

The Methodist Church Thames Valley Circuit Meeting
7.45 pm Tuesday 13 March 2018 at Ledgers Road Methodist Church, Slough

Minutes

Note: CA. stands for Church Action needed.

Present: Rev. Sonia Hicks plus three other Ministers, six Circuit Stewards and 33 other members as listed on the register of attendees. Two Observers were present. Apologies were received from 12 members noted there. 7 members did not attend or give their apologies.

1. Welcome and opening devotions.

The meeting opened with a reading from John 10, starting at verse 1 – the parable of the shepherd. Current Circuit theme is “Life in all its fullness”. This was followed by singing “Be Thou my vision” and a prayer.

2. Membership of meeting and apologies for absence.

Membership: Circuit Meeting Secretary to circulate current attendance list and ask church representatives to check that it is accurate and fill in any vacancies shown. CA.

Apologies: David Ridley, Rev. Dr. Malcolm White, Naomi Sharp, Kathy Rickman, Pam Proctor, Phil Mount, Janine Amphlett.

3. Agreement of the agenda; notification of items requested for AOB:

Additional items to the agenda:

- **District Consent and ancillary properties** under Property;
- **Data Protection** before appointments;
- **Mission Grant** item would now be under Finance;
- **Conversation on Strategic Planning** under AOB.

4. Minutes of last meeting (as already circulated) and matters arising.

Agreed and signed as a correct record after amending item 13 – Joan Carr had died.

5. Matters arising not on the agenda below

- **Staines & Feltham Update:** The disbandment of the S&F Circuit would not happen for the moment as the Teddington Circuit, who were to have taken some of the S&F churches, has withdrawn from the process. The re-alignment was now in abeyance. Another Circuit may be approached.
- **Stationing 2018:** No match was made for the Maidenhead section of the Circuit. The process for the 2019 stationing would start soon.
- **Candidate for the Presbyteral Ministry Update:** Jon Garde had been to the District Candidate Committee who had pronounced him as a good candidate and who would now go forward to the Connexional Committee the following Tuesday.
- **Colnbrook & Poyle Right of Way:** This had now been resolved and all parties concerned had signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

6. Local Preachers' Meeting

Jon Garde, who has to be an accredited Local Preacher before becoming a presbyter, has undertaken a second interview and a trial service. Local Preachers' meeting has unanimously proposed that Circuit Meeting approve his accreditation. CM approved. There would be a Service of Accreditation on Easter Sunday in the evening at Windsor Church to include Holy Communion. Dr John Long has been invited to preach. All other evening services in the Circuit to be cancelled/postponed to maximise good attendance.

7. Safeguarding Report and Annual Review of the Circuit Safeguarding Policy

- At the District Safeguarding meeting the following had been discussed: new safeguarding Leadership Module; changes in the DBS umbrella organisation with the folding up of the Churches Agency for Safeguarding; the District Safeguarding group.
- Another refresher course had been held. A further course to be held in June.
- A Creating Safer Space Foundation Module was being arranged for Saturday, 21 April – further information and booking forms to follow.
- Named co-ordinators to be encouraged, particularly by their Church Councils, to attend the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinators meetings.
- The District Safeguarding Officer has raised the issue that Church Stewards, or those in a leadership role within their churches, are required by the Methodist Church to have a DBS check.

Rev Sonia Hicks to sign current Circuit Safeguarding Policy. As the new policy has not been circulated, this will be dealt with at our next meeting. **CA**

8. Finance - Treasurer's Report

Finance - Treasurer's Report (circulated previously with agenda):

Mr Chris Wren presented the budget for TVC churches for 2018/19, as previously circulated. Circuit Meeting was asked to approve the Budget and Assessment for 2018/19. The Meeting approved. It was noted that this would be Mr Wren's last report and he was thanked for the work he had done as Circuit Treasurer.

Mission Grant

Lynn Packer, who was just finishing her first year at Bible College, had requested the CLT to approve £1,000 towards the cost of a trip associated with her course at the Bible College. CLT had recommended that the CM approve half of that amount (£500). Rev Sonia Hicks said that it was important that laity were supported as well as Ordained Staff. Following a discussion, it was decided that a decision be postponed until further information was available, in relationship to Methodist doctrine and the doctrine espoused by Charis Bible College. Sonia and Lynn to provide a document with the information with a request for a vote to be taken at the May CM meeting. **CA**.

This document to be circulated with the minutes of this CM. **CA**

[Please see postscript at the end of these minutes]

9. Property

(Details circulated previously with agenda.)

