

Minutes of the Thames Valley Circuit Meeting held at Burnham Methodist Church on Thursday, 21st March, 2019, at 7.45 pm

Note: **CA** – Church Action required.

Welcome and opening devotions

Sonia led the opening devotions with a reading from Luke 11, about prayers being answered – and illustrated how this is happening in the circuit with new ministers appointed and the progress with St Mark's building project. She asked us all to converse with the person sitting next to us about what God had done during the last two weeks, and finished with a prayer.

Membership of meeting and apologies for absence

The membership of the meeting was agreed. Those attending were the Superintendent, 4 other members of staff, 5 Circuit Stewards and 28 other members. Apologies were received from: Philip Ely, Peter Morris, Linda Harrison, Chris Wren, Janice Wren. There were 6 members who neither attended nor sent apologies. Rev Margaret Dudley was on Sabbatical. There were 3 observers – Jo Webb, Cynthia Fenton, and Joyce Dhilwayo.

Agreement of the agenda; notification of items requested for AOB

- The agenda as distributed was agreed.
- One item for AOB was requested

Minutes of last meetings (as already circulated) and matters arising

The minutes of the last Circuit Meeting and of the Extraordinary Circuit Meeting were both agreed and signed as correct records of the meetings.

Matters arising

- Andy's report on his sabbatical has been postponed until the May meeting.
- Staines & Feltham merger is still on the cards; the part which would not be in Thames Valley is currently looking at Richmond and Hounslow. Nothing has changed as far as Thames Valley is concerned.
- A Circuit Administrator has been appointed. Pauline Poole starts on 1st May. She is familiar with church administration as she already works with St Mary's Hitcham and Eton Wick Anglican churches. She will be working 15 hours per week.
- Annual Report – the full one, and the 2019-2020 Circuit Directory will both be produced for the new church year. Anne reminded members that she will be asking for the information for both at the end of June. The last full Annual Report can be found on the Circuit Website. **CA**
- Support for Urdu congregation. Sonia said that she had taken the proposal from the Circuit Meeting to the Urdu congregation. They felt unable to contribute the whole amount (£1200) but offered £600 towards the payment for an Urdu-speaking Methodist minister. The CLT have reviewed this offer, and have accepted it, but have also reduced the hours to 4 per week. This support will be reviewed in a year. In response to questions, Sonia explained that most of the Urdu congregation do not come from a Methodist background, and do not know Methodist governance, hence the need for an Urdu-speaker to explain the nuances of Methodism. The meeting agreed to this support.

- Strategy. Sonia said that the development of the circuit strategy was on hold until September, she having too much to do until the circuit has its full complement of staff.

Safeguarding Report and Annual Review of the Circuit Safeguarding Policy

Kathy presented the safeguarding report (Appendix 1) and the new Circuit Safeguarding Policy (Appendix 2). She thanked Glenice and Jenny for their work alongside her. She reminded churches that anyone taking up a new role will need to do the required training, and said that there were still some who needed to do the Refresher Foundation course.

CA

Sonia signed the new, updated Circuit Safeguarding Policy, and, on the meeting's behalf, thanked Kathy for all her hard work on safeguarding, ensuring that we all know what we are supposed to do.

Written reports already circulated were taken as read. (Appendices 3 - 8)

Anne drew attention to Action for Children being 150 years old on 9th July 2019. The circuit will celebrate with an afternoon tea that day, at Old Windsor. More details to come later. Thoughts about a Circuit Service on 14th July (AfC Sunday) were mentioned, but given the difficulty of obtaining a speaker, the meeting decided to hold individual services at the churches that Sunday.

CA

Financial Statement and Budget 2019 - 2020

Sue presented the Budget report which had been discussed at the Church Treasurers' meeting and sent out in advance of this meeting. The increase in reserves is better than expected. With the increase in staff next year, the total proposed budget expenditure is £323,822. With budgeted income of £15,240, this gives a net figure of £308,582.

It was proposed to limit the total collected by assessment on the churches to 103.5% of the figure for 2018/19 and to take the budget deficit of £43,498 from the general fund reserve. This would still leave a balance of £46,959 in the General Fund and is in line with our current Reserves Policy. However, as this will be an exceptional year, all churches were encouraged to review their giving.

