

## **The Methodist Church**

### **Bailiwick of Guernsey Circuit**

#### **Minutes of the Circuit Meeting held on Thursday 25 June 2009 at Rohais Methodist Church**

##### **08/59 Welcome, apologies for absence and notification of any other business**

The Reverend David Hart welcomed members to the meeting and received the following items to be considered under any other business:

- Les Capelles – Rateable Taxation issue
- Change in name of Connexional Funds
- St Paul's refurbishment plans

Apologies for absence were received from Rev Arthur Mignot, Joe Langlois, Anne Benson, Koos Sheffer, Janet de Jersey, Liz and Robert Langlois, Michael Le Tissier, Geoff Gallienne, Carl Rosumek, Mark Dorey, Miriam Bosworth, Pauline Powell, Peter Drake, Joan Stanford and Dallas Courtney-Warren

46 people were present at the meeting.

##### **08/60 Opening Devotions were led by The Reverend Paul Chesworth**

**08/61** Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2009, which had previously been circulated, were approved subject to the comment made by Mr Eric Waldron that he did not use the words 'bold step' when referring to the decision by St Peter Port's Church Council to cease worship.

##### **08/62 Correspondence, greetings and pastoralia**

It was agreed to send a letter to the Reverend David Coote assuring him and his wife of our prayers for them at this time when he continued to be in poor health. Their family would also be in our prayers as they, too, had their own health problems to cope with.

##### **08/63 Matters Arising**

**08/63.1 Methodist National Brass Band** The Reverend Carole Holmes reported that the final programme for the Band's visit to the Island, 8 -15 August 2009, would be passed to the Circuit office as soon as possible for further circulation to the churches and also to put on the Circuit website. She said that Les Capelles had agreed to provide overnight accommodation and breakfast but asked if the other churches would consider the possibility of offering one lunchtime meal and if so, to let her know. This would also help the Band to meet people from around the Circuit. She proposed that the Circuit should offer to cover the cost of one meal per day and this was agreed and for the Circuit Stewards to keep an oversight of the expenditure.

**08/63.2 Update on St Peter Port Church and Ebenezer, Brock Road** Mr Michael Le Poidevin said approval had been given for the Society to cease worship and for the property to be sold, but the schedules were currently held up in Manchester waiting for approval. The Society would continue to monitor the state of the building for Insurance purposes until the end of August when the responsibility for this would be handed over to the members of the Circuit meeting until the property was sold. An inventory had been drawn up and this would soon be circulated around the churches for information. A few hymn books would be left at Les Cotils as a gesture of thanks. The Environment Department had stipulated that the building could not be used in its entirety as an office complex although rooms at the rear of the premises could be used as such. Approximately £4,000

worth of work was immediately required to facilitate the sale of the building. There had been one or two expressions of interest in the purchase, but these were confidential at this time.

Reverend David Hart explained that the legal paperwork had been held up in Manchester because of the recent death of one of the Connexional Solicitors, which had also created other District administrative problems and so the Circuit should be sensitive to this issue for the time being. He continued that there had been a good response to the pastoral plan for St Peter Port and that over 80% had expressed a preference to join other Methodist Churches and some had been commended to other churches mainly for geographical or theological reasons. A final Act of Worship had been arranged for Sunday 30 August in the Harry Bound Room at Les Cotils at 6.30 pm, to be taken in the form of a Circuit Service of Thanksgiving. He asked that all churches be encouraged to attend this special time of worship.

#### **08/64 The Mission and Ministry of the Circuit**

08/64.1 Pastoral Organisation Sara Gould outlined the background preparation and thinking for the re-arrangement of the Circuit in 2010 which resulted in the Sections being very similar to the current set-up. Reverend Hart paid tribute to the tenacity of the Circuit Stewards in achieving the proposed arrangement and said they had been greatly helped in discussions by the Reverend Dr Stephen Dawes from Exeter who had acted as a critical friend and affirmed their judgement.

Andy Roussel spoke on behalf of Wesley when he said he was not sure that it was a good thing for Wesley to be with St Paul's and Galaad, and that it currently enjoyed a close association with Les Camps. Sara explained that the new Section provided a variety of interests as well as similar associations with Parade Services and in any case in 2011 the Circuit organisation could change again if there was a reduction in Ministerial staff. David Hart there was no guarantee that Reverend Stephen Robinson would be replaced when he retired in 2011. A profile had to be drawn up for the new Minister and those three churches were seen as providing a challenge in a number of ways and especially with the work among children. There was no reason why the links with Les Camps could not continue. The pastoral oversight of the Circuit from 1 September 2010 was agreed as follows:

Reverend David Hinchliffe, Chair of District and Superintendent Minister with responsibility for policy development and external relationships, and pastoral care of Les Capelles and Bordeaux.

