

## **Minutes of the Thames Valley Circuit Meeting held at Eton Wick Methodist Church on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019, at 7.45 pm**

*Note: CA – Church Action required.*

### **Welcome and opening devotions**

Sonia welcomed everyone to the meeting, and Margaret led us in a service of Holy Communion.

### **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, 5 other members of staff, 1 supernumerary minister, 6 Circuit Stewards and 24 other members. Rev Conrad Hicks, Head of Global Relationships at Connexion, was welcomed to this, his first Circuit Meeting in our circuit.
- 9 apologies were received, as listed on the attendance sheet; 7 members neither attended nor sent apologies.
- There were 4 observers – Jo and Peter Webb, and Peter and Valerie Morris.

### **Agreement of the agenda; notification of items requested for AOB**

No items were requested under AOB, and the previously circulated agenda was agreed.

### **Minutes of last meeting (as already circulated) and matters arising**

These were, with one minor correction, agreed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

### **Matters arising**

Sonia reported that, although no-one except herself had been into the circuit safe, she had not yet checked the contents with Glenice, and would report back once it has been done.

### **Stationing**

Glenice reported that, in the first round of stationing this year, we have been matched with Rev Vicci Davidson, who will be visiting the circuit this coming Saturday. Glenice reminded the meeting that members of the Circuit Invitation Committee would be gathering on Saturday to meet Vicci, and on Sunday to decide on whether to extend the invitation.

Sonia then announced that she had been matched with and had visited the Wembley Circuit. She and they have agreed to the match.

Sonia also said that the outhouse at the manse, which had been demolished by a car, had been rebuilt.

In order to allow the CLT more time to discuss circuit affairs, the date of the next Circuit Meeting has been changed to Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2020.

### **Safeguarding**

Kathy reported that there was nothing new to bring to the meeting. The one or two people who still needed Foundation or Refresher training would be approached individually.

The meeting offered its grateful thanks to Kathy for her hard and continuing work with this important and difficult aspect of our work.

## Finance

Sue reported that the 2018/9 Circuit Accounts would be presented to the March meeting. She explained that our existing internet banking account permits only one name, while Standing Orders say there must be two signatories on every bank account. She is investigating how this can be done with our existing bank. Keith Machin and Glenice White were proposed and accepted as extra names for the account.

Sue said that the reserves policy will be brought to the next meeting.

The circuit telephone and internet policy for the staff has been revised. It is attached as Appendix 1.

Sonia asked the circuit to consider a web-based package for plan-making – Chrestos – which should remove the problems of the manual plan-making system. This allows each preacher to enter available dates, and any restrictions (eg number of services in total). The basic package costs £9 per month. The proposal was carried. There is more detail on the paper in Appendix 3.

## Property

- There were no property consents to consider at this meeting.
- Joy said that schedules have to be completed and presented to Church Councils by February. Three churches have completed their returns, and three have not yet started. **CA**
- Keith (Machin) reported that the members of St Mark's are now back in full possession of their building, which is looking very good. He (and Sonia) mentioned three events which will be at St Mark's in the near future:
  - Swing into Christmas, on Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> December.
  - Thames Valley Voices Circuit Christmas Carol Service on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December.
  - St Mark's Pantomime, Babes in the Wood, on Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February.
- The meeting asked that a card of greetings be sent to St Mark's.

## Matters from CLT

- The question of information displayed on Church Cradle Rolls had been raised as a potential GDPR issue. See Appendix 2. **CA**
- Role descriptions and GDPR mapping information. Pauline had been asked to let all churches know the situation with these two items, but several churches had not received the information. Sonia said she would get the information re-sent. **CA**
- Lay employee contracts. We have an obligation to offer equal pay, and good supervision practice, and a contract to our various lay employees, whether circuit or individual church employees. There is confusion and Anne Ellis offered to start a small group to unpick the problems. Peter White offered to join. They will start by establishing what is being done currently, and go on from there. Sonia will ask other Superintendents in the Western Area when she meets them next. **CA**

## Circuit Strategy

Sonia said that the staff had taken this work back, and, as reported at the last Circuit Meeting, are working within their sections.

