



Eastern Synod

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30th October 2009

To Members of Synod

Dear Friend

Subject: Synod Minutes

Enclosed please find the minutes of our meeting on 17th October 2009. You have only received a paper copy if the Synod Office has no recorded e-mail address for you. If any amendments should be required, you are requested to let me have them within the next month please.

The March 2010 Synod will be on Saturday 20th March. The venue will be Water Lane URC, Bishops Stortford. Two guest speakers have already agreed to make presentations namely Revd Roberta Rominger (URC General Secretary) and the Suffragan Bishop of Lynn, the Rt Revd James Langstaff.

If you, or anyone who it is planned will be replacing you, will need crèche facilities at the Synod on 20th March 2010, it will be appreciated if this could be advised before 31st January 2010 please.

As you will know my term of office finishes on 31st December this year and Linda Harrison has been confirmed as my successor. It has been a privilege to have served in this role and I know that Linda will serve the Synod well. May I thank all of you whose church may have contributed to the gift I received at the Synod meeting. I was thrilled when I opened the enveloped as I travelled home.

The Synod Web site (www.urc-eastern.org.uk) is increasingly our main communication channel to the local churches. ***Please encourage your church members to visit it regularly and where appropriate share information within your church family.***

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mick Barnes".

Mick Barnes



THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

EASTERN SYNOD

MINUTES of the meeting of Synod held at Christ Church, Chelmsford on Saturday, 17th October 2009.

09/21 Constitution of Synod

The meeting of Synod was duly constituted by the Moderator, the Revd Paul Whittle, at 10.30 am.

09/22 Opening Worship

Revd John Cox led worship, including in Memoriam. The following had died since the last Synod and were remembered in prayer: Revd Chris Warner and Mr Alan McKenzie. It also included a reading from Acts 26, from which the message 'Go and meet the man' came, which was shaping the church's mission. John told of Christchurch's current mission and work in the area.

09/23 Attendance and Apologies for Absence

Attendance was recorded by **147** people, as follows:

	Lay Representatives	Ministers	Total
Local Church Representatives	66	42	108
Retired Ministers		5	5
Moderator, Co-opted, FURY and Ecumenical Members	6	4	10
Students	2		2
Speakers and Other Visitors	19	3	22
	93	54	147

35 apologies were received.

09/24 Ministerial Movements and Welcome to New Members

URC ministers inducted and recently ordained within the Synod Revd Andrew Royal – Framlingham and Saxmundham, Revd Mary Playford - West Suffolk Area Partnership, Revd Sohail Ejaz - Southend the Cornerstone and Southchurch Park were welcomed and greeted; as were ecumenical ministers Revd Terence Keen (Methodist) - Hatfield Heath, Revd David

Gibson (Methodist) - Waveney Valley Ecumenical Partnership and Revd Beth Bendrey (Church of England) - Great Notley LEP. One new Member, Mr Ken Hopcraft was also greeted. Forthcoming retirements were announced including Revd Victor Ridgewell – Southend, Crowstone St George’s who had recently been visited by the Moderator following his stroke in the summer.

09/25 Apologies for Absence and other Notices

The Synod Clerk (Mick Barnes) had received some apologies for absence already and reminded Synod members to complete their record of attendance slips, and to collect their voting cards.

The Synod Clerk gave details of the arrangements for the workshops and for lunch drawing attention to the plans of the church building.

09/26 Appointment of Tellers

Mr Simon Mynott was appointed as co-ordinator, and Arthur Thomas, Linda Harrison and Peter West were appointed as Tellers for the meeting.

09/27 Minutes of Synod, 7th March 2009 were accepted, with no matters arising.

09/28 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

09/29 Appointments (see paper A)

The Synod Clerk presented Paper A containing details of new Synod appointments.

Resolution 1: was passed

Four further additions were proposed to Paper A under Resolution 2;

- Dr Richard Jurd needed to be co-opted as a Synod Member, whilst serving as Pastoral Advocate in the Central Suffolk Area Partnership
- Revd Bill Mahood (retired) needed to be co-opted as a Synod Member, whilst serving as Convener of the Synod Pastoral Committee
- Mr Barry Capon was willing to serve for a further year on the Synod Resources Committee, filling one Vacancy
- Mr Ron Wade’s 1st term as a co-opted Synod Member had ended and needed to be extended to the end of 2010.

Resolution 2: was passed

The Clerk explained that the Executive Committee had proposed the name of Mr Clifford Patten as a Synod Representative to Mission Council.

Resolution 3: was passed.

Clifford Patten was greeted by the Moderator as was Linda Harrison, the new Synod Clerk from January 2010.

09/30 Closure of Houghton Chapel (Paper B)

Mick Barnes reported that negotiations with the Anglicans continue. There were no comments or questions. The Resolution was carried.

Resolution: Eastern Synod gives thanks to God for the past work at Houghton Chapel, concurs with the resolution of the Executive Committee to close, and instructs the Clerk to report this to the General Assembly.

