

SOUTHEND AND LEIGH CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
Registered Charity No 1134248
Superintendent Minister – Rev Peter Moorhouse

Minutes of the 99th Circuit Meeting Held at Canvey Island Methodist Church, Waarden Road, Canvey Island on Thursday 9th March 2017

Present: Revv Moorhouse, Hooks, Monaghan, Moon and Sandy, 5 Circuit Stewards, the Treasurer, 4 Circuit Officers, 33 members representing 14 churches and 1 visitor (48 voting members).

1. **Opening devotions** were led by the Rev Chris Sandy.
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from 8 members. The register was completed.
3. **Greetings, Condolences etc:** New members were welcomed. Circuit Meeting (CM) noted that since it last met a member of the meeting, Keith Beresford, and a former Circuit Treasurer Bernard Wallace had both – CM agreed to send condolences to Beryl Beresford and Carol Wallace. CM noted that Rev Michael Hayman is failing and expressed its prayerful support for him and Sheila.
4. **Minutes of the 98th Meeting** having been circulated, were amended at para 9, first bullet “is leading” to read “is helping to lead”, then taken as read, confirmed and signed.
5. **Matters arising** – CM noted that Margaret Chipandambira had been successful at the District Candidates’ Committee and would proceed to the Connexional Committee, the next stage in candidacy for the presbyteral ministry.
6. **Notice of items to come under AOB** – 3 noted – Methodist Summer Fellowship; Easter Offering papers; permission for a lay employee at Rayleigh.
7. **Mission Updates**

7.1 Circuit Mission Initiatives

7.1.1 Stationing – Rev Peter Moorhouse advised we were unsuccessful in all 3 stationing rounds to find an either an experienced Presbyter (Rayleigh & Hockley) or a probationer presbyter (Chalkwell & Thundersley) – mainly due to a dearth of people. The Probationer application was converted into an application for an experienced presbyter, but had also been unsuccessful in Round 3. These appointments now sit with the Stationing Action Group (SAG) which meets until Conference (June) in an effort to fill remaining vacancies. We are also seeking an Authorised Minister (AM) (Rochford) and that has looked at ecumenical partners; known individuals and other options – 2 local ministers are known to be available from Sept so that avenue is being pursued. Appointments under SAG can be withdrawn on either 31st March or 31st May so, if that route were taken, it is possible we could have 3 AMs from Sept or a creative mix of AMs and say Lay Pastors. CM was assured each church will have a minister, backed by a good local team, in Sept. Circuit Leadership Team (CLT), the Invitation Committee and the Steering Group established to seek the AM, will continue to pursue options and will report back to next CM.

7.1.2 Nightshelter – This year’s shelter started with low client numbers (10) across the town, but has picked up to 20+. The new manager has worked well, allowing Norman Hooks to attend monthly and be on call otherwise. A request to the circuit to provide camp beds was very successful, raising £800 against a target of £400 – extra funds are being used by Nightshelter. Options are being explored with churches and bus companies to provide transport to help less mobile clients reach centres. Some of our teams had challenges in terms of numbers, notably for breakfast and clearing away. After an appeal at Rayleigh, there are towels available for other teams. Managers from all the centres met with HARP and Council representatives two weeks ago and received excellent feedback for the work.

7.2 Local Churches

7.2.1 **Benfleet** – hosted a meeting with Peter Edwards (Westminster Central Hall) to explore Healing ministry. Work continues to determine the way forward on this topic. Since last CM Chris Sandy has run Circuit visits to Westcliff Synagogue and the Houses of Parliament – where attendees watched Prime Minister’s Question Time and then shared Communion in St Mary’s Under Croft – both visits were well received.

7.2.2 **Rayleigh** – working with the Children’s Centre, a government initiative group required to meet with 95% of 0 – 5 year olds. The church provides premises and breakfasts for those taking part in the activities led by the group, as well as an opportunity for parents to spend time with children and for the church members to actively serve the community. The work is also ongoing at Rochford.

7.2.3 **UMC Great Wakering site** – the Mother & Toddler Group is running successfully with 13 – 20 children attending – providing a valuable space for parents to be with children for whom they do not have full custody in some cases.

7.2.4 **Belfairs** – The Short Mat Bowls club has invested in a new mat – the old one is usable and is available for other churches.

7.2.5 **Trinity** – Open as usual to provide meals on Christmas Day and had a number of non-church volunteers, including a 17 year old – Mohammed. The ambulance service brought a man to the church who had recently returned from Bangladesh to find his home repossessed less and his goods sold. Trinity fed him and began seeking a bed for him – Mohammed took him to Mosque – who found a bed and paid his air fare to return home. Mohammed returned to volunteer again.

