

The Methodist Church Thames Valley
Extraordinary Circuit Meeting
St Mark's Crescent – Tuesday, 21st January 2014 at 7.45 pm

Minutes

Present Rev Andrew Baker plus 3 other ministers, 5 Circuit Stewards, and 22 other members as listed in the register of attendees. Apologies from 18 members noted there.

Introduction by Andrew Baker.

As we begin the process of writing a description of the circuit and its direction for the next five years by late spring in preparation for inviting a new Superintendent Minister, the two property issues highlighted in the Manse Review paper for this meeting are timely. The current position is no longer satisfactory. We have a duty of care to our ministers which we have been unable to fulfill at 23a Hillside. Although the St Mark's Road manse has been owned since it was built by the Circuit and has served us well, it no longer meets the requirements for a manse and does not give the flexibility of a location in the middle of the Circuit. Hence the proposals being brought this evening.

In reply to questions on clarification it was stated that the sums involved would depend on the sale price of St Mark's Road. If this were £400,000 and the total expenses were £25,000 then there would be £375,000 available for a property suitable for a manse in the chosen area; suitable properties had been found in this price range, but non ideal yet. If the monies are spent on a replacement manse there would be none held back by the Connexion. This was a good time of year to start looking for properties but we would have to be able to move quickly to secure a suitable one. (**Post meeting note** – Members are asked to notify Connie Jeffery or Anne Haggarty if they know one coming on to the market.) Bill Barnett expressed the view endorsed by the meeting that the suitability of the property for use as a manse was the most important factor.

Proposals from the Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) endorsed by the Meeting (Rev Andrew Baker did not vote):

1. That steps are taken to put the St Mark's Road manse on the market and that it be sold.
29 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions
2. That a new manse be purchased in the Cippenham / Burnham / Lent Rise / Taplow area. The outlay be roughly on a par with the income raised from the manse sale.
28 for, 0 against, 1 abstention
3. That the Circuit Meeting delegate responsibility to the CLT to manage and complete this process on its behalf and that the signatories to sign legal documents on behalf of the Circuit be any two of the Circuit Stewards.
Unanimous
4. That Mrs Connie Jeffery and Rev Sonia Hicks sign as trustees a solicitors' client engagement letter on behalf of the Circuit in order that the property at 92 Ledgers Road may be registered voluntarily with the Land Registry. That Rev Sonia Hicks then signs a statutory declaration that this property is owned by the Circuit. This is for the first registration of this property with the Land Registry. We have no proof of ownership and registration is a precondition to the granting of a multiple occupancy licence now required by the council.
Unanimous

Thanks were extended to Rev Sonia Hicks and family for their fortitude when faced with the property problems.

The meeting closed with thanks to our hosts and the saying of the Grace together at 8.15 pm.