

United Reformed Church

Wessex Synod

World Church Group

**Minutes of the meeting held at London Street URC, Basingstoke on Thursday, 18th
June 2009**

Present: Martin Waldron (Convenor), Derek Lindfield (Secretary), Peter Pay (Synod Clerk), Rob Weston and Stephen Smith.

Apologies: Helen Everard and David Webb.

WC09.03 Minutes of the last meeting held at London Street URFDC, Basingstoke on Thursday, 15th January 2009 were approved.

WC08.04 Register of Churches in Wessex with overseas links. Derek reported that there had been a reasonable response to the form included with Synod papers at the last Synod meeting. He suspected that there may be a few outstanding responses still to come and so it was agreed that he would put a reminder in the next Synod e-newsletter.
Action: Derek to ask Carol Rogers to put a notice about this in the next e-newsletter.

WC08.06 Website. It was agreed that there should be an attempt to put photographs and reports on the website as soon as possible after an event. Rob agreed to put information about the Zambia exchange on the website.
Action: Rob to put information about the Zambia exchange on the website as soon as possible.

WC08.07 2012 Olympics. Peter kindly agreed to e-mail all Synod Clerks to ask if there were any plans being made for the Olympics in the synods.

Derek reported that he had drawn a blank from URC Church House. He expressed concern that he had left a message with the Mission Secretary's PA and had been assured that there would be a response, but no response came. He had had to telephone again. The response from the PA was that she had assumed that he had been contacted. She suggested that the non-response might mean that nothing had been planned. Derek felt that this was poor. It was agreed that we ought to push for some URC action to welcome people – particularly those from within our Reformed family – to the London Olympics. Peter's e-mail would be a first step in this direction.

It was agreed that Derek should invite representatives of churches that might be affected by the Olympics to meet the WCG over lunch at the November Synod.
Action: Peter to e-mail all Synod clerks regarding plans being made for the 2012 Olympics. Derek will invite representatives of churches in the Weymouth/Dorchester area to meet the WCG at the November Synod.

WC08.02 Links with the Eglise Reformee de France (Nord Normandie). Particular thanks was expressed to Helen for all her hard work in ensuring that Le Weekend was resounding success. Carole Lindfield was also thanked for her report of the weekend. It was agreed that it may be possible for this to be included in the next batch of Synod papers and Derek would provide Peter with a copy.

Martin reported that Helen has been asked to perform a chaplaincy role at the next Synod meeting in France and the group felt that this was really good.

The Group agreed that it is so important to continue to develop and maintain a fraternal link with our French brothers and sister and that perhaps local churches might be encouraged to link with churches in Normandy.

Le Weekend next year is in Luneray from the 16 to the 19th April. Helen is asked to write to Jan Albert asking what the theme for Le Weekend is. It was stressed that we should emphasize that the weekend is for everyone. In accordance with Eglise tradition it was agreed that the French should be asked to produce a communiqué at the end of the next Le Weekend.

The question of Camberley covering its costs was raised. Helen is asked to let us know if they were.

Action: Helen to write to Jan Albert to find out what the theme for next year's Le Weekend is, and also to let us know if Camberley covered all its costs.

WC08.03 Links with the Lusaka presbytery of the United Church of Zambia. Rob reported that unfortunately the French connection with the exchange will not be as great as had been hoped. The French will come over to England and camp for four days in the New Forest (10th to the 14th August). There is now a problem over the third leg of the programme in France and this may not now happen as it may not be possible for the French to host it.

The long term nature of the link was discussed and Rob suggested that we should see where it leads. Other groups – apart from young people – could be involved.

The programme for this year is now established. The two URC Synod youth workers and the Methodist youth worker are involved. There is to be an orientation weekend on the 3rd to the 5th July for the English participants. Rob said that he was happy about how things are working out. He will liaise with the Synod office to sort out how cash payments might be made. There will be the exchange of church leaders from the 10th to the 24th September with the Zambians coming here to England. Preaching arrangements have been made. It was suggested that there should be a short presentation by the young people (about 15 minutes) at the November Synod.

Action: Rob to liaise with the Synod office over financial arrangements.

WC08.08 Council for World Mission.

It was reported that Stephen and Derek had arranged to meet with Steve Cox at Ipalo House about raising the profile of CWM in Wessex but due to a diary error Steve was not present. His place was ably taken by Kenwyn Price.

The following suggestions were made:

- There should be a speaker from CWM at the March Synod (and a display of CWM information). This was agreed and Peter said that he would report this agreement to the relevant Synod planning group.
- All churches should be asked to allocate one Sunday a year as CWM Sunday and CWM would produce worship material for this.
- A list of recommended speakers will be made available by CWM.
- Every church should be provided with a copy of Inside Out after the March Synod. (It was noted with thanks that all churches had already received a copy.)
- Relevant and important articles from Inside Out might go into the Synod e-newsletter.
- The articles might be used for discussion groups.

Action: Peter to inform Synod that CWM will provide a keynote speaker for the March 2010 Synod meeting. Stephen to liaise with CWM over this and the other actions agreed.

WC08.11 Zimbabwe.

Derek reported on the continuing good work of Johnston Simpson, an elder at St Andrew's URC, Walton-on-Thames. To date he has raised over £50,000 for the struggling artists at Silveira House. It was suggested that there might be a link from our website to Johnston's e-mail address. Martin will ask Johnston to write a piece for our website.

Action: Martin to contact Johnston and ask him to write an article for inclusion on our website.

WC09.03 Prayer for overseas churches and situations. It was agreed that Martin will look into putting ideas on both our website and the Synod newsletter.
Action: Martin to explore the above.

WC09.04 Synod Review. It was agreed that Martin will circulate a document relating to this to all members of the group and asked that all of us should be prepared to contribute to the issues raised.
Action: Martin to prepare and circulate relevant document.

WC09.5 Road Shows/Display Boards.
This issue is to be discussed at our next meeting in the light of the Zambia Exchange/CWM and Le Weekend. Agreed that we should look into the possibility of purchasing notice boards.
Action: Martin to liaise with Derek and bring to the next meeting information relating to the purchase of notice boards.

Date of the next meeting: Saturday, 26th September 2009 at 10.00 am at Avenue St Andrew's URC, Southampton.