

The second Synod Together met at Emmanuel URC, Worthing
on Saturday 5 November 2011

The Opening Worship was led by Kirsty Middlemist, Synod Children's & Youth Development Worker and members of the FURY Executive who later ran the Youth event. The All Age Worship included the creation of paper chains by all, which carried prayers of thanks.

The Meeting opened with the Synod Clerk acknowledging that this was the first Synod Together since the appointment of the Revd Nicola Furley-Smith as Moderator and welcomed her to the Chair. All present responded with a rousing applause.

- 1/st/11** The Moderator thanked everyone for their support since her appointment, welcomed everyone and then read out the Constitution of the meeting.
- 2/st/11** **Synod Roll** The Synod Clerk placed the roll on the table, informing the meeting that it comprised 119 ordained ministers; 171 lay members, 22 observers and 81 retired ministers (associate members of Synod).
- 3/st/11** **Present** – The Moderator presided over a Synod Together which comprises of 66 ordained ministers; 83 lay members; 5 retired ministers, 9 observers, 2 students; 2 civic, 4 ecumenical, 1 from the local media/Press and 2 Westminster College Appeal guests.
- 4/st/11** **Apologies** were received from 14 ordained; 18 lay members; 7 retired ministers and the local Member of Parliament, Sir Peter Bottomley.
The Synod Clerk led in prayers for those who could not attend.
- 5/st/11** **Welcome to Civic and Ecumenical Guests** – The Synod Clerk presented the following to the Moderator:
Councillor Ann Barlow, the Mayor of Worthing, and her consort Mr Peter Barlow.

The Mayor welcomed Synod Together to Worthing. She spoke of the ecumenical work carried out in and around Worthing particularly to those in special need – the homeless, unemployed and the elderly and lonely. She informed the meeting that many hotels had bookings for the time when the 2012 Olympics were to take place in London and around the South East. In closing she said that as a Christian she was certain that for each of us we were where we were for a purpose and she hoped that during the meeting of Synod Together we would learn together and feel a oneness. The Mayor and her Consort stayed for most of the morning session and their attendance was greatly valued.

The Revd Julian Allbrow, The Methodist Church's Superintendent for Worthing.
The Revd Stuart Davison, The Baptist Church Area Minister.
Mr Ian Chisnall, Churches Together in England's Mission & Unity Co-ordinator for Sussex.

Father Chris Benyon, The Dean of Worthing of The Roman Catholic Church was greeted after lunch.

The Moderator welcomed the two representatives of the Westminster College Appeal the Revd John Proctor, Vice-Principal and Prof Sir Anthony Bottoms, convenor of the Governors.

- 6/st/11** **Tellers:** The following were unanimously elected to be the tellers: Revd Sheila Foreman [Convenor]; Mrs Marion Bayley; Mrs Jeanette Chamberlain; and Mr Guy Morfett.

