

CIRCUIT MEETING MINUTES

5th March 2024

Upton Methodist Church

1. Rev Tony welcomed Trustees to the meeting.
2. Opening Devotions – led by Deacon Gill.
3. Agree Membership of meeting - Agreed
4. Apologies for absence were received from Rev Karen, Naomi Shrimpton, Sarah Joy, Dr T Fish, Di Baggs, Ian Underwood, Anita Hazell, Paul Thompson, Mike Glassey, Ann Hughes, Denise Gibbs, Gerald Beddard and Annie Fellows.
5. Letters of Greeting & Acknowledgement and Items for Prayer – Rev Chris is in contact with Alison Sclater.
6. The minutes of the meeting held 5th December 2023 were agreed as a true and correct record.
7. There were no Matters Arising.

8. News from Churches

Lytchett Matravers – on Tuesday 26th March at 7.30pm a Holy Week Meditation through words and music led by Churches in Harmony Choir at the chapel. Everyone welcome. Rev Karen is leading the Easter Labyrinth at Lytchett Matravers Chapel on Maundy Thursday from 2-4pm, Good Friday from 6-8 pm and Holy Saturday from 10am -3pm.

Bournemouth – the Worship Trial continues with both shared and traditional services; themes can be suggested by both members of the congregation and visitors to the Café. There is a 'Seed' service – Sunday School for adults; rotas are including many more members of the congregation and helping to engage with everyone. A decision will be made where to go in the future.

Poole – the Kids eat free initiative continues to be popular, on average 77 meals a day were served during the February half term week. Poole will be taking part in the Walk of Worship on Good Friday and will be welcoming folk back for drinks and hot cross buns afterwards. Services at Poole continue to be inclusive.

9. Life of the Circuit

- 9.1. Mission Updates – Deacons Gill and Suzie were very positive about their Godly Play initiative at Winton, more and more members of the Toddler Group are joining in. The Café at Victoria Park has really taken off; full of both young families and older people. Deacon Gill's work at Maidment court continues.

- 9.2. Report from Circuit Youth Group from Kate White; the Report had already been circulated and was adopted.
- 9.3. Report from Local Preachers – Dr Terry Fish; there was no report as the meeting has been postponed until 15th April. This will be an opportunity for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders to have help with responding to the current situation in the Holy Land. It is hoped that this will be available to other Circuits via Zoom.

10. Governance

- 10.1. Liz Graham has had to resign as a Circuit Steward because of ill health. A replacement is needed. A replacement is also needed for Andrew Goodwin who will be stepping down in August as Financial Steward. If no one can be found it may be necessary to employ someone or look at the possibility of returning to having a Circuit Office.
- 10.2. As Rev Karen was not able to be at the meeting there was no Safeguarding Report; this to be circulated at a later date.

11. Finance - Andrew Goodwin

11.1. **Approval of 2022/23 Report & Accounts including Letter of Representation and Comment.**

These documents had already been circulated. Andrew said that overall, the financial situation of the Circuit was healthy. If a church needed support for a new project there might well be available funds, do ask. Adoption of the 2022/23 Report and Accounts including the letter of Representation and Comment were proposed by Rev Betto and seconded by Clive Allen. They were unanimously adopted.

Unfortunately, the other forms for completion have been changed and are having to be started again from scratch. (Item 11.1-116 on the agenda)

11.2. **Approval 2023 PBMC Annual Return – Circuit Meeting Report**

Deferred to June Circuit Meeting

11.3. **Approval 2023 PBMC Annual Return – Property Information**

Deferred to June Circuit Meeting

11.4. **Approval of Risk Management Policy**

Deferred to June Circuit Meeting

11.5. **Approval of Charity Commission Checklist**

Deferred to June Circuit Meeting

11.6. **Approval of Annual Property Returns**

Deferred to June Circuit Meeting

11.7. **Approval of the 2024-2025 Budget and Circuit Assessment**

There are challenges with the Assessments as two churches are closing. Churches have had their Assessment payments supported by the circuit but this may not be able to continue indefinitely. Andrew presented a breakdown of support for church assessments and how it could change by either £88,184 support, £30,000 support or without support. Deacon Suzie raised the amount budgeted for Mission and wondered if that could be increased, it was also suggested that churches need to look at how they already spend money on Mission. It was decided, that as this is so important to all churches the next Circuit Meeting in June should be held in person rather than on Zoom and that churches should discuss beforehand with ideas of how to go forward.

The budget and assessments were agreed unanimously. Church Assessments of £241,336.

12. Property

12.1. There is still no movement on the sale of Wareham Church, the Council and the Government still have to agree on development.

12.2. Update on Manses

Purchase of Shaw Drive: There have been problems with the purchase of 37 Shaw Drive but still trying to complete by 22nd March. If the sale fall through it may be necessary to look at bringing Cherry Hill Grove back.

St Luke's Road: The meeting agreed to renew the tenancy for 21 St Luke's Road if the current tenants wish to remain.

Kinson Church closure: Rev Tony explained that the district had queried the closure as there were still 60 members but he explained that many were in residential care and that the average age was over 80. The district agreed to the closure. The Scouts who meet at the church still haven't found new premises and the Circuit has offered to support them financially for the first 6 months for which they are very grateful.

Lytchett Matravers Church closure: After 250 years, the membership at Lytchett Matravers voted unanimously to cease to meet from July. There are very close links between the Anglicans in Lytchett Matravers and the Methodists which will continue. The Trustees voted unanimously to give permission to cease to meet from July 2024 (22 votes in favour, none against and no abstentions). The chapel building is of cob construction having been built in 1853 and is not in a good state. It was unanimously agreed that the chapel should be sold. (22 votes in favour, none against and no abstentions). The building is not listed.

13. There was no other business.

The next Circuit Meeting to be at Victoria Park on 11th June 2024 and the September meeting to be held at Poole on 17th September 2024.

The Meeting closed at 9.15pm.