

The Methodist Church

Bailiwick of Guernsey Circuit

Minutes of Circuit Meeting held on Monday 8th February 2010 at Wesley Methodist Church

10/12 Welcome, apologies for absence and notification of any other business.

The Reverend David Hart welcomed members to the meeting, and sought approval for Brian Guille to take the Minutes, in place of The Circuit Meeting Secretary, Mrs. Margaret Lewis, who was unable to be present. The meeting agreed to this request, and Reverend David Hart thanked Brian for standing in.

There were a number of items to be considered under “any other business,” and these are listed below.

- Healing on the Streets - The Reverend Paul Chesworth
- Report on Wesley Play Group - The Reverend David Hart
- Worship Leaders Course - The Reverend Carole Holmes
- Notice of proposed changes to the Model Deed - The Reverend David Hart
- Report from The Methodist Council - Clive Falla

At this point Reverend David Hart asked the meeting to approve the appointment of Mrs. Margaret Lewis as a new Custodian Trustee, who would also act as Secretary to the Board of Trustees. Agreed.

Apologies for absence were received from Irene Day, Margaret Lewis, The Very Reverend Canon Paul Mellor, David Robilliard, Joe Langlois, The Reverend Arthur Mignot, The Reverend Tom Vidamour, Kath Bichard, Keith Le Parmentier, Ray Mabire, Eugene Gidney, Carol Langlois, Bob Thompson, Heather Le Boutillier, Paul Le Boutillier, Miriam Bosworth, Pauline Powell, Michael Ward, Eve Weston, Herbert Winterflood and Margaret Penney.

There were 41 people present at the meeting.

10/13 Opening Devotions were led by The Reverend Stephen Robinson.

10/14 Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2009, which had previously been circulated, were approved subject to the following amendment:-

08/78.2 For “Sue Seymour” substitute “Bob Harbottle.”

10/15 Matters Arising

10/15.1 Parochial Rates levied on Methodist Properties

Reverend David Hart explained that the normal classification for a church was “Purposes of Religion.” However, where church premises were let to, say, revenue generating play groups, these had been classified as “Retail Premises” which had resulted in rate demands being issued. None of the demands made had been outside the powers of Douzaines, and were within the legal framework.

10/15.2 Candidate for presbyteral ministry – David Hollingsworth: The Reverend David Hart was delighted to announce that David Hollingsworth had been unanimously recommended by the District as a candidate for the Presbyteral Ministry, with a grade of “Very Good.”

10/15.3 Invitation to new Minister for September 2010

Andrew Male reported that the Reverend Geoff Hays had accepted an invitation to the Circuit, and would, subject to the approval of The Methodist Conference, take up his appointment on the 1st September 2010. The Reverend David Hart expressed thanks to the Circuit Invitation Committee for their work in this connection.

10/16 Finance

10/16.1: Presentation of Budgets for the year beginning September 2010

Before dealing with the Budgets, Bob Harbottle explained that there were no unusual items in the accounts to date, and the deficit of £13,252 was in line with expectations.

The meeting agreed that costs of approximately £1,000 in connection with Ministers visiting the Island for possible appointments, be reclaimed from Methodist Central Funds.

Turning to the Budget, Bob said the amount required by way of Church Contributions was £240,000, an increase of 6.2%. If the meeting agreed £10,000 would be added to this from the Circuit Advance Fund, together with the amount of the contribution from Social Security for the Wesley Playgroup, which was still being negotiated. Nine churches had already provided either definite or indicative figures relating to their contributions, and these accounted for 68% of the budget requirement. However, until all Church Councils had been held the final figure would not be known, and in view of this it was not possible to present the Budget for approval. In the circumstances, the meeting agreed that this be dealt with at the June Circuit meeting.

The Reverend David Hart said that the major item in the Budget was for the Ministry, the cost of which was inevitably borne by the churches. He urged churches to think very carefully about the implications of not meeting this, as deficit budgeting could not continue. The only economy that could be made was in Ministerial levels, and a further reduction in this area could result in Ministers finding the work load too great with the existing number of churches. This in turn would result in a revised Pastoral plan, which would necessitate using available resources to best effect. In response to a question about the possibility of church closures, Reverend Hart said that this would be entirely in the hands of Managing Trustees, as neither the Circuit, or the Connexion, could insist on it. History had shown, however, that there was no will to see closure. It was not possible to return to the old method of assessing churches solely on the basis of membership, as this was no longer permitted by the Methodist Conference. All the issues needed to be carefully considered, and any feedback would be welcomed by the Circuit Stewards.

10/16.2 Annual Registration of Circuit as Charity in Bailiwick of Guernsey

Clive Falla confirmed that the registration had been completed under reference CH195.