- 7/st/11 Minutes of Synod Together held on 6 November 2010** at Christ Church URC, Petts Wood.
- 7a/st/11 **The Minutes** of the first Synod Together Meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Moderator.
- 7b/st/11 **Matters Arising:**
- 7bi/st/11 **Mapping** –
The meeting was informed that:
- a) Revision to the questions within this exercise was necessary and that additional information from the 2011 census is being awaited before proceeding to the next stage.
 - b) It was planned that Synod would continue with this exercise and consideration was being given to whether the information required could be done ‘in house’ by Synod Council.
- 7bii/st/11 **Press Officer/Advisor** – There was nothing to report.
- 7ciii/st/11 **Communications** – The Moderator reported that consideration was being given to ways of sharing within the whole Synod information about good news from the various Synod/United Areas and local churches. It had been mooted that this could be done via the Synod website.
- 8/st/11 **Synod Ministries Committee Report** – Presented by the Convenor, the Revd Jennifer Millington
- 8a/st/11 The Committee’s Convenor opened by presenting **Paper E** which reported on the work of the Committee. She particularly highlighted that the Committee, which was created at the time of the Synod restructuring in April 2010, had found gaps and malfunctions in certain areas and so various areas of policy were being reviewed by the Committee. One matter which would be highlighted throughout the meeting was the issue of deployment and the reduction in the number of ministers available for Synod. The Ministries Committee wished to stress that there was now a need for the whole Synod and particularly pastorates in vacancy to be proactive rather than reactive in scoping. On behalf of the Committee she also asked that anyone with ideas of ways of improving communications to and from the Committee should direct them via their Synod/United Area Pastoral Committee
- 8b/st/11 Report from the Local Mission and Ministry Review (**LMMR**) Planning Group - The Convenor then asked Mr John Bunker, Convenor of the LMMR Planning Group to present **Paper F**.
The presentation was made by John Bunker and the Revd Andrew Mills. The meeting was reminded that the previous scheme, **Ministerial Accompanied Self-Appraisal**, had been voluntary and some found this helpful but some did not take part. The Review Panel felt that the Pastorate[s] Profile should be a living document which should be reviewed regularly to ensure that the Church[s] continued to keep their work and mission following the aims at the start of a ministry. The Panel within Paper F had recommended agreed amendments to Pastorate[s] Profile within the first year after a minister commences ministry at a pastorate[s]; an internal review should take place after 2 years with a main review after 4 years with Synod/United Area Pastoral Committee appointing 3 people from outside the Pastorate[s].
In answer to various questions, the following comments made, by the two representatives of the Panel. :
- a) Where there was more than one church in a pastorate then the congregations, minister and Synod/United Area Pastoral Committee would agree whether this would be carried out as over the entire Pastorate or by each church individually.
 - b) The full reviews would gradually be instigated.
 - c) The situation with ecumenical partnerships was covered – particularly in the case of the majority which are URC/Methodist. It was reported that it had been agreed with the Methodist-South East District Chair that regarding URC ministers in a Methodist

Church, they would be invited to take part in the LMMR process. The minister would not do the Methodist Church's Ministerial Development Review [MDR]. A Methodist Minister in a UR Church would continue with MDR and would also engage in the LMMR review of the UR church. It was noted that all Methodist ministers do MDR as it is separate, unique and different in many ways from LMMR and other review processes.

LEP situations are strongly encouraged to adopt LMMR within the constitutions.

There were a number of people who expressed concern at the "people hungry" aspect of LMMR. Whilst this was acknowledged it was pointed out that these Reviews were for short time of up to 3 months commitment.

9b/st/11 **Resolution**

Southern Synod Ministries Committee proposes that Southern Synod adopts the process of Local Mission and Ministry Review, as agreed by General Assembly and as laid down in Paper F, presented to Synod Together in November 2011. The scheme to begin on 1st January 2012.

The Resolution was carried by a overwhelming majority.

9c/st/11

The Moderator, on behalf of Synod, thanked Mr John Bunker [Convenor], Dr Graham Campling, Mr Bruce Gill, the Revds Sue Powell and Andrew Mills [who had replaced the Revd David Morgan when he left Synod in August 2011] for their considerable work on the planning for this new Review.

10/st/11

Finance – Paper D1 and D2 - The Synod Treasurer, Mr Ian Fleming, spoke on Papers D1 & D2. Mr Fleming reported that, with the sale of another church building, Trinity Ifield, the 2011 deficit would be lower than forecast, in the order of £100,000.

10a/st/11

Resolutions - from Paper D1

10ai/st/11

Resolution

Synod Together agrees the 2012 General Purposes Budget, which was agreed by the Finance Committee.

This was carried nem com.

10aai/st/11

Resolution

Synod Together agrees to the grant to the Westminster College Appeal of £250,000 over 4 years from 2013 onwards

This was carried by a sizeable majority.

10aiii/st/11

Resolution

Synod Together notes the Manse Fund forecast.

This was carried nem com.

10aiv/st/11

Resolution from Paper D2

Synod Together accepts the audited accounts for 2010

This was carried by a sizeable majority.

