

10 March 2017

Mrs Helen Lidgett
Synod Clerk, East Midlands Synod Office
1 Edwards Lane
Sherwood
Nottingham
NG5 3AA

Dear Helen,

Synod Moderator Review for East Midlands Synod

I write to let you know the recommendation of the Assembly's Review Group, who met on 7th March to consider the ministry of the Revd Peter Meek as Moderator of East Midlands Synod. Peter took post on 1st September 2011, and thus his initial seven-year tenure runs to August 2018. The Review Group was asked to consider whether he should be asked to extend his tenure for a further five years until August 2023.

The Group was grateful for the many people in the Synod who supplied information and opinion on Peter's ministry, and particularly to the six people on the Synod Review Panel who collated this material and discussed it with the Group. The Group also appreciated its discussion with Peter, and recommends with conviction that **Peter's tenure should be extended to August 2023**. It will be for the URC's Mission Council, at its meeting in May, to consider this recommendation on behalf of General Assembly; only at that stage could the recommendation become a decision of the Church.

The Group was impressed by Peter's clear and strong faith. He is not afraid of facing difficult issues, nor of working with ministers or local churches to address challenges in their own situation. He cares. He deals consultatively and respectfully with people. He is able to listen to the perspective of others, but is ready too to offer his own insights and ideas. With a deeply pastoral heart, he also has a keen and logical mind, a concern for strategy and a proper regard for due process. For all these reasons, and because his ministry is already valued highly across the Synod, the Review Group believes he is the right person to lead the East Midlands Synod and care for its churches and people in the coming years.

East Midlands is larger than most of our URC synods in both land area and number of congregations. If its Moderator is to give of his best, the Synod may need to think in some fresh ways about its aims, aspirations and methods of working. The Review Group recognised from information supplied by the Synod Panel that the pattern of meetings of the Synod and its committees is complex, and claims a lot of the Moderator's time and energy. The Synod Panel spoke of the need to identify and affirm a small number of priorities for the next few years, of setting the Moderator and his ministry within that clearer context, and of reviewing and reshaping the Synod's structures and patterns of working to facilitate the realisation of such priorities. That may in turn allow decisions about deployment, about spending and about mission to be taken with greater clarity, and it may also allow the Moderator increased scope to play to his strengths by channelling his gifts into those areas and activities where he can contribute most helpfully.

The Review Group attended carefully to these suggestions, and found much wisdom in them. The Group therefore **invites East Midlands Synod ...**

- to undertake a careful and purposeful review of its priorities
- to re-draw its working structures in ways that reflect and promote these priorities
- to use its Moderator's gifts in ways that reflect these priorities
- so far as possible, to ease the Moderator's load of meetings and expand his time for people and churches

The Review Group agreed with the Synod Review Panel that changes of this kind would be of lasting value, not only of immediate benefit. They would certainly help the ministry of the present Moderator, but as they created a sharper sense of purpose and direction, they would inform and enhance the whole work of the Synod, and would thus reach beyond the tenure of any individual.

The Review Group counted it a great privilege to consider the work of the East Midlands Synod and its Moderator. It extends its warmest good wishes to the Synod and its people, and in particular to the Revd Peter Meek, in all the Christian service that is before you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Proctor". A horizontal line is drawn underneath the signature.

John Proctor (Secretary to the Review Group), on behalf of the Group, who were ...

Hilary Miles (Convenor) and Raymond Singh, from Southern Synod
James Coleman and Sheana Dudley, from Yorkshire Synod
Sue Brown, from Wessex Synod