

The Methodist Church Thames Valley Circuit Meeting
7.45 pm, Thursday 20th September 2012 at Windsor

Minutes

Present: Rev Andrew Baker plus four other ministers, five Circuit Stewards, and 35 other members (plus two non-voting observers) as listed in the register of attendees. Apologies from six members noted there.

The meeting opened with a welcome from Peter Trout of Windsor and thanks to our hosts. The new members of staff were formally introduced to the circuit:

- Margaret who comes to us as a probationer from Wesley House, Cambridge,
- Sonia who has been a minister in Dublin for the last 9 years, and
- Andy, a Deacon in Peterborough for the last 10 years coming to pioneer outreach work in the circuit.

Sonia's husband Conrad will be returning from Mexico in November and December to take part in the stationing process for next year. We also welcome Andy's wife, Lynn, as a local preacher. Andrew thanked the circuit for the prayers and support given.

Where we are as a circuit – a good place, a hopeful place. The way we support each other has been evident especially in the outpouring of love at the Farewell Service, the Circuit holding together at Peter's Thanksgiving Service and the sense of joy and love at the Welcome Service. *Alive in Slough* had been run with joint events on Friday evening to Sunday evening, 14th – 16th September, inspiring the three Methodist Churches in Slough.

Our theme this year is "Lord, teach us to pray." Andrew commented that it can be difficult to find the quality time to build our individual relationships with God, be it in the praying we do all through the day or a regular commitment. Using the Psalms as a cry from the heart and the Methodist Prayer Handbook "Crossing the Chasm" can help. St Andrew's may still have some available. The Circuit website has a link to the Methodist prayer of the day.

Matters from Conference

- The *Fruitful Field* report on training clergy and lay people in the future. After thoughtful debate the decision was taken to concentrate this at Queen's College, Birmingham and Cliff College, Derbyshire with regional tutors, and to close the training centres at Durham and Cambridge.
- Connexional team – two posts were made redundant, including that of our current President.

Agenda of this meeting was agreed as distributed, plus Circuit Steward Allocation to Churches, Ministers' Rest Days and items from the Local Preachers' Meeting and Smaller Churches Group.

Minutes of last meeting were agreed and signed as a correct record. Proposer: Neville Walton, Seconder: Liz Tottingham. There were no extra matters arising.

Safeguarding: Dates for Creating Safer Space trainings:

Thursday October 18th 10 – 1 or 2-5 St Mark's

- Saturday November 3rd 10 - 1 Eton Wick
- Friday November 16th 10 – 1 High Street, Maidenhead

See News section on Website for application form.

These should perhaps have been advertised as “Awareness raising”, especially of how adults have been “groomed” and deceived as to motive where they were not aware of signs to look out for. Conference requires all Pastoral Visitors to attend one of these sessions; as a Circuit we have raised the problem where Pastoral Visitors of long standing and now in their 70s and 80s, whose work is much respected, feel this requirement for training is too daunting. We await a response from the District.

Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) Reviews are now available from the local minister for those who wish to see the full document. That for Colnbrook & Poyle, a joint Methodist / URC LEP, encouraged more work to be done to engage with the village. The Circuit commended what this LEP has achieved with limited resources.

The North Slough LEP was originally between two Anglican congregations and Hampshire Avenue Methodist Church. The two Anglican churches are now one church, and the main concern of the review is the future, as the number of Anglicans has declined and the vicar is due to retire at Pentecost 2013. The Circuit asked Rev Sonia Hicks to relay its expectation to Rev Jan Cotman that she is not to be asked to take on these churches during the interregnum.

Representatives to Deanery Synods. Phil Mount and Rev Andrew Baker agreed to be our representatives to both the Burnham & Slough, and the Maidenhead & Windsor Deanery Synods. Proposer: Jo Webb, Seconder: Anne Haggarty

Property

Manses 23A Hillside has been rented, the cost being largely offset by the rent received for the St Mark's Road property. Over the summer £34,000 has been spent on repairs and renovations of the manses we own, the majority of this on Priesthaus and Salt Hill Drive where a backlog of jobs had built up, now hopefully all tackled. The Salt Hill Drive manse was redecorated and re-carpeted for the change of minister. Some decoration work is currently being completed at Upton Road.

Schedules Churches are asked to ensure that the property Schedule A form is completed, brought to the next Church Council meeting and then sent to Phil Clack. The names of Church Property Stewards will be included in the Circuit Directory next year; please advise Phil Mount, who holds the current version, of any changes.

Ledgers Road Project An outstanding grant application will not be decided until November. The Church Council will decide whether to wait for this or start the building work earlier using a £20,000 loan facility from Chapel Aid to cover the current shortfall. Please continue to support their fundraising events.

Property Consents Circuit consent was given to High Street Methodist Church to run on the lease on the former caretaker's house.

Finance Chris Wren reported that the outlay on the manses over the summer was within budget and asked for any BT broadband expert to contact himself or Sonia to help negotiate a new circuit contract.

CCLI copyright licenses Rev Sonia Hicks highlighted the facility for churches with average attendance of less than 25 to share a license with another church and so reduce their joint cost.

Mission in Britain Fund The Missions Committee were asked to investigate a Circuit Advent offering for this, similar to the Easter offering for Overseas Mission. The new offering service for this has been designated for 2nd December 2012. Resources will be available – to register interest email missionfunding@methodistchurch.org.uk or telephone Methodist Publishing on 01733 235 962.

Local Preachers' Meeting on 5th September agreed that Liz Tottingham be given a note to preach with Alison Hadwin as her mentor. Tim Baker was moved from being On Note to On Trial. Please pray for all our Local Preachers and particularly those in training – Liz, Tim, Kathy Rickman, Kay MacKenzie and Dave Tottingham. Their annual study day has been arranged for 11th May 2013.

Smaller Churches Meeting Anne Haggarty reported from this support group on new initiatives at each of the six churches – see the *Smaller Churches Newsletter* on the website for details. They have been grateful for the ministerial support given to the series of healing services, where all are welcome.

Circuit Stewards allocation to Churches

Ruth James	Burnham and Eton Wick
Phil Mount	High Street, Ledgers Road and St Mark's
Liz Tottingham	Cookham Rise, Woodlands Park and St Andrew's (Urdu),
Chris Wren	Old Windsor
Anne Haggarty	Colnbrook & Poyle and St Andrew's (English)
Alan Crowle	Hampshire Avenue and Windsor

Ministers' Rest Day

Monday	Gary, Sonia, Andy and Study Day for Margaret
Friday	Andrew and Margaret

Good News

- Eton Wick invite all to their evening service each Sunday.
- St Mark's 60th anniversary service will be led by the minister son of members of the Church.
- Cookham Rise have won a photographic competition.
- The caretaker at High Street is moving to full time employment, thanks to his work experience there.

Dates for Diaries

27th Sep	Meeting for Church Property Stewards	7.30 pm at Eton Wick
27th/28th Oct	Celebration of 60 years as a Methodist Church	Old Windsor
28 th Oct	Circuit Home Mission Service/	6.30 pm at Old Windsor
10 Nov	Singing the Faith	2.30 pm at Eton Wick
20th Nov	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm at Colnbrook
28th Feb 2013	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm at St Marks
22nd May	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm at Hampshire Ave.

Gary gave details of the arrangements for and the funeral and thanksgiving service for Jo Bruton.

The Meeting closed with prayer for Mike Bruton, and the Blessing at 9 pm.