

## North Lancashire Methodist Circuit – Lancashire District 21/16

### Minutes of the Circuit Meeting held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022

#### held at The Lancaster Methodist Church (and zoom)

##### **Present:**

**Circuit Staff:** Revs Steve Charman (Chair), Keith Borwick, Roy Burley, Kara Cooper & Emma Holroyd (5)

**Circuit Trustees:** David Battarbee, Paul Bowden, Lesley Brookbanks, Andrew Champley, Ruth Champley, Daphne Cockerill, Sandra Cooper, Shirley Cormack (Sec), Rodney Doldon, Barbara Drayton, Clive Drayton, Shirley Eaton, Barbara Fisher, Mary France, David France, Brian Gorst, Edith Gorst, Deacon Jane Harper, Cathy Hartley, Clive Horsford, Helen McGregor, Jenny Macking, Lisa Marple, Shirley Pollard, Hazel Preece, Judith Pye, Howard Rogerson, Sue Spencer, Elizabeth Tuer, Jonathan Whitfield, Val Woods & Denis Yates (31)

**Welcome and opening devotions:** -Rev Steve Charman

Reading: Exodus 14:8-16 Preparing to cross the Red Sea

Do we ever find ourselves between a rock and a hard place? Here we see the Israelites between an army and the sea! Paths are not always straight forward. We face twists and turns/highs and lows, but God remains with us, seeking to guide, lead us and enables us.

Song: StF465 Guide me O Thou great Jehovah

**Apologies:** Marion Brewer, Jean Cooper, James Cottle, Margaret Fancy, Peter Gorst, Kathryn Haigh, Joan Jackson, Dorothy Long, Ian Love, Gary Marsh, Derek North, Lois Preece, Richard Preece, Jo Towers, Austin Walker, Mick Ward, Susan Wilson & Alwyn Yost (17)

**Guests:** Jackie Allen, Barbara Miller, Bob Miller

**Notice of Any Other Business:** None

**Minutes & Matters Arising:** The minutes of the Circuit Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022 were **AGREED** as correct and signed by the Chair, Rev Steve Charman.

No matters arising.

**Appointments:** Circuit Steward – sadly, Kathy Bamber has had to step down due to ill health. We urgently need one or preferably two new Circuit Stewards. Please pray about this matter. Names to CLT. Reps to District Synod (4) - **Susan Wilson, Hazel Preece, Cathy Hartley** - Edith Gorst has requested to step down. Thanks, expressed for Edith's service in this role.

**Jo Towers** has offered to serve in this position. **AGREED**

**Proposal:** Remove Bank Account signatory - Shirley Townley. **AGREED**

We are still in need of a circuit Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

**Pastoral:** Ken Clapham- Still suffering with eye difficulties and facing a further (third) operation and therefore not able to fulfil preaching engagements this quarter.

Margaret Fancy has been very ill and is still with her son in Manchester. Margaret Mansfield is very poorly. Brian Hargreaves has passed away and his widow, Margaret is quite frail.

**Report from CLT:** Ruth Champley gave her report

She gave a vote of thanks and flowers to Shirley Cormack who is stepping down after 6 years as Circuit Steward.

**Circuit Administrator:** Annual review of hours

**Proposal:** from CLT: We continue the hours for Circuit Administrator Jo Towers at 25 hours per week.

**AGREED**

**Stationing:** As reported in CLT report, the stationing process is going ahead to seek a replacement for Rev Keith when he retires in August 2023. Three Circuit Stewards are meeting with Phil Gough and Andrew Bennet from the District to carry this work forward.

**Safeguarding:** Cathy Hartley reported two Zoom training sessions went ahead earlier in the year –Thanks to Helen and Leslie for leading these and Katie for doing the bookings. A further session will be arranged later in the year. Those requiring updating will be informed. Advanced training is planned at Lune Valley Hub/Zoom on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 and places need to book via the district.

**\*A rolling 4-year Audit starts in September but we do not know when in those 4 years we will be audited.**

We are looking for someone to take over the Safeguarding Co-ordinator role for the Circuit as Cathy is stepping down. Please pray for the right person – someone with good pastoral skills and good admin skills too.

