

West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze
Notes from a meeting with Methodist Circuit Super
27 Jan 2015 at Jan's

Present:

Jan Partridge (Methodist Minister, Supernumary),
Andrew Fleet (Methodist Circuit Steward),
Keith Osborn (Methodist Circuit Superintendant Minister)
Sue Green
Chris Scarisbrick
Clive Deverell, (CofE Team Minister, Partnership)

Apologies from Mark Dowling (Methodist Lay preacher) who was travelling abroad

Keith had asked for a meeting with the leadership of the Partnership. It seemed most appropriate initially for this to be a small group. Most of the Exec went along.

Keith and Andrew outlined the structure and operations of the Methodist Upper Thames Circuit, and talked about the challenges of staffing and buildings and congregations not necessarily being in the right place to support new estates such as Tadpole Lane. Keith mentioned that he'd been somewhat disappointed by the poor attendance at a recent Swindon Churches Together Sponsoring Body meeting.

Keith and the Circuit intend to continue to offer events that all of us may find useful. They recognise that the default venue, Highworth is not the most convenient place for people to travel from the partnership.

We talked about the youth and children's mission work, and how the workers involved may have a tendency to feel disconnected from wider church life. Perhaps it might be possible to find ways for the Circuit youth leaders to encourage one another or share best practise?

Circuit are keen to increase the effectiveness of communications with the Partnership.

Clive and the Partnership team outlined the history and structure of the partnership churches and how we represent and make decisions. We talked about our buildings, and offered them to the circuit for hosting meetings and events this end of the District.

We talked about some of the hopes for redressing the ecumenical balance in the partnership. Specifically our hope for a church appointment through the circuit (which would have more local scope) rather than a circuit-wide shared appointment. We asked Keith to let us know what the circuit's expectations would be on funding if a full time or a part-time appointment were to be made. We mentioned the manse as a possible factor.

We mentioned the impending appointment of Rev Trev, the Baptist pension liability to be determined, and the CofE parish review and possible re-organisation due this year.

The partnership team having asked specifically for Keith's support during the review process, Keith assured that he would try to keep abreast of progress, and push to be involved and consulted. Chris committed to keeping him (and the URC reps, who Chris had already approached, when they visited Westlea) informed of CofE discussions, so that SCTSB can be involved informally if not formally.

Keith asked to be informed of Partnership meetings, while not promising to attend every one would like to know what's going on. Chris later added the District office contact email UpperThamesCircuit@gmail.com to the mailing list PC@WSwinLyd.org.uk (for meeting announcements etc)

Speaking of SCTSB, the next meeting is apparently 30 April. We should make sure we do a progress report for then.