

Minutes of the Circuit Meeting of the Sutton Park Methodist Circuit Held on 11th June at Nechells Methodist Church

I. PRELIMINARIES

1. Welcome and Introductions

Rev Malcolm Oliver chaired the meeting and thanked Nechells for acting as hosts. An inspiring article was read about Methodism, we need to be fearless, our hearts on fire and go back to our roots. John Wesley did not want to start a church but to renew it. 18th century Methodism scared the authorities, it is time for rebirth, get brave again and in our circuit, we have the chance to “let the flame burn bright again. The article was then attributed to Rev Alan Smithson as being the writer, all agreed a challenging and thought-provoking piece, which we thanked Alan for. We then sang hymn 564 O Thou Who Cam’st From Above.

2. Opening Prayer – Deacon Marilyn Stowe

3. Membership of the Meeting

Attendees were asked to sign the attendance sheet. By signing the sheet, you are confirming details held are correct for the records held by Steve Buck. There were currently 11 vacancies, although 2 forms had recently been returned, leaving 9, the vacancies need to be filled, although the meeting was reminded anyone could attend Circuit Meetings, but would not be able to vote if not a member. Rev Stephen F asked how many church representatives were entitled from each church? Confirmed one steward, one treasurer, and 1 or 2 other reps, other than Four Oaks and South Parade who could have 3 due to their size. (Note: following the meeting a document was sent from Steve Buck to Rev Stephen, secretary was asked to append these to the minutes, please see end of document). Mr Stuart Dyer was attending the meeting as a final year student from Queens College, who was an observer whilst shadowing Rev Stephen Froggatt.

4. Apologies for Absence

There were 46 members present and 12 apologies received.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th March 2019

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed accordingly, having been proposed by Rev Alan and seconded by Marion Watts (circuit steward).

6. Notice of extra matters to be discussed

One item had been received for discussion from Falcon Lodge Church.

II. GDPR and Safeguarding – Rev Stephen Froggatt

Rev Stephen reminded the meeting of GDPR and that we need to be mindful as to what is in the public domain in our churches, could a member of public come into church building and pick up a leaflet, read a notice on the notice board. We need to be aware of what is available, rotas, newsletters, as anything in public domain can be republished. Need to be clear and careful as to what is displayed in our foyers. Try to use generic email names (steward@church, treasurer@church) rather than individuals names. If data gets out of a church or is leaked, this is called a data breach. Rev Stephen is the District Data Champion and should be informed of any data breach within our churches, usually low key and can be easily sorted.

A Circuit Safeguarding Officer is urgently needed. Please see if anyone from your church could be encouraged to do the role, it does not have to be the churches Safeguarding Officer. Rev Stephen, as the Circuit’s Safeguarding Trainer, had led a training day on Saturday 25th May at South Parade, which had been well attended with 79 people completing the Foundation Module training course, which is valid until 2023. A repeat of the course will take place for those unable to attend on the evening of Tuesday 15th October at Kingsbury Church. Alternatively, there are other dates around the District or monthly training dates at Coventry Central Hall.

Rev Stephen had been asked what the policy for supervision of children is, when a letting was taken. The recommendation, which should be the church trustee decision, is one adult to eight children. However, if for example, a letting had one adult and twelve children, it should be raised at Church Council meeting for their decision and approval. It was also confirmed that a person is classed as an adult from 18 years old.

Rev Stephen advised that a minimum of two stewards should have a DBS clearance checks, not everyone on Church Council needs DBS clearance. However, everyone on Church Council should complete Form C on an annual basis. (Church Council trustees are signing up every year to be part of church council for a maximum period of 6 years). Form C is then retained by the church Safeguarding Officer.

The meeting gave their thanks to Rev Stephen for the training course he had held and for all the work he does on GDPR and Safeguarding.

III. Circuit Mission Priorities CGK “Living and Growing God’s Kingdom”

Rev Malcolm reminded the meeting that we had 7 mission goals in place for a few years and at a recent Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) meeting, it was challenged to reduce them to 5, which had been done. The meeting was asked to revise the 7 goals to 5 as per the proposal below.