Presentation and approval of Property Schedule D

All Property Schedules D returns had been completed, except for St. Andrew's who were required to get theirs signed off by 31 March. **CA.**

This meant that Joyce Brown could not sign off that all schedules until St. Andrew's had completed theirs. **CM**

The CM authorised Joyce to sign them off once St. Andrew's has been completed.

Quinquennials: 3 quinquennials had been completed and the reports were due in on Thursday.

Priesthaus:

An offer from a private buyer had been received but our legal department had advised that we were unable to accept it as the Circuit is a charity and the property had to be put on the open market. All processes have now been completed and estate agents, Hamptons, were compiling a brochure to put the property on the market soon at £1M.

Ancillary Properties and District Consent:

Consent had been given to renew the lease for Cookham. The District Property Secretary had given further clarification to the Superintendent. The District is only concerned with the number of manses being rented out, and not ancillary buildings. Therefore, in future, churches requesting consent from the District for renewal of lease agreements should not encounter difficulties as they have recently.

10. Data Protection and the Methodist Church

On 25th May a new set of Data Protection legislation comes into effect and guidelines will be issued by TMCP. If we intend to use the data given for additional purposes, then this would mean that written consent would be needed. However, keeping pastoral lists is considered a 'proportionate' reason for holding this data and WILL NOT require written consent. The Circuit and its churches will have to follow the TMCP guidelines and we have to show that we are organising this by mapping the data we hold now. Templates are being produced and are available on the TMCP website. The new legislation requires that every organisation has a Data Controller. This role will be fulfilled by TMCP in most instances except data held for complaints and safeguarding. For these two areas, the Data Controller is the Methodist Council.

11. Annual Appointments.

Circuit appointments commence from 1st September each year, except for the Circuit Invitation Committee which starts now. Additional appointments to note:

- Anne Haggarty: re-appointed as a representative to Synod; Glenice White appointed as a representative to Synod with Peter White as the substitute;
- Liz Tottingham has completed her term as Circuit Steward. The remaining Stewards are Connie Jeffery, Glenice White, Charles Tubman, Elsa Daniel. It was agreed that two more Circuit Stewards should be appointed to bring the total to 7. No names to confirm yet.
- Other appointments included Sue Le Page as Circuit Treasurer, Joyce Brown as Circuit Property Secretary, Diana Phipps as Circuit Meeting Secretary.

All the above appointments were carried by CM *en bloc*.

12. Circuit Greetings.

Circuit greetings to be sent to Roger Umpleby who not only played the organ at High Street but also throughout the Circuit. Roger has just come back home from a spell in hospital. **CA.**

13. Any other business.

St. Mark's Crescent 2020 Vision Update

The April 2018 start date has been delayed until next year. Resources are limited. The estimated total is £530K with £277K already committed and, with interest added, comes to £365K. St. Mark's has raised £30K themselves and has received £135K from grants. Churches in the Circuit were thanked for their contributions.

Conversation on Strategic Planning

Rev Sonia Hicks outlined some thoughts to be discussed further at the next CM regarding strategic planning for the future:

- Shortage of Ordained Staff in the Circuit makes the situation untenable, but we will try again to get another member of staff through 2019 stationing;
- If Circuit has to manage with less Ordained Staff, churches will have to consider what other forms of ministry would be available, what outreach could continue, where staff would be employed. Also, how any changes in the current Ordained Staff would affect the plans of each church in 5, 10, 20 years' time. Each church needs to talk and pray about this.
- SH drew attention to what had happened at the S&F Circuit recently. It was a strong Circuit just 10 years ago. TVC needed to look ahead.

14. Dates for Diaries.

Thurs 24 May 2018	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Burnham
Tues 11 Sept 2018	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Hampshire Avenue
Wed 14 Nov 2018	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Windsor
Thurs 21 Mar 2019	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Colnbrook & Poyle
Tues 14 May 2019	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	St. Andrew's

15. Closing thanks and prayer.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm. Rev Sonia Hicks thanked Ledgers Road for its hospitality. The meeting finished with a prayer.

Postscript

The Superintendent met with Mrs Lynn Packer regarding her request for financial support from the CM towards her Mission Trip with Charis Bible College. Lynn has withdrawn her request for financial funding but still wants to fundraise as a private individual. As there was no perceived backing from the CM, it was agreed that the Circuit would not circulate any publicity, but that Lynn was free to write to the churches herself asking that posters be displayed. It would be then up to the individual churches if they wanted to mention the event in their notices or not.

Editorial note: minor changes have been made to this website version of these minutes to aid understanding for those not at the meeting. Subject to the minutes being accepted at the next meeting.