

# NEWS FROM SYNOD

Reporting on the Northern Synod meeting at St John's Wideopen—15th October 2011

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Opening Worship at Synod was a series of pictures from Holy Island and included telling the story of the island read by Roy Boulton and assisted by Rosie Reeve on the piano. It was very moving and inspirational.



## Dying to Live Vision 2020

Sue Bush and Jean Degenhardt introduced the 'Dying to Live' plan for Vision 2020. The moderator emphasized that churches do not need to do all ten statements but relate to whatever is relevant to them. People were then encouraged to visit the 'Market Place' in the main hall or listen to a discussion on this matter with ME members Sue and Jean. The 'Market Place' appeared to be busy and lively and a good discussion took place in the church with lots of questions. However it was also felt that perhaps the resolution on this should be deferred until the March Synod so that further work could be done on it.

**More than Gold**—Phil Glover from 'More than Gold' challenged all those present to get involved with this exciting work and brought members up to date on what was happening in the region for next year's Olympics. Many churches are already getting involved in the community projects. It is estimated that over 1,000 young Christians will come into this country to work alongside churches. 21-23rd July 2012 there will be 60 young people coming to Whitley Bay and they will need accommodation and transport although they will pay for this.

29th July—2nd August—Big celebration on the quayside. An opportunity for everyone to get

Involved.

It could be ecumenical—see what you can do to make your church come Alive.

## Welcomes

Andy Lie was inducted as our Ecumenical Officer of the Synod and welcomed by other Ecumenical Officers. He spoke about how he was slowly getting around the Synod and getting to know a lot of people. Peter Rand presented Andy with a book and his wife with some flowers.

People in the News—the Synod Clerk gave news of people moving in and out of the synod. The Moderator welcomed Andy Lie, Ecumenical Officer and Revd Rachel Poolman, Warden at St Cuthbert's, Holy Island.

Also welcomed were ministers who have either moved into the synod or taken on new responsibilities: Ray Anglesea, Ann Shepherdson, Philip Gray, Andrew Robinson, Linda Coulthard and Peter Wright.

Returning to live in our synod are Kay Alberg and Linda Granville.

Ministers and others who have moved on or retired: John Durell, Stan May, Janet Flawn, Barry Hutchinson, Bert Keller, Jo Merrygold and John Pugh.

Unfortunately we had two church closures—St Mark's, High Howdon and Linthorpe.

We also thought about and remembered those who have not been well—Kate Baxter, Catey Morrison, Alan Williamson, Kath Stocks and Ann Honey.

Peter Heckels spoke to the paper on Deployment informing synod that this had been produced with a lot of soul-searching, planning and prayer. It is not a situation that we are happy with or that will please everybody but we have to be realistic about what ministers we will have to serve our synod by 2015 and we will need the prayers of synod to take this forward.

A day on **Receptive Ecumenism** is to be held at St James's Church to talk through the research work that has been going on including the surveys, mappings and analysis on 15th December. Further details available from Synod Office.

**Westminster College** Susan Durber and

Brian Long gave an excellent presentation on the refurbishment of the college, asking for the help of synod. Alastair Pratt and Alison Mills supported the project, Alastair having had long a long and memorable association with the college. Although Westminster is a long way from the north east all were in favour of supporting such a worthwhile cause. It was agreed that the Synod would give £150,000 to the Appeal payable over 5 years.



**Commitment for Life** Chris Eddowes, Advocate for Commitment for Life gave an update on what was happening and informed synod that URC were the largest givers to this project. She emphasized that it does not matter how much you give—it all counts. It can make such a difference to so many people in so many countries. Next year is to be a celebration for C4L and if anyone would like Chris to take a service in their church she would be happy to do so. She would also like to hear from churches about what they are doing for Commitment for Life. Her email is [chris.richard.eddowes@ntlworld.com](mailto:chris.richard.eddowes@ntlworld.com)



James Breslin thanked synod for the bookshelves which had been requested by West End Refugee Centre but he was now seeking foreign language books (particularly French) if anyone had any to spare. Preferably up-to-date.



The children had continued in their workshops on the synod theme of 'Telling the story' and at the close of synod they

gave a really pleasing dance routine upon which they had obviously worked hard. It was appreciated by all.

**Book of Reports** –The General Assembly Secretary had issued a paper on 'The Book of Reports' for Assembly, looking at costs and how this could be cut down. Out of the 4 options synod voted for Option 4

"As in 2010, a hard copy of the Book of Reports is sent to all Assembly members with the contents posted on the URC website. A CD ROM is sent to all churches."

**Child Friendly Award**

The Moderator presented St Columba's Church, North Shields with the Child Friendly Award.



**A visit to Mozambique** John, Hillian and Meg gave a wonderful presentation on their recent visit to Mozambique which showed how many of the people live and work. John asked the questions—Is there more we can do to help our friendship with Mozambique develop? He also mentioned it is 125 years since the Swiss Mission Project was formed.



Our moderator is going next year and hopefully others might like to go with her.