The budget for 2019/20 was accepted unanimously and a paper on our reserves policy requested for the next Circuit Meeting.

2019/20 Assessments – new system

A new system for calculating the assessments has been introduced. As the ability of churches to contribute depends both on their collection income and income from property (both residential/commercial and outside lettings), the Church Treasurers meeting supported a proposal to calculate the assessments thus:

- 25% according to the last membership numbers filed,
- 25% according to the collection offerings receipts and
- 50% according to the income from property.

In this first year increases from 2018/19 are to be capped at 10% and decreases reduced to zero. This, with the exception of the decrease for Windsor, which was capped at 9.1%, gave a total close to the sum needed. Churches who are able to were encouraged to made offers to cover the deficit.

The Circuit Meeting agreed the new system in principle and the figures for the total proposed assessment on page 4 of the Budget report, subject to a further adjustment for a post schedule offer and the need for quarterly figures to reflect lump sums paid. A schedule of the revised quarterly figures is to be produced for the next Circuit Meeting.

Circuit Advance Fund

A proposal was made to take up to £30,000 from TMCP (to cover legal costs, refurbishment costs, the upkeep of Priesthaus while empty, fees for the replacement property at 14 Poplars Grove and for work needed to bring it to Connexional standards) was accepted, subject to an account being compiled. Should more be needed, it will require the agreement of another Circuit Meeting.

The Vine Resource

So far the circuit had paid for this. A proposal to invoice the individual churches for this year and next year together was accepted.

Review Giving

Sue suggested that all churches should ask their members to review giving – too many are still not giving even the price of a cup of coffee. Extra giving should make it easier to help us grow. **CA**

The meeting expressed its grateful thanks to Sue for all her hard work.

Property Report

Joy's report is attached as Appendix 7. She said that the circuit is still looking for a new Property Steward, as she will no longer hold that post after the end of this church year. **CA**

She said that the on-line returns have been completed by all the churches except one, and that is in hand. Members authorised Joy – once the final one has been completed – to sign off the returns from all the churches. There were no property consents to consider.

She thanked all property stewards, and the manse visitors. There have been considerable problems with Clarence Road, when scheduled work revealed more problems, including large cracks in the party wall. She said that the insurers will be paying for all but £1000 of the work required. Other work at Clarence Road is well under way – the damp-proofing and plastering have been done, and the new kitchen will be fitted next week.

Manse situation

- There is some work still to be done on 14 Poplars Road
- The potential new manse in Slough is likely to be in the region of £620,000. A potential one in Langley has been identified, and Rev Anne Ellis will be coming to see it.
- Both Upton Road and Salt Hill Drive have been valued; each in the region of £500,000.
- To meet the stringent specifications for a Methodist manse, the circuit is looking at £100,000 to £200,000 more than the valuation of Upton Road.
- Chapel Aid has been approached and is willing to help with a bridging loan which could be kept on until the second manse is sold.

The Circuit Meeting gave approval for the CLT to purchase a new manse.

The meeting expressed its grateful thanks to Joy for all her hard work.

Constitution of the Circuit Meeting

Sonia and Anne have reviewed the constitution of the Circuit Meeting, and the new one was sent out with the Agenda. The local ecumenical contacts are being pursued, so far with no response. The meeting accepted the new constitution (Appendix 10).

Annual Circuit Appointments 2019/20

The following changes were agreed:

- Peter White becomes a representative to Synod in place of Liz Tottingham who has stepped down after 6 years.
- We are still seeking a substitute to go to Synod should a representative not be available.* **CA**
- Connie Jeffery agreed to do an extra year as a Circuit Steward, and the meeting formally accepted this with a unanimous secret ballot (35 for, 0 against).
- Another Circuit Steward will be needed as Elsa will have completed her 6 years. * **CA**
- As noted above, a new Circuit Property Steward will be needed. * **CA**
- The list of church members of the Circuit Invitation Committee (Appendix 12) was circulated with the agenda. They, along with the CLT, form the full committee.

** Names, please, to Sonia or Anne.*

The revised list is attached as Appendix 11

Presbyteral Synod

The one next March will be held in the Thames Valley Circuit. One of the large churches is required. Peter White offered High Street, an offer which Sonia gladly accepted.