- Margaret reported that the Windsor section has a series of four events in the pipe-line between now and next May.
- Carmel reported that High Street had decided to stop their Messy Church, and use their resources in conjunction with St Mark's.
- Anne E reported that progress is very slow, and they are also considering the situation about Colnbrook & Poyle.

Sonia said that all this is taking longer than planned because the staff have many other things to do as well. The question was raised as to whether individual approaches to people might produce more responses.

### Carbon Footprint

- Andy thanked everyone who had responded – see Appendix 4.
- It was suggested that all members of the congregations should see the document, and all churches take note of ideas they could use. **CA**
- It was proposed that a circuit review of where we are takes place every two years, starting at church level with the GCM in 2021, and reporting to the Circuit Meeting that year. **CA**
- St Andrew's are becoming an eco-congregation. Anne E suggested that all churches Googled eco-congregation to see what is involved, including the checklist of things to consider. Sonia wondered whether there were any eco-circuits, and whether Thames Valley could become one. **CA**

### Circuit Greetings

These will be sent to:

- Jean Barnett, whose daughter is seriously ill
- John Long who has moved out of the circuit
- Mary Hall who is unwell
- Connie Jeffery (our former Senior Circuit Steward, etc) who is leaving the circuit shortly. Members signed a card for Connie.

Sonia said that after the Welcome Service at High Street, she had received a letter of thanks from the Deputy Mayor of Maidenhead, for making him feel so welcome!

She also thanked all those who helped in any way while she and Conrad were coping after the death of Conrad's mother.

### AOB

Sue Trout gave out fliers for the Live Nativity at Windsor on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 11 am – 2 pm.

### Dates for Diaries

Tues 17 Mar 2020	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	High Street <b>NB date change</b>
Wed 20 May 2020	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Old Windsor
Thurs 17 Sep 2020	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Ledgers Road
Tues 10 Nov 2020	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	St Mark's
Wed 17 Feb 2021	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Woodlands Park
Thurs 13 May 2021	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	Hampshire Avenue
Tues 14 Sep 2021	Circuit Meeting	7.45 pm	St Andrew's

### Closing thanks and prayer

Sonia closed the meeting at 9.15 pm with thanks to Eton Wick, and we finished with the Grace.

## **Appendix 1                      Circuit Telephone and Internet Policy**

The Circuit will provide a landline with a UK calls package and internet connection to each manse.

Presbyters are to reimburse the circuit for any calls not covered by the package, i.e. international calls and any calls lasting more than 59 minutes.

Mobile phone calls made on Circuit business can be claimed but must be itemised to avoid being taxed.

## **Appendix 2                      Church Cradle Rolls and GDPR**

Subject to certain restrictions, churches can still display on their premises Cradle Rolls with name and date of Christening.

There are some restrictions. If your Cradle Roll posters include any of the following information, they must be removed from public view:

- Date of birth
- Address at time of Baptism
- Any other information not relevant to the child (e.g. names of parents/guardians)

If you are in the habit of sending out cards/gifts to children who have been Baptised in the church, perhaps until the 5th birthday, consent may be required to do this. "Legitimate use" is not an option here.

A card or gift can be sent for up to two years following the Baptism. Thereafter consent from the parent/guardian is required. This could take the form of a simple note inside the card asking if they wish to continue to receive the card/gift from you. If they respond "yes", you have their consent. If you do not hear back or they reply in the negative, you must destroy any record you hold of that child (other than the Cradle Roll poster or Baptism Register). Retaining this information beyond the two years and without consent constitutes a breach in the regulations.

## Appendix 3

## Chrestos

### Info regarding the Chrestos (thenmedia.co.uk) Planning module and website design and maintenance

Chrestos provides:

- Cloud based storage of contacts, documents and dates
- Online plan making
- A content management system for Chrestos built websites
- A tool for managing social networking
- Chrestos is leased rather than bought. Different combinations of tools are available and charged for per month. Most customers pay by monthly standing order.

**Planning module:** Already agreed by CLT is separate cost to website.

Looks amazing having sat in one planning meeting.

Only authorized people can access, update.

The Time Element will be in setting up information: Preachers dates, availabilities and preferences and service times at all the Churches.

