

ST. AUSTELL METHODIST CIRCUIT

MINUTES OF THE CIRCUIT MEETING HELD AT ST JOHN'S ON 21ST SEPTEMBER 2017

DEVOTIONS were led by Rev Danny Wheadon and included reflections on Psalm 37:5 and Proverbs 16:3. Those present also sang *All our hope on God is founded*.

WELCOME Members were welcomed to the meeting, especially new trustees, including Rev Dr David Hart and Rev Paul Parker. There was a reminder that substitutes were welcome, but were not able to vote and that updates and changes for the Directory should be sent to John Keast and Debbie Eade as soon as possible.

APOLOGIES were received from Rev S Caddick, Messrs C Baglow, J Blake, M Bray, B Hawken, H Hawken, S Hunkin, A Sanders, O Sleeman, G Thornton, N Tregonning, R Treleaven, K Truscott and T Warren; Mesdames M Adams, S Allen, A Champion, H Manhire, S Mitchell, J Northcott, R Owens, S Rabey and J Warren; Ms Helen Blamey. (56 trustees and 1 additional attender signed the attendance register.)

LETTERS OF SYMPATHY OR CONCERN A message of sympathy has been sent to Mr Clifton Yates and of congratulations to Mr and Mrs Owen Sleeman, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding. A message of sympathy will now be sent to Mrs Maureen Adams, whose son-in-law has sadly died and of best wishes to Mr Nigel Tregonning, whose father has had a very serious accident. (*A message of welcome will also be sent to Rev Peter Smith, a supernumerary, who has recently moved into the circuit. This was suggested by Rev Danny Wheadon after the meeting.*)

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (28th March 2017) These were agreed and signed after some small amendments. Dr Elizabeth Burroughs and Mrs Edna Yelland should have been included in the list of Circuit representatives to the District Synod, so our representatives now are:

Mrs Ann Arnold

Dr Elizabeth Burroughs

Mr Gareth Bray

Mrs Liz Foster

Mrs Maria Hathway

Mrs Anne Keast

Mrs Edna Yelland

(Mrs Marjorie Keam and Mrs Carole Thornton are reserves)

Under Carne Hill in the property section, although Mr Richard Holman was involved in giving some advice about demolition to Carne Hill, the church obtained demolition estimates independently and has accepted the lowest.

MATTERS ARISING None

BUSINESS

CIRCUIT POLICY AND ACTIVITY

a) CIRCUIT MISSION STATEMENT AND STRATEGY (Mr John Keast)

The current statement and strategy was drafted in 2012. Originally it was intended to review this in 2016, but the process was delayed because of the sad death of Rev Joan Watson. It was decided to wait to continue with the review in October 2017 so that the two

new ministers coming to the circuit can be involved in the process. The current documents are available on the circuit website.

A series of circuit consultations and discussions were held in 2015 and 2016. As a result, some changes to staffing have already been made with the appointment of various lay pastors and there has been the recent introduction of Messy Church as a circuit initiative at Mount Charles, with plans to begin sessions soon at Trinity.

Membership and attendance in the circuit have continued to decline – membership at a rate of about 4.5% and attendance a somewhat lower rate. The District and Connexion are also concerned about declining numbers and the age profile of those remaining. Rev Steve Wild has led a prayer session and a discussion session in the circuit recently to focus on the challenges we face. Unfortunately, although the recent District Synod discussed these issues at length, no positive decision was made about the way forward.

Nevertheless, it is important that the circuit now works on developing a new mission statement and strategy for its own use. Specific issues the circuit faces include how it will manage with three presbyters instead of four when Rev Danny Wheadon leaves in August 2018. It will be important to decide how to balance the budget and to levy the assessment in a way which is fair to all the churches. Important decisions will be needed about which churches need circuit support, which manses should be kept and whether new churches are needed in some areas. Churches will need to revise their own individual mission statements and strategies. Mrs Lyn Hawken has a model which churches might find useful. Churches have already been invited by the President of Conference to formulate a growth plan or end of life plan!

Mr Keast outlined a possible process:

- i) A small steering group to be set up to organise wider consultation
- ii) An agenda to be prepared for consultations and dates chosen for the consultations
- iii) A report back to the Circuit Meeting in December
- iv) A revision to be ready for the March Circuit Meeting, when the budget will need to be set.