Circuit Greetings

Greetings will be sent to

- Rev John Hellyer, Chair of South-East District, on his move to Gloucester to become the Superintendent there.
- Rev Conrad Hicks on his appointment as Director of Global Relationships. His work will involve liaising with all Methodist Conferences world-wide.
- Jenny Sturgeon following the death of her mother.

Any other business

- Sonia reminded the meeting that one of her responsibilities is to supervise the other staff. To help with this, she will be attending a 5-day course during August to gain a *Certificate in Pastoral Supervision*. She asked if the circuit would be willing to fund one-thirds of the course, £292. The meeting agreed.
- Sonia read out the message from Mindy following her farewell service. (See Appendix 13)
- The next Circuit Training Morning will be for Pastoral Visitors and Pastoral Secretaries on Saturday 21st September at St Andrew's Slough. More details later. **CA**

Dates for Diaries

Tues 14 May 2019	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	St. Andrew's
Wed 11 Sep 2019	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Cookham Rise
Thurs 14 Nov 2019	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Eton Wick
Tues 18 Feb 2020	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	High Street
Wed 20 May 2020	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Old Windsor
Thurs 17 Sep 2020	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Ledgers Road

Closing thanks and prayer

The meeting closed by saying the Grace to one another at 9.20 pm

Appendix 1 Safeguarding Report

The last Circuit Safeguarding Meeting was held on January 29th and we were pleased that Sonia was able to be with us on this occasion. The main business of the meeting was to look together at the model Church Safeguarding Policy from the Methodist Church, to discuss its content and to then produce a common policy. This was a very useful exercise, with those Safeguarding Officers present contributing to the review. My thanks go to Glenice and Jenny who did the initial groundwork with me. Every church council should have reviewed its Safeguarding Policy by now as this was made easy for them.

I would urge church councils to support their Safeguarding Officer and encourage them in their role, which is described within the policy. They also need support around training as there are still some people who should have attended the Creating Safer Space Refresher Course by now.

The last course was well attended and some lively and interesting discussion took place. 128 people have now taken part in the Refresher course. The next Foundation training is on Saturday April 6th at Eton Wick. I have to rely on the church Safeguarding Officers to ask people to attend if they are new to a role; for the Refresher Course I have data base of name, church and dates of training.

The Circuit Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed using the current model policy on the Methodist Website. It is for this meeting to agree the policy.

Kathy Rickman

Appendix 2 Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for the Thames Valley Circuit

[Click here](#) to see the current policy

Appendix 3 Action for Children (AfC) Report

Action for Children is 150 years old this year!

As a circuit we shall celebrate by holding a Circuit Service on Sunday, 14th July, at Cookham Rise, at 6.30 pm, with a speaker who will tell us something about the current work of AfC.

On the actual anniversary, Tuesday, 9th July, there will be an afternoon tea at Old Windsor.

On Saturday, 13th July, Cookham Rise will be hosting a quiz. Details of all events will be sent out nearer the time.

Action for Children has sent out a list of suggestions for individuals and churches to take up. I have sent a copy to all known AfC representatives. If anyone else would like a copy (by email) please let me know.

Anne Haggarty

Appendix 4 Local Preachers' Meeting Report

Points to note:

1. The Methodist Conference of 2018 amended SO 563 (3) as follows and this requires that "all preachers should undertake peer review of their ministry every three years". Guidelines have been recently issued and circulated.

SO 563 (3) As to fellowship and training, it is the duty of local preachers:

- (i) to attend the Local Preachers' Meeting on each occasion (or to tender an apology for absence to the secretary if unable to attend for good reason);
 - (ii) to continue to develop in their personal spiritual life, in knowledge and understanding, and in preaching and leading worship;
 - (iii) [...] to **regularly review their ministry** and to participate in a programme of continuing local preacher development **which reflects the guidelines annually produced by the Ministries Committee;**
 - (iv) to attend a class, housegroup, or similar fellowship group if possible;
 - (v) **to attend an annual Service of Reaffirmation of their call to preach.**
2. A Western Area study day is planned for 15 June at Staines Methodist Church, aimed at Worship Leaders as well as Local Preachers.
 3. We hold in our prayers and assure of our support Preachers on Trial and those who are no longer able to preach and lead worship.

