

**The Methodist Church Thames Valley Circuit Meeting
7.45 pm Wednesday 22 November 2017 at Woodlands Park Methodist Church**

Minutes

Note: C.A. stands for Church Action needed.

Present: Rev. Sonia Hicks plus three other Ministers, five Circuit Stewards and 26 other members as listed on the register of attendees. 3 Observers were present. Apologies were received from 16 members noted there. 9 members did not attend or give their apologies.

1. Welcome and opening devotions.

The meeting opened with Holy Communion.

2. Membership of meeting and apologies for absence.

Membership: Bertha Hodge, a representative from Ledgers Road, had recently passed away and our thoughts and prayers go to her family.

Apologies: David Ridley. Rev. Dr. Malcolm White, Jean Barnett, Linda Harrison, Keith Le Page, Hilary Evans, Sam Adjei, Ed & Chris Filmore, Patie Crockett, Daphne Hogg, Evelyn Thomson, Kwabena Amankwah, Marion Cathcart, Lynn Packer, Peter Morris.

3. Agreement of the agenda; notification of items requested for AOB:

Agreed. Items requested: None.

4. Minutes of last meeting (as already circulated) and matters arising.

Agreed and signed as a correct record.

5. Matters arising not on the agenda below

- **Confirmation on contents checked in circuit safe**

Connie Jeffery and Rev Sonia Hicks hadn't checked the circuit safe. This had been done last year and nothing has been deposited or removed during the year.

- **Staines & Feltham Update**

A document was circulated at the meeting which listed the pros and cons about the merger. At the end of January District will send down a proposal for the circuits involved. This will be dealt with by the three churches moving from Staines & Feltham and our own churches. Replies would come back to Circuit Meeting, when a vote will be taken on the proposal. It was also agreed that Rev Sonia Hicks will be the Superintendent until 2020. The name of the Circuit will, for the time being, remain as Thames Valley Circuit. If there was a desire to change the name this could be done once the merger had been completed.

- **Stationing 2018**

there are three rounds in this process. The first round at the beginning of November had resulted in no match for the Maidenhead vacancy. The next round is to take place on 5-6 December, with the third round in January. The CLT is doing some strategic thinking about what we do if no appointment is made.

- Rev. Andrew Reed (Superintendent of Staines & Feltham) will keep his superintendent's allowance until 2020 when his appointment finishes. The Circuit would then decide if he is to be invited to stay on if so requested. He lives in the Ashford manse and this property would come to the Thames Valley Circuit when we could decide if we wanted to keep or sell it. No rent will be payable as the Manse would become a circuit asset. Egham manse was about to be rented out.
- 150 presbyteral appointments need to be filled with only 95 presbyters available; only a few specified wanting to be located in the south of the country.

- **Candidate for the Presbyteral Ministry**

Jon Garde was invited to speak about his candidating for the ministry. He said it gives you a lot of work to do, lots of essays and reflections. To him there are three important words to keep in mind – blessed, loved, able.

- Blessed – he had so much but done little.
- Loved – he reflected back to when he was a non-believer and look now and how his heart is warmed – extend this to other people and recognise it in others.
- Able – Jon is able and is here – taken a long time in his life but is willing and able.

33 members voted unanimously their approval to put Jon forward as a candidate. Rev Sonia Hicks delighted to send Jon forward. Meeting prayed for Jon. **C.A.**

6. Safeguarding

- A third Creating Safe Space refresher course had been held in October and this year's Foundation course will be held this month.
- There will be three refresher courses next year: 10th February at St Mark's Crescent, 9th June and 29th September. Another Foundation course will be held early in 2018.
- Connexion has updated model policies for Circuit and Church Safeguarding policies. However, some clarification was needed on certain issues.
- As from 17th November, all DBS checks will be done on-line.

7. Receipt of Annual Reports from Superintendent Minister and Circuit Senior Steward

(Circulated previously with agenda.) No additional comments made.

8. Local Preachers Meeting

No report submitted.

9. Finance - Treasurer's Report

- **2016/17 Circuit Accounts** (circulated previously with the agenda):
1st page: summary of 2016 showing an underspend of £20K.
2nd page: budget vs expenditure
3rd page: funds
4th page: comparison between this year and last year.
This will now to be forwarded to District. Proposed by Chris Wren, seconded by Joy Brown. 33 members unanimously agreed.
- **Circuit Advance Fund**
£9,500 earmarked for funding another 3 years for Deacon's grant (£28,500 in total) as District 5-year grant finished in 2016/17. Proposed by Chris Wren and second by Peter White. 33 members unanimously voted their approval.

10. Property

(Details circulated previously with agenda.)

- **Property Consents, Completion of Schedules**
Quinquennials – 5 due this year.
On line property returns – some churches have started the process, some completed, others are struggling.
Manse visitors' reports have been completed.
Circuit ladder is no longer needed – meeting agreed to dispose of it.
- **Priesthaus**
Circuit ready to put Priesthaus on the market. Everything sorted out including garden. One issue – many theological books still left in manse. Local preachers had been informed but not many takers. All paperwork had been done but waiting for Legal's approval. Surveyors report had been done. Valued at £875K and put it on market at £950K. How much below £950K was Circuit Meeting willing to go without reporting back to the Meeting? The Meeting agreed a figure of £895K. Other estate agents had been contacted. Hamptons valued £1M, Roger Platt, £950K. As Hamptons only requested 1% + VAT, the Circuit have put the property with them. Two signatories are required to authorise the signing of documents relating to the sale of Priesthaus. The Meeting agreed to Rev Sonia Hicks, Connie Jeffery and Glenice White, with any two of the three, to sign documents.

11. Recruitment of a Church Secretary at High Street.

The current Church Secretary is due to leave at the end of the year. All the necessary paperwork had been completed and sent to District for approval. Now that this had been received, the job advertisement had been put onto High Street's website and the Circuit website. The Circuit Meeting approved the appointment.

12. Circuit Directory:

- **Notification of deceased members**
In respect of those who have passed away, CM members are asked to box the names in the Circuit Directory initially instead of deleting them. **C.A.**

- **Sunday services contact telephone numbers**

Churches to be asked to give a contact telephone number to be available should a preacher be delayed in getting to a service and needed to inform the Stewards on duty. This should be discussed at each Church Council. **C.A.**

13. Circuit Greetings.

- Bertha Hodge, Irvin Richardson and Meg Few had died.
- Joan Carr and Doreen Lloyd are unwell.

14. Any other business.

None

15. Dates for Diaries.

Tues	13 Mar 2018	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Ledgers Road
Thurs	24 May 2018	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Burnham
Thurs	11 Sept 2018	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	t.b.c.
Wed	14 Nov 2018	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	t.b.c.
Thurs	21 Feb 2019	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	t.b.c.
Tues	14 May 2019	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	t.b.c.

16. Closing thanks and prayer. Meeting closed at 9.25 pm. Rev Sonia Hicks thanked Woodlands Park for Holy Communion, tea & coffee and finished with a prayer by Barbara Winner 'Sun has set'.