

Circuit Stewards' Report Autumn 2020 Church Councils

We are now in a new Methodist year and as a Circuit we are carrying out all the meetings, such as Synod, Circuit Meeting and Church Councils but as throughout the Spring and Summer these are again being done mainly online.

We have welcomed Rev Emily Young, a probationer from Queens who has Pastoral care of Boldmere, Kingstanding and Nechells and we hope soon to welcome Rev Dr Jimmy Dube from Zimbabwe. Jimmy will work part time in our Circuit looking after Stockland Green, and part time with the Zimbabwe Fellowship. Part of the preparation to welcome them has involved readying their manses. We thank David Allen and Lindsay for their efforts. We are also very grateful to those in our Circuit and beyond who have donated items both large and small to help furnish the Chester Road Manse, this has been a huge help.

At our recent Circuit Meeting Rev Malcolm Oliver was re-invited for a further year from August 2021 to August 2022. This followed a period of consultations across the Circuit, District and Ecumenically. Next year we shall be considering the stationing of Rev Stephen Froggatt and Deacon Marilyn Slowe whose 5 year appointments end in August 2022.

Following the item in the Circuit Summer Newsletter regarding an Expanded Circuit Leadership Team, we have met twice as an ECLT with representatives from 11 of our Churches together with David Allen our Circuit Property Secretary. We trust that the information from the ECLT will be communicated to your church by your representative and from your church to the ECLT.

Much of the summer has been taken up by churches carrying out their Risk Assessments and planning for when and how they may re-open for Worship, either live or streamed, and also for outside lettings, again we thank David Allen for checking and advising on these Risk Assessments.

Church finances and cash flows are being monitored by Church Treasurers, John Rutherford (Acting Circuit Treasurer) and Helen Lynskey (District Treasurer). The loss of income from there being few lettings and a reduction in giving by those who use envelopes could have a big impact on some Churches finances.

However, in spite of the issues caused by coronavirus, we still need to look ahead and consider the work of the Circuit regarding Mission and Outreach. Following a discussion at the ECLT a recommendation was made to the Circuit Meeting that £5,000 be available for exploring, initially, on-line Worship involving Gospel Central at Stockland Green on 2 Sundays each month. Conversation with Stockland Green Leadership Team is ongoing as to how they would financially contribute to this. The proposal also invited other Circuit Churches to consider what fresh initiatives in Mission they could bring to their communities on the understanding that the Circuit would consider funding if the church itself was willing to partner with funding from their reserves. This proposal was carried.

Last but not least. Yet again we are making the same appeal. The Circuit has need of a Circuit Treasurer, Circuit Stewards and also a Circuit Meeting Secretary. At the Circuit Meeting, Malcolm spelled it out, "if we don't find people to fill these roles then consideration may have to be given to joining with another Circuit". Please pray about this, speak to your Minister, talk to one of the Circuit Stewards, talk with John Rutherford.

We thank all those who serve God in so many ways that enable us to keep this part of His kingdom growing. All the seen and unseen work in the circuit in these challenging times, as we seek to do God's will.

John, Naomi and Marion