

The Methodist Church Thames Valley Circuit Meeting at Hampshire Avenue - Wednesday, 22nd May 2013 at 7.45 pm

Minutes

Present: Rev Andrew Baker plus 5 other ministers, 5 Circuit Stewards, and 23 other members as listed in the register of attendees. Apologies from 16 members noted there.

Agenda as distributed plus:

- under item 6a: Circuit Independent examiner,
- under item 6b: Gift Aid on small donations scheme,
- under item 6c: Staffing Issues
- under item 7a: Circuit Directory and Prayer Diary.

Minutes of last meeting were agreed with a second sentence inserted in the safeguarding report that *Over 200 people have attended the sessions*, and the paragraph headed *Office for* clarified to *Study for Rev Conrad Hicks being considered for September when he will be taking up a full-time appointment split part-time presbyter in the Hampshire/Surrey Borders Circuit and part-time Assistant Chair of the South East District responsible for the Western Area of which this Circuit is a part, while residing with Sonia in Slough.*

Matters arising Thanks had been received for our greetings from the Maidenhead & Windsor and the Burnham & Slough Area Deaneries of the Anglican Church, the Pastoral Area Dean for Slough in the Catholic Diocese of Northampton, and the Maidenhead Reform Synagogue.

Safeguarding: The Circuit Meeting (CM) asked the meeting of Safeguarding Officers on 2nd July to make any recommendations for changes to the Circuit Safeguarding Policy. Church Councils are asked to check that all present and future office holders in the churches have attended a Creating Safer Space session. There are two more detailed in the diary below and CM agreed that from then on two sessions would be arranged a year for new people. Attending a session will be a condition of taking up any church office.

Ledgers Road Church thanked the Circuit for their welcome to worship during the building work and for financial backing received. An extra £6,000 roof work was needed, but they have enjoyed an uplifting first service back in the hall and hope to be back in the worship area in two weeks' time.

Circuit Property Consent was given to Ledgers Road to change the Landlords on the Tenancy agreement for their house next door, to The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes. Other churches were asked to check theirs and liaise with Phil Clack and Phil Mount in the next month if a change is needed.

Action on discovery of drug taking materials in any church: Rev Gary Homewood spoke from an experience of this, and stated that all churches should be prepared and ensure no-one is put in harm's way. Once found, the Church Council is legally responsible for the disposal of this hazardous waste:

- Do not pick up or sweep up.
- Provide strong rubber gloves and specialist sharps container to be collected by a registered organisation for incineration of hazardous waste – look up *Clinical Waste* on the Internet to find a local firm.
- Report any such incident to the police.

Reminder: if anyone finds themselves alone on church premises they should ensure all doors are locked and that someone knows where they are. Please ensure Church Councils are aware of this.

Circuit Independent Examiner is wanted to check the Circuit accounts and so save on audit costs. Please ask anyone who might do this and is not a member of Circuit Meeting to contact Chris Wren for more details.

Gift Aid on Small Donations Scheme (GASDS) is available on individual cash donations of £20 or less not already gift aided. Need to ensure donors put just one week's money in each envelope if needed to keep within this the limit. Phil Mount will be emailing a sample collection slip to treasurers and has more information.

Minister's Sabbatical: Rev Gary Homewood is in the 10th year of his ministry and on sabbatical this June, July and August. He will be resident but is not to be contacted by email, letter, telephone or text during this time.

Ministerial Development reviews have been completed with Ed Filmore, Mary Hall and Peter Hardiment as the lay reviewers.

Annual Circuit Appointments for 2013/14: Phil Clack was confirmed as Circuit Property Steward and Connie Jeffery as the fifth Representative to Synod. We are still looking for a fifth Circuit Steward - please contact Rev Andrew Baker.

Circuit Directory: This will be sent to churches in July or August with one copy for everyone named therein. Do not leave copies lying around. Church Council Secretaries to ask new officers for permission to include their details and then send these to Phil Mount for inclusion.

Circuit Prayer Diary is proving a useful circuit resource. Please ensure a copy of this is available on every lectern. CM to ask the Local Preachers' Meeting to encourage its use.

Eton Wick church requested help with stewarding over this summer for either morning or evening once a month. Please take back this request to members in your churches. Contact Rev Sonia Hicks or Phil Clack.

MRDF Rev Sonia Hicks challenged us to make a difference for the 1 in 8 who will go to bed hungry tonight by supporting this charity working to empower smaller groups – Join or pray for The Big IF event in London on Saturday, 8th June or hold a Fair Feast event, perhaps at harvest, to fund raise. Resources from Sonia or on the web.

Deacon Andy Packer highlighted the Men's Breakfast meeting in Slough starting 8 am on 15th June, the Big Saturday event in Baylis Park in August, Street Angels in Slough, plans to use Ledgers Road with the YMCA, and prayers for a place to sleep for recently released prisoners.

Our Vision for the Circuit in the coming year. Rev Andrew Baker spoke of the theme of "Becoming a Learning Church" and the search for suitable materials to use as a network across the circuit for small groups to rethink how we can be learning and growing disciples through reading, house group meetings and writing about individual faith journeys.

Circuit Services The Easter Offering Service was good with about 65 attending. The monthly summer services will be outside, weather permitting. Churches are asked to liaise with Sonia or Andy over the Circuit Prayer Day. All who have been touched by the ministry of Rev Heather Noel-Smith are invited to her retirement service on 4th July. Please send cheques payable to *High Street Methodist Church* to Felicity Kendon.

Circuit Greetings to be sent to Heather and to Rev Jan Cotman on their retirements, Rev Jack Roberts moving to be near his daughter Hazel, and Rev Michael Smith, the Maidenhead and Windsor Area Dean, on his appointment as Canon Pastor at York.

Thanks were given to Phil Mount and Ruth James for their service as Circuit Stewards over the past six years.

MHA Sunday: Daphne Hogg asked for churches to make good use of the materials provided for this, celebrating 70 years of care.

Dates for Diaries please see also diary of forthcoming events on website:

Tue 2 nd July	Church Safeguarding Officers Meeting	7.45 pm	at	Windsor
Thu 4 th July	Celebration of Heather Noel-Smith's ministry	7 pm	at	High Street
Sat 13 th July	Creating Safer Space Foundation Module	10 - 1	at	St Mark's
Wed 25 th September	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	at	St Andrew's
Sat 28 th September	Circuit Prayer Day starting	4 pm	at	St Andrew's
Sat 5 th October	Creating Safer Space Foundation Module	10 - 1	at	Eton Wick
Wed 20 th November	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	at	Cookham Rise
Thu 27 th February 2014	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	at	High Street
Wed 21 st May 2014	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	at	Old Windsor

The meeting closed with thanks to our hosts and the Blessing at 9.25 pm.