

The Methodist Church

East Lincolnshire Circuit 17/6

Circuit Meeting

Wednesday 18th June 2025

7:00pm at Louth MC



in Christ
with Christ
for Christ

MINUTES

Item

Action

Welcome: Graham spoke from Galatians 3 v 26. We are all one in Christ Jesus. We shouldn't just seek out people like ourselves but appreciate and learn from those who are not like us. These sentiments were expressed by John Wesley – we need to imitate Jesus' universal love for all, not just those who agree with us. Graham urged the meeting to keep this in mind.

Present: Nick Adams, Sue Alldread, Rev Margaret Asiedu, Lyn Bignell, Ann Briggs, Nancy Cartwright, Doreen Horn, Tricia Johnson, Peter Mace, Roger Maidens, Anne May, Michael May, Gaynor Miles, Rev Graham Miles (Chair), Edward Mossop, Liz Mossop, Heather Neale, Richard Neale, Patsy Pike, Doreen Silvester, John Silvester, Irene Unsworth, Bryan Utteridge, Sheila Warsap

In Attendance: Paul Cooper (Circuit Property Officer), Richard Johnson (Withern), Catherine Rolph (minutes),

Apologies: Jean Cawkwell, Christine Foulds, Anne Moyes, Neil Poulson, Ernie Simmonds

Minutes of the last meeting on 19/03/25: Accepted and signed.

Matters arising from the minutes of 19/03/25: None raised

Correspondence: None received.

1. Presentation – Christians Against Poverty

Lorraine Papaioannou (Regional Director) and Alex Rodmell (Partnership Development Manager) from Christians Against Poverty (CAP) gave a presentation to the meeting. They have been praying for the East Lincolnshire coast as it is an area of great deprivation. In East Lindsey, 60% of households are deprived in some way whether that is through education, work or housing, and the figure is higher in certain localities, for example it is 75% in Chapel St Leonards. Mablethorpe ranks in the top 1% of deprived areas according to the Church Urban Fund, which is worse than many inner-city areas. There is a great need for debt advice. Estimates suggest 9,500 people in the Louth & Horncastle constituency and 16,500 in the Skegness and Boston constituency could use this service.

The role of CAP is to inspire and equip churches to help people out of debt and poverty and see them become followers of Jesus. They work in partnership with local churches who provide volunteers to be trained as Debt Coaches and to work as befrienders. The Debt Coaches have face to face meetings with clients, and then the information is passed to professionals who are based in Bradford and who negotiate with creditors. There are costs associated – it costs about £300 per month for 2 new clients a month. However no specific buildings are required.

Graham asked who was interested in looking further into this and there were quite a few volunteers, so Graham will arrange a further meeting with CAP when details can be discussed. This wouldn't commit churches to anything at this point.

Graham

2. Finance: Irene Unsworth – Circuit Finance Liaison Officer

Irene introduced herself, gave a little bit of her financial background, and was warmly welcomed by Graham in her new role.

- **Circuit Finances to end May 25:** (Previously circulated). These are for 9 months showing actual income/expenditure, budget for this period and a comparison to what we spent last year for comparison. The main overspend is on surplus property at nearly £14k but these are unavoidable costs. We have not spent much on the Caravan Chaplaincy yet

although there are a few more expenses to come in. ***These figures were accepted by the meeting.***

- **Proposed assessments 25/26:** (Previously circulated). Church assessments for 25/26 include the extra churches of Halton Hologate and Spilsby who will be joining us from September. There will be a 15k deficit on the year which will be met out of reserves. ***These figures were accepted by the meeting.*** Graham warned that we can only run a deficit budget for a finite number of years.
- **Report on KMAS Service Agreement Approval:** Following approval from the previous Circuit Meeting, CLT have now signed an agreement with KMAS to take on the financial work of some individual churches and the Circuit.
- **New Financial Examiner:** KMAS previously carried out this work but cannot independently examine accounts that they have prepared. Irene, on behalf of CLT, proposed that Bethany Watkinson (a qualified accountant and Grimsby Circuit treasurer) be appointed. This was seconded by Michael. ***This was unanimously agreed by the meeting.*** Irene will inform KMAS/Bethany of this decision.

Irene

3. CLT Matters:

- **Circuit Stewards:** Anne May and Doreen Horn are stepping down as Circuit Stewards from 1st September and were thanked by Graham on behalf of the whole Circuit. Lyn Bignell steps down as Safeguarding officer and was also thanked. All were given flowers and a card. Graham pointed out how important Circuit Stewards were. Bryan noted that Anne and Doreen deserve to sit down but it is disappointing that despite advertising for new CS and a Safeguarding Officer there has been no response. Graham urged trustees to take this matter back to churches and if anyone is interested in stepping in as a Circuit Steward or Safeguarding Officer then please talk to any of CLT. One piece of good news is that Sue Alldread from Wainfleet has received a Community Hero award from her local council from Wainfleet for all the work she does for the church and town.
- **Phone/Messaging:** Graham said that it is quite hard to distribute information across the circuit and CLT were wondering if churches would support a text message tree type system to disseminate information.
- **Synod Report:** (Previously distributed) There were no questions about this, and Graham asked if members would take it back to share with their churches.

ALL

4. Property Update:

- **St Marys:** Paul reported completion should be in the next couple of weeks.
- **Burgh:** The local council has made an offer to purchase the church in order to relocate the library, have an office and create a warm space. Paul is liaising with TMCP to get the sale approved, although they may yet compel us to market it openly first.
- **Conisholme:** The process of getting extra land registered (to enable the property to have room to install a septic tank and therefore sell for conversion to a house), is still ongoing.

5. Missions:

Graham asked for feedback on the Easter Offering Services which were held at individual churches. Feedback seemed positive and Graham says this will be repeated next year. He expressed a hope that the resources available would help us engage with the wider Methodist Church. People were urged to take away posters about the World Mission Fund.

6. Safeguarding: (Lyn)

From the 30th June to 11th July the District are running safeguarding sessions on Zoom with an in-person conference on 12th July at Lincoln. All are welcome to attend, and the theme is how we contribute to a positive safeguarding culture. Information has been sent to SG officers and is also on our website.

Unconscious bias training sessions are included as part of the sessions. All stewards, worship leaders, local preachers, lay pastors and SG officers need to do this course at some point.

The conference runs from 10am-4pm at Moorland Park Methodist Church in Lincoln – take your own lunch.

If you need SG training let your officers know and it may be possible to get courses arranged locally. Lyn made a plea for someone to take on her role – it may not be for long because of district reorganisation.

7. Caravan Chaplaincy: (Bryan)

Bryan had circulated a report and was wearing the new branded polo shirt mentioned in it. He asked for more volunteers to come forward to fill the 3 spare shirts he has. He commented that they are making a difference to people's lives.

8. Local Preacher Matters: (Nick)

Alison Simpson has reached her 40 years as an accredited LP and she was presented with her certificate at Wainfleet a few weeks ago. Every September LP are recommissioned, (as are Worship Leaders) and this will take place at Spilsby on 7th September at 3pm. It would be great to see others there supporting them as they do work hard. Nick hoped that all were gaining from John's gospel this bible month.

9. AOB:

The 24-7 prayer movement are holding a week of prayer for the nations of the world that they are encouraging churches to participate in from 1st September. Margaret has produced a leaflet using the resources 24-7 have provided and gave one for church to take away and copy and use as suits them best.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

All meetings start at 7pm

Wednesday 17th September at Mablethorpe

The meeting closed in prayer and by sharing the grace.