

Synod Together Resolutions

Resolution 1: Minutes of the last meeting

Synod Together agrees the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2021

Resolution 2: Grant Panels Review

1. Instead of a renewal the panels are established as permanent grant making bodies within Southern Synod,
2. The Annual Church Maintenance Grants budget (£250,000) be removed from the budget of the Panel and placed in the Synod's annual budget under "Annual and Emergency Repair Grants",
3. The annual budgets for each panel be reduced to £750,000.

Resolution 3: URC Ministers Defined Benefit Pension Fund Deficit

With gratitude to God for the past, present and future service of stipendiary Ministers within the United Reformed Church, Southern Synod undertakes to provide £8.0 million in funding to the URC Ministers' Pension Funds anticipated deficit. The funds to be provided over the period 2022 to 2030.

This undertaking to provide the funding is subject to:

1. A satisfactory method is established that funds are held in a separate account under the control of the URC Trust, or such other body as agreed by all thirteen synods, and only provided to the Ministers' Pension Fund Trustees as required.
2. When the deficit has been cleared, funds no longer required will be returned to the Synod unless otherwise agreed.
3. Southern Synod's commitment will be reviewed in 2026 and at other times when the Ministers' Pension Fund valuation estimates change.
4. Annual review as part of the Synod budget process; should the continued provision of this funding jeopardise the financial integrity of Southern Synod, the Synod reserves the right to cease providing funds until such time as the position is rectified.

Resolution 4: Ministers' Pension Fund – Supplementary

Synod Together, noting the decision in principle of the General Assembly to move away from a Defined Benefits pension scheme for ministers, requests those working on a replacement scheme to ensure that the Church puts in place a suitable form of financial safety net, funded by the Church, to underpin a minimum fair pension for all ministers at retirement.

Resolution 6: Synod Accounts

Synod Together receives the Accounts for 2020.

Resolution 7: Synod Accounts and Budget

Synod Together approves the recommended Synod 2022 budget for the General Purposes Fund.

Resolution 8: Synod Environmental Charter and Strategy

Synod Together adopts the Environmental Charter and Strategy outlined in Paper H.

Resolution 9: Climate Emergency Resolution

We, the Southern Synod of the United Reformed Church, declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency.

We pledge to work with and support our congregations and government, at local and national levels, in tackling this Emergency, and we call on others to do the same.

These are our intentions:

1. We will tell the Truth

Governments and public broadcasters must communicate the facts about the Climate and Ecological Emergency, reverse inconsistent policies and communicate the urgency for far-reaching systemic change.

We will communicate with members of our congregations and support them to discover the truth about the Emergency and the changes that are needed.

2. We will take Action

Governments must enact legally binding policy measures to reduce emissions to net zero by 2025 and to reduce consumption levels.

We pledge to work towards reducing our emissions to net zero by 2025.

We will challenge policies and actions of local and national governments and their agencies, where they do not help to reduce emissions or consumption levels.

We will actively work to inspire, enable, and resource our congregations to protect and renew our life-sustaining planet.

3. We are committed to Justice

Faith communities can imagine and encourage fundamental changes in the ways people relate to one another and the world, in our values and behaviours.

We will do what is possible to help our congregations and the communities they serve to talk about how the Emergency will affect them and the changes that are needed.

We believe that all truth-telling, action and democratic work must be underpinned by a commitment to justice both within our nation and towards other nations, particularly those who are poorer.