

## Minutes of a Circuit Meeting Held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at Winton Methodist Church

1. Opening Devotions  
Revd. Sue Gowling led the meeting in the reading of a meditation, the singing of a hymn and in prayer.
2. Welcome  
Revd. Tony Cavanagh, Superintendent Minister, welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Revd. Sue Gowling, who is recovering from illness.
3. Membership of the Meeting  
The membership of the meeting was agreed as per the list of those members agreed at recent church council meetings. It was noted that there were 4 observers from various churches in the circuit. Members were asked to sign the attendance sheet.
4. Apologies for Absence  
Any known apologies to be noted on the attendance sheet and the Secretary was asked to write to the Revd. John Graham is undergoing further tests and is, therefore, unable to attend.
5. Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September  
David Howe, Lytchett Matravers, drew the attention of the meeting to the item in 'News from the Churches'. David believed that what he had said should, in fact, have been shown as a general item and he has produced an alternative set of wording. The alternative wording was agreed by the meeting and with that change, the meeting agreed the minutes from 10<sup>th</sup> September could be signed by the Superintendent.  
David went on to say that **following the amendment to item 13 of the Circuit meeting minutes for 10th September 2014 members were encouraged to read the Methodist Conference report on 'Statistics for Mission'. It was suggested that Church Councils also discuss this report and that reference be made in Church magazines/notices as soon as possible. Circuit Manager would advise Churches how to obtain this report on line or attach a copy via e-mail.**  
In addition, wherever possible, members were asked to personally speak to people leaving their congregations to ascertain their reason(s) for leaving.  
In order to allow sufficient time for this project it was agreed to postpone further Circuit discussion until the 10th June Circuit Meeting at Kinson.
6. Matters Arising  
There were none.
7. Governance  
The constitution of the circuit meeting was discussed. The basic constitution has, previously, been agreed but Tony Cavanagh asked who else should be invited to the meeting in order to show a good representation of the membership and activities within the circuit.  
Action for Children was suggested as being in need of representation.

There are currently two representatives from the Preachers and Worship Leaders Meeting. The meeting agreed that this should continue. These are presently Gloria Dennigan and Brian Tucknott.

Tony Cavanagh asked that all churches consider who else might be invited to join the meeting. Revd. Mark Kimber pointed out that this is, already a very large meeting and that we should be careful not to overload.

Tony Cavanagh asked that churches consider this and report back in time for the next meeting.

## 8. Life of the Circuit.

### 8.1 Stationing

We have been unsuccessful in the first rounds of stationing with regard to our request for a new Presbyter. There is nothing more we can do at this time and it is possible that we will not get an appointment. Tony will give an update at the next meeting.

### 8.2 Church Structure

The churches in the eastern part of the circuit are struggling. The circuit leadership team is working on what may be done to help both ease the struggle and enable people to engage in mission within their local communities. One possibility shared with the Bournemouth CC, by Tony, was that from September 2015, the 5 Bournemouth churches could become one Society, continuing to meet in the current 5 locations. Hopefully this would help ease the burden of finding people to fill positions in church life, but also, and more importantly free people up to engage in mission. There was also a picture shared of how worship might look in this structure. Members of the Bournemouth CC meeting were asked to go away, pray about this, talk it over with others, but recognise that doing nothing is not an option before us. Further discussion will happen in the individual churches as they stand now, and at subsequent CC meetings, and in this meeting too. The meeting was asked to pray for the Bournemouth Churches and the CLT in this work.

### 8.3 Report from the Preachers Meeting.

The report from the meeting of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders had been circulated together with the agenda and the report was accepted unanimously.

### 8.4 Future of Youth Ministry in Swanage

Tom Bullock introduced himself as the Children and Families Worker based at Swanage Methodist Church and provided the meeting with a report of his work in the Swanage area – see Appendix A.

### 8.5 Lay Employment

i) Jane Shipton-Ashwell reported that Hannah Raybould, the Youth Worker in the Bournemouth part of the circuit was returning to Cliff College to start an MA course in Pioneer Ministry. It has been decided not to find a replacement for this role at this time, but to continue to review our needs across the larger circuit. The secretary will write to Hannah on behalf of the meeting.

ii) Chris Evans, Pastoral Visitor working alongside the Ministers in the Bournemouth churches, has accepted an offer of a post in Honolulu and has asked for a two year sabbatical. Following discussion it was agreed by unanimous vote to reject the request.

The matter of a replacement was discussed and it was agreed by a majority vote, one dissenting, to appoint a replacement with a one year contract.

## 9. Property

### 9.1 Property Schedules Update

Jane Shipton-Ashwell reported that very few had been completed. Senior Stewards are asked to expedite these returns.

### 9.2 Statistics

Most returns have been received with the exception of Kinson; Trinity and Winton churches. Again, Senior Stewards are asked to expedite.

## 10. Finance

10.1 The accounts for Poole and Swanage have been completed and will be circulated. They will be audited and signed off at the circuit meeting in March.

10.2 The Bournemouth accounts are close to completion and these too should be available shortly. Thanks were expressed to the circuit office staff for their work in this area.

10.3 The Spire, Poole Methodist town centre church has been advised by Ernst and Young, a major firm of accountants that much of the work on their new build annex premises should be free of VAT. However, as is normal practice, HMRC will not confirm this and will not do so until all the work is completed. HMRC will then have six years in which to decide whether VAT will apply.

The meeting was asked to agree to a loan of £315,000 for up to five years which will be ring-fenced in the event that HMRC do decide to apply VAT. The meeting voted unanimously to granting of this loan.

It was requested that the proceeds from the sale of Corfe Mullen Methodist Church, (estimated to be £180,386) be allocated to The Spire. This again was agreed by unanimous vote in favour.

