

The Broadsheet

Broadway URC

December 23/January 24



May the God who came to us as a baby, bless you with peace
and hope

To know Jesus better and to make Him better known

180th Celebration Weekend



The church was open on Saturday 18th November to view the exhibition of church history and in the hall were displays from the groups who use the halls. On Sunday many former members and friends joined the uplifting celebration service led by our last minister the Rev Richard Becher. This was followed by the dedication of the bird bath by Kathryn Louch. Then almost 60 sat down to an excellent lunch.



SYNOD MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS SYNOD OF THE URC HELD ON 13TH/14TH OCT 2023

The Synod met at the Holiday Inn at Birmingham Airport on Friday 13th October 23, your representatives were Kathryn Louch, Joanne Griffin and Mark Pickering. We all met together for Dinner and then afterwards the Synod began with Worship by the Moderator, Steve Faber and was followed by a Presentation on the Synod Review. The Synod Meeting in March commissioned this Review of the Synod structure, operation and governance.

The Team felt that the following issues were noted:

- a) 'Synod' is felt to be too remote from church life.
- b) Synod processes are felt to be too cumbersome, bureaucratic and slow.
- c) The Synod has 'too much money' and is too reluctant to support local churches.
- d) Congregations are struggling to be affective in growing the church.
- e) There is a lack of engagement from local churches in developing the work and policy of the Synod.
- f) Synod officers are aware of difficulty in communicating issues around legislative compliance.
- g) The attendance at worship has not recovered since Covid lockdown.
- h) The available level of ordained ministry and lay leadership is insufficient.
- i) Too many Synod posts remain unfilled.
- j) There is a lack of engagement with synod training. (safeguarding and other areas).
- k) There are differences of understanding and perception About what 'Synod' can and should deliver, and what can the 'Synod' expect from local churches.

The Review Team had sent out a questionnaire to all the Churches and they had 20 responses plus a series of meeting with Synod staff and Officers.

The Review Team summarized the outcome of their findings as:

The key messages that we heard were around:

Communication;

Relationship building,

The perceived need for 'bureaucracy' (which is often driven by external Regulators)

Understanding the roles of individuals and who does what.

The need for an understandable synod strategy.

The need for greater consistency and joined up thinking.

The need to demonstrate the kind of behaviours that we want to see.

Next Steps: The Review offer the following recommendations:

- 1) The current staff vacancies should be recruited as soon as possible.
- 2) A systemic approach to information sharing should be developed – to ensure the same basic understanding for all, eg: on ecclesiology, synod strategy and structure.
- 3) Senior synod staff will look at initiating regular ‘team meetings’ so that staff can exchange information, ideas, and any areas of concern.
- 4) We will need to look at the demands for information placed upon churches to see if they can be streamlined or eliminated.

Synod resolved to receive the interim report of the Review Team and endorses the work carried out so far.

On Saturday morning after opening worship the Synod divided into different Mission Streams:

Intergenerational church. Understanding and including gender diversity. Family Outreach ministry. Developing Pioneer ministry. Including others through Racial Justice. Sensory Processing and Communication differences; Understanding and including neurodiversity. Stepwise – making new leaders.

These went on until lunchtime and we all attended different streams.

After lunch there was a series of ‘surgeries’ and both Joanne and I attended the: Supporting eldership – general questions.

At 3pm there was ‘Synod Lite’ when thanks were expressed to those who were retiring:

Stuart Scott the Training Officer and Nick Stanyon the Synod Evangelist. The Jubilee Ministers and those who had died since the March Synod were remembered.

There was a ‘Lundie Memorial Award’ for a young man from Brockworth URC who had raised enough money from a Tabletop sale to take his Pilots Group to the Cotswold Farm Park.

There was a presentation on the URC Visual Identity from General Assembly 2023.

This was followed by the closing worship and we departed for home.

The following Thursday the remainder of the Synod Business was conducted by Zoom at which I was present as your representative.

Apart from all the Reports and the Presentation by the Synod Treasurer the meeting was mainly taken up by the Moderator who presented the Synod Staffing Proposal. The proposals are to replace the Training Officer post with a Training Officer/Pastoral Consultant and to have a new post of a Mission Development Officer employed full-time and a Communications Officer (10 hrs/week). He also brought forward the following: Temporary Consultant to roll out 'Leading Your Church into Growth', it was proposed this would be Revd Ashley Evans, the Yorkshire Synod Evangelist, who would be seconded to work in the West Midlands part-time for about 15 months.

Synod agreed to the establishment of all these posts.

Anyone wanting any further information should contact me direct and I will happily give what answers I can.

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Recent Events

Church in Society

The special Collection for flooding relief in Libya raised £123.91 which has been forwarded to the British Red Cross.

The Christmas Collection this year is for the Evesham Pastors. These are a local Christian group of men and women who function as a calming and supportive group on the streets of Evesham on weekend nights when many youngsters are out and about on the streets.

There are pamphlets with more details about the Pastors' work available at Church.

Donations may be received before or after the church services on 10th, 17th and 24th December.

Mini Fete 30th September

Congratulations to Wyn for organising this which raised £528 and thanks to everyone who assisted or donated.

A Little Walk in the Garden with God

Broadway URC

As you make this little journey think about the times you have lived through and experienced, easy, difficult, bad, good. Think of encounters and choices. What might God be saying to you in the journey so far? What might God be inviting you to lay down and let go of as you journey together?

Sit and rest for a while. In the centre of all creation, we find the good purposes of God. The grace that flows from God's journey to find us and bring us to his Jesus Christ. We find the Holy Spirit resting and waiting to enliven us.

What might be a blessing for you here today? What is God's gift as you take time to rest for a while?

Now retrace your path without rushing. You are returning from this still moment to the life of this day. You have returned to tasks and obligations, opportunities and choices, encounters and relationships. But you have had this time to be still and to go more slowly.

What gifts has God given to you to take with you into this day?

Give thanks.

Services for December

Sunday services start at 10.30 and everyone is invited to stay for refreshments in the hall after the service.

December	
3 rd	Worship group
10 th	Rev David Lawrence
17 th	3pm Carol Service Kathryn Louch
24 th	Kathryn Louch
31 st	Methodists

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Please send articles for the next Broadsheet by 16th January
to Christine at wta@cawyld.co.uk