**Reminder – Safeguarding is EVERYONE’S responsibility.**

**Finance:** Update presented by Sandra ACCEPTED

### **Assessment 2022-23**

Following significant time exploring a variety of methods of calculation in which we attempted to avoid any church being unduly pressured, we feel that it would be best to put a freeze on the assessments across the whole Circuit. We know that every church (and the members of our congregations) will be experiencing Cost of Living increases and so we have decided to propose that we DO NOT INCREASE the assessments for 2022-23 and we will use Circuit reserves and income from rents to cover the shortfall. We may have one or two chapels who feel that they cannot continue at the 2021-22 level, but we may have one or two who could increase their contribution. Any church which feels that they can offer a little more than their proposed figure will help their sisters and brothers who might be struggling more than them.

**Proposal:** We request the Assessment from each chapel for 2022-23 at the same rates as 2021-22.

**AGREED**

**Local Preachers’ and Worship Leaders’ Meeting:** Rev Steve read the report from Peter Gorst as some people had not received a copy.

**ACCEPTED**

**GDPR:** Rev Roy Burley reported that four churches have not completed their reports and the deadline was the end of May. Also, Church Directories and GDPR forms should have been returned to Jo by **10<sup>th</sup> June.** Please forward them asap!

**Circuit Property:** James Cottle

Chapel House at Dolphinholme requires a new lease drawing up and requires the trustee’s consent.

**AGREED**

### **Property Sales and Developments:**

#### **Update on Quernmore and Wray Sales**

#### **Garstang Feasibility Group** (further paper)

Replacement project using money from sale of Wray. Connexion will release funds when Wray is sold.

**Proposal:** Circuit funds be used until sale goes through.

**AGREED**

**Proposal:** The phrase of 'one months notice by either party' in the document be changed to '12 weeks' notice by either party'. **AGREED**

**Lune Valley Feasibility Group:**

Shirley pollard also spoke of the background and some of the challenges facing this group being complex. There is a lot of arduous work being put in by people from Caton but no long-term security. More involvement from the wider circuit is needed. The building is owned by the Circuit and needs to be used for the whole Circuit.

**Tewitfield update:**

**Proposal:** The Circuit Meeting agrees to the request of the Tewitfield Church Council and seeks permission from the District Policy Committee and District Synod to cease worship and proceed to advertise for sale.

(Probably be District Synod in Sept 2022)

**AGREED**

Anniversary & Thanksgiving Service **6:30 pm** on **3<sup>rd</sup> July** (please note amended time)

**Emmetts update:** Quite complex situation with Land Registry. Methodist Insurance does not cover legal fees and a Solicitor/ Barrister will be needed to sort out the legal situation.

Good Thanksgiving Service for the Mission and Ministry over many years.

Emmett items to be dispersed and building used for storing Garstang items temporarily. **AGREED**

**Arkholme:**

**Proposal:** The Circuit Meeting recognises the challenges of the property at Arkholme and agrees that the whole site be sold. **AGREED**

(The funds from the sale will be under the trusteeship of Arkholme Church Council)

**Proposal:** The Circuit provides a loan of £7000 per year to assist in covering the current costs (the loan will be repayable once the sale of property has been completed). **AGREED**

Rev Roy Burley informed a letter went out to churches as follows:  
"If you had £50,000 to spend on your building, how would you use it?"  
**Return by 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

**Matters regarding wider Methodism-District, Connexion:** There is a review of districts all over the country not just our region. Things are going to change and be re-shaped on a different model. In-put is needed from all circuits particularly the needs of rural areas to be further addressed. There is an invitation to join three open consultations (on Zoom) **July 9<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, or 19<sup>th</sup>**. Papers with further details are available and will be sent out on email. Please have your say.

**Synod in our Circuit:** Please note the date of Synod is **22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023** – Keep the date clear as we will require lots of people to assist with the planning.

**Dates of Circuit Meetings:**

**19<sup>th</sup> September at Lune Valley Hub @ 7:30pm**

28<sup>th</sup> November; 8<sup>th</sup> March & 15<sup>th</sup> June – Venues to be confirmed

**Any other business:** None

\*Reports are accessible on our website: [North Lancashire Documents \(northlancsmethodist.org.uk\)](http://northlancsmethodist.org.uk)

Thanks to Bob for overseeing Zoom; Thanks to Jackie and Barbara for refreshments

Thanks to everyone for attending.

Meeting closed by sharing the Grace together.