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## Synod Council Report

Since Synod Together last met on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021, Synod Council has met on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

1. Pastoral

Synod Council recognizes the extreme stress that the last two years has placed on all areas of church life and wish to give thanks for the extraordinary amount of work achieved by many under difficult circumstances.

2. Mission Projects

The Synod Council previously reported a scheme to introduce an Officer/ Director of Mission to oversee, advise and appraise projects working alongside Martin Hayward. The Synod Council were delighted to welcome Revd Wendy Swan in this role and give thanks for her gifts and skills in this area. The papers 'Criteria for Mission Projects' and the 'Process for Mission Projects, 'were received and adopted at the meeting.

3. Ministers pension Fund

John Ellis met with Ian Hardie, it had been a fruitful meeting. It was felt that concerns raised at the last Synod Together had been heard. Consideration is also being given to the best way to support ministers who may face financial challenges after retirement.

4. Deployment

It was proposed that a paper be presented to Synod Together for discussion.

5. Review of the Synod Strategy

A process is underway to review the Synod Strategy which includes updating the Synod website.

6. Digital Strategy

Synod Council expressed their thanks to Adam Earle, Mark Rigby and John Ellis for their part in drawing this document together. The digital strategy feeds into the conversation regarding deployment. This remains a work in progress.

7. Advocate for the elderly

Revd Janet Hopewell is the Southern Synod Chaplain and Advocate for the Elderly. A review has taken place and an application submitted for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term. Synod Council approved the extension. At the same time we give thanks for Janet and for this special category ministry, which is a valuable resource in the Synod.

8. Appointments

A new Synod Area leader has been appointed for Surrey and Sussex, we welcome Revd Helen Higgin-Botham. In doing so Synod Council appreciates the huge amount of work undertaken by Synod Area Leaders and Pastoral Committee Convenors.

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9. Visit by General Assembly Moderator

It was noted that Fiona Bennett, General Assembly Moderator was coming to Southern Synod in March 2023, the weekend of March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> (Banstead). A request has been made by her PA Rachel Fitzgerald that if there are any projects or churches that might like a visit please contact [rachel.fitzgerald@urc.org.uk](mailto:rachel.fitzgerald@urc.org.uk).

The next meeting will be on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Revd Kim Plumpton Synod Council Convenor