

Spring Synod Meeting 2022

North Western Synod at MediaCityUK Church, Salford



Our Spring Synod this year took place at Oasis MediaCityUK in Salford on Saturday 19th March 2022. We were delighted that 78 people attended in person, along with 37 joining us via Zoom for our first fully hybrid meeting. It was almost inevitable that we had one or two technical issues which our tech team dealt with valiantly, and despite those hiccups, we managed to involve those present online and in person

during the day. A Synod of our size means that wherever we choose as a venue for our Meetings, it is a long journey for some – and this new way of meeting will hopefully enable those who cannot travel long distances to be involved in the discussions, presentations and decision making. We certainly intend to continue to develop this pattern of meeting.

Revd Ruth Watson, Minister at Media City Church, and helpers welcomed everyone with bacon butties and tea or coffee, before then leading us in our opening worship, along with Revd Elizabeth Gray-King.

During the morning, we were able to agree the Enabling Agreement for Missional Partnerships. You can find this on the website ([here](#)) and you will see that it gives a framework within which Missional Partnership Steering Groups can develop and enable their own Partnership to grow and evolve.

Executive also launched a new consultation, with the assistance of the Facilitation Group, looking at the Synod's finances. Over the coming months you may very well be asked to share your own thoughts about how the financial resources held by individual churches, and by the Synod, might be best and most effectively used to further our mission and God's work in this part of the denomination.

A presentation from Zaidie Orr and David Reynolds offered an opportunity for a brief discussion of the 'Legacies of Slavery' consultation which led, over the lunch break, to an emergency resolution being presented to the Synod Meeting. The resolution was passed and asks General Assembly, meeting in July, to agree that the United Reformed Church as a denomination, should make representations to the Government about its treatment of refugees.



During the afternoon, we heard from Barbara Redmond about the World Church group (you can watch her presentation [here](#)), from Revd Mike Walsh about his Pioneer Ministry (you can read his report [here](#)) and from Revd Daleen ten Cate about the Kairos housing project for refugees in Blackburn (you can see the short video [here](#)).



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

Nearing the end our meeting, Revd Fleur Houston shared plans for a North Western Synod 50th Jubilee service at Victoria Hall, Bolton on the afternoon of Sunday 25th September 2022 (please save the date!).

We also saw the start of the 50th Jubilee relay around North Western Synod for four symbols of our faith – a spade, a bowl, a chalice and a cross. These symbols will be travelling around our four Areas. We hope that when your object arrives at your church, you can use it as a way of marking of our 50 years as a denomination, and record how your church incorporated the symbol into an activity, in the scrapbook accompanying it. We are looking forward to all the symbolic objects returning to our Autumn Synod on the 15th October 2022, and to learn of the activities which have surrounded them on their travels.



Our meeting ended with worship, led by Revd Ruth Watson and Revd Elizabeth Gray-King. Special thanks to Oasis, and to Revd Ruth Watson for hosting our meeting and making us very welcome.

The feedback which we have received since that meeting expressed almost wholehearted thanks for a central, easily accessible venue (roadworks aside) and also for the use of hybrid facilities to allow people to join on line. We shall certainly take all the comments received on board as we make arrangements for our Autumn Synod, and will let you know of the venue for that meeting as soon as we can.