

*MINUTES OF CIRCUIT MEETING  
HELD ON ZOOM  
15th September 2020*

**1. Welcome**

Rev. Tony welcomed everyone to the meeting including Deacon Gill Judge, Dr Terry Fish, Local Preachers Secretary and the new Circuit Stewards.

**2. Opening Devotions** were led by Nick Wood

**3. Agree Membership of meeting as per circulated list**

As the list could not be circulated, Val recorded attendees from the Zoom participants list.

**4. Apologies for absence** were received from Jean Bettles, Kate Greaves, Ian Underwood, David Pollington, Ann Hughes and Bob Taylor.

**5. Letters of Greeting & Acknowledgement and Items for Prayer**

Requests were made for greetings to be sent to the Vicar at Wool who is ill, Peggy Hiscock, Sian at Victoria Park who has cancer and Dennis Dean in thanks for his work as Local Preachers Secretary and Circuit Steward.

**6. Agreement of the minutes of the meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (already circulated)**

The Minutes were signed as a correct record.

**7. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**8. News from Churches**

Upton's pre-school continued throughout lockdown looking after vulnerable children and those of essential workers.

Wool had been keeping in touch by telephone with members of their congregation.

Deacon Suzie reported on the Zoom discussions regarding the future of the church. Five main points had come out of the meetings:-

- Meeting in groups is vital to offer support and social contact.
- Repurposing of our buildings which can be difficult to maintain and are not always essential for worship.
- Being wise with our resources - people, skills, money.

- Working with others is the only way forward - Circuit, ecumenical partners, partners in mission.
- Becoming a hybrid church using Zoom, recorded services and face to face worship to include everyone.
- Focus on the younger generation.

Thanks to everyone who took part in the discussions.

## **9. Life of the Circuit**

### **9.1 Appointment of Circuit Stewards**

All agreed to the appointment of Julian Tawn, Naomi Shrimpton, Kate Greaves, Keshento Burbidge and Andrew Goodwin as Circuit Stewards. Brian Tucknott remains in post and Di Baggs will continue until December. David Howe expressed delight at the appointments but said that he didn't know all of them and asked if we could have some more details. The new Stewards agreed to provide some information about themselves to send out with Minutes.

### **9.2 Circuit Invitation Committee**

The CIC had agreed the Stationing Profile prepared by the CLT for the position to be vacated by Nick Wood. Everyone had received a copy and Pete Smith asked why the new Minister will stay in the Cherry Hill Grove manse. Rev Tony explained that it was in a good position between both Broadstone and the Spire. Some of the profit from sale of Gannetts Park would be used to upgrade it.

The CIC will receive the profiles and make a decision in October. If this is unsuccessful, there will be a second round in December and another in January.

The meeting agreed the Profile and the process.

### **9.3 Local Preacher's Report & New Secretary**

Terry Fish had taken up the post of secretary. Julian Tawn had completed his portfolio so hopefully the next stage in his training would go ahead. Two worship leaders, Naomi Shrimpton from Victoria Park and Nicola Dunn from the Christchurch and Wimborne Circuit will begin their training soon.

## **10. Governance**

### **10.1 Circuit Review update – Governance & Leadership**

The Mission Folder will be uploaded onto the new website shortly. The new Circuit website is in the final stages of preparation for going live and more information will follow.

The Circuit Review has been put on one side for the moment.

Everyone had received a copy of the Conference Digest and we were asked to pay particular attention to the section headed 'Oversight and Trusteeship' which

encourages Circuits and Church Councils to explore ways of streamlining the way they work perhaps by having one Church Council for several churches.

## 10.2 Review and re-adopt Safeguarding Policy

Rev. Karen reported on changes which were of named officers only. The meeting agreed these changes. Individual church policies will need similar amendments and should be reviewed at Church Councils. Information posters are available and each church will be sent one. Additional copies can be downloaded.

## 11. Finance

### 11.1 Agree Budget and Assessments

The Draft budget had been circulated and Rev. Betto outlined the figures and changes from last year. Covid 19 had hit the Circuit finances hard but we still have 1.5 million in reserves plus assets (manses and buildings). The Assessment provides approximately 60% of the total income required and the rest comes from manse rental etc.

We don't yet know the total cost of PPE and grants to cover churches lost income so it is proposed that we take the budget as provisional for three months until the CFG have met and looked at the figures in more detail. Church assessments will also be provisional for the first three months and have been calculated at 20% less than last year.

It was noted that:-

- we need to know the reserve balances and commitments.
- the loan to the Spire will be coming back in through the reserves,
- we need more details on how the Manse repair fund is being spent.

We must move forward but we cannot pay out more than we are getting in. We need to work out what the future is and be smarter in the way we use resources. We have 11 buildings; can we afford them? Churches need to take a realistic look at where they are going and whether they have completed their mission. Now is the time to do something different especially with our new CLT, and Treasurers will be meeting to work out some practical ways forward by mid-January.

The meeting agreed to accept the provisional budget and assessments for a period of 3 months.

### 11.2 Agree auditors for 2019/2020 audit

It was agreed that we keep PKF as our auditors for the 2019/20 accounts at a cost of £5,900 + VAT.

### 11.3 Grant to cover café losses at the Spire and Broadstone

It was agreed that we should wait until the CFG meeting before deciding on this.

It was reported that there had been a change to the Gift Aid small donations scheme which will only apply during the Covid 19 crisis. Not all Treasurers were aware of this and David Howe will forward the e-mail with the details to them.

## **12. Property**

### **12.1 Update regarding sale of Wareham Church**

We have received offers ranging from £300,000 from the Purbeck Gateway church up to £350,000 from a local property developer. We need an update from the estate agent on whether these offers remain on the table.

### **12.2 Update regarding sale of Gannetts Park**

Contracts have been signed and are now with the purchaser's solicitors.

### **12.3 Re-letting of 103 High Street, Swanage**

Swanage requested the Circuit Meeting's approval to re-let the property at 103 High Street as the current tenants had given notice of their intention to move out. This was agreed by the meeting.

### **12.4 Renewal of tenancy agreements, Fernside Road (Aug) Wimborne Rd (Nov) Headswell Ave (Nov)**

All the above renewals of tenancy agreements were agreed.

### **12.5 Letting of York Road Manse**

Due to family reasons Sue Gowling will remain in York Road until mid-November. After that any necessary work will be done before letting it. This was agreed.

## **13. Any other business**

Rev. Nick reminded everyone that Deacon Gill's welcome service would be this Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September on Zoom and asked people to let him know who will be attending.

It was suggested that we could use extra help at the CFG meeting and Rev. Tony said that he already had this in mind.

The meeting recorded its thanks to the outgoing stewards for all their work.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Date of next meeting                      1<sup>st</sup> December 2020      Circuit Meeting                                      7.30pm