11/st/11

Synod Council Report - Paper A was presented by the Revd Martyn Coe who was acknowledged by the meeting, at this his first Synod Together as Convenor of Synod Council. Martyn Coe opened by confirming that it was planned that the Mapping Exercise would continue. He also gave update information on the outstanding matters on the Outcomes of the Synod Staffing Review.

Other items which were drawn out of the Report were: *The Synod Policy for the Sale of Church Buildings Paper C*; *Turn the Tide*; *Synod Manse Policy – Vacant Manses Paper B*; and *Synod Mission Criteria*.

- 11a/st/11 In discussing *The Synod Policy for the Sale of Church Buildings - Paper C* the Moderator [who was the past Convenor of the Synod Council] did re-state that there is a need to ensure that any church which has to close is given:
1. Pastoral care and to this end that there is a service to celebrate the work and witness which has taken place from the Church.
 2. Practical steps to ensure that legal requirements under the Synod Trust and the URC Act are complied with.
 3. That following on from these points that the funds from the sale of buildings is used for mission and to this end that is why the Mission Purposes Fund is being set up.
- In answer to various questions from the floor, the Moderator stated that 10% of the net proceeds from the sale of buildings would ensure that the Synod as a whole supported churches where costs were high by taking this percentage from all sales. Where a Church was united with another denomination, it was agreed this matter needed further clarification.
- 11b/st/11 **Resolutions from Paper C**
- 11b1/st/11 **Resolution**
Synod Together adopts the policy of the sale of church buildings as laid down in Paper C. This was carried nem com
- 11b2/st/11 **Resolution**
Synod Together agrees to the creation of a Synod Mission Purposes Fund and tasks Synod Council with detailing the principles for this fund. This was carried nem com.
- 11b3/st/11 *Turn the Tide*
Recommendation: that Synod Together approves Synod Council's recommendation of the **allocation of funds, in future Budgets, for the continuation of the Turn the Tide Scheme.**
This was carried nem com.
- 11b4/st/11 *Synod Manse Policy – Vacant Manses Paper B*
Resolution
Synod Together adopts the amendment to the Manse Policy as laid down in Paper B. This was passed by a sizeable majority.
- 12/st/11 As Synod Together prepared to break for lunch Angela Cooper, Emmanuel's Church Co-ordinator welcomed all to Worthing. She pointed out matters of interest in the building which had been very recently modernised and gave directions as to how lunch will be served.
- Note: During lunch a presentations were made on the Westminster College Appeal, by the Revd John Proctor and Prof Sir Anthony Bottoms and on the Olympic Games 2012 by Martin Hayward, Synod Mission Officer.
- 13/st/11 **Introduction of new Ministers, Candidates & Students, Anniversaries, Thanks & Farewells**
The following were presented to the Moderator
Ministers who have/are moving pastorate - The Revds Samuel Cyuma moving in to Wickford in November; Dominic Grant moving in June 2012. Also mentioned were the following who have already moved: The Revds Simon Ellis to East Midlands Synod; Peter Southcombe to Wessex Synod, Peter Welsh who has moved to Australia.

New Ministers - The Revds Heather Cadoux, ordained & inducted to Epsom, Ewell & Tolworth in October; Ian Gow, inducted as Associate Minister for Gravesend, Hartley & Northfleet; Suk In Lee, now Korean Liaison South London SA; Reggie Mudenda from Zimbabwe to the South London Group Pastorates of Streatham, Stockwell Green and Brixton Hill; Andrew Lowe [Methodist] to Littlehampton; Dr Philip Luscombe [Methodist] to Ashford Centrepiece & Cade Road & Kennington; Don Hall, from New Zealand on a Pulpit Exchange with Peter Clark of Gravesend, Hartley & Northfleet and Elaine Dunn moving within Southern to Horsham with Slinfold in January 2012.