Existing Goals:

1. Understand the needs of each community served by our thirteen churches and respond with at least one new initiative
2. Value the uniqueness of each Church Community.
3. Ensure that each person we encounter is empowered to achieve their full potential:
4. Encourage everyone to enrich their faith by providing the ‘right fit’ resources.
5. Be a voice speaking out for justice in tangible and measurable ways.
6. Bring more children and young people to a knowledge and love of Christ.
7. Link each Church with at least one other Church:

TO BE REVISED TO

- A. Understand the Needs of and Value the Uniqueness of each community within Sutton Park Methodist Circuit.
- B. Ensure each person is empowered and Encourage/Equip everyone to enrich their faith.
- C. Continue to encourage Linking of congregations within Sutton Park Circuit churches.
- D. Speak out for justice in tangible and measurable ways.
- E. Bring young people to a knowledge and love of Christ.

PROPOSAL: The circuit meeting adopts the revised Circuit Mission Priorities as proposed by the CLT until the September 2019 Circuit meeting.

The meeting agreed unanimously to the proposal.

IV. Outworking of Circuit Mission Priorities CGK

1. Stationing 2020 confirmation of known details and arrangements including Invitation Committee on 14th June:

PROPOSAL: The Circuit meetings agrees that the invitation committee will for the coming twelve months will be made up of : (1) All Circuit Stewards; (2)A steward from all the churches of ministers involved in stationing in the pastoral charge of Revd Alan Smithson and Revd Stephen Willey; (3)The Superintendency Co-ordinator (Revd Malcolm Oliver) (4) second Minister (Revd Stephen Froggatt)

The above proposal was put to the meeting. Chris Higgs asked that the names be removed from the proposal

Revised PROPOSAL: The Circuit meetings agrees that the invitation committee will for the coming twelve months will be made up of : (1) All Circuit Stewards; (2) A steward from all the churches of the Minister involved in stationing; (3)The Superintendency Co-ordinator (4) a second Minister.

The revised proposal was proposed, seconded and carried by the meeting.

2. Coordinating Circuit Stewards – Chris Higgs

The following report was issued in advance of the meeting. “As Circuit stewards we are the link between churches and the Circuit Leadership Team. Because we each belong to different churches, we bring the everyday viewpoint of life in churches to the CLT meetings, although we sometimes feel that churches do not realise this, nor do churches realise that the circuit is working for everybody and it is sometimes hard to convince congregations of the need for change. •Revs Alan Smithson and Stephen Willey will be going into stationing, and we are engaged in conversation with them concerning their future. A Circuit Invitation Committee has been formed, including members of their respective churches, to manage this process. • During the past few months, along with the Circuit Property secretary, we have been involved with the nitty gritty of selling 2 Four Oaks Road, in order to fund the purchase of a new manse at 54 Hawthorn Brook Way, for our new Deacon Rachel, who will be joining the circuit in September. This will leave us with an amount of money, which we hope to use initially to fund a property for refugees, or in the long term, a property for mission and outreach in the Peddimore area, where new housing is planned. • The circuit has also experienced the faith against knife crime walk, which Rev Andrew Brazier was instrumental in organising,

culminating in the wonderful service of witness outside Methodist Central Hall on Good Friday. • Friends from the Kadoma District in Zimbabwe, twinned with the Birmingham District, came to stay in the circuit in May and Stockland Green was privileged to hold a District service, which was very joyful, and those who were unable to attend from within the circuit, missed a very blessed time. • At Synod, we heard from Farai Mapamula, the District Equality, Diversity and Inclusion officer, about her experiences concerning inclusion and equality in Britain today. How can we move forward? Following discussion, we decided that we must find places to let people speak about the discrimination that they are experiencing. In addition, we are all urged to be more thoughtful in our conversations with others. • Rev Andrew Brazier is moving on to Hemel Hempstead after 2 years with us. He will be missed. We will welcome Deacon Rachel Prasad Thomas in September, as a full-time deacon in the Urban and Estate cluster. • Both Revs Stephen Willey and Andrew Brazier are on Sabbatical at the moment, and this, together with holidays in August, means that there are more Local Arrangements on the Plan. However, congregations have been provided with a valuable resource – the Vine - which will give every assistance needed for planning worship, in addition to the joint services which have been planned, offering opportunities for new ways of worshipping with friends from round the circuit. • We are always looking to the future and to this end we have adapted our circuit Missional Goals, combining some and there will now be 5 instead of 7. • The mission goal of bringing young people to Christ is being ably led by Rev Malcolm Oliver and others. This is being done through weekends away and youth services around the circuit and indeed, district. We are all urged to engage young people in our churches with this. • Whilst John Rutherford is ably continuing as acting Circuit Treasurer, there is an urgent need for a permanent Treasurer. Please look around your congregations: the alternative is to buy in services. • There is also a need for a new circuit steward to replace Chris who is stepping down in August. 2 • In addition, a Circuit Safeguarding officer is urgently needed. This is a vital role within the circuit and support would be given to anyone who is interested. • Finally, the CLT are aware that there has been considerable change in the circuit during recent years. This reflects changes that are going on in Methodism. We trust that God will guide us through these changes as we continue to Live and Grow His Kingdom in the Sutton Park Circuit. “