7.2.6 **Wesley** – Memory Worship is progressing well and is advertising via leaflets in Waitrose who have some staff involved. One leaflet, slipped into a customer’s pocket, proved a lifeline for him and his dementia sufferer wife at a time of particular need.

7.2.7 **UMC** – have been exploring employing a youth and community worker across the sites – this evolved from the item approved by CM in June 2015 which said "11.5 **UMC** – sought permission to explore the idea of having a family/youth worker from Oasis College. The person will study at the college and work 16 hours a week at the church – an exploratory submission has been made. CM approved the exploration." It is now hoped to employ Luke Dobson, who already has links to UMC, for 20 hours a week – his musical skills are already having an impact.

7.2.8 **Thorpe Bay** – Now employing a Youth Worker – Dan Crooks – he started in Sept, praying for and researching the needs of young people in the area. He has started a Tuesday evening youth club (25 young people), a Thursday Evening “Sacred Space” and built a sound studio for the young people to practice their instruments. He is also to work at Trinity on Wednesday evenings.

8. **Local Preachers’ (LPs) and Worship Leaders’ (WLs) Meeting Business** – the group met on 22nd February opening with a discussion working through an Explore section of the new course. Much of the material is available on the website at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/local-preachers/worship-leading-preaching> . The meeting also reviewed some of the forms required as part of the new course – congregational feedback on worship; service reviewer’s form; service planning form – again available on the web site at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/local-preachers/worship-leading-preaching/portfolio-submission-guidance> then select from the paragraph on Standard Forms.

The meeting received reports on those in training, on trial and on note. CM noted:-

- Caroline Warrey – Worship Leader portfolio is ready
- Kristin Kilgour is beginning to assemble her portfolio; has assisted at Hadleigh and Highlands and been well received. Working towards a trial service in due course.
- Sue Hockett proceeded to full accreditation at a Circuit Service on 5th March 2017.

Finally the meeting heard of numerous opportunities for continuous development for worship leaders, preachers and leaders of small groups – from literature to conferences and training events.

9. Matters Referred by Conference or District

9.1 Representative Synod – we are hosting our District Synod on 6th May 2017 at Rayleigh – the Synod Secretary (Catherine Roots) has visited the premises and planning is in hand. Thanks were expressed to those who have volunteered to help on the day – a meeting will be arranged closer to the date to finalise arrangements. Synod runs for 10am to around 1pm – it is an open meeting so anyone can attend to observe and get an idea of what happens at this level of Methodism.

9.2 Conference – meets at end of June in Birmingham – items on the agenda include the new Ministerial Code of Practice and the introduction of Supervision for ministers – Peter Moorhouse is to receive initial Supervision Training shortly.

10. Reports from Circuit Offices and Committees

10.1 Circuit Stewards – Since last CM CLT have met and considered:-

- Stationing 2017 – as described above.
- Heard from the management committees for our employees:-
 - Ministerial co-worker (Anne Lane)
 - Circuit Administrator (Ruth Lowden)
 - Youth Worker (Jonathan Logan)
- Heard from the Support Group for Rev Hannah Bucke in the Town Centre ministry.
- Reviewed the CM agenda.
- Noted the coming 3Generate manifestos.
- Discussed the study opportunities for Worship academy Extra.
- Stationing 2018 CM gave approval for Kathy Burrell to convene a Circuit Invitation Committee (CIC) to undertake the appointment for the Leigh section due in Sept 2018 – CIC to be Superintendent; presbyteral staff rep; the circuit stewards; the senior steward of each church directly impacted (Wesley, Highlands, Belfairs), a rep from each of the other sections of the circuit.
- Appointments See revised sheet attached. Those appointments requiring a 75% majority (Circuit Stewards Kathy Burrell, Colin Turner and Ian Low and the Treasurer, Richard Reeves) were considered with the four people absent from the room – all four received the necessary majority. All other appointments were approved nem con. CM appointed as representatives to Synod: Kathy Burrell, Richard Reeves, Pat Norman, Pam Smith, Patrick Smith, Rob Gray, Laurie Ward and 1 vacancy – Substitutes – 2 vacancies – any volunteers for the vacancies to contact Kathy Burrell. CM noted that the Rev Teresa Rutterford has agreed to serve as Disability, Equality & Diversity Officer. A new Mission with Youth Forum rep and Young people's rep are needed – CM agreed to ask Youth Workers to identify nominees for these roles.