Each Church, if authorized, could set up their own, as could each Preacher or it could be done centrally.

The grid looks easy to work with. Because it is online based, a number of people can access and work on it at the same time,

It tracks the number of appointments given to any one person against the number of appointments they have agreed to do.

It also gives history of visits to each Church.

Because all dates, availabilities and preferences are pre-entered the job could be done centrally.

Could not really say how long it would take, but it would definitely be quicker and clearer than the current system.

The final plan can be printed .pdf or spreadsheet and can also be shared electronically and uploaded to website.

2019 Costs per month:

Basic Server & bandwidth Telephone and email support	£11
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Plan-maker Churches Periods Availability Planning Grid Service codes People (restricted)	£ 9
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VAT at 20% is to be added to all these prices.

## **Website:**

Chrestos designs and builds websites for circuits and churches. Accompanying such websites is an online content management system that makes for easy website maintenance. Editing page content, writing news stories, uploading images, managing a calendar and arranging files for downloading is all done easily with Chrestos.

Circuit websites need to be attractive, informative and up-to-date. The initial build is usually the easy part; keeping them fresh and accurate is often more difficult. Chrestos website tools (along with a Chrestos website) can make the job much easier.

To see a Chrestos circuit website go to <http://dappleshire.chrestos.co.uk>. The Dappleshire Circuit is a fictional circuit we use for demonstration purposes. The Dappleshire Circuit website displays the kinds of pages we are most frequently requested to supply.

The Chrestos website editing tools are an option when building a Chrestos package. (They only work with a ThenMedia supplied Chrestos website.)

The sample website they show is bright, friendly and welcoming, yet simple.

With the Database and Library app documents can be “Cloud” stored and easily retrieved by those with locally determined permissions.

Contact information tends to get duplicated with different officials maintaining different lists. Chrestos encourages the rationalising of this circuit data by storing it online and making it available to permitted individuals.

**COST: £9.00 per month**

The website It includes a clear and concise Circuit Diary, which people have been asking for.

## **LOUDHAILER**

Our 'Loudhailer' tool simplifies social networking. If you're posting to Facebook and/or maintaining a Twitter feed, Loudhailer allows you to post or tweet from within Chrestos. A news story prepared for your website can be transformed into a post or tweet without having to sign-in separately to Facebook or Twitter.

If social networking is important in your circuit/church, then Loudhailer will be an indispensable tool.

'Loudhailer' is an option when building a Chrestos package.

## **2019 Costs subject to 20% VAT.:**

The present price for designing and building a Chrestos website is £600. This is a one-off charge, separate from any monthly fees.

Basic — server space, bandwidth, phone & email support (necessary)	£11.00
Website editing cloud advanced tools	£ 9.00
Loudhailer	£ 9.00
Chrestos Database & Library +	£ 9.00

They offer training onsite at £35 per hour.

Contact details: Our office hours are 09:00 — 17:30 Monday — Friday.

General Enquiries: Phone: 01244478727

Email: [info@thenmedia.co.uk](mailto:info@thenmedia.co.uk)

## Appendix 4

## Carbon Footprint Responses received from the Churches

### Burnham

- We have replaced main doors into the church.
- We have double glazed windows.
- We use a food waste bin which is collected every week.
- Our heating is regulated.
- We never use disposable cups; we use china crockery at all times.

### Colnbrook & Poyle

We will continue to practise the measures put in place which include:

- Reduce the heating so the building is only heated when in use
- Encourage all to utilise the Slough recycle bin

In addition

- We plan to review all items stored in the church and
  - Redistribute items we no longer use keeping the disposal to landfill to the bare minimum by taking items to
    - Charity shops
    - Third world education and worship resources
    - Tool aid
    - The recycle centre
- Stop using single use items when the church is catering
  - To encourage others who cater at funerals to avoid single use items

### Cookham Rise

At our July Church Council Meeting we came up with the following facts for Carbon Footprint:

- Insulation was put in the roof when retiling was done (Note not the whole building which would be far too expensive)
- Our new boilers have reduced gas use and are more efficient
- We can publicise the fact that COSTA does accept re-usable cups and that we are always washing and returning any of their cups which come on our premises. (Costa is 100 yards from the Church.)
- We already have labelled food waste compost bins in the kitchen but could label our general bin 'No food in Here'

