

The Methodist Church Thames Valley Circuit Meeting Windsor, Thursday 17th November 2015 at 7.45 pm

Minutes

Note: CA stands for Church Action needed.

Present Rev Sonia Hicks plus 4 other ministers, 4 Circuit Stewards, and 33 other members as listed in the register of attendees. Apologies from 11 members noted there.

Connie Jeffery led the meeting in a shortened "Rest and Reflect" session (see below) before Holy Communion led by Rev Sonia Hicks.

Agenda Agreed as distributed.

Minutes of last meeting were agreed and signed.

Matters Arising

Inter Circuit Events

Staff met with the two staff of the Staines and Feltham (S&F) circuit and agreed:

- to have the training morning next March as a joint event, with another in 2017 in S&F,
- a joint staff event in December
- to ask preachers who preach outside the circuit if they would offer one of those appointments to S&F.

In June there will be a training day for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders in the seven circuits of the Western Area of our SE District.

Sabbatical request for Rev Mindy Bell

Agreed by the District Sabbatical Committee for 19th June to 18th September 2016 as it is of benefit to the Circuit.

Circuit Training Morning

12th March 2016, 9.30 am – 1 pm at Windsor. The first session will be workshops for Church Stewards, Communion Stewards and Welcome Stewards. After coffee there will be three workshops on local arrangement services, to produce three different outlines for churches to use – **CA**.

Matters from Conference

One of the 33 recommendations from the Past Cases review is that ministerial staff need more opportunities to discuss issues that come up, rather than having to make decisions on their own. Our SE District and Liverpool District are piloting a supervision scheme whereby superintendents meet with staff 8 times a year, and superintendents meet with their Chair of District.

Sabbatical for Rev Sonia Hicks

3rd December 2015 – 2nd March 2016. During this time Rev Mindy Bell will have pastoral oversight for Ledgers Road, Rev Gary Homewood for Burnham and Deacon Andy Packer for Cookham Rise.

Connie Jeffery reminded members that as part of the gift of sabbatical, ministers are not supposed to be contacted in any way, including email and phone – **CA**.

2014-15 Annual Reports

The reports from the Superintendent Minister and the Circuit Senior Steward were adopted by the meeting. They will be available on the Circuit Website. Churches are asked to print one paper copy for display – **CA**.

Safeguarding

Church Safeguarding Officers have been made aware of some changes, and will be updated further at their next meeting. Churches need to check that the name of the Complaints Officer has been changed from Rev Andrew Baker on their Safeguarding Policy – **CA**.

Local Preacher on Trial

Kathy Rickman has completed her studies and is waiting for the result of her final piece of work. The Circuit Meeting voted unanimously to accept her accreditation as a Local Preacher subject to this and successful interview by the Local Preachers' Meeting.

This meeting will be held in advance of the Circuit Meeting in future.

Conversation on the work of God

“Rest & Reflect”

These are half hour meditation sessions set up to allow people to encounter Jesus in a non-threatening, easily accessible way. There is training available for leaders or recordings can be used. Examples of these in the District include sessions at 9.15 am with a crèche and 1.05 pm midweek lunchtime sessions. Connie Jeffery is keen to set up a group in the Circuit and asks churches to discuss possibilities. Anyone who would like to help set up a group please contact her – **CA**.

Alternative devotional expressions include

- Wednesday 8 am Prayer at Cookham Rise followed by porridge or toast at the local coffee shop,
- Sunday 9 am God & Marmalade is about to be introduced at Windsor.

The use of the **Methodist Modern Art Collection** was highly recommended. See the Methodist Church website for more information and art collection resources. These (and Rest & Reflect) could be used in a Local Arrangement service. We could explore as a circuit exhibiting the collection.

Circuit Healing Services

The first will be on 6th December at Windsor. Please encourage all to come – **CA**.

Response to the Refugee crisis

Deacon Andy Packer and Rev Gary Homewood gave an update on the position locally. It had been the subject of a recent interfaith gathering at St Mark's Crescent. Please see **Appendix 1** for information concerning the use of churches for refugees.

Finance

The audited Circuit Accounts for the year to 31st August 2015 showing General Fund net expenditure of £23,037 were presented and adopted unanimously. This shortfall is £13,000 more than that budgeted largely due to costs on the Spring Lane and Priesthaus manses. Whilst the former was one-off costs after purchase, spending on Priesthaus needs to be monitored.

After transfers to meet our reserves policy the balance on the General Fund was £57,300 compared with the £25,000 needed to manage risk and meet unplanned expenditure. The budget for 2016/17 will be discussed at the Treasurers' Meeting on 13th January. The treasurer, Chris Wren, was thanked warmly for his work.

On-line Banking controls Please see also **Appendix 2**

For churches, conditions will depend on the particular bank. Church Councils need to set their own safeguards. It is much easier to change only one name on a bank mandate at a time.

Property

Church Property Schedules Joyce Brown reminded churches that these need to be completed and agreed by Church Councils by mid-February 2016, so that they can be approved by the Circuit Meeting on 3rd March. Please contact her with any queries. She will be arranging a workshop for Church Property Stewards including Church Log Books (which should include quinquennial reports) next March – **CA**.

