

Pastoral Committee Report

October 2023

The Pastoral Committee recognizes the faithful service that goes on throughout the Synod in churches large and small, rural and urban, in United Reformed Churches and Local Ecumenical Partnerships, in churches with a reinvigorated sense of purpose and those feeling fragile. Together we acknowledge that the church is the body of our Christ and as we strive to express God's love, we are reminded to collectively take time to worship, to pray and to also receive God's love.

Church Changes

Churches that have closed since the last Synod Meeting are recorded in the Synod Executive report. We give thanks for these churches and the many lives they have enriched over the years.

We welcome the Bristol Korean Church, which was formally accepted as a URC church at General Assembly, following the recommendation of the South Western Synod.

Ministerial Movements

We welcome those who have moved into the Synod

Revd Jessica Aschroft-Townsley - moved into the Synod from the USA in June and commenced at Dawlish and Kingsteignton on a Certificate of Limited Service with an associated Synod role.

Mrs Claire Partridge - commenced as Synod Safeguarding Officer in August 2023

Revd Yohan Song - commenced at Bristol Korean Church

The new Methodist ministers

Revd Stephen Caddick - commenced at Braunton, Christ Church in September 2023

Revd Sharon Lovelock - commenced at Frampton Cotterell in September 2023

The new Baptist ministers

Revd Andy Pearce - commenced at Locking Castle in April 2023

And the new Local Church Leaders

Revd David Jewell - commenced at Wrington, Winscombe and Nailsea in July 2023

We wish every blessing for those moving out of this Synod

Revd Dr John Burgess (Rtd) - moved to West Midlands Synod July 2023

Revd Susan Durber (Rtd) - moved to National Synod of Wales March 2023

Revd Rowena Francis (Rtd) - moved to West Midlands Synod July 2023

Revd Peter Henderson (Rtd) - moved to Eastern Synod June 2023

Revd Vivien Henderson (Rtd) - moved to Eastern Synod June 2023

Revd Ruth Whitehead - moved to National Synod of Wales March 2023

And we note a change within the Synod

Revd Colin Halstead - left role of Local Church Leader at Bedminster in May 2023

As we journey through this extended period of Moderator vacancy, we are aware of the extra pressures this places on churches and individuals; we encourage your prayers and grace as we all strive in our varied ways to serve well.