Chris Higgs advised the meeting that the above report contained the wrong name for our new Deacon, and it should read Deacon Rachel Thomas Prasad. Chris said we need to be mindful of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and to look at ways to make sure we are being thoughtful in our conversations.

Chris asked us to think about a new circuit steward as she was due to step down and also a circuit treasurer, John was doing a great job, but just had too many other things to do, if not we would have to buy in the services of a treasurer. We were recommended to use The Vine information when churches had local arrangements,

Rev Malcolm proposed the following, which was accepted and seconded and carried by the meeting.

PROPOSAL The Circuit meeting warmly accepts the Circuit Stewards report and gives thanks to Chris, Marion, John and Naomi for all their ongoing work. The Circuit meeting wishes to record its special appreciation to Chris Higgs in her role as Co-ordinating Steward as her term of office ends on the 31st August.

3. South Parade Congregation appoint 'Pastoral Worker for the third age'

Liz Topliss addressed the meeting about the following report, which had been prompted following her attendance at Synod three years before and attended a workshop looking at different age groups in church and the lay worker for older people, had since been to South Parade to offer advice. Although the church did recently attract some younger people, they did not stay due to age difference at the church, other churches in Sutton are catering to younger people, there should be no shame in South Parade focusing on older people, accept it is an ageing congregation and work with them. A job description had been produced and interviews to take place.

*“Background :The South Parade Sunday School buildings were erected in 1927. Over many years there has been a gradual change in the use of these rooms with increasing use by non-church groups for room hire. The Centre is in use over 70 hours a week on weekdays and Saturday mornings but is not available for hire on Sundays. There is a tremendous cross-section of people using the Centre and in a typical week there are as many as 1,700 people passing through the doors. There are currently over 50 groups using the rooms with a large proportion of these being children and other vulnerable groups. The community centre is operated entirely by volunteers from the membership of the church apart from a paid part-time cleaner. We have a dedicated team who help to open up and lock up the premises and who run all the bookings and issuing of invoices etc. **Current Challenge** Our members are diminishing in number and ageing which means that the model of running the Centre purely with volunteers is no longer viable. The implication of this is that we are very close to finding it impossible to continue. We are aware that there is very little affordable meeting space*

in the town centre which groups such as our current ones could move to if we were to close. Many of these groups are helping to counter the isolation that many older people suffer and in addition it gives our own members activities to go to and to volunteer within. **Proposal** We have spoken to officers and Councillors on the City and Town Council, other churches with situations similar to ours and other providers of services for the vulnerable and have considered a number of options for a way forward. The optimum solution is for us to employ a Centre Manager for 30 hours a week to take on the bookings and general operational issues. We would continue to rely on our volunteers at other times. We should like to run this project for 3 years and have assessed the total required at £30,000 each year. This would include a small amount for paying for outside contractors to carry out repairs to the Centre which were also generally done in the past by volunteers. We are confident that we will be able to fund this 100% from external grants and at zero cost to the church and circuit. The church rather than the Circuit would be the employer for this post. We have experience of employing staff for many years and the post holder would be supervised and monitored by a management group and have a named line manager. **Exit Strategy** At the end of the 3 year period our vision is for the post to be self-funding via new lettings income. If this is not the case then we would scale back or defer until further funding could be secured. **Timescales** Before we launch into employing a person we are going to do some preliminary scoping to assess the issues involved, review our current ways of working and to consult with our volunteers and Centre users to ensure the job description is appropriate and to identify any other aspects we need to consider. Having done this and considered the outcome we will then be able to apply for grant funding and hopefully move into recruiting somebody in the late autumn / winter. **Recommendation** We are seeking the Circuit's support for this proposed way forward. Amanda Hume, Secretary of Finance & Property Committee”

Rev Malcolm proposed the following:

Proposal: The Circuit Meeting confirms that it is aware that South Parade Methodist Church Council have advertised for the post of LAY WORKER for Ministry to Older People. The Circuit Meeting understands that Connexional approval has been given for this post. The Circuit Meeting further understands that (1) It would enable money given in a legacy to be used in a constructive way (2) There would be no cost to the Circuit. (3) There is an allocation of funding for redundancy after the three year period. The Circuit Meeting wishes South Parade Church Council every best wish in this new venture providing there are no implications which will impact in any negative way on Mission and Ministry in Sutton Park Circuit.