Circuit Property Consent given to

- High Street for renewal of lease of Kingsway Chambers and
- Colnbrook & Poyle for the grant of a licence for a right of way and use of car parking space.

Circuit Greetings

Replies have been received from Rev Barbara McIntivey and Rev Mannie Jacobs.

Many had attended Helen Banham's funeral and her ministry as a local preacher had supported many in the circuit.

AOB

Circuit Invitations Committee

CM agreed the names of one representative from each church, and a motion that Church Councils affirm at their next meeting their representative for the next connexional year. 1 abstention and 1 vote against in each case – **CA**. See **Appendix 3** for details.

Thames Valley Journeymen

The next walk will be on 19th January. See the poster in your church and encourage participation – **CA**.

Positive Working Together

District sessions about bullying, etc, will be held on 9th December at Aylesford, and 15th December at Woking. Connie Jeffery is going to the latter and offers transport.

Extra Dates – please also see the Circuit website

Saturday 28th November – Awayday 10am at Stubbings on “The Relevance of the Wesleys today”. Open to everyone – **CA**.

The meeting closed with a blessing for our Superintendent’s sabbatical and thanks to our hosts at 9.40 pm.

Appendix 1 Action for Refugees Methodist Church Conference 2015

Following on from a Notice of Motion presented to this year's Methodist Conference, all Methodist churches are being encouraged to provide support to at least one individual or family crossing Europe from the Mediterranean fleeing from conflict.

The Revd Olufemi R W Cole-Njie, who proposed the motion, said "Social action is at the heart of Methodism. When people are in need it is our rôle as the Church to step-up and help the hungry, the weak, the stranger. Thousands of people are fleeing their homes in fear for their lives. How can we on one hand say that we welcome Jesus into our lives, and yet on the other not welcome those in need?"

In addition to encouraging its own churches to do more, the Conference has urged the Government to accept those seeking asylum on a much larger scale, commensurate with Britain's size and resources.

Praising the enormous contribution that migrants and refugees make in Britain, the Conference welcomed the recent Statement by the Conference of European Churches that encouraged European Churches and Institutions to support refugees, and applauded the ongoing efforts of the Churches in Greece and Italy, particularly for the 'Mediterranean Hope' project.

The Revd Stephen J Burgess, Chair of the York & Hull District, added "What this practically looks like will be different in each community and for each church. But in putting this forward, we are encouraging and reminding our churches to fulfil the words of Wesley: 'Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all places you can.'"

November 2015 Postscript from Superintendent of our Thames Valley Circuit

Having looked into the situation regarding using Methodist churches for refugees, it seems that the Methodist Church hasn't given any guidelines regarding accommodating refugee families in Methodist buildings.

I would therefore urge that, before any action is taken, managing trustees speak with Methodist Insurance and the District Property Secretary (Chris Linford).

Appendix 1 ON-LINE BANKING & CONTROLS – TVMC

Methodist Central Finance Board (CFB)

- Only pay to Registered Accounts*, for which documentary evidence has been provided, or
- Other Methodist Organisations
- CFB has no daily limits or controls, other than set out by the account holder or within the Mandate

* for TVMC this is the HSBC current account

HSBC

- Cheques – need 2 signatures.
- Bank Current Account – has a NIL overdraft facility.
- Bank has algorithms that will highlight any unusual activity, whether by Cheque or On-line, and raise a query.
- On-line Banking works on 1 person who has to have password access.
- Limit on an on-line payment is £8,000 per day.
- Copy of Monthly Current Account statement sent direct from HSBC to TVMC Superintendent whose rôle is to vet the statement and to question any unusual payments or receipts.

Chris Wren
TVMC Treasurer

September 2015

Appendix 3 Thames Valley Methodist Circuit – Circuit Invitation Committee

Consists of Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) plus a representative from each Church as below.

The committee is empowered to issue an invitation to a minister if a right match be found.

Circuit Invitations Committee Church Representatives as agreed at Circuit Meeting on 17th November 2015:

Burnham	Mrs Marilyn Brown
Colnbrook & Poyle	Mr Keith Ayres
Cookham Rise	Mrs Kathy Rickman
Eton Wick	Mr Phil Clack
Hampshire Avenue	Mr Irvin Richardson
High Street Maidenhead	Mrs Felicity Kendon
Ledgers Road	Miss Anne Broome
Old Windsor	Mrs Anne Haggarty
St Andrew's (English)	Miss Joyce Jarman
St Andrew's (Asian)	Mr Kamran Dass
St Mark's Crescent	Mr Keith Machin
Windsor	Mr Phil Mount
Woodlands Park	Mr Neville Walton

Composition of Circuit Invitation Committee will be:

For Superintendency: CLT plus all the above

For a particular section: CLT as above plus the representatives from the churches involved.

Example The appointments for both Sonia and Margaret are to the end of August 2017.

Assuming that the existing structure in the circuit is to remain the same, the composition of the Circuit Invitation Committees for these 2 appointments will be:

Margaret's section: CLT plus the representatives from each of the 4 churches in her section, *i.e.* Windsor, Old Windsor, Eton Wick and Colnbrook & Poyle.

Sonia's section: As Sonia is superintendent ... CLT plus the representatives from all 13 congregations.

NB There will be times during a re-invitation process when the minister concerned will need to absent him/herself even though remaining a member of the Circuit Invitation Committee.