

United Reformed Church

Wessex Synod

World Church Group

Minutes of the meeting to be held at London Street United Reformed Church, Basingstoke on Thursday, 28th January at 2.00pm

Present: Martin Waldron (Convener), Derek Lindfield (Secretary) Helen Everad, Rob Weston and David Webb.

Apologies: Adrian Bulley (Moderator), Peter Pay (Synod Clerk) and Stephen Smith.

The meeting was given a brief update on Stephen's progress following his recent operation and asked that the love and greetings of those present should be given to him.

WC 09.06 The minutes of the meeting held at Hythe URC on Saturday, 26th September 2009 were approved.

Matters arising

WC 08.04 Register of Churches in Wessex with links to churches overseas
Derek reported that he had sent out a revised list recently. Rob noted that a number of churches had links with Uganda and that the URC International Office is presently investigating the possibility of the misappropriation of funds which have been sent to that country. Rob reported that he had given a copy of the list to Jane Rowell, the new International Secretary.

WC 08.08 Council for World Mission. Derek reported that Steve Cox, the Secretary for Communication at CWM has agreed to speak at the March Synod. Peter Pay has written to him giving details of what is being asked of him.

WC 08.07 2012 Olympics. Derek stated that there was nothing to report.

WC09.03 Prayer for overseas churches and situations. Martin expressed the view that the prayer list on the Synod e-newsletter was probably long enough and that adding WCG prayer concerns to it might overload it. It was agreed, however, that a one sentence concern should be added each month.
Action: Martin to be responsible for this.

WC.08.02 Links with the Eglise Reformee de France (Nord Normandie).
Helen reported that she had attended the recent Synod in Lisle and had managed to work on planning the programme for Le Weekend in Luneray on April 16th to 18th. The theme is to be 'My Prayer Life' – 'La Priere dans ma vie'. It was agreed that this information now needs to go out as soon as possible. Helen agreed to contact Carol Rogers so that the information can

be put in two Synod e-newsletters. Deborah will be asked by Helen to send out a colour brochure containing information with the Synod mailing for the Southampton meeting. Helen will also contact those people who have expressed interest who live outside the Synod area. It was noted that the new Moderator is Olivier Fihal.

Action: Helen to contact Carol Rogers, Deborah Walker and interested people outside the Synod area.

WC 08.03 Links with the Lusaka Presbytery of the United Church of Zambia. Rob reported that the second stage of the link takes place in Zambia from the 6th to the 28th August 2010. The group going has been selected and comprises 8 young people and 3 leaders - 2 YRC and 1 Methodist. The URC people are Laura Peirce and Phil Ray and Nicola Briggs is the Methodist. Rob mentioned that he had attended the Global Partnership Conference at the Windermere Centre and was heartened to learn that it was not only him who had experienced communication problems with partners in Africa.

Jane Rowell has been made aware of our link with the UCZ and the Eglise.

Jane had told Rob that in the current national World Church Budget 6 return flights for each Synod as included. The meeting welcomed this and it was suggested that this could help with the cost of the eleven flights to Zambia. Rob has agreed to act as the group's UK contact.

Two training weekends have been organised for the participants. February 26th, 27th and 28th at Kintbury and the 11th to the 13th June venue to be decided.

WC 08.06 Website. Martin reported that he had been unable to do very much on the website because of problems with the person who is responsible for it. He expressed his disappointment and frustration about not being able to do what he wanted to do with the site. In spite of clear requests nothing has improved and so it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Synod Clerk with a copy to the Moderator from the Convener and Secretary on behalf of the World Church Group expressing concern about the management of the website.

Action: Martin to draft the letter and Derek and he to sign it.

WC08.11 Zimbabwe. Derek reported that Johnston Simpson had been responsible for bringing over another consignment of sculptures from Zimbabwe. The Marlow Church in holding a special sales weekend in February.

The Group is very impressed with the selfless service of Johnston and thought that it would be a good idea to explore the possibility of him being given an honour in either the Queen's New Year or Birthday List. Derek was asked to write to the Office of the Prime Minister about this.

Action: Derek to write to the Prime Minister's Office about a possible honour for Johnston.

WC09.04 Synod Report. Martin tabled his report and it was agreed that it was an excellent synopsis of the work of the Group. With minor amendments it was agreed.

WC09.05 Display Boards. It was agreed that we should now proceed to purchase full size boards which could be used creatively in the Synod. Martin will pursue this.

Action: Martin to arrange for the purchase of display boards.

Any other business

9.6 Volunteer possibilities at the CWM House in Amsterdam. It was agreed that Rob will alert the Synod Youth and Children's Committee to volunteering opportunities in Amsterdam.

9.7 Synod Day 2011 to be held at the home of Lord and Lady McAlpine near Henley. It was agreed that Helen be asked to explore the possibility of holding the 2011 Le Weekend over the same weekend.

9.8 There was discussion about an event that could excite people on world church issues. A possible joint day along the lines of the one held in Calais a few years was suggested and it was agreed that Derek should speak to the Convener of the Southern Synod World Church Group to see if this was a possibility.

Date of the next meeting: Thursday, 10th June 2010 at 2.00 pm and London Street URC, Basingstoke.

End of business:

There being no other business the meeting concluded with those present saying the Grace with and to each other.