Revd John Piper, seconded by Revd Mike Walsh and accepted by Revd Martyn Coe regarding the wording of the Resolution. As amended, the following resolution was presented:

Resolution 2: Synod agrees to revive the work of the Mission and Discipleship Committee by the formation of a Mission and Discipleship Network and Steering Group.

- 10 Resolution 2 was passed with 1 vote against
11 A further resolution was presented, having changed the reference to 'Chair' in the resolution to 'Convenor':

Resolution 3 Synod agrees to the appointment of Revd Richard Bradley as convenor of the Mission and Discipleship Network and Steering Group initially until Autumn Synod Meeting 2023

- 12 Resolution 3 was passed with 0 votes against
13 The Synod Clerk presented the intention that the Communications committee is boosted in membership and redoubles its efforts in streamlining communication within and across Synod.

- 14 Revd Elizabeth Gray-King presented the proposal for the appointment of a Deputy Synod Clerk to support the work of the Synod during this current period.
- 15 Some questions concerning the financial implications of staffing costs and staff structures were raised, and the Synod Treasurer confirmed that the costs would come from Synod reserves.
- 16 It was recognized that this was a fixed term appointment, reflecting the current absence of a Synod Moderator.
- 17 Revd Elizabeth Gray-King moved the resolution:
Resolution 4: Synod agrees to the appointment of a Deputy Synod Clerk for a fixed period of two years
- 18 Resolution 4 was passed with 0 votes against
- 19 The Synod Clerk presented a proposal that a review be conducted regarding the post and role of Synod Pastoral Convenor during its vacancy.
- 20 The Synod Clerk moved the resolution:
Resolution 5: Synod agrees to appoint Derek Estill to convene and chair a review of the post of Synod Pastoral Convenor, expecting to report to the Spring 2022 Synod Meeting.
- 21 Resolution 5 was passed with 0 votes against
- 22 The Synod Clerk presented the proposed appointment of a new convenor for Central Area Pastoral Committee, following the current

convenor (Revd Richard Bradley) being appointed as Convenor of the Mission and Discipleship Network and Steering Group.

- 23 Synod allowed an amendment of the resolution to read 2024 instead of 2025 (reflecting the likely date of retirement of the new convenor)
- 24 The Synod Clerk moved the resolution:

Resolution 6: Synod agrees to the appointment of Revd Jacky Embrey as Central Area Pastoral Committee Convenor until Spring Synod 2024

- 25 Resolution 6 was passed with 1 vote against
- 26 The Synod Clerk reminded Synod of the need to provide nominations for General Assembly and Assembly Executive by the end of March, and that names needed to be approved at Synod Meeting on 19th March 2022.
- 27 Synod was asked to encourage people to put themselves forward for nomination for a period of 1, 2 or 3 years.
- 28 Revd Elizabeth Gray-King closed the meeting in prayer
- 29 Synod Meeting was adjourned until 19th March 2022 at Oasis, MediaCityUK.