10.2 Circuit Treasurer

CM reviewed the half year accounts (Sept 2016 to end Feb 2017) and the draft budget and assessment allocation for 17/18 - circulated prior to CM. The Treasurer clarified, in response to a question, that the Circuit Office moved to a smaller room in the New Road

building, so allowing release of the larger room for lettings. Church treasurers had already met to discuss these documents. The majority recommendation from the Treasurers' Meeting was that the budget for 17/18 be approved, the assessment allocation be calculated using the current formula but with a 5% maximum increase cap applied per church and that a working party be established to review the formula and report findings by November 2017 to allow approval by CM for utilisation for the 18/19 budget and assessment allocation process. CM discussed at length the assessment formula; creation of a working group to review the formula and the timing of the report of such a group; the use of a cap on increases in the assessment per church; and the approach to giving and the need to cover the Ministerial costs which form the bulk of the budget requirements. CM then proceeded to take four votes:-

10.2.1 Budget 17/18 – to accept the budget – **Vote** - 45 For and 3 Against – carried

10.2.2 Assessment Cap of 5% - to use the 5% cap in 17/18 assessment allocation – **Vote** 33 For and 8 Against - carried

10.2.3 Assessment allocation Formula Working Group – to set up group – **Vote** 45 For and 1 Against – carried

10.2.4 Working Party Formula to be used from 1 September 2017 – **Vote** – 10 For and 28 Against – lost.

CM subsequently agreed that the Working part should be Peter Moorhouse, Richard Reeves, Keith Flintham, Tina Gowers, Patrick Smith, Pam Smith, with power to co-opt.

CM was reminded we must endeavour to grasp the vision and maintain mission focus, evidenced when last CM agreed to move to a ratio of 1 minister to 2 churches, and to treat it as a privilege to provide for this. The budget as agreed does not cover the additional minister that requires – and more creative thinking will go to that as the stationing situation unfolds.

The Treasurer was thanked for his work.

10.3 Connexional Funds Treasurer – report circulated prior to CM, no further business.

10.4 Property –

10.4.1 Since last CM quinquennials have been carried out at Chalkwell Park and Thorpe Bay – local trustees will deal with any issues found.

10.4.2 The small Panel (Tom Deans, Ruth Lowden, Tony Gowers and Don Parsley) to review our Quinquennial Inspections supplier requirements has concluded its work. Michael Downing FRCS, IRRV [HONS], a surveyor based in West Wickham, Kent, and with considerable experience of inspecting Methodist buildings, has been asked to be our circuit surveyor. All candidates were similarly qualified but local surveyors proved more expensive. Mike takes the role on under the same terms as his predecessor – Derek Rona. There is no contract so either party can withdraw at any time, though we hope to retain his services for the next five years. Mike will also provide advice on building problems and planned building works between quinquennials as required. His first inspection in the circuit will be at the Gainsborough Manse in Sept. Derek Rona's last inspection for us will be at UMC Great Wakering in August. Tom Deans will write to Derek on behalf of the circuit to thank him for his work – it is understood he is now retired and working on a consultancy basis. Any questions or comments on the appointment process to be directed to Tom Deans.

10.5 Manses Co-ordinator – No business

10.6 Mission with Youth Forum – There is an exciting increase in the number of children and young people involved across the circuit. A Big Event was run at the Mega Centre with Tim Annan, Youth President. Jonathan Logan (Circuit Youth Worker) is reporting an increase in numbers and good developments on his film night initiative. 11 children and 2 adults attended 3Generate in Nov 2016 and plans are already underway for this year's event which is 24 – 26 Nov at Pontin's, Southport. This event sees a change of ethos from an event where children are encouraged to come without their leaders, to one where, with a much larger number of young people able to attend (perhaps 1K), youth leaders are welcome. The plan is to allow leaders to attend free, children will continue to be funded by the District so the only cost to the Circuit is transport. We would encourage youth leaders and volunteers to attend and CM gave permission for Rev Peter Moorhouse to be released from the Plan for 26th Nov to attend with the Hadleigh and Thorpe Bay youngsters. In the interim Tim Annan has media access to publicise the Manifestos agreed at a previous 3Generate.

Rochford, with the Community Church, has applied for a One Person Programme Participant to work at the Hub – all costs are met by the Connexion – so we wait to see if the application is successful.

10.7 Circuit Meeting Secretary –

10.7.1 Annual Questionnaire CM was reminded the questionnaire will be issued soon to collect the data for the Circuit Directory and to confirm CM membership for 2017/2018 – the deadline will be towards the end of May.