Rev. Hart asked Bob Harbottle to comment on the Charitable Donations Tax Scheme. Bob explained that it was similar to the Gift Aid scheme in the UK, and he was checking with the Income Tax Authority to see whether it could operate under the existing Circuit Charity registration, failing which churches would have to register individually. He would also seek clarification as to whether Audited Accounts needed to be submitted.

10/17 Appointments

10/17.1 Appointment of representatives to the District Synod

The meeting agreed to the appointment of the following persons for the Connexional Year 2010-11:-

Mr.M.Le Poidevin	Mrs. M. Penney	Mr. J. Le Page
Mrs. M. Lewis	Miss J. Vidamour	Mrs. E. Weston
Mrs.K.Saddington	Mr. M Ward	Mr. R. Browning
Mr. M. Le Tissier	Mr. H. Winterflood	Mrs. S. Gallienne

10/17.2 Appointment of Secretary of the Property Committee

Clive Falla explained the duties of the Secretary and said that his successor needed to be appointed before the end of August. He would be happy to work with whoever took on the responsibilities for the first year.

10/17.3 Appointment of other Circuit Officers

The meeting approved “en-bloc” the names of all officers listed on Page 5 of the Circuit Directory.

Miss Jean Vidamour and Mrs. Brenda Langlois were confirmed as the Network representatives to the Circuit Meeting.

10/17.4 Appointment of representative to Guernsey Christian Aid Committee

The meeting approved the appointment of Mr. Roger Browning as a representative to the above Committee.

10/18 Reports on Circuit life and Ministry

Most of the reports had been circulated with the minutes, but David Hollingsworth was asked to present his report on the work in Sark.

10/18.1 The work of the Church in Sark

David began by reminding the meeting that Jesus Christ is the purpose of everything we talk about. The Church in Sark continued to flourish providing traditional worship for locals and visitors to the Island, as well as a wider ministry touching the lives of many people. David mentioned the Kenwood Trust, a Christian organisation which provided help for people with deep personal and addictive problems. The Trust had nine venues throughout the UK, and a former Sark member, now resident in the UK was a Trustee. David had managed to secure a place for a young woman experiencing enormous difficulties involving addiction, and said that through the work of the Trust lives were being changed. The help offered by the Trust was not restricted to Sark, but open to everybody. Anybody who knew of someone who could benefit from a placement was asked to contact David in the first instance.

10/18.2 Circuit Property Report

Clive Falla reported that the recently held Property Committee meeting had been poorly attended. It was perhaps, not the most exciting of meetings, but nevertheless dealt with important issues. The system for the agreement of Schedule D, which summarised the information provided by all the churches, would change from one of scrutiny of every detail to “agreement by exception.” Other issues discussed included Risk Assessment, which covered not only the safety of buildings, but also financial matters.

Andrew Dawson, a representative of the Methodist Insurance Company, would be holding a “workshop,” provisionally arranged for 7.30p.m. on the 2nd March at Forest United. This would be an opportunity to learn more about church insurance, and raise any queries.

Quinquennial inspections were due to be carried out this year at, Forest United, Wesley, Galaad and Delancey Manse.

10/18.3 Maison L'Aumone and Maison de Quetteville

Although the MHA Guernsey property was not part of the Circuit, Reverend David Hart presented a short report from Paul Le Boutillier. The Maison L'Aumone Higher Dependency Unit had been operational since the end of last year, and staff in Maison de Quetteville had completed a 1 week training course early in January. Admissions to Maison de Quetteville began on the 18th January, and there were now 18 residents being cared for, with more waiting to come in, which affirmed the urgent need for the facility. The residents were involved in a range of activities, and the Wii machine was very popular, something which impressed the Guernsey Press reporter on a recent visit.

10/18.4 Les Bourgs Hospice

The Reverend David Hart referred to the appeal for funds to enable the much needed improvements to go ahead. Support was needed and he urged members to take this request to their churches.

10/19 Property

10/19.1 Ebenezer, Brock Road

Andrew Male reported that plans to convert the property into flats and office space were being considered by the Planning Department.

10/19.2 St. Paul's: repairs to structure

Bob Harbottle said that the builders started in January, and it was anticipated that the work would be completed by Easter, within budget.

10/19.3 Proposed Sale of Baugy Manse

Andrew Male reported that with the reduction in the Ministerial staff, Baugy Manse was now surplus to requirements. It was becoming expensive to maintain and work was needed on the structure and fabric of the building. The recommendation from the Circuit Leadership Team was that the property be sold. Sale proceeds would go to the Circuit Advance Fund, and be subject to a levy by the Connexion, which would continue each year, for as long as the funds were unused.