Retired/retiring Ministers - The following who have retired were mentioned - Revds Richard Alford to Birmingham; Iain Bentley to Perth; David Flynn to Devon; Ted Landon to Northamptonshire; Bob Woods to Essex; Susan Marsh from Canterbury with Littlebourne and presented to the Moderator was Alan Wharton retiring at the end of November but remaining within the Synod.

The following were who had or were about to take on *new roles* within Synod were welcomed - Revd Bruce Allinson, Leader of East Kent SA; Mrs Jennifer Chalmers, Administrator in New Year and Mrs Catriona Tait, Treasurer, both for Surrey & Sussex SA and Mrs Pam Rowden, Administrator for West Kent & East Sussex SA.

Students - Martin Ferris and Tim Reith were presented and Lisa-Maria Browning was acknowledged in her absence due to ill-health.

Ordination Anniversaries – Synod Together noted, with joy the following anniversaries: 25 years – Revds Andrew Fairchild and Peter Elliott; 30 years Revds Margaret Juhasz and May Segain; 40 years Brian Stone and 50 years Jack Beeson, who was present and received the Synod’s approbation.

Guest Speaker – The Synod Clerk introduced the Revd Craig Bowman, URC Secretary for Ministries and was welcomed by the Moderator.

Pastoral - The Synod Clerk informed Synod Together of the following death since the Synod Together last met – The Revds Kwadwo Ntiamoa Amaning; Keith Trice; Thomas Jones and Beryl Bennett. He also announced, with regret, the death of Lynn Alford, wife of Richard Alford, who died within days of their move to Birmingham. The meeting was informed of arrangements for the funeral on 18 November. Also the death of Miss Shirley Gray, who had been a long serving Church Secretary at Geddes Place URC, Bexleyheath, whose funeral was to be held on 8 November. Prayers were said for all these servants of God who covered ministers, elders and those who supported church leaders.

14/st/11 URC Guidelines on Conduct and Behaviour for Ministers of Word & Sacrament, Church Related Community Workers and Elders and the Ministerial Working Week - This presentation was made by the Revd Craig Bowman as a Power Point.

14a/st/11 The three sets of Guidelines on Conduct and Behaviour and been sent out with the papers for this meeting. Most who spoke from the floor supported the Guidelines and recognised the reasons for drawing them up. It was pointed out that one clause which appeared in the Ministers Guidelines did not appear in some of the others - “not to do anything to undermine spiritual health of another”. Craig Bowman took this comment on board and said he would look into this.

14b/st/11 *Ministerial Working Week* - These new requirements came from the European Working Directive. It was recommended that full time ministers should do between 40-48 hours a week or 160-192 hours a month. He gave various scenarios and showed how, unintentionally, pressure could be put on the minister by the congregation[s] he ministered to. Comment was made that where a minister was called to more than one church the whole Pastorate needed to work together to ensure that each Church was not asking too much of the minister for their part of his time. Ministers needed to have personal time and this should be protected. He told the meeting where to find information on both these matters on the URC website by going to what_we_do/ministers/docs/ministry_toolbox.

The Moderator thanked Craig for coming and helping all of Southern Synod to see how we could support our Ministers in their working hours and explaining the Guidelines.

15/st/11 Synod Clerk's items –

The Synod Clerk, Derrick Dzandu-Hedidor introduced, for information:

Paper G – Statement on the Human Sexuality Consultation held in September 2011 at Cambridge issued by the General Assembly Task Group

15i/st/11 Paper H – URC Zero Intolerance - Radical Welcome Campaign.

The Synod Clerk, informed the meeting, that the number of churches currently exploring ZI nationally is 463 including 55 from Southern Synod.

Regarding Companions Training, there are currently only 3 volunteers from Southern. He announced that more volunteers are needed. He urged those interested to contact Denese Chikwendu, the Campaign Co-ordinator in URC Church House.

15ii/st/11 Synod Together were asked to approve the following recommendations from Synod Council's Nomination Sub-Committee.

15iia/st/11 Appointments:

15/ia/1 Convener of Synod Council

Resolution Synod Together concurs the appointment of The Revd Martyn Coe as Convener of Synod Council for a three year period from September 2011 to September 2014.