The meeting agreed, seconded and voted unanimously in favour of the proposal and wished South Parade success with this new venture.

4. Report from Acting Circuit Treasurer – John Rutherford

The following report was issued in advance of the meeting.

“Sale of 2 Four Oaks Road property: we accepted the highest price offered for the house (by the current tenant), which is in line with the independent Qualified Surveyor’s valuation. Purchase of a new manse: with the new Deacon joining the circuit this year, the purchase of the house located by the Circuit Stewards and Property Steward is progressing. The new manse has been recorded as a Replacement Project on the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) consents system. This means that only the net proceeds from the sale and purchase will be subject to a Connexional Priority Fund levy. It is hoped that the likely timings of completion dates for the sale and purchase will mean that the bridging loan (approved at the previous meeting) will not be needed.

Once these property dealings have concluded it is worth reviewing the purchase of a new property to either replace lost rental income or as a means of mission. This process could involve a review of the other existing investment property on Chester Road, as discussed at the last circuit meeting. If we wanted to buy another property from the net proceeds and avoid or mitigate the considerable Levy mentioned above, we would have to speak to the Conference Office at Connexion and make our case for this. New bank account: the new account with CAF Bank is now operational, and we have closed the HSBC account. Budget and assessments: most offers have been received from each church in the circuit. The possibility of returning to previous methods of determining what each church should pay has been raised by some churches. Reserves Policies: the Circuit is reviewing these in the light of the Connexional Financial Strategy highlighted in the December 2018 Circuit Treasurers report. We are producing a financial strategy in line with our Mission Goals, bearing in mind latest budget figures. We are still seeking an offer from someone to take over the Circuit Treasurer role, which was vacated a year ago. Options of how this could be sub-contracted will be explored if no-one comes forward, which will inevitably put a further burden on Circuit finances and church assessments.”

John advised the meeting that many aware the balance in the circuit funds was more than the 4 months reserves, Connexion are asking to have them reduced. The sale of Four Oaks Road will potentially leave a £300k surplus, have been looking at what to do with the funds. Rev Stephen W has looked at how reduce them over 4-5 years, will be monitoring annually. The net proceeds from the sale will look at mission possibilities, could we house refugees, have a church centre / presence in the new Pedimore Estate development.

John asked that if any information on churches in the circuit, such as league tables, were being distributed, to let him see first. It was disappointing that recently information had been disseminated without being checked with him first, as we want to be open, honest and approachable. A question was asked from Blackwood, the treasurer had raised a query around the league tables but had not received an answer before his sudden death, so Blackwood were asking now. It did not look right that a church with 42 elderly members was paying £384 a head for circuit assessment, but a church with 185 members was paying a lot less. John took away an action to review and report back at the meeting in September. John advised there were 3 churches who pay their assessment via the Central Finance Board, this is of benefit when payments change if other churches could review how they pay.

A question was asked if we would be penalised if held on to reserves? In TMCP funds has a levy at different levels, we could make a claim to connexion for funds for mission and were advised it would be looked on favourably.

John confirmed budget had been approved at the last meeting, nothing further to approve now.

The meeting was also asked to vote on the following proposals.

PROPOSAL: Sutton Park Circuit includes £10k a year for youth work in the annual budget.

The meeting agreed to the proposal.

PROPOSAL: The Circuit Meeting requests the CLT to explore how we use the surplus from the current sale of a manse to invest in a long-term tangible way to develop our Mission priorities. (this could initially enable the Circuit to fund a property for refugees/asylum seekers and may in the longer term, enable a property for mission and outreach in the Peddimore area, where new housing is planned)

The meeting agreed to the proposal.

The meeting thanked John for all the work he does.

5. Property Steward – David Allen

The following report was issued in advance of the meeting.

“These are reports on individual churches, as known and reported to me at the time of writing (05/06/19).

