

Minutes of the Thames Valley Circuit Meeting held at St Andrew's Methodist Church on Tuesday, 14th May, 2019, at 7.45 pm

Note: CA – Church Action required.

Welcome

Sonia welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Sabbatical Report

Andy gave his Sabbatical report, which included the opening devotions. He used his Sabbatical to look at living in community, reflecting on the various experiences, and relating them to his own experience of Diaconal ministry.

He described the four communities he visited (Lindisfarne, Iona, Lambeth Palace, Caldey Island), and illustrated his talk with photographs, interspersed with devotional meditations.

Membership of meeting and apologies for absence

- The membership of the meeting was agreed. It is recorded on the attendance sheet in the minute book.
- Those attending were the Superintendent, 4 other members of staff, 4 Circuit Stewards and 21 other members.
- 12 apologies were received, as listed on the attendance sheet; 7 members neither attended nor sent apologies.
- Rev Margaret Dudley was on Sabbatical.
- There were 6 observers including Richard and Jean Whiffen (from Quench bookshop) and Pauline Poole (Circuit Administrator)

Agreement of the agenda; notification of items requested for AOB

Two items for AOB were notified: extra resources and carbon footprint.

Minutes of last meeting (as already circulated)

The minutes of the last Circuit Meeting with the amendment sent out with the agenda were agreed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

Connie said that the Circuit has a new solicitor (with Methodist experience), and that it was hoped that the purchase of Sutton Avenue would be completed by the end of June.

Matters arising

- Circuit Administrator – now in place. Sonia introduced Pauline Poole.
- Circuit Directory – requests for updates, etc, during June CA
- Annual Report – requests for information during July; the new version to be ready for the September Circuit Meeting. Pauline Poole to liaise with Anne and Ian about both this and the Directory. CA

Safeguarding Report

Glenice reported that there was nothing new to bring to the attention of the meeting. She thanked all the Church Safeguarding Officers for their work.

Reports

- There were no written reports to receive.
- Anne gave a brief report on the Rural Ministry Workshop held last Saturday
- Easter Offering Service – Brenda Cheeseman reported that this had been an uplifting time of fellowship both during the service and the meal afterwards. Anne Browse, a former MWiB Vice President, was an inspiring preacher. Sonia queried why the service had been on a Saturday afternoon, and was told that that was the only time the speaker could come. Total so far is £1929.36 plus Gift Aid.

Financial Statement and Budget 2019 - 2020

Sue gave the meeting an update about our reserves. £19,000 from the Advance Fund will be used to help fund the new manse. The Manse fund has been built up by £2,500 per annum per manse. However, as maintenance costs continue to increase, Sue proposed that this should be raised to £3,000 pa. Rev Dr Malcolm White seconded the motion, and it was carried with no member voting against.

The General Reserve Fund remains set at £25,000. We agreed to look again at the reserves in September.

Sue requested all members of all churches to review their giving before the start of September. CA

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

St Mark's Crescent Building Project

Ed Filmore gave a presentation about this church's building project. As the building required maintenance work which could have cost £200,000, their members decided on a total rethink, which led to their 2020 Vision project.

The church is well used, and has a footfall of 500-600 per week, and – in addition to the work required – there were safeguarding issues to be addressed – such as occasions where both adults and children used the premises for different activities.

Through hard work, and being able to source grants, by January 2019 everything was in place. The work started in April, and will take about 6 months to complete. The total cost is £551,000.

St Mark's have raised £38,000 themselves, and grants from a number of sources have brought the amount needed in interest-free loans down to £26,000, with more grants still to come.

Ed asked the circuit to continue to support St Mark's through attending events, making donations, and – above all – prayer. He expressed the grateful thanks of St Mark's members for helping to make their vision a reality.

On behalf of the circuit, Connie offered our congratulations on making the project happen.

Property Report

Joy's written report had been circulated. All the on-line property returns have been completed. She reminded churches about contacting Neil Barr about quinquennials, and added that TMCP have set up a Panel of Surveyors similar to the Panel of Solicitors. These are companies trained by TMCP so that Circuits / Churches may have smoother dealings in future.

- Eton Wick have asked for permission to seek new tenants for their cottage, with a rent of about £1000 per month. This was approved.
- Upton Road is now on the market for £575,000, and we are hoping for £550,000. The only offer so far (£535,000) was rejected as too low.
- The work being done at Poplars Grove will be completed by the end of July.
- Spring Lane needs new stair carpeting.
- Clarence Road – the cracking has been caused by the next door house.

Joy has prepared, and members have been sent, a job specification for the Circuit Property Steward's role. She said that now we have an administrator, some of the on-line work will be done by Pauline. CA

The meeting expressed its grateful thanks to Joy for all her hard work on property during her years as Property Steward.

Carbon Footprint

Andy challenged all the churches to read his paper and act on it! He asked that all churches review their situation, and be ready to report to the November Circuit Meeting on what they are doing, and what changes they are making.
CA

Annual Circuit Appointments 2019/20

Joy Brown, having stepped down as Circuit Property Steward, has agreed to become a new Circuit Steward. Andy proposed this, and Anne seconded it. The meeting agreed.

Sonia expressed the meeting's grateful thanks to Elsa for her work as a Circuit Steward.

She also expressed the whole Circuit's grateful thanks to Rev Julie Underwood for her work in the circuit for the last two years, particularly with St Mark's Crescent. She brought an enthusiasm to everything she did, and will be greatly missed.

Circuit Greetings

There were no requests. However, the meeting acknowledged Sonia's birthday next week!

Any other business

Sonia brought a number of resources to the attention of the meeting:

- Talking Jesus – a new resource for evangelism CA
- Thy Kingdom Come – from Ascension to Pentecost, and the Methodist booklet, 9 days of prayer CA
- Bible Month – studying Colossians CA

She also told the meeting about the Marriage and Relationships report from Connexion, which every circuit and church will discuss. She said that she was looking for facilitators for the meeting, which would (at circuit level) be an open meeting, probably on a Saturday.
CA

Dates for Diaries

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

Sonia closed the meeting with thanks to St Andrew's, and a prayer at 9.15 pm