This was passed unanimously.

15/ia/2 Leader of East Kent Synod Area

Resolution Synod Together affirms the appointment of The Revd Bruce Allinson as Leader of East Kent Synod Area for a three year period – July 2011 to July 2014.

This was passed unanimously.

15/ia/3 Convener of New Growth Fund

Resolution Synod Together affirms Mr Martin Hayward as the new Convener of New Growth Fund for a three year period – January 2012 to December 2014.

This was passed unanimously.

15/iii/st/11 Election:

Co-ordinator of LMMR – Local Mission and Ministry Review

Resolution

Synod Together elects The Revd Andrew Mills as the first Co-ordinator of Local Mission and Ministry Review for a three year period – January 2012 to December 2014.

This was passed unanimously.

15iv/st/11 Church Closures – The Synod Clerk announced that District Council had met prior to Synod Together and formally concurred, with sadness, the closure of the following churches:

Hartley URC – closed in 2005

Welling URC - closed on 10th January 2009 - South London SA

Snodland URC - closed on 28th August 2011 – WKESSA

Grove Green (LEP) - closed on 1st September 2011 - WKESSA

Synod Together noted and agreed these closures and offered thanksgiving for the life and witness of the members of these Churches in their communities over the years.

15v/st/11 Amalgamations of churches - The Synod Clerk announced that:

Bognor Regis URC closed on 18th July 2010. The members have united with St Ninian's, Pagham and the church is now called Pagham URC.

Trinity URC, Ifield Road, Crawley closed on 28th November 2010 and united with Christ Church URC, Worth Park Avenue, Crawley and is now called Crawley URC.

Synod Together noted these two amalgamations of churches and offered thanksgiving for the life and witness of members in the closed churches over the years.

- 15vi/st/11 **Spring Synod Together Day in 2012**
 The Synod Clerk said that, in preparation for General Assembly 2012 at Scarborough, all Synods were being asked at their Spring meeting to provide a forum on two matters:
 i) To have informed, balanced and safe conversations and discussions around the issue of human sexuality, following the 2010 Equality Act, ready for debate at General Assembly.
 ii) Discussion of a booklet, from national, with items which will have relevance for other significant items to be raised at General Assembly 2012.
- The Synod Clerk further explained that the Synod Officers could not see how these two substantial items could be dealt with at Synod/United Areas level, in a way that would allow people to get the general feeling of the mind of Southern Synod in its entirety. Therefore, Synod Officers propose a Synod Day in the spring. By then, the Synod/United Areas should have nominated their representatives who will attend the 2012 General Assembly and be able to attend this meeting and gain a knowledge of the general opinion of Synod.
 The Moderator reiterated that the 13 Moderators had been asked to take these matters to their Synods prior the bi-annual General Assembly in July 2012.
- 15vi/a/st/11 **Resolution**
 Synod Together agrees to an additional meeting as Synod Together Day on Saturday 10th March 2012 from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm at East Croydon URC.
The resolution was passed unanimously.
- 15vii/st/11 The Synod Clerk gave notice again that the Synod was seeking:
 Convener for Synod Church & Society Committee
 Secretary to Synod Church & Society Committee
 Safe Church Monitor (Convener) for Vulnerable Adults.
- 15viii/st/11 In closing the Synod Clerk reported that Alison West was taking on the role of PA to the Synod Development Officer for Education and Learning and would continue to be based at Chatham at the Under One Roof building.

At this point the Young People re-joined the Synod Together.