In the discussion that followed it was pointed out that although these ideas were an excellent start, the timing envisaged was too ambitious. It was important for the steering group to be representative of all areas, so it was agreed that names should be sent in by the end of October for the steering group. It would also be helpful for all churches to have a copy of the process planned so that they have an opportunity to send ideas to the circuit administrator.

b) PEOPLE

i) Welcome to new staff

The new presbyters were welcomed earlier and Rev Danny Wheadon now thanked those who attended the welcome service and St John's for organising the refreshments.

ii) Circuit Stewards and Churches

Mrs Liz Foster would be attending the church councils previously attended by Mrs Sue Battison. Mrs Jenny Taylor would be attending the church councils previously attended by Mrs Sheila Allen, with one exception. She would be attending the church council at Tywardreath and not Roche because it would be easier for her to get there. Mrs Lyn Hawken would be attending Roche church councils and otherwise her churches would remain unchanged. Mrs Anne Keast would be continuing to attend the same church councils as previously.

The Circuit Stewards will therefore sit on the following church councils:

Mrs Liz Foster: Bethel, Gunwen, Indian Queens, Nanpean and Whitemoor.

Mrs Lyn Hawken: Carne Hill, Lostwithiel, Mount Charles, Polgooth, Treviscoe and Roche

Mrs Anne Keast; Bugle, Carclaze, Par St Mary's, St Andrew's and Stenalees

Mrs Jenny Taylor; Leek Seed, St John's, Tregrehan, Trinity and Tywardreath

ii) Update on Mrs Sally Wheadon's training for the diaconate Mrs Wheadon said that her training was going very well and she is now beginning the third year of her course. She has passed all her essays and the final one is due on 12th July. Her stationing process is about to begin. She thanked the circuit for its continuing support.

iii) Safeguarding (Mrs Lyn Hawken)

The Creating Safer Spaces Refresher Foundation Module training has now been completed by most people needing to do it, but it is important that those who still need to do the training be sure to get on to one of the two courses planned for 2nd November at 7.00 pm at Whitemoor or 4th November at 10.00am at St John's. Lists of who has completed the course and those roles which make it necessary were available for each church at the end of the meeting. It was also important for churches to ensure that DBS checks were completed and up to date. The website for doing the checks is still in operation for the moment.

c. FINANCE (Mr John Keast)

Mr Keast reported the following:

i) He and Mrs Debbie Eade are preparing the accounts for the auditor as the financial year ended on 31st August. He thought that the budget had gone more or less according to plan and thanked Mrs Eade for her invaluable work on the accounts.

ii) The budget for the current year would go ahead as planned

iii) The Circuit Leadership Team had agreed to loan SACREd Place £2,000 to buy the Bibles for Schools (Churches Together Project) to present to children starting school this year. This was necessary because the publisher selling the bibles was being liquidated and there was also a financial saving involved in purchasing now from existing stock. The loan will be repaid when the money comes in from Churches Together.

iv) There was a need to change the signatories on the bank mandate. Mrs Liz Foster, Mrs Lyn Hawken and Mrs Jenny Taylor needed to be added and Mrs Sue Battison and Mrs Sheila Allen taken off. This was agreed.

v) The October Count must start on Sunday 1st October. (Paper pro formas will be provided.) It would be good to have the statistics completed by the end of November and to keep to the rules for counting! Statistics will need to be entered on the Statistics for Mission website and it would be useful to check that the profile for the church is correct on the website. The annual attendance figures should be kept up to date too.

vi) Schedules will need to be worked on now and passed to Mr Keast when complete. The on-line return must also be completed.

d. PROPERTY (Mr John Keast) (See the written report; additional points are listed below.)

i) Gunwen (Mr Ivan Phillips)

Mr Phillips pointed out that Gunwen was asking for a loan of £3,300 to be converted into a grant and not £7,000 as in the Property Report. The grant was necessary because there had been extra expense as a result of complications with the water supply. Gunwen had decided to install its own water supply instead of depending on a supply via an elderly neighbour and the new bore hole had to be approx. 250 metres from the chapel. Permission had been given to put it in a nearby field. The

work at Gunwen was now almost complete and the chapel had already been used for harvest festival. There would be a Heritage Day on 21st October, followed by the official reopening by Rev Steve Wild on the afternoon of 22nd October. Mr Phillips recommended Gunwen as a venue for church away days.