David Ridley
Local Preachers' Meeting Secretary

Appendix 5 Methodist Women in Britain Report

The Easter Offering Service will take place on a Saturday 4th May, at 3.pm. at Windsor Methodist Church. A hot meal will follow and there will be tickets available to purchase for the meal by the middle of March. £5 each. Although anyone can attend the service without a ticket. The speaker will be an Ex. M.W.I.B. Speaker – Anne Browse. She is a farmer’s wife from Devon and she will be talking of her experiences as her term as president.

The theme for the Easter Offering Service is “Longer Tables and Lower Fences”, which suggests a theme of hospitality and good neighbours. We are looking forward to this one, so please make sure that it is advertised as much as possible in your churches. Names for the meal tickets can be forwarded to lynnpacker@uwclub.net and we will get them to your churches as soon as they are available.

Lynn Packer
Circuit MWiB President

Appendix 6 Smaller Churches Report

The Smaller Churches Group continues to meet to give help and support to all our smaller churches, who all continue to be busy.

The workshop based on “A Discipling Presence” will now take place on Saturday, 11th May almost certainly at Old Windsor and will be led by Rev Katie O’Loughlin, a member of the Connexional Team. More details to follow.

Our proposed visit to the New Room in Bristol has been postponed. More interest was expressed than turned into numbers wanting to go, and this made the cost of the coach prohibitive. We are looking to a summer date, and Margaret will be investigating other options once she is back from her Sabbatical.

During the summer, Cookham Rise will host a Circuit Service on their allotment.

Anne Haggarty

Appendix 7 Property report

On line Property Returns situation to date:

All Churches except one have now signed off their online property return, while one church is just waiting for their next Church Council meeting for permissions to do so. Well done to all concerned.

Quinquennials

We now seem to be on track with these.

Just a reminder for property stewards to call Neil to arrange their premises inspection when they are due.

Manse Visitors

My thanks to all the manse visitors for their speedy reports.

Much of the urgent remedial work is in hand with the exception of Clarence Road where we found a major issue with cracking on the joint wall. This is being pursued by the insurance company and remedial work should start soon. We are also replacing the kitchen at Clarence Road, Glenice and I have received 3 quotes and have accepted the Howden quote. Work is underway to install the kitchen and to deal with the damp-proofing issue. We are also pursuing with the insurance company the issue in respect of the now major cracks on the party walls and await the reports re their investigations.

Joy Brown

Appendix 8 St Mark's Crescent 2020 Vision Building Project

After 6 years of preparation and 4 years of active fund-raising, St Mark's Church Council is delighted to announce that full funding has been accomplished with the help of generous offers of interest-free loans.

Formal Methodist Consent was received in January, building work should start early in April and will take 26-28 weeks to complete.

A detailed report on the project will be presented at the Circuit Meeting in May but we wanted to share this exciting news with friends across the circuit as soon as possible and sincerely thank all those who have supported us financially and in their prayers.

As we and all the users of our church premises face restrictions on facilities and the inevitable disruption caused by major building works, please continue to support us through prayer and our fund-raising events.

Ed Filmore

Appendix 10 Constitution of Circuit Meeting

The Superintendent, Ministers, Probationers, Authorised Ministers.
Supernumerary Ministers and Ministers residing in the circuit who have informed the Superintendent that they wish to be members of the Circuit Meeting (CM).
Circuit Stewards
Lay Workers employed by the circuit (if any)
Circuit Meeting Secretary
Local Preachers Secretary
Any Circuit Representative to Synod not included above

From each Church:

One named Church Steward

Church Treasurer

Named Representatives from Church Councils based on size of membership:

up to 75	1
76 - 150	2
151 - 225	3
Over 225	4

Additional persons

Circuit Treasurer (if not a Circuit Steward)

Circuit Deputy Treasurer

Circuit Property Secretary

Circuit Safeguarding Officer

Local Preachers 2, appointed by the Local Preachers Meeting

MWiB 1, local president

Ecumenical Links

Burnham and Slough 2, observers

Maidenhead and Windsor 2, observers

Notes

1. Lay Workers - note that, although the circuit has to give its approval, lay workers appointed by individual churches are not included.
2. Churches may choose annually which church steward to send to the Circuit Meeting.
3. Substitutes may be sent but only the named member is eligible to vote.
4. If a member wears two hats, he / she has just the one vote
5. Representative from Church Councils as at February 2014: One per Church except for:
High Street 2; St Andrew's (English) 2; Windsor 2

The full constitution was last approved at March 2019 Circuit Meeting.