- 16/st/11 **PILOTS 75th Anniversary** - The Synod Together received a report on the celebrations for the PILOTS from Kirsty Middlemist, the Children's & Youth Development Officer and the Regional Pilots Officer. It was recognised within the presentation that many of those present had been involved in PILOTS, as members themselves or as leaders.
- 16i/st/11 **Thank you and Farewell**
 The Synod Clerk presented Emily Young to Synod Together.
 Emily had been employed by Kingston URC, over the last 10 years, but had willingly allowed her to carry out Synod Youth Work as part of the Turn the Tide scheme. Emily had been on the Synod Children & Youth Work Committee initially she was the Synod FURY rep., then as the District Youth Secretary for Wimbledon District and for the last five years had been the Synod Youth Secretary, jointly convening the Committee. Throughout this time she has been dedicated to advocating on behalf of young people and encouraging & enabling young people to take part in the councils of the church at all levels. She has also been a model of reliability in the organising of events for young people in the Synod.
 Emily's commitment to the young people in Southern Synod has gone above and beyond her roles and she is already sorely missed. She has just started a new post, with the Methodist Church in North London. She was given a gift in thanks for all that she had done for Southern Synod.

- 16ii/st/11 The Synod Clerk presented **Kirsty Middlemist, the Synod’s Children’s & Youth Development Worker.**
Kirsty Middlemist came to us after a few years working for a Methodist Circuit in north London, during which she gained an MA in Youth & Community Work. In September 2009 Kirsty was appointed by Southern Synod as Children’s & Youth Work Development Worker, to increase Synod’s support for work with children & young people. She has done this in a number of ways: By helping local churches, for example, with holiday clubs, Messy Church, Christian Unions within schools, and involving young people in leading worship. In the Regional Pilots Officer role, she has supported existing Pilots companies, encouraged new ones, and organised a very successful Pilots 75th Anniversary celebration earlier this year. She was instrumental in establishing the Synod Youth Exec, enabling young people from around the Synod to get together; to discuss issues and feed views into Synod Areas and some Synod committees; to help plan & run events for other young people in the Synod; to get involved in FURY Assembly & General Assembly; and to have a lot of fun in the process. She has co-ordinated a number of Synod-wide events for young people, including the one happening here today. She has contributed to training youth leaders, working alongside the CYDO and other Synod staff.
The Moderator also spoke of the work and commitment of Kirsty. She spoke of Kirsty’s enthusiasm and support to many of the Churches which needed guidance on how to keep the young people who were already in their church and to bring more in. It was with deep regret that Kirsty was leaving, following the Staff Review, and she was presented with a bouquet and the promise that there would be further opportunities for Synod to express their thanks for all she had done.
- 17/st/11 The Synod Clerk expressed thanks to all the members of Emmanuel URC, Worthing for their hard work and hospitality; especially to the minister David Littlejohns, Mr Ian & Mrs Jennifer Chalmers, Mrs Angela Cooper, Mrs Elspeth Bunker and other individuals who put themselves at the forefront; the Mayor of Worthing and her Consort, and all our Ecumenical partners and guests for gracing the meeting with their presence; the Revd Craig Bowman, the Guest Speaker for his presentation; Richard, Martin and Percival the IT people; the Synod Youth & Children’s Work Committee Executive and the young people for leading worship and their participation; Mrs Pam Marshall-Jones who operated the mini bookstall; the Synod Office Staff, Linda, Catherine, Simon, Guy and Glenys who made the administrative preparations; all our Committee Conveners for their Reports and various inputs; all Church representatives, Ministers and everybody for their attendance; the Moderator for her chairmanship and control of discussions, debates and comments.
And to God, without whose blessings and guidance all that was planned could not have been done so successfully.
- 18/st/11 There being no other business the Moderator led Synod Together in worship taking as her theme “Mission and Ministry - Keep it Simple” and using the reading from Luke 9 v57-62.
- 19/st/11 The Moderator declared the Synod Together closed until it meets again.
The Annual Synod Together Meeting would be held on **Saturday 10 November 2012** at a venue to be confirmed
The next meeting would be the Special Synod Together meeting on Saturday 10 March 2012 at East Croydon URC.
- Note:** Following this meeting, Mission Council heard that the documentation necessary for discussions to take place at the agreed Special Spring Synod Together would not be available until late February 2012.
The Officers were seeking a new date and this would be advised as soon as possible.