The Circuit Leadership Team recommended supporting Gunwen's request for a £3,300 grant rather than a loan. This was now agreed, having been proposed by Mr Gareth Bray and seconded by Mrs Lyn Hawken.

ii) Bugle (*Rev Paul Parker*)

It was explained that a grant of £8,842 was needed to replace the windows in the hall (£5,800) and to install temporary heating there (£3,042) so that the thriving youth club could continue to meet during the winter. Mr Chris Benney in support of this explained that it was hoped to start a club for teenagers in the hall also. The meeting agreed to a grant of £10,000 to allow for any contingency problems. This was proposed by Mr Colin Grigg and seconded by Mrs Sue Battison. (This was subject to the project being placed on the Property Consents Website.)

iii) Carne Hill (*Mr John Williams*)

Carne Hill has two planning applications in –one for the building of ten houses on half the field and another for the demolition of the old chapel and the building of a new one. The result of the former application is expected on 10th October. Formal consent for a project for the sale of the field will have to wait until that result is known, but consent for the other project to go ahead with the demolition and rebuilding if the planning application for the redevelopment of land was successful, was now needed. The land has been valued at £270,000 – £295,000, but figures remain speculative until it is sold. When the former Hendra Road chapel was sold, it was understood that the £70,000 coming to the circuit then would be made available towards the project at Carne Hill. However, there was no need to seek formal approval for that at this stage. Mrs Lyn Hawken proposed that Circuit consent be given for the demolition and rebuilding part of the Carne Hill project. She was seconded by Mr Gareth Bray and the meeting agreed. One member abstained.

iv) Indian Queens (*Mr Richard Holman*)

Mr Holman has been asked by the church council at Indian Queens to manage the project that may result from its decision in principle to lease the hall to the playgroup and modify the chapel, especially the vestry to meet the church's needs. Modifications could include removing more central pews and improving catering facilities. The present toilet block would be demolished and toilet facilities installed in the church. The cost of this work in house could be £25,000, but as much as five times this if done by contractors. There was considerable discussion and it was clear that much would depend on how TMCP would interpret the regulations for listed buildings and the leasing of church property. However, it was agreed in principle to support Indian Queens exploring the possibilities further; otherwise an opportunity for mission could be missed.

TMCP's conservation officer has said that the new doors must be painted and not varnished.

v) St John's (*Mr John Keast*)

St John's needs to demolish an unsafe chimney, but consent is needed from TMCP for this because of the building's listing.

vi) Treviscoe

A chimney also needs to be demolished urgently at Treviscoe for safety reasons. The cost will be £1,920. It was agreed to grant this amount to Treviscoe on grounds of health and safety.

vii) Tywardreath

Rev Danny Wheadon proposed that £1,500 be granted to Tywardreath towards upgrading the sound system. There was unanimous approval given.

x) Quinquennial inspections

In the coming year these will take place at Carclaze and Mount Charles.

e. REPORTS OF CIRCUIT ACTIVITY

Written reports from Carole Thornton, the lay pastoral assistant in the eastern section, Sheridan Pengelly, the lay pastoral assistant in the western and northern section, Sheila Allen lay pastor for residential homes, Sue Battison on Children and Families Work, Carolyn Rowse on Local Preachers and Worship Leaders and youth work were received and approved. Mrs Dorothy Grose announced that, following the departure of Mrs Dorothy Grundon from the circuit, Mrs Sandra Coke was to become the new Circuit President of Methodist Women in Britain.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Dr Elizabeth Burroughs said that there would be a District preparation day at Newquay on 18th November and anyone wishing to attend would be welcome.

Youth Work

Now that Mr Jon Lewis has left the circuit, youth work must be a high priority in the Circuit review process.

SHOEBOXES 2017

Boxes were available for those churches wishing to continue with shoeboxes this year. The boxes will be able to be left at St John's for collection as in the past.

WEBSITE

The circuit website is looking very good and thanks were expressed to Mrs Lyn Hawken and her son, Matthew for their work on this. Dates of meetings, information for the Directory and amendments about churches should be sent to Mrs Lyn Hawken for the website. The website address is www.staustellmethodist.co.uk and the password to access the Circuit Directory etc. is available from any staff member. Please ask.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION *(Mr John Keast)*

- i) There is a new process to ensure we have your data with your consent. This will be in place by the end of the year.
- ii) Mr Keast will continue to send out information from District Synod about events, including a Methodist Heritage Day in Oxford in the summer, a streamed conference *All Together Now* in October and a session on Christian Creativity put on by Arts Serve.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Residential Homes *(Mrs Ann Arnold)*

Mrs Arnold suggested that churches 'adopt' a residential home near them and members come along to support when she or Mrs Sheila Allen holds services there. Most services were on a monthly basis.

DATE OF THE NEXT CIRCUIT MEETING: Wednesday 6th December at St John's at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed with the Grace.