- 1. Kingstanding. The re-decoration of the worship area and some of the small rooms, is still on track to be undertaken during the summer when they can be assured that the spaces can be unoccupied and available.*
- 2. Boldmere. Their new entrance scheme is due to finish on Friday, 7th June, after some small delays. Thus, by the time of the meeting and barring snagging, the new facilities ought to be complete and in use.*
- 3. Erdington. While the ownership problem of Wesley Road is still on the “back burner”, the drainage of the car park (and the road) appears to have been solved. However, the road is still in need of at least some repairs, and discussions are continuing as to what can be achieved within a reasonable cost.*
- 4. Nechells. There is currently no progress on the works that they would like to carry out, because the requirements of creating a better access at the front are seemingly complex. I will report again on this when it is decided how to proceed.*

I am not aware of any other projects in process of consideration at the current time, but if there are any additions or amendments to the property report for presentation in the minutes would people like to make them known now.

QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTIONS. Witton and South Parade Churches, together with the manse at 85, Reservoir Road, are to have their Quinquennial Inspections this year.

I have instructed Mr David Willets of PCPT Architects, to undertake the work in accordance with his fixed-price fee. He will make his own access arrangements with the appropriate persons, and I have provided him with those contact details.

MANSES. 98, Walmley Road. There is still a small amount of non-urgent superficial quinquennial inspection work to be carried out, but the builder has other jobs to do for us first!

85, Reservoir Road. A serious damp problem had made itself evident in the study and adjoining utility room, but the problem has now been rectified and all has been dried-out. final tidying up will be complete before the QQI takes place.

2, Four Oaks Road. The sitting tenant has made the best offer to purchase the property, and the sale would appear to be quite advanced. The surveyor's reports have been undertaken and we know that he has a suitable mortgage in place. We have been informed by our selling agents that they expect to complete within just a couple of weeks.

54, Hawthorn Brook Way. This is a relatively new (about 18 years old) detached house on the boundary between New Oscott and Erdington, on which the Circuit has made an offer to purchase as the new Manse for the incoming Deacon. The offer has been accepted and all of the formalities have been completed by us, but we still await the current occupier to indicate when they are to vacate. They have been given a finite date of the 5th July otherwise there will be penalties.

The electrical report detailed a few minor issues to be addressed when the house becomes vacant, the gas report gave a clean bill of health, but regrettably, the drains could not be accessed properly because the inspection chambers had all been covered over! The only "runs" that could be surveyed revealed no problems. 12, Upper Clifton Road. Unfortunately, even excepting my last report on this Manse, just before I completed this report, Alan Smithson asked me to get his hot-water boiler repaired! Things never seem to stop.

CONNEXIONAL PROPERTY FUND. All donations were in by the beginning of March but too late to report to the March meeting. The total raised last year was £4078, or £4.68 per member based on numbers published as at September 2018. The highest donation was £8.33/member and the lowest was £1.76/member. This all compares with the figures for 2017 of £4044 or £4.48/member – the highest being £8.69/member and the lowest being £1.82/member. "

The meeting asked for an update on Wesley Road (Erdington Methodist Church). David advised that a report had gone to Rev Malcolm and Finance and Property meeting at Erdington with some ideas, but it was a difficult problem as we do not own the road and it is in a bad state. Option had been given to lower the level, scrap off the cobble stones and drain the blocked gully's at a cost of £1,600. Erdington were asked to consider it and David would have some money to help to get it progressed. Erdington had spent a lot over the years trying to sort out the problem and were very grateful to David for all the help he had given them. The meeting thanked David for all the work he does.

6. South Parade Intention to appoint a Centre Manager (proposal issued with agenda)

PROPOSED WORDING FOR THE MINUTES The Circuit Meeting receives the outline proposal for a Centre Manager. The Circuit Meeting supports the proposal providing: (1) That South Parade Church Council and not the Circuit will be responsible for employing the Centre Manager (2) There will be no financial or management implications for the Circuit. (3) There is an allocation of funding for redundancy after the three year period. (4) That careful consideration be given as to the sustainability of the management of any Centre Manager beyond three years. The Circuit Meeting wishes South Parade Church Council every best wish in this new venture providing there are no implications which will impact in any negative way on Mission and Ministry in Sutton Park Circuit.

7. Requesting the CLT to explore future management of Church Property and Personnel through a Community Interest Company ('CGK Services'?)