Swoffers, Cooper Brouard and Lovells had all quoted 1½% commission to act as agents in the sale, and it was agreed that Cooper Brouard be appointed. The meeting also agreed that the usual Application for Permission to Advertise for Sale be submitted to Property Division Manchester for approval. The present tenants would continue to occupy the property in the short term.

10/19.4 Application for wayleave by Cable and Wireless at L'Islet

The Reverend David Hart explained that a new slightly larger distributor box needed to be installed. No legal basis covering the previous installation could be found, this being due to the fact that the German occupying forces were responsible, and did not consider such formalities to be necessary. Cable and Wireless would bear all legal costs, and the Custodian Trustees would, in due course, deal with the legal aspects. Agreed.

10/19.5 Application for lease on ground at Rohais by Guernsey Electricity

John Sheard said that Guernsey Electricity had asked if they could install a sub-station in the church car park, but it was considered more appropriate to contain this within the garden area. They had offered to buy the plot for £2,000, but the church preferred to retain ownership, and were prepared to offer a lease for a maximum term of 21 years at a rent of £500 per annum, minimum.

10/20 Ministry and Mission

10/20.1 Note to preach: Mrs. Karen Harrison

The Reverend David Hart referred to Karen's note to preach and said her mentor would be Keith Le Parmentier.

10/20.2 Accreditation as a Local Preacher – Mrs. Janet de Jersey

The Reverend David Hart congratulated Janet on becoming a fully accredited Local Preacher, and the Reverend Stephen Robinson also added his congratulations. Reverend Hart thanked Stephen for tutoring, not only Janet, but other Local Preachers over the years.

10/20.3 Appointment of authorised persons at the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony

Reverend Hart said that in order to reflect Ministerial changes from the 1st September it was necessary for churches to make application to the Greffe to enable any Minister to officiate at a wedding in any of the Island Methodist churches. He asked representatives of the various churches to take the necessary application form back to their churches for completion.

10/21 Any Other Business

10/21.1 Healing on the Streets

The Reverend Paul Chesworth spoke of a very exciting ministry in which 7 churches were involved. 26 people had attended the training courses and of these 15 were part of the team, with a core number of 9. A total of 67 people had been prayed for and many prayers, some for healing, had been answered. There was a need for a small van in which to store and transport the equipment to the site outside the HMV shop from which the team operated. Reverend Chesworth asked the Circuit to invest in this valuable ministry, in which churches of other denominations

also participated. The meeting gave general approval to the ministry and a specific request for financial assistance would be made in due course.

10/21.2 Report on the Wesley Playgroup

The Reverend David Hart reported that a review meeting had been held with Social Security. 30 children attended the playgroup, for which there was a waiting list. 7 people were employed, and HSSD reports indicated that the level of training was very good. Thanks were expressed to Wesley church for their major contribution to the work, and active interest in what went on. Changes in the area surrounding Wesley had not impacted on the work, and children, some in desperate need, came by referral from the appropriate authorities. On a recent visit to the playgroup the Lieutenant Governor and Lady Malbon had been impressed by the work, of which the Circuit was a part. It was important for the work to continue, as it gave the children a “head start” in life.

10/21.3 Worship Leaders Course

The Reverend Carole Holmes said that Worship Leader training over two Saturdays, details of which were being circulated to all churches, was for anyone interested. She challenged people to come on the course, to pray and to encourage others to come. It was an opportunity to explore whether God might be calling people to work in this role, and asked that the opportunity to share in the training be made known as widely as possible.

10/21.4 Notice of proposed changes to Model Deed

The Reverend David Hart gave notice of proposed changes to legislation re Circuit Advance Funds, and assured the meeting that there was nothing more to do at this stage.

10/21.5 Report on the Methodist Council

Clive Falla highlighted two items which had been discussed at the recent meeting. There had been a debate regarding the minimum wage, and in the stand against poverty, it was felt that churches should instead pay employees a living wage, currently £7.50 London rate, where this was applicable, instead of the minimum.

Secondly there had been a debate about the possibility of replacing the present system of having a President and Vice President with a “Presidium.” This would be made up of The President and two Co-Presidents who would share responsibilities over a 3 year term. No decision had yet been made pending further consideration of the issues involved.

By way of information the Reverend David Hart mentioned that the Reverend Stephen Robinson would be retiring to Northern Ireland at the end of the Connexional Year, whilst he and the Reverend Anita Hart would be taking up Circuit appointments in Bristol. He invited members of the meeting to remember them all in their prayers.

10/22 Date and place of next meetings:

Thursday 24th June 2010 at Forest United and Thursday 23rd September 2010 at St. Paul’s.

The Reverend David Hart thanked Wesley for their hospitality, and closed the meeting with prayer at 9.25p.m.