

The Vale of Aylesbury Circuit Meeting

7.45 pm Tuesday 15 March at Stoke Mandeville

The attendance sheet was passed around prior to the meeting.

Devotions The Rev Helen Kirk welcome everyone to the meeting and led the opening devotions.

Temporary Secretary

Rev Helen Kirk pointed out that Arthur Sara was willing to act as minute secretary for this meeting if the meeting was in agreement. It was. Helen went on to point out that the circuit must have a new secretary as Peter Honeyball wishes to relinquish the role. She asked for all the members to think carefully about the role and who could fill it.

PRESENT: There were 35 members present and 12 apologies received.

Welcome

The Rev Romilly Micklem was welcomed to the meeting and the circuit.

Minutes of meeting 15 September 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Dispensation: Arthur Sara has been authorised to dispense Holy Communion since September 2015 and Rev Helen Kirk had been approached by District to enquire if this dispensation is to continue. The meeting agreed unanimously that this dispensation should be continued.

Circuit Leadership

Rev Helen Kirk reported that there had been a number of meetings and a great deal of work done to enable the appointment of Rev Romilly Micklem. Gratitude was expressed for all this work particularly to Anne Marie Lord for her work and to Rev Steve Watts for stepping in while we had no minister for Thame, Cuddington, Haddenham and Chinnor.

The Circuit Leadership team have been looking at our policies and thinking about how we can move forward together in developing different kinds of worship, supporting smaller churches and other areas of our work.

Rev Jill Marsh, District Director of Mission came and talked to the team and helped to talk through some of the issues. In order to move forward Rev Helen Kirk suggested that she and maybe some others visit each church and sit and listen to what they have to say about their work and then to take their hopes, ideas, fears etc. back so that they could inform the discussion in June. This idea was discussed briefly but generally warmly received. It was suggested that a list of available dates and times might be useful and the good news being circulated each week was commended. The question was asked about fears that expectations might be raised and then not met.

Financial Report

The circuit accounts had been circulated and were briefly explained by the treasurer. It was noted that this year we are running at a deficit but in future the new formula for calculating church contributions will ensure this does not happen. The Circuit accounts were approved unanimously.

The Treasurer pointed out that because of the several building projects that have or will be undertaken the amount in The Model Trust Fund is greatly reduced and so he proposed that £20,000 be transferred from the general fund into The Model Trust Fund. This was discussed and unanimously agreed.

Property

It was reported that Chinnor have received the tenders for their redevelopment and the costs are much higher than expected but they are in discussion at present.

North Marston also have tenders but soon could be able to proceed.

Stone will soon be able to proceed with their proposal to build a disabled toilet.

Weedon have transferred the care of their graveyard successfully and Keith Wallace was commended for the huge amount of work he did to enable that to happen.

Stoke Mandeville are proposing to replace the stage at the back of the church with more storage. This will benefit both the church and The Karibuni Trust. Agreement, in principle was given for that work.

It was reported that a leak has been discovered in the church roof at Cheddington and work may need to be carried out there.

Paul Ingram and Geoff Nicholson were thanked for all the work they do.

It was reported that Rev Romilly Micklem is using the Thame manse at the moment but it has been redecorated ready for renting in the near future. M and W Property Services did that work and will be working in the manse at Herston Close shortly.

Appointments

It was unanimously agreed that Val Watts and Chris Skidmore be appointed as synod reps from this circuit and that we are in desperate need of a circuit meeting secretary and new circuit stewards. Paul Ingram spoke about the role of circuit steward, commending it to all in the meeting. Members were encouraged to think carefully about people in their churches who might be willing to take on these important roles.

Areas of Circuit life

a). Fairtrade: A report was circulated and the meeting was reminded that Fairtrade applied to all producers and that in UK pressures in farming were causing farmers to commit suicide and need to be mindful of what they buy and also what they sell in our churches if we are to remain a Fairtrade circuit. Rod Thorpe was thanked for his work.

b). Safeguarding. Arthur Sara was confirmed as the Circuit Safeguarding Officer and the circuit safeguarding policy was unanimously approved.

c). Local Preachers. Frankie Fisher wished to resign as Local Preachers' Secretary but David Neville has agreed to take on the role. This was agreed. Nick Aylen has decided to start the new local preacher training course and both he and Arthur Sara have been registered for it. Iddah Bennett has decided to discontinue her efforts to become a local preacher because of her many other commitments. Peter Vernon reported that he had seen a great improvement in her over the period of her training.

d). Website: Roy Collis pointed out that there is now a great deal on the new website and appealed for people to use it more.

Methodist On-line Data Site: One church had not completed the Statistics return, and churches were asked to make sure the list of church officers published on it is up to date. He also reported that there were 3 churches that had not completed their property returns. (Amendment to circulated minutes)

e). MHA. Diane Robbins brought in the MHA envelopes and appealed for churches to use them as our contribution to MHA last year was lower than usual.

f). Easter Offering. There will be an Easter Offering Service at Aylesbury on 24 April.

g). Karibuni Trust. Rev Helen Kirk reported that John Cottin and Joy Murphy are in Kenya at present and appealed for continued support of this tremendous charity. Paul Ingram explained that they are being too successful as many of the sponsored young people are moving on to higher education and this is a joy but also a greater expense. 50% of the proceeds of a jumble sale on Friday at Stoke Mandeville will be in aid of Karibuni.

Communications

A concert featuring Noel and Tricia Richards will take place at Aylesbury Methodist Church on 22nd April. This was highly recommended.

An Open air service will be held at Swanbourne on 26 June.

A Circuit camping weekend has been arranged for the weekend of 2-4 July.

The next Circuit Meeting will take place at Whitchurch on 20 September at 7.45pm.

On Tuesday 14 March 2017 the Circuit Meeting will be at Waddesdon at 7.45pm.

The meeting closed with The Grace at 9.02 pm.