

**The Methodist Church Thames Valley Circuit Meeting  
7.45 pm Tuesday 23rd May 2017 at High Street Methodist Church**

**Minutes**

**Note:** CA stands for Church Action needed.

**Present** Rev Sonia Hicks plus 2 other Circuit Ministers, 6 Circuit Stewards, 25 other members and 3 observers as listed in the register of attendees. Apologies from 18 members noted there.

**Agenda** agreed as distributed with the addition of items about publications and forthcoming events.

**Minutes of last meeting** were agreed and signed.

**Matters arising**

Rev Julie Underwood, a supernumerary in Staines & Feltham Circuit, will give two days a week from September to St Mark's Crescent, and will come for a meeting in June to agree details. Our circuit is also supervising a student presbyter for 2 days a week from September.

A job description for a full-time lay worker for 12 months at High Street has been drawn up and will be submitted for approval by the District. The Circuit Meeting unanimously approved the following for an appointment panel – Rev Sonia Hicks, Connie Jeffery, Liz Tottingham, Chris Wren, and a representative from High Street. In answer to a question, Rev Sonia Hicks confirmed that another member of the staff team would line manage this position.

For the record, the presbyter in charge of Woodlands Park is Rev Sonia Hicks.

Marking the ministry of Rev Gary Homewood in this Circuit: There will be a service of appreciation in September. Cheques for monies collected by each church should be sent to the Circuit Treasurer by the end of July, and photographs (preferably jpeg format), with a short message either of your church or illustrating ways in which Gary has affected life in the Circuit, should be sent by the end of June to Ed Filmore, who will compile a presentation album. **CA.**

**Conversation on the work of God**

Brenda Cheeseman spoke of how children were warmly welcomed at Hampshire Avenue and enjoyed being given jobs to do, or toddler activity bags. Last Christmas many came to the joint LEP Carol Service held at 4pm on a Sunday in a local community hall; this may be held in an old people's home this year. They have bought a film licence and distributed 100 flyers locally for a free family friendly film with popcorn and juice.

St Andrew's Urdu language congregation are hoping to start a Saturday youth club.

St Andrew's English have held a successful Saturday Supper for Christian Aid, and an afternoon auction for charity. The Tuesday *Create & Craft* sessions with lunch (bringing own work or learning a new craft) have brought new people into the church.

The work of the **Smaller Churches Group** was illustrated by a display set up by Hilary Evans.

## Safeguarding

The first *Creating Safer Space* Refresher Course was well received. The next will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> June and 7<sup>th</sup> October. There will be a Foundation Module course in November. The next meeting for Church Safeguarding Coordinators is Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm at Windsor. **CA.**

## Staines & Feltham Circuit update

Discussion took place on the approach of churches from the **Staines & Feltham Circuit** (S&F) to join this circuit. A report from S&F dated 27.2.17 had been sent to members following the last meeting, and a revised page 22 circulated by email. This later page was dated 16.5.17, the date of a joint CLT meeting held to discuss issues arising. There are now effectively three churches wishing to join: Staines, Egham LEP and St Judes, Englefield Green LEP, together with one minister, a manse, and a number of local preachers. Their aim is to complete the change for 2018/2019 and discussions will start soon with the Teddington Circuit about their other churches.

The employees at the Village Centre are employed by the circuit, and so issues such as pension and redundancy will have to be considered. The PA is also employed by the circuit. Concerning non-viability, this is due to the falling number of members and therefore presbyters and not financial.

The Anglican Vicar is at St Jude's freehold, i.e. until he decides to leave. The URC minister at Egham was appointed in 2016. In future LEPs with the URC will have both Methodist and URC ministers in pastoral charge.

The Circuit Meeting voted unanimously to continue discussions with S&F. The procedure will be that each Church Council will be asked to discuss the additions and report their mind to the circuit which will make the final decision. Churches are asked for input on the factors that need to be explored with S&F. **CA.**

## Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB)

Lynn Packer spoke to the MWiB Circuit Report which had been circulated and thanked the Circuit for the support received particularly at the Easter Offering service. The 2016 Easter Offering total was £1150.58 and churches were asked to send any further 2017 envelopes to Chris Wren as soon as possible. **CA.**

The August coffee morning at High Street raised £60 for the Dalit project. This year MWiB is raising money for refugee support. A stall is planned at the Slough Canal Boat festival the second weekend of September 2018. A representative is needed for the Windsor church.

## Circuit Appointments 2017/18

- Circuit Steward replacing Mr Alan Crowle: Mr Charles Tubman appointed unanimously.
- Circuit Treasurer: Mr Chris Wren unanimously appointed (by secret ballot) for an eighth year.
- Circuit Ministerial Review Secretary: Dr Ed Filmore is standing down from this position. Deferred to the September meeting.
- Deputy Webmaster to maintain the website: deferred to the September meeting.

## Stationing 2018

Connie Jeffery reported that stewards had attended an initial briefing meeting. A profile for the Maidenhead section will now be drawn up in consultation with the churches in the section. This will be considered by the Circuit Invitation Committee and brought to the September Circuit Meeting for approval. We hope that a match will be made in the first round in November.

## Finance

A paper requesting a grant for **St Mark's Crescent** Methodist Church's *2020 Vision Project* has been circulated together with one from the Circuit Treasurer about the Circuit reserves. The meeting agreed unanimously to a Circuit grant of £20,000 from the Circuit Advance Fund to St Mark's providing full consent was given and, to show support, agreed to the possibility of considering a future request for a short-term loan should this be needed. *Green Redeem* recycling points would be appreciated by the end of June, and promises of gifts from churches and individuals by then if possible, will be very helpful. **CA.**

## Property

It was confirmed that all the schedules have been submitted online and the programme of quinquennial inspections was up-to-date. A full visual inspection of Priesthaus is outstanding.

Circuit Meeting Property Consent was given to **High Street** Methodist Church to let the first floor above the shops to a daytime nursery provided this was for a rent of at least £12,000 p.a.

## Circuit Greetings

Circuit members were pleased to have the good news from Eileen Chislett that Dave is in remission following a successful bone marrow transplant

Greetings to be sent to Rev George Howard (HA LEP) who has been off sick for a number of weeks, and to Mary and Richard Hall whose son Tim is in a hospice.

## AOB

- **Circuit Directory** – Please check every entry and get permission for all details given. **CA.**
- **Circuit Prayer Diary** – Anne Haggarty thanked all for the short and pithy entries for this.
- **Publications** recommended for consideration by Church Councils:
  - **The Gospel Story** £7.99 New Room Publications
  - **Seasons of My Soul**, Available for loan from Rev Sonia Hicks. **CA.**
- **Slough Refugee Support** are looking for befrienders for Syrian Refugee families in Slough. **CA.**

## Dates

Please see website for further details.

24<sup>th</sup> June: Live streaming of Jill Baker's inauguration as Vice President of Conference.

16<sup>th</sup> July: Circuit evening service: Christians against Poverty, helping people not to fall into debt

19<sup>th</sup> July, midday: Slough Refugee Summer Party – please contact Rev Mindy Bell to offer help. **CA.**

The meeting closed with thanks to our hosts and the saying of the Grace together at 9.45 pm.