PROPOSAL: The circuit meeting requests that, time permitting, the Circuit Leadership team explore the possibility of beginning a Community Interest Company (or appropriate alternative) to support the Congregations within the Sutton Park Circuit in its existing and new work in managing buildings and personal. In due course the CLT will report back its findings to the Circuit Meeting. The CLT is encouraged to consult and use the wealth of experience both within and beyond the Circuit.

The meeting agreed that this could be explored and asked that Bob Dauncey was consulted with CLT bringing back ideas to this meeting.

8. Report from Local Preachers Meeting – Martyn Blunt

The following report was issued in advance of the meeting.

"Thirteen persons were present. The pre-meeting for Preacher's on Trial confirmed that Diana Bosman, Kirsten Newman and Peter Cashmore continue to progress well in preaching and study. Clive Thursfield continues on sabbatical from study and preaching due to his on-going charity work overseas. Preachers on Trial should continue on Trial for the next Quarter. In the main meeting no matters arose from the previous meeting minutes. The meeting was reminded of the long service in preaching of David Hewitt at 60 years, Godfrey Higgins and Bob Dauncey both at 55 years this year, to whom a note of congratulations from the meeting be sent. It was noted that Rev. Keith Webster was retiring from preaching at the end of August. A note of thanks for his long service to the Circuit is to be sent to him. It was noted that Margaret and Colin

Gardner have moved out of the Circuit to Walsall. A note of thanks for their service to preaching in the Circuit is to be sent. It was sadly noted that previous minister in the Circuit Gill Le Boutillier-Scott had recently been bereaved of her husband Robin, who passed away. A card of condolence is to be sent from the meeting. It was noted that Tracey Gough from Falcon Lodge Church has permission from the Church Council to test her call to becoming a local Worship Leader. She will be assigned a tutor and mentor. A letter from Stockland Green Church Council was read to the meeting, encouraging and thanking Preachers' for their services to the Circuit. A brief discussion took place on the Lectionary and its usefulness to Preachers. The meeting was reminded of ensuring that a gospel reading is always included in a service. The concept of preaching on themes over a block of time was discussed. It was suggested that this might prove difficult due to the nature of itinerant preaching. Rev. Stephen Froggatt gave an update on the recent local Safer Spaces training at South Parade Church, which was well attended by in excess of seventy persons. He reminded the meeting under GDPR that the Circuit newsletter and Plan is in the public domain once in churches. No addresses are published. The new Circuit Post holder's directory will not appear in the public domain. Kirsten Newman, Local Preacher on Trial presented her topic on giving children's addresses within an all age worship service. Her PowerPoint and involvement of willing volunteers from the meeting was helpful and well received by the meeting. The meeting was informed by Rev. Malcolm that the CLT would like to promote and develop a Circuit response in 2020 to 'Thy Kingdom Come', the Novena nine days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost. A brief reminder was provided of the CLT expectation regarding Local Arrangement services and Cluster services, that Preachers should not be asked to lead these independently of the Plan."

The meeting was advised that the Circuit was in urgent need of a Circuit tutor. Also need to look to raise the profile of our Worship Leaders.

9. Cluster Covenant Services

There had been a joint Covenant Service in January (2019) and the proposal is to do the same in 2020. Had seen the benefit of coming together, asked to hold in our prayers, as understand some do not like that churches are closed. Asked to hold a conversation/discussion/compromise and sign up to it in advance rather than been presented with it without discussion. Look to discuss at Local Preachers meeting and our individual Church Councils. Four Oaks expect to see new people each Sunday, so reluctant to close, but Rev Malcolm said we were facing big issues and need to prayerfully consider what the churches do.

10. Refugee Support Group Update

"The date of the next Refugee Seekers Support Group fun day in Sutton Park, in conjunction with Restore, will be on Wednesday, 14th August. If anyone is able to offer help with the activities and transport, please contact Rosie Rayner drjrayner@gmail.com."

Meeting asked to publicise the above event. The previous year had over 50 people attend, so we do need help to make sure that it will be a success.

11. Eco Circuit

PROPOSAL: The CLT are requested to oversee a group of people who are interested in developing Sutton Park Circuit in being an Eco Circuit.

Streetly is an Eco Church in our Circuit, working towards their Gold Award. Now looking to have Eco Circuits and Eco Districts, anyone interested in helping the Circuit move to an Eco Circuit would be invited to a meeting in September/October that Rev Alan will be organising so that we can start to think about it.

