

Mission Committee, 7 – 8 February 2019

Feedback for Synods

1. **Legacies of Slavery:** Mission Committee received a report on how to respond to CWM's work on Legacies of Slavery, which focused on four areas: apology, reparation, sacred conversation on all forms of exceptionalism, and the economic motive. The committee agreed to establish a small working group to take this work forward, with a view to working with local churches and synods, and to bringing recommendations to the Assembly in 2020. The group was asked to bring a progress report to the Mission Committee meeting in June 2019.
2. **New International Financial and Economic Architecture:** Mission Committee received a report on the NIFEA following a series of consultations organised by the Council for World Mission. It commended a proposed Conference on Debt being organised by the Mission Team at Church House to be held in December 2019. It also encouraged them to oversee the production and collation of learning resources relating to a New Economy of Life to be used contextually across the URC.
3. **Taiwan Ecumenical Forum:** Mission Committee received a report from John Proctor, who had attended a meeting of the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum in November 2018. This Forum is a structured consultation with international partners to provide the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan with advice and support as it sustains its witness around a number of difficult public and justice issues. The forum highlighted four broad justice issues: indigenous land rights, the need for truth and reconciliation work, the need for women's perspectives and gender justice, and Taiwan's concern to exercise its own democratic choices in the face of increasing pressure from China. The committee also heard how much the PCT values the partnership with the URC.
4. **Environmental Task Group and Environmental Policy 2016:** Mission Committee agreed to recommend to Mission Council that the remit for the Environmental Task Group which was established by General Assembly in 2016 be revised in the light of the Task Group's work in the past two years. The Mission Committee also agreed to recommend to Mission Council that the 2016 Environmental Policy, as adopted by General Assembly, be updated to reflect the recognition that in light of the most recent science around climate change, our ambitions to reduce carbon emissions must be accelerated.
5. The Mission Committee approved a proposal to develop a **carbon offsetting project** for the URC's Global Partnership programme, to include a feasibility study and a trial implementation of a carbon offsetting programme.
6. **Combating Islamophobia and Antisemitism:** Mission Committee discussed a report on Combating Islamophobia and Antisemitism and agreed to encourage the development of some educational work around this. It also commended the work being done by CTBI with the Council of Christians and Jews and the Christian Muslim Forum on Antisemitism and Islamophobia.
7. **Brexit:** The Mission Committee discussed a report on Responding to Brexit and highlighted various ways in which the Church can play a positive role. These include being welcoming communities, truth telling (speaking up and speaking out for those who will be hit the hardest by Brexit), looking beyond our borders and by reanimating a vision for the UK.

8. **Mission in a Rural Context:** Mission Committee discussed mission in a rural context and asks for prayer for farmers in particular, as they fear the effects Brexit will have on their livelihood.
9. The National Rural Officer, Revd Elizabeth Clark, is looking for models of joint pastorates in rural areas. If you can help, please contact Elizabeth on elizabethc@germinate.net
10. **HOPE:** Mission Committee agreed to continue support for and participation in HOPE in 2019.
11. **Church and Society/Joint Public Issues Team:** Campaigns and other news for synods:
 - a. **Living Lent Challenge:** JPIT is inviting people to become part of the 'Living Lent' community over the 40 days of Lent and to make significant, personal commitments to changing our lifestyle for the climate. Find out more and sign up at www.livinglent.org
 - b. **Meet your MP:** can you encourage churches in your area to consider meeting with their MPs, or inviting them to a church event? Resources and support are available through the **Meet Your MP** initiative: see www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/MeetYourMP
 - c. **Share your stories** of how local churches are involved in creating a welcoming environment.
 - d. Please use the Church and Society staff, Simeon Mitchell and Roo Stewart as a resource and consider inviting them to speak or lead workshops at synod meetings, training days etc.
12. Mission Committee decided to send a letter in support of the Pastoral Letter to CWM member churches on Article 377A written by the General Secretary of CWM, Revd Dr Collin Cowan, which speaks out against homophobia.
13. **Ecumenical Relations:** Next year it will be 30 years since the Berlin Wall came down. To mark this fact there will be a major celebration in the Church of the Palatinate in November 2019, to which a party of up to 20 people from the URC has been invited. If you are interested in more details, please email carole.sired@urc.org.uk.
14. **Resources** to be noted:
 - Racial Justice Sunday Resource 2019 are still available online and can be used any Sunday <https://urc.org.uk/news/2292-resources-ready-for-racial-justice-sunday>
 - National 'Visit your Mosque Day' will be held on 3 March. Find more details on <https://www.visitmymosque.org/>
 - Rural Isolation and Loneliness Toolkit: <http://germinate.net/mission//rural-isolation-and-loneliness-toolkit/>
 - Download the Fresh Expressions Godsend App for further pioneering information and help (available for iPhone and Android)
 - Rural Mission Sunday is on 14 July. Download resources <https://germinate.net/mission/rural-mission-sunday/>
 - Accessible Welcome is a new resource from Germinate: Arthur Rank Centre. It is a toolkit designed to help rural churches work towards ensuring that their church – both the building and their worship – is accessible to all, and can be downloaded here <https://germinate.net/mission/accessible-welcome/> or ordered from info@germinate.net