

**Synod Children's and Youth Work Committee Report**

Submitted by Graham Purdye

*The good leave an inheritance to their children's children... Proverbs 13:22a*

**Membership:** 8 active members: Graham Purdye (Chair), Reuben Watt (Acting Secretary). Thomas Hackett attends as staff responsible to this committee. Representatives from Uniformed Organisations, Crossfire & Youth Executive.

We are very grateful to Reuben for temporarily taking on the secretary's role and taking the minutes of the meetings, despite his other roles in Synod and further afield. However due to his increased involvement (see below) we really do need a new secretary so please could everyone give some thoughts as to whether they or anyone in their congregations who may feel able to take on this role which is mainly taking minutes of 5 meetings a year.

There is also still a need to get more involvement from Local Areas on the committee.

**Youth Assembly:**

Four young people from the synod attended the youth assembly on 18-20 January at Whitemoor Lakes, Staffordshire where the theme was "One Body: we are all in this together" and they spent time studying 1 Corinthians 12 as well as looking at the three themes of "One Church" linking it to LGBTQ+ with the Beacon, "One World" linking it to the environment with a talk from A Rocha and finally "One Community" with a talk from JPIT (Joint Public Issues Team). The 140 members (90 of them were under 26) of Youth Assembly thoroughly enjoyed it. Hannah Jones was Youth Moderator. After an election took place to find the new moderator-elect, Reuben Watt was honoured to find that he had been appointed to the role of Moderator-elect for the year 2019 followed by 2020 as Moderator of Youth Assembly. This does mean he will be both Synod Youth Rep and mod-elect for the first year but that will not be possible in 2020. Reuben is really looking forward to the two years and after checking, it turns out he will be one of the youngest ever URC Youth Assembly moderators. Well done Reuben!

**Crossfire Camps:**

This year's camp takes place from Friday 24th May to Monday 27th May at Stathern Lodge, Leicestershire. The cost is £30.00 before the 30th of this month, before rising to £40.00 from April. Rev. Andrew Willett is once again planning on taking some young people from his local churches by minibus. The committee has agreed to fund the minibus as there is no Synod Camp this year, but it does require a minimum of 6 young people from other churches in the Synod going. Please contact Andrew direct if you have any young people interested in going. [revwillett@googlemail.com](mailto:revwillett@googlemail.com)

There will also be a short video about Crossfire shown at Synod.

## **Synod CYDO (Children's and Youth Development Officer):**

### **Children and Youth Questionnaire –**

Tom Hackett has not been able to go through the forms which were sent out with the 'Annual Return' as not all of them have been returned yet. This year, the form was left fairly open to give churches space to explain what activities happen, what goes on as well as the age ranges. In the few that Tom has looked at, the most popular events were Junior Church, Creche and Messy Church which was in line with the findings by Church House. On the form there was space for people to join the committee and so far there have been three names put down. These will all be invited to the March meeting where Tom will report back on the findings as well as to see if there are any geographical patterns.

While briefly looking over the returns, it was noted that there was a loss of people during the transition stages (primary to secondary and secondary to university). This could be something Tom and the committee could look into. One suggestion was made to ensure that church groups start at Year 6 as opposed to Year 7 as well as keeping in regular contact when the ones that go to University, Tom is in the process of applying for 2 half day Messy Church planning. Several churches (Reigate Park, Crawley and Charlton) have all offered their venue for it. The minimum numbers needed would be 15 and the maximum would be 50. He is also waiting on a quote from "Young Minds" about mental health first aid training as there is money in the training budget to do this. There are over charities he can contact to find training for mental health such as "Rethinking mental illness"

## **Synod Youth Executive (SYE)**

Not a lot has happened since the last meeting in November apart from Youth Assembly. Over the next year, there are plans to re-launch the Synod Youth Executive (SYE) as well as running an event at Synod Together. Reuben also attended the South London Synod area meeting on the 26th January.

At Youth Assembly, a document was released to help Synods to work with their Synod Youth Rep (SYR). It is suggested that the SYR gets given a Synod email to help with safeguarding and communication. It is also recommended that regular meetings occur between the SYR and the CYDO especially at the start of year.

For 2019, Reuben will be dual-rolling Mod-elect and SYR. However, it is hoped to try to find a replacement as possible so he does not have to be SYR.

The Synod Youth Exec relaunch would probably take place in July and then have another meeting in September. Using the annual returns, it would be worth going to visit the churches that have big groups to encourage some of them to join. The encouragement of young people to join the SYE should never stop especially when there is a solid group of people in it.

### **Upcoming Meeting Dates:**

2019: 13th March

5th June

2nd October

Venue: The Temple, St Mary Cray, Kent (for March meeting – other dates to be confirmed)