### Eton Wick

Eton Wick Church Council has decided to implement the following measures to reduce our carbon footprint:

- Request food waste bin from RBWM
  - Use to reduce landfill after Wednesday lunches.
- Purchase a dedicated recycle bin
  - Have recycle posters up reminding users what can be recycled in our RBWM blue bin.
- Use crockery and cutlery at all times
  - Use no disposable cutlery, bottles or plates etc.
  - Encourage user groups not to use single use materials.
- Change the heating timer so the church is not heated on a Sunday morning.

## **Hampshire Avenue**

1. We have stopped the use of plastic cups/materials.
2. Changing electric lights to LED.
3. The ceiling in the wings will be undergoing full insulation.
4. Underfloor heating in the main Church will be tested for efficiency.
5. Gas/electric to run on timer.
6. Insulated partition considered for the wings of the main Church to maintain heat.

## **High Street Maidenhead**

### *Confession – our sins of omission:*

Like others we have not made this a priority. The request for a report has heightened our awareness that we need to do something.

### *Progress to Date*

1. We are in the process of using up all stocks of single use plastic cups and will in future use only crockery.
2. Of necessity (because we could no longer buy the light bulbs that we need) we have replaced all the light fittings in the sanctuary and moved to energy efficient bulbs. We have yet to evaluate what this means for our energy bills.
3. We are trying to ensure that when we dispose of recyclable items, they go into the correct waste bin. More education and awareness are probably needed.
4. We are only heating those parts of the building which are in use – we have four separate zones. They are each programmed weekly for the required period of time. This is not new.
5. We have referred to information on the Methodist website but have not yet pursued any of the suggestions in greater detail.

### *The Future*

1. We are in serious deliberations about rebuilding our premises. If we do, then the carbon footprint issue will become a design priority
2. In the meantime, we are conscious of the need to raise the general level of awareness of eco-friendly behaviour.
3. We will undertake an energy audit of the premises and develop an appropriate action plan which is affordable.

## **Ledgers Road**

We took the environment into consideration during the refurbishment of our premises a few years ago

- Large, old windows and doors were replaced with new double-glazed ones
- The heating boilers were replaced along with new time clocks and the kitchen facilities upgraded.
- Heavy curtains in the hall help with insulation.
- We continue to replace old bulbs, tubes etc, with modern low energy ones when needed.
- The Church Council recently committed to reduce the use of single-use cutlery and crockery.

## **Old Windsor**

We have a false ceiling in the church.

As a minimum – we are:

- Not using single use drink bottles.
- Not using plastic or polystyrene cups, plates or cutlery.
- Setting the timer appropriately for lighting and heating.
- Recycling as much as possible – including having a green waste bin (garden rubbish, etc).
- Sharing lifts to meetings.
- Printing of documents
  - Only if necessary.
  - Downloading documents to a tablet for a meeting instead of printing them.
  - For personal use, printing on reverse of a finished-with single-sided document.
  - Saving ink by printing with setting at draft, not best.
  - Using narrow margins.

### **St Andrew's**

At our recent Church Council meeting we committed to becoming an Eco Congregation and agreed that this would be our focus:

- Need to focus on becoming an Eco Congregation
- We are stewards of creation – we are responsible for its well-being
- Church Council have committed to becoming an Eco Church and Eco Congregation

### **St Mark's Crescent**

Our 2020 Vision building works have incorporated improved insulation and low-energy lighting in new buildings and the areas connecting the church to the halls.

Where possible (e.g. in toilets), motion activated lighting has also been installed to reduce energy usage.

In addition, neon tube lighting in both church halls and side rooms has been replaced with LED units rated at 50% of the neon tube power ratings. These lights will not only save on energy but also reduce costs of maintenance and replacement bulbs.

Paper/board/plastic and cans are routinely recycled through the RBWM scheme.

### **Windsor**

- Place a recycle bin in the church kitchen
- Use crockery more rather than single-use cups etc
- Car-share wherever possible
- Continue programme of replacing lights with more energy-efficient units