12. District Mission - Including Church without Walls – Jim Hart (report issued with agenda)

"BISH Annual Report Lawrie Rumens, Chair of the Directors of Birmingham International Student Homes presented his annual review and the Directors' report They have had over 300 residents from more than 50 countries in the houses over the year including 35 to 40 children among the residents at Asbury. He noted that Mike Fisher, the company secretary is stepping down. A new company secretary has been recruited. Reports from the District's New congregations Jazz Church The written report from Adam Saunders was noted. Ian expressed some concern that with Trey moving on that there has been less mentoring support for Adam and this will be addressed as the new Mission Advisor comes into post. New Inclusive Church The congregation is looking for funding to recruit a half time pioneer pastor for September 2019. Reports: Reports from Birmingham, Birmingham Sutton Park and Birmingham (West & Oldbury) were received. Mission Advisor The post has been advertised, shortlisting made, and interviews will be held on 7th February. Reimagine Conference Helen Woodall reported that 232 people have registered so far and a request for workshop choices should come out this week. Communications Strategy Helen Woodall reported on the

meeting held 10th December. A small group is revising the front of the website. Zimbabwean Visit A Group will be coming from the Kadoma District May 10th to 20th to attend the District Synod – visas may be an issue. The District is looking for hosts and help with trips to London and New Room in Bristol. Invitations to events in circuits welcome and to be given to Ian before planning group meeting on 8th March. The visitors will be available for preaching on 12th and morning 19th May. A District Celebration is being planned to be held at Stockland Green or Erdington on afternoon 19th May.

Report from Methodist Council Vincent Jambawo gave a verbal report on the Council meeting held 30-31st January Financial Report Helen Lynskey presented her written report outlining the fund summary. Approval was given to 1. the value of land and buildings for accounting purposes of the manse at £750,000 and Wesley International House £3,000,000 2. the Budget 2019/20 3. the amounts paid to Trustees 4. the approval Haynes Watts Birmingham as auditors. Thanks, were expressed to Helen for all her work, for her generosity with the time she gives and her care to ensure the District resources are used for mission purposes. Stationing Two presbyters were found in round 1, another came at round 2, and then in round 3 a married couple a probationer Catshill and a presbyter for Quinton were stationed. Both probationer appointments and the 2 diaconal posts, one in Sutton Park and a new appointment at St John's Hereford are filled Candidates The District Candidates committee considered 3 candidates. 2 were recommended to go forward to the Connexional Candidates Committee

Safeguarding Sue Holder's written report was noted. The roll out of advanced module is taking a lot of resources. Training on offer re the Prevent Strategy was highlighted. Matters Arising/Report Circuit Changes Meetings on 6th December agreed to the dissolving of the Stratford and Evesham, Mid Waricks and SW Worcs circuits and the formation of two new circuits - South Warwickshire and South Worcestershire from September 2019. Representative Synod in May will be at Stratford and will include a thanksgiving for the Stratford and Evesham circuit. Refugees Concerns were noted about the District having resources to give the practical support for a second community sponsorship family. Solihull are raising money but casework support is also needed

Twinning with Germany, Caz Hague is yet to convene a meeting about future of links with Germany. Possible visit spring 2020. Sabbaticals Caroline Warrey's written report from the meeting held 24th January was noted. Ian highlighted how there needs to be a formal, circuit appointed group to be a sabbatical support group. Queens keen to engage and offer support with sabbatical studies. Any other business Learning Network Anthony Reddie highlighted the following upcoming courses 16th March Training for Local Preachers tutors and mentors at Catshill Sundays 10/17th/24th March He is leading a series of conversations around theology for Sutton Park circuit 5-7pm at Stockland Green. One of priorities within the Learning Network is to look at encouraging vocations and resources are being developed for this. President's Pilgrimage The incoming Methodist President, Barbara Glasson, is making a pilgrimage from West Yorkshire to NEC and is asking churches locally to host walkers in the weeks leading up to Conference. They will be at Nechells on 24th June and Ladywood on 25th June. On Saturday morning 29th June she will walk from Gas Street to NEC. Ian asks that the district support this pilgrimage".

The meeting was advised that the section in the above report "Reports from Birmingham, Birmingham Sutton Park and Birmingham (West & Oldbury) were received" should be Tamworth, Lichfield, Mid Warwickshire and Black Heath. District was working towards an action plan for January.