10.4 A proposal was put to the meeting by Upton Methodist Church for an underwriting of £40,000 towards the cost of additions to their building. The church runs a very successful school for between 25 to 30 children Monday through Friday and Dorset County Council require the church to provide separate toilet facilities for these young children. The request is for a grant from the circuit of £15,000 and, if necessary a further loan of £25,000 to be repaid over five years. The church is seeking external grants and the loan guarantee is in the event that further grants are not forthcoming. The proposal was put to the meeting and agreed with one member abstaining.

## 11. News from the Churches

Clive Allen from Lytchett Matravers advised the meeting that due to heating problems within their own church, the local Church of England members would, for the winter months be worshipping with our members. Once a month, on one week, there would be an Anglican Holy Communion Service and a Methodist one the following week. There would be an 8am service using the Common Book of Prayer and there would be 'Sung Evensong'. The meeting welcomed this news.

Gerald Beddard announced that the Wesley Cafe in the Spire would open for business on 5<sup>th</sup> January, Monday through Saturday. As previously announced there would be a 20minute service "Together at One" each day aimed at appealing to all faiths.

David Pollington advised the meeting that, for the first time, Kinson Methodist Church had a presence at the Kinson Christmas Carnival. They had used a display board detailing their toddler group and Shell group and whilst it is difficult to quantify the benefits of such presence, there was evidence of new people at the Shell group.

Fiona Key from Trinity told the meeting of a new Listening and Talking project taking place around Boscombe Pier, with possibly a 'Messy Church' service on the beach. People taking part in the project will need to undergo training and prayers are requested for this initiative.

Revd. Sue Gowling thanked all for the cards, phone calls and prayers. She is gradually getting back to full time work and our prayers are still appreciated.

Revd. Dr Mark Kimber advised the meeting that he would be going into hospital for tests and an operation on 15<sup>th</sup> December. There would be a number of week's recuperation, following the operation and Mark requested that members refrain from making calls or indeed sending cards. Revd. Chris Moreton would be providing cover.

It was announced from Wareham that, so far, 579 shoe boxes have been collected and dispatched.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at a venue to be advised.

13. The meeting was closed with prayer and the saying of The Grace

Signed

Date

## REPORT FROM TOM BULLOCK

Tom began by reading from John 17:20-21, in which Jesus prayed for his believers to live in unity, as "one". He explained that these verses have been an inspiration in guiding the children's ministry in Swanage and was a verse which Tom highlighted on his application form prior to being appointed in April 2009.

Since that time, there have been many successes in the work and much of it has taken place on an ecumenical basis with close working between all the Church denominations in Swanage. Highlights have included:

- The development of the former small Methodist children's group into two ecumenical groups - "Tetra" and "Juice" which now attract a regular weekly combined attendance of over 50 children and young people, who hear a Christian message at the groups every week, in term time.
- The growth of the Methodist Toddler group which now has two sessions and which has more than doubled in size, attracting a large number of children and families from across the town. A Messy Church will soon be formed to help create a "bridge" between the group and the wider Church family.
- Excellent links have been created with the local primary schools. Tom visits them all regularly for assemblies, lessons, occasional residential trips and to support children's emotional and social development.

The first three years of the work were funded mainly by Swanage Methodist Church. The following three years have been mainly funded through generous individual donations and grants, including an annual contribution from the Poole and Swanage Circuit in 2012-14 and Poole Bay Circuit for 2014-15. Although the work has been successful, there is a great need for additional workers to sustain the work and enable it to grow any further.

This current period of funding will come to an end on 31st August 2015. Tom's contract will end at this time too and discussion has taken place amongst all the Churches in Swanage in order to plan an appropriate way to follow and build upon the work. After various options, local Churches have agreed to succeed this work with a fully ecumenical project known as '*Wave Kids*' which will be a part of a wider new charity called '*The Wave Youth & Children's Ministry*' which has seven trustees representing six Churches in Swanage. Mrs Maggie Hardy, a member of Swanage Methodist Church and Tom's line manager, is the chairman of this new charity. *Wave Kids* will see the appointment of one full time, professional children's ministry leader being employed, who will lead the children's work and line manage three unpaid "interns". The interns will be provided with accommodation in Swanage, food, pocket money and expenses, along with excellent training in children's ministry and practical theology, delivered by SWYM (South West Youth Ministries). They will work with *Wave Kids* on a full time basis and will be able to contribute a great deal to the ministry with children in Swanage and gain excellent experience in the process which will help them in their first steps in ministry. Examples of activities which the children's ministry leader and interns will deliver include;

- Work within schools (including collective worship/assemblies, lessons, small group work, special activities and residential activities)
- Support of existing ecumenical children's groups and the introduction of new ones (particularly a group for children in school years R-2 which is a notable "gap" at present)
- Organising worship events for local children and families
- Working with the local children's centre and other organisations
- Arranging special events and communities.

Interns will be allocated to support groups in local churches too, for example we plan for an intern to work with the congregation of Swanage Methodist Church, in particular through assisting with the running of our weekly toddler group and Messy Church.

There is a great deal of excitement about this work within Swanage and it is hoped that this sense of excitement will be shared with the wider Poole Bay Circuit too. *The Wave* will be working within the local town of Swanage but will act as a resource to the wider area, including offering regular training events and welcoming visits from other Churches to see the work in action. The Wave is not, at this stage, asking the Circuit Meeting for financial support, but Tom requested our prayers for the work, particularly in the following areas:

- For the transition between the current work and the work of *Wave Kids*
- For the trustees of the new '*Wave Youth & Children's Ministry*'
- For Tom as he seeks to know God's will for his future.

Tom thanked the meeting for listening and said that he is very happy to discuss the work further with anyone who is interested. Tom's contact details can be found in the Circuit Directory.