09/31 Executive Committee Report (Paper C)

Mick Barnes asked that comments for the Synod Review be sent to him by the beginning of December. He also reminded Synod that names can be put forward as potential representatives from Synod to General Assembly, at Loughborough University 2010 by 15th January 2010

The Clerk outlined to Synod the new system for nominations for the Moderator of General Assembly 2012 -2014. Two people, one an ordained minister and one lay person will jointly serve for this period. Linda Harrison will be writing to the Area Partnership Pastoral Advocates shortly giving more detail on timescales.

Revd Prof David Thompson, commented on District Records stating that advice will shortly be coming to all Synods that Pastoral Committee Records should never be deposited outside of Synods.

Mick Barnes gave his thanks for the privilege of serving the Synod as Clerk, and had every confidence in his successor.

09/32 Mission Committee Report (Paper F)

John Hardaker spoke to his report, with information on the 'Evangelism Matters' day planned for July 10th 2010 – details to follow.

Chris Wright (Church in Society) drew attention to item 2, and informed the meeting that Right Revd James Langstaff would speak at the next Synod. An update on Church in Society matters was on the chairs. Encouragement was given to keep 'Standing Up' for issues of justice etc.

Revd Peter Ball (Training and Development Officer) spoke regarding the Rural Roadshows (item 6) to be held in all 4 counties over two years. Members were encouraged that all rural churches in each county should support their local Roadshow, and issues needing to be addressed should be sent to Peter in good time. There were no comments or questions.

09/33 Pastoral Committee Report (Paper E)

Revd Bill Mahood, new Convener, spoke thanking Revd John Proctor, for his work as the previous Convener.

Resolution 1: Synod agreed that Fowlmere Church may withdraw from the Linked Pastorate of Bassingbourn, Great Chishill, Fowlmere, Melbourn and Buntingford with effect from 17th October, 2009.

Synod noted that the Pastoral Committee, acting on behalf of Synod, appoints Carole Pearl as Non-Stipendiary Minister of Fowlmere Church for a period of 4 years from 17th October 2009.

Resolution 2: Synod approved the union of Abbey Lane, Saffron Waldon and Newport URCs on the terms set out in the paper.

Resolution 3: Synod sustains the training of those named below and commended them to the church for introduction to service in its ministries.

The Moderator introduced and greeted Matthew Stone and James Taylor. Bill emphasised his desire to be contacted in the event of any pastoral concerns. There were no comments or questions.

09/34 Resources Committee Report (Paper D)

Ron Wade spoke to his report. There were no questions or comments. The Report and Financial Statements for the period ended 31st March 2009 had been sent out in a separate pink booklet. Resolution 1 was presented with a minor amendment as below.

Resolution 1: Synod received the Trustees Report and adopted the Accounts for the three months ended 31st March 2009.

Resolution 2: Synod supported the 2010 budget recommendations for approval by the Eastern Provincial Synod Trustees.

09/35 The Synod then dispersed into two Workshop sessions each of one hour either side of lunch. One Workshop – Labyrinth Prayer – had to be cancelled as Revd Neil Thorogood was unwell and thus unable to attend.

The eight Workshops were:-

- 1) Messy Church – Revd Ian Wales and Margaret Smith
- 2) Godly Play – Revd Ruth Whitehead
- 3) Café Church – Mike McCullagh and Jo MacPherson
- 4) Reaching the Lost Sheep – Revd Don Nicholls
- 5) Vision4Life Prayer Year – Revd Ian Fosten
- 6) Resources for Prayer with GEAR – Revd Jon and Ruth Sermon
- 7) Working with Small Numbers of Children and Young People – Henry Playle and Moira Kleissner
- 8) Engaging with Families – Gillian Thomson

Members were invited to fill in a Feedback Sheet. Early results from 60 members indicate that 78% are happy to have Workshops again at a future Synod Meeting.

09/36 Uncompleted Business

The Moderator talked about the parallel programmes which would in future link Local Ministry and Mission Reviews (former District Visitations) with Ministerial Reviews (self appraisals). A framework for these exists but requires further planning at Synod level. There is a need to recruit 'friends' or 'partners' to the churches and ministers, willing to be involved in this process, either for church or ministerial review or both – any body, any age, minister or lay, can offer to help. Please contact the Moderator at the Synod Office, or contact your Area Partnership Pastoral Advocate. Training will be offered.

The Moderator then paid tribute to Mick Barnes for the immense effort and energy he had put into the post of Synod Clerk for six years; his dedicated approach to the job, and to his willingness also to serve the Church at national level. He was given a token of thanks and appreciation, and his wife, Heather, was given a bouquet of flowers.

09/37 Closing Worship

Closing Worship including Communion was led by the Revd Paul Whittle, Moderator.

09/38 Next Meeting

Saturday, 20th March 2010. The venue is Water Lane URC, Bishops Stortford.