

The Methodist Church

East Lincolnshire Circuit 17/6

Circuit Meeting

Wednesday 17th September 2025

7:00pm at Mablethorpe MC



in Christ
with Christ
for Christ

MINUTES

Item

Action

Welcome: Graham welcomed everyone in a new church year, with an especial welcome to the new churches. He spoke from Matthew 10. There is darkness in this world, but we are called to bring the light of the gospel into the dark corners of the world and 'publish abroad' the wonderful name of Jesus. After singing 'Crown him with many crowns' the meeting opened in prayer.

Present: Nick Adams, Rev Margaret Asiedu, Chris Banham, Lyn Bignell, Ann Briggs, Nancy Cartwright, Helen Clough, Ivan Clough, Linda Hadfield, Tricia Johnson, Dennis Kemp, Roger Maidens, Michael May, Gaynor Miles, Rev Graham Miles (Chair), Edward Mossop, Heather Neale, Richard Neale, Patsy Pike, Ernie Simmonds, Irene Unsworth

In Attendance: Paul Cooper (Circuit Property Officer), Catherine Rolph (minutes), Gillian Willoughby (TFD)

Apologies: Sue Alldread, Jean Cawkwell, Carol Clough, Christine Foulds, Peter Mace, Bunty Martin, Liz Mossop, Anne Moyes, Kate O'Flynn, Neil Poulson, Josie Towle, Bryan Utteridge, Sheila Warsap

Graham played a video showing the highlights of the recent Methodist Conference.

Minutes of the last meeting on 18/06/25: Accepted and signed.

Matters arising from the minutes of 18/06/25: None raised

Correspondence: None received.

1. Finance: Irene Unsworth – Circuit Finance Liaison Officer

Initial End of Year Report: Expenditure at nearly £187k is below that budgeted and the figure for last year. Administrator costs were lower due to a reduction in hours but ministerial costs increased because of the rise in National insurance. Payments for Circuit Officers (Finance and Property) are below budget as the Finance Officer did not stay in post, but this will change next year with the appointment of KMAS to take on this role.

Under income, rents increased partway through the year and should now rise annually in line with inflation but the costs of surplus property at £27k left a deficit of nearly £10k. Interest was down slightly. The 'other income' figure included £8726 from the Mid Lincs Circuit, which ceased to exist from 1st September, for the churches of Spilsby and Halton Holegate. This is an initial payment of the Mid-Lincs circuit money which is split 20/80 with Lincoln based on the number of churches going to each circuit. There should be more to come when the Mid-Lincs manse are sold but we are sharing the cost of the ongoing roof repairs at Horncastle – again with a 20/80 split.

The General Fund deficit of £23,944 has been covered by withdrawing £30,000 from the Circuit Model Trust Fund. This deficit is less than last year (£46k) and what was budgeted for. Thanks to Michael's accuracy most of this year's amounts were within budget apart from some unforeseen circumstances.

Raithby Chapel has money ring-fenced for its use. This is currently shown under the heading of 'caravan chaplaincy' which is a simple accounting manoeuvre to separate it from other money, but it will be reported correctly next time.

The meeting agreed to accept this report

2. CLT Matters:

- **Christians Against Poverty:** Michael May brought forward a proposal that, in principle, the Circuit should seek to establish a CAP Debt Centre. (This proposal is attached to these minutes). This motion was seconded by Tricia Johnson.
Gaynor asked if East Lindsey could contribute to the costs as they have received extra funding for Skegness, and Michael said he would be attending a meeting with the council and will raise the issue.
The meeting voted and 17 people supported the motion with a few abstentions, so this was carried.
- **Circuit Administrator Position:** Catherine is to retire at the end of 2025 so the Circuit will be advertising for a replacement administrator. As the circuit are currently without a safeguarding officer, CLT would like safeguarding administration to come under the administrator's role. We would then seek volunteer 'case workers' who could handle safeguarding issues. The case workers may also need to attend District meetings. A job description for the roles will be drawn up next week.
- **Church Bank Accounts:** Keith at KMAS highlighted the fact that Lloyds bank, who are used by many of our churches, are starting to charge fees. One church investigated moving to the CO-OP bank but they require you to be a registered charity. Graham said CLT will be looking further at this issue to see if there are any solutions. Richard Neale suggested looking at charity bank.org.
- **Synod Report: (Additional Item):** Michael presented a report from the recent District Synod (attached with the minutes). If anyone would like to be a lay rep to next year's Conference there is still a vacancy – let Michael know.

MM

CLT

3. Property Update:

- **St Marys:** This is still sold subject to contract. There was an issue further down the chain, but this has now been resolved so hopefully it will complete this side of Christmas.
- **Burgh:** We have had a supportive DAR (Designated Advisor's Report) and we are waiting for TMCP to approve this so we can pursue the offer from the council for £90k.
- **Conisholme:** An offer of 105K was accepted 6 weeks ago but this is subject to additional land coming with property, so we are now waiting for the Land Registry.
- **Seathorne/Winthorpe:** (Extra item). Michael had joyful news - TMCP have agreed the lease and WCP (Winthorpe Community Partnership) trustees are meeting on Friday and will hopefully agree it and sign it. GM thanked Michael for his persistence in this matter.
Subsequent to CM, WCP asked that it be minuted that the Circuit would be happy to offer WCP a new lease when the initial 7 year term expires. Circuit has agreed to this.

4. Missions:

Graham requested that trustees ask in their churches if there is anyone enthusiastic about joining a mission group, as mission is part of our calling

5. Safeguarding:

With no Safeguarding Officer in post Graham will be the responsible person when necessary. Our District SG officer (Howard Smedley) is now the Regional Officer for Safeguarding and is employed by Connexion.

The New Safeguarding policy had been circulated.

The policy was approved by the meeting and signed by Graham

6. Caravan Chaplaincy:

Bryan had circulated a report prior to the meeting and had sent apologies. Catherine reported that the campervan had finally sold.

7. Local Preacher Matters: (Nick)

At the LWP meeting last Thursday three new Local Preachers were welcomed to the meeting and fellowship from Halton Hologate and Spilsby. However, there are now 27 extra services per quarter to cover. Graham led a discussion about leading worship in care homes and residential

homes, especially for those with dementia and cognitive impairment. Maybe some local churches could help lead worship in some of those facilities. Nick said residents are very appreciative and it is a tool for evangelism.

At the start of September new church Spilsby hosted a Circuit Service which recognised the work of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, who felt it was good to be recognised and affirmed.

Thanks to friends at Spilsby for hosting.

Local Preachers: Cathy Croft is On Trial and David Simpson is On Note.

Worship Leaders: Elaine Craig is in training and Chris Rolph from Louth was commended last week by Louth CC last week and will start training soon.

Numbers as at 17th September are: 23 fully accredited LP of whom 17 are active although some are limited in scope, with 1 On Trial and 1 On Note. There are 6 Worship Leaders and 2 in training.

8. AOB:

Three requests from Louth MC had been circulated together with a report on the work of the Church Family Worker. **The first request, that Louth be allowed to release funds from the sale of Louth Property to fund maintenance work, was approved.**

The meeting also considered the application for Louth to seek District funding for the post of Family Worker and for the Circuit to contribute. Louth MC hopes to contribute a third of the costs, the Circuit a third and the District a third, initially for a 3 year period. This would be around £6k per year for the Circuit.

This requested was seconded by Tricia Johnson. **The meeting approved the request to support Louth and to contribute a third of the FW costs for 3 years.**

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

All meetings start at 7pm

Tuesday 9th December at Withern

The meeting closed in prayer and by sharing the grace.