10.7.2 MHA Sunday – This is 11th June 2017 under the title this year of “Best Sunday For Ages” – see www.BestForAges.com. Packs were available for each church containing a letter to the Senior Steward, a poster and a pack of 25 gift envelopes – further packs of 25 envelopes available to take as needed.

- 11. Safeguarding** Rob Gray and the other trainers attended the new Creating Safer Space and Refresher Training in December. Foundation training (for 11) and Refresher training (for 21) was held at Rayleigh in January, an opportunity to trial the new material. More trainers are needed, especially as we lose one in August and the requirements for refresher training every 4 years mean we some 500 to train in addition to new appointees.. We have asked the District to run a train the trainers session in the circuit, or at least in Essex and await their offering. In the interim a training session is planned for Thetford on 23rd March. Once we have the extra trainers we will run foundation courses for new appointees and then the refresher training.

The Methodist Policy and Practice Guidelines are being re-worked. The Churches' Agency for Safeguarding is closing, a new provider of DBS checks is being appointed.

12. Local Churches' Business

12.1 Property Consents – CM approved inclusion in the Circuit Policy Handbook of a one page flow chart to guide property officers and churches through the online consents process. CM was reminded that it is essential that CM and the Superintendent be aware as early as possible of projects as Connexional Officers contact the Superintendent directly with queries.

12.2 UMC Great Waking – Terry Galley was given permission to speak. He outlined the discovery of a serious structural problem, located primarily above the organ. It was identified by a contractor who was costing other work already agreed at a cost of some £25K. Last CM gave permission for urgent work to proceed. A detailed structural report has been produced and submitted to Church Council (CC). The work to correct the

structural issue has been costed at £28K. The church has contacted a number of trusts and grant making bodies, including Osborne Trust and was also seeking a grant of £3K from the circuit and a loan from the York Road Fund. CM agreed in principle for the project to proceed and to the church approaching relevant bodies for funding. CM also approved the request for a loan from the York Road Fund. It further delegated to the CLT consideration of the application for a Circuit Grant once it is completed.

12.3 Rayleigh – the sale of the land had finally gone through and work is now progressing on “The Big Project”. The church has employed a professional fund raiser who has had some success. Papers, including an application for a Circuit grant had been circulated. CM agreed the £3K grant and gave the church permission to seek further external funding.

12.4 Trinity - Repair work and redecoration is required to the Institution Building – estimated cost £50K – last CM agreed the work could proceed and funding could be sought from Rank Trust. Trinity were now seeking a grant from the Circuit of £3K – application had been circulated. It was noted that current papers assume two thirds of funding will come from Rank Trust – should this not be successful other avenues have been identified. CM approved the grant of £3K. CM also noted Trinity plans to replace its cooker – a separate, small item.

12.5 Thundersley – Have currently raised £109K of the £170K costs of the foyer extension. The church asked CM permission to take a loan from the York Road Fund of £16K to allow progress to the next level of funding bodies. CM approved the loan.

12.6 Belfairs – Planning to refurbish the foyer and servery at a cost of £15K (including soft furnishings. Funding is in place – C gave permission to proceed.

12.7 Rochford. Phase 1 of the hub refurbishment is complete; Phase 2 to start shortly.

12.8 Hadleigh Advised CM that they have the necessary machine and two members trained to do PAT testing of electrical appliances – assistance via Roger Kingston

13. Dates of Next Meetings - Monday 12th June 2017 at Thorpe Bay, Tuesday 12th September 2017 at Rayleigh, Wednesday 15th November 2017 at Benfleet and Thursday 15th March 2018 at Trinity, all at 8pm (***Motions and written Reports to be with the Secretary at least three weeks before the Meetings, please***)

14. Other Business

14.1 Methodist Summer Fellowship – Meets 29 July to 4 August at Swanwick – its 100th year – under the title “I have a dream: adventures in Faith and Discipleship”. Keynote speaker Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and daily Bible Study led by Tom Greggs, holds the Chair in Historical and Doctrinal Theology, Aberdeen. Ontcat Eileen Simmons (Leigh Wesley) if interested.

14.2 Easter Offering Literature and envelopes available for each church to take. An Easter Offering Service is being planned by the Circuit MWiB group – details to follow – probably early June in the Castle Point section of the circuit.

14.3 Permission to employ Rayleigh sought retrospective permission to employ a local church administrator for 4 hours a week – CM agreed. Rayleigh also advised CM that, with Hockley, they are considering appointing a Children, Youth and Community worker for 17 hours per week – for which they will be seeking funding externally to the circuit.

15. There being no further business the meeting closed with prayer at 10.45pm.