Our thanks were given to Jim for all the work he does.

13. Wider Mission Matters - Thy Kingdom Come, Global Mission

PROPOSAL: The CLT seriously explore forming a group to develop the "Thy Kingdom Come" initiative in 2020.

The meeting agreed to further explore this initiative and for the CLT to present back at the next meeting.

14. Knife Crime project - Revd Malcolm

Rev Malcolm read out a letter from a young person who had taken part in the walk, a letter was to be sent to her to thank her, she had given an amazing testimony and great commitment and witness.

15. CGK Youth and Junior Report - Revd Malcolm

Continuing to encourage our youth across the Circuit. Some had been to the Pioneer Centre at the end of March and some were going to the 3Generate meeting in October. Please be encouraged to attend the Youth Services and advertise in your church and via WhatsApp, parents and grandparents can help spread the word. Fitzroy continues to work with our youth. A sleepover was taking place at Erdington church followed by the youth taking the service the next morning. Trying to do something once a month to keep their interest. Services were not always in our Circuit.

16. Circuit Mission report - Deacon Marilyn

The meeting congratulated Deacon Marilyn on being appointed Vice-President of MWiB, a service was being held at Catshill on Saturday 22nd June.

V. Other Business and Appointments

a. Sabbatical Support Groups

Deacon Marilyn would be taking a sabbatical January to March 2020 and Rev Stephen Froggatt June to August 2020.

b. Letters of Support from the Circuit

Letters were asked for Rev Gerald Hainsworth having given up preaching, Shirley Howard following the death of her husband John Howard, Rev Keith Webster on retiring at the end of August, Rev Gill Le Boutillier-Scott following the death of her husband Robin and Frankie for her encouragement on the knife walk.

c. Appointments

- Circuit Safeguarding Officer
- District Council Representative
- Circuit Steward
- Circuit Treasurer

The meeting was reminded of the roles that need filling.

AOB

1) Giles Wheeler from Falcon Lodge, told the meeting that they have a children's group every Wednesday (4.30pm-6.30pm) 24 youngsters on a first come first served basis, would like to have 40 children, but will need 3 more adult volunteers to help, if anyone can do this, please speak to Giles.

2) Janet Grainger had not done the Methodist Home for the Aged this year, Deacon Marilyn can give phone numbers if churches want to do the MHA envelopes.

3) Question was asked as to how many Lay Representatives to Synod from the Circuit. Liz and Gill happy to continue to attend, Rev Alan to confirm.

4) The incoming President would be doing a walk and was coming to Nechells on the 24th June, Rev Malcolm will find out more information to circulate to churches.

VI. FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of the next 4 meetings were planned for:

- Wednesday 18th September - Streetly
- Thursday 28th November - St Chads
- Tuesday 10th March 2020 - Boldmere
- Wednesday 10th June 2020 - Witton

V. Closing Devotions

Rev Malcolm thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Stuart Dyer closed the meeting with a prayer.

Signed.....Dated.....

Sutton Park Methodist Circuit

(Registered Charity number 1134369)

Composition of the Circuit Meeting as agreed on 17th September 2009

- .Ministers, deacons and probationers.
- .A Steward and Treasurer from each church in the circuit.
- .Secretary of the Circuit Meeting.
- .Secretary of the Local Preacher's Meeting.
- .Circuit Stewards.

Representatives from the churches as elected from their Church Council:-

- .Blackwood (2)
- .Boldmere (2)
- .Erdington (2)
- .Falcon Lodge (2)
- .Four Oaks (3)
- .Kingsbury (1)
- .Kingstanding (2)
- .Nechells (1)
- .South Parade (3)
- .St Chads (1)
- .Stockland Green (2)
- .Streetly (2)
- .Witton (1)

Additional people as the Circuit Meeting may desire and appoint to ensure that all areas of the life of the Circuit are adequately represented: -

- .Any person elected as circuit representative to the District Synod becomes, if not already, a Trustee of the circuit for the duration of the appointment.
- .Circuit Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- .Circuit Treasurer.
- .Secretary of the Circuit Property Committee.
- .Supernumerary ministers*.

Amendment agreed on 10th June 2010

- Local Preachers (2).

Amendment agreed 5th December 2012

- Trustees' Registrar.

* Rev Ted Heyes and Rev Gerald Hainsworth both declined to become a trustee.