

The Methodist Church Thames Valley Circuit Meeting
7.45 pm Thursday 24th November 2016 at St Mark's Crescent Methodist Church

Minutes

Note: CA stands for Church Action needed.

Present Rev Sonia Hicks plus 2 other Circuit Ministers, 5 Circuit Stewards, and 25 other members and 3 observers as listed in the register of attendees. Apologies from 18 members noted there.

Keriann Belcher and Jean Kelly spoke to the meeting about Slough Refugee Support

Agenda Agreed as distributed with the addition of an item about the Staines and Feltham Circuit.

Minutes of last meeting were agreed – subject to the invitation to Rev Gary Homewood and Rev Margaret Dudley being as a Circuit Presbyterian rather than Circuit Minister.

Matters arising

Confirmation on contents in Circuit safe

Certificates of registration as Place of Worship and for the solemnisation of marriages have been checked by the Circuit Superintendent and the Senior Circuit Steward.

Message from Chris Maskell:

“The High Street Church Council gave its retrospective approval to the lease renewal negotiations in respect of the first floor office accommodation in Kingsway Chambers, details of which I gave to the Circuit Meeting in September. The lease renewal negotiations for the shop unit which, the meeting will recall, have been triggered early by the tenant, have made no further progress since September. I will update Members again at the next Circuit Meeting.”

Conversation on the Work of God in this Circuit.

- Eileen Chislett gave a presentation on how St Mark's Crescent Methodist Church's mission (to be a welcoming church that makes a difference in people's lives, building relationships with each other and others in the community) has guided their 20:20 vision project for the 600 people who come through the doors each week. The Circuit Meeting warmly endorsed their application for planning permission for changes to the building.
- Pam Proctor from High Street spoke about the Maidenhead Living Advent calendar events happening at 5pm each day, and invited all to come to the 3pm Christingle Service on 24th December.
- Chris Wren spoke of the well-used building at Woodlands Park and the work with the local churches on events for all in the area.
- David Ridley spoke of the new small inclusive group of members from the three churches working together, asking the church councils for a steer on ways in which talents and resources could be shared to enhance worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism. Please give ideas of what has worked in your churches to David. **CA.**
- St Andrew's Slough invited all to a “Bring & Share” party, and to take part in a reverse Advent calendar activity – donating a tin each day to the local food bank. They have a source of A3 colouring sheets which are a good intergenerational activity.

- Old Windsor are taking their Carol Service into the local Day Centre.
- Ledgers Road singers are going to Woodlands Park.
- Burnham offer breakfast to all on the Sundays when their minister is preaching.
- Eton Wick held a joint service with the local Anglican and Catholic churches on the green.

Safeguarding

Deacon Andy Packer reported that our four safeguarding trainers have recently attended a “Training for Trainers”, and will be announcing dates for next year’s refresher courses and the updated “Creating Safer Space Foundation” module in mid-January. He reminded churches to keep policies and practices up to date and keep aware. **CA.**

2015-16 Annual Reports

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

Approach by churches in the Staines & Feltham Circuit

Rev Sonia Hicks explained that, following the merger this September of two circuits in our district to form the new Wye Valley Circuit, the Staines & Feltham Circuit have decided the time has come to disband. Four of its ten churches have made an approach to join our circuit. These are the Staines church with one minister, Egham United URC & Methodist, Wendover Road and Englefield Green united with Anglicans. The minister is Rev Andrew Reed who has already worked as a tutor for our Local Preachers and there are half a dozen local preachers associated with the churches. Englefield Green has a Village Centre. In response, the CLT have set up a working party to consider issues to explore – including the variety of LEPs and alternating ministries, as well as financial viability and circuit equipment. A Circuit Meeting member asked whether there is an URC minister in Windsor currently. Further questions should be sent to the Circuit Meeting Secretary to forward to the working party. **CA.**

Finance

The audited Circuit Accounts for the year to 31st August 2016 showing General Fund net income of £11,930 were presented and adopted unanimously with one abstention. This is £21,000 more than budget due to mainly to manse rental income received from the HSBC Circuit and a reduction in the sums spent on our manses including lack of any removals cost. After transfers to meet our reserves policy the balance on the General Fund was £56,700 compared with the £25,000 needed to manage risk and meet unplanned expenditure.

Members of the Circuit Meeting were thanked for giving their personal details as trustees of the Circuit bank account in response to a request by HSBC bank. The CLT has asked for a letter confirming that this information would be kept confidential and not used for any other purpose.

The budget for 2017/18 will be discussed at the Treasurers Meeting on 11th January. The treasurer, Chris Wren, was thanked warmly for his work.

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 8th March. Please contact her with any queries. **CA.**

Circuit Greetings

The meeting asked for letters to be sent to Mrs Pat Smith and Mrs Veronica Mullix, and also to Rev Gary Homewood and family. We are encouraged to send cards to Rev Homewood who has been signed off work until 8th January – but no emails nor phone calls. A risk assessment is being made for a phased return to work.

AOB

- **Provision of gluten free bread for Holy Communion.** The Local Preachers' Meeting asked that Church Councils consider requesting communion stewards to use gluten free bread for all. This is available in supermarkets and the Genius brand was one recommended.
- **TMCP** bequest statements are now ready – log in needed.
- **Extra Dates** Please see the Circuit Website. Ian Haggarty is co-ordinating the next plan dates.

The meeting closed with thanks to our hosts and the saying of the Grace together at 9.35 pm.