

Thames Valley Circuit Meeting
Tuesday, 17th November 2021, at 7.45 pm
St Mark's Church, Maidenhead.

MINUTES

- 1 Welcome and Opening Devotions** – Vicci welcomed all to the meeting by reading from Mathew 26: 6-13, the story of the anointing at Bethany. The story ends with Jesus' words “Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.” And 2000 years later we do remember. When listening to current news, through this story we are reminded that if we are not worshipping God through this time, what is our purpose? Even in these times we know that as God is faithful to us, we will stay faithful to Him.

- 2 Membership of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**
The membership of the meeting was agreed as recorded on the attendance list, and apologies for absence noted from Mrs Judith Foster, Mrs Marilyn Brown and Mr Keith le Page.

Mr David Ridley, Mrs Liz Tottingham, Mr Dave Tottingham and Mrs Laura Clack were present via zoom. 28 members were present in the room.

Rev Vicci asked the meeting to consider the proposal “That Elanor Davidson, in her role as Circuit Youth Convenor and under the provisions of standing order 510(ix) should become a member of the Circuit Meeting.” The Proposal was carried unanimously.

- 3 Declaration of interests**
4 There were none.

- 4 Agreement of the agenda; notification of items requested for AOB**
No items were requested under AOB, and the previously circulated Agenda was agreed.

- 5 Minutes of last meeting**
The Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as correct. There were no matters arising.

- 6 Matters arising not on the agenda**
There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere.

- 7 Safeguarding Report**
This previously circulated report (**see Appendix 1**) was accepted by the meeting, with no comment or question.

- 8 GDPR** Pauline has been in contact with our district Data Champion. Nothing new to report back. This report was accepted by the meeting, with no comment or question

- 9 Accept other reports already circulated**
 - **Local Preachers (see Appendix 2)** – ratification of Sue Clifford as Local Preachers Secretary. The decision of the Local Preachers meeting to appoint Sue Clifford as Secretary was ratified by the meeting.
 - **Youth Convenor (see Appendix 3)**, accepted by the meeting, with no comment or question.

- 10 Finance**
 - Receipt of the draft financial accounts for the year to 31 August 2021: Sue presented the accounts, as forwarded before the meeting These were accepted without comment or question, subject to approval by the external examiners.

- After conversation with Stewards and Treasurer at Hampshire Avenue, Sue proposed that they be released from the second quarter payment of their assessment. The Circuit is in a strong enough position to absorb this cost. Rev Anne felt that it should be a deferment, not a release. The vote was taken on the grounds that it would be expeditious to vote on the worst-case scenario. The vote to agree the release was unanimous.
- Sue reminded all Treasurers to send her copies of their accounts when they have been signed off.

11 **Property**

- A reminder that (a) online returns are now open and should be “in process” (b) Manse visits are also due, and forms have been sent to the people responsible.
- The appointment of an Interim District Property Secretary, Roger Byard, should help with the backlog of Consents. Contact details have been sent to Property Stewards.
- Major property items will be covered elsewhere.

12 **Good News** (An amendment to the published Agenda.) Rev Margaret shared the good news of the progress with the Community Project hub that is happening in Colnbrook and Poyle Church. Support has come from both Slough Borough Council and the C&P Parish Council in terms of finance for the project, and a team from “Volunteer It Yourself” using unemployed youngsters, and potentially offering them apprenticeships, has come on board. The Post Office, local medical services, local PCSOs and after school activities groups are all keen to take part.

A proposal was put to the meeting that “we allow Colnbrook and Poyle to do what God appears to be telling them to do” in respect of pushing ahead with some internal building work, reconfiguration and refurbishment based on the “fag packet” drawing presented by Revd Margaret. This was carried unanimously.

13 **Matters from CLT** – Joy Brown gave the following:

- Revd Cliff Shanganya and his wife and family, a potential “Match” through Stationing, visited Slough last weekend. It was a very positive visit and a meeting via zoom of CIC on Sunday afternoon resulted in a unanimous decision to invite him to come to this Circuit. He expressed that he really wants to come to Slough. A “Letter of Understanding” is in process and will be sent to District for approval.

We were not successful in finding a matching for the Maidenhead position but everything is being done to find the right solution for the Churches in the area. VD and JB had a really positive meeting with the Warden and Deputy Warden of the Diaconal Order this week.

- Lay Youth Worker – the role has been signed off and advertising has begun.
- Chapel Loan Request – when Rev Margaret sits down in August the Circuit will be looking to sell the Clarence Road Manse and buy another property which meets specifications, which this one does not. This, together with the many problems with the building do not make keeping it an option. Members were directed towards the Methodist Church website which details guidelines for a Presbyterian’s accommodation. CLT looks to the meeting for permission to go to Chapel Loan for a bridging loan if/when appropriate. This was given unanimously.

14 **Circuit Greetings** – Rev Vicci shared that a letter has been received from the Queen in response to one Vicci sent on the death of Prince Philip.

15 **Any other business** – items requested in advance of the meeting. None

16 Dates for Diaries

Thurs 17 Feb 2022	Circuit Meeting	Burnham	7.45 pm
Tues 17 May 2022	Circuit Meeting		7.45 pm
Wed 14 Sep 2022	Circuit Meeting		7.45 pm
Thurs 17 Nov 2022	Circuit Meeting		7.45 pm

17 **Closing thanks and prayer:** Rev Margaret closed in prayer at 8.40 pm

Appendix 1 Safeguarding Report

Most of the focus in the last two months has been on training. The updated Creating safer Space Foundation Module was presented on October 9th and November 6th and attended by 29 people. A third session is being held on December 4th. Further dates are being planned for the New Year. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Eton Wick for hosting the training on many occasions throughout the last 9 years. It has been the ideal place for a smaller group and we have always been made very welcome.

Two Church Safeguarding Officers have participated in the online Advanced Module. This consists of 5 hours personal study online and then a 2 hour group Zoom meeting with other participants and is organised by the Learning Network. The information about how to link into this is being passed on to those who still need to do the course. This is a requirement by the Methodist Church for Local Preachers, Worship Leaders and Church Safeguarding Officers.

At the Circuit Safeguarding Meeting we looked at the roles of Superintendent Ministers, Circuit Safeguarding Officers and Church Safeguarding Officers, the Methodist Safer Recruiting Policy updated in August this year including accessing the procedures for recruiting, and DBS checks - eligibility, type, and self declaration forms.

This is a reminder that the review of the church's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures must take place annually. All churches should by now be using the Connexion Model Policy with no editing, only the insertion of the Church name and the name of the Safeguarding Officer. I would like to re-emphasise that we can be confident in the safeguarding processes of the Methodist Church as long as we continue to regard safeguarding as everyone's responsibility, integral to our churches' culture, and to know who to contact with concerns should they arise.

Kathy Rickman
Circuit Safeguarding Officer

Appendix 2 Local Preachers

1. This report comes to you from Sue Clifford. I have been asked by our Superintendent, Rev Vicci Davidson, to succeed Mr David Ridley as Local Preachers secretary following his resignation on 30th September (which was announced at the last circuit meeting). I have agreed to do this subject to ratification from this meeting.
2. We thank David for his dedicated and tireless work on our behalf over the last 6 years and wish him well in his continuing ministry as a local preacher.
3. We hold in our prayers those local preachers and worship leaders no longer able to lead worship and those whose health is failing or who are facing other challenges and who may have to consider whether they can continue to lead worship in the future. As we ask for God's courage and strength for all our

local preachers and worship leaders, we would ask that if you are aware of anyone in your congregations who you feel may have a call to preach or to lead worship, please prayerfully have a conversation with them and encourage them to explore their calling.

4. On 25th September we held a successful study day at Stubbings. This was led very ably for us by John White of the Learning Network. We spent time in fellowship together and explored various ways of using testimony within worship.
5. Going forward we plan to hold 5 local preachers' meetings per year (previously 4). This will enable us to have more time for conversation, discussion, study, development of our skills and deepening of our knowledge. We have exciting plans which include, among other things, sessions on voice training, digital theology and insights into Timothy.
6. We hold the senior leadership team in our prayers as they explore the possibilities for new ministerial appointments and different ways of worship within the Thames Valley circuit.
7. We have two local preachers 'on trial', Josh Wilson and Mwadzipaura Magaisa. We offer them our encouragement and prayers as they continue with their studies and their prayers.

Sue Clifford MBE

10th November 2021

Appendix 3 Youth Convenor

'ALoud!' is continuing to run from Windsor on alternate Saturdays with 'Shout About' in Burnham and both groups are growing steadily.

Shout About has also begun training a youth team leader in Meg who has been excelling in the role.

'Life the Universe and Pizza' though still small, has doubled its members since the last report as has the Friday 'Liturgical Dance Group'.

We are looking forward to Revd Margret Dudley leading a session of 'Lego Church' at Burnham Methodist Church during their Christmas Tree Festival weekend of the 10th/11th/12th of December

All other youth orientated groups mentioned in the previous report continue to run successfully.