Appendix 11 Annual Circuit Appointments for 2019 – 2020

Circuit Leadership Team Appointed by Circuit Meeting

Appointed in:

Circuit Stewards	Mrs Connie Jeffery 2013	Mr Charles Tubman	2017
	Mrs Elsa Daniel 2013	Mr Keith Machin	2018
	Mrs Glenice White 2015		
Circuit Steward/Treasurer		Mrs Sue Le Page	2018
Circuit Property Secretary		Mrs Joyce Brown	2015

Non-members of Circuit Leadership Team Appointed by Circuit Meeting

Circuit Meeting Secretary		Mrs Anne Haggarty	2018
Circuit Safeguarding Officer		Mrs Kathy Rickman	2004
Deputy Circuit Treasurer		Mr Phil Mount	2013
Children and Youth Appointment		<i>vacant</i>	
MHA Co-ordinator		<i>vacant</i>	
Action for Children Co-ordinator / Secretary		Mrs Anne Haggarty	2016

Nominations from Circuit Committees for ratification:

Local Preachers' Mtg: Secretary		Mr David Ridley	2015
LWPT Secretary / Treasurer		<i>vacant</i>	
Circuit MWiB President		Mrs Lynn Packer	2015

Circuit Representatives to Synod: Ex officio member + 5 representatives + 1 substitute (All are *ex officio* members of the Circuit Meeting)

	Mrs Connie Jeffery (<i>Ex officio</i>)	2015	Mrs Anne Haggarty	2018
	Mr Ian Haggarty	2015	Mr Phil Mount	2016
	Mrs Glenice White	2018	Mr Peter White	2019
<i>Substitute:</i>	<i>vacant</i>			

Membership of Invitation Committee:

See separate schedule

Other Appointments

Circuit Auditor		Brigden, Watkins & Wainwright	
Circuit Webmaster		Mr Ian Haggarty	2009
Circuit Deputy Webmaster		<i>vacant</i>	
Circuit Ministerial Development Review Secretary		Mrs Veronica Mullix	2018

NB: 1. **Highlighted** – new appointee essential. 2. Several vacancies need to be filled

Appendix 12 2019 Circuit Invitation Committee Members from the Churches

Burnham	Mrs Marilyn Brown
Colnbrook & Poyle	Mrs Patie Crockett
Cookham Rise	Mrs Kathy Rickman
Eton Wick	Mr Phil Clack
Hampshire Avenue	Rose Ankrah
High Street Maidenhead	Mr Peter White
Ledgers Road	Nasheta Daniel
Old Windsor	Mrs Anne Haggarty
St Andrew's (English)	Mr Sam Adjei

St Andrew's (Asian)
St Mark's Crescent
Windsor
Woodlands Park

Mr Kamran Dass
Mr David Ridley
Mr Phil Mount
Mr Chris Wren

Appendix 13 Message from Mindy

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ in the Thames Valley Circuit,

Thank you for the gracious leaving service you organised for me last Sunday. The service and bring and share meal afterwards was a wonderful opportunity to share memories, celebrate our discipleship together and ask for God's blessing as we part from each other. These events were meaningful for both me and my family and I thank you for organising these opportunities to acknowledge this transition in community and the presence of God.

I also want to thank you for the generous monetary gift you gave us. We are humbled by your generosity and very thankful. We plan on putting this money to good use; we will use it to pay the fees for our British citizenship application. This is something we have been trying to save up for and this gift will allow us to "just do it!" The freedom of being citizens, of the nation we are resident in, will be a much appreciated relief. Thanks for your gift which makes this application possible.

It has been a pleasure to be in ministry with you and once again thank you!

Blessings,
Mindy