

SYNOD COUNCIL MATTERS

A brief report by no means reflects the amount of work Synod Council has dealt with since we last met as Synod Together. Synod Council continues to look at Synod strategy including deployment, town centre churches, a post for Transitional Ministry, staff changes including job descriptions and the Moderator's review. I am very grateful to the amount of time and creativity given to ensure the business of the Synod is done. Other items are covered elsewhere on the agenda. However, there are three specific items to report:

1. Local Mission and Ministry Review (LMMR)

In March 2016 the Moderator set up a Review of Southern Synod's LMMR process in response to recurring comments that it was too people hungry and time consuming whilst recognising that considerable time and effort had been put into to making the process integrate MASA (Ministerial Accompanied Self Appraisal) along with the CLR (Church Life Review). The Review Team, consisting of Steve Allott, Synod LMMR Advocate, Deirdre Harrison, Synod LMMR Co-ordinator, Jim Thorneycroft, and the Moderator, has met with both Synod Ministries and Synod Council to listen to their views. Synod Council discussed the LMMR proposals on 15th September including:

- a slimmed down process with less meetings;
- creation of a small pool of specialist Review Conveners active across the whole Synod;
- creation a small pool of specialist Ministers Facilitators across the whole Synod.
- creation of a simplified Synod pro-forma for LMMR living documents. (A living document is distinct from a pastorate profile which is the document needed during a vacancy).

2. South West Sussex United Area

A farewell service was held on 21st August 2016 for the dissolution of the South West Sussex United Area. I am very grateful to Revd. Ken Lynch, SWSUA Co-Leader, who preached an eminently appropriate sermon and to Revd. George Watt, Surrey and Sussex Synod Area Leader, who also attended. The Synod Clerk represented the Synod Moderator at the service. The former URCs and LEPs of the SWSUA will form part of the Surrey and Sussex Synod Area.

3. Shared Synods Panel for the Section O Disciplinary process

At a gathering in July which included folk from East Midlands, West Midlands, Eastern, South Western, and Wales Synods, the question arose of having a Shared Synod Panel and it was felt that to be advantageous, particularly as it is sometimes difficult to find panel members who don't know the individual and situation from within a Synod. That meeting was asked to contact all Synod Moderators to see whether other Synods would like to participate. The result was that the "northerly" Moderators all commented that they were doing a number of things together and that, if they did this, they would do it as a group. The Moderators of Wessex, Southern and Thames North Synods all indicated they would like to participate.

As the current rules permit a maximum of six (and minimum of three) Synods to share, a shared panel between eight Synods is not possible. The Moderators meeting suggested a split into two 'fours', following the current groups for Mods' Cells, and have prepared the resolutions on that basis. Southern would therefore be in a group with Thames North, Eastern and East Midlands.

Resolution 1

The Southern Synod meeting in plenary session on the 8th day of October 2016, resolves as follows:

1. To join with *Eastern, East Midlands, Southern and Thames North Synods* (the Sharing Synods) in constituting a Shared Synod Panel in accordance with Paragraph B.2.2 of the Ministerial Disciplinary Process, which said Panel shall come into being when all the Sharing Synods have passed this enabling resolution and at a date to be agreed by the Sharing Synods ("the formation date"), at which date the Shared Synod Panel shall come into existence.
2. In conjunction with the other Sharing Synods and no later than the formation date, to appoint persons onto the Shared Synod Panel in compliance with Paragraph B.2.2.1 and one person (who may be a Panel member) to act as Co-ordinator in compliance with Paragraph B.2.2.3.
3. To continue to maintain its separate Synod Panel until the formation date, following which it shall cease to exist.

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