Reverend A N Other – Responsibility for exploring discipleship and developing vocations, pastoral care of St Paul's, Wesley and Galaad.

Reverend Paul Chesworth – Responsibility for mission development, fresh expressions of church and pastoral care of Les Camps, St Martin's Mission and Rohais.

Reverend Carole Holmes – Responsibility for fresh expressions of church, work among children and young people and pastoral care of Forest United, Torteval, Les Adams and Delisle.

In answer to a question from Irene Day, Reverend Hart said that the Superintendent Minister would have oversight of Alderney and Sark.

#### **08/64.2 Possible development of 'town centre' ministry – discussion on a possible exploratory project.**

Reverend Hart said this discussion would be postponed until the September meeting. However Canon Paul Mellor asked that consideration be given to Ecumenical relationships in anything to do with the Town Centre.

## **08/65 Circuit Financial Affairs – Update on Assessment Share Scheme and proposals for transitional funding, 2009/2010**

The meeting approved the budget contributions for 2009/2010, which had been circulated at the beginning of the meeting. Bob Harbottle thanked the Church Councils for re-consideration of their assessments but said there would still be a shortfall and this would be met, as transitional funding, by the use of the interest accruing from the Roger Venmore bequest, and from reserves.

## **08/66 Circuit Property Matters**

**08/66.1 Revision of scheme at St Paul's** – Bob Harbottle reminded the meeting of a previous damp problem in the west wall of the church which had now been resolved and the outside wall pointed. It was now possible to continue with the necessary work to the interior of the gable where the plaster had been falling off due to the dampness. The meeting agreed that Schedule 1 in respect of this scheme be signed.

## **08/66.2 Approval of extension of occupation by the Reverend Pam Le Poidevin at La Petite Jaoniere**

Andrew Male explained the provisions of the current 15 year lease of the property which expires this year. It was agreed that the lease should be renewed annually from now on at the existing rent of £20 per annum and for this to continue according to the terms until such time as a Supernumerary Minister no longer resided there.

**08.66.3 Report on works at the Alderney Manse** – Irene Day said the work on the Manse roof was being carried out according to schedule. She said that consideration was now being given to a refurbishment plan for the Church which had damp problems on the outside and the interior needed upgrading. She would submit plans for this to a future Circuit meeting. David Hart assured her of our prayers for this way forward and also of the help available from the Circuit Property Committee.

**08.66.4 Report on Wesley Playgroup Management Committee** – Reverend Hart expressed his thanks to the current Committee. However, it was necessary to change the structure of the Committee from September so that the Circuit could have more oversight. Bob Harbottle and Reverend Stephen Robinson were thanked for their past work and approval was given to the appointment of Reverend David Hart and one Circuit Steward to represent the Circuit and for Margaret Lewis to act as Secretary to the Management Committee. This would help reinforce the relationship between the Playgroup and the Circuit. Consideration had already been given to the possibility of holding an open day (without children present) instead of a formal AGM so that anyone from the Circuit could come and meet the staff and see what sort of activities were provided there. 65% of their budget was met by the States Social Security Department in recognition of the on-going work.

## **08/67 Annual appointment of Officers and Representatives**

### **08/67.1 Circuit Steward**

Sara Gould, retiring Circuit Steward, thanked past and present Circuit Stewards, members of the Circuit meeting and Church Stewards for facing the challenge of the changes outlined in the Circuit Reviews. Sara proposed the nomination of Mrs Janet de Jersey as a Circuit Steward from the 1st September 2009 for a period not exceeding 4 years. Mrs de Jersey would not be able to take up the appointment until 1st October because of her Local Preaching commitments. The appointment was unanimously approved.

## **08/67.2 Circuit Invitation Committee**

Reverend David Hart explained the provisions of SO 541 (5) of the constitution and the meeting therefore agreed the appointment of the Circuit Invitation Committee: membership consists of all Ministers in the active work and stationed to the Circuit under SO 733 (save any whose extension and invitation is under discussion), all Circuit Stewards and two Stewards of those churches included in the relevant profile. Where a member of a church in this Circuit is the District Lay Stationing representative, then s/he is also a member of the Committee. The Committee acts with the authority of the Circuit meeting in accordance with SO 541 (5).

Sara Gould said it was hoped to get a profile together by September for the new Minister. It was noted that in addition, candidates could be given information on Island conditions concerning health, education, finance, etc and would also have access to the website.

## **08/67.3 District Policy Committee**

The following people were appointed as members of the District Policy Committee: Andrew Male, Claire Teed and Reverend Paul Chesworth .

## **08/67.4 District Synod**

Because Mrs de Jersey would be a member of the District Synod as a Circuit Steward from September, there were now 2 vacancies to be filled. In answer to a question from Michael Le Poidevin, David Hart said that it was not necessary to be a member of the Circuit meeting to be a member of the District Synod. But it had been agreed previously that members of the District Synod were eligible to attend Circuit meetings. The meeting was asked to send nominations for the 2 current vacancies to the Circuit Office in time for approval at the September Circuit meeting and in the meantime it approved the list of members as printed in the agenda:

Mr M Le Poidevin	Mr M Le Tissier
Mrs M Lewis	Mrs M Penney
Mrs K Saddington	Miss J Vidamour
Mr M Ward	Mrs E Weston
Mr H Winterflood	(2 vacancies)

## **08/68. Any other business.**

### **08/68.1 Change in name of some Connexional Funds**

David Hart said it was important to note the changes in the name of the following Connexional Funds for amendments to be made to the relevant documents:

Fund for Home Mission – change to Mission in Britain Fund  
Fund for World Mission – change to The World Mission Fund  
Connexional Advance and Priority Fund – change to Connexional Priority Fund  
Auxiliary Fund – change to Fund for Support of Presbyters and Deacons

### **08/68.2 Anglican Teaching and Preaching of Generosity Day**

The Dean extended an invitation to all Methodist Church Stewards to attend an Anglican Day of Teaching and Preaching of Generosity to take place at Torteval Church Hall on 7 July from

9.00 am – 4.00 pm. Stewards should bring a packed lunch but other refreshments would be provided.

### 08/68.3 Rateable Value on Church Property

Gavin Johns said he had received an account from the Vale Parish in respect of rates for the Capelles Community Centre. This building had previously been exempt from taxation together with the Caretakers Cottage and the Church building itself. However the States of Guernsey Cadastre Department had recently re-classified the Community Centre building as 'retail premises' and the rates were now levied at £800 per annum. The re-classification was something that the Cadastre were applying to all Halls, Community Centres, etc attached to Methodist Churches in the Island. Bob Harbottle said he had received accounts for Wesley Playschool, L'Islet and St Paul's Playschool.

David Robilliard explained that this was not unique to the Methodist Church, however the system dated back to the old Tax on Rateable Value. Some Halls were classified as publicly owned and were therefore zero rated. Mr de Jersey referred to the previous meeting when it was noted that the Churches were now categorised as 'Charities' and that as non-profit organisations they were exempt from tax.

The meeting agreed that the rates for this year for the various churches would have to be paid, but that in doing so it should be made clear that the Circuit was contesting the basis of the charges and would appeal against them. More immediately, the meeting supported Les Capelles in their desire to change the classification of the Community Centre from 'retail premises'. A strategy would have to be drawn up with Capelles as to who would take up their particular issue. David Robilliard advised that the groundwork be started with the Cadastre Department to establish how each of the properties had been classified before taking up the issue with the Parish Douzaines.

### 08/68.4 Liberation Day 2010

Bob Thompson asked what the response had been to Roy Sarre's proposal to have a 1,000 voice choir taking part in a celebration at St James on 9 May 2010. After some discussion it was concluded that as the event would not be a corporate Act of Worship the Methodist Churches would not close on that evening. If further details were available and any change in the situation was likely to affect the churches then the proposal would be discussed again at the next Circuit meeting.

### 08/69. Closing courtesies.

David Hart thanked Reverend Paul Chesworth and the people from Rohais for hosting the meeting, and those members present for attending.

### 08/70. Date and place of next meetings.

The next Circuit meetings are arranged at St Martin's Mission on Wednesday 23 September 2009, Wesley on Monday 8 February 2010, and Forest on Thursday 24 June 2010.

### 08/71. Closing Devotions

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm with the words of the Grace.