

**Thames Valley Circuit Meeting**  
**16<sup>th</sup> May 2023, at 7.45 pm**  
**Colnbrook and Poyle Methodist Church**  
**Circuit Meeting Minutes**

**Rev Vicci welcomed everyone to the meeting.** Jason Yannacopoulos read from the book of Acts about Jesus' Ascension into Heaven. Rev Vicci drew a link between young people leaving their home base and going out into the world where their thoughts and opinions are influenced by the people they meet there and the experiences they have, and how when they return to the family home they have changed, and the dynamics of the home change as a result and Jesus leaving His heavenly home and coming and spending time here on earth. She posed the question "on His return to Heaven, was Heaven changed because of He had lived amongst us?"

We gather because we believe that Jesus came and lived among us and left a pattern for life, the gift of Eternity, and the Holy Spirit – and lived out what it means to be human. We try to live this out while seeing also what it means to be Divine.

- 1 **The membership of the meeting was agreed.** It is recorded on the attendance sheet in the minute book.  
Those attending were the Superintendent, 3 other members of staff, 6 Circuit Stewards and 18 other members. 11 apologies were received, as listed on the attendance sheet. 8 members neither attended nor sent apologies.
- 2 **Declaration of interests** were submitted by St Mark's (item 2 Finance) and Cookham Rise (item 6 Finance)
- 4 **The Agenda was agreed** with no other items requested for AOB.
- 5 **Minutes of last meeting** were accepted and duly signed.
- 6 **There were no matters arising** not on the Agenda.
- 7 **EDI** Vicci reminded the Meeting that EDI training is Mandatory for Presbyters, Local Preachers, Circuit Stewards and Church Stewards. The training is online. The Link has been sent to those needing it, but Sue Clifford or Pauline Poole can provide it to any who cannot find it. Please let Pauline Poole know when you have completed the training. For those who are unable to access the training online, there will be in person sessions arranged. Please let Pauline Poole know if you are one of those.
- 8 **Safeguarding Report** The Safeguarding Report was circulated ahead of the Meeting. In addition, Vicci reminded people that the Minister cannot be the Safeguarding Officer of a Church.

The Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed. The Meeting agreed to adopt the revised Policy. It was also agreed to appoint Kathy Rickman as Safeguarding Office and Sue Clifford as Assistant.

- 9 GDPR** Pauline Poole reported that most of the churches have submitted the Annual GDPR Audit which has to be completed by the end of May. There are three churches currently outstanding and Pauline was asked to chase them.
- 10 Accept reports already circulated.** The Superintendent's Report was accepted by the Meeting and will form part of the Annual Report to the Charity Commission.
- 11 Finance** – the Finance report was circulated ahead of the Meeting, and Sue Le Page spoke about it:
1. The proposed Budget. was accepted without questions. Sue again reminded members of the need to ask Church Members to review their personal giving on an annual basis.
  2. A revised figure of £15000 towards the cost of a replacement boiler at St Mark's was approved unanimously.
  5. The Meeting approved a proposal to seek quotes to convert the garage at 2 Lent Green into an office.
  6. Cookham Rise has requested some financial support towards the insulation of their cottage. A short discussion about setting precedents for other investment properties seeking funding from the Circuit, and the moral obligation to provide our tenants with a good standard of living. The cost will be a maximum of £5000, of which Cookham Rise will pay half. The proposal was agreed in principle with the Cookham Rise representatives abstaining from the vote.

The Easter Offering amounted to £1391.44. The Meeting thanked Anne Hardiment and Cookham Rise Church for co-ordinating and hosting. There were no offers for hosting next year's Service and this was put forward to the next Circuit Meeting.

- 12 Property** – Joy Brown shared the following points in addition to the Report circulated ahead of the Meeting:
1. TMCP has given permission, and the Meeting was asked to approve, retrospectively, for the new doors at Sutton Avenue. This was unanimously given.
  2. Ledgers Road, as reported at the last Meeting, are looking at works in excess of £60k. The Church is working hard at raising funds themselves, but at some point, they will have to come to the Meeting for a loan. The Church has already raised £9100 of the £10k they pledged to raise themselves. Ed Filmore offered to share with them some of the sources used at St Mark's for their recent project. We are all asked to support the fund-raising concert in August, details of which will follow shortly.
- 13 Matters from CLT.**  
Further to discussions about the proposed Bus project, the CLT would like to have "dry runs" at properties in the areas around the Circuit where the bus might be used, to make sure that this project is what is needed to keep a Methodist presence in these areas.
- 14 Circuit Strategy.** See comments above. We will be starting small group discussions in the near future.
- 15 Matters from the Local Preachers Meeting.** Recently it has been unclear where the responsibility of contact between Local Preachers and Churches lies. It was agreed that Churches will contact the "Planned" Preacher by Wednesday. If this communication does not happen, the Local Preacher is to contact the Senior Steward.

Local Preachers are responsible for communicating any changes to The Plan to the Church Steward, Sue Clifford and the Superintendent.

There is a new Local Preacher coming “on note” – Barnabas Palfrey from Cookham Rise Church. Barnabas will be mentored by Jean Barnett.

**16 Growing Good** – Sara Motion from St Mark’s shared the Growing Good resource that has been really useful to them as a tool for growth, and getting back together post covid. Pauline was asked to investigate setting up a Circuit Dropbox where this and other resources can be shared.

**17 Churches' Report on the Coronation weekend**

The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla was celebrated in numerous ways around the Circuit. In Windsor the event coincided with the “Teatime for the Soul” service, with the addition of Coronation Memorabilia from all Coronations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; Colnbrook and Poyle joined with a service for all the Community; Woodlands Park hosted a Community lunch for 37 people; There were a couple of Community lunches in Burnham Church and in High Street they had the Friendship hour, and also lit up the Church with red, white and blue light.

**18 Circuit Greetings**

Joy Brown requested a Greeting to be sent to Rev Richard Cattley, who has been poorly several times when he has been due to come to Burnham.

Anthony Nicholls has served as organist at St Mark’s for 50 years. It was felt that this should be marked in a special way and Jenny Sturgeon will investigate an appropriate certificate.

Jason Yannacopolous expressed thanks on behalf of himself and his family for the condolences sent them on the death of his mother.

The Rev Sonia Hicks, Ex-president of the Methodist Conference will be awarded an honorary doctorate from Oxford Brookes University in May. It recognises her achievements regarding the Church's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy for racial equality and same-sex marriage. Sonia commented "I am delighted that I was selected but I see this as an award for the whole Methodist Connexion in Britain and the steps it is taking towards inclusivity." It was agreed to send greetings to her.

Vicci welcomed back Rev Pete, with a cautionary note to “take it easy”. It is good to have him back amongst us!

**19 Any other business** “Just a song at Twilight” is a new initiative, launching on zoom this month. Each month it will feature a different member of the Circuit talking about a piece of music that has had real impact on their Christian journey. The link will be distributed nearer the time.

**20 Dates for Diaries**

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13th September at St Andrews Church.

Reading Phoenix Choir 10<sup>th</sup> June High Street Church.

Concert at Ledgers Road, 19<sup>th</sup> August (details to follow)

**21 Closing thanks and prayer:** Vicci thanked Colnbrook